

***Thunderbird
Neighborhood
Action Plan***

***Proudly
presented by the
residents of the
Thunderbird
Neighborhood***

September 2005

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The Thunderbird area was chosen to participate in the Neighborhood Planning program because of the unique challenges facing the area, and the residents' demonstrated interest to improve their neighborhood. Aging properties, absentee ownership, and a need to improve code enforcement efforts characterize the issues and concerns expressed by the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Planning program uses a strategic planning approach to creating a forum for citizen involvement to address issues and enable creative problem solving and a spirit of teamwork between the City and the neighborhood. This approach is based on the Neighborhood Planning program initiated in 1998, which serves as a model for many other neighborhoods throughout Plano as they continue to face challenges associated with becoming mature neighborhoods.

The Thunderbird Neighborhood Planning effort began in March 2005. Meetings were held biweekly through July 2005 to identify and resolve community issues. Invitations were mailed to all homeowners, renters, and business owners within the planning area to participate in the preparation of this neighborhood action plan. Through the use of traditional investigation methods, such as surveys, community outreach, and neighborhood meetings, planners gathered information on the residents' hopes and concerns for their community.

The Neighborhood Planning Team is composed of seventeen residents from the Thunderbird Neighborhood. Over the period of five months, the Neighborhood Planning Team worked together to identify the causes of the concerns and shared desires of residents in connection to sustaining the livability of their neighborhood. The Neighborhood Planning Team formulated goals and objectives to address issues and concerns that the planning team identified.

Thunderbird Neighborhood Action Plan Goals

1. Assure stable property values and generate community pride by maintaining the quality of residential properties through home rehabilitation and code compliance.
2. Assure safe, convenient, and efficient mobility for pedestrians, motor vehicles, and emergency services while preserving the residential nature of the neighborhood.
3. Preserve, maintain, and develop the neighborhood tree canopy into a valuable resource that contributes to the character, beauty, and comfort of the neighborhood.
4. Enhance recognition of the Thunderbird Neighborhood and further develop neighborhood identity, stability, and cohesiveness. Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors and help make the Thunderbird Neighborhood a rewarding place to live.

***Executive Summary
(Continued)***

Budget

To help achieve the stated goals, this plan establishes a series of objectives that offer specific plans of action and identify the parties responsible for implementation. (please see page 33, Appendix D: Thunderbird Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Matrix) Expected costs to implement this plan are approximately \$172,000 from existing budgets and the 2005 bond referendum.

Description	Amount
Thunderbird Lane Street Upgrade (2005 bond referendum)	\$168,000
Neighborhood Sign Topper Production	\$2,500
Neighborhood Resident Guide (printing and postage)	\$1,650
Alley Speed Limit Signs	\$15.00 per sign
Lock, Take, and Hide Signs	\$12.00 per sign

Neighborhood Description

Location

The Thunderbird Neighborhood planning area is located at the northeast corner of Parker Road and Alma Drive. The neighborhood is bounded by Alma Drive on the west, Parker Road on the south, Premier Drive on the east, and a tributary of Rowlet Creek on the north. Thunderbird Lane runs north-south and separates the Park Forest additions from the Ruisseau Place subdivision.

Population & Demographics

The demographics have changed dramatically over the past 10 years as the neighborhood continued to develop. The population grew from 911 residents in 1990 to 1412 residents in 2000. Residential development began with Park Forest Additions 6 and 8 during the late 1970's, and continued into the 1980's. The Ruisseau Place residential subdivision development period began in the late 1980's and ended in the mid 1990's. The median year for residential construction is 1985.

Home Ownership

Housing occupancy rates in Thunderbird (97.5%) are higher than the City average (94%). Of the 466 occupied homes, 387 (83%) are owner occupied; this figure compares favorably to the citywide owner occupancy percentage (69%). High levels of home ownership and occupancy are signs of a stable neighborhood. The high rate is most likely due to the growing demand for affordable and entry level housing in Plano.



Figure 1 Thunderbird Neighborhood Boundaries

**Neighborhood
Description
(Continued)**

Census Category		Thunderbird		City of Plano	
		1990	2000	1990	2000
Population	Change	911	1,412	128,713	220,030
Housing Tenure	Home Owners	83%	76.6%	70.1%	68.8%
	Occupancy	97.7%	96%	93.6%	94%
Age	25 to 34 years	23.1%	14.6%	19.6%	16%
	45 to 54 years	9.3%	15.1%	12.3%	15.4%
	Median Age (Years)	29.3	34.1	31	34.1
Ethnicity	African American	7.1%	12.9%	4.1%	4.9%
	Anglo	80.2%	58.6%	85.4%	72.8%
	Asian	8.7%	18.2%	3.9%	10.1%
	Hispanic	3.8%	7.6%	6.2%	10.1%
	Other/Two or more races	0.2%	2.7%	0.4%	2.1%
Income	Median Income	\$66,522	\$70,769	\$53,905	\$78,722
	Management/Professionals	59%	42.6%	42.2%	55.5%
	Poverty	0.7%	1.1%	3.3%	4.3%

Income

Employment characteristics shifted dramatically from the 1990 Census results to the 2000 Census results. From 1990 to 2000 the number of workers living in Thunderbird and holding management professional positions fell 16%, from 59% to 42.6%. By comparison, the number of workers living within the City of Plano holding professional management positions increased 13%, from 42.2% to 55.5%, during the same

***Neighborhood
Description
(Continued)***

period. As a result of changing employment characteristics, the median household income for Thunderbird increased 6.4% from \$66,522 in 1990 to \$70,769 in 2000. By comparison, the median household income for the City of Plano increased 46% from \$53,905 in 1990 to \$78,722 in 2000. The percentage of households earning below the poverty level remained below average, yet increased from 0.7% in 1990 to 1.1% in 2000.

