

STRATEGIC PLAN
BERRYHILL – MASON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT ZONE
March 27, 2007

LOCATION

The Berryhill/Mason Heights Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) is situated in the Southeastern quadrant of Fort Worth in relation to the Central Business District, located approximately 6 miles southeast of downtown. See attached maps.

- North boundary: Hwy 287 service road to Cobb Park Road
- West boundary: Cobb Park Road to East Berry South
- South boundary: Mitchell Street to Wilbarger
- East boundary: Foard Street to Vaughn to Bishop to Hwy 287 service road

GENERAL CONDITIONS IN THE BERRYHILL/MASON HEIGHTS AREA

The area contains small older homes, mostly 2 bedrooms, on pier and beam foundations on large lots with predominantly wood frame construction. Many homes are in need of repair and the area has moderate code violations. The age of the homes indicates a possible large number with lead based paint. There are no sidewalks. The area has a non-grid street pattern with a wide range of street conditions. There is a large number of vacant lots in addition to the vacant land surrounding the Masonic Home. Zoning does not appear appropriate for the area i.e. “B” two family verses A-5 one family. Retail or commercial uses are minimal and in some areas of the proposed NEZ, non existent.

According to the Tarrant Appraisal District, the proposed NEZ area has an approximate total taxable value of \$48,344,505, made up of the following components:

Uses	Number	Total Value	Average Value	Average Age
Commercial	30	8,312,085.00	277,069.50	1958
Commercial Vac	29	7,957,424.00	274,393.93	
Undeveloped	4	329,386.00	82,346.50	
Utilities	3	122,328.00	40,776.00	
Multi-family	1	7,204,816.00	7,204,816.00	2002
SF Vacant	102	331,410.00	3,249.12	
Single Family	772	22,626,956.00	29,310.00	1941
Duplex (35*2=70)	35	1,460,100.00	41,717.14	1952

Total Properties 976 \$48,344,505.00

STATISTICAL & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Census data from 2000 reveal the following key factors:

- Ethnic distribution for the area was 66% African-American, 27% Hispanic, and non-Hispanic white estimated at 7%. The area’s population declined between 1990 to 2000,

- from 2323 to 2086. The Hispanic population grew 113% during that time period, to 603 persons, while the African American population was reduced by 13%, from 1672 to 1455.
- Approximately 91% of all housing units were single family detached, however, 29% of housing units were renter occupied – therefore it is likely that approximately 20% of single family units were renter-occupied at the time of the Census.
 - The area has a high concentration of elderly. Persons 62 or over made up 11% of the population, however, 37% of households in 2000 had a family member 55 or over.
 - The area had an unemployment rate of 12.6% in 2000, compared to the Fort Worth average of 3.8%.
 - The median household income for the area in 1999 was \$24,440, compared to a Fort Worth city-wide median income of \$37,074.
 - Of all persons (adults and children) living in the area, the Census found 28.7% were in poverty, compared to a city-wide average of 15.9%.
 - Educational attainment in the proposed NEZ area was low relative to the city as a whole: 41.5% of persons over 25 had not graduated high school, compared to 27.2 for all Fort Worth residents
 - The percentage of residents in the NEZ who were born outside the United States was 14.6%, slightly lower than the city-wide percentage of 16.3%.
 - Up to 24% of residents speak a language other than English at home; city-wide this percentage is 29%.

Statistics for area based on Census Tract 1046.04.

Additional information from the Census and maps of the area are attached.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: HOUSING

The Berryhill/Mason Heights NEZ area is fairly homogeneous consisting of primarily single-family residential development. Approximately 667 single family units exist within the boundaries. The majority of the single family homes were constructed prior to 1970 – data from the Appraisal District indicates an average age for single family homes of 66 years, and an average age for duplexes of 55 years. Rental duplexes appear to be clustered at certain geographic locations in the area. Data from the Tarrant Appraisal District indicates that 34% of the single family properties in the area are not owner-occupied, and therefore likely to be rental properties. Comparing this with the Census data cited above, it appears that single family rental uses have increased in the area over the past 10 years.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The area has been in a declining state due to a lack of economic and re-development activities. The average age for commercial properties in the area is 49 years old. Increased investment in areas throughout the central city, some of them in proximity to the proposed NEZ, including Evans-Rosedale, La Gran Plaza, Fort Worth South and downtown Fort Worth, and in major housing infill projects such as Sierra Vista and New Rolling Hills, has created heightened awareness of the economic potential of other central city areas such as the proposed NEZ area. The area's excellent location and ready transportation access to east-west and north-south corridors increase the potential for this NEZ.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: INFRASTRUCTURE

