

EASTRIDGE

Neighborhood Plan

**An Amendment to the
Amarillo Comprehensive Plan**

2022



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Acknowledgements

The City Council acknowledges this document as both a thorough examination of the Eastridge neighborhood and an organized plan of action through which the ideas and insights of its residents, business owners, and property owners can be executed. The formal adoption of this plan as an amendment to the Amarillo Comprehensive Plan signifies a commitment to the neighborhood. This commitment will be demonstrated by:

1. Utilizing the abilities of the City Council and the Council appointments to its boards and commissions in cooperation with City staff.
2. Examining the City's annual budget for opportunities to support the plan's implementation.
3. Making the neighborhood a primary focus of capital improvement projects in the annual preparation of the five-year Community Investment Program.
4. Recognizing opportunities for partnerships with other agencies and organizations.
5. Encouraging and acknowledging actions taken directly by the neighborhood.

This plan would not have been made possible without the commitment of the Eastridge Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee. They devoted many volunteer hours to the effort. Working closely with the City's Planning staff, they helped craft a plan for the future of the neighborhood that addresses the needs of residents, business owners, property owners, and visitors. The City thanks them for their exhaustive efforts.

Genie Baca	Timothy Ballejo
Michael Garman	Georgia Estrada
Tommie T. Knox	Patrick Miller
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Maribel Sotelo-Gilliam	Tyler Trinh
Emma Rohrs	

In addition, the City of Amarillo would like to thank Eastridge Elementary School and Texas Refugee Services for hosting the outreach events, public meetings and advisory committee meetings. The school provided a youthful and neutral space for discussion and deliberation.

Finally, the City sincerely thanks the meeting attendees, survey respondents, and all interested citizens that invested their time and attention in the planning process.

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Relationship to Adopted Plans

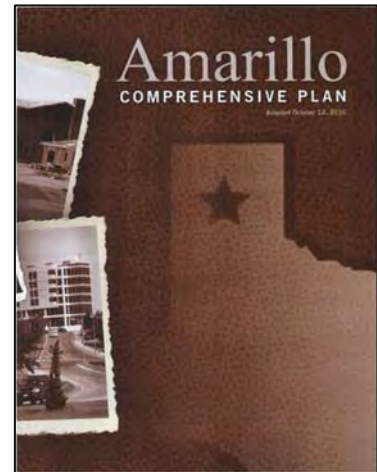
The Eastridge Neighborhood Plan is as an amendment to the Amarillo Comprehensive Plan, adopted in October of 2010. One of the fundamental responsibilities of local government is to plan for future growth and development of the community. The Comprehensive Plan is the policy guide that provides the broad vision and framework for all land use and development decisions in Amarillo.

Neighborhood plans serve a slightly different purpose. Undertaken in the spirit of a partnership between the neighborhood and the City, they allow for a more thorough analysis of the characteristics and conditions of a smaller area. They are designed to build organizational capacity, form consensus for goals among stakeholders, and provide a roadmap to guide future neighborhood planning and development efforts both in general categories such as land use, zoning, and circulation as well as site specific improvements. Through collaboration with neighborhood stakeholders, the plan establishes area-specific strategies and sets forth a course for implementation.

The neighborhood plan has a specific purpose of providing guidance to elected officials and city staff so that formal actions by local government will be more compatible with the vision and goals created by neighborhood stakeholders. Both neighborhood planning and comprehensive planning entail a commitment to an inclusive participatory planning process, which includes all of the key leadership in a community and reaches beyond those citizens that routinely engage with local government.

The Neighborhood Planning Initiative was established in 2016 through an interlocal agreement between the City of Amarillo and Potter County. The purpose of the agreement was to facilitate planning and community development in the “older, distressed neighborhoods.” North Heights, Barrio, San Jacinto, and Eastridge were identified as the Initiative’s first priorities. Both the City and Potter County committed to contributing \$75,000 annually for the purpose of plan development. The City then contributed an additional \$2,616,200 from the 2016 5-year Community Investment Program (CIP) to be divided equally among the four neighborhoods and specifically reserved for their plan’s implementation efforts.

The importance of the Neighborhood Planning Initiative was underscored in the City Council’s 2018 strategic plan “Blue Print for Amarillo.” The Economic Development and Redevelopment Council Pillar calls for applying innovation to the “redevelopment of disadvantaged areas of our community” by completing the neighborhood plans and exploring a number of community and economic development tools to address neighborhood needs. In addition, the neighborhood planning effort is identified as an important mechanism to spark civic pride, another Council Pillar.



Plan Process and Public Engagement

The Eastridge Neighborhood Plan was developed over the course of approximately one year kicking off in January 2021 (during the COVID 19 pandemic at time when all business was still being conducted virtually) and culminating in the adoption of the document by City Council in early 2022. Eastridge, due to patterns of refugee resettlement, is one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods in the City of Amarillo. At the time the plan kicked off, Eastridge Elementary reported that 38 languages were spoken at the school requiring 19 translators to reach every group.

The Eastridge Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee was formed to provide guidance and oversight for the process, which was expected to be different than some of the other neighborhood plans due to the diversity of the neighborhood and cultural differences ranging from communication to the perception of the role of government. The Advisory Committee was comprised of neighborhood leaders with a deep understanding of the area, and they served a critical role in bridging the communication gap for staff.

In total, the process included two (2) public meetings, eight (8) advisory committee meetings, a resident survey, a business owner survey, an online property owner survey, and a series of focus group meetings with city departments. The process resulted in a vision statement, vision map, a set of goals and strategies, and an implementation matrix to serve as the overarching framework for the plan.

Below is a summary of the overall process and public engagement activities.

Process Design and Phasing

PHASE 1: Existing Conditions Review and Project Kickoff (January 2021)

During the first phase of the planning process, the project team gained an understanding of Eastridge's history, demographics, and the built environment. Using data provided by the City and information provided by the community, this phase identified the current neighborhood conditions and virtually kicked off the process online and in the community.

PHASE 2: Vision, S.W.O.T, and Guiding Principles (February-March 2021)

The second phase of the planning process focused on conducting a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT) and developing a vision statement. The vision outlines how the community wants to see the neighborhood in the future. It identifies existing qualities that the community wants to preserve while also describing changes that the community desires. The guiding principles are consistent with the land use guiding principles of the other neighborhood plans. Both the vision and guiding principles relate back to the Amarillo Comprehensive Plan.

PHASE 3: Focus Areas and Goals (April-July 2021)

After setting the vision for Eastridge, the big picture goals for the plan were refined with the community's input. The goals were determined by need (as shown through data analysis) and by want (as shown through community input). The goals are limited to those issues that are most critical to the community and that may be addressed in a manageable manner.

PHASE 4: Implementation Strategies (August-September 2021)

The City worked very closely with the Advisory Committee during the fourth phase of the planning process to begin drafting implementation strategies. This work was done through extensive analysis and research, citing

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best practices and case studies as examples. City of Amarillo staff guided the Advisory Committee to prioritize projects during this phase and determine those that are key as “transformative” projects.

PHASE 5: Develop Options/Recommendations/Priorities (October-November 2021)

Using the research from Phase 4, the City again worked closely with the Advisory Committee to develop and refine neighborhood options and recommendations into a list of priority projects for implementation.

PHASE 6: Draft Plan (December 2021-January 2022)

The City created a draft plan Word document to be reviewed by the public and the Advisory Committee.

Phase 7: Plan Adoption and Transition to Neighborhood Association (February 2022+)

During the last stage of the planning process, the City prepared the final document for the necessary commission and board approvals prior to presentation to City Council for adoption. The Advisory Committee begins to transition to a neighborhood association.

Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule and Summaries

The Eastridge Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee was formed through an application process which began even before the plan kicked off and continued open throughout. Anyone interested in serving could apply and commit to attending the regularly scheduled meetings. Members agreed to the following roles and responsibilities:

- Provide strategic oversight
- Identify project partners
- Serve as an advocate for the plan
- Represent the neighborhood
- Accept responsibility for the plan
- Lead community-based initiatives

Advisory Committee Members

Last Name	First Name	Title	Profession/Affiliation
Baca	Genie	Principal	Eastridge Elementary
Ballejo	Timothy	Operations Team Leader	Owens Corning
Estrada	Georgia	Potter County Constable PCT. 2	Potter County
Garman	Michael	Executive Director/Pastor	Eastridge Mission Center/Eastridge Baptist Church
Knox Jr	Tommie T	Real Estate Broker/Agent	Keller Williams
Miller	Patrick	Assistant Principal	Eastridge Elementary
Pennington	Russell	Pastor/Director of Outreach	Bethesda Outreach Center
Pennington	Ryan	Executive Director	Refugee Language Project
Trinh	Tyler	Engineer	Pantex
Rohrs	Emma	Founder	We Find in Love Non-Profit

The committee met nine times throughout the process, plus committee members participated in the Neighborhood Clean-Up on National Clean-Up Day (Sept. 18th) and the Fall Carnival Open House (Oct.

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22nd). Meetings were held in a variety of places –virtually on Zoom, the City of Amarillo’s Simms Municipal Building, and Refugee Services of Texas. Below is a summary of what was accomplished at each meeting.

Meeting #1: January 19th, 2021, Zoom

The first Advisory Committee meeting was held virtually and featured an overview of the process, the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee, a discussion of the key themes and desired outcomes of the process and the best options for community engagement throughout the neighborhood.

Meeting #2: February 23rd, 2021, Zoom

The second Advisory Committee meeting included an initial update regarding the surveys being distributed around the neighborhood. It was followed by a discussion of the drafts for the SWOT and the neighborhood profile that included the existing conditions analysis of Eastridge. The committee also participated in an activity to form the vision statement.

Meeting #3: March 30th, 2021, Zoom

The third Advisory Committee meeting was a work session to further refine the vision statement and goals, as well as to begin developing strategies for each goal using the information gathered from the neighborhood surveys. City staff proceeded to introduce a small business survey for business owners in the neighborhood to learn more about economic development opportunities in Eastridge.

Meeting #4: April 27th, 2021, Zoom

The fourth Advisory Committee meeting included an update on the business owner survey and what information was gained from the surveys. The committee approved an initial draft of the focus areas and decided the main focus area should be the area around Eastridge Elementary School. The committee then approved the vision statement for the plan.

Meeting #5: June 1st, 2021, Simms Municipal Building

The fifth Advisory Committee meeting was a brainstorming meeting for the priority projects in Eastridge. City staff presented a Best Practices presentation to the committee which showed different ideas that could potentially be implemented in the neighborhood. The committee agreed that Community Pride through Housing and Economic Opportunity should be the two transformative projects for Eastridge.

Meeting #6: July 20th, 2021, Simms Municipal Building

The sixth Advisory Committee meeting again focused on planning a community outreach event to gain community feedback for the chosen priority projects. The committee finalized the goals and projects list for the neighborhood plan.

Meeting #7: September 28th, 2021, Zoom

The seventh Advisory Committee meeting included staff providing updates to the committee after meeting internally with other City departments. The committee and City staff discussed different priority project possibilities including adding a new park, community center and fixing infrastructure throughout the neighborhood. The date and location for the first community outreach event was finalized.

Meeting #8: December 7th, 2021, Refugee Services of Texas

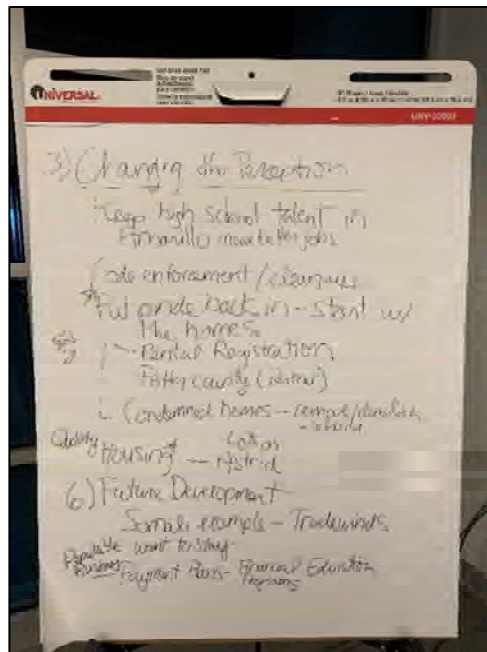
The final Advisory Committee meeting included review and approval of the two transformative projects as well as a discussion of evolving from a neighborhood plan committee to a neighborhood association

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responsible for the implementation of the plan. Committee members and potential neighborhood association members completed a priority project worksheet for the implementation projects in Eastridge.

Meeting #9: January 13th, 2022, Refugee Services of Texas

Planning staff presented the final recommendations in the plan, priority projects, and neighborhood association expectations and structure. The group discussed what projects they might like to implement in the first year and what structure they think may work best for their organization. This meeting was open to anyone interested in becoming involved in the neighborhood association.



Advisory Committee members worked on developing focus areas and potential plan goals at the June 1st meeting.

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Public Outreach Schedule and Meeting Summaries

It was anticipated that public outreach for the Eastridge plan would be more challenging than any previous completed neighborhood plan due to the language and communication barriers. In general, online engagement in this particular part of Amarillo is not successful. This presented significant challenges for conducting a neighborhood plan process during the COVID-19 pandemic, where most communication and interaction had moved to virtual platforms. One of the original strategies featured an interactive and translatable website via the social engagement platform Social Pinpoint; however even with social media, press releases and news coverage, very little engagement occurred through the website.

Staff and the Advisory Committee worked throughout the process to try different strategies and, in the end, a variety of different methods were utilized to reach neighborhood residents including: paper surveys, the online translatable website, in-person events with partner organizations, one-on-one conversations by Advisory Committee members, and direct mailings. Staff also used previous community engagement summaries provided by the Refugee Language Project to help identify neighborhood needs.

Public Outreach #1: Resident Survey

February 2021-March 2021

Surveys Distributed: 450 paper + online version

Surveys Submitted: 134

Due to COVID-19, public outreach was initiated first by distributing surveys to the various language groups that live throughout Eastridge. The surveys asked residents to give their honest feedback regarding the current conditions in the neighborhood. City of Amarillo staff and the Advisory Committee targeted seven language groups. Surveys were distributed and translated with the assistance of local translators recommended by the Refugee Language Project. Overall, the surveys contained great initial feedback that provided a solid foundation for the plan.

Survey Distribution by Language		
Language	# Distributed	# Received
English (online)		2
English (paper)	50	9
Lao	50	0
Lao (Bethesda)	50	22
Spanish	50	2
Karen	50	20
Swahili	50	21
Somali	50	18
Burmese	50	9
Vietnamese	50	31
Totals	450	134

Public Outreach #2: Business Owner Survey

April 2021

Surveys Distributed: 30

Surveys Submitted: 7

The small businesses in Eastridge rely heavily on the different cultural groups located in Eastridge. Markets, restaurants, and auto resources are the top three businesses out of the 86 inventoried throughout the neighborhood. Most of these small businesses fall along the Amarillo Boulevard and Grand St. The surveys allowed business owners to express their likes, dislikes, and overall opinion over running a business in Eastridge. Feedback from the survey will guide a clearer path forward for future businesses owners looking to start a business in the neighborhood boundary.

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Public Outreach #3: Eastridge Fall Carnival and Priority Voting

5:00 – 7:30 PM on Friday, October 22nd, 2021

Eastridge Elementary School

Attendance: Estimated total of 400-500, about 150 participated in the plan activities

Mailing list: 2200 unique addresses

The first in-person public outreach event was in partnership with Eastridge Elementary School at their annual Fall Carnival. Both kids and parents were able to participate in the outreach activity. The activity was based upon voting for preferred priority projects with \$1 and \$5 bundles of fake money. Of the 14 different projects suggested, streetlights, soccer fields, and a water amenity were the top three priority projects chosen. The voting activity was also available online.

Public Outreach #4: Property Owner Meeting

6:00 – 7:30 pm on Thursday, December 2nd, 2021

Refugee Services of Texas

Property Owner Mailing List: 1800 unique addresses

Attendance: 8

Online surveys submitted: 0

Property owners were invited to join a round-table discussion about the housing conditions throughout the neighborhood. City of Amarillo staff guided the conversation by asking questions from the property owner survey and suggested different solutions that would improve housing.



Attendees at the Eastridge Elementary School work with translators to vote on the priority projects.

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If you had \$20 to spend on improving your neighborhood, where would you invest it?

Now is the time to let us know! The Eastridge Neighborhood has funds available to be used for projects that will help improve the community and the City of Amarillo Neighborhood Planning team needs your help deciding which projects the neighborhood should invest in. Please choose the projects listed below that you would most like to see implemented in Eastridge. You will not be able to select all projects.

<u>Voting Amount</u>	<u>Actual Estimated Cost</u>
\$1	\$1,000 - \$25,000
\$5	\$25,000 - \$100,000
\$10	\$100,000 - \$500,000
\$15	\$500,000 - \$1 Million



Neighborhood Welcome Signs provide a sense of pride for the neighborhood.

\$1

YES NO



Community Crosswalks provide safety for kids while brightening the neighborhood.

\$1

YES NO



Sign Toppers establish community pride for where people reside.

\$1

YES NO



Dumpster Art Program is a creative opportunity for residents who want to keep their alleys clean.

\$1

YES NO



Pride in Property Grants provide residents funds to help with repairs and appearance.

\$5

YES NO



Large Item Trash Removal helps keep the neighborhood clean and beautiful.

\$5

YES NO

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New Street Lights provide extra lighting that will help reduce the amount of crime in the neighborhood.

\$5

YES NO



Dead Tree Removal assists residents who would like to clean up their property and remove dead trees along the streets.

\$5

YES NO



Bus Shelters provide safety from natural elements while waiting for city transit to pick them up.

\$10

YES NO



New Soccer Fields is an investment in positive youth recreation around the area.

\$10

YES NO



New Sidewalks give pedestrians and kids extra safety when walking to work, school, or grocery store.

\$10

YES NO



Park Amphitheater provides an outdoor space to celebrate cultural events or family gatherings.

\$10

YES NO



Water Amenities at the park provide fishing and aquatic recreation.

\$15

YES NO

Do your chosen projects total to \$20?

Yes No

Your feedback is important for the Eastridge Neighborhood Planning process. We encourage you to come to the Eastridge Elementary Fall Carnival at 5:30 PM October 22nd to learn more about how the City of Amarillo is working to improve the Eastridge Neighborhood. If you are unable to attend the Fall Carnival, please return this worksheet to **Bethesda Ministries** or **Eastridge Elementary School** where the Planning Team can receive your input. **Questions? Call (806)-378-6291 or visit amarillo.gov/eastridgeplan**

Plan Process and Public Engagement

Survey Results and Focus Groups

Resident Survey

COVID-19 and the different language groups were the primary reasons why the outreach process began with a Resident Survey. Surveys were created in nine different languages- Somali, Burmese, English, Hakha Chin, Karen, Lao, Swahili, Vietnamese, and Spanish. A representative from each different language group assisted with the distribution and the collection of all surveys. A total of 450 surveys were distributed, 50 for each language group, and 134 surveys were returned to be translated to English and analyzed. With assistance from the Refugee Language Project, paid translators were able to help translate the survey responses back to English.

After reviewing the feedback from the surveys, many common complaints were shared across the numerous language groups. Below is a summary of the data collected from the surveys:

- Among all surveys, the three top neighborhood issues were improvement of housing conditions (14%), reduction in crime (13%), and opportunities for better jobs (10%).
- 43% of survey participants do not feel safe in their neighborhood and another 30% marked neutral. Numerous written responses included complaints of crime, speeding, and lack of security presence in Eastridge.
- Over half (53%) of the survey participants believe their neighborhood is unattractive and another 29% are neutral. Numerous comments were made about trash and illegal dumping throughout the neighborhood. The residents consider this to be one of the biggest issues Eastridge consistently faces.
- Many residents enjoy amenities that are available to them while living in Eastridge. They have access to the goods and services they need (30%), the schools are high quality (28%), and they are not likely to move in the next five years (41%).
- Each language group was appreciative of their individual communities they have in Eastridge. Survey participants often wrote that they were thankful to be near family, friends and their places of worship. The only problem they would encounter was finding a large enough location for their communities to gather. Several surveys mention a desire for a community center in their neighborhood.
- A consistent issue that the neighborhood faces that was written by several Somali and Swahili residents included the train at NE 24th Ave and Eastern St. It is considered to be a traffic nuisance for residents during their work commutes and a danger for children walking to and from school. Eastridge residents desire a solution that will alleviate them of the hassle the train tracks bring to their day-to-day life.