Races, Ethnicities, and Ages

Many shifts are occurring in the racial and ethnic composition of the neighborhood, and the 2000 U.S. Census (see Appendix A: 1990 – 2000 Census page 22 for more detailed Census information) indicates that the neighborhood is home to a more diverse group of people than ever before. As the number of people living in the neighborhood increased, the groups of people living in the neighborhood have also changed over the past 20 years. There are a greater number of people from different races and ethnicities; today the neighborhood is 58.6% white, 7.6% Hispanic, 12.9% African American, 18.2% Asian, and 2.7% two or more races. The age structure of the neighborhood, consistent with national trends, has also changed. The median age increased 16% from 29.3 in 1990 to 34.1 years. The median age for the City of Plano increased 10% from 31 to 34.1 years during the same period. The most significant shifts occurred in the 25-34 and 45-54 year age brackets. The percentage of people between the ages of 25 and 34 decreased by 8.5% while the percentage of people between the ages of 45 and 54 increased by 5.8%. The decrease of 25 to 34 year olds is the most significant factor to consider because the actual number of people in this age bracket decreased from 210 to 206 people while the neighborhood population increased 55% from 911 to 1412.

Neighborhood History

For planning purposes, the Thunderbird Neighborhood was formed by combining the Park Forest Additions 6 and 8 and Ruisseau Place developments. Thunderbird Lane is the original north-south through street which separates the eastern edge of the Park Forest Additions from the western edge of Ruisseau Place. Upon thoughtful observation, the street was likely whimsically named for the row of 100- foot tall metal high tension electrical distribution towers which grace its median and provide electrical service to a large part of Plano. They do resemble Indian totem poles with Indian Thunderbird iconic symbols on top. Since itinerant Indians once wandered this area, the name “Thunderbird” seems entirely appropriate.

Most of this neighborhood sits on land that was first claimed by pioneer Dr. Daniel Rowlett in the 1840’s when Texas was a Republic. He was a noted physician, lawyer, land contractor, surveyor, ferry operator, Indian fighter, soldier, and congressman. The town of Rowlett in Dallas and Rockwall County as well as the old Rowlett Church and Cemetery on Custer Road and Highway 121 all derived their name from Rowlett Creek, which in turn was named by Daniel Rowlett. He owned large parcels of land in what is now Collin County. He acquired the land when it was still a part of Fannin County, but he never actually lived here. On February 17, 1838 (two years after the Texas Republic was formed) he was issued a first class headright land grant certificate by the Board of Land Commissioners of Fannin County for one league and one labor of land. He located this land in two surveys with 1782 acres in Fannin County and 2823 acres in what would become Collin County in April, 1846.

Rowlett was also issued a bounty warrant for 320 acres of land as reward for his service in the Army of the Republic of Texas from July 20 to October 24, 1836, the period of uneasy peace following Santa Ana’s

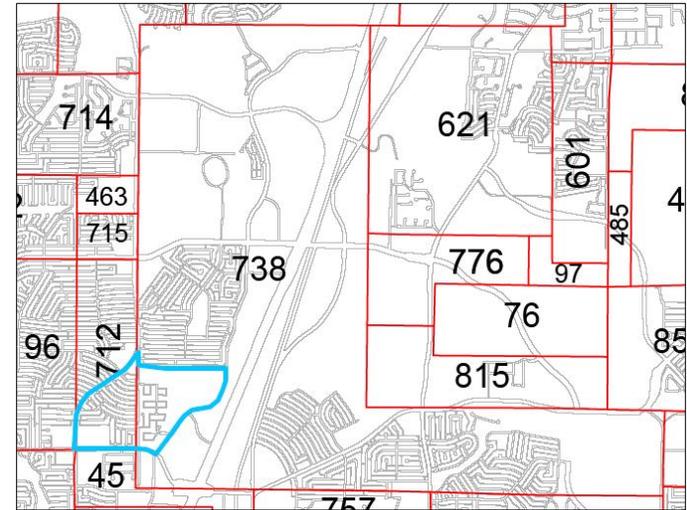


Figure 2: Daniel Rowlett's survey tract (738) and location of the Thunderbird Neighborhood.

Neighborhood History (Continued)

Treaty on May 14 and inauguration of Sam Houston as President of the Republic of Texas on October 22. This 320 acres is located in what is today Plano. Rowlett used his skills as a surveyor to stake out his property in the prime farmland along Rowlett Creek in November, 1845. A month later the Texas Republic dissolved to become the 28th State in the Union.

Daniel Rowlett was born in Prince Edward County, Virginia in 1786. He came to Texas in 1836 from Calloway County, Kentucky bringing with him his third wife and six families. They eventually settled at Tulip Bend north of present day Bonham and were the first to settle in this area. Here he developed an extensive plantation. He was said to have been the wealthiest and most versatile of Fannin County pioneers. He was an agent for the Charles Fenton Mercer Colony, which brought in settlers primarily to the Bonham and Rowlett township areas. During the Republic of Texas he was the first congressman from Fannin County and served from 1837 to 1844.

President Houston was always a friend to Indians and urged Texans to use their efforts to collect the scattered and roving bands in this section of Texas and treaty with them to be settled on reservations. Dr. Rowlett, while a member of Congress, had collected a small part of a tribe of Coshatta Indians at his place on Red River and cared for them until they could be settled somewhere else by the government.

Rowlett died in Duplex, Texas (Fannin County) on May 27, 1848, and is buried in the old English Cemetery in Bonham. His grave was marked by a pair of bois d'arc posts which are still there. A Texas Historical marker was placed at his grave in 1973.

There was no area of Collin County more fertile than the watershed of Rowlett Creek, and it was settled early because of its attractiveness to the western pioneers who were searching for the very best farm land. George



Figure 3: 1915 Push binder (Top) and 1914 Steve's Steam Engine (Bottom)

Neighborhood History (Continued)

Herndon estimated that at the time of his 1842 visit to what later was to be Collin County there were about 150 people living here. These new settlers included William Culwell up at Weston. A small group had joined John McGarrah in 1842 establishing Buckner, three miles west of present McKinney. There was also the Throckmorton settlement at Melissa. Moreover, there were a very few other families scattered about. Interestingly enough, Dr. Throckmorton's first choice in November 1841 had been lands on Rowlett Creek near the mouth of Spring Creek, and he had gone to get his family to settle there only to return and find that Daniel Rowlett had taken up these lands. Both Dr. Throckmorton and Dr. Rowlett were educated and prominent men and so their choice of location was the result of careful evaluation.

