



Everyone everywhere wants a safe and attractive place to live, work and play. Residents and business owners in far east Dallas are no exception. The study area for this 2-Point to White Rock East Area Plan is a completed Weed and Seed grant program that focused primarily on the reduction in crime. While this has been a successful program, there is a continuing need to focus on crime reduction while identifying issues that directly influence the quality of everyday life in far east Dallas. This plan is a handbook for the residents that has assessed the important issues and gives them measures to solving the problems.

Although an area plan generally focuses on Land Use and Transportation, the residents at the first community meeting identified other areas of concern in the SWOT analysis that could be grouped under the title, Quality of Life. They realized that not all of the issues are strictly ones that can be addressed in this plan, but they wanted to bring attention to them. The residents like living in the White Rock East area. They chose to live here and would much rather see improvements made that would make it more feasible to stay put. Reduction in crime, new businesses, sidewalks, trails, housing options and street safety and beautification are priorities on their “to do” list.

Exhibits and details from the Community Meetings are in Appendix A.

Quality of Life Consensus Vision

Enhance the quality of life in the White Rock East area through continued crime reduction, responsive public safety, improved parks, new trails, an accessible library, a variety of housing choices with businesses that meet the residents’ needs.

Public Safety

Police

There is mutual respect and cooperation between the residents and the police officers assigned to the area. Legal and code enforcement efforts have helped curb crime and certainly need to be continued, even expanded. The patrol watches and investigative units are managed by the North East Division of the Dallas Police Department. There has been a successful approach to the reduction of crime through the application of the Department of Justice Weed and Seed program.

There are active neighborhood and crime watch organizations that function not only to protect their neighborhoods, keep up with the police activities and recently as Volunteers in Patrol (VIPs), but as general watchdogs for many activities in the communities. The crime reports tend to come from the higher density apartment complexes where rules are not fully enforced. New approaches to reducing crime in the study area could be the establishment of crime watch groups in the multi-family complexes. The Dallas Police Department’s Gold Star Certification Program is a cooperative effort by law enforcement, apartment managers/owners and apartment residents to abate crime and to enhance the quality of life for citizens living within multi-family communities. To become a Gold Star Property, the apartment community has to successfully complete all three phases of the program and demonstrate a willingness to work with the Dallas Police Department. There are several such complexes in the study area and the interest and opportunity for others to achieve this certification.

Crime related issues from the SWOT analysis at the Community Meeting on December 5, 2009 include:

- High crime areas: Abshire area, northwest corner John West at Buckner, John West at La Prada, Oates Plaza including drug dealing
- New and existing gang activities
- Not enough visible DPD in area
- Gunfire
- Transient nature of a large percentage of the population (due to rental units)
- Fearful residents in neighborhoods
- Loitering around the barbershop and other uses at Oates Plaza
- Need to get area businesses involved
- Need more police patrol including inside apartment complexes
- Continue successful truancy enforcement
- Drug dealing

To continue to maintain a vigilant approach to crime and crime reduction, the implementation measures that are recommended are found in the Implementation Chart and at the end of this section.

Fire

The White Rock East area is served by Fire Station Number 53 located at 1407 John West at the intersection of John West/Lakeland/Green Meadow Drive. Engine 53, Truck 53 and Rescue 53 units respond out of this station. The fire station also serves the community as a “safe house” for children. The station was built in 1965. According to the Needs Inventory List (NIL), it is slated for roof replacement and eventual building replacement.



No comments were made during the SWOT analysis with regard to fire protection and emergency response. Everybody seemed very positive about service. In order to continue to maintain the quality of service recommended implementation measures are in the Chart at the end of this section.