Refugee Dialogue Responses

Advisory Committee member, Dr. Ryan Pennington with the Refugee Language Project, graciously shared in-depth research from previous outreach conducted in 2019-2020 to better understand the challenges refugee families face in Amarillo. The research process included facilitated workshops with the Chin, Karen, Somali and African-Christian communities. They were asked to discuss four topics: Staying and Leaving Amarillo, Community Places, Culture and Business. While each language group may be geographically represented throughout Amarillo, the research is informative for the specific needs of refugees wherever they reside. Below is a summary used to help inform the plan written by City staff after reviewing the research notes.

African-Christian Community – The African-Christian community enjoys the Amarillo area, but they need assistance in creating and having the jobs that promote their culture and family life. The process to

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integrate into the community is difficult because they lack resources and experience a language barrier. Their strengths lie in their ability to create handcrafted goods and grow whole foods to sell, yet they do not have business resources available to them to achieve that. The only income that is available to them are the jobs in the meat-packing industry which negatively affects their family life.

Chin Community – The Chin community is much smaller in comparison to the other immigrant communities in the Amarillo area. They need assistance in developing English language skills, business ideas as well as immigrant resources so they are more comfortable living here. They want better job opportunities, and they believe if they were given the resources to start a small-scale farm, they would be able to slowly build an economy for their community that will lead them away from the meat-packing jobs they hold at the moment.

Karen Community – The Karen community enjoys Amarillo, but they, like many of the other communities, are lacking the resources in order to flourish in the American system. There are very little job opportunities since many do not know how to speak English. They, like the Chin community, would like to figure out a program that will help them get started in agriculture as an alternative to their jobs at JBS and Tyson. They would love to start their own business but lack the resources to make that happen. They need adult education classes as well as access to daycare during those times.

Somali Community – The Somali community feels that Amarillo is home, but they want to be able to succeed more within it. Since they are the community with the smallest business success, they would like to continue in being a part of the growing economy by opening daycares, clothing stores and beauty salons. They feel as if people have stereotyped them, and they want Amarillo to learn more about their culture and understand them, so they have a better opportunity for growth.

After reviewing the interviews from each community, there were several repeating themes for needed support. **The first is social services.** The refugees from each community mentioned the lack of guidance and resources once they get here. They can't speak or read English, they lack insurance, and they lack the opportunities for any jobs other than in the meat-packing industry because they are unable to speak English. Without any guidance for learning English or small business development, people in each of these community feel as if they must work in a job that is mentally and physically taxing in order to have stability and income for their family. **The second is space to celebrate their culture.** Each community has a great love for their culture and traditions, but they do not have a consistent space other than a church to celebrate it. Every community is in favor of a well-established and organized community center that will allow them to have markets, teach classes, celebrate events, and provide guidance for establishing a life here in Amarillo. **Third and finally, agriculture was of consistent importance** to each of the immigrant communities, but they lack the resources and space to be able to practice what they are naturally experienced in.

Overall, the communities feel the lack of opportunities and outreach from the City will drive them to move somewhere else in order to find better jobs, better benefits and better opportunities for them and their families to flourish. In order for the communities to stay in Amarillo, they need more opportunities for them to advance, find jobs and improve the quality of their family life by being able to consistently celebrate their cultures.

Business Owners

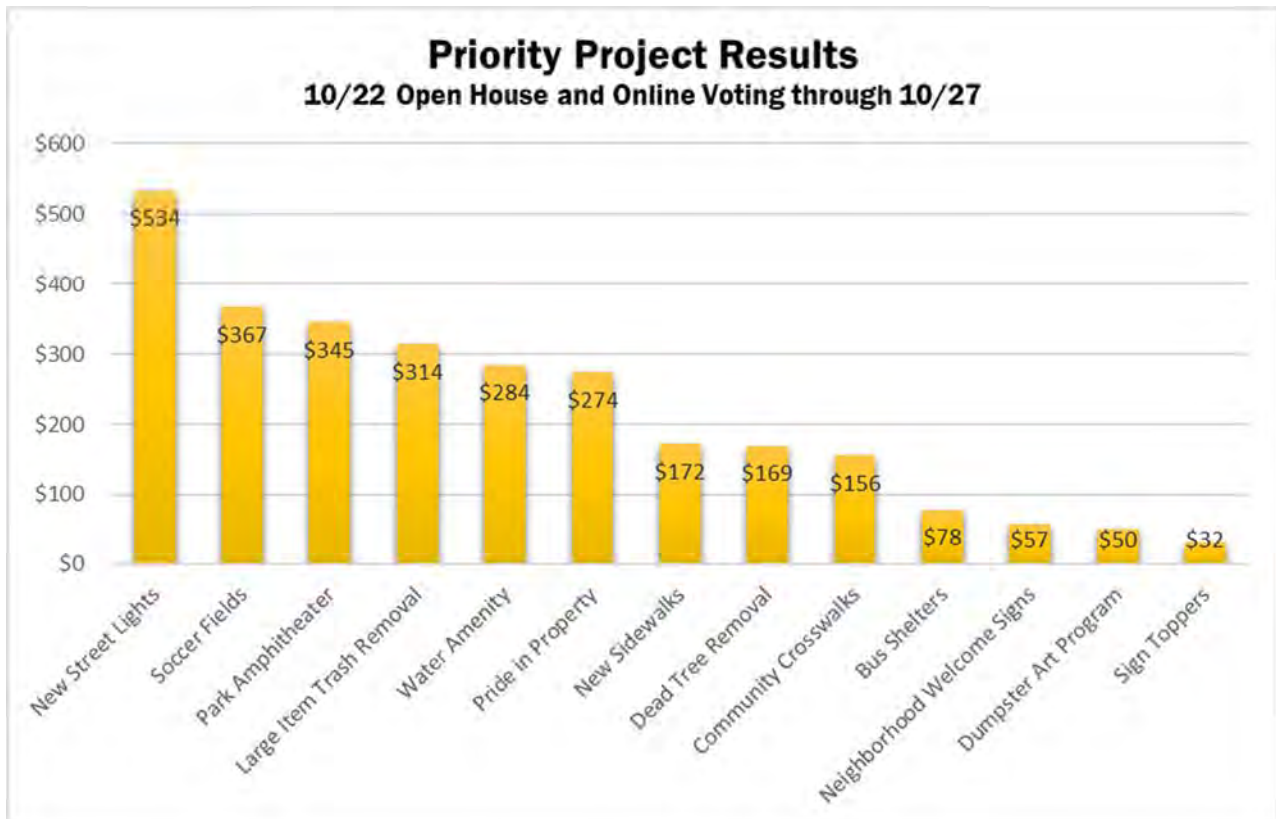
Economic Development is an important factor for positive growth in a neighborhood. After building an inventory of businesses and major employers within the plan boundary, City staff created a survey for

Plan Process and Public Engagement

small business owners to learn more about their experience in opening and running a business. Below is a summary of the survey experience and what was discovered:

- A total of 86 small businesses are located in within the Eastridge boundary. Of those businesses, staff narrowed down 30 businesses to distribute surveys to. Of the 30 surveys distributed, seven were received back.
- All survey participants are family owned and operated businesses and residents of Eastridge. Majority of their employees are family members that work full-time.
- Five of the seven businesses own their building as opposed to renting. To small business owners, Eastridge is a good location due to cheaper land or rent and caterign to the cultures in the neighborhood.
- Obtaining permits and licensing was a smoother process to most than expected. However, small business owners ran into application struggles with the COVID-19 grants. Many were denied funding and their last resort to keep their businesses afloat were credit cards. This led to debts that they are having a difficult time paying off.
- Several suggestions for new businesses included more retail, entertainment options, shopping plaza, and dry cleaners.
- Overall, the responses to the survey were positive. Majority of the business owners want more people who live outside of Eastridge to visit their businesses and experience what Eastridge has to offer. They are in need of more marketing and advertising resources to expand their clientele across the city.

Priority Projects Voting Activity (Conducted online and at the Fall Carnival)



Plan Process and Public Engagement

Property Owners

The City of Amarillo facilitated a property owners' survey that was created online and advertised by a mass postcard mailing around the neighborhood. The purpose of the survey was to engage property owners in the neighborhood, share information collected from the community, gather feedback, and discuss strategies to improve neighborhood property conditions.

The condition of the residential housing stock in Eastridge was identified early on as one of the area's major challenges. Conditions such as extremely neglected and substandard homes and the presence of "slumlords" contribute significantly to the negative perceptions of the neighborhood.

A total of 1800 postcards were sent to individuals or entities that own properties in the Eastridge neighborhood plan boundary. Eight property owners attended the meeting. Property owners' concerns around the neighborhood's housing stock were generally aligned with the community's concerns. Owners agreed that crime, lack of ample police presence, illegal dumping and trash, and dilapidated/substandard structures were of top concern. The property owners discussed both impediments to improving the housing stock and potential solutions that included a Pride in Property grant opportunity. They noted that even if minor repairs were made to doors, windows, front porches and fences through a grant opportunity, they believed that tenants would still not maintain the properties.

City of Amarillo

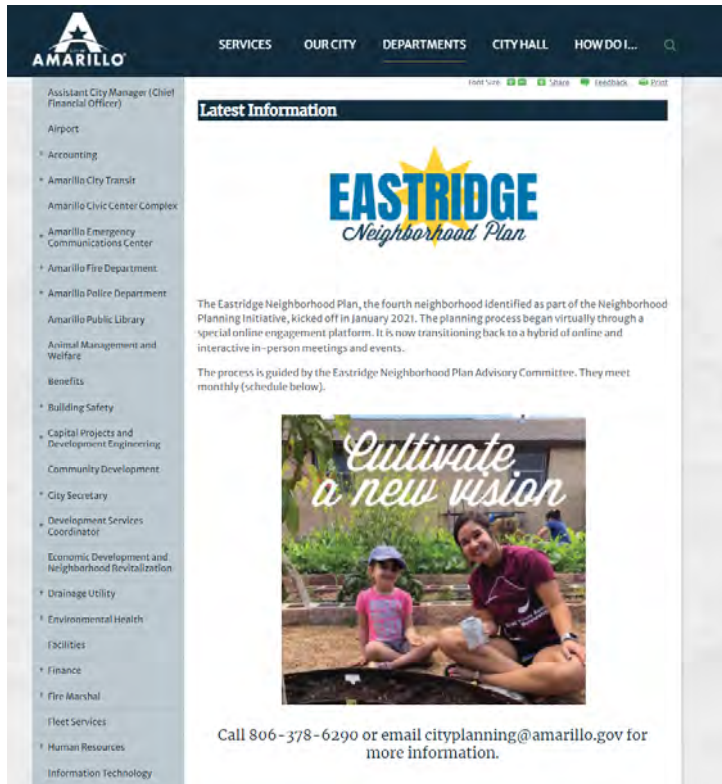
In total, there were five focus group meetings held with various city departments. The neighborhood expressed common concerns about communication and coordination with the City of Amarillo. These conversations not only helped highlight issues, but they also served to create open lines of communication among staff and the neighborhood.

An interdepartmental working group formed as a result of these efforts and the group will continue to meet regularly to address policy issues impacting neighborhoods with a focus on critical items in the plan areas. Below is the list of meetings conducted with other city departments:

- Initial Eastridge City-wide Department Meeting – August 31st, 2021
- Amarillo Police Department (Neighborhood Patrol Officers) – September 2nd, 2021
- Parks and Recreation – September 15th, 2021
- Community Development & Building Safety – September 16th, 2021
- Traffic Engineering and Transit – October 5th, 2021

Communications

The Public Engagement Plan utilized a series of methods to reach participants including social media, tv and newspaper coverage, direct mail, and word-of-mouth information-sharing among neighbors. Eastridge Elementary School regularly sent flyers home in school packets in the appropriate languages to parents advertising the events. City staff completed the graphic design and promotion. Examples are included below from the City’s website and social media, the Social Pinpoint website designed for engagement, and the direct mail pieces.





Welcome . ڤيڤتتوڤنڤب . Soo dhawo . Chào mừng . Over the next year, we'll come together here to create a new vision for Eastridge. Every resident, business owner and community supporter is needed. Join us!

Provide your input!

You can still provide comments about what you like about Eastridge and what you would change by taking the neighborhood survey and making comments on the Eastridge Map.



ACTIVITY 1: Survey

Let us know what you think about Eastridge. This short survey helps focus the entire plan.

Take the Survey



ACTIVITY 2: Mapping

Add your ideas and comments to the Eastridge map to shape future improvements together!

Go to Map



ACTIVITY 3: SWOT

Take a look at what your neighbors say about Eastridge's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. As more people complete the survey and map, this will be updated to reflect everyone's comments.

Join the Discussion

EASTRIDGE
Neighborhood Plan

Drag to comment > Let's Do Better (Red Pin) Something I Like (Blue Pin) Big Ideas! (Orange Pin)

Instructions

Translate | العربية | Tarjum

SHOW US WHERE!

ACTIVITY

We want you to show us where!

Use this map to show us things that you told us about in the survey. Point out the things you like, flag areas that need that to be improved and put on the map any of your big ideas for Eastridge.

From your computer:

Click and drag the icons at the top of the map to the location you want to focus on. Add as many ideas as you'd like!

From your phone:

Use "Add Comment" at the top of the map to share your thoughts. Choose the marker that fits your idea and place it on the map!

View and comment on other ideas by choosing "Activity".

Legend

- Let's Do Better
- Something I Like
- Big Ideas!

Plan Process and Public Engagement

Join Eastridge Elementary and the City of Amarillo at the
FALL FESTIVAL
 Friday, October 22nd
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

🍎 Games 🍎 Food 🍎 Music 🍎 Fun

\$650,000 is being invested in **YOUR** neighborhood!
 How would you spend it?

EASTRIDGE Neighborhood Plan | AMARILLO TEXAS

CREATE A NEW VISION

City staff will be available for your questions and input on the Eastridge Neighborhood Plan. Call ahead for more information at 806-378-6290 for more info.

Translate

EASTRIDGE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT

Join the Eastridge Plan Advisory Committee and the City of Amarillo
Thursday, December 2nd @ 6:00 PM
 at the Refugee Services of Texas - 1101 Fritch Highway

Improving housing conditions in Eastridge is one of the main priorities in the Eastridge neighborhood planning process and we want to hear from **you**, the property owners on how to help guide the neighborhood towards positive change.

CAN'T ATTEND?

Make your voice heard through the online survey here

OR

Contact the Planning Department at 806-378-6290

ENGLISH
 Interested in being a part of the Eastridge Neighborhood Association? We need your voice! Find out more January 13th at 5:30 PM. Location at Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

SPANISH
 ¿Está interesado en ser parte de la Asociación de Vecinos de Eastridge? ¡Necesitamos tu voz! Más información 13 de enero a las 17:30 h. Ubicación en Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

SWAHILI
 Je, ungependa kuwa sehemu ya Jumuiya ya Kitongoji cha Eastridge? Tunahitaji sauti yako! Pata maelezo zaidi Januari 13 saa 5:30 Usiku. Mahali pa Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

SOMALI
 Ma xiiisaynaysaa ka mid noqoshada Ururka Xaafada Eastridge? Waxaan u baahanahay codkaaga! Wax badan ka ogow Janaayo 13keeda 5:30 galabnimo. Goobta Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

VIETNAMESE
 Bạn muốn trở thành thành viên của Hiệp hội Khu phố Eastridge? Chúng tôi cần tiếng nói của bạn! Tìm hiểu thêm ngày 13 tháng 1 lúc 5:30 chiều. Vị trí tại Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

LAO
 ມີຄວາມສົນໃຈໃນການເປັນສ່ວນໜຶ່ງຂອງສະມາຄົມ Eastridge ລຸ່ມບ້ານບໍ? ພວກເຮົາຕ້ອງການສຽງຂອງເຈົ້າ! ຕິດຕາມໄດ້ທີ່ 13 ມັງກອນ ເວລາ 17:30 ໂມງແລງ. ສະຖານທີ່ຢູ່ Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY.

BURMESE
 Eastridge Neighborhood Association ၏တစ်စိတ်တစ်ပိုင်းဖြစ်ရန် စိတ်ဝင်စားပါသလား။ မင်းရဲ့အသံကို ငါတို့လိုအပ်ပါ။ ဇန်နဝါရီလ 13 ရက်နေ့ ညနေ 5:30 တွင် မှတ်တမ်းတင်ခွဲပါသည်။ Bethesda Outreach, 1101 Fritch HWY တွင် တည်နေရန်။

Questions?
 Preguntas?
 Maswali?
 Su'ala!
 ၵူဝါ ၵိုဝါ?
 မေးခွန်းများ?

Contact the Planning Department at 806 - 378 - 6290 or visit www.amarillo.gov/eastridgeplan

Existing Conditions Analysis

During the first phase of the planning process, the City of Amarillo completed an existing conditions analysis to form an understanding of Eastridge’s history, demographics, and the built environment. This included a review of both quantitative data, such as GIS mapping, census demographic information and crime statistics, as well as the collection of qualitative community input. The existing conditions analysis provides a snapshot of the neighborhood and establishes a baseline from which thoughtful decisions can be made about its future.

Introduction

The 2016 Neighborhood Planning Initiative identified Eastridge as one of the priority areas due in large part to concerns about the overall condition of the neighborhood as well as its integration and connection – both physical as well as civic and social – into the larger city. It’s a very unique neighborhood and its cultural diversity should be an asset to the overall quality of life here in Amarillo. A major theme throughout the planning process is that Eastridge neighborhood residents desire physical space and opportunity to celebrate their cultures which in turn can add to the richness of Amarillo overall.

Compared to some of the other plan areas, incomes, home values and home ownership are all higher and more aligned with the City’s average overall. The primary challenges include the physical appearance of housing and widespread issues with bulk trash and illegal dumping, and the lack of economic opportunity and mobility available to many of the residents.

Boundaries and Subdivisions

Located in northeast Amarillo, the Eastridge neighborhood is defined for the purposes of this study as the area possessing a northern boundary between NE 24th Avenue, an eastern boundary of N Whitaker Rd, a southern boundary of NE 3rd Avenue (which turns into the BNSF Railroad), and a western boundary of N Grand St. The neighborhood encompasses approximately 1,606 acres (2.51 square miles) and primarily contains a mix of residential and industrial properties, but also includes several educational, non-profit, and faith-based institutions. While East Amarillo Boulevard is the primary commercial district, several auto-oriented commercial uses and industrial companies may also be found along the neighborhood’s primary arterial roadways of N Grand and Eastern Streets. What is historically known as Eastridge is the Eastridge subdivision platted in 1952. It runs along the East Amarillo Boulevard and surrounds Eastridge Park and Elementary School. However, the planning boundary for this study encompasses additional subdivisions including some of Amarillo’s earliest platted areas including include East Amarillo, Greenbrier, The Park, Amarillo Industrial Park, and McKinstry Gilvin and Williams.

