

Briarwood Neighborhood Action Plan



Proudly presented by the residents of the Briarwood Neighborhood
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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The Briarwood Neighborhood was selected to participate in the Neighborhood Planning Program because of the challenges facing the area and a demonstrated interest on the part of the residents to improve their neighborhood. Over a period of six months, the Neighborhood Planning Team met to develop a vision for the neighborhood and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their neighborhood. The team then developed five goals and supporting objectives that help to define what the residents of Briarwood are trying to achieve. The goals contained in the Briarwood Neighborhood Action Plan are:

1. Create a positive community image and instill community pride. Maintain and preserve the quality of the existing residential properties through the encouragement of rehabilitation and code compliance.
2. Provide parks that either by walking or bicycling are easily accessible to the neighborhood; provide a variety of recreational opportunities and open space.
3. Assure safe and efficient mobility for cars, trucks and pedestrians while protecting the stability and residential character of the neighborhood.
4. Preserve neighborhood trees as part of the resources that contribute to the character and beauty of the neighborhood.

Enhance recognition of the Briarwood area/further develop neighborhood identity and cohesiveness. Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors and make Briarwood a fine place to live.

To help achieve the stated goals, this plan establishes a series of objectives that offer specific plans of action and identifies the parties responsible for implementation.

Background

Purpose

The Briarwood Neighborhood Action Plan was developed by members of the Briarwood Neighborhood working in conjunction with the City of Plano Neighborhood Planning Program to define a vision for the future of the neighborhood. The Plan utilizes a strategic planning methodology to accomplish this vision through direct revitalization efforts and targeted action plans. The plan is based on the City of Plano Neighborhood Planning program initiated in 1998.

The Planning Process

The Briarwood Neighborhood was selected to participate in the Neighborhood Planning Program because of the challenges facing the area and a demonstrated interest by the residents to improve their neighborhood. This planning effort began in October 2003 and meetings were held biweekly through March 2004 to identify community issues and develop strategies for their resolution and improvement.

Community outreach was very important to the planning process; efforts included direct mailings, an e-mail distribution list, a neighborhood opinion survey and a website. Meeting notices were mailed to lot owners and targeted stakeholders. Neighborhood surveys (please see Appendix A), in both English and Spanish, were distributed to every home and church in the neighborhood and were collected by a team of neighborhood residents.

In a series of ten meetings the Briarwood Neighborhood Planning team met with representatives from many City departments as well as some outside agencies to formulate action strategies. Information

Background
(Continued)

gathered in these meetings and through the neighborhood survey was used to help formulate the goals and objectives contained in this plan.

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Vision

EXAMPLE VISION STATEMENT

The vision for Briarwood includes neat and tidy homes. Streets are **tree lined** and there is no evidence of trash or graffiti. **Traffic** travels through the neighborhood in a safe and respectful manner.

Residents of Briarwood envision a neighborhood that is **safe, beautiful and clean**. They see a neighborhood that is inviting for families, with good schools and vibrant parks.

The **parks are clean and safe**, and residents can walk safely to them. Kids have sufficient recreational activities and their energies are directed in a positive way.

There is a desire among residents to **promote the diversity** of their neighborhood. People of many different cultures and several generations live together harmoniously.

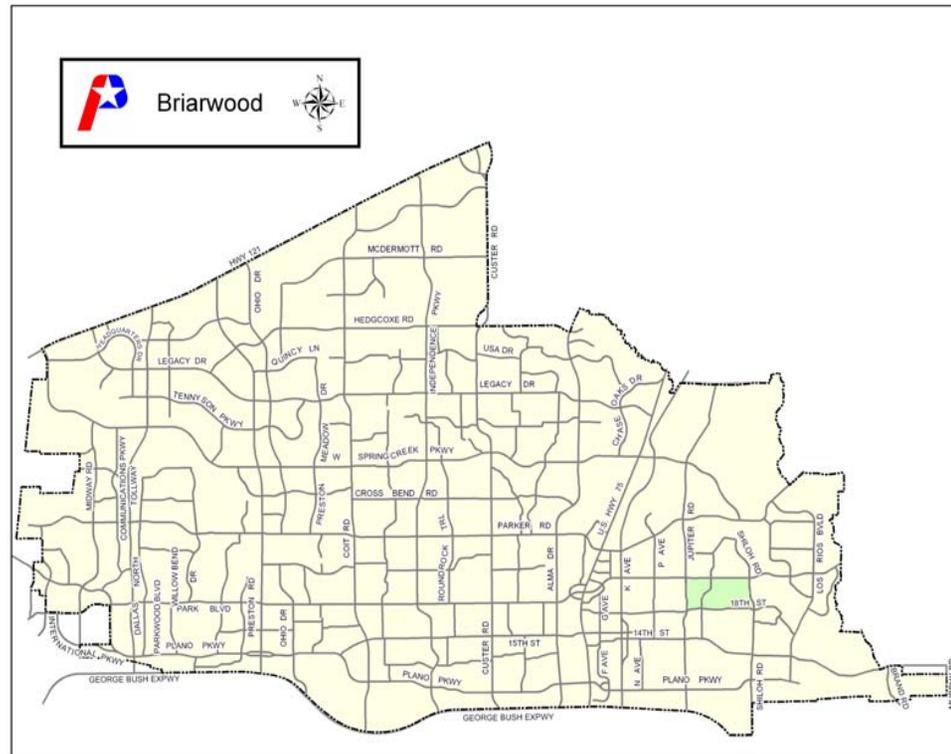
The vision for Briarwood is one of a **close-knit community** where neighbors help neighbors with an active neighborhood association where people volunteer their time and resources to help improve the neighborhood. Members are informed and active in local issues, they help each other out because they know and care for each other, and they are committed to their community.