Code Enforcement/Compliance

The residents appreciate the activities of the Code Enforcement/Compliance arm of the City, but know that there is more that can be done. It is understood that there are economic restraints, but more code enforcement personnel are needed. The area needs a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to code violations. Several years ago the position of a shared community prosecutor from the City Attorney’s office was created and has been successful in prosecuting a large number of code violations. These violations include building maintenance, safety issues, and high grass/weeds. Specific concerns were expressed at the first community meeting regarding code enforcement including:

- Poorly maintained apartments: Buckner at Ferguson, John West and on Peavy
- Trash along major streets particularly along North Buckner and John West
- Need to enforce code on alley clean-up and repair of sidewalks and alleys
- Trash and brush in the creeks at New Hope and Hillview Terrace
- Serious concerns about retail spaces adjacent to New Hope, abandoned for years and full of junk
- Parking lots unmaintained
- Tattoo parlor and bars/lounges not consistent with needs, desires of residents

- Trash everywhere
- Irresponsible multi-family and single-family property owners who allow criminals to rent
- Stray dogs
- Adult oriented business near IH 30 not appropriate near neighborhoods
- Vacant and derelict buildings
- Additional code enforcement personnel needed

Specific **implementation measures** that would address the list above through code enforcement and compliance are found at the end of this section.

Parks and Recreation

Parks are very important elements of the neighborhoods as they are enjoyed by all segments of the population. All three parks in the study area have seen major improvements in the past five years. More improvements are already programmed and are in the Needs Inventory List (NIL) and included in the Dallas Parks and Recreation Department Long Range Development Plan, *A Renaissance Plan*. Lakeland Hills Park on St Francis has new playground equipment, the first skatepark in Dallas, and a perimeter walking path. Ferguson Park on Gross Road has similar improvements as does Hillview Park. All the parks see very active use. Future plans include lighting and pavilions. The participants in the SWOT analysis for the area plan identified several other improvements they would like to see in the area including:

- Spray park (one has been added since the planning process began)
- Dog park
- Running path (added recently)
- Basketball court (possible conversion of underused tennis courts to multi-purpose courts)
- Youth center

Also identified as very important, even crucial, was the desire for a trail system that would use the areas around and in the forks of Ash Creek for recreation as well as pedestrian and bike routes. It should be noted that a multi-generational recreation center is proposed on a site fairly close to the study area on Highland Road at Ferguson. Area residents will then have more recreational opportunities than are currently provided at Harry Stone Recreation Center on Milmar, which was recently reopened after extensive renovations. This makes the trails and sidewalks even more important as a means for those of all ages that do not drive to reach the recreation centers. The potential trails are identified in the Transportation section of this area plan.

Implementation measures for Parks and Recreation needs and desires are found in the chart at the end of this section.

Library

The residents of the area are absolutely delighted that the new White Rock Hills branch of the Dallas Public Library System is now open. The new library is conveniently located on Hibiscus at Ferguson in the study area. This facility makes the need for sidewalk and trail linkages to and from neighborhoods even more important. For optimum effect, the new library branch operations and maintenance must be a priority for White Rock East and the entire surrounding area now known as White Rock Hills.

Since this planning process started, the library has opened and the White Rock Hills Library Friends has been organized. Ideas for continued support are in the chart at the end of this section.

Schools

There are three Dallas Independent School District (DISD) schools in the study area, S. S. Conner Elementary on Green Meadow at Lakeland, George W. Truett Elementary on Gross Road, and Howard Lang Middle School on Chenault Road.

Parental involvement and community outreach to parents is critical to the improvement of these education facilities. While the area plan cannot directly change the activities of the schools, it can recommend improvements that will make the schools safer to get to and less overcrowded with the implementation in the future of lower density land uses.

From the SWOT analysis it was expressed that Truett Elementary School concerns are as follows:

- Grounds are not maintained
- Trash is not picked up
- Lawn not mowed
- 35 unsightly rotting portable buildings need replacement
- Overcrowded (at more than 200% capacity according to school enrollment data)
- Cafeteria can't accommodate all students
- Additional gym space
- New classroom wing

Since the planning process began, many improvements have been made to Truett. A new principal and active neighbors, with the help of the new trustee and responsive district personnel, have seen most of the items mentioned in the SWOT analysis addressed. However, the school is still operating at almost double its capacity. A new wing, like nearby Conner and Bayles have, would alleviate the overcrowding until another school could be built in the area. This would most likely require DISD to allocate bond funds to build the improvements.