Even earlier, in January 2, 1840 McBain Jameson received his conditional certificate to settle on Rowlett Creek. Mr. Jameson was later joined by Jeremiah Muncey who got his conditional certificate on January 3, 1842. In those days a married man could headright 640 acres of land, and a single man 320 acres. To headright meant to obtain a homesteader's formal government grant of land. Men from the northern and eastern states began to come into Texas in ever-increasing numbers.

From Missouri and Illinois came a colony of young men and their families, a caravan of ox wagons. Among this group were Samuel Young and wife, Godfrey Baccus and wife, Pete Baccus and Hogan Witt, John Baccus, father of Dow and Dowdy Baccus, the Goughs, and perhaps others. They came seeking their fortune and found a country with broad, rolling prairies, dotted here and there with groves of tall trees, and streams of clear, running water, with thickets bordering on their banks. All of them seemed to settle on or near a creek, many along Rowlett Creek and its tributaries. This was the most colorful country they had ever seen, for there were wild flowers of every color and variety and wild life in every direction. It is said that in the fall of the year buffalo came to the watering places in great numbers and, when given a scare, would stampede, making a noise like thunder. Wild meat was the only meat the settlers had.

In this Promised Land they pitched their tents or lived in their wagons, and began to build. They cleared the land and built their houses out of logs. From Jefferson oxen hauled wagonloads of lumber that they could not make locally. With their crude implements, they broke the prairie and cultivated the land.

Neighborhood History (Continued)

They made their food out of corn by grinding it in a mortar hollowed out of a rock, and would beat it as fine as possible to prepare it for cooking purposes. Sometimes two or three would go in an ox cart to the nearest mill at Bonham. It took two weeks, and sometimes longer to make the trip as there were no bridges and roads, but only trails. This was too far to go to mill, so Hogan Witt and Pete Baccus decided to establish a water-powered mill on Rowlett Creek, just below the bridge on the Allen-Lebanon road. They hired Charley Wysong, father of Dr. Wysong, and the Foster boys to build the mill and start it. This mill was a great help to the settlement and served the country as far out as Elm Creek in Denton County. They grew their vegetables, dried, and stored them. The thrifty housewife carded, spun, and weaved the cloth and made all their clothes. They utilized everything. All discarded clothing was torn into strips to make woven carpets.

To experience what these pioneers saw in the land, one has to go back to the time when the buffalo, the deer, and the antelope, and wild horses roamed the prairies, and the woods were full of wild turkey, prairie chickens, bear, Mexican lions, razor-back hogs -- when the yelp of the prairie dog and the howl of the coyote were still heard. Fortunately, we can see for ourselves this pristine land. The Connemara Conservancy has 72 acres of such land, the Williams' farm, which borders the Rowlett property on the north. Frances Montgomery Williams allowed the land to revert back to its natural state over the past forty years. She has put it into permanent conservancy, and it is open to the public. To see "The Meadows", take Alma north past Hedgcoxe; when you are about 1000 yards before the Bethany intersection, turn right onto Tatum. This is a poorly marked gravel road that leads to Rowlett Creek and, on the left, opens up to the Meadows with its tall, native grasses and wooded creek beds.

After the Civil War, active farms quickly encircled the young town of Plano, which had a post office in 1852 and incorporated in 1873. The rich Texas Blackland Prairie soil provided great wealth in production of stock animals, feed, and cash crops of cotton, corn, and sorghum. The Houston & Texas Central Railroad came



Figure 4: The Connemara Conservancy resembles how the Thunderbird Neighborhood looked before pioneers settled and cleared the land for farming.

Neighborhood History (Continued)

through Plano in 1872 giving it access to world markets through the port of Galveston. Enterprising businessmen established three cotton gins in Plano to clean, de-seed, and compress the cotton. In 1958, Central Expressway (US 75) was completed from Dallas to Plano with much fanfare, giving yet another commercial boost to this area. The original farmers (1880's) in the area that is now the Thunderbird Neighborhood were Robert Brown, Silas Harrington, G. W. Barnett, and John M. Salmons. It was typical for farmers to work together, share equipment and labor, in order to quickly get crops planted and harvested. The long Texas growing season provided two back-to-back crops in one annual growing season – a big financial benefit. As cotton prices increased from 10 cents per pound to over 50 cents, all available land was planted in cotton. Absentee landowners and retired farmers would allow neighboring farmers to work their land and keep two-thirds of the yield. Even as late as the 1970s, one could see field after field of cotton in Plano. The Christie family was the last to farm the Park Forest land, and W. O. Haggard farmed the Ruisseau Place land. Even today, in 2005, farmers still work the fields adjoining Ruisseau Place to the east.

In 1977, Fox and Jacobs (F&J), now a division of Centex, the largest home builder in America, began building their 'Flair' houses in Park Forest east of Alma and north of Parker. They had already built-out the land west of Alma with their 'Today' homes, which sold briskly. F&J was known for its high value, affordable tract houses. Their Flair models were single story but larger offerings with garages in the back and alley access. They were specifically engineered for high energy efficiency in the Texas climate and offered some amenities normally only found in custom houses. The Park Forest theme is carried out in the streets named after National Parks, although the flatness of the terrain belies names like Grand Teton and Shenandoah.

The Park Forest Addition section was scheduled to be completed by January 1979. However, the worst ice storm in thirty years hit North Texas on December 31, 1978. In Plano, 4,000 homes lost power as trees and power lines were pulled down by the weight of the ice. Dallas had 10,000 homes without power. On January 1st, a second wave of ice hit, and five days later, a third wave of freezing drizzle. It took over two weeks to



Figure 5: The presence of agriculture still exists in this field adjacent to the neighborhood.

Neighborhood History (Continued)

restore all the outages. The weather remained bitterly cold all winter. Needless to say, construction on the houses fell behind and they were not completed until spring. Ironically, the next year, 1980, brought scorching heat with 69 days of 100+ degrees, 42 on consecutive days, and 2 days reaching the all-time records for North Texas of 113 degrees. The 'cool efficiency' F&J houses were severely tested and proved their worth. Some homes are still running with the same Carrier heat pumps installed when built 27 years ago. Nevertheless, the severe weather extremes in those early years weakened and eventually killed most of the original trees (Arizona Ash) and landscape shrubs. The lack of trees and shrubs still exists in many parts of the neighborhood.

