

ELM THICKET - NORTH PARK



Neighborhood Plus *Neighborhood Action Plan*



BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

In spring of 2016, the Elm Thicket – Northpark neighborhood was selected as Council District 2’s Neighborhood Plus Target area. Located just east of Love Field airport and bounded by Mockingbird to the south, Lovers Lane to the north, Inwood Road to the east, and Lemmon Avenue to the west (see map on page 3), Elm Thicket – Northpark enjoys a prime location with its proximity to the airport, several shopping opportunities, job centers, and transportation options.

Elm Thicket - Northpark has been experiencing significant physical and demographic shifts over the past 20 years or so, including a sharp decline in its traditional African-American demographic, a large rise in the Hispanic and white populations, as well as rising property values and new construction.

For over two years now, many residents and neighborhood leaders have been working through the Neighborhood Crime Watch with Councilmember Medrano, City Code representatives, the Dallas Police Department (DPD), and other City departments to build stronger relationships

and address community concerns. Because of this work, Councilmember Medrano designated Elm Thicket – Northpark as one of the Neighborhood Plus Focus Areas.

Led by the Department of Planning and Urban Design, the Neighborhood Plus Target Area Initiative engages residents in the neighborhood to understand the conditions and changes in their neighborhoods and develop a vision for their future, a leadership structure, and a framework for action.

This document represents the final summary of the planning effort in Elm Thicket - Northpark, called a Neighborhood Action Plan, which will outline:

- The community engagement process
- Demographic, physical, and other conditions
- The community concerns and priorities gathered through this process
- The short and long term action steps developed for the city, the neighborhood, and external partners to achieve the neighborhood’s vision for its future.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is at the core of the Neighborhood Plus initiative. Described below are a number of different engagement tools that were utilized in order to better understand and address the needs of the community.

1) Juneteenth Survey: Nearly 60 individuals participated in a survey conducted by Neighborhood Plus staff at the 2015 Juneteenth Celebration in Elm Thicket – Northpark. Respondents listed their top assets in the neighborhood as well as most pressing challenges. Results of the survey were presented to the Advisory Council and the first community meeting.

2) Community Meetings: Three formal community meetings were held at the KB Polk Recreation Center to define a vision statement for the Elm Thicket – Northpark Target Area Initiative, to discuss challenges and assets of the neighborhood, and provide feedback on action steps developed in the Advisory Council meetings. Mailouts were sent to residents and flyers posted at the Recreation Center.