Specific items were not identified for S. S. Conner and Lang Middle School although they may be encountering some of the same problems. Also within the study area is Bishop Lynch High School. Located at the corner of Ferguson and Peavy Roads, the well maintained campus includes classrooms, an auditorium, a stadium, and accessory buildings. Motivated by this area plan, several members of the Advisory Committee have been very successful in securing many improvements to the facilities at Truett Elementary School.

Another consideration would be the location of a **charter school** in the study area. There are several large tracts and buildings that could accommodate such a school. Reduced overcrowding and new educational opportunities would then be available to the area residents. Dallas has a number of fine charter schools, but there are none in far east Dallas. Research and contacts will need to be initiated to determine the feasibility of a charter school.

Public Works/Infrastructure

Streets, alleys, water mains and lines, sewer (sanitary and stormwater), sidewalks, and trails are all a part of the local infrastructure. Since this area was built over 50 years ago much of the infrastructure is aging and needs repair and replacement. The Needs Inventory List (NIL) identifies projects that require capital expenditures that are often paid for with bond funds. Streets, Public Works and Dallas Water

Utilities manage the local utilities components. Operations and maintenance funding comes from the General Fund or designated enterprise funds.

New approaches that enhance the urban environment in appearance and function should be considered. One of the more fragile components of the infrastructure system is stormwater management. Low Impact Development and Green Infrastructure are now being included in a regional approach called integrated Stormwater Management (ISWM).

Housing

With a variety of housing options in the study area, 2-Points to White Rock East, there is tremendous opportunity to become what is now being called a “lifecycle community”. A lifestyle community is one in which all ages are included and their needs addressed—from young children to aging adults. The housing types are small starter homes, mid size single-family, townhomes and apartments—a village.

There are approximately 12,491 housing units in the study area, split almost evenly between owner-occupied and rental units. Demographic information does not differentiate whether the rental units are in multi-family complexes or are single-family homes.

Recent research by the Advisory Committee indicates an upswing in owner occupied single-family homes in several areas. This is proving to be a significant improvement to the area!

City of Dallas Housing Department

The Housing Department offers a range of programs to assist neighborhood residents in maintaining the quality of their communities. One program that can help to improve housing and neighborhoods is People Helping People which assists senior and disabled homeowners with minor exterior home repairs and weatherization. Neighborhood associations and crime watches should become aware of this program and include this information in their communication and outreach efforts. Here is an opportunity to assist those with the desire to “age in place” but need help with the maintenance of their property.

In February 2003, the City Council approved the **Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP)** to focus housing/land bank, public infrastructure improvements, code enforcement, economic development and other City resources in designated targeted Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) neighborhoods. Program emphasis is placed on:

- Leveraging private development and other community investments;
- Facilitating sustainable neighborhood redevelopment through community partnerships and stakeholders; and
- Targeting City, stakeholders and public/private resources.

Currently the City has five such programs, mainly in the southern and western portions of the City. This study area in the far eastern portion of the City has generally been neglected or overlooked for such a program due to lack of available information and advocacy. The study area would benefit greatly by inclusion in the NIP program.

In February 2008, the City Council approved the Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) as a companion to the NIP. The NEP provides funding for streetscape improvements, landscaping and neighborhood gateway initiatives, pedestrian amenities, and related architectural/engineering work.

Projects are selected to maximize neighborhood impact under the NIP and are coordinated by the Housing Department. The study area is a logical candidate for these programs.

Dallas Housing Authority

The Dallas Housing Authority has one facility in the study area, Lakeland Manor. It is a 185 unit multi-story building for the elderly and disabled.

Section 8, the low income housing assistance program, is coordinated by the Housing Authority. Landlords may voluntarily in which landlords may participate in this program. The purpose is to distribute low and moderate income renters in the community rather than concentrate them in a single building or complex. Rental vouchers may be available to renters for single-family and multi-family units. While there does not appear to be a definitive list of where such assistance is available in the study area, three complexes are identified: Lakeland Manor, Buckner Village and Casa Ridge as locations of Section 8 recipients.

