



## The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area Sustainability Workshop, December 9, 2008 Meeting Notes

The Sustainability Workshop began with meeting participants examining the *Tree Recommendations Map* that was created based on input from the November 18 NLCNPA meeting. The map detailed areas in the NLCNPA where participants felt trees should be preserved, protected, or planted.

A *Sustainable Ideas Handout* was given out to participants; it included a list of sustainable ideas generated by residents in previous meetings, as well as a list of possible ideas/actions that the neighborhood or individuals could take to promote sustainability. Additionally, website addresses were listed to so those interested could find more information, including how to calculate their carbon footprint and save money using compact fluorescent lights.

A presentation by NPZD staff was given to meeting participants that focused upon *Sustainable Initiatives* and programs the City of Austin supports that relate to sustainability.

The map, handout, and presentation can be found here:  
[http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north\\_lamar.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north_lamar.htm).

Some questions that came up during the Sustainable Initiatives presentation:

Q. Are there plans to have different sized recycling bins?

A. Currently, there are no plans to offer different sizes; only one recycling bin size is offered.

Q. How does single-stream recycling get sorted and where does it go?

A. The recycle the city collects is bought by out of town companies and they sort out the recycle we collect here in Austin. Within 2-3 years the old landfill out on Hwy 812 will be Austin's recycling center. All of the recycle collected in Austin will be collected there and sorted.

Q. What are the barriers to small-scale wind power projects in residential areas?

A. The cost is currently fairly high for small wind power turbines. Additionally, wind power is more fickle than solar power, and zoning would likely limit the height of any proposed wind tower.

Q. What is an electric bicycle?

A. An electric bicycle is a traditional bicycle with an electric assist that allows the rider to temporarily power the bike using an electric motor.

Then followed a presentation by *Austin Energy* on things individuals can do to reduce their energy consumption and lower their monthly bills. The presentation can be found here:  
[http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north\\_lamar.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/zoning/north_lamar.htm).

Some questions that came up during the Austin Energy presentation:

Q. Can renters apply for Energy Saver programs?

A. Yes, but the landlord has to approve it first.

Q. Will Austin Energy pick up a refrigerator from both homes and apartments?

A. Yes.

Q. Will Austin Energy pick up non-working refrigerators?

A. No, but you can drop them off at some recycling locations for free.

Q. Are income guidelines for free home energy efficiency improvements gross or net?

A. They are gross income, and 80% MFI.

Sari Albornoz of the Sustainable Food Center (SFC) then gave a presentation on what the SFC does in Austin, and what they can do to help the NLC planning area do produce and consume healthier foods.

During Sari's talk, a question was asked by the audience:

Q. How does distribution of the food from the community gardens work?

A. It's completely up to the community gardeners at that garden. Sometimes each gardener has their own small plot from which they take the produce. Sometimes the produce from an entire garden is divided evenly among gardeners. Or it can be a mix of the two. There is no set distribution system, the gardeners can divide the produce up however they see fit.

During the presentation, the presenter asked the audience several questions about how community gardens can help make neighborhoods healthier.

Q. What are the benefits of a community garden?

A. Interaction between neighbors

A. Erosion control

A. Creation of a greenspace

A. Beautification of an empty space

A. Healthy food to eat

A. Physical exercise

A. Habitat for insects

A. Attracts more "eyes on the street"

Q. What are some areas in NLCNPA that might be suitable for community gardens?

A. Churches

A. City owned property

The presentation can be found here: (Presentation forthcoming)