Neighborhood Fast Facts

Earliest Subdivision: 1952

Current Population: 8,139

Plan Area: 1,587 acres

of National Register Districts: 0

of Schools: 1

of Churches: 13

of Parks: 1

of Businesses: 86

of Multiple (4+) Property Owners:

Median Age: 30.7

Median Household Income: \$46,724

Home Ownership: 60%

% at/below Poverty Line: 29%

Average Home Value (PRAD): \$70,874

Vacant Housing Units: 10% (305)

Existing Conditions Analysis



Figure 1 - Eastridge Neighborhood Plan Boundary Map

Existing Conditions Analysis

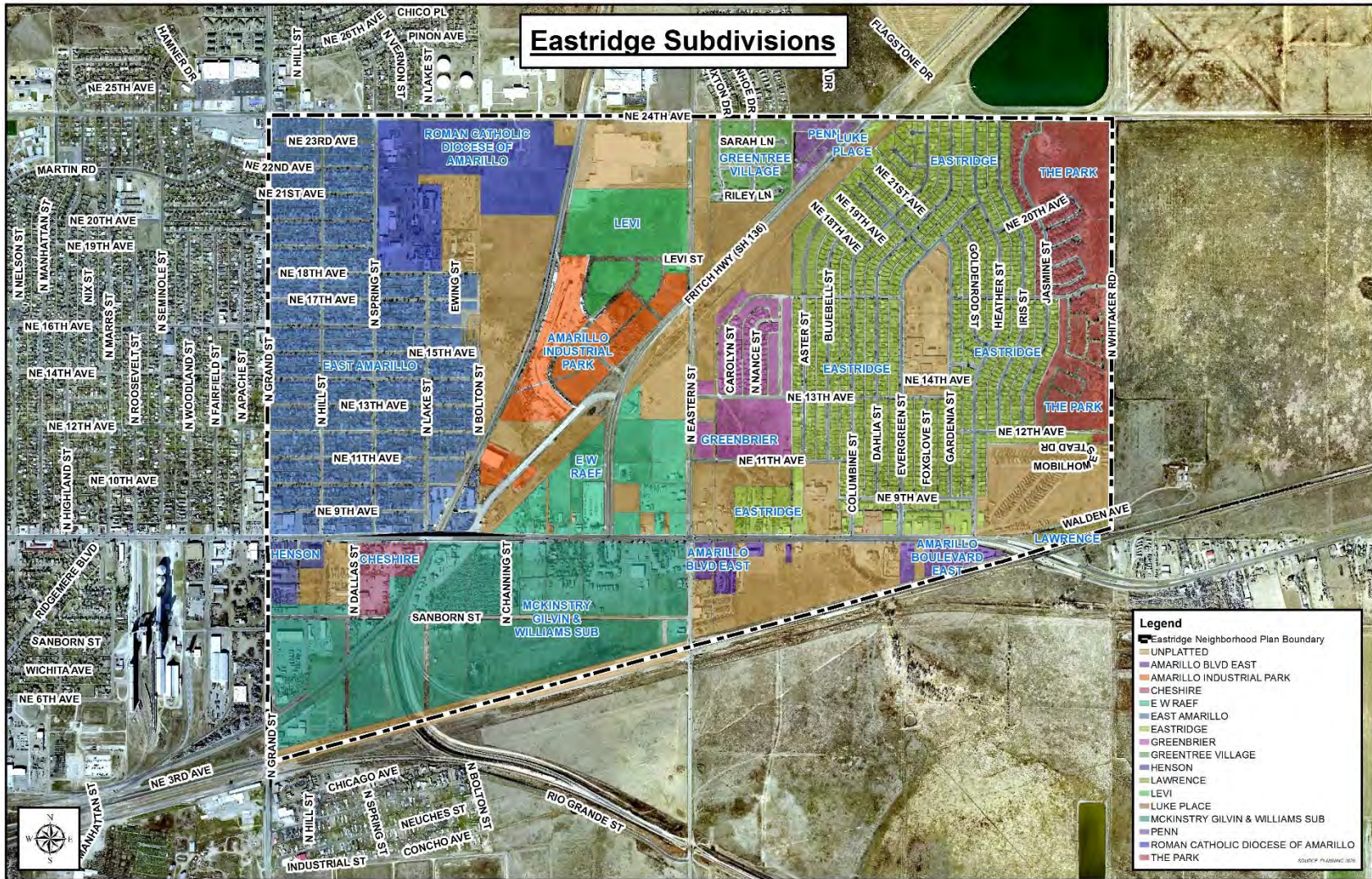


Figure 2 – Eastridge Subdivisions

Existing Conditions Analysis

Neighborhood History and Timeline

1951: The Amarillo Air Force Base opens providing jobs, new opportunities, and beginnings for Northeast Amarillo.

1952: Eastridge Units 1 & 2 Subdivisions were officially platted and approved for building new single family home dwellings. The new subdivisions were the beginning of the Eastridge Neighborhood.

1953-1965: Eastridge began to boom next to the Air Force base and the Route 66 corridor. New subdivisions began to assist with the expansion of the neighborhood.

1968: The Amarillo Air Force base closes and slows the expansion of Northeast Amarillo.

1970: Refugee support begins with Catholic Charities providing assistance to Cuban refugees.

1971: Tyson Meatpacking Factory opened creating job opportunities for newly settled refugees needing jobs to support their families.

1975: The Vietnam War ends and Amarillo becomes a location for refugees from Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos to seek to a new life post-war.

1990: The Texas Department of Criminal Justice opens the Clements Unit in Northeast Amarillo, near the Eastridge Neighborhood.

2006: A new wave of refugees begin to settle in Amarillo from Burma, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan.

*Preservation Priority
Evaluation by Hardy Heck
Moore, 1995 Survey
See map on page 26*

High Priority – Contributes significantly to local history or broader historic patterns; is an outstanding, unique or good representative example of architecture, engineering or crafted design; is a good example of a common local building form or architectural style and retains a significant portion of its original character and contextual integrity; and meets in some cases criteria for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Medium Priority – Contributes moderately to local history or broader historical patterns, but alterations or deterioration have diminished the resource's integrity; is a typical example of architecture, engineering or crafted design; is typical example of a common local building form, or architectural style.



Vintage Postcard, 1953



Vintage Postcard, 1955

Existing Conditions Analysis

Route 66

This stretch of Route 66 provides the gateway to Amarillo for those driving westward on the original historic highway. This alignment dates from 1932-1956, the heyday of roadside travel. The entire Texas length of Route 66 was surveyed by the Texas Historical Commission in 2016 and a number of medium and high priority buildings are identified in this area.

Address	Type	Historic Address	Historic Name	Priority
3207 E Amarillo Blvd	Gas Station	3207 E Amarillo Blvd	Phillips 66	High
3902 E Amarillo Blvd	Gas Station	3902 E Amarillo Blvd	Chevron	High
4600 E Amarillo Blvd	Tourist Court (30+ Cabins)	4600 NE 8 th Ave	Biltmore Courts	High
5407 E Amarillo Blvd	Motel / Tourist Court	5407 E Amarillo Blvd	Colonial Courts	High
7840 E Amarillo Blvd	Motel / Tourist Court	7840 E Amarillo Blvd	The Triangle Motel	High



Vintage Postcard, 1955



Vintage Postcard, 1955



Original Big Texan Building, 1962



Colonial Courts



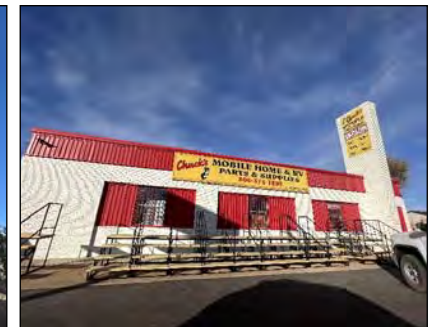
Biltmore Courts



Eastridge Lanes



Triangle Motel



Original Big Texan Building

Existing Conditions Analysis



Figure 3 – Historic Designations and Survey Priority Recommendations

Existing Conditions Analysis

Community Points of Interest

The neighborhood is home to eight different religious organizations which include seven Churches, a Mosque, and a Karen Buddhist Temple. There is only one school, Eastridge Elementary, that is located within the boundary. The school is the heart of the neighborhood and lies directly next to Eastridge Park at NE 13th and Evergreen St. The park has plenty of open space for recreation and contains the neighborhood's main playground and picnic area, and an athletic court. Since Eastridge is known for being culturally diverse, there are several different markets that cater to the different cultures in the neighborhood. Tri's Marketplace and Blue-Sky Asian Market are the popular locations for people to gather and grab groceries.

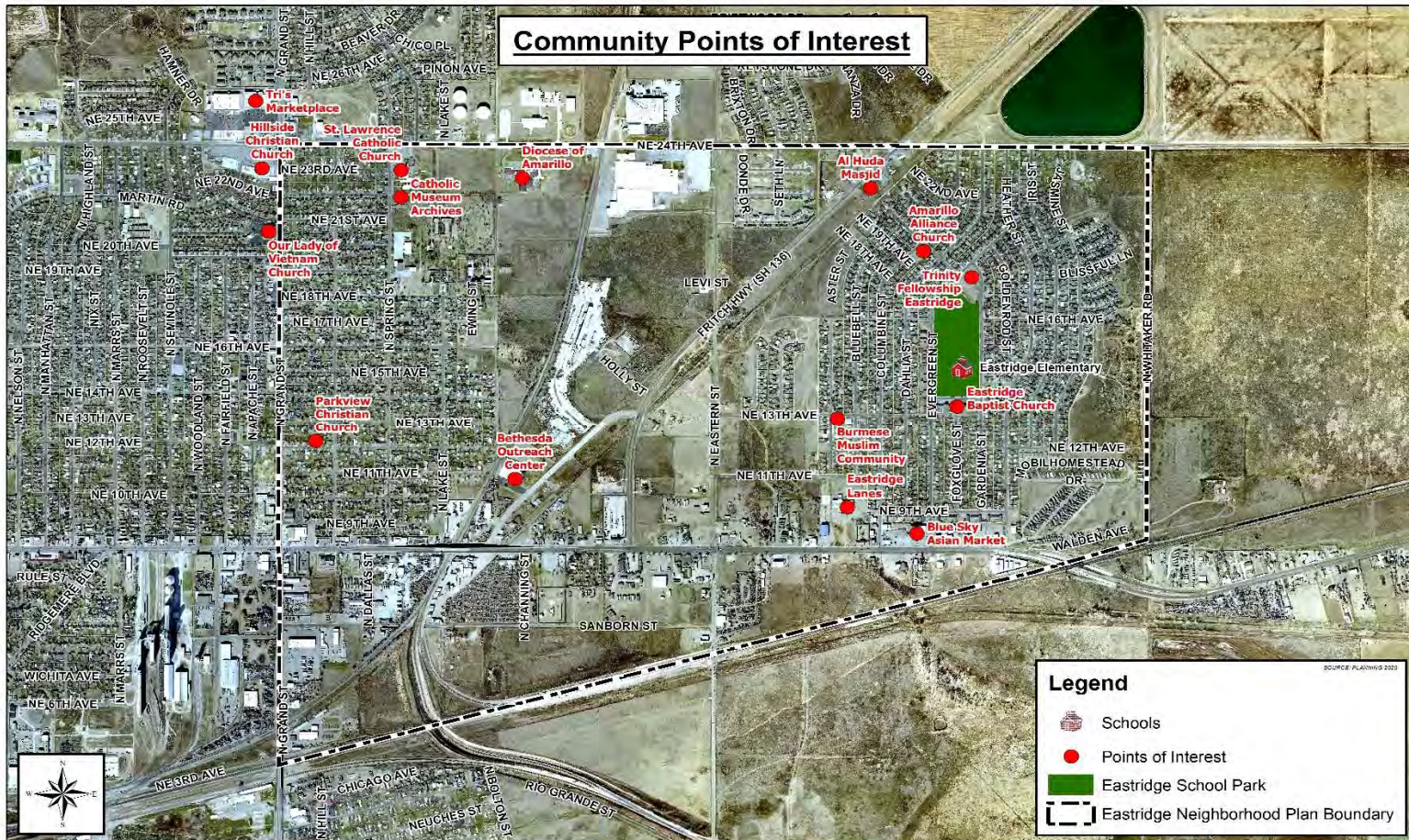


Figure 4 - Points of Interest

Existing Conditions Analysis

Community Points of Interest Photos – Representative Examples



Existing Conditions Analysis

Zoning and Land Use

Current Zoning

Zoning plays an important role in regulating the type of development permitted within a neighborhood. It is a tool used to create a safe and comfortable environment for the residents who live or work in the neighborhood.

- In Eastridge, a little under half of the neighborhood’s land area is zoned residential: Residential District-1 (R-1), Residential District-2 (R-2), Residential District-3 (R-3), and Multiple Family District-1 (MF-1). Split between the northwestern border of the neighborhood boundary and surrounding the elementary school, (R-2) accounts for 17.81% of the neighborhood’s zoning. (R-3) allows for smaller lots resulting in a denser residential district which falls on the East side on Grand St. (R-1) allows for larger lot development, but it composes a relatively small proportion of the neighborhood just north of the park. Residential zoning is intended for residential use, however the standards set forth by the respective zonings differ slightly in significant ways (see Table 1).
- MF-1 accounts for 3.77% of zoning within Eastridge. Located in small portions of the neighborhood around NE 9th and 13th Streets, MF-1 primarily deviates from R-1 and R-3 by allowing a greater variety of residential products, such as group living quarters, duplexes (two-family houses), or apartment complexes (multiple family housing).
- Light Industrial zoning (I-1) is the second-largest zoning category in Eastridge (33.62%). This zone splits the neighborhood by falling along the Fritch Highway and the Amarillo Boulevard. Light Industrial permits a wide range of intensive uses including hauling and storage, freight terminals, auto body/painting as well as dance halls, amusement parks, theaters, and more. It currently is one of two zoning districts that allows for adult businesses. Light industrial does not permit single family or duplex residential. Heavy Industrial Zoning (I-2) accounts for 12.48% of the land and expands uses for heavier industrial businesses such as meat processing facilities, large storage areas, and auto service stations.
- Light Commercial zoning (LC) comprises 3.43% of the land area. Areas of Light Commercial zoning (LC) and Heavy Commercial (HC) (1.51%) zoning primarily fall along major commercial corridors including N Grand St and the E Amarillo Boulevard. Light and heavy commercial permit a wide range of commercial uses as well as residential.

<i>Current Zoning Designation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
General Retail (GR)	30.54	1.9%
Light Commercial (LC)	55.09	3.43%
Heavy Commercial (HC)	24.36	1.51%
Light Industrial (I-1)	539.81	33.62%
Heavy Industrial (I-2)	200.49	12.48%
Planned Development (PD)	89.22	5.55%
Multi-Family Residential (MF-1)	60.54	3.77%
Residential 1 (R-1)	125.48	7.81%
Residential 1 w/ SUP (R-1/S)	.63	0.03%
Residential 2 (R-2)	285.95	17.81%
Residential 2 w/ SUP (R-2/S)	9.45	0.58%
Residential 3 (R-3)	183.72	11.44%
Residential 3 w/SUP (R-3/S)	.18	0.01%

Table 1. Current Zoning

Existing Conditions Analysis

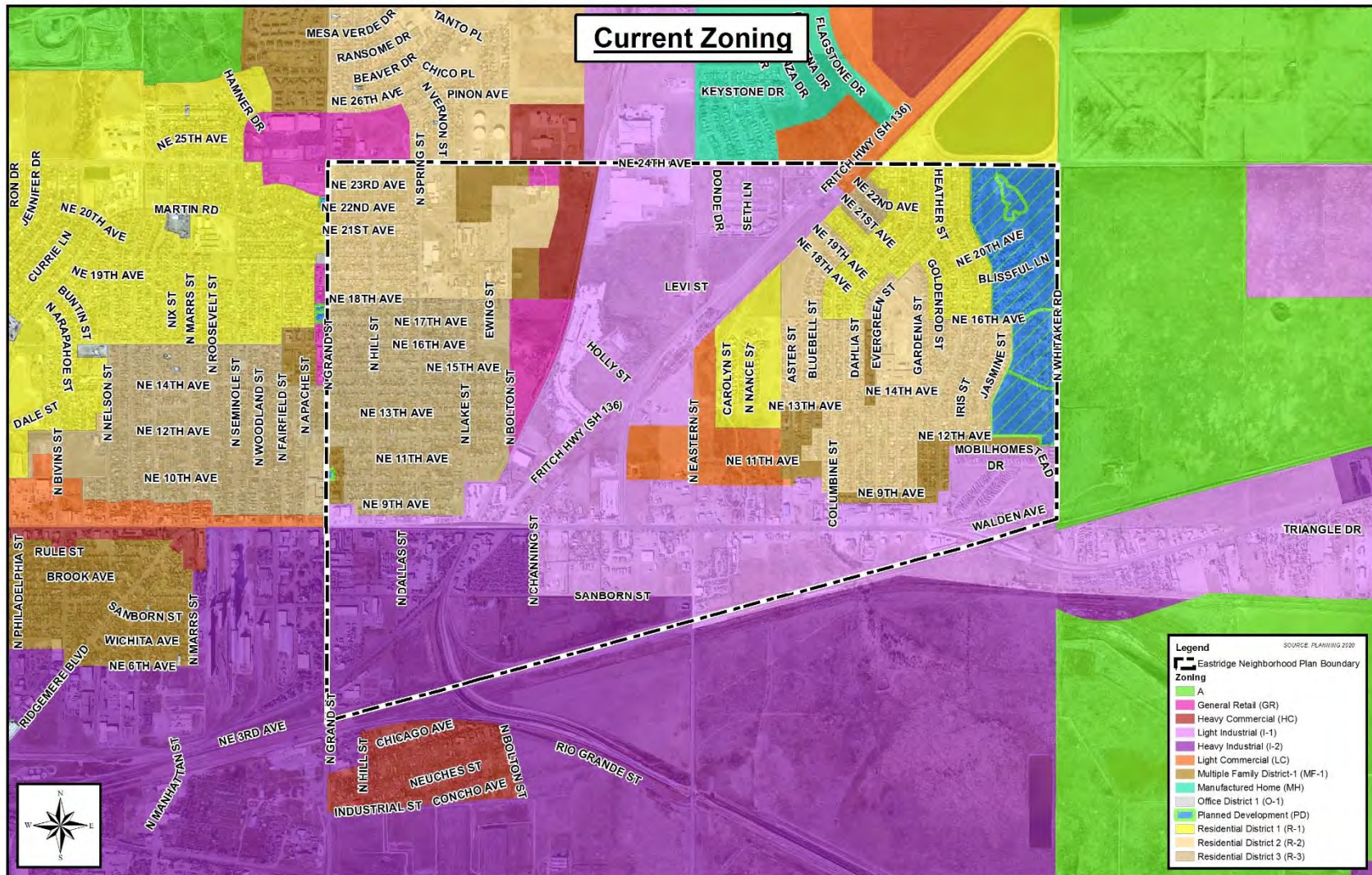


Figure 5 - Current Zoning

Existing Conditions Analysis

Current Land Use

While zoning indicates what a piece of property may legally be used for, land use reveals the property's actual function. This data is mapped utilizing the Potter Randall County Appraisal District's (PRAD) land use codes. An examination of current land use by lot/tract reveals the following:

Agricultural/Vacant Land makes up most of the current land use in Eastridge. Most of the vacant land falls in the middle of the plan boundary that falls along the Fritch Highway. Single Family and Office / Commercial make up the next two largest categories. Single Family lots are placed near the Eastern and Western borders of the plan and expand inward towards the Fritch Highway. Office/Commercial use mainly falls along N Grand St from NE 3rd St to NE 24th and the E Amarillo Boulevard. Industrial land use falls along the railway system that flows throughout the neighborhood.

<i>Current Land Use Designation</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>
Agricultural / Vacant	504.24	38.12%
Duplex	9.02	0.68%
Industrial	74.30	5.61%
Multiple Family	25.20	1.90%
Office / Commercial	238.70	18.04%
Public / Park / School	62.48	4.72%
Single Family	408.65	30.89%

Table 2. Current Land Use Designation

Current Zoning vs. Current Land Use

Comparing actual land use to current zoning can provide insight into neighborhood development patterns. Conflicts between current zoning and land use reveal areas for additional analysis. Findings from this plan can inform future rezoning initiatives. These findings are summarized below:

- The large amount of vacant land is positive for development purposes. There is plenty of room to develop the neighborhood and bring in more commercial businesses, single family homes, and public parks.
- Possible rezoning efforts are suggested near Eastern St and NE 11th due to it being classified as Industrial. It falls near the Residential neighborhood where the schools are located. If future businesses are wanting to assist in developing Eastridge, it would be worth researching a possible change of use for that area of land.