New Opportunities

As White Rock East ages and redevelops, there will be a need for new and different housing types. The Land Use Vision identifies new housing in mixed use developments closer to transit, single family at a more urban density, active senior housing and live-work housing. Changes to land uses and improvement in the economy should foster the repurposing of deteriorating multi-family units and using vacant land for townhomes and cluster development. With the help of the City’s Housing Department the area could attract development and design organizations. Both nonprofit and commercial developers should be encouraged to develop in this area so convenient to Downtown.

Goals and Implementation Measures for Quality of Life

The following is a chart that shows the Implementation Measures for each of the components of this Quality of Life section. More details may be found in the full chart at the end of the Implementation section.

Goal	Implementation Measure
<p>Goal QL.1: Code Compliance. Improve the study area’s image using codes, regulations, programs, and enforcement to clean up, stabilize, and enhance neighborhoods.</p>	<p>QL.1.1: Community leaders will work with property owners, local businesses, institutions, and local organizations to develop methods that educate, clean up, and aggressively monitor trash “hot spots” to pursue violators.</p>
	<p>QL.1.2: Identify and pursue removal of structures and uses that are derelict, nonconforming or illegal.</p>
	<p>QL.1.3: Support area organizations that educate property owners, local businesses, and institutions about trash pickup, graffiti, local maintenance, and beautification.</p>
	<p>QL.1.4: Conduct annual issues inventory, review what worked and what needs improvements, and share annual inventory/review with community.</p>
	<p>QL.1.5: Work with Dallas Animal Services and neighborhood groups to manage the pet population by educating residents about the need to spay and neuter their pets, report animal hoarding, animal abuse, and sightings of stray cats and dogs.</p>

Goal	Implementation Measure
	<p>QL.1.6: Work to identify, aggressively monitor and resolve or remove poorly maintained, dilapidated, or abandoned apartments and commercial structures.</p>
	<p>QL.1.7: Explore different methods to work with property owners and businesses in the study area to repair, stripe, landscape, and maintain their parking lots.</p>
	<p>QL.1.8: Continue to work with the Community Prosecutor to address crime and code compliance to curb crime through police patrols and enforcement.</p>
	<p>QL.1.9: Work with property owners and managers of multi-family developments to bring their complexes up to local codes, evict problem occupants and visitors, and enhance their properties to achieve Gold Star designation</p>
	<p>QL.1.10: Work with the police department and code compliance to implement a graffiti prevention program for neighborhoods and businesses.</p>
	<p>QL.1.11: Continue to support crime watch groups and encourage new groups, especially in multi-family complexes.</p>
	<p>QL.1.12: Conduct regularly scheduled meetings with assigned code compliance officer to discuss status of code issues in community and the measures required to resolve issues.</p>
<p>Goal QL.2: Education. Facilities and programs enhance the study area’s neighborhoods and serve local residents.</p>	<p>QL.2.1: Support improvements of facilities and curriculum at George W. Truett and S. S. Conner Elementary Schools and Harold Wendell Lang, Sr. Middle School.</p>
	<p>QL.2.2: Construct new classroom wing at Truett Elementary to relieve overcrowding.</p>
	<p>QL.2.3: Landscape and maintain school grounds to provide positive impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and community.</p>
	<p>QL.2.4: Work school board trustees and City Council to ensure future improvements around local schools districts are on the NIL and capital programs.</p>
	<p>QL.2.5: Encourage and support parental and neighborhood involvement in the schools.</p>
	<p>QL.2.6: Increase enforcement of traffic regulations in school zones to promote Safe Routes to School programs and identify trouble spots in school zones that can either be remedied through enforcement or noted for future improvements.</p>
	<p>QL.2.7: Initiate a continuous school zone on Peavy Road adjacent to Bishop Lynch High School and Truett Elementary School.</p>

