

**North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area
Crime and Public Safety Meeting, March 12, 2008
Meeting Notes**

The Crime and Public Safety Meeting began with a presentation by Jacob Browning that provided a review of the planning process and of the Goals and Visioning Workshop. Presented first were the Draft Goals that were formulated at the previous workshop and North Lamar stakeholders were then given the opportunity to provide feedback on these goals (see comments below). It should be noted that most of the comments given could eventually be included in the North Lamar Plan as objectives and recommendations under their respective goals.

The focus of the presentation was to provide attendees with an overview of criminal activity within the North Lamar area. Type I crime data (the most serious of offenses) for the five-year period between 2003 and 2007--as provided by APD--was shown alongside corresponding and related maps; these maps portrayed the frequency of crime occurrences for those years within the North Lamar neighborhood planning area as well as the Initial Survey Results (Crime) map, and the Local and Absentee Ownership map.¹

Officer Youngs of the North Central Command unit of APD was invited to guest speak at this meeting but was unable to attend due to illness. He has, however, committed to guest speak at the next North Lamar meeting on April 2, 2008. In the absence of an APD representative, planning staff was not sufficiently able to address most concerns brought forth by meeting attendees and, as such, these questions and concerns will be forwarded to Officer Youngs so he might address them at the next North Lamar meeting. These concerns can be found below.

The comments for the *Draft Goals* are as follows:

Transportation Goal

- We should capture innovative transportation ideas into the goal
 - Rail
 - Ways to connect to the Chinatown Center
- Include electric recharge centers for cars (Austin Energy may address this)
- Reduce air pollution
- List pedestrians as the first priority in the transportation goal (instead of motorists, etc.)
- Review and possibly lower the speed limit along N. Lamar Blvd. (some people drive too slow, while others drive too fast)

¹ All maps and data can be found at http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north_lamar.htm.

- Provision of AISD bus stops for school-age children
- Look for solutions for pedestrians along N. Lamar Blvd.

Infrastructure Goal

- All attendees were satisfied with this goal

Parks and Open Space Goal

- All attendees were satisfied with this goal

Land Use Goal

- The wording of the goal seems a bit inconsistent--how can we “benefit everyone” while “containing and limiting?”
- Add “quality of life” instead of “benefits everybody,” but what is “quality of life?”
- Just take out “benefits everybody” from the Draft Goal
- Set better goals than just letting the free market reign
- Raise the quality of the entire neighborhood by improving entire area
- Limit additional low-income housing

Quality of Life Goal

- There are not enough treatment centers in the City (Health and Human Services can address this in a future meeting)
- Take a proactive approach to helping people improve their standards of living
- Crime must be controlled in order to improve the area’s quality of life
- Noise issues must be addressed
- Provide appropriate alternatives to disruptive behavior in the area
- Create positive outlets to unacceptable behaviors
- Provide job training

Q. Are these Draft Goals available in Spanish?

A. Currently, they are not but can and will be translated before the next meeting.

The concerns addressed during the *Review of Crime Data* portion of the presentation are as follows:

- Lower-level petty crime is what leads to the more serious offense crimes shown on your frequency maps
- A large majority of crimes probably goes unreported
- Why are crimes not reported?
- Why doesn’t APD come when crimes are reported? No (reported) motor vehicle thefts seem to warrant officers’ concerns or attention in North Lamar. Why?

- More APD patrols are needed in our area whether they be bicycle, horse, etc., patrols
- Crimes tend to occur in more commercial or common areas. Why is this true?
- Overall, there needs to be more/better enforcement in the area
 - Beer cans, litter, crime
- Ice cream vendors are loud. What is the legal volume they can use? Are the vendors even legal?
- Is the economy a relevant factor in criminal activity? That is, does crime increase as the economy declines?
- Landlords need to be held accountable in helping reduce crime occurring on/near their properties. How can we ensure that absentee owners will be held accountable?
- Research needs to be done to relate transportation corridors to criminal activities occurring along them
- We must encourage people to report crime and property owners to report graffiti
- Need to coordinate with APD and NPZD
- AISD can communicate with Spanish-speaking community
- Send a press release for April 2nd meeting in order to garner the attention of the community, City, and its leaders in hopes that many will attend to hear the collective voice of the North Lamar neighborhood