Ruisseau Place was built between 1988 and 1995 by General Homes. It is a follow up to the earlier construction of the Ruisseau Village shopping complex on the northwest corner of Parker Road between Premier Street and Central Expressway. The word Ruisseau is French for 'creek'. While there are plenty of creeks in Plano, no natural flowing water is now apparent within this subdivision. The French theme carries over into the street names: Napoleon, Voltaire, Eiffel, etc. The home design concept, which is unique within Plano, is attractive, affordable two story patio homes with small lot sizes and several large common-use areas. Garages are front access and limited guest parking is made available around the common areas. Some of the streets are too narrow to allow on-street parking.

Researched and written July 2005 by Frank Kalbac, 913 Stonetrail Drive, Plano, Texas, 972-423-7072, fkalbac@comcast.net from these and other sources:

Lucy Rasor (early 1900's), Helen Evans Buron (Jan 1955), Mildred Welch (1977), Frances Wells (1978), Larry Mills (Jun 2005), the *Plano Star-Courier* (1958, 1978), and the *Dallas Morning News*.



Figure 6: Severe weather from the 1978 – 1979 winter delayed construction and damaged many of the neighborhood trees.

Neighborhood Vision

The success of the neighborhood planning program depends upon bringing people together, both physically and philosophically, in order to identify shared values. These shared values become the basis for the neighborhood's vision, goals, and subsequent objectives.

Vision Statement

“The residents of Thunderbird see their neighborhood as a stable, peaceful, and family oriented place to live. Neighbors are dedicated to sustaining safe, efficient, and attractive streets, well maintained property, and a strong sense of community pride, involvement, and mutual respect.”

June 2, 2005

Neighborhood Maintenance

The condition of a neighborhood sends a message to residents and visitors about how well people care for the area. If people observe poorly maintained properties, they tend to conclude that no one cares for the home or perhaps the entire block. Such apathy encourages littering, poorly maintained yards, graffiti, and eventually more serious crimes. The residents of Thunderbird are proud of their neighborhood and decided to adopt a proactive approach to keeping their neighborhood vital.

Goal

Assure stable property values and generate community pride by maintaining the quality of residential properties through home rehabilitation and code compliance.

Objectives

- Improve compliance with Property Standards regulations by informing residents how to identify and report the City of Plano’s “Top Ten Code Violations”, as defined by the City of Plano Property Standards Department as the ten most common violation reports.
- Be vigilant in the reporting and enforcing of Property Standards and code violations.
- Increase education efforts from the Solid Waste Division to teach neighbors how to use the Solid Waste services more effectively and thus clean up the neighborhood. Education efforts include distribution of schedules showing regular and special collection dates, educational brochures, and refrigerator magnets that remind residents of collection rules.
- Promote homeownership by sending a targeted mailer about the City of Plano First Time Homebuyer’s program to rental properties in the neighborhood.
- Encourage home maintenance by educating residents about the City of Plano Housing Rehabilitation Program.
- Reduce number of stray animals in neighborhood by educating residents on current animal control procedures.



Figure 7 Leaning fences are one of the “Top Ten Code Violations”.

Transportation

Safe and efficient access contributes significantly to the overall livability of an area. A pedestrian friendly environment helps to establish feelings of community and connection to the neighborhood, reduces automobile traffic, and creates safer streets. Residents should be able to walk or ride their bikes safely to and from schools, parks, and nearby public transportation stops. Streets and sidewalks in the Thunderbird neighborhood are in good condition though a few spots require repairs.

The main traffic concerns residents identified in their neighborhood are access to Alma Drive, high volumes of cut-through traffic, disruptive on-street parking, and speeding. The residents expressed that left-hand turn access to the southbound lanes of Alma Drive is becoming more difficult. The difficulty is caused by the width reduction of the center median on Alma Drive. In addition, the Thunderbird Lane street closure restricts access to the nearest traffic light at Cross Bend Road and Alma Drive.

Goal

Assure safe, convenient, and efficient mobility for pedestrians, motor vehicles, and emergency services while preserving the residential nature of the neighborhood.

Objectives

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



Figure 8 The width of the center median on Alma Drive (top) was reduced in 1995. The original width allowed motorist to cross the northbound lane of Alma and then wait in the median for a gap large enough to enter the southbound lane. Thunderbird Lane street closure (bottom).

Transportation (Continued)

- Investigate the need to modify the Thunderbird Lane street closure to mitigate the changes of street conditions in close proximity to the Thunderbird Neighborhood that affect safe access to Alma Drive.
- Encourage motorists to drive safely in alleys by posting speed limits signs in alleys.
- Upgrade the sub-standard section of Thunderbird Lane from Cross Bend Road to Cambridge Drive.
- Investigate options to mitigate the health hazards associated with water that accumulates and stands for extended periods of time on the private driveway located southeast of the intersection of Renaissance Drive and Premier Drive.
- Ensure sidewalks are continuous, well maintained, and unobstructed by surveying existing conditions and working with City of Plano Engineering and Public Works to address these concerns. Investigate the need to extend sidewalks along Premier Drive.
- Ensure that streets and sidewalks are well lighted by:
 - ~ Evaluating neighborhood street lights to ensure minimum City street light distance standards are met, and that all street lights function properly;
 - ~ Encouraging prompt faulty street lights reports by educating residents about all the reporting procedures and options;
 - ~ In cases where lighting is obscured by the tree canopy, working with property owners to get these trees trimmed; and
 - ~ Organizing a campaign to encourage residents to install motion detectors and light timers.



Figure 9 Thunderbird Lane from Cross Bend Road to Cambridge Drive.

Natural Resources

For many people trees are the most important single characteristic of a good street. Given a limited budget, the most efficient way to improve the appearance of a street is by developing and maintaining the tree canopy.¹ Neighborhood trees are important assets that require care and maintenance. Severe weather in the early years weakened and eventually killed most of the original trees and shrubs in the Park Forest 6 and 8 Additions. The neighborhood planning team believes developing a healthy tree canopy will create a more pleasant and unified sense of neighborhood character.

Goal

Preserve, maintain, and develop the neighborhood tree canopy into a valuable resource that contributes to the character, beauty, and comfort of the neighborhood.