Existing Conditions Analysis

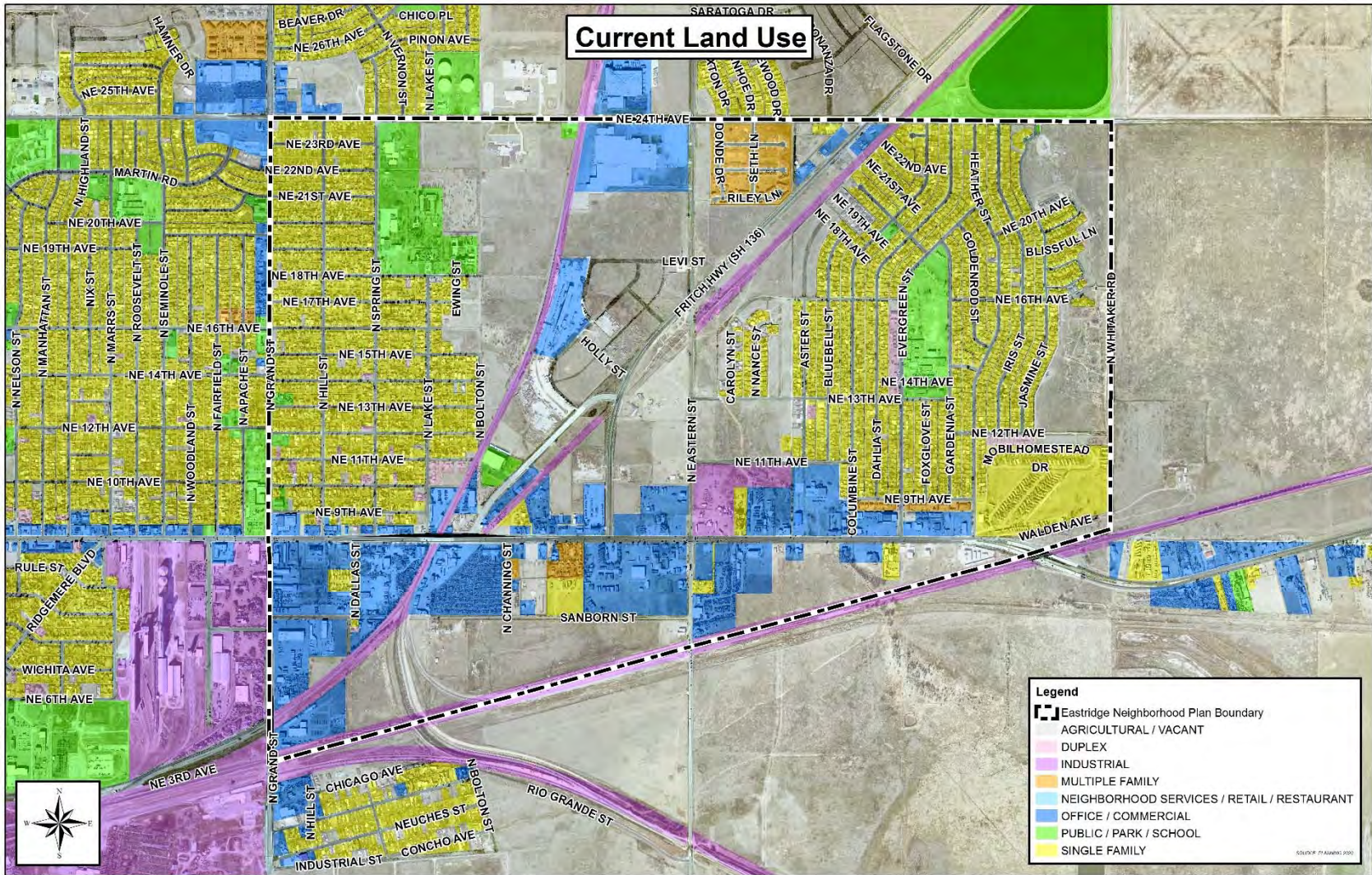


Figure 6 - Current Land Use

Existing Conditions Analysis

Future Land Use

Identifying future land uses is one of the important outcomes of comprehensive planning. According to Amarillo’s Comprehensive Plan, the future land uses for Eastridge are primarily General Residential, General Commercial and Industrial. These designations are not regulatory- future land use maps are created to guide development; for example, when rezoning is sought for a new construction project.

In the case of Eastridge, the Future Land Map generally follows what is currently built on the ground. Amarillo’s Comprehensive Plan is scheduled to be updated in 2022/2023 and these designations are likely to change.

The neighborhood planning process identified that Eastridge residents want two main things regarding future development: they want new quality single family homes and they want to benefit from the new commercial construction to the east such as the Amazon distribution center and Centerport Business Park.

Future comprehensive planning efforts should take into consideration the following observations for Eastridge:

- New, quality constructed, single-family residential development is desirable to the Eastridge neighborhood.
- Amarillo Boulevard should not be an industrial corridor, it should be redeveloped to serve the adjoining neighborhood as a retail corridor as well as provide business services and amenities appropriate to Route 66 travelers driving the historic highway.
- The neighborhood should feature a compatible transition to the east across Whitaker as it moves from single-family residential to commercial. Parks and trails have been suggested as ways to connect to future commercial
- The current industrial area along the railroad tracks and the Fritch Highway should be transitioned where possible to commercial uses to be more compatible to future residential. The areas east of the Fritch Highway moving towards Eastern are suitable for residential redevelopment.

<i>Future Land Use</i>	<i>Percent of Land Area</i>	<i>Acreage</i>
General Commercial (GC)	12.44%	155.43
General Residential (GR)	47%	587.03
Industrial (I)	36.07%	450.49
Multi-Family Residential (MFR)	1.36%	17.01
Parks-Recreation (P-R)	1.49%	18.62
Rural (R)	1.61%	20.23

Table 3. Future Land Use Designation

Existing Conditions Analysis

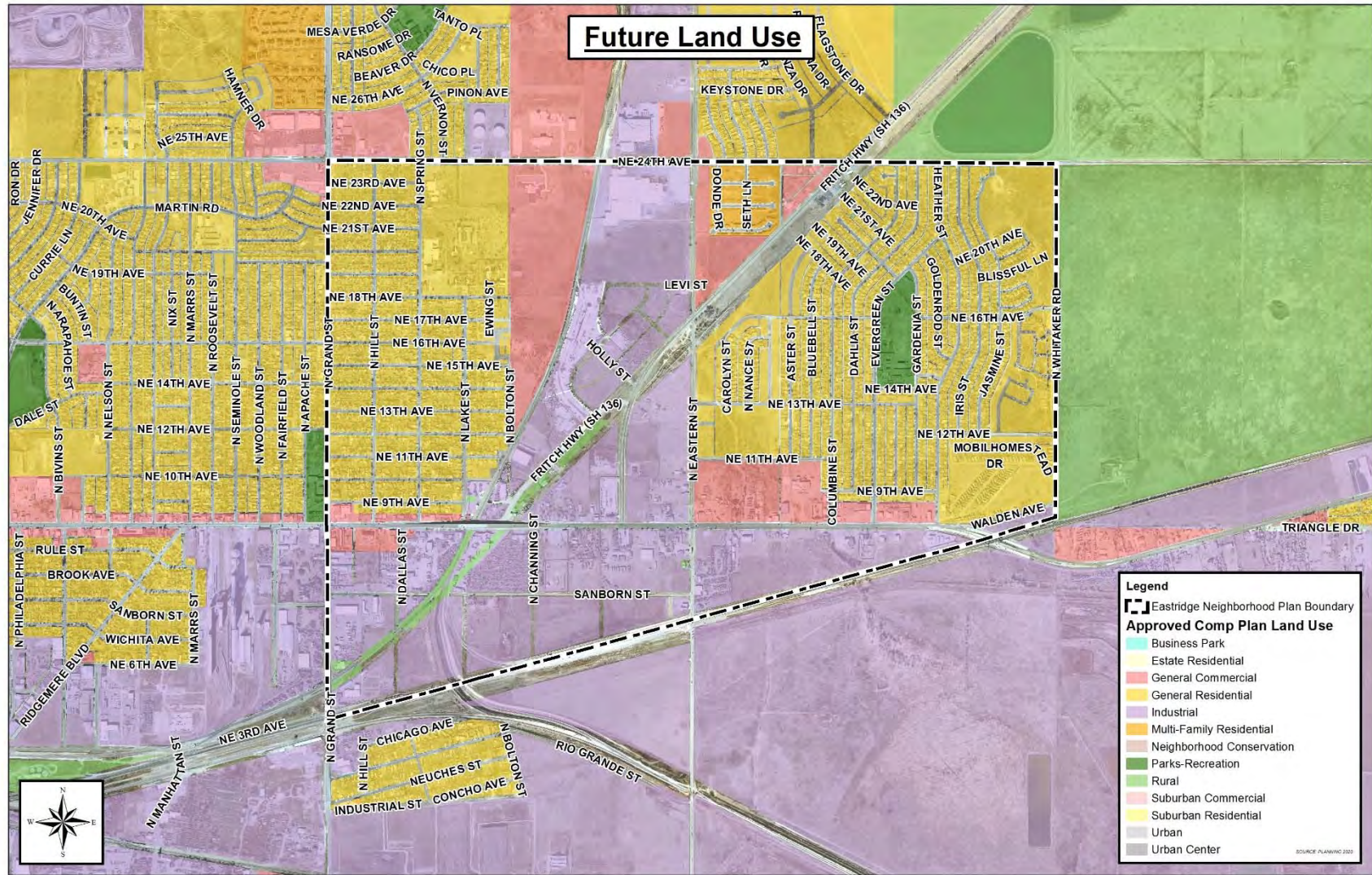


Figure 7 – Future Land Use

Existing Conditions Analysis

Demographics

The following series of maps (Figures 8-13) examines the demographic characteristics of the neighborhood. Data, unless otherwise indicated, was drawn from the US Census Bureau’s 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates or the 2020 Decennial Redistricting data, although at the time of completion of this plan, very little of the 2020 data had been released.

Race

Eastridge is known for being a diverse neighborhood. According to the 2020 Census, more than 60% of the neighborhood is a different race than white alone. The Asian population consists of the highest percentage within the neighborhood boundary. The reason for the high percentage is due to refugee resettlement patterns in Amarillo. Refugees have lived in this area since the first resettlement of Vietnamese in the 1970s after the Vietnam War. Many non-profits and organizations with resources to assist refugees are located in the neighborhood.

	BG 1, Census Tract 126	BG 2, Census Tract 126	BG 1, Census Tract 149	BG 2, Census Tract 149	BG 3, Census Tract 149	BG 4, Census Tract 149	Eastridge	Eastridge %	Amarillo %	Texas %
Total Population	1742	1210	1,373	1,780	1,913	121	8139			
White alone	520	340	176	228	399	51	1714	21.06%	61.23%	50%
Black or African American alone	84	191	206	191	137	8	817	10.04%	7.34%	12%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	26	29	14	3	14	5	91	1.12%	1.07%	1%
Asian alone	31	76	711	1,052	835	11	2716	33.37%	4.22%	5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	0.04%	0.04%	0%
Some Other Race alone	475	240	161	145	258	22	1301	15.98%	10.46%	14%
Two or more races	606	334	105	160	268	24	1497	18.39%	15.64%	18%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1331	719	339	343	672	56	3460	43%	33%	39%

Table 4. Race in Eastridge by Block Group

Existing Conditions Analysis

Foreign Born

According to ACS data, over 40% of Eastridge’s population is born in a foreign country. The highest foreign born population at 57% is in the southeast part of the neighborhood near Eastridge Elementary School. These numbers are strikingly high compared to the City’s overall percentage of 41%.

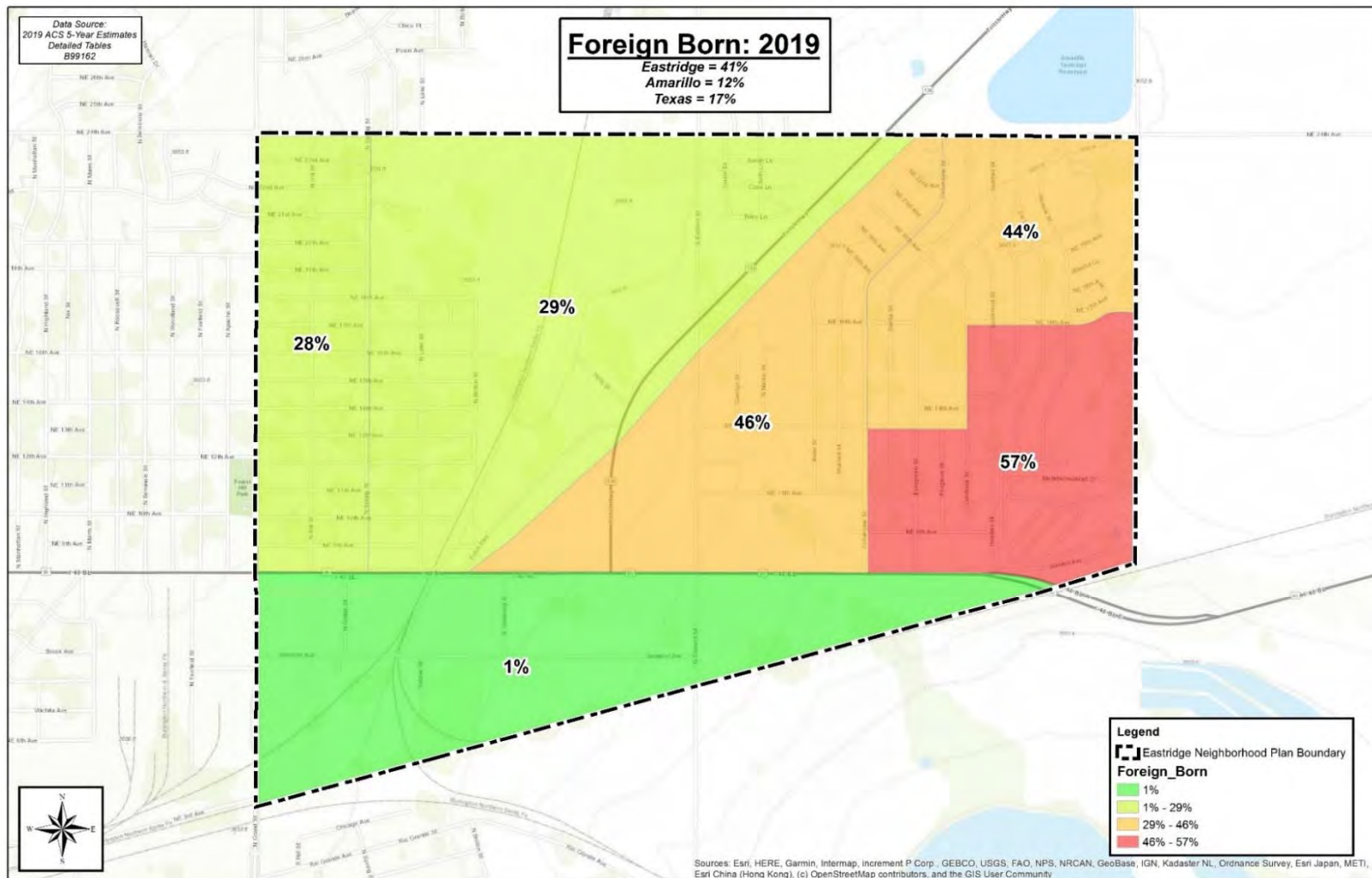


Figure 8 – Foreign Born per Block Group: 2019

Existing Conditions Analysis

Population

The population of the plan area is about 8,139, or approximately 4% of Amarillo's total estimated 2017 population of 200,393. This data speaks volumes of how high the population is for a small area of land. The need for more residential development rises as the population of the neighborhood grows.

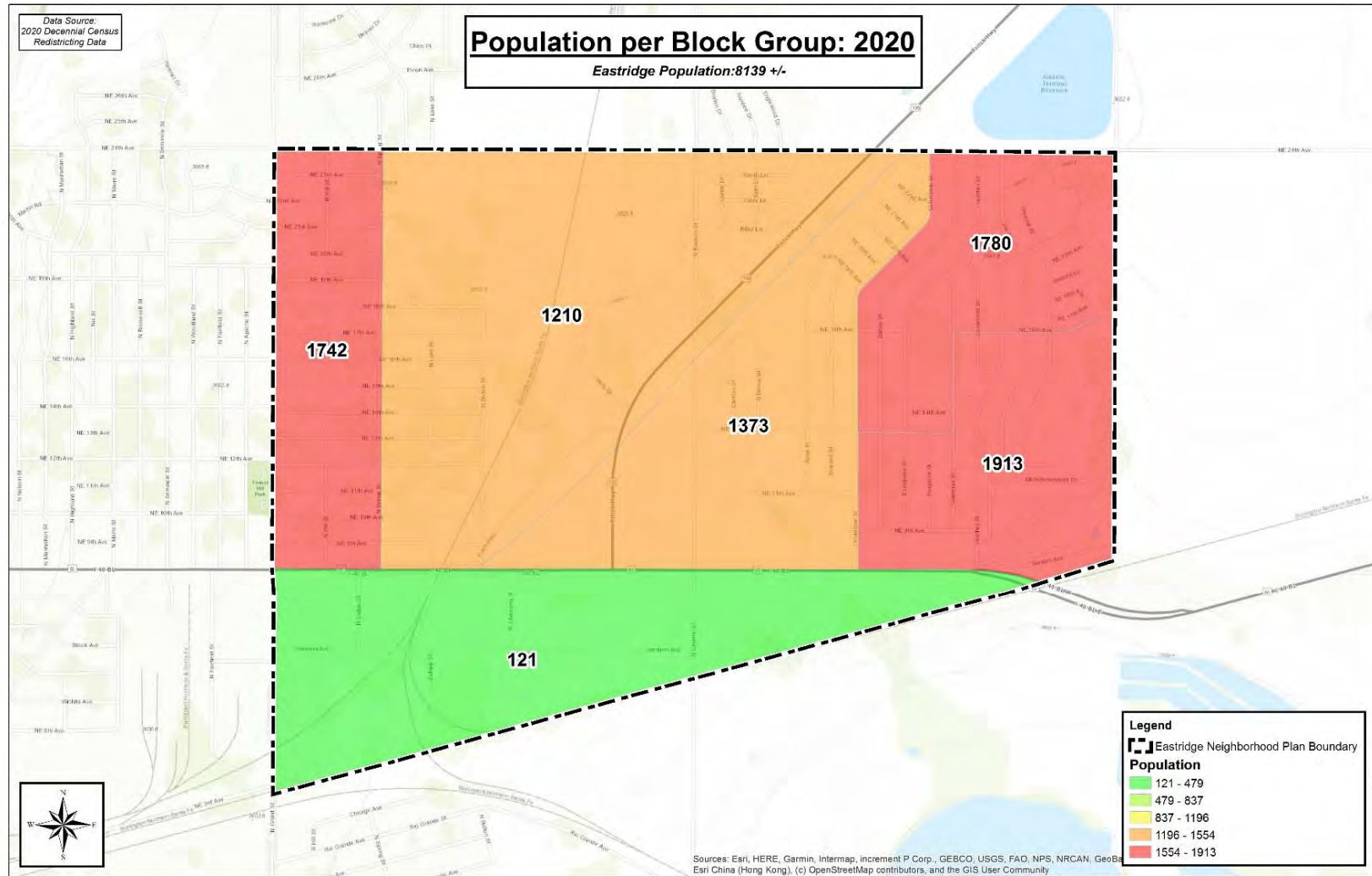


Figure 9 – Population per Block Group: 2020

Existing Conditions Analysis

Median Age

The median age of residents in Eastridge, 30.7, is younger than the median age of Amarillo residents, 34.2, and Texas 34.6.