The following streets are major thoroughfares within the Berryhill / Mason Heights NEZ: East Berry Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Freeway (US Hwy. 287), Mitchell Boulevard, and Vaughn Boulevard. Their overall condition appears good. Enhancements are presently being sought to improve access to Berry from Highway 287. Existing neighborhood streets lack sidewalks.

NEIGHBORHOOD ATTRIBUTES

- Proximity to downtown
- Access to Public Transportation routes (The T)
- Good transportation / commuting access via major highway, i.e. Hwy 287
- Good transportation / commuting access via Berry east-west thoroughfare

UNMET DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Vacant lots throughout area neighborhoods (approximately 100)
- Lack of retail and commercial
- Commercial, retail and residential development proposed for the 200-acre Masonic Home site, to include approximately 63 acres of commercial development and approximately 108 acres of single family residential, with homes prices ranging from \$130,000 to \$200,000.

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE AREA

PROPOSED HOUSING STRATEGIES

- New single family housing is needed and recommended. Development of this type is presently proposed for the area and initial stages have begun for such development. Development of additional dwellings on presently vacant land, both on large tracts and on infill lots, is likely to enhance average incomes and property values in the NEZ area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Retail / Commercial Development in the whole southeast Fort Worth sector, and more specifically the Berry Street / Hwy. 287 corridors, is severely lacking.
- The proposed new single family homes within this NEZ, as well as the additional new 232 homes in the Sierra Vista subdivision, and the proposed 155 units in the new Rolling Hills Addition are likely to stimulate the need for and growth of the retail market in this area.

SOCIAL SERVICES

- The large number of elderly households indicates a need for senior services for longtime residents. The large number of children in the area, indicated by an average household size of 3.05 relative to a citywide average of 2.67, points to a need for services for children and youth: day care facilities, playgrounds, etc. A YMCA branch is presently located within the NEZ area.

EDUCATION

- An elementary school is located within the proposed NEZ boundaries. The large number of adults who are not high school graduates, and the number of non-English-speakers, indicates a need for adult education, both for job training and for general literacy.

DESIRED ZONING CHANGES

A majority of the area is zoned B – Two Family, should be zoned, at a minimum, A-5 Single Family. Other zoning changes may be pursued on a case-by-case and property-by-property basis as redevelopment is proposed, consistent with the provisions and goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of this NEZ Strategic Plan.

ADOPTED DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR SINGLE FAMILY INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEZ

- 1250 square foot minimum, with 3 bedrooms and 2 baths; for each additional bedroom, 150 square feet should be added
- 8/12 pitch roof with one gable
- Landscaping to the same standards as required by the City's subdivision ordinance
- 70% Mortared Brick, with remaining exterior surfaces of fibercement type material
- At least 78 sq. ft. front porch
- At least three fenestrations on the street face
- Raised foundation 18 inches from grade with reinforced beams
- Garages shall not extend beyond the building face

DESIRED PROJECT TYPES TO BE ATTRACTED TO THE NEZ: ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TAX ABATEMENTS

Desirable Project Types

- Single Family Infill
- Retail
- Commercial Facilities as appropriate on main thoroughfares

Undesirable Project Types:

No NEZ Benefits would be authorized for the following:

- liquor stores
- pawn shops
- car lots
- check cashing businesses
- bars
- tattoo and piercing parlors
- sexually oriented businesses.
- duplexes

