

**North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area
Kick-Off Meeting, November 15, 2007
Meeting Notes**

Neighborhood Stakeholder Questions:

Q. Are other City departments involved in the planning process?

A. Yes, the planning process is inclusive, with many departments involved in the process. It is necessary to have these departments' participation in order to implement the plan's vision.

Q. Who was notified with the mail-out notifications?

A. All property owners (business- and homeowners), utility account holders, and renters. There were approximately 10,000 notices sent to stakeholders within the North Lamar area.

Q. Is the zoning map available for us to have?

A. Yes. A copy of the area's zoning map is available to all stakeholders who wish to have one. All maps are available on the planning area's website and are also available by mail (by contacting NPZD staff). A zoning map may not be necessary in the early phases of the planning process as it may be somewhat confusing or unfamiliar to neighborhood stakeholders; however, education on zoning will occur later in the process.

Q. How do zoning changes affect current residents?

A. Zoning changes will help with land use compliance that already exists in North Lamar.

Q. Is North Lamar under a special project? Or, is it under review to be included in a special project? A map on the City's website says that this may be the case.

A. No, North Lamar is not included in any special project(s) at this time. The map in question can be found in Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use (of the City's code) on page v (Roman numeral 5):

http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/planning/downloads/Subchapter_E_Design_Standards.pdf. On this map, North Lamar Blvd. (along the border of the planning area) is a future transit corridor, where these design standards may be applied at a later date. As of now, because this portion of the street is not a core transit corridor, the mixed use guidelines will not be applied.

Q. How is a neighborhood plan put in place? How is it more than a piece of paper?

A. The neighborhood plan is adopted by the City Council as part of the City of Austin's Code and Ordinances. The neighborhood plan is also the catalyst for capital improvement project(s) implementation within the North Lamar area as it contains all recommendations for these projects within its contents.

Q. Diversity affects "community." How does the neighborhood plan address diversity and involve citizens from all classes?

A. The planning process allows for communication to occur among all concerned citizens from every aspect of the neighborhood. Ideally, the process will solicit opinions from all neighborhood stakeholders. Getting everyone involved, however, may prove to be a daunting task.

Q. What is the City of Austin's agenda?

A. The City's agenda is to not create conflict among policies of different City departments; it also includes the creation of consistent land uses. NPZD does not have a "hidden" agenda as one might assume: the neighborhood plan is the CITIZENS' plan; projects are based on YOUR ideas. No special projects are currently planned for the North Lamar area.

Q. Is a recreation center being built behind the HEB?

A. We have no information regarding this question at this time.

Q. What are the public health ordinances in place for mobile food vendors?

A. We have no information regarding this question at this time.

Q. What influence does NPZD have to change the criminal problems in North Lamar?

A. Throughout the planning process, NPZD will be in contact with and working alongside the Austin Police Department to ensure your concerns will be addressed in the neighborhood plan.

Q. Are the hotels in the North Lamar area being fined for the criminal activities occurring on their premises?

A. We have no information regarding this question at this time.

Q. Who is in charge of Code Enforcement, especially on weekends?

A. Steve McNarus.

Q. Can the City of Austin condemn the Brownie Lane area or other problem areas within North Lamar?

A. We have no information regarding this question at this time.

Brainstorming Exercise Results (Organized by Group):

GROUP A

Three Most Important Issues

Crime

Landlords out of compliance

Failure to upkeep property

Absentee landlords

“person-operated” crime

- Prostitution
- Drugs---crack
- Vandalism---cars
- Burglaries

Illegal businesses

Traffic

Cut through traffic

Addition of speed bumps to lower speeding

Status of North Lamar as a Core transit Corridor---how does it affect the neighborhood?

Georgian Drive

- Lights
- Sidewalks
- Prevent commercial development along Georgian Drive
- Bus stops as crime nodes

Garage sales generating traffic

COA not taking responsibility for infrastructure (sidewalks)

Uncurbed sidewalks

No sidewalks along streets

Traffic to and from Lamar

Left turn/middle lane on Lamar and Elliot

Speed bumps on Georgian

Misc. Issues

Connection to sewer lines? Many still on septic tanks

Erosion along Walnut Creek

Lack of drainage plan for neighborhood

No street cleaning but pay for it

Low attendance and participation of minorities

Consideration of time and place for neighborhood meetings

Vacant lot at Middle Fiskeville and Grady a possible park
Get an idea of what zoning will occur and where; especially in open spaces
Keep diversity
Population in flux; increase in the number of people coming and going
Zoning issues on Georgian Drive

Expectations of the Planning Process

Take care of crime

Infrastructure

- Lighting
- Curbs
- Sidewalks

FLUM to shape of neighborhood for 10-15 years

- Economic impact analysis

Code enforcement

Increase communication among participants

Plan as an enforcer in 2-5 years

Standards for landlords

Police substation on Rundberg

GROUP B

“Things we like”

Trees

Location

Diversity

Affordable

Access to IH-35 and US 183

Large lots

Three Most Important Issues

Change in the character of the neighborhood

- Bring back the family-oriented character of the neighborhood
- Loss of “neighborliness”
- Lack of stability
- Lack of pride in the neighborhood

Need to address larger problems of crime—need to clean up the neighborhood before we can shine it up

Vagrancy/panhandlers

As the affordability of the neighborhood has increases it has become attractive as an area for investors to purchase property

Absentee landlords

Landlord accountability

Lack of parkland

Create a safe neighborhood

Too much affordable housing

Rundberg Lane has too many negative connotations so rename the road
The Chinatown Center is huge plus to the neighborhood
No place for kids
Need sidewalks and curbs
Illegal home businesses
Commercial encroachment into the neighborhoods
Better street lighting
No sense of community among area businesses
Businesses don't feel comfortable marketing to the neighborhood
Things get worse at night
Need to create incentives for home ownership
People shouldn't be afraid in their own neighborhood

Expectations of the Planning Process

Existing problems (drugs, prostitution and associated criminal activity) need to be addressed before the planning

- Public safety emphasis

GROUP C

Three Most Important Issues

Safety

Reduce crime "crack"/crime

Traffic lights

Unregulated pedestrian traffic

More and better maintained sidewalks

Cut through traffic

Noise pollution and enforcement of noise statutes

Speed bumps

Road maintenance

Livestock—roosters

Unregulated retail

Empty lots not being maintained

Poorly maintained rental property

Barrier between residential and commercial area?

Traffic flow regulated

Crime "magnet" street

- Nowhere street
- East Rock Hollow Lane

Code enforcement issues

- Cooper and N. Lamar

Traffic cameras

More parks

Creek erosion

Walking trail?

Grady and Brownie

Expectations of the Planning Process

Implementation of the plan

SEE something change

Spend as much in our neighborhood as in downtown

That our neighborhood will be respected by the City

Identify allocatable resources to our community

Will help us see what our neighborhood can become....examples

That our community will have an identity we are proud of

Keep our affordable housing

The City will engage ALL of the stakeholders