

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The “Residential Neighborhood Categorization Map,” contained in the Housing Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, delineates neighborhoods throughout the City according to the prevailing condition of private property. The main objective of the categorization is to identify the level of need in each neighborhood, which in turn will determine the strategies to be taken in meeting that need. The Seacrest/Del-Ida Park Neighborhood is currently categorized as follows:

Revitalization - Evidence of decline in condition of structures and yards; increase in crime; property values stagnant or declining.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for areas with this categorization to have a greater priority in terms of targeting of code enforcement and law enforcement operations; and to have a greater priority in the scheduling of capital improvements (infrastructure) which will assist in arresting visual signs of deterioration. It also calls for the creation of a Neighborhood Plan.

The overall purpose of this Neighborhood Plan is to capitalize on the strengths of the area and provide methods to deal with the weaknesses. The Plan provides the framework for the revitalization of **the “Seacrest/Del-Ida Park Neighborhood,”** bordered by the F.E.C. Railroad on the east; Swinton Avenue on the west; NE 4th Street on the south and the city limits to the north. The plan is organized into three sections, the “Introduction”, “Existing Conditions” and “Plan Implementation”.

The “**Introduction**” gives a brief background and history of the area. It also describes the purpose of the Plan and gives a brief summary of the planning process that helped shaped the contents of the Plan.

The “**Existing Conditions**” section describes the neighborhood in terms of the factors that affect the quality of life in the area. It contains a description of the existing land uses, zoning, and Future Land Use Map designations that apply. Analyses of development patterns, occupancy status, property values, infrastructure, code enforcement calls and crime problems are also included.

The “**Plan Implementation**” section outlines the strategy for the revitalization of the neighborhood, including the actions that the City will take to facilitate it.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Development Pattern

The neighborhood area contains a mix of residential, commercial, office, and community facility land uses. The area also contains many undeveloped parcels. The principal land uses are detached single-family residences and duplexes. Six hundred eighteen single-family parcels take up 64.19% of the land area and 108 duplex parcels take up 9.55%. Other major land uses in the area include 45 undeveloped parcels (8.15%) and 1 public school (Plumosa Elementary School) with 4.5%.

There are several residential subdivisions within the neighborhood area, containing a mix of single-family, duplex and multi-family structures. Overall, the neighborhood contains 642 single-family residential units, 21 apartments/guest houses associated with single family, 240 duplex units and 94 multi-family units for a total of 997 residential units.

Within some parts of the neighborhood, there is an inappropriate mix of small-parcel duplex and multiple family development with single family residences. A major concern of neighborhood residents is the continuation and potential expansion of this development pattern. Over 75% of the residential units in the areas where this development pattern occurs are rentals. Unfortunately, the combination of apathetic landlords and unmotivated tenants has resulted in many deteriorating duplex and multi-family properties. Lack of building maintenance (painting, window and door repair, etc.), inadequate and overgrown landscaping, crowding and overparking are the major problems. Combined, these problems have a blighting influence on adjacent single family homes. As a result, many of these homes have also converted to rentals—the problems escalate and the blight spreads.

Back-out parking onto adjacent roadways is the typical parking arrangement for duplex development within the neighborhood. In most cases, the number of spaces are maximized with the entire roadway frontage covered in asphalt without the benefit of landscaped

breaks between spaces. This degrades the appearance of the area, affects drainage and encourages speeding.

Of the 108 duplex parcels within the neighborhood, 93 (86%) are non-conforming. Two parcels are located in the R-1-AA district, which does not permit duplexes. Of the remaining parcels, 65 (61%) are non-conforming with respect to lot size (i.e. less than 8,000 sq. ft.), 4 parcels (4%) do not meet minimum lot width requirements (i.e. less than 60 ft. wide) and 22 parcels (21%) are non-conforming with respect to unit size (i.e. less than 1,000 sq. ft.)

All multi-family development within the neighborhood was found to be non-conforming with respect to density. Within the RL zone (3-6 du/acre), three multi-family buildings have densities between 19 and 27 du/acre. Within the RM zone (6-12 du/acre), 1 multi-family building has a density of 20 du/acre and four others have a density of 40 du/acre. Two multi-family buildings within the neighborhood are located in a zoning districts which does not permit the use. Both of these buildings are located in the Del-Ida Park subdivision, within the RO-Residential/Office zoning district.

Historic Structures

There are 105 buildings in the neighborhood over 50 years old. Geographically, 45 (42.9%) are located within the Del-Ida Park Historic District. The remaining 60 buildings are located outside the historic district without protective regulations in place to preserve their historic value. Of these 60 buildings, 55 (52.4%) are located within the Dell Park subdivision.