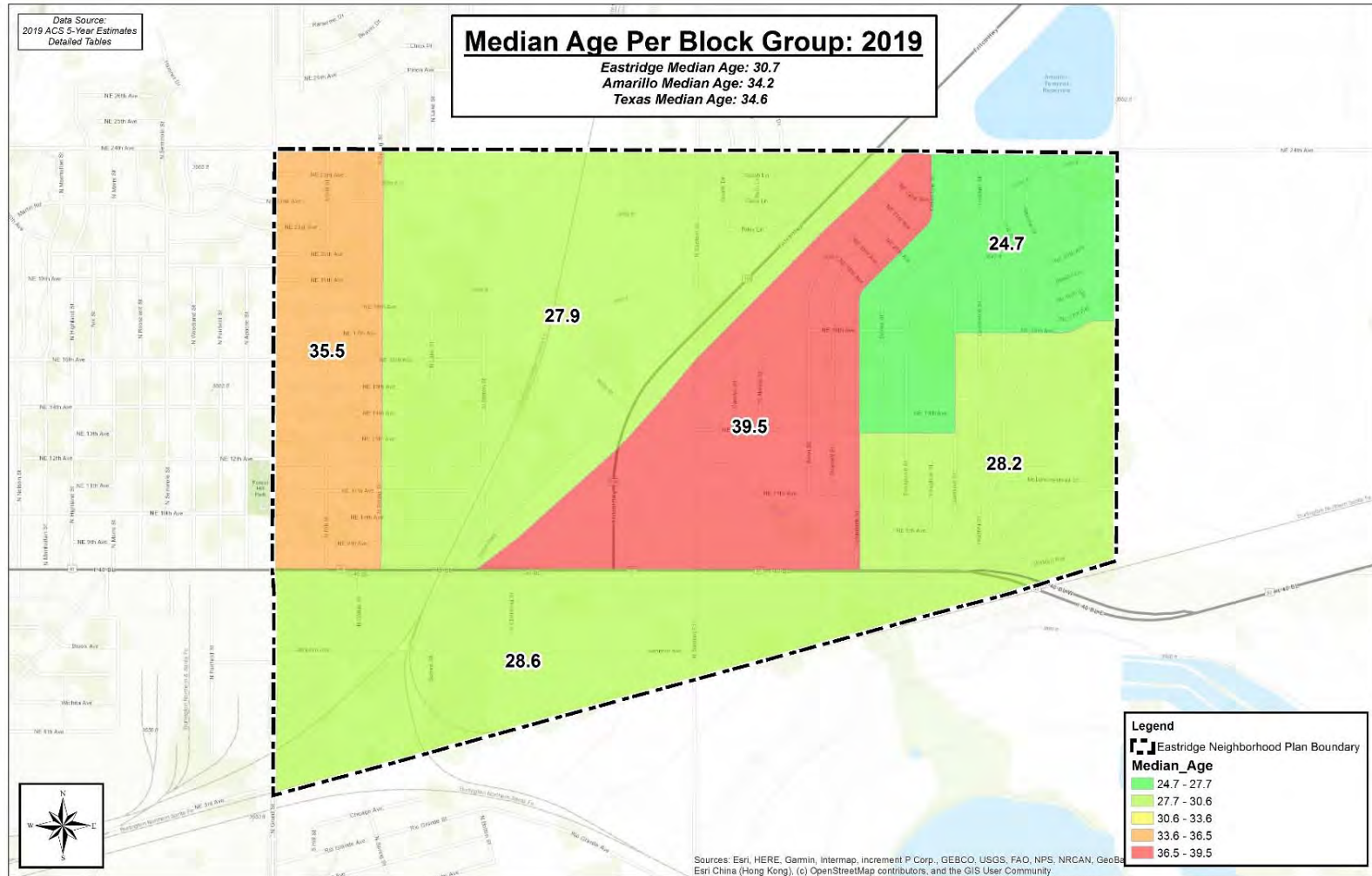


Figure 9 – Median Age per Block Group 2019

Existing Conditions Analysis

Median Household Income and Poverty Status

The average median household income for Eastridge, \$46,724, is slightly lower than the city's, \$52,725 (which is less than the state average of \$61,874). The distribution of poverty levels throughout the neighborhood may be seen in Figure 12.

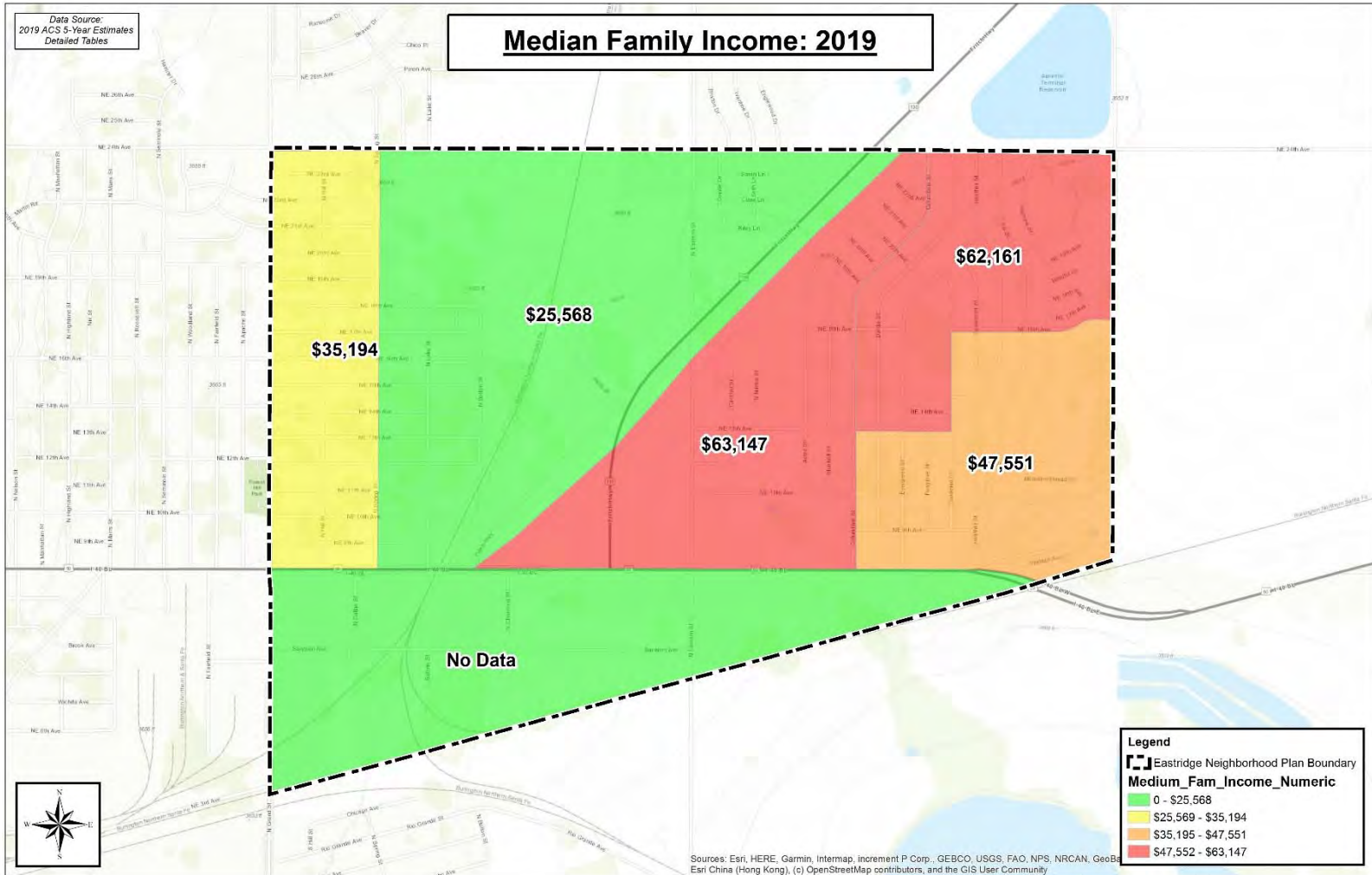


Figure 11 – Median Family Income per Block Group 2019

Existing Conditions Analysis

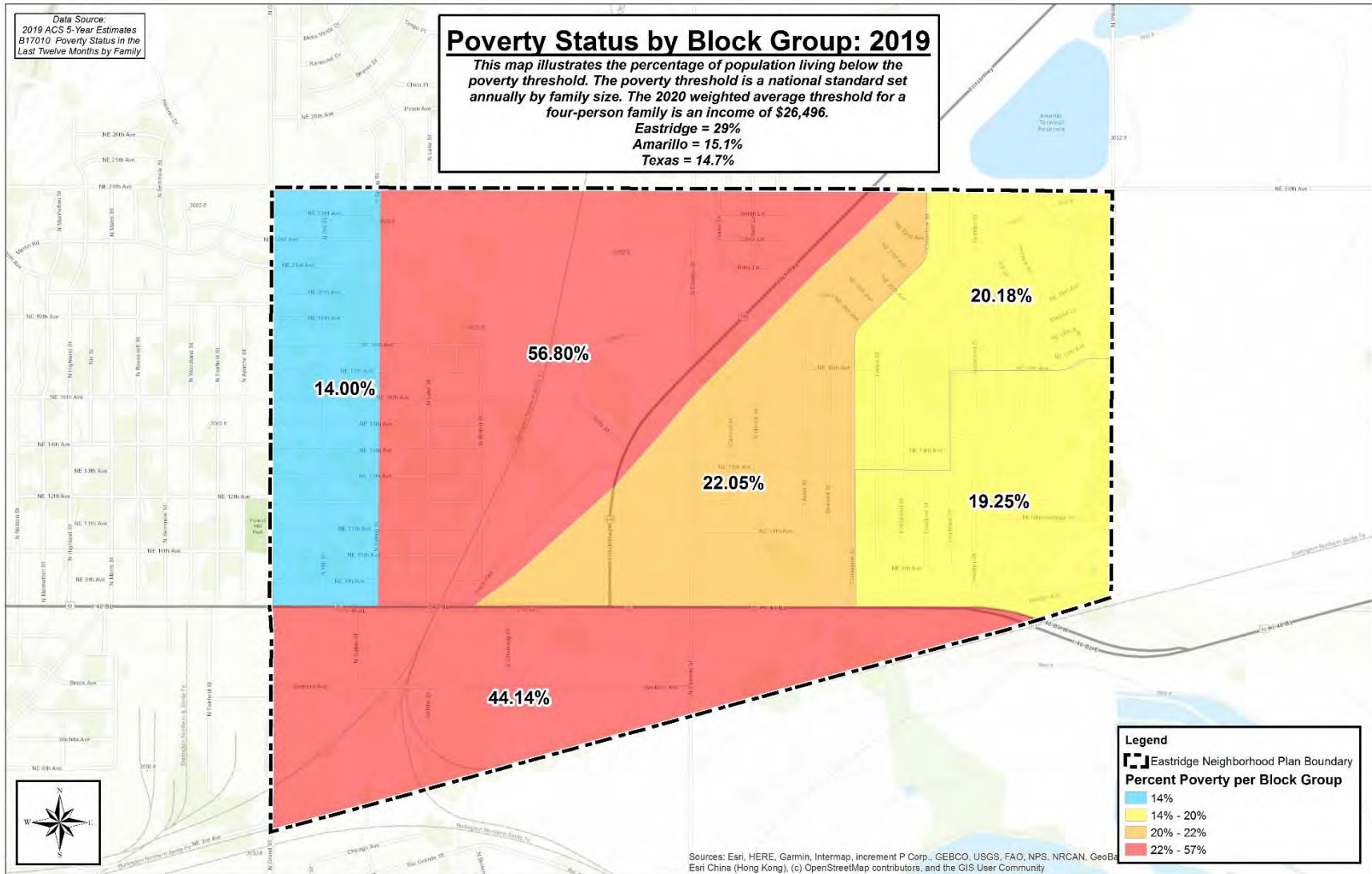


Figure 12 – Poverty Status per Block Group 2019

Existing Conditions Analysis

Housing Status

Owner/Renter Characteristics

The percentage of homeownership in the Eastridge neighborhood is 62% which is slightly higher than the City's average of 60%, and right on target with the state's average of 62%.

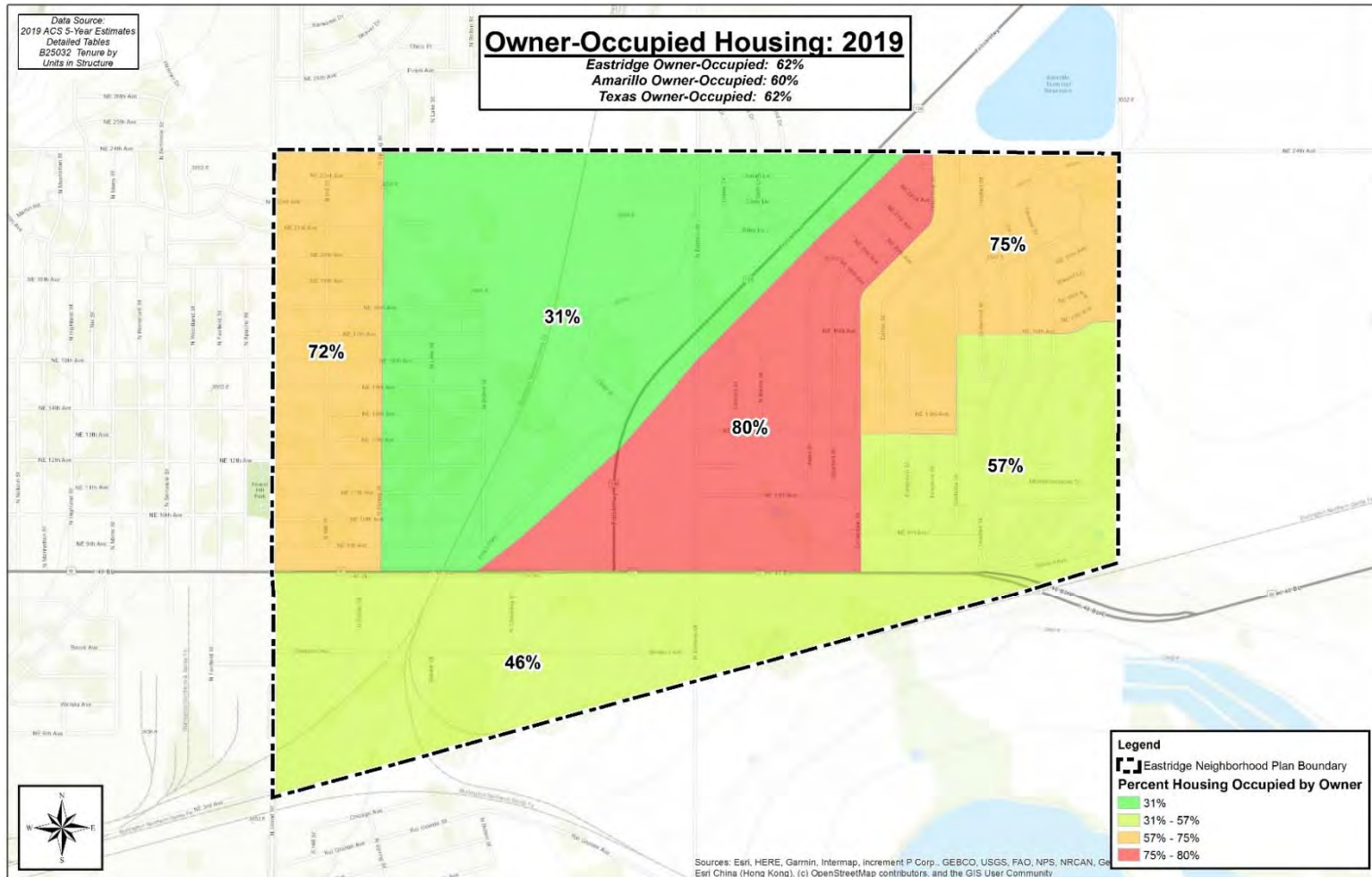


Figure 13 – Owner Occupied Housing per Block Group 2019

Existing Conditions Analysis

Assessed Property Values

In 2021, the average assessed value for single family residential in Eastridge was about \$70,874.

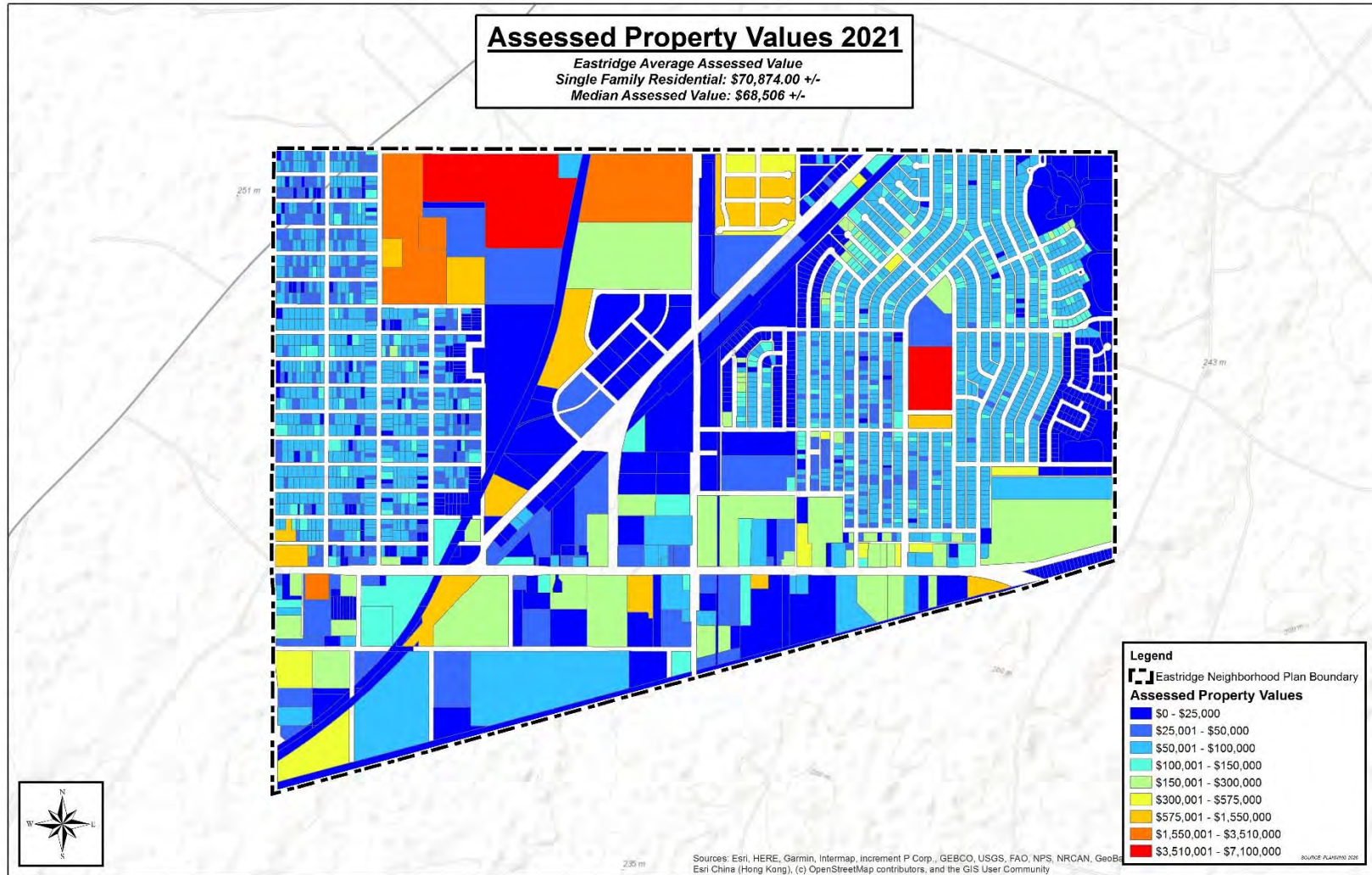


Figure 14 – Assessed Property Values

Existing Conditions Analysis

HUD Renters

The HUD (Housing and Urban Development) rental voucher program connects registered property owners with qualified renters through the federal housing assistance program which is managed locally by the city's Community Development office. As noted above, Eastridge, while only containing about 4% of the city's population, contains approximately ?? of the HUD renter-occupied properties.