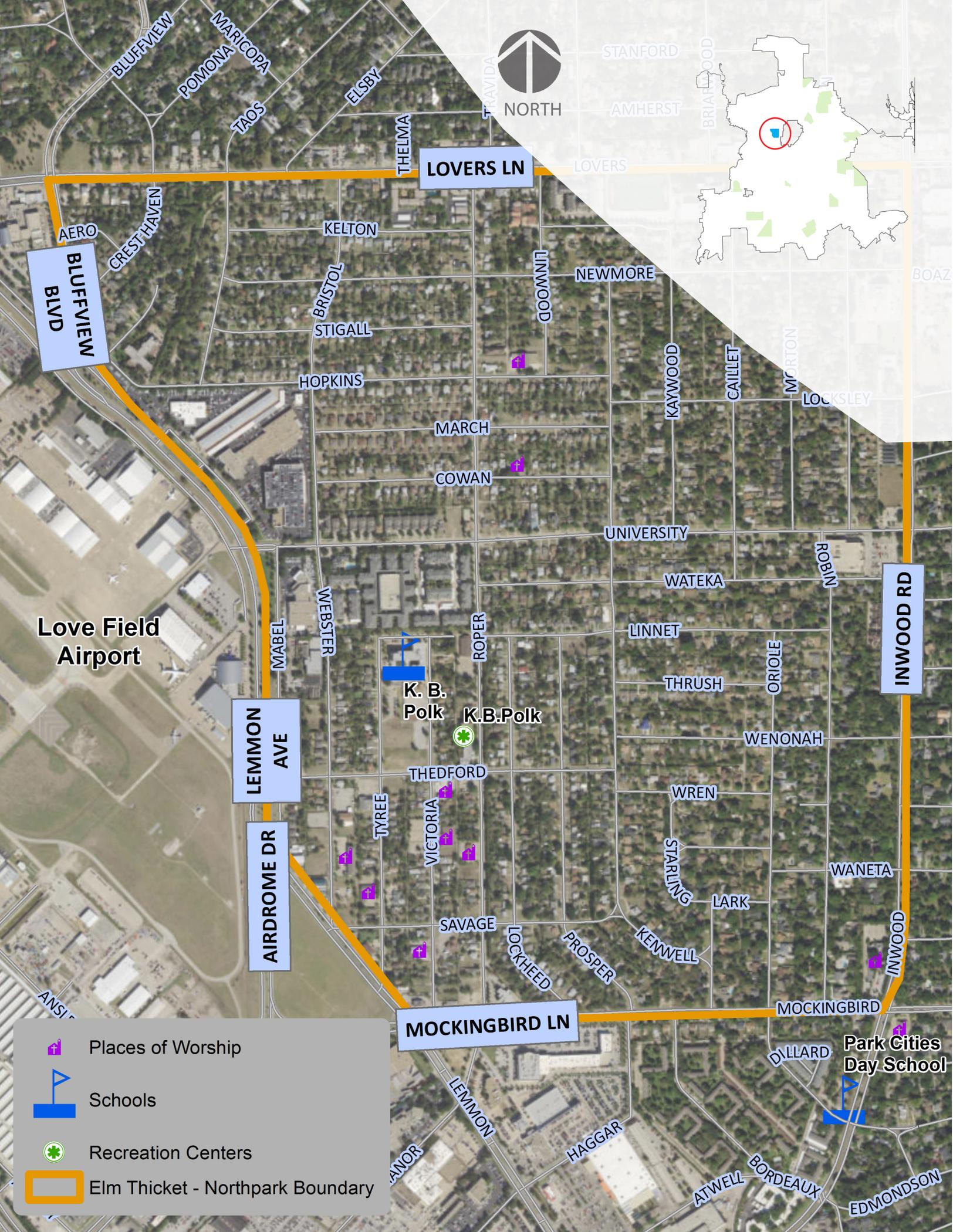
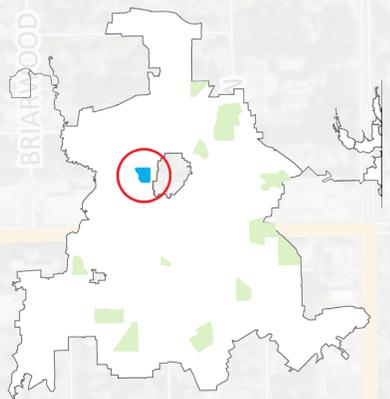
3) Advisory Council: Councilmember Medrano selected members from the community to form an Advisory Council that met on a regular basis to plan community events, review resident feedback, and develop implementable action steps.

4) Project Website: A project website was developed early in the process to explain the purpose of the Elm Thicket – Northpark Neighborhood Plus initiative, to inform residents of upcoming events, and to post meeting materials and summaries from completed meetings.

5) Community Events: Several community events have been facilitated by Neighborhood Plus staff, the Advisory Council, Councilmember Medrano’s office, the KB Polk Recreation Center, and other departments and external organizations. These events focused on neighborhood beautification, code compliance, education on home repair services, property tax and loan issues, and neighborhood history preservation.



NORTH



Love Field Airport

LOVERS LN

BLUFFVIEW BLVD

LEMMON AVE

AIRDROME DR

MOCKINGBIRD LN

INWOOD RD

K. B. Polk

K.B. Polk

Park Cities Day School

-  Places of Worship
-  Schools
-  Recreation Centers
-  Elm Thicket - Northpark Boundary

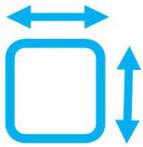
NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICS



**NEIGHBORHOOD
POPULATION**
5,570

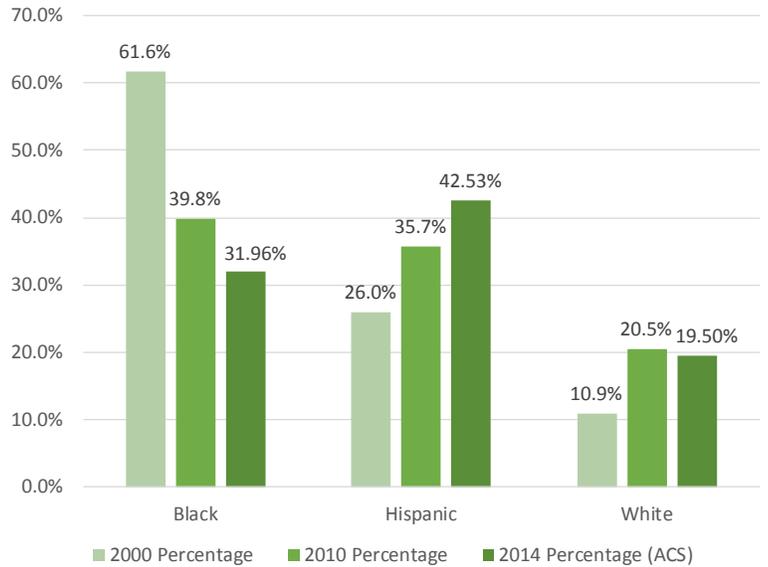


**PREDOMINANTLY
SINGLE FAMILY
HOUSING**



**NEIGHBORHOOD SIZE
APPROXIMATELY 1,500
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES
.8 SQUARE MILES**

SIGNIFICANT RACIAL/ETHNIC CHANGES FROM 2000 TO 2014

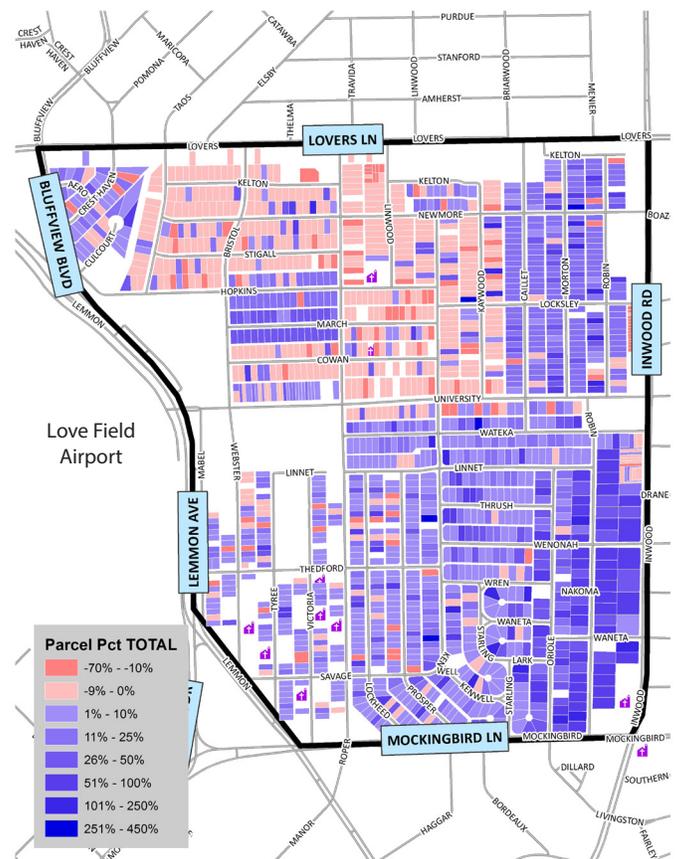


CURRENT CONDITIONS

Elm Thicket – Northpark has undergone extensive social and physical change in recent years. As shown above, the African American population has dropped by half from 62% of the neighborhood’s population in 2000 to 32% in 2014. In the same time, the Hispanic population has risen dramatically, from 26% to 42.5%. The white population has doubled from 11 to 19.5% of the neighborhood’s population.

In addition to the demographic change, there are key physical and economic differences between the eastern and western portions of the neighborhood. As shown to the right, while property values are rising significantly for many of the lots closer to Inwood Road, some as much as 50% or 60% or more in the past 5 years (compared to 10% citywide), many on the western side of Roper are either barely growing or in a decline. The eastern blocks are also seeing most of the new construction, with over 40 new homes built in the past 5 years, most of them tear downs. In terms of housing condition, more of the homes in lower condition tend to focus west of Roper. There is also a significant number of rental single family homes, as shown on the next page, around 30%, with most of them also focusing on the western blocks of the neighborhood.

**PROPERTY VALUE CHANGE FROM 2010-2015,
VERY HIGH IN SOME AREAS, LOW IN OTHERS**



NEIGHBORHOOD FEEDBACK

Mission Statement :

"To support a diverse, safe neighborhood with quality housing, infrastructure, and institutions for all its residents, and to preserve and protect the legacy and heritage of this historic Dallas neighborhood."

Neighborhood Concerns:

The community identified five main challenges facing the neighborhood:

- 1) The need for stronger code enforcement (such as homes not being maintained, loose/dead animals, yard maintenance, and others),
- 2) The rapid increase in property value for many residents,
- 3) Infrastructure needs (such as sidewalks, alleys, streets, lights),
- 4) Absentee landlords of single family rental homes,
- 5) The lack of parks and open space.

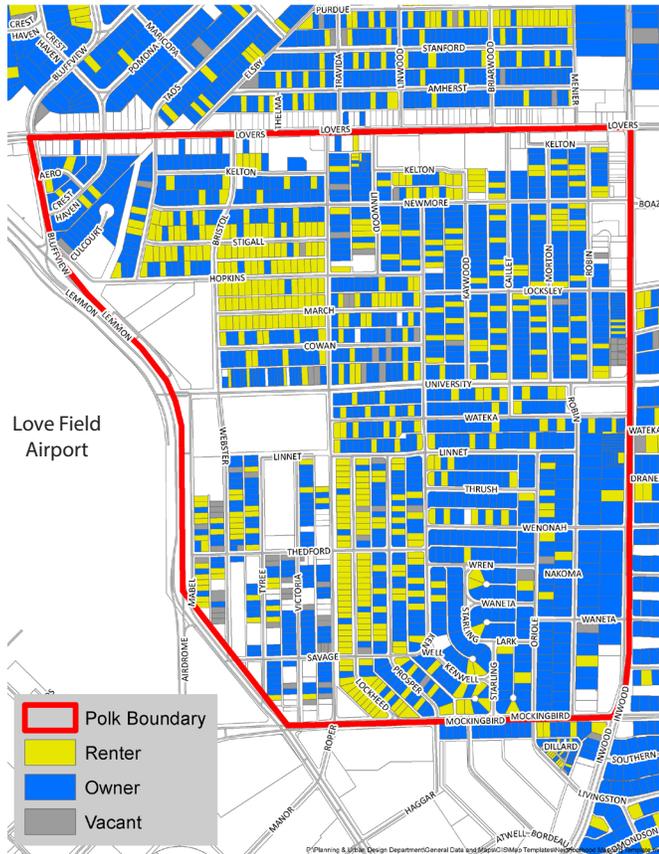
Neighborhood Priorities:

The community also identified five main priorities for the neighborhood:

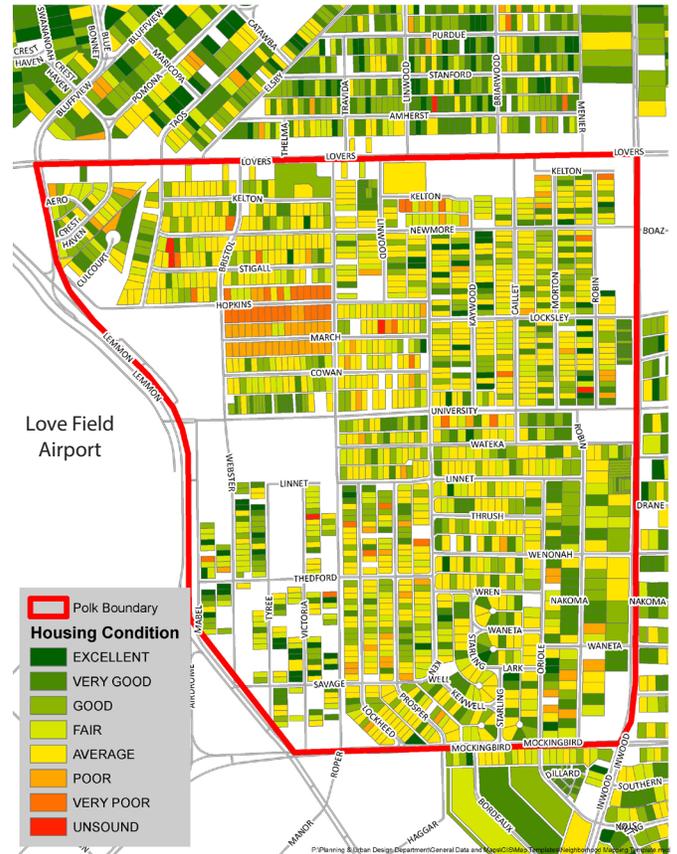
- 1) Managing neighborhood change (displacement prevention, maintaining diversity, concerns over new development),
- 2) Improving physical conditions of the neighborhood (such as home repair, code enforcement, infrastructure needs),
- 3) improving of rental properties,
- 4) Improving safety,
- 5) New social programs for the elderly and youth.

CURRENT CONDITIONS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

RENTER VERSES OWNER SINGLE FAMILY HOMES



SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING CONDITION RATINGS



NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

About the Plan Recommendations

This section highlights short and long-term action items based on the key issues identified by the community throughout the public engagement process carried out between June 2016 and February 2017. The advisory council developed this list with the help of City staff and the Councilmember to reflect the community's priorities and take advantage of opportunities developed through their work sessions. A draft of this chart was presented at the final community planning meeting on January 28th, 2017.

The short-term action steps are designed to equip the community and its leaders to address pressing concerns and to focus city services to show immediate impact. Most of these actions revolved around hosting community events to deliver these services and build partnerships between the community and various city departments and other organizations. Longer term action steps are those challenges and opportunities that require more significant investment of time or resources.



Community clean-up day for residents and partners to clear trash and beautify the neighborhood



Residents learning about property taxes and reverse mortgages at a tax education workshop

Category	Action Step	Short Term or Long Term Action Step	Responsible Organization
Code Compliance	Dedicated Code Officer	Short Term	Code Compliance
	Code Crawl	Short Term	Code Compliance
	Continued Education and Relationship Building with Crime Watch and City	Long Term	Code Compliance, Advisory Council, Councilmember, Neighborhood Plus
Beautification	Community Clean-up	Short Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Neighborhood Beautification/Landscaping Collaboration	Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Ongoing Community Clean-ups	Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
Home Repair	Home Repair Workshop	Short Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Home Repair Incentive Program	Long Term	Housing/ Community Services Department
	Home Repair Assistance	Long Term	Habitat for Humanity

(Continued on next page)

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN (CONTINUED)

Ensuring Successful Implementation

Community ownership of the action plan will be essential for ensuring successful implementation. The City will work with residents of the community to ensure they have a successful leadership structure and access to internal and external partners. It is recommended that the neighborhood commit to establishing a Neighborhood Association and assigning workgroups to areas of importance to the neighborhood.



Residents learning about home repair - related programs and services at a home repair workshop

Category	Action Step	Short Term or Long Term Action Step	Responsible Organization
Crime/ Public Safety	DPD Education and Extra Patrols for Motor Vehicle Breakins and Burglaries	Short Term	DPD
Parks/ Open Space	Build park near KB Polk With Bond Funding	Long Term	Parks Department
Infrastructure needs	Develop Infrastructure Needs Inventory, Submit for Bond Program and CDBG Funding	Short Term/ Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
Neighborhood History Preservation and Storytelling	BC Collaboration, Neighborhood Stories Project	Long Term	BC Workshop, Neighborhood Plus, Advisory Council
Neighborhood Stabalization	Tax Education Workshop	Short Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Single Family Rental Registration Program	Long Term	Code Compliance
	Increase Homeownership	Long Term	Non-profit Builders
	Neighborhood PD (zoning change) or Neighborhood Tax Increment Financing District	Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember, Sustainable Development and Construction, Economic Development
Neighborhood Capacity Building	Establish Elm Thicket - Northpark NA	Short Term/ Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Develop Resource Book for Community Leadership Moving Forward	Long Term	Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember
	Build Crime Watch Capacity, Outreach and Education	Long Term	DPD, Advisory Council, Neighborhood Plus, Councilmember

SPECIAL PROJECTS

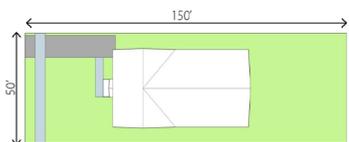
NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION

Residents of Elm Thicket - Northpark recognize that their neighborhood is going to change, grow, and diversify over time. Given its prime location and proximity to high income neighborhoods, the neighborhood has been experiencing a significant number of new construction and property tax increases. With growth and change however have come concerns that the scale of change are going to displace traditional residents and make this desirable neighborhood and location less affordable.

Research has been presented through the Neighborhood Plus process to help residents understand the physical and economic changes taking place in Elm Thicket - Northpark. Page 4 shows a map of property value increases throughout the neighborhood, the graphic below shows the scale of the historic housing compared to the new construction replacing them. To the right is a map of new constructions in the past 5 years. Tools have been presented to the community and Advisory council and incorporated into the action plan that could help manage the scale of new construction to fit more in line with existing character or raise revenue to tap into the growing tax base to generate funding for improvement projects.

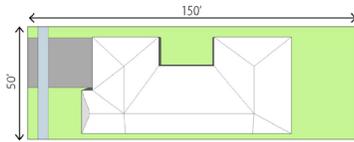


Historic Housing

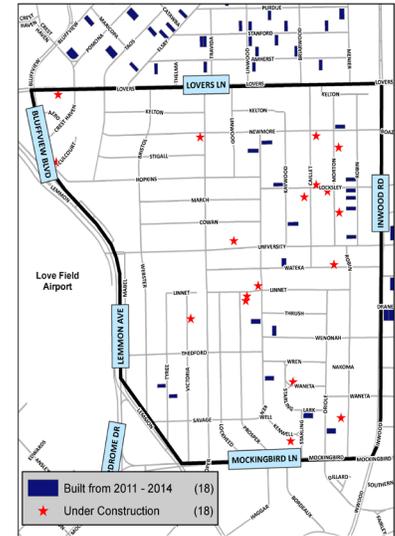


Average Lot Size 7,500 sf
Average Lot Coverage 30%
Average House Size 1,200-2,000 sf

Newly Constructed Housing



Average Lot Size 7,500 sf
Average Lot Coverage 45%
Average House Size 2,500-4,500 sf



Over 40 homes built or under construction in the last 5 years, mostly teardowns with much larger scale and lot coverage

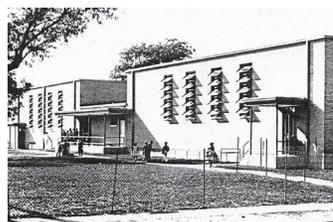
ELM THICKET - NORTH PARK HISTORY AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD STORIES PROJECT

THE PROJECT

In collaboration between BC Workshop, Neighborhood Plus, and Neighborhood residents, a Neighborhood Stories project will capture the stories of residents, gather historical photos and archive information to help the neighborhood tell the story of this historic and dynamic part of the city. Interviews will be recorded and presented to the community in June of 2017 and a research booklet will explain the history of the neighborhood in greater detail.

THE HISTORY

From its foundation as a Freedman's town in the early 20th century, to a small country town without water or infrastructure, to the large displacement by the Love Field airport expansion, Elm Thicket has seen many changes in the history of a neighborhood rich in culture that prides itself in its churches, school, and organizations.



Two pieces of Elm Thicket's history: KB Polk Elementary is dedicated in 1963 (above), and the Hilliard Memorial Golf Course for blacks is dedicated in 1950 (below)



THE STORIES

Residents will share their stories to the community, preserving them for generations to come, stories of growing up or moving to the neighborhood, about life in the neighborhood, the school and churches, and the racial divide happening all over the country.



Seniors who gather at KB Polk Recreation Center engage in lively discussion while sharing their memories of the neighborhood

PROJECT TIMELINE

This section highlights the main events facilitated as part of the Neighborhood Plus. Events on the left are associated with the planning process, designed to develop a neighborhood vision and action plan, events on the right are community events that were facilitated to provide residents with tools and capacity building experience.

PLANNING EVENTS

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Meeting #1
July 23, 2016
 Neighborhood Plus facilitated the first community meeting/workshop, asking residents to define key assets and challenges and vision statement



Community Meeting #2
August 13, 2016
 The second community meeting involved deciding on a final vision statement and reviewing a preliminary list of action steps



Community Meeting #3
January 28, 2017
 A draft action plan was presented to the community, emphasizing a neighborhood stabilization strategy developed by the advisory council



Neighborhood Plus Open House
July 1st, 2017
 Event to reveal final action plan and promote neighborhood ownership and continued partnership with the city



Juneteenth Celebration
June 18th, 2016
 Neighborhood Plus staff introduced themselves and conducted a neighborhood survey to better understand neighborhood issues and concerns



Code Crawl
September 24, 2016
 Code officers and volunteers educated residents on code violations, largest code crawl in Dallas history x3



Community Clean-up
October 1, 2016
 Dozens of volunteers gathered trash, cleaned alleyways, and helped seniors with their lawns



Home Repair Workshop
October 15, 2016
 Residents learned about home repair-related programs, asked direct questions with service providers



Neighborhood Stories Into Workshop
February 4, 2017
 Residents told stories about the neighborhood's past, facilitated by BC Workshop and Neighborhood Plus



Tax Education Workshop
February 25, 2017
 Residents learned and asked questions about property taxes, exemptions, assessments, and reverse mortgages from County experts



SPECIAL THANKS

It takes many individuals and organizations to build the consensus and capacity to enact change within neighborhoods. This year-long endeavor and the action plan will require diligence and leadership between the city and neighborhood. Special thanks to those who have put in many hours in educating, volunteering, participating, and contributing to Elm Thicket - Northpark's future.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLUS

Brian Price - Team Lead

ELM THICKET - NORTH PARK INTERNAL CITY TEAM

Lolita Jackson - Parks and Recreation
 Michael Price - Parks and Recreation
 Jimmy Vaughan - Dallas Police Department
 Tyrone McGill - Code Compliance
 Neely Blackman - Code Compliance
 LaShonna Slider - Code Compliance
 Juanita Cortez - Code Compliance
 Jon Hubach - Economic Development
 Wesley Nute, JR - Community Prosecution

COUNCILMEMBER ADAM MEDRANO - DISTRICT 2

COUNCILMEMBER'S OFFICE

Monica Moreno
 Vernesha Cathey

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

bc Workshop
 Dallas County
 Habitat for Humanity

ELM THICKET - NORTH PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL

Todd Flick
 Joyce Lockley
 Jonathan Maples
 Brenda Oliver
 Gus Perez
 Kimberly Sims
 Josh Terry



NOTES:



For more information about the Elm Thicket- Northpark Project, visit our website at:
http://dallascityhall.com/departments/pnv/Pages/ElmThicket_Northpark.aspx

To learn more about Neighborhood Plus, visit:
<http://dallascityhall.com/departments/pnv/Pages/neighborhoodplus.aspx>