Objectives

- Encourage effective tree planting by educating residents on tree selection, planting, maintenance, and preservation by inviting local landscape experts and arborists to attend a neighborhood meeting and by distributing landscape education information to all residents.
- Coordinate a neighborhood tree planting campaign.
- Maintain the existing tree inventory by replacing dead or dying trees.

¹ Jacobs, Alan B. *Great Streets*, p. 292, 1993



Figure 10: Neighborhood trees are beautiful, provide shade, and attract wildlife. Many of the original trees failed to survive the severe weather that struck in 1979 and 1980.

Community Identity

The Thunderbird Neighborhood consists of people from many different cultural or social backgrounds. Increasing the opportunities for interaction, group participation, and common elements helps unite neighborhoods made up of diverse households by creating a sense of neighborhood identity and developing neighborhood pride.

Goal

Enhance recognition of the Thunderbird Neighborhood; further develop neighborhood identity, stability, and cohesiveness. Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors and help make the Thunderbird Neighborhood a rewarding place to live.

Objectives

- Create a convenient medium to post information concerning the neighborhood by developing a neighborhood association webpage.
- Reduce crime and increase the overall awareness of order in the neighborhood by reorganizing the neighborhood crime-watch group.
- Provide an opportunity for neighbors to get to know one another by organizing annual block parties.
- Produce and distribute neighborhood resident guides to current residents and residents moving into the neighborhood.
- Improve our sense of community involvement, develop an organized neighborhood structure, formulate goals and objectives as neighborhood conditions continue to change, and increase neighborhood cohesiveness by forming a voluntary neighborhood association.



Figure 11: Neighborhood sign toppers help establish a neighborhood's identity by defining its boundaries.

***Community Identity
(Continued)***

- Encourage local commercial centers to participate in the “Lock, Take, and Hide” program. The “Lock, Take, and Hide” program consists of brightly colored signs that remind people to lock their cars and take their keys and belongings with them
- Improve neighborhood identity and interconnectedness by researching, drafting, and distributing a historical account of the neighborhood.
- Design and install neighborhood sign toppers at all intersections within the Thunderbird Neighborhood Planning area to create a broader recognition of the Thunderbird name and clearly establish the neighborhood boundaries.

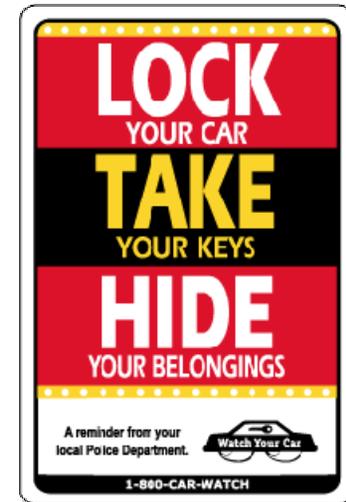


Figure 12 The “Lock, Take, and Hide” public awareness program was first introduced to help prevent burglary of motor vehicles and unauthorized use of motor vehicle offenses.

Appendix A: 1990 – 2000 Census Information

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender Distribution												
Male	695	49.2	457	50.2	238	52.1	110619	49.8	64228	49.9	46391	72.2
Female	717	50.8	454	49.8	263	57.9	111411	50.2	64485	50.1	46926	72.8
Total Population	1412		911		501	55.0	222030		128713		93317	72.5
Age Distribution												
Under 5 years	106	7.5	88	9.7	18	20.5	18379	8.3	11061	8.6	7318	66.2
5 to 9 years	135	9.6	84	9.2	51	60.7	18519	8.3	11215	8.7	7304	65.1
10 to 14 years	120	8.5	81	8.9	39	48.1	17385	7.8	10668	8.3	6717	63.0
15 to 19 years	97	6.9	68	7.5	29	42.6	14322	6.5	9705	7.5	4617	47.6
20 to 24 years	65	4.6	47	5.2	18	38.3	10639	4.8	7253	5.6	3386	46.7
25 to 34 years	206	14.6	210	23.1	-4	-1.9	35576	16.0	25220	19.6	10356	41.1
35 to 44 years	345	24.4	205	22.5	140	68.3	45543	20.5	27465	21.3	18078	65.8
45 to 54 years	213	15.1	85	9.3	128	150.6	34182	15.4	15832	12.3	18350	115.9
55 to 64 years	76	5.4	29	3.2	47	162.1	16574	7.5	5717	4.4	10857	189.9
Over 64 years	49	3.5	14	1.5	35	250.0	10911	4.9	4577	3.6	6334	138.4
Median Age (in years)	34.1		29.3		4.8	16.4	34.1		31.0		3.1	10.0
Ethnicity and Racial Distribution												
Hispanic	108	7.6	35	3.8	73	208.6	22357	10.1	8019	6.2	14338	178.8
Non-Hispanic	1304	92.4	876	96.2	428	48.9	199673	89.9	120694	93.8	78979	65.4

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Non-Hispanic, one race												
African American or Black	182	12.9	65	7.1	117	180.0	10989	4.9	5228	4.1	5761	110.2
American Indian	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	100.0	655	0.3	392	0.3	263	67.1
Asian	257	18.2	79	8.7	178	225.3	22518	10.1	4992	3.9	17526	351.1
Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	1	0.1	-1	-100.0	89	-	49	-	40	81.6
Some other race	3	0.2	0	0.0	3	100.0	317	0.2	86	0.1	231	268.6
White	827	58.6	731	80.2	96	13.1	161543	72.8	109947	85.4	51596	46.9
Non-Hispanic, two or more races	34	2.4	This attribute did not exist for the 1990 Census.				3562	1.6	This attribute did not exist for the 1990 Census.			
<i>Housing Statistics</i>												
Number of housing units	477		298		179	60.1	86078		47370		38708	81.7
Occupied housing units	466	97.7	286	96.0	180	62.9	80875	94.0	44352	93.6	36523	82.3
Vacant homes	11	2.3	12	4.0	-1	-8.3	5203	6.0	3018	6.4	2185	72.4
Persons per household	3.03		3.19		-0.16	-5.0						