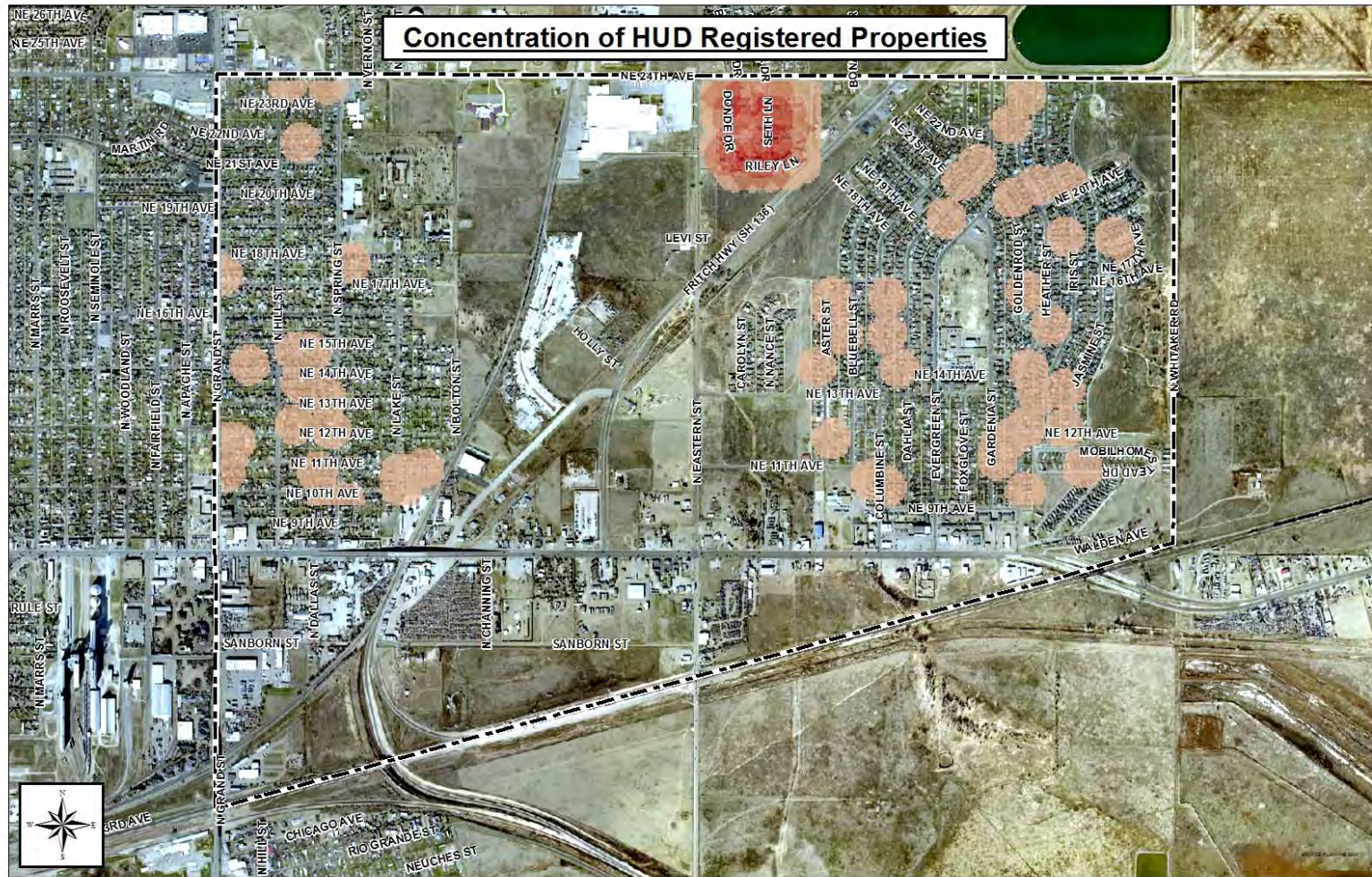


Figure 15 - HUD Renters

Existing Conditions Analysis

Vacant Housing and Lots

Figure 17 displays the Census Bureau's estimated percentages of vacant housing per block group. The data indicates that approximately 10% of the housing stock in Eastridge is vacant. Figure 18 provides some more detail on the distribution of potentially vacant parcels utilizing county appraisal classification data. It is estimated that 27% of the PRAD parcels are classified as vacant within the plan boundary.

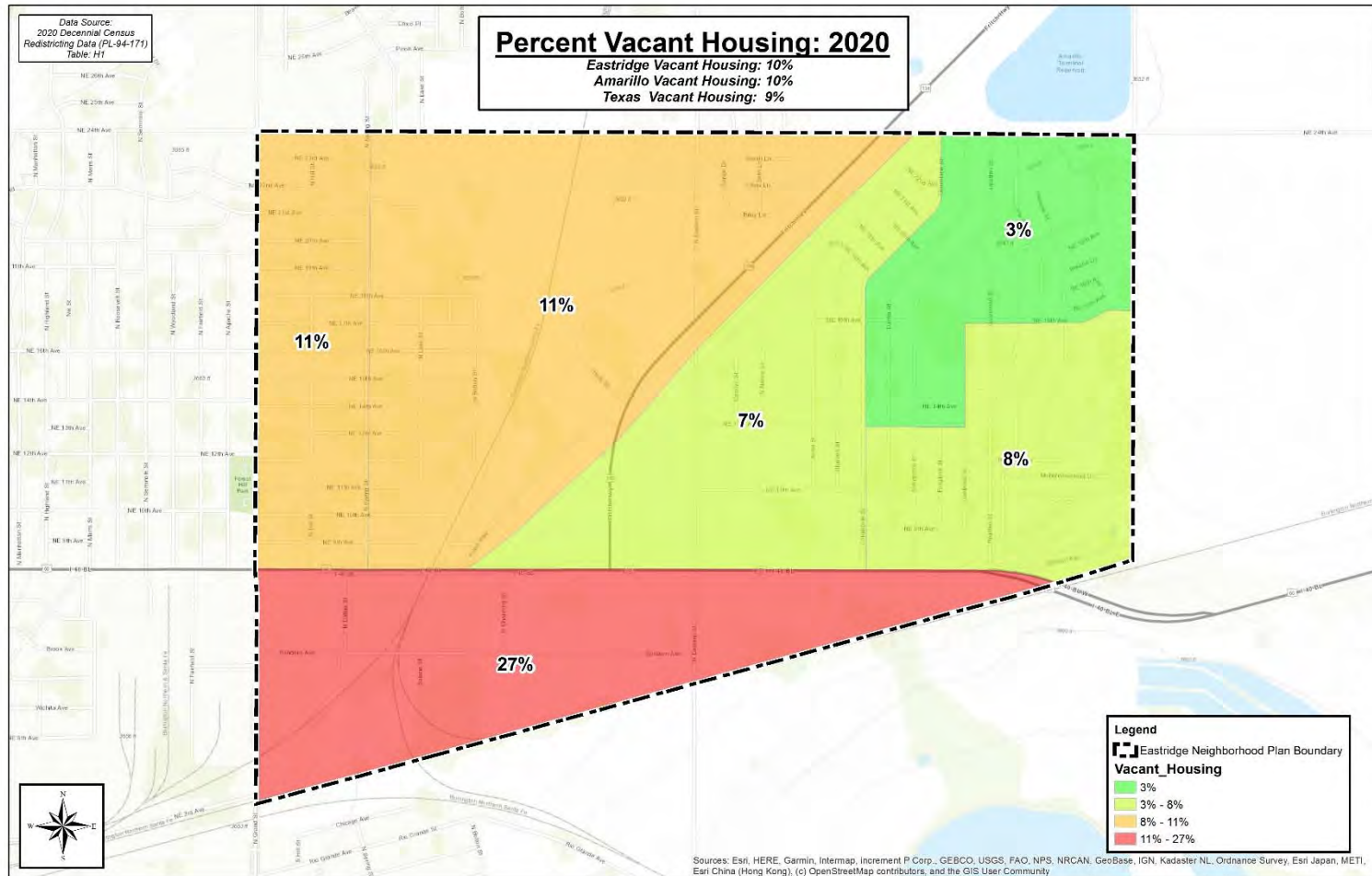


Figure 16 - Vacant Housing Percentage by Block Group

Existing Conditions Analysis

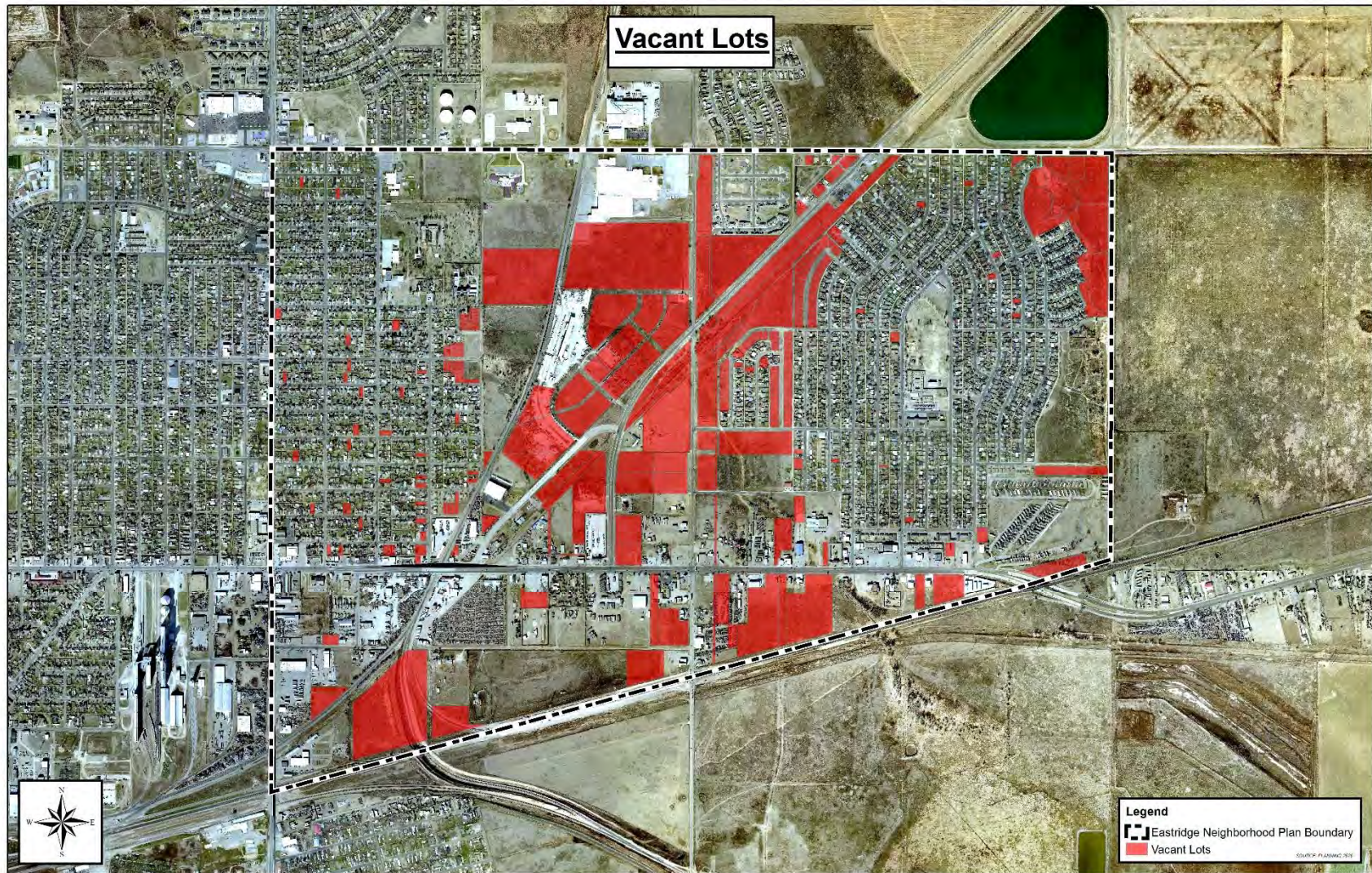


Figure 17 - Vacant Lots

Existing Conditions Analysis

Neighborhood Housing Stock – Representative Examples



Existing Conditions Analysis

Code Violations

Code violations are tracked by the City and the data from 2017-2019 indicates a challenge of controlling weeds and overgrown yards with over 2,000 citations issued for weeds. Code violation data also shows that 15 properties were cited as substandard housing and eight dangerous structures were moving through the condemnation process as of January 2019. The neighborhood expressed many concerns about the overall appearance and condition of the housing stock. In fact, one of the plan's transformative projects is the improvement of housing stock as a way to reignite pride.

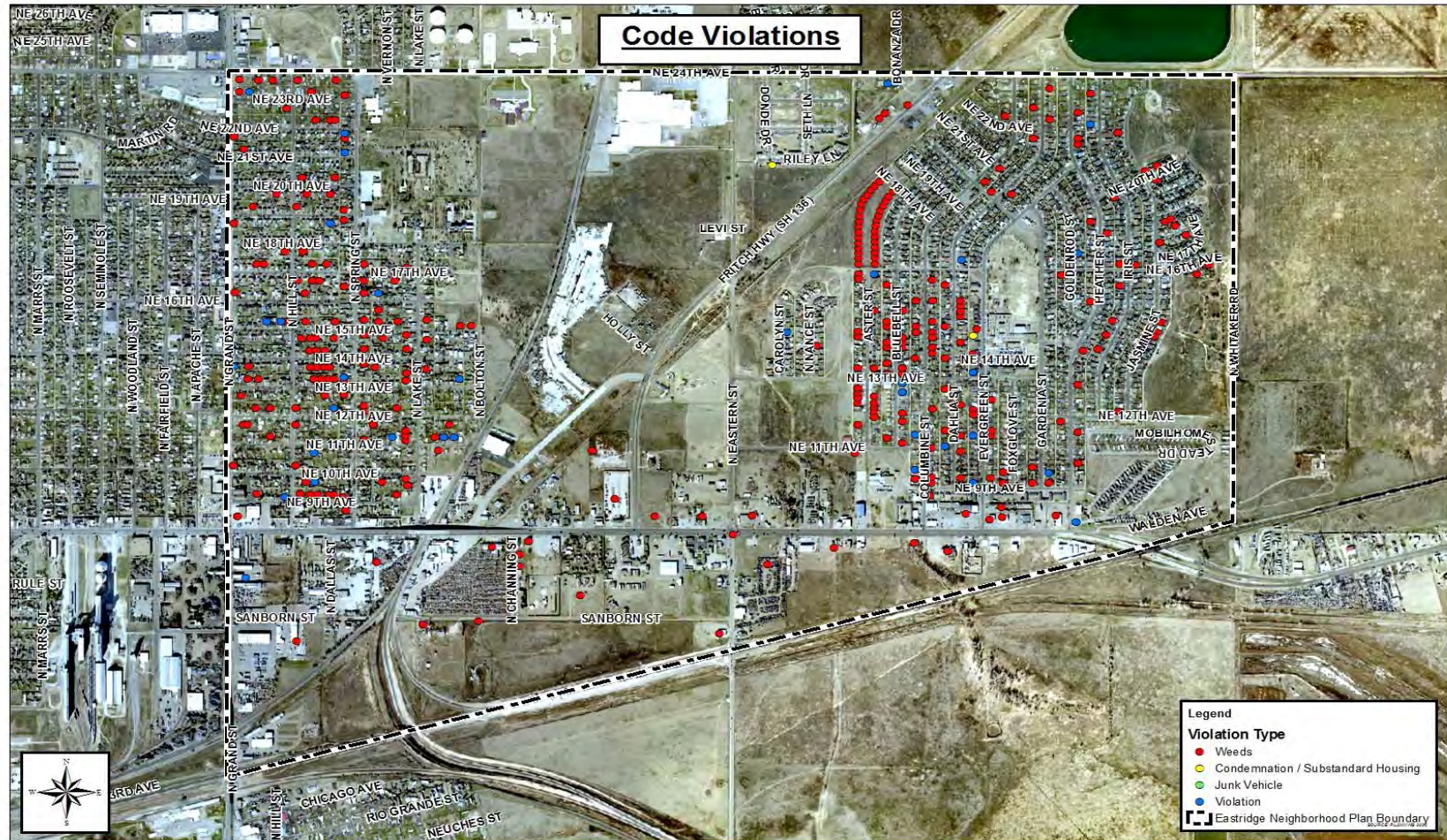
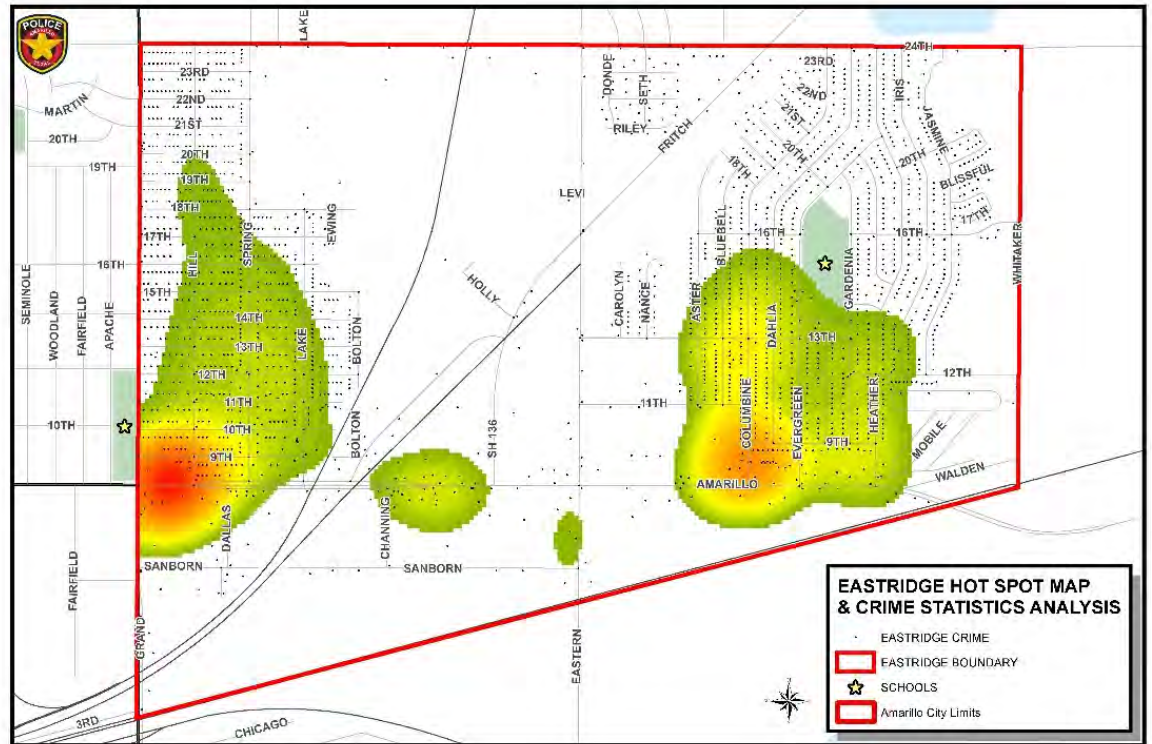


Figure 18 – Code Violations

Existing Conditions Analysis

Crime

Eastridge crime incidents were analyzed in comparison to the other neighborhood plan areas. Crimes per 100 residents are generally lower than the other plan areas. Comments received on the survey along with the advisory committee’s input suggest that residents are very concerned about crime, but they are less likely to report incidents. Violent crime is high, even with the lower number of total reports. Also, the 2020 data for Eastridge reveals an almost 50% increase in incidents between 2019 and 2020.



	2018	2019	2020
Total Incidents	860	799	1189
Crime Rate (Reports Per 100 Residents)	9.73	9.04	13.46
Violent Crime Totals	83	59	66
Violent Crime Rate (Reports Per 100 Residents)	0.94	0.67	0.75
Crime Trend (Increase or Decrease of Reports from Previous Year)		-7.09	48.81

Existing Conditions Analysis

Transportation and Connectivity

Transit and Primary Thoroughfares

In October of 2018, existing bus routes were modified by the City. Figure 20 displays current route lines and names. Eastridge is primarily served by Routes 22 and 23. These routes roughly correspond to major arterials in the area serving high traffic commercial areas on the East Amarillo Boulevard. Route 23 is the main thoroughfare that serves the Eastridge neighborhood.