Code Enforcement

The location of each property within the neighborhood was examined with respect to the number of incident calls generated. Generally, the number of incident calls was consistent in areas of the neighborhood with primarily single-family residential development; whereas, the number of incident calls was significantly higher in areas where duplex and multi-family development is prevalent.

Adjacent Nuisances

The neighborhood is adjacent to a number of properties and transportation facilities that affect the stability of the neighborhood. Directly to the east of the neighborhood is an existing commercial corridor with uses including automotive sales and repair, restaurants and strip commercial development. The development fronts on Federal Highway, which puts the rear of buildings and service areas facing Dixie

Highway and the neighborhood. These areas are visually unattractive, and generate noise within the neighborhood.

Traffic Issues

Traffic problems within the neighborhood include speeding on NE 2nd and Swinton Avenues as well as on local residential streets, lack of observance at stop signs, and non-residential through traffic to Federal Highway on NE 13th Street, NE 14th Street and NE 16th Street. Consideration must be given to eliminating excessive through-traffic on residential streets in the neighborhood which are headed for the commercial corridor.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation programs and work elements of this plan are aimed at achieving three major objectives:

- *Elimination of the problems associated with small lot duplex and multi-family development. Prohibition of new duplex and multi-family development north of George Bush Boulevard.*
- *Reduction of the negative impacts associated with through and non-residential vehicular traffic on local residential streets.*
- *Improvement of the physical appearance of the neighborhood through enhanced police activity, code enforcement and beautification.*

FLUM Amendments and Rezonings

It is the intent of this plan that all new residential development or redevelopment, not located within the Del-Ida Park Historic District be single-family detached housing. FLUM and zoning designations will be amended where necessary to support this goal. Within the Del-Ida Park RO and RL zoning districts, low density multi-family and/or duplex development will continue to be permitted under the control of the Historic Preservation Board.

Most parcels within the neighborhood area will retain their current FLUM and zoning designation. However, implementation of the neighborhood plan will require FLUM amendment and/or rezoning of some parcels in the area. The proposed Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map for the Neighborhood Area are attached.

The proposed FLUM amendments and rezonings include:

- Amendment of FLUM designation from “Medium Density Residential” to “Low Density Residential” and rezoning from RM to R-1-A of 34 parcels located on the east side of NE 3rd Avenue, north of NE 14th Street. Single-family zoning (R-1-AA) exists west of this area and six parcels to be rezoned are currently developed as single family homes.;
- Amendment of FLUM designation from “Transitional” to “Low Density Residential” of 6 parcels and rezoning from RL to R-1-AA of 2 parcels located on NE 22 Street. The two parcels to be rezoned are the only properties in the area currently zoned RL. They are surrounded on three sides by single-family homes zoned R-1-AA.; and
- Rezoning from RL to R-1-A of 134 parcels located east of NE 2nd Avenue (Seacrest Boulevard), between George Bush Boulevard and NE 13th Street. The area contains a mix of single-family homes, duplexes and multi-family structures. The areas to the north and west are zoned R-1-AA Single Family.

Land Development Regulations

Processing of LDR text amendments made necessary by the Neighborhood Plan will be initiated immediately following the adoption of the plan. As discussed in the “*Existing Conditions*” Section, there are a considerable number of non-conforming residential structures within the neighborhood. Additionally, many duplexes and multi-family buildings will become non-conforming with respect to use as a result of the recommended rezonings. It is a goal of this Plan that residential properties in the neighborhood be upgraded and improved. Article 1.3 of the LDR’s, NONCONFORMING USES, LOTS AND STRUCTURES, places limits on expenditures for repair and maintenance of non-conforming uses and structures. In order to prevent further decay, an amendment to the LDR’s will be initiated to increase or eliminate the current expenditure limits within the neighborhood.

Traffic

The following measures are recommended to help alleviate the problems associated with excessive through and non-residential vehicular traffic in the neighborhood:

- Install traffic calming measures (speed humps) on selected streets. At a minimum, speed humps should be installed on NE 13th Street, NE 14th

Street, NE 16th Street, NE 22nd Street, Dixie Boulevard (between NE 2nd Avenue and NE 3rd Avenue) and NE 3rd Avenue (between George Bush Boulevard and NE 22nd Street). Install roundabouts and divided roadways on selected streets. Consideration may also be given to installing a temporary street closure at the NE 14th Street railroad crossing until these traffic calming devices are installed.