Berryhill Mason Heights NEZ Census Data Census Tract 1046.04

Total Housing Units	734	
Owner Occupied	444	60.5%
Renter Occupied	213	29.0%
Single Family Detached	667	90.9%
Occupied Units	683	
Vacant Units	51	6.9%
Rental Vacancy Rate		10.5%
Built Before 1970	660	89.9%
Built Before 1960	461	62.8%
Median No. of Rooms	4.9	
Median Reported Value, Owner Occupied	\$28,300	
Number reported valued under \$50,000, Owner Occupied	413	56.3%
Median Mortgage Payment	\$269	
Median Rent payment	\$469	
No. Rental Units with rent under \$499	\$123	57.7%
Householder moved in since 1995	252	34.3%
Householder moved in before 1980	284	38.7%
Householders 55 to 64 in 2000 (<i>now 62 or older</i>)	134	18.3%
Householders 65 or over in 2000	138	18.8%
Total Population	2086	
Adults (18 & Over)	1383	66.3%
Elderly (62 & Over)	227	10.9%
Number of children (under 18)	703	33.7%
Family Households	647	75.90%
Household Size, Renters	2.98	
Household Size, Owners	3.09	
Hispanic	523	25.1%
African-American	1366	65.5%
Other / Non-Hispanic White (<i>Est.</i>)	197	9.4%
Economic Characteristics		
Number of persons 16 & over	1451	
In Labor Force	732	50.4%
Employed	640	87.4%
Unemployed	92	12.6%

Employment by Occupation		
Mgmt,professional & related	117	18.3%
Service occupations	164	25.6%
Sales & Office occupations	145	22.7%
construction, extraction, maintenance	76	11.9%
Production, Transportation & material moving	138	21.6%

Employment by Industry		
Construction	72	11.3%
Manufacturing	79	12.3%
Wholesale Trade	18	2.8%
Retail Trade	49	7.7%
Transport & warehouse	41	6.4%
Information	28	4.4%
Finance,insurance,real estate	44	6.9%
Professional, scientific, mgmt, etc.	79	12.3%
Education, health & social services	110	17.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, hotel & food svc	43	6.7%
Other services (non govt.)	56	8.8%
Govt/public administration	21	3.3%

Employment by class		
- private employment	527	82.3%
- government	62	9.7%
- self-employed	43	6.7%

Total Households 647

Income		
- under \$15,000 (est under 30% of median)	170	26.3%
- \$15K to \$24,999	160	24.7%
- \$25K to \$34,999	150	23.2%
- \$35K to \$49,999	93	14.4%
- over \$50K	74	11.4%

Percent Low-Mod (*from HUD, not Census*)

Families in Poverty	128	26.1%
Persons in Poverty	598	28.7%
Seniors in Poverty	38	21.2%
Children in Poverty	247	35.1%

Median Household Income	\$24,440
Average Household Income	\$28,968
Per Capita Income	\$9,150
Median family income, married couple families	\$33,824
Median family income, single female householders	\$17,917
Median household income, elderly households	\$17,472

Households on Social Security and/or SSI	245	37.9%
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Median Income by Race		
Median income black households		\$21,964
Median income white households		\$35,000
Median income, Hispanic households		\$32,589

Social Characteristics

School Enrollment in 2000	580	
Educational attainment of persons 25 or older	1185	
- less than HS grad	492	41.5%
- HS grad	288	24.3%
- some college	304	25.7%
- BA or professional degree	101	8.5%
Veterans (as pct. of civilians over 18)	98	7.1%
Disabled (as pct. of age cohort)		
Disabled - 5-20 years old	61	11%
Disabled adults - 21 to 64	490	43.50%
Disabled Elderly - 65 & over	89	49.70%
Born in U.S.	1735	83.2%
Born in Texas	1491	71.5%
Foreign Born - Citizen	76	3.6%
Foreign Born - non-Citizen	229	11.0%
Region of Birth, Foreign Born: Latin America	293	96.1%
Language spoken at home not English (persons 5 & over)	446	23.9%
Spanish spoken at home	417	22.4%

Population Trends, 1990 to 2000

White	-29.70%
Black	-13.00%
Hispanic	113.10%