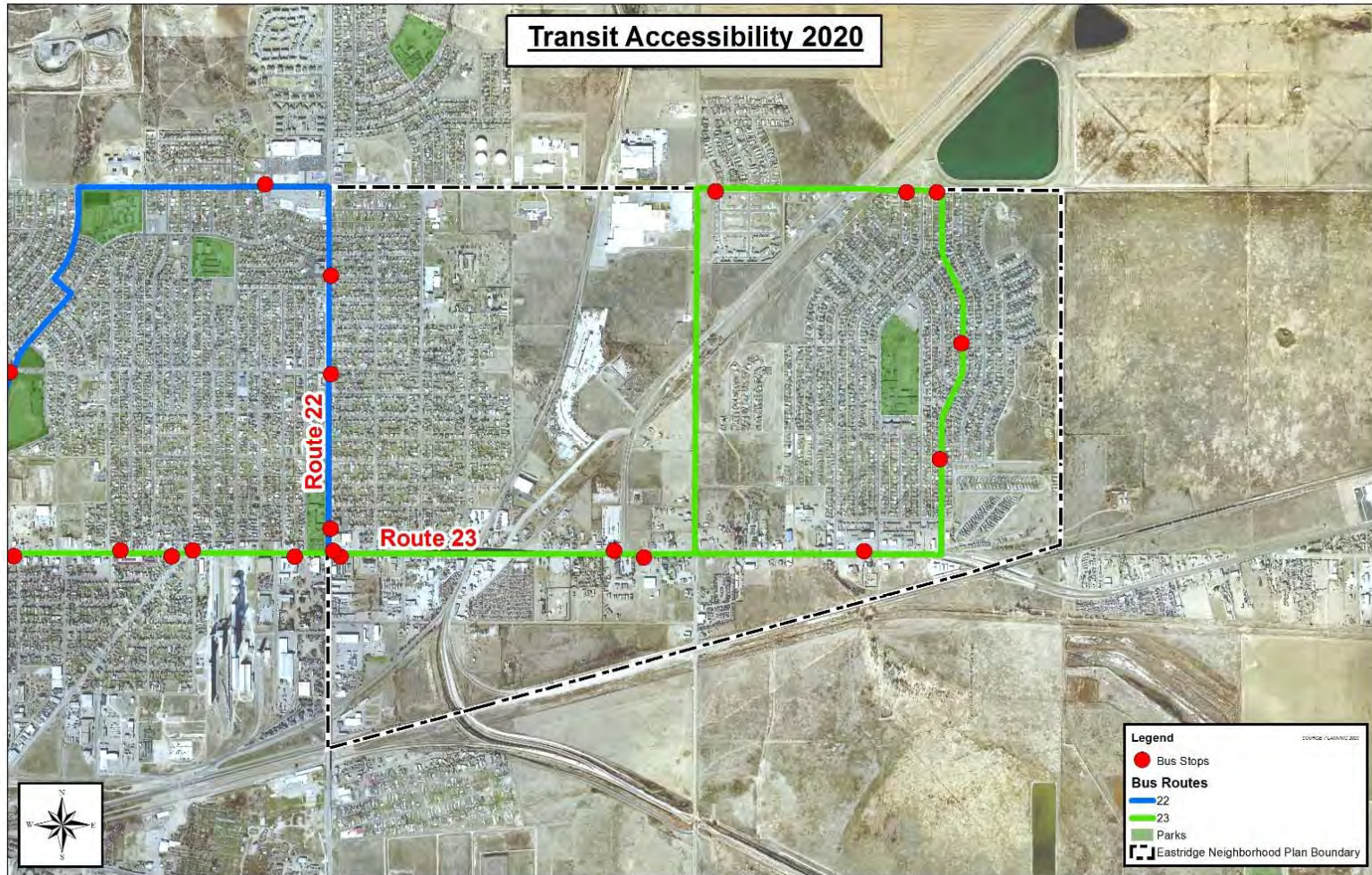


Figure 19 – Transit Accessibility 2020

Existing Conditions Analysis

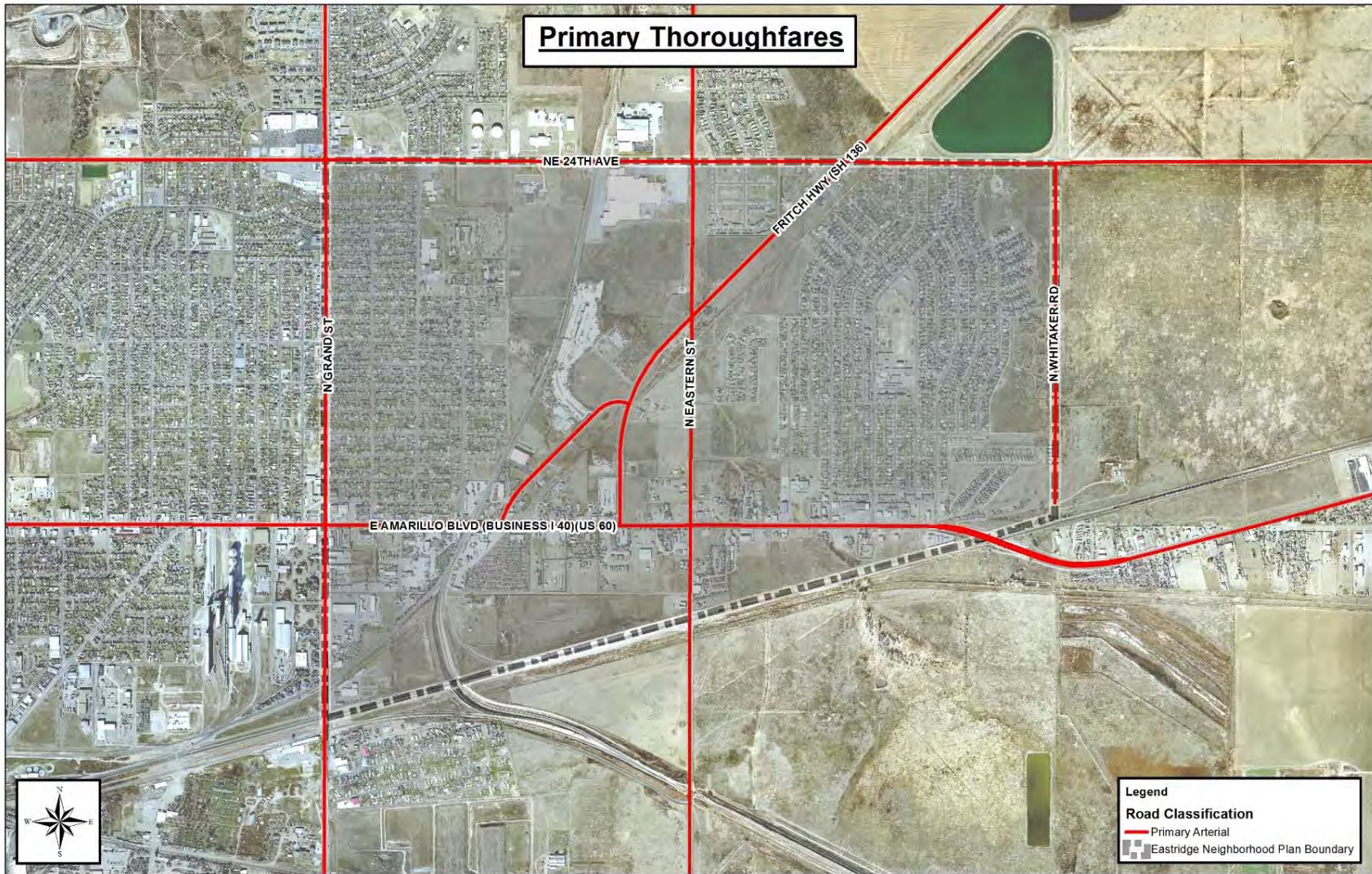


Figure 20 – Primary Thoroughfares

Existing Conditions Analysis

Sidewalk Conditions

Based on an examination of 2017 aerial imagery, majority of lots in Eastridge have inadequate sidewalk coverage (either nonexistent or in an advanced stage of disrepair). Figure 22 reveals dense concentrations of inadequate sidewalk coverage in the western half of the neighborhood and along the Fritch Highway. A less dense (but still significant) band of missing and/or highly damaged sidewalks fall along NE 13th and 11th Avenues near Eastridge Elementary.

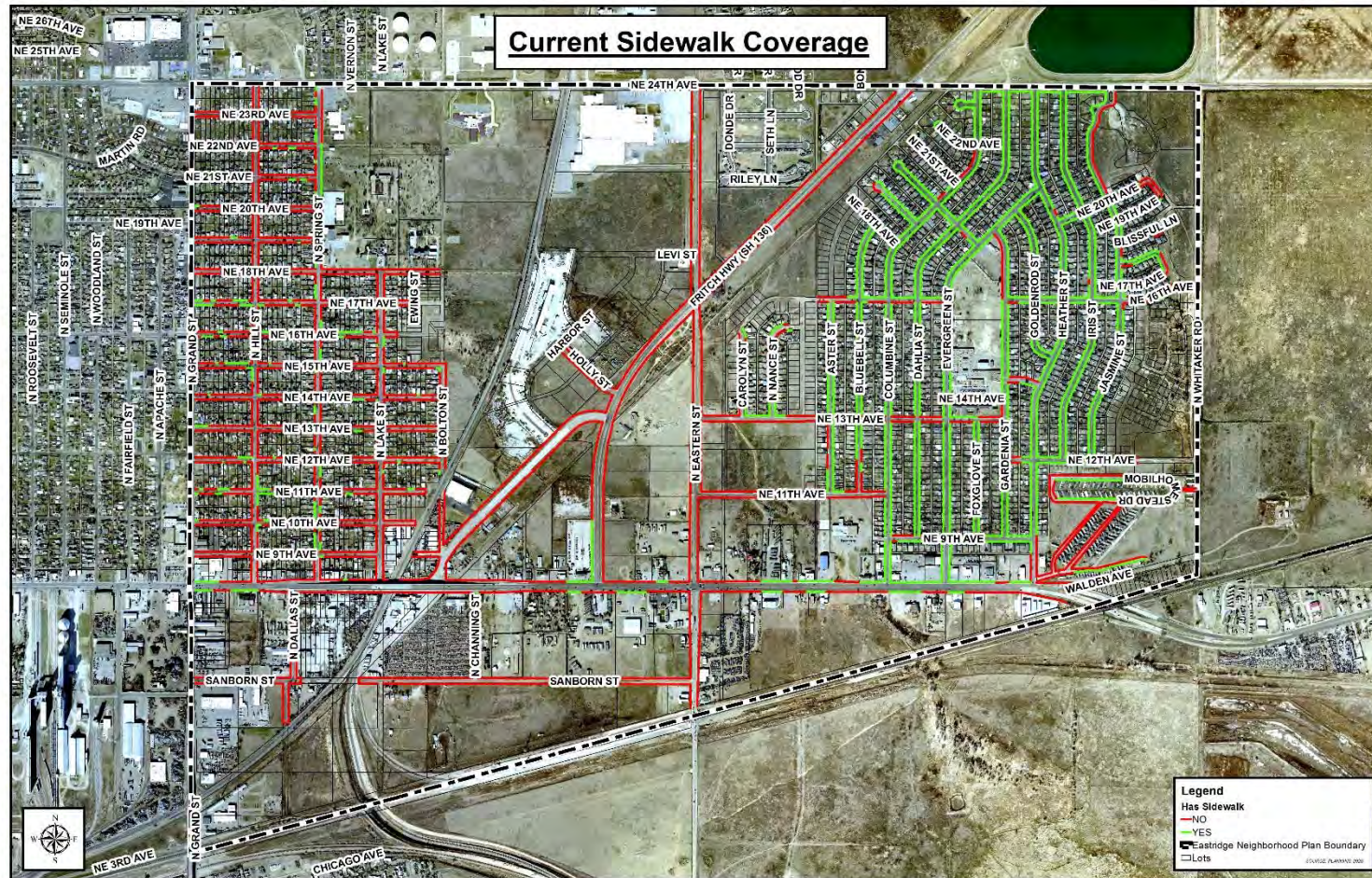


Figure 21 – Sidewalk Conditions

Existing Conditions Analysis

Traffic Counts and Intersections of Concern

Traffic counts are based on sample counts taken on different days for different sections of the road. Dates for traffic counts range from 2015 to 2018. Crash data from 2017 to 2018 revealed several intersections of concern within the Eastridge neighborhood (APD, 2018). One of the most problematic is the intersection entering into the neighborhood boundary at N Grand St and E Amarillo Boulevard.

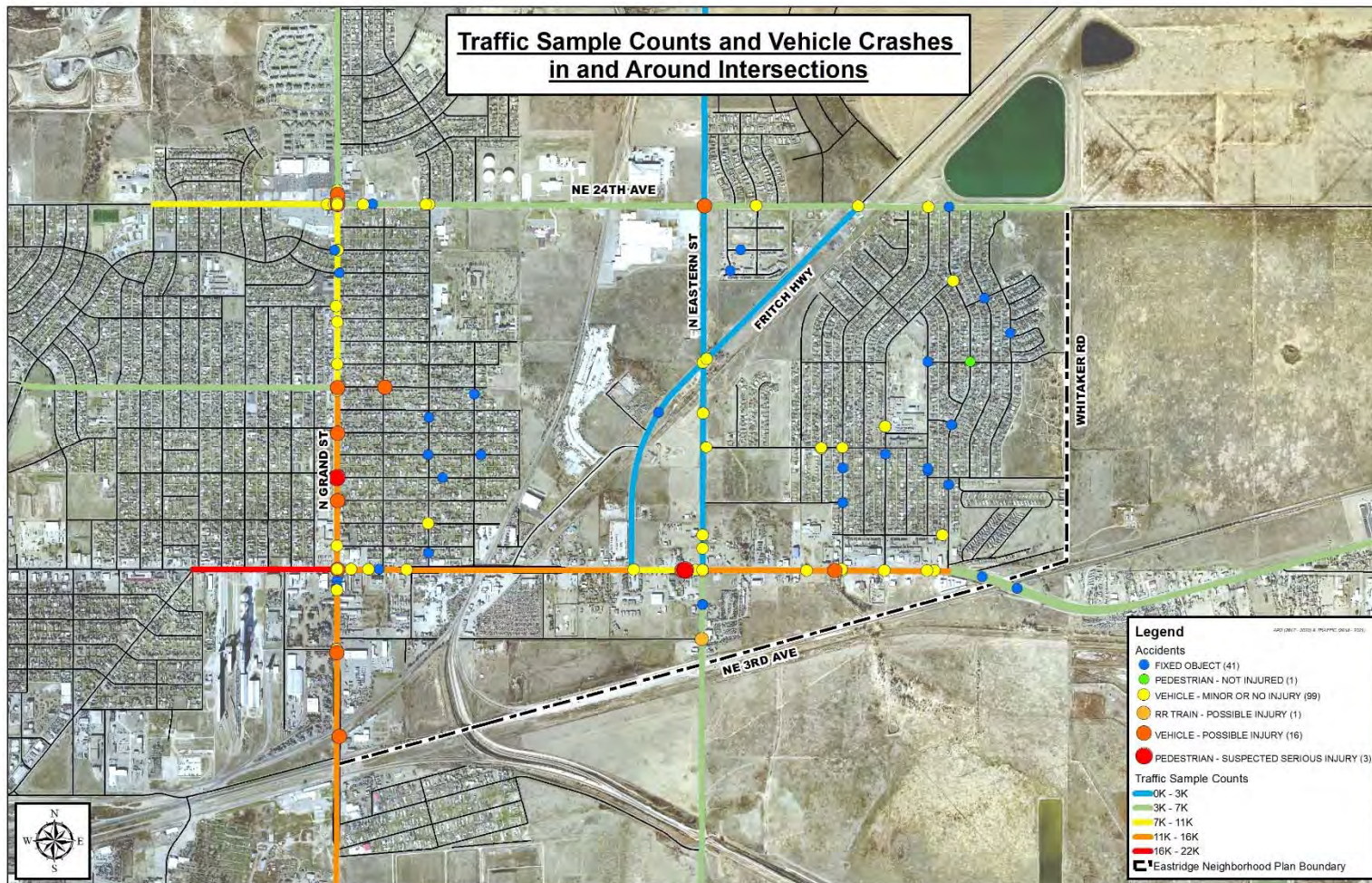


Figure 22 -- Traffic Counts & Intersections of Concern

Existing Conditions Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Summary

This activity is a common planning tool used to create a thoughtful dialogue about the current state of the neighborhood for participants. Neighborhood Planning facilitated the Eastridge SWOT through a few Advisory Committee meetings using information collected through the surveys. The results provide important insight from the community's perspective on the issues and opportunities identified through data analysis.

Strengths – Key Themes

- Eastridge Elementary is central to the neighborhood.
- Diverse community and culturally rich.
- Smaller houses, starter home neighborhood.
- Locally owned businesses and ethnic restaurants (especially those along E Amarillo Blvd)
- Vacant land for development.
- Quiet neighborhood.

Opportunities – Key Themes

- Invest in existing housing (weatherize homes, improve current housing stock, etc.) to improve living conditions
- Vision for vacant land around the neighborhood.
- Build upon existing non-profit and church organizations' efforts to improve social services (language programs, childcare, etc.)
- Building soccer fields as a unifying factor for the neighborhood and supports youth recreation.
- Use the strength of locally owned small businesses to enhance the neighborhood economy and provide an East Gateway for Route 66.
- Access to farmland for ways to make a living through agriculture.
- Community Center as a space for cultural expressions – education, handicrafts, and events for communal celebrations.

Weaknesses/Threats – Key Themes

- Crime (drugs, human trafficking, theft, speeding)
- Infrastructure (decaying streets/alleys, missing sidewalks, outdated parks, lack of adequate lighting)
- Trash/debris/dead trees
- Stray animals
- NE 24th and the train tracks are unsafe to the community.
- Neglected housing – boarded up/substandard homes
- Food desert (no grocery store/little access to healthy, quality food)
- Lack of timeliness and access to City services.
- General negative perception of the neighborhood.
- Difficulty cooperating between cultural and language groups due to language barriers.

Existing Conditions Analysis

Existing Conditions and Public Input Key Take-Aways

- **Housing** – The poor appearance and condition of housing is the most critical issue in Eastridge. This contributes to a series of complex interrelated concerns resulting in lack of pride in the neighborhood, lack of emotional connection to place and the overall deterioration of social bonds that make residents love where they live. It was stated that, “It is not anyone’s goal who lives in Eastridge to stay in Eastridge.” In addition, only 7% of Eastridge residents indicated they felt their neighborhood was attractive and “improvement of housing conditions” was the top priority selected in the resident survey for neighborhood issues.
- **Economic Opportunity** – Overall economic well-being of the neighborhood is dependent upon creating a new path of upward mobility for families relocating to this area primarily for the meatpacking jobs. This must involve changing the cycle of low-level education, secondary migration, and home life that is not stable for families. “Opportunities for better jobs” was one of the top three priorities identified in the resident survey.
- **Bulk Trash and Neighborhood Appearance** – Whether due to cultural differences or a lack of understanding of regulations regarding disposal, trash is an issue. Many people leave items in front yards and in alleys next to dumpsters. Illegal dumping on vacant lots is a challenge as well. The Advisory Committee and City participated in a neighborhood clean-up in Eastridge in September 2021. City trucks worked on loose items in the alley and were only able to complete a small percentage of the route compared to the other work areas due to the number of debris. This will require outreach, education, and consistent clean-ups to tackle the problem long-term.
- **Crime** – Only 23% of Eastridge residents feel safe in their neighborhood and “reduction of crime” was one of the three top neighborhood issues that should be prioritized. Crime data indicates lower numbers of overall reports, but Advisory Committee members cautioned that crime is likely under-reported because there is a general sense of, “what does it matter if I call them? They won’t respond anyway.”
- **Culture and Diversity** – This is Eastridge’s greatest strength. A major theme throughout the planning process is that Eastridge neighborhood residents desire physical space and opportunity to celebrate their cultures through food, events, crafts, art and more, which will not only contribute to a stronger, healthier neighborhood, but in turn, can add to the richness of Amarillo overall.
- **Opportunities for Young People** – Repeatedly it was stated how important Eastridge Elementary is to this neighborhood. Everyone loves the school and refugee families are dedicated to providing their children an education so that they will have new opportunities. It was also noted that one critical focus needs to be on improving the neighborhood so that kids stay out of trouble and form positive bonds with Eastridge. This combined with better higher education and job opportunities will allow them to stay in Eastridge and Amarillo by choice and continue to contribute their talents, rather than leaving the area and leaving Eastridge to continue its repetitive cycle of migration and deterioration.