Neighborhood Description

Land Use and Zoning

The Briarwood Neighborhood is located just to the west of Bob Woodruff Park. Boundaries for the neighborhood planning area are Park Boulevard to the north, 18th Street to the south, Jupiter Road to the west and Shiloh Road to the east (please see location map to the right). The neighborhood includes almost 600 homes as well as several churches, and two multi-family developments. The majority of the Briarwood

neighborhood is zoned for single-family residential use (SF-7 and SF-9) but the area also includes zoning for two-family residences (2F) and two areas of multifamily development (MF-1, MF-2/PD-34) (please see Appendix B for a detailed map of these zoning boundaries).

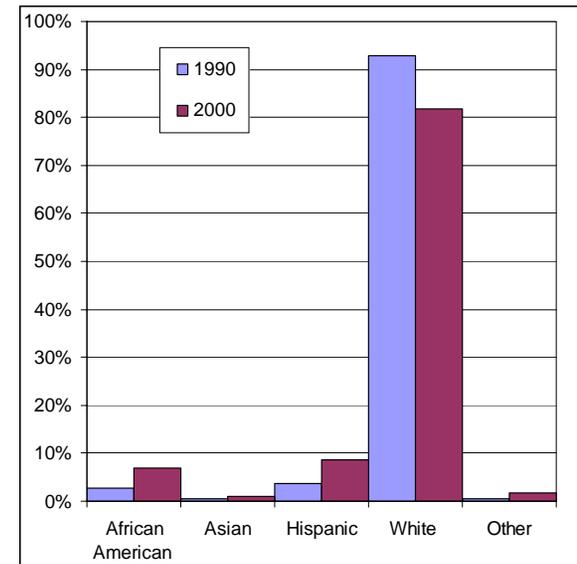


**Neighborhood
Description
(Continued)**

Residential Population and Demographics

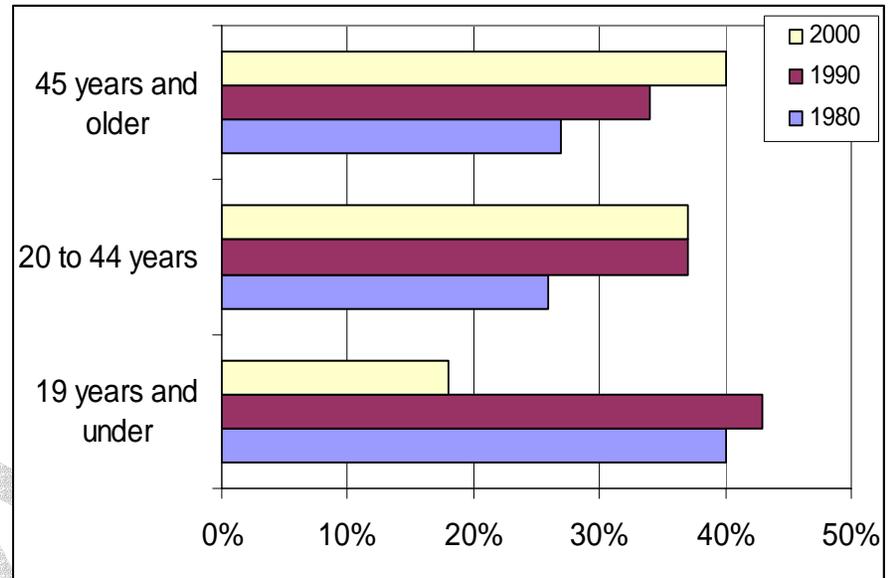
Census data for the Briarwood neighborhood indicate that the area is relatively stable. Over the past 20 years the number of people living in the neighborhood has remained constant at around 2,200 and housing occupancy rates have remained high at approximately 94%. Further, homeownership data from the 2000 census shows that 77% of the homes in the neighborhood are owner occupied with the remaining 23% being rentals; this compares favorably with citywide percentages (69% owner occupied, 31% renter occupied).

Some definitive changes are occurring in the neighborhood; the 2000 U.S. Census shows that the neighborhood is home to a more diverse group of people than ever before. While the number of people living in the neighborhood has remained constant, the groups of people living in the neighborhood have changed over the past 20 years. There are a greater number of people from different races and ethnicities than ever before; today the neighborhood is 82% white, 9% Hispanic, 7% African American, 1% Asian and 1% other (see chart at left).