- Reduce the highway feel on local residential streets by removing additional pavement used for off-street parking on all single family homes and multi-family structures where possible.
- Evaluate the possibility of changing the caution signal to traffic light at Swinton Avenue and George Bush Boulevard.
- There is a need for stricter enforcement of speed limits on NE 2nd Avenue (Seacrest Boulevard) and Swinton Avenue as well as on local residential streets.
- Ban through truck traffic north of NE 4th Street on Swinton and NE 2nd Avenue (Seacrest Boulevard). Within this area, these are residential streets. This type of traffic should be using North Federal Highway, Congress Avenue, or I-95.
- Remove conflicting landscaping at the intersections where visibility is a problem.
- Require lawn maintenance companies to park in driveways where possible to avoid blocking traffic.
- Install improved signage to route people around the neighborhood to Federal Highway.
- Convert Lake Court back to two-way traffic flow.

Streetscape

It is recommended that streetscape improvements be made to the neighborhood which includes additional street lights, street trees, repair of damaged sidewalks, the addition of new sidewalks, removal of illegal on-street parking, and the reconstruction of drainage swales. The Homeowners Associations should be involved in the location and design of all new facilities. Funding for the project would be shared by the City, CRA and the property owners. It is recommended that the neighborhood create a property improvement district which, in turn, would be the legal entity with which the City would create a partnership. The formation of a property improvement district would give the owners a collective voice in improving their neighborhood. The district would contribute a portion of the moneys needed to pay for the improvements.

This plan also recommends development of a program to provide additional exterior lighting on private property. Under this program, the City and CRA would share the cost with individual property owners

to install a decorative pole light in the front yard. These lights would improve security in the neighborhood by filling in the dark spots between street lights.

Public Parking Lots

As part of the overall streetscape program for the neighborhood, it is recommended that the CRA acquire one or more lots on each block within the higher density duplex/multi-family areas. These lots will be used for the construction of off-street parking lots for the residents. This will help alleviate many of the problems associated with the large number of back-out parking spaces on the street and provide opportunities to install additional landscaping and drainage.

Del-Ida Park Residential/Office District

In order to facilitate business development in the RO district, it is recommended that the CRA consider acquisition of one or more parcels to provide off-street parking. It is recommended that funding for this parking be provided by the CRA and/or City. The parking spaces would then be sold to adjacent properties who wish to redevelop their properties or convert existing homes to nonresidential uses.

Historic District Expansion

It is the recommendation of this plan that a historic evaluation of the buildings in this area be conducted. If the results of the study indicate that it is warranted, the historic district boundaries should be expanded north of George Bush Boulevard to include the Dell Park subdivision.

F.E.C. Railroad Buffer and Linear Park

The appearance of the adjacent railroad right-of-way and Dixie Highway has a serious impact on the neighborhood. The CRA will use a portion of the tax increment generated by new development and redevelopment of the North Federal Highway corridor for landscape buffers along the railroad.

As a long-term goal, the CRA is exploring the possibility of creating a linear park along the railroad tracks adjacent to NE 3rd Avenue. This park would provide opportunities for passive recreation in the area and create a buffer between the railroad and the single-family neighborhood to the west. The park would also enable the City to provide additional stormwater retention in the area. Construction of the park could be financed in part by the parks and recreation impact fees and tax increment revenues generated by new development and redevelopment in the area and along the North Federal Highway corridor.

In moving toward this long-term goal, the CRA should be prepared to purchase any properties in this area that become available in the short-term.

First Steps

Immediately following the adoption of this plan, processing of the Comprehensive Plan amendments, Future Land Use Map amendments, Land Development Regulations text amendments and rezonings required to implement the plan will begin. The CRA's Community Redevelopment Plan will also need to be revised to include the projects and programs included in the Neighborhood Plan.

Members of the Homeowners Associations who have participated in the development of this Plan should begin to meet with other neighborhood residents to discuss the provisions of the Plan and gather support for the Special Assessment District.

Since the capital improvements included in the Plan are not yet included in the 5-Year Capital Improvement programs for either the City or the CRA, these budgets will need to be amended and dollars allocated for the various projects.

Implementation of the capital improvements included in the Plan will first require the preparation of land surveys. This work element should be scheduled as soon as possible. When the surveys are completed, the engineering, design and detailed cost estimates of individual projects can begin as time and funding becomes available.

Other new programs contained in the plan will be developed and implemented as opportunities arise and funding becomes available.

Funding Sources

The City and CRA will provide whatever support is available to assist in the implementation of this Neighborhood Plan. Funding for some public improvements may be available from the City or through the CRA's tax increment generated by new development and redevelopment in the neighborhood and in the N. Federal Highway corridor. Other improvements may be financed in part through the establishment of one or more special assessment districts created pursuant to the neighborhood plan. The CRA will expend funds on behalf of the neighborhood in order to create the required Special Assessment Districts.