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Housing Tenure</i>												
Owner occupied housing units	387	83.0	219	76.6	168	76.7	55625	68.8	31091	70.1	24534	78.9
Renter occupied housing units	79	17.0	67	23.4	12	17.9	25250	31.2	13261	29.9	11989	90.4
<i>Language Spoken at Home</i>												
People aged 5 years and older	1307		822		485	59.0	204045		117613		86432	73.5
Speak English only at home	762	58.3	703	85.5	59	8.4	158931	77.9	111471	94.8	47460	42.6
Speak Spanish at home	148	11.3	43	5.2	105	244.2	17686	8.7	6142		11544	188.0
Speak Asian languages at home	212	16.2	61	7.4	151	247.5	15211	7.5	3137		12074	384.9
Speak other languages at home	185	14.2	15	1.8	170	1133.3	12217	6.0	102192		-89975	-88.0
<i>Age of Housing Distribution</i>												
Housing unit surveyed	478		293		Housing unit totals data inconsistent between 1990 and 2000 Census data							
Built 1999 to March 2000	0	0.0	0	0.0								
Built 1995 to 1998	6	1.3	0	0.0								

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Built 1990 to 1994	157	32.9	0	0.0	Housing unit totals data inconsistent between 1990 and 2000 Census data							
Built during the 1980s	143	29.7	130	44.4								
Built during the 1970s	157	32.8	163	55.6								
Built during the 1960s	7	1.5	0	0.0								
Built during the 1950s	8	1.7	0	0.0								
Built during the 1940s	0	0.0	0	0.0								
Built before 1940	0	0.0	0	0.0								
Median year structure built	1985		1979									
Median value of housing*	116500		117518		-1018	-0.9						
<i>Educational Attainment -- People Age 25 Years and Over</i>												
People age 25 years and older	838		596		242	40.6	144046		79261		64785	81.7
Less than High School	72	8.6	8	1.3	64	800.0	8772	6.1	5390	6.8	3382	62.7

*Monetary values from the 1990 Census adjusted for inflation based on CPI for comparison with 2000 Census data. (CPI = Consumer Price Index from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
High School Diploma/GED	161	19.2	83	13.9	78	94.0						
Some college, no degree	169	20.2	174	29.2	-5	-2.9						
Associates Degree	48	5.7	47	7.9	1	2.1						
Bachelors Degree	239	28.5	200	33.6	39	19.5						
Graduate or Professional Degree	149	17.8	84	14.1	65	77.4						
Occupation												
Employed people age 16 years and older	718		536		182	34.0	120230		71973		48257	67.0
Management Professional	306	42.6	316	59.0	-10	-3.2	66777	55.5	30363	42.2	36414	119.9
Service	102	14.2	36	28.9	66	183.3	32833	27.3	27774	38.6	5059	18.2
Sales, Office Administrative	238	33.1	155	6.7	83	53.5	9647	8.0	5698	7.9	3949	69.3
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	46	0.0	407	0.6	-361	-88.7
Const, Labor, Production, Transportation	72	10.0	29	5.4	43	148.3	10927	9.1	7731	10.7	3196	41.3

	THUNDERBIRD						CITY Of PLANO					
	2000 Census		1990 Census		Change		2000 Census		1990 Census		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Household Income**</i>												
Households surveyed	424		332		92	27.7	81179		44528		36651	82.3
Under \$25,000	14	3.3	10	3.0	4	40.0	7575	9.3	4324	9.7	3251	75.2
\$25,000 to \$49,999	108	25.5	87	26.2	21	24.1	15116	18.6	9098	20.4	6018	66.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	105	24.8	99	29.8	6	6.1	15798	19.5	9438	21.2	6360	67.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	67	15.8	103	31.0	-36	-35.0	12851	15.8	9300	20.9	3551	38.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	103	24.3	33	9.9	70	212.1	29839	36.8	12368	27.8	17471	141.3
Over \$150,000	27	6.4	0	0.0	27	100.0						
Median household income*	70769		66522		4247	6.4	78722		53905			
Below poverty level	16	1.1	6	0.7	10	166.7	9500	4.3	4248	3.3	5252	123.6

* Monetary values from the 1990 Census adjusted for inflation based on CPI for comparison with 2000 Census data. (CPI = Consumer Price Index from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

Appendix B: Neighborhood Survey Results

The following survey was sent to every resident, property owner, and business in the Thunderbird Neighborhood. Eighty-four (18%) surveys were completed and returned.

How do you and your family members travel to work, school, and other places within your neighborhood?

Automobile – 99%

Walk – 23%

DART Light Rail – 15%

Bus / mass transit – 7%

Bicycle – 6%

Do you feel comfortable walking/cycling in your neighborhood?

Yes – 64%

No – 11%

Sometimes – 13%

No reply – 12%

Do you feel comfortable walking in your neighborhood at night?

Yes – 55%

No – 37%

Sometimes – 4%

No reply – 5%

Would any of the following increase your desire to walk/cycle in your neighborhood? (Multiple responses)

Improved lighting 64%

Pedestrian and bicycle pathways 32%

Speed humps 26%

Pedestrian crosswalks 24%

Improved park access 24%

Sidewalks 19%

No reply 12%

It is convenient for me to get around by DART.

Strongly agree 15%

Agree 35%

Disagree 21%

Strongly disagree 17%

No reply 12%

Crime is a serious problem in my neighborhood.

Strongly agree 8%

Agree 17%

Disagree 61%

Strongly disagree 8%

No reply 6%

In your neighborhood, what types of crime concern you the most? (Multiple responses)

None 11%
Vandalism 55%
Juvenile crimes 51%
Burglary/robbery 32%
Drugs 30%
Auto theft 26%
Rape 5%
Prostitution 2%

Is flooding an issue in your neighborhood?

Yes 6%
No 94%

Have you noticed home occupations operating out of people's houses in your neighborhood?

Yes 30%
No 60%
No reply 10%

What have you noticed about these businesses?

Vehicles stored on site 20%
Equipment stored on site 10%
Parking problems 8%
Increased traffic 5%
No problem 7%
Extra eyes on the street 1%
Other 4%

On average, how often do you or someone who lives with you visit a City park or recreation area near your neighborhood?

Daily 5%
Weekly 35%
Monthly 17%
A few times per year 30%
Never 8%
No reply 6%

Do parks in your area meet your recreational needs?