Vision and Goals

Purpose

The purpose of the Eastridge Neighborhood Plan is to enhance the physical conditions of the plan area in order to improve the overall quality of life for neighborhood residents.

Neighborhood plans are a tool for change by targeting public investment, connecting community partners, and attracting private investment.

Vision Statement

The Eastridge neighborhood is a community of different faces, from different places, where many cultures are celebrated. It is a place we call home with room to roam; a community with opportunity to grow economically, spiritually, educationally—with family and friends—all for a better way of life.

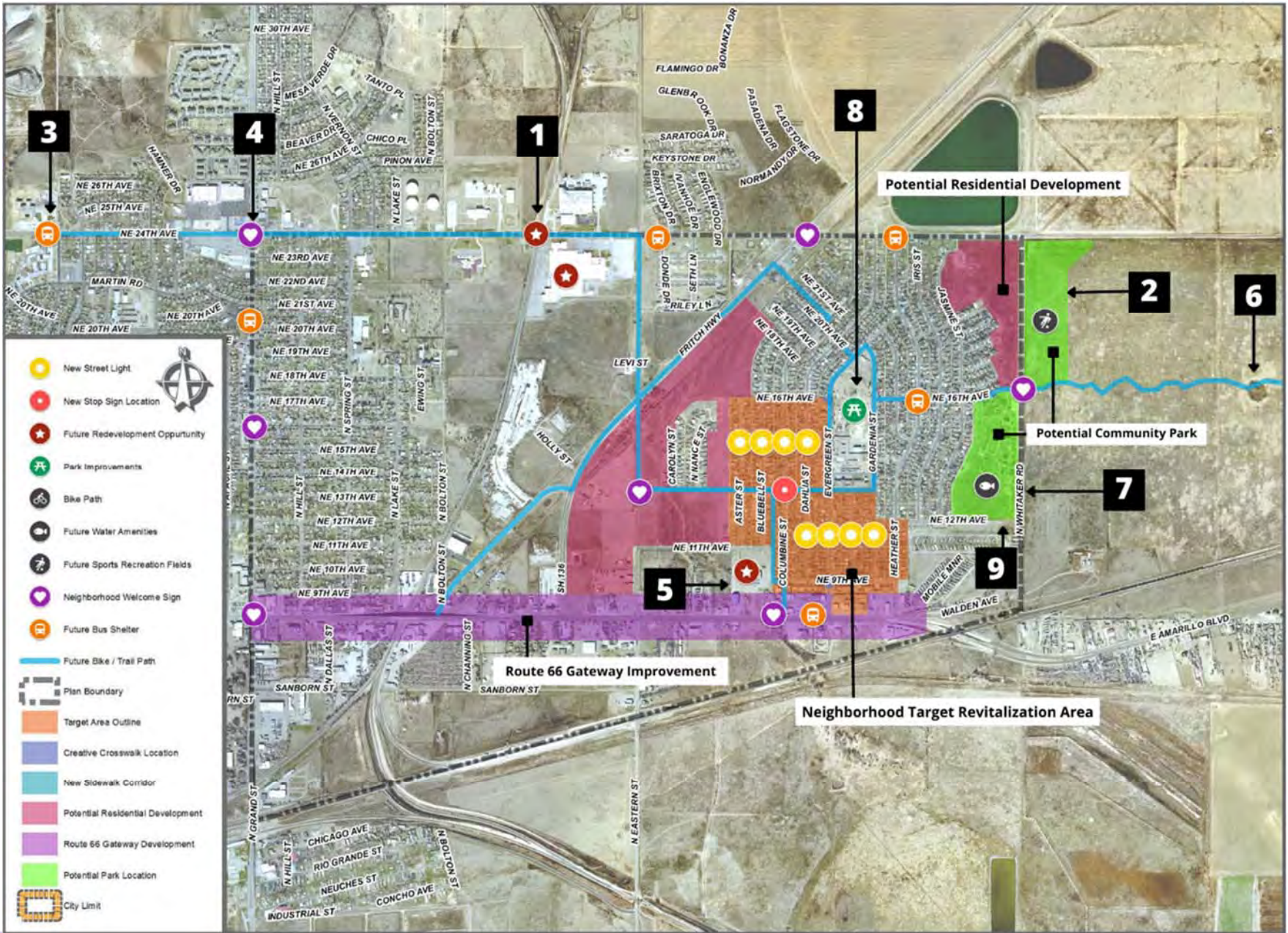
In the future is a place that...

- will be proud that it is a family-friendly neighborhood. Residents choose to live there to raise their families, not because they have to live there. The homes are well-cared for, the streets and sidewalks are safe for people of all ages, and pride of ownership is evident.
- provides good job opportunities and quality housing options for people near one of Amarillo's major economic centers.
- is recognized for its small businesses. It is desirable to own a business in this area. Businesses serve residents, but they also attract people from all over Amarillo to shop handicrafts, experience ethnic food and attend events.
- will offer innovative urban agricultural practices. Residents utilize previous farming skills to grow products and generate income.
- offers an exciting Route 66 gateway into Amarillo. Enhanced landscaping, signage, and lighting welcome Route 66 travelers as they first enter the city and business opportunities result from this tourist activity.

Vision Map

One of the main results of the planning effort is a vision map for Eastridge which is intended to help communicate that change is possible. It illustrates proposed public improvements, areas for redevelopment, new park amenities, trail systems and more. The map is non-regulatory and intended as a guide for future policy decisions.

Eastridge Vision Map



Vision and Goals

Eastridge Vision Map Project Descriptions



1

A Car & Pedestrian Overpass on 24th Ave and the train tracks will provide safety for pedestrians crossing.



2

New Soccer Fields are an investment in positive youth recreation around the area.



3

Bus Shelters provide safety from natural elements while waiting for city transit to pick them up.



4

Neighborhood Welcome Signs provide a sense of pride for the neighborhood.



5

A Community Center will bring Eastridge a safe, neutral space for learning, recreation and different cultural activities.



6

Biking & Walking Trails to create safe travel across the neighborhood. The trail will connect to the different churches, parks and schools.



7

Urban Agriculture brings new economic opportunities for people with farming skills.



8

Park Amphitheater provides an outdoor space to celebrate cultural events or family gatherings.



9

Water Amenities at the park provide fishing and aquatic recreation.

Goals and Projects

The Eastridge community invested a significant amount of time in articulating the current challenges facing the neighborhood and the best solutions for solving those challenges in order to realize their goals.

This section outlines the community's goals and projects necessary for achieving those goals. The Advisory Committee identified two of the five goals as transformative for the neighborhood – Economic Opportunity and Housing. If nothing else were addressed in the plan but those two goals, progress in those two areas would set the Eastridge neighborhood on a new path for its future. If those priorities are not addressed, it is likely the neighborhood will continue on its same trajectory and little progress will be made in improving the overall condition for residents.

Below is a complete listing of the goals and strategies. An implementation matrix is also part of the plan which includes time-frames for implementation, high priorities as selected by the neighborhood, and project partners for all the recommended projects.

Year One Priorities and Prop #1 Funding

In year one, the Eastridge Neighborhood should focus on projects that are the most feasible to implement and have the most visual impact. It is imperative that neighborhood residents see and experience change to buy into the plan's efforts. This will help build trust so that the City and other governmental entities can continue to build relationships and work effectively in the area.

In addition, the neighborhood association should determine as soon as possible how it would like to allocate its bond money appropriation of \$654,500. This funding was made available to the initial four neighborhoods in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative. It is voter-approved, public funding and must be spent on public improvement projects. These funds are intended to launch implementation of the plan and demonstrate early successes. Based on feedback in the final Advisory Committee meetings, the first project priorities are identified below along with recommendations for the bond allocation:

- Address illegal dumping and bulk trash in the neighborhood
- Add more lighting for both safety and aesthetic reasons
- Introduce traffic calming measures to reduce speeds on neighborhood streets
- Add and repair sidewalks near Eastridge Elementary School
- Work on crime prevention in the Target Revitalization Area
- Coordinate the design and planning for the new neighborhood park including soccer field construction
- Create the Eastridge Neighborhood Association and establishing effective communication among the diverse language groups

Vision and Goals

Transformative Goal #1: Economic Opportunity

Break the Cycle of No Upward Mobility by Creating New Economic Opportunity

Strategy 1: Support small businesses

- Provide small business training in native languages
- Work with businesses to upgrade appearances, meet code requirements and enhance conditions for cleanliness
- Facilitate a coordinated marketing strategy for Eastridge restaurants
- Complete a market assessment to determine entrepreneurial opportunities to support large businesses and companies
- Connect small businesses with tax incentive programs
- Introduce high school students to entrepreneurial career opportunities – help them become their own bosses; (partner with WT Enterprise Center and Amarillo College)



Strategy 2: Provide opportunities for those with agricultural skills to make a living here from those skills

- Join Amarillo's efforts for a community center to support refugee families for business development and social services.
- Consider the opportunity for satellite programs/locations in Eastridge specifically related to urban agriculture.
- Work with Amarillo College to develop agricultural-related curriculum

Strategy 3: Create strategies for Eastridge residents to work at nearby major employers

- Provide English language classes at convenient times and locations
- Convene ACC, AEDC and major employers to discuss workforce needs and develop workforce training programs that are tailored in date/time, language and content to Eastridge residents
- Plan for adequate public transportation to and from major employers with dependable schedules

Strategy 4: Create a childcare training program to meet childcare needs and provide business opportunities

Vision and Goals

Project Highlight: Urban Agriculture

Eastridge’s diverse population presents some unique opportunities for economic development. Studying the different surveys and interviews from residents in the community revealed that a majority expressed strong desires to use their farming skills to grow food, share their harvests with their community, and create new entrepreneurial ways to earn a living rather than the dead-end meat-packing jobs. Low-income neighborhoods and refugee communities in food deserts across the country partner with non-profits to invest in urban agriculture practices. This provides opportunities for people to have access to fresh, healthy foods and for the farmer to learn more about building a small business.



New Roots for Refugees, 2020

Eastridge residents’ unique farming skills and agricultural knowledge from different nations around the world also provide an opportunity for education and community-building. Food holds a universal language, but with many different practices. Providing a space for urban agriculture in the neighborhood would allow refugees from different countries to learn new skills and languages while strengthening community ties.

What does urban agriculture look like in practice? In the case studies examined, successful enterprises include a community farm, gardens and additional space for a center. The center can provide a community gathering space, commercial kitchen and food pantry. Residents can both teach their methods and learn from others; additional classes and resources help them learn how to market their products to earn a living.

The plan identified one of the most important needs for residents is a place to celebrate their cultures with their community and the rest of Amarillo. Investing in a space for urban agriculture, community building, education, and celebration will birth a new sense of pride for the Eastridge neighborhood. This type of project has the ability to not only physically transform the neighborhood through investment in a center and gardens, but also transform the well-being and quality of life of Eastridge residents.



New Roots for Refugees, 2020

Case Study

New Roots for Refugees

Kansas City, Missouri

<https://newrootsforrefugees.org/>

Vision and Goals

Transformative Goal #2: Housing Put the Pride Back by Improving Housing Conditions

Strategy 1: Establish a target revitalization area between Amarillo Boulevard and Eastridge Elementary to coordinate and direct simultaneous beautification, code enforcement, and public safety initiatives in order to see visible change (see Vision Map detail).

- Install additional street lighting and alley lighting for safety.
- Focus home security camera installation in the target area in years 1-2 after adoption.
- Focus code enforcement activities in this area in years 1-2 after adoption especially with renter-occupied properties and multi-family units.
- Contract for additional solid waste pick-up routes in alleys.
- Pilot dumpster art program.
- Install missing sidewalks.
- Focus on educating residents about property maintenance, renter responsibilities and sub-standard housing procedures in this area in years 1-2.
- Install community crosswalks and stop signs for safe access to Eastridge Elementary.
- Focus Pride in Property grants in this area to improve conditions along streets that are high traffic corridors.



Strategy 2: Explore all available tools for improving the conditions of existing owner and renter-occupied housing with other neighborhood partners and the City of Amarillo.

- Educate homeowners about available programs through Community Development and develop a neighborhood committee to assist those interested with applications.
- Use existing code enforcement tools to improve the condition of multi-family apartment complexes.
- Create a community awareness program for expectations about property maintenance.
- Create a Pride in Property Grant program to assist property owners with exterior improvements to public street facing facades such as doors, windows, shutters, awnings, front porches, front steps and landscaping.
- Create a first-time renters education program.

Vision and Goals

- Educate resident about and create an anonymous process for renters to report sub-standards housing condition.
- Partner with Potter County on acquiring tax foreclosed properties for rehabilitation and resale.
- Work with the City to proactively demolish condemned homes and rebuild.

Strategy 3: Leverage new commercial development in the area to facilitate quality new home construction.

- Identify infill lots and determine development barriers to new home construction.
- Partner with Habitat for Humanity and other affordable developers to build new homes that are that are cleaner, safer, more affordable homes such as those in Tradewinds subdivision.
- Assess utilities and infrastructure needed for new residential subdivisions on nearby vacant land.
- Identify opportunities for larger lot homes with land area to grow gardens, have workshops, etc.
- Follow this plan's zoning recommendations to ensure future compatibility with residential development.
- Develop a reputable program for alternative financing such as a payment plan to assist with home ownership and equity-building.

Strategy 4. Educate residents about code requirements and the enforcement process.

- Determine what offenses residents do not want to see and begin first with education.
- Conduct targeted enforcement in areas where there in consensus on the violations by the neighborhood (as represented by a neighborhood association)

Vision and Goals

Project Highlight: Target Revitalization Area

The Target Revitalization Area is 68.8 acres of residential land that wraps around the southwest side of Eastridge Elementary School (see map on page ____). The majority of residents who live in Eastridge consider the Elementary School to be the heart of the neighborhood. However, the area surrounding the school has a high need for improvement.

The goal of the Target Revitalization Area is to implement a series of smaller, manageable projects within the plan's first year of adoption. By strategically coordinating efforts in a smaller area, positive change will be visible to residents in a shorter amount of time. This will help create buy-in for the plan and hopefully begin to a process of reestablishing pride in the area.

The projects recommended for implementation include:

- crime reduction through an increase of private security cameras;
- additional street lighting;
- exterior property improvements;
- colorful crosswalks;
- bulk trash removal, illegal dumping strategies and other creative solutions to reducing trash such as a dumpster art program; and
- new sidewalks.

The projects chosen were based on the feedback from the Advisory Committee and during community outreach events. Neighborhood appearance, multi-family rental properties, bulk trash and crime were noted consistently as some of the neighborhood's most pressing issues. By focusing on a small area first, the execution of new projects can be managed better. Once successful, all of the recommendations can be implemented more broadly throughout the neighborhood.

Case Study

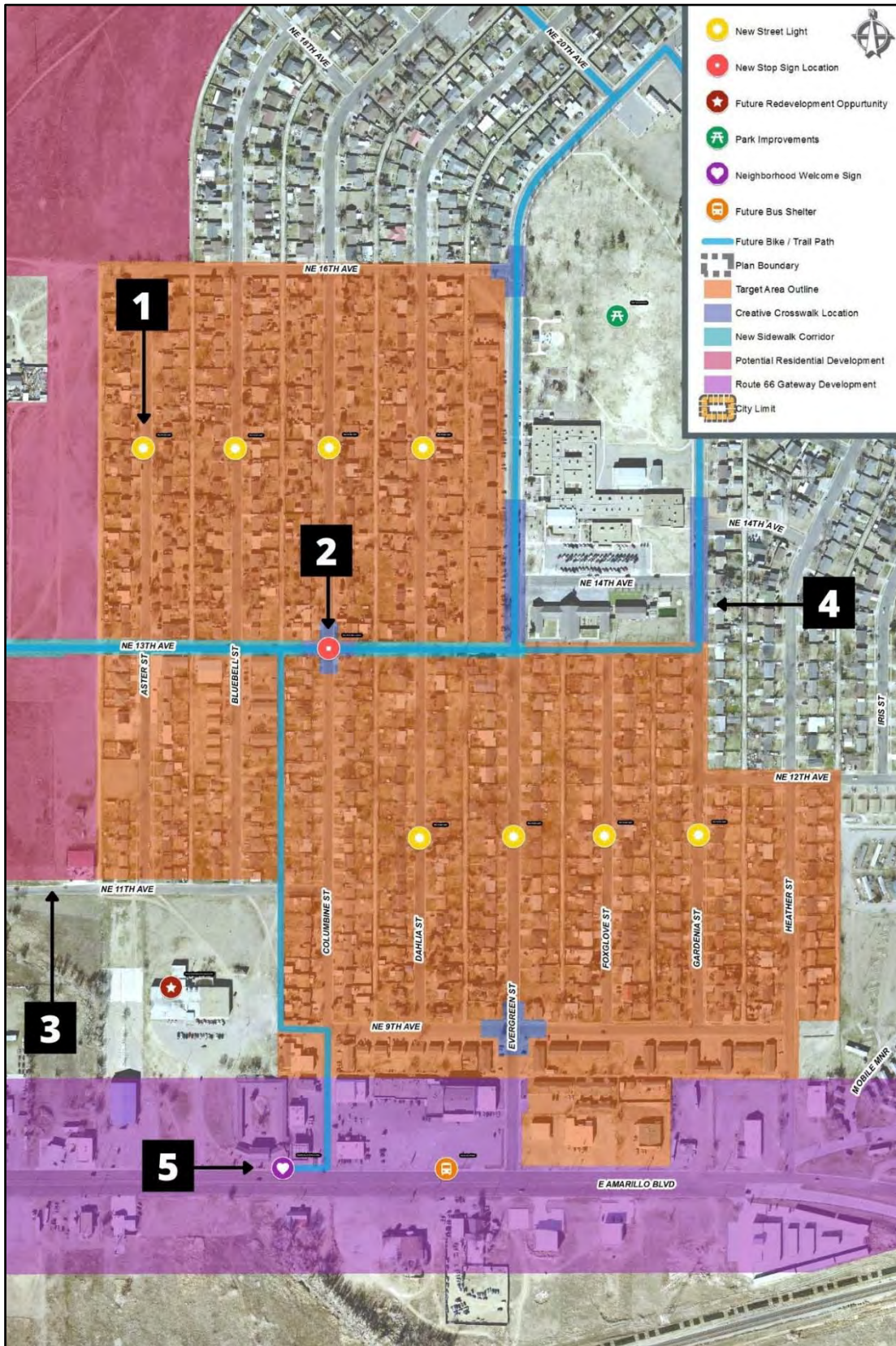
Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
Topeka, Kansas

<https://www.topeka.org/planning/neighborhood-revitalization-plan/>



Vision and Goals

Neighborhood Target Revitalization Area



Vision and Goals

1

New Street Lights provide extra lighting that will help reduce crime in the neighborhood.



Pride in Property Grants provide residents funds to help with repairs and appearance.



Dumpster Art Program is a creative opportunity for residents who want to keep their alleys clean.



2

Additional **Stop Signs** within the neighborhood help slow traffic on busy streets.



Large Item Trash Removal helps keep the neighborhood clean and beautiful.



3

New Sidewalks give pedestrians extra safety when walking to work, school, or grocery store.



Security Cameras will give property owners extra protection from petty crime.



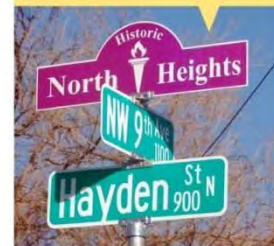
4

Community Crosswalks provide safety for kids while brightening the neighborhood.



5

Sign Toppers establish community pride for the streets where people reside.



Vision and Goals

Goal #3. Crime and Public Safety Create Safer Places and Spaces by Reducing Crime

Strategy 1. Continue to support the Neighborhood Police Unit program and ensure Eastridge is staffed with officers that are multi-lingual who can focus on communication and building trust with the neighborhood.



- Provide NPO a new office in a neutral location central to the neighborhood. Many people prefer to come speak in-person but are not comfortable going to a religious space.

Strategy 2. Develop a community crime watch program with more support from APD.

Strategy 3. Reduce speeding on neighborhood streets.

- Using traffic cameras and other devices such