

**North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area**  
Crime and Code Enforcement Meeting, April 2, 2008  
Meeting Notes

The Crime and Code Enforcement Meeting began with a brief presentation by Jacob Browning that provided an analysis of crime data for the North Lamar area. Both Type I (serious offenses) and Type II (lesser offenses) crime data was presented as were maps showing the locations of such criminal activities within the neighborhood.

The purpose of this meeting was to provide North Lamar stakeholders a venue to ask both APD and Code Enforcement officers about the issues concerning the overall safety and welfare of their neighborhood. Officer Michael Youngs, the North Central Command District Representative, and Steve Ramirez, the North District Manager of Solid Waste Services, were in attendance to provide feedback on these issues. Their comments to stakeholders' questions can be found below.

**Comments made by Officer Michael Youngs of APD**

Q. Are there any specific tasks that have been planned for the North Lamar area? What are their completion dates?

A. Currently, there are nuisance abatements for local businesses that if violated, these businesses can be closed for one year and fined \$1 million to \$1.5 million. There are also projects planned within the next few months for both the Sam Rayburn and Brownie Dr. areas that will include undercover stings, busts, and other enforcement. On May 3, 2008, there will be a neighborhood clean-up project on both streets.

Also, refer to your neighborhood association for any information regarding current operations in your area. Get involved with your neighborhood association by contacting its president. Also, get involved with the North Austin Coalition of Neighborhoods (NACN). There are currently 80,000 to 88,000 residents represented by NACN; by the end of the year, that number will be closer to 100,000.

Q. What is APD doing to make the Spanish-speaking population in the area more involved in their neighborhood?

A. It is hard to get the minority populations involved, but there is outreach being done. Translators attend public meetings and fairs are being held for Spanish speakers. There is also a program to work with immigrants in the area. The Mexican consulate is also involved in some of these efforts.

Q. The planning horizon for the NPZD process is 10 to 15 years. Does APD have the same planning horizon? What would APD want to see about this neighborhood in the future?

A. No, APD does not have the same horizon as NPZD. APD hopes that within 2 to 5 years, the North Lamar area will be cleaned up and become almost unrecognizable to current stakeholders. We need to find people that will invest in the welfare of the North Lamar area.

Q. When was the last successful business abatement? And, how many offense occurrences must happen for an abatement to be placed on an establishment?

A. The District Attorney determines whether or not to place an abatement based upon the number of occurrences; therefore, it is subjective. It also depends upon what crimes have occurred and if weapons were involved. The DA also looks into whether the establishment has been cooperative with APD in past situations.

Q. Crimes occur quickly in North Lamar and are hard to accurately report. How does my report help?

A. Your report does help. It *is* hard to get a good visual description of criminals and their activities when they occur so quickly. But, any visual description called in will assist in finding the criminals. Other descriptive material (license plate numbers, etc.) will help with future call-ins, too.

Q. If crime is occurring in my front yard, what can I do to prevent this from occurring? I am concerned that my house is being targeted by criminals. Can I put up “No Prostitutes or Drug Dealing” signs?

A. You can put up “No Trespassing” signs and lights around your property. But, always call the police and give descriptions of those doing business on your lawn. Criminals are counting on residents living in fear so that they can continue to do their business as usual. These criminals usually don’t retaliate confrontation, however, do not approach them if you do not feel safe. Call 911 instead.

Q. Are there going to be any new officers assigned to the North Lamar area?

A. No, and the North Central district is getting bigger because of recent redistricting. So, there are going to be the same number of officers patrolling a larger area and population.

Q. How do we increase the number of officers in our area?

A. This is a contentious issue in this area, I realize. Contact the Chief Acevedo, the City Council, and City Management regarding the number of officers in the North Lamar neighborhoods.

### **Comments made by Steve Ramirez of SWS**

Q. Is it a code violation to inhabit a residence without any water, electric, gas, etc. hookups?

A. Yes, living without any utilities presents a dangerous living condition to those living in such a situation.

Q. Does Code Enforcement deal with trash around bus stops?

A. Typically, Code Enforcement deals with violations on private property. Capital Metro should be responsible for any issues regarding their facilities.

Q. Who do we call about the many ice cream vendors in our neighborhood? These vendors play loud music, block our streets, and are probably vending their goods illegally.

A. These issues, like many others, fall between department jurisdictions. Code Enforcement has no jurisdiction over food vending (or, mobile food vending). Contact Jason Redfern of Public Works for Right-of-Way management issues and the Health Department about the ice cream (or any other mobile food) vendors' sanitation.

Q. There is a problem of trash collecting around our community mailboxes. What can we do to fix this?

A. Your neighborhood association can address this issue.

Door-to-door bilingual code enforcement education is currently being planned.

Tell the NACN, City Council, and the City Manager that more code enforcement officers are needed to address the many issues affecting the North Lamar area.