Yes 37%
No 30%
No response 33%

How long have you lived in your neighborhood?

Less than one year 5%
One to five years 30%
Six to ten years 14%
More than ten years 49%
No reply 2%

Please list the reasons why you chose to live in this neighborhood. (Multiple responses)

Price 37%
Accessibility 31%
Location 29%
Neighborhood 19%
School quality 15%
House features 14%
Quiet 10%
Safety 10%
Street design 8%
Cleanliness 5%
Architecture 4%
Cultural makeup 2%
Parks 2%

Do you own or rent your home?

Own 93%
Rent 1%
No reply 6%

Please indicate how many people living in your home are in each of the age brackets below. (The total number of residents, indicated by the survey responses, for all age ranges is 224.)

Under 5 years 7%
5 to 9 years 3%
10 to 14 years 8%
15 to 19 years 9%
20 to 24 years 6%
25 to 34 years 14%
35 to 44 years 20%
45 to 54 years 15%
55 to 64 years 13%
Over 64 years 4%

What language do you prefer to speak?

English 87%
Asian 7%
Spanish 2%
Russian 1%

What is your ethnic background?

African-American 11%
Anglo 62%
Asian 7%
Hispanic 6%
Multi-ethnic 2%
Other 5%
No reply 6%

City government is responsive to our needs.

- Strongly agree 7%
- Agree 50%
- Disagree 17%
- Strongly disagree 6%
- No reply 20%

Overall, my neighborhood is clean.

- Strongly agree 12%
- Agree 63%
- Disagree 18%
- No reply 2%

What do you like best about your neighborhood? (Multiple responses)

- Location 76%
- Affordability 50%
- Neighbors 24%
- Architecture 13%
- Trees 7%
- Street design 5%
- Amenities 4%
- Safety 4%
- Parks 1%

What improvements would you like to see in your neighborhood or on your street? (multiple responses)

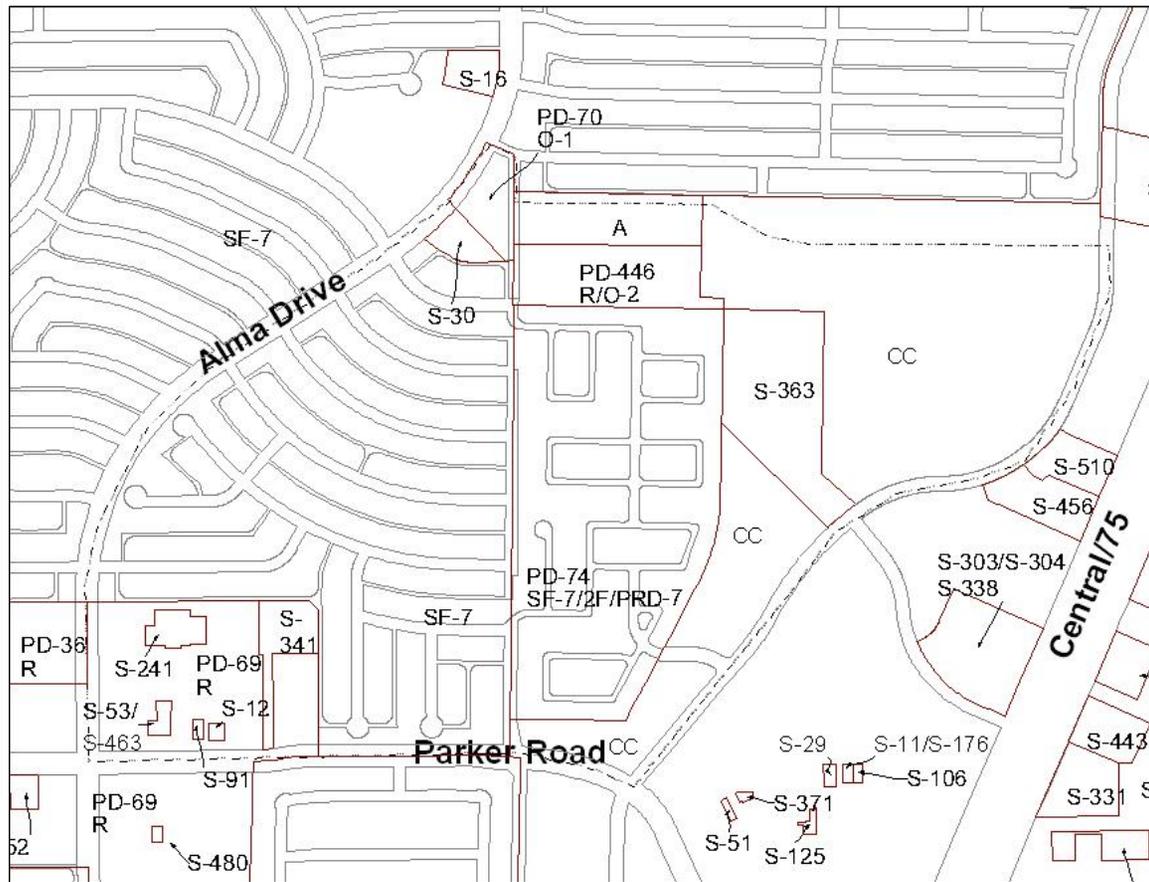
- More lighting 27%
- Speeding mitigation 20%
- Code enforcement 12%
- House maintenance 12%
- Lawn maintenance 10%
- Fence maintenance 8%
- Park improvements 7%
- Limit street parking 6%
- More trees 4%
- Reconnect Thunderbird Lane 4%
- Blocked mailboxes, eliminate occurrences 2%

Please indicate your household income

- Less than \$25,000 4%
- \$25,000 to \$49,000 19%
- \$50,000 to \$74,999 19%
- \$75,000 to \$99,999 26%
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 12%
- More than \$150,000 8%
- No reply 12%

Appendix C: Zoning Map

Zoning District	Land Use Description
A	Agricultural (Undeveloped)
O-1	Neighborhood Office
CC	Corridor Commercial
SF-7	Single-Family Residence 7
S-12	Drive-in Restaurant
S-30	Day Care Center
S-53	Private Club
S-91	Drive-in Restaurant
S-241	Day Care Center
S-341	Day Care Center
S-363	Retirement Housing
S-463	Arcade
PD-69 R	Retail
PD-74 SF-7/2F/PRD-7	Single-Family Patio Homes
PD-446 R/O-2	Retail/General Office (Undeveloped)



