

**THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, IN REVIEWING THIS PAST YEAR ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATIONS, DESCRIBES ONE SANTA FE AS THE EXAMPLE OF WHAT AN AMBITIOUS RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CAN LOOK LIKE IN A DECENTERED AUTOMOBILE METROPOLIS LIKE LOS ANGELES.**

(<http://www.dallasnews.com/lifestyles/arts/columnists/mark-lamster/20151224-year-in-review-architecture.ece>)

## **Year in Review: Architecture**



Tom Fox/Staff Photographer

The main lobby is seen from above at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas.



Mark Lamster Follow @marklamster mlamster@dallasnews.com

Architecture Critic

Published: 24 December 2015 04:14 PM

Updated: 26 December 2015 10:28 AM

Dallas has a lot of issues to address — education, criminal justice, economic disparity — but even with those subjects grabbing for attention, it was urban design that dominated city elections this year. The Trinity toll road, for or against, became a litmus test for candidates, and the mayor felt compelled to put together a Dream Team to plot a course to a safe middle ground, always his favorite destination. Wherever you stand, the fact that Dallasites have made city planning a central focus of their thinking was the big, and very welcome, story of the year.

**1.The new Parkland:** Visually it's overwhelming, but the multibillion-dollar Tetris-block public hospital was the biggest architectural arrival in Dallas in 2015. Just what it will mean for health care outcomes is a story for the future, but the fact that every patient has a private room is something to celebrate, as is its generous, light-filled lobby.

**2.The year of Frank, Part I:** Say this for the 86-year-old dean of American architecture: Frank Gehry (below) is not fading quietly into retirement. Over the summer, his billion-dollar Louis Vuitton Foundation (right) debuted in Paris to wide acclaim, and he followed that with a career survey at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and a celebratory biography by Pulitzer Prize-winning critic Paul Goldberger. To cap it all, he has taken on that most entrenched of challenges: the remaking of the Los Angeles River.

**3.Preservation's moment, finally?** In the wake of 2014's outrageous downtown demolitions, the city of Dallas finally got off its duff, enacting a moratorium ordinance on downtown razings and otherwise energizing the

landmarks department. Meanwhile, Preservation Dallas, for the first time in five years, published a “most endangered” list. But threats to the Meadows Building, the old Cabana Hotel and other landmarks suggest the inadequacy of those measures and make clear that further vigilance is required.

**4. The year of Frank, Part II:** Frank Welch, beloved gray eminence of Texas modernism, celebrated the year with a pair of publications — a memoir rich in charm recounting his early years as an architect, and a monograph illustrating 30 of his most significant projects.

**5. The Alexan:** In a year marked by crass residential development, Trammell Crow’s craven Goat Hill behemoth, by Good Fulton Farrell, reaches a new summit of awfulness, fouling a prime site for decades to come. Thumbs down also to Good Fulton Farrell’s out-of-scale Bishop Arts proposal for developer Alamo Manhattan, mediocre even in its second iteration, after wholesale rejection by its neighbors. Part of architectural practice is convincing clients to be better citizens, not enabling their worst impulses.

**6. One Santa Fe:** An example of what an ambitious residential development can look like, this mixed-use megaproject by architect Michael Maltzan stretches for a quarter-mile on the site of a former railyard along the Los Angeles River. Striking in white with red accents, and punctured at regular intervals to provide both visual and pedestrian circulation, it is one of several projects remaking a decentered automotive city into one that is multimodal with a revived core. Big doesn’t have to be bad.

**7. The Trinity River:** The endless saga of the Trinity continues, with the Dream Team’s proposed “meandering” parkway the subject of contention. The public has made it clear that it wants a curvy, limited-impact road. Can this balanced vision be implemented within the constraints of federal approvals? Maybe we’ll find out in 2016.

**8. Buffalo Bayou Park:** While Dallas continues to fight it out over the Trinity, Houston has managed to produce a park of similar size and scale along its own formerly neglected waterway. Buffalo Bayou Park is a \$58 million verdant landscape that runs through the heart of Houston, with

restaurants, water sports, playing fields, concert venues, scenic bridges, bike paths and myriad other benefits. At least Dallasites can visit.

**9. What's fair for Fair Park:**The mayor's Fair Park Task Force finally issued its report, which called for the establishment of a nonprofit foundation to oversee planning and management of languishing Fair Park, the civic jewel that's in a state of appalling disrepair and underutilization. That entity is the right way to bring accountability and new energy to the park, but there will be no forward momentum without engagement with the community and an end to the bullying of the State Fair.

**10. A new home for American art:**Renzo Piano had been tossing up versions of the same project for so many years that his decidedly weird new Whitney Museum of American Art, at the foot of the High Line in New York City, left critics wondering just what he could have in mind. Then it opened and we all found out: his best project in years, an industrial-strength stack of galleries, absent his usual fussiness, that show works to advantage and boast a series of terraces that are a pleasure to navigate.

*Mark Lamster is a professor at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture.*