Goal	Implementation Measure
	<p>QL.2.8: Investigate the potential for locating a charter school in the study area to relieve overcrowding and provide new educational opportunities.</p>
<p>Goal QL.3: Parks & Recreation. Ensure quality parks and trails that meet the community’s expectations.</p>	<p>QL.3.1: Maintain or improve upkeep of Ferguson Park, Hillview Park, and Lakeland Hills Park by working with staff.</p>
	<p>QL.3.2: Continue to add improvements to area parks as identified in the <i>Renaissance Plan</i> and NIL.</p>
	<p>QL.3.3: Create park advocate groups or use existing crime watches and neighborhood organizations to adopt the parks and focus on the planning, design, landscaping, and security.</p>
	<p>QL.3.4: Identify possible park locations adjacent to future trails to incorporate additional features such as a spray park, dog park, and recreation center with running path and basketball courts.</p>
	<p>QL.3.5: Pursue funding of projects with staff and elected officials for improvements that are listed in the NIL.</p>
	<p>QL.3.6: Initiate discussions with officials of the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas or similar provider to provide programs in the study area.</p>
	<p>QL.3.7: Link community facilities by trails while preserving open space (see Transportation).</p>
	<p>QL.3.8: Program trail improvement through public/private cooperation.</p>
<p>Goal QL.4: Public Safety. A community that is a safe and desirable place to live.</p>	<p>QL.4.1: Continue successful Weed and Seed strategy by area neighborhood associations and crime watches.</p>
	<p>QL.4.2: Promote, develop, and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) program.</p>
	<p>QL.4.3: Support the Volunteers In Police (VIP), Citizens Offering Police Support (COPS), Crime Watch Executive Board (CWEB), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs</p>
	<p>QL.4.4: Work with apartment owners to reduce crime in their complexes by enforcement of lease rules and HUD rules through education and communication as well as enforcement.</p>
	<p>QL.4.5: Consider a community police substation as a presence in the community and place of rest and paperwork for the officers working in the area.</p>
	<p>QL.4.6: Continue DPD programs to coordinate with community leaders/crime watches/neighborhood associations, businesses, schools, and public and private institutions to identify and monitor “hot spots” of criminal activity such as drug dealing, prostitution, burglary, and loitering.</p>

Goal	Implementation Measure
	<p>QL.4.7: Use monthly local crime data to inform residents and business owners of local trends and educate citizens on the causes of crime and how to prevent criminal activity.</p> <p>QL.4.8: Maintain/increase visible DPD patrols with aggressive monitoring of high crime areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dilido Road at Senate Street ▪ Abshire Lane ▪ NW corner of North Buckner and John West Road ▪ La Prada Drive north of John West Road ▪ Ferguson Road at Oates Drive ▪ North Buckner (Loop 12) and Peavy Road at South Fork Ash Creek <p>QL.4.9: Support DFD local fire station and their role in the community.</p> <p>QL.4.10: Perform necessary repairs on fire station.</p> <p>QL.4.11: Adhere to the NIL for future replacement of the fire station facilities.</p> <p>QL.4.12: Keep staffing at the required level to maintain superior response times.</p>
<p>Goal QL.5: Housing: A wide range of attractive, affordable, accessible housing options</p>	<p>QL.5.1: Apply to be NIP and NEP programs.</p> <p>QL.5.2: Develop a program with local architects and designers to apply inexpensive improvement solutions to enhance the marketability of the older housing stock and encourage future owner-occupied residents.</p> <p>QL.5.3: Review housing programs across the country for remodeling Post-World War II housing and make it available to prospective homeowners, local realtors, and development professionals.</p> <p>QL.5.4: Monitor rental units for compliance with city codes and HUD requirements.</p>
<p>Goal QL.6: Library. Support the new White Rock Hills Library</p>	<p>QL.6.1: Support operations, maintenance and materials acquisition for the new branch library.</p> <p>QL.6.2: Support the local “Friends of the Library” group for the White Rock Hills Library.</p> <p>QL.6.3: Support the creation of linkages of trails and sidewalks connecting the library to the residences and businesses.</p>
<p>Goal QL.7: Public Works/Infrastructure. Ensure a healthy environment with adequate infrastructure.</p>	<p>QL.7.1: Continue to reconstruct and replace aging infrastructure.</p> <p>QL.7.2: Explore and adopt new methods and materials for design and construction of streets, alleys, parking lots, and drainage ways.</p>

Given the accessible location of White Rock East in the DFW Metroplex, the recommended Implementation Measures will serve to rejuvenate and enhance its residential and commercial features. These proposed improvements can and will lead to a more sustainable future for the study area and for far east Dallas, a better quality of life for all.