Appendix D: Thunderbird Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Matrix

Neighborhood Maintenance	Responsible Parties	Cost
Goal: Assure stable property values and generate community pride by maintaining the quality of residential properties through home rehabilitation and code compliance.		
Objective: Improve compliance with Property Standards regulations by informing residents how to identify and report the “Top Ten Code Violations”.	Residents, City of Plano Property Standards	Postage, Printing, and Staff Time (from existing budgets)
Objective: Be vigilant in the reporting and following up of Property Standards and code violations.	Residents, City of Plano Property Standards	Staff Time
Objective: Increase education efforts from the Solid Waste Division to teach neighbors how to use the Solid Waste services more effectively and thus clean up the neighborhood. Education efforts include distribution of schedules showing regular and special collection dates, educational brochures, and refrigerator magnets that remind residents of collection rules.	Residents, City of Plano Solid Waste	Staff Time
Objective: Promote homeownership by sending a targeted mailer about the City of Plano First Time Homebuyer’s program to rental properties in the neighborhood.	City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Postage, Printing, and Staff Time (from existing budgets)
Objective: Encourage home maintenance by educating residents about the City of Plano Housing Rehabilitation Program.	City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Staff Time
Objective: Reduce number of stray animals in neighborhood by educating residents on current animal control procedures.	City of Plano Animal Control	Staff Time

Transportation	Responsible Parties	Cost
Goal: Assure safe, convenient, and efficient mobility for pedestrians, motor vehicles, and emergency services while preserving the residential nature of the neighborhood.		
Objective: Protect the residential character of the neighborhood from cut-through traffic, disruptive on-street parking, and speeding, while maintaining convenient access to and across major arterial streets by working with the City of Plano Safe Streets program.	Residents, City of Plano Traffic Engineering	Staff Time
Objective: Investigate the need to modify the Thunderbird Lane street closure to mitigate the changes of street conditions in close proximity to the Thunderbird Neighborhood that affect safety.	Residents, City of Plano Traffic Engineering	Staff Time
Objective: Encourage motorists to drive safely in alleys by posting speed limit signs in alleys through the City of Plano Public Works Department.	Residents, City of Plano Public Works	\$15.00 per Sign
Objective: Ensure sidewalks, streets, and alleys are continuous, well maintained, and unobstructed by surveying existing conditions and working with City of Plano Public Works Department to address these concerns. Investigate the need to extend sidewalks along Premier Drive.	City of Plano Public Works	Staff Time
Objective: Upgrade the sub-standard section of Thunderbird Lane from Cross Bend Rd. to Cambridge Drive.	City of Plano Engineering	\$168,000 (2005 Bond Referendum)
Objective: Investigate options to mitigate the health hazards associated with water that accumulates and stands for extended periods of time on the private driveway located southeast of the intersection of Renaissance Drive and Premier Drive.	Health Department	Staff Time
Objective: Evaluate neighborhood street lights to ensure minimum City street light distance standards are met, and that all street lights function properly.	City of Plano Engineering	Staff Time -- approximately \$1,000 per light, if warranted (from existing budgets)
Objective: Encourage prompt faulty street lights reports by educating residents about all the reporting procedures and options.	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Staff Time
Objective: In cases where lighting is obscured by the tree canopy, work with property owners to get these trees trimmed.	Residents, City of Plano Parks	Staff Time

Transportation	Responsible Parties	Cost
<i>Objective:</i> Organize and complete a campaign to encourage residents to install motion detectors and light timers.	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Staff Time

Natural Resources	Responsible Parties	Cost
<i>Goal:</i> Preserve, maintain, and develop the neighborhood tree canopy into a valuable resource that contributes to the character, beauty, and comfort of the neighborhood.		
<i>Objective:</i> Encourage effective tree planting by educating residents on tree selection, planting, maintenance, and preservation by inviting local landscape experts and arborists to attend a neighborhood meeting and by distributing landscape education information to all residents.	Residents, City of Plano Parks, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Staff Time
<i>Objective:</i> Coordinate a neighborhood tree planting campaign.	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Staff Time
<i>Objective:</i> Maintain the existing tree inventory by replacing dead or dying trees.	Residents	

Community Identity	Responsible Parties	Cost
Goal: Enhance recognition of the Thunderbird Neighborhood; further develop neighborhood identity, stability, and cohesiveness. Encourage a neighborhood spirit which will preserve the friendly, open relations between neighbors and help make the Thunderbird Neighborhood a rewarding place to live.		
Objective: Reduce crime and increase the overall awareness of order in the neighborhood by reorganizing the neighborhood crime-watch group.	Residents, City of Plano Police Department	N/A
Objective: Encourage local commercial centers to participate in the "Lock, Take, and Hide" program.	Residents, City of Plano Police Department	\$12 per sign (from existing budgets)
Objective: Inform the neighborhood of municipal services and procedures by producing and distributing an all inclusive <i>Neighborhood Resident Guide</i> to current residents and residents moving into the neighborhood. (Resident Guides are contact numbers, general procedures, and descriptions of the neighborhood.)	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Printing and Postage – approximately \$1,650 (from existing budgets)
Objective: Improve our sense of community involvement, develop an organized neighborhood structure, formulate goals and objectives as neighborhood conditions continue to change, and increase neighborhood cohesiveness by forming a voluntary neighborhood association	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	N/A
Objective: Provide an opportunity for neighbors to get to know one another by organizing annual block parties.	Residents, City of Plano Neighborhood Services	N/A
Objective: Improve neighborhood identity and interconnectedness by researching, drafting, and distributing a historical account of the neighborhood.	Residents	N/A
Objective: Create a forum for residents to become familiar with neighborhood activities and interact with each other by developing and maintaining a neighborhood website.	Residents	N/A
Objective: Design and install neighborhood sign toppers at all intersections within the Thunderbird Neighborhood Planning area to create a broader recognition of Thunderbird's Neighborhood name, and clearly establish the neighborhood's boundaries.	City of Plano Neighborhood Services	Sign Toppers – approximately \$2500 (from existing budgets)