***Neighborhood
Description
(Continued)***

The age structure of the neighborhood, consistent with national trends, has also changed. There are more people in the neighborhood over the age of 55 and fewer children than there were ten and twenty years ago. The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that the annual median household income for Briarwood was \$63,103 (1999 dollars) and 8% of



households in the neighborhood were below the poverty level (this number is higher than the city wide poverty level of 4% and is up significantly from the 1990 census when the poverty level in the neighborhood was 5%).

Neighborhood Maintenance

The condition of a neighborhood sends a message to residents and visitors about how well people care for the area. If properties are poorly maintained people will observe this and may conclude that no one cares for the home and perhaps even the block. Apathy encourages littering, poorly maintained yards, graffiti and eventually more serious crimes. The residents of Briarwood are proud of their neighborhood and have embraced a proactive approach to keeping their neighborhood vital.

Homes in Briarwood were mostly built during the mid-1960's and many have been well maintained. However, residents have observed some problems with code compliance, trash and graffiti. There are also some infrastructure problems that need to be addressed. Some streets in the area need to be patched or repaved, as do some sidewalks and alleys.

Goal: Create a positive community image and instill community pride. Maintain and preserve the quality of the existing residential properties through the encouragement of rehabilitation and code compliance.

Objective: Create a clean and safe neighborhood. Be vigilant in the reporting and enforcement of code violations.

Objective: Improve compliance with Property Standards regulations by educating residents about the "Top Ten Code Violations".

***Neighborhood
Maintenance
(Continued)***

Objective: Encourage home maintenance by educating residents about the City of Plano Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Objective: Create a resource list that elderly residents who need help with basic property maintenance can refer to for help.

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Area Parks

The Briarwood neighborhood is located between two City parks – Bob Woodruff Park and Willow Creek Park. Residents were pleased to learn that the lake at Bob Woodruff is scheduled to be dredged, to remove silt that has accumulated over the years and encourage such ongoing maintenance projects. These parks are prized by neighborhood residents for the recreational opportunities they provide and the natural beauty they bring to the community. For these reasons these parks are highly utilized by area residents.



Goal: Provide parks that either by walking or bicycling are easily accessible to the neighborhood; provide a variety of recreational opportunities and open space.

Objective: Improve pedestrian and bicycle access from the Briarwood neighborhood to the southern portion of Bob Woodruff Park.

Objective: Create a stronger pedestrian and bicycle connection to the northern section of Bob Woodruff Park through the installation of a trail running from the southern section of the park, across from the neighborhood to the trail under Park Boulevard.

***Area Parks
(Continued)***

Objective: Address the flooding that occurs in Bob Woodruff Park at the northeast corner of Park Boulevard and Shiloh Road.

Objective: Repair guardrails in Willow Creek Park that have become unstable due to creek erosion.

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Transportation

Goal: Assure safe and efficient mobility for cars, trucks and pedestrians while protecting the stability and residential character of the neighborhood.

Objective: Protect the residential character of the neighborhood from cut-through traffic and speeding, while maintaining convenient access to and across major arterial streets by working with the City of Plano Safe Streets program.

Objective: Promote pedestrian safety by completing the neighborhood's sidewalks and improving maintenance of existing sidewalks.

Objective: Ensure that streets and sidewalks are well lighted by evaluating dark areas in the 1900 Block of Jupiter Road.

Objective: Ensure that residents have a safe pedestrian route to Bob Woodruff Park. Investigate the possibility of improving pedestrian friendliness of the intersection at Park Boulevard and Shiloh Road.

Objective: Investigate the need for a traffic light at the intersection of Park Boulevard and Rigsbee Drive. Install a light if necessary.

***Preservation of
Neighborhood
Trees***

Just as streets, sidewalks, public buildings and recreational facilities are a part of a community's infrastructure, so are neighborhood trees. Trees -- and, collectively, the urban forest -- are important capital assets that require care and maintenance just like any other property. The Briarwood neighborhood has a wealth of trees, an important asset residents would like to preserve.

Goal: Preserve neighborhood trees as part of the resources that contribute to the character and beauty of the neighborhood.

Objective: Request a survey of neighborhood trees by City of Plano Urban Forester to identify and inventory neighborhood trees.

Objective: Meet with the City of Plano Urban Forester to review the survey results and to learn about tree care and maintenance.

Objective: Maintain the existing tree canopy by replacing dead or dying trees.

Objective: Seek funding to offset the cost of buying trees by participating in the Keep Plano Beautiful Matching Grant Program and/or the Plano Park Foundation's matching grant program.

Community

Goal: Enhance recognition of the Briarwood area/further develop neighborhood identity and cohesiveness. Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors and make Briarwood a fine place to live.

Objective: Reduce crime and increase an overall sense of peace and safety in the neighborhood by forming a neighborhood crime watch group.

Objective: Provide an opportunity for neighbors to get to know one another by organizing an annual block party.

Objective: Promote broader recognition of Briarwood's name and boundaries with the installation of sign toppers in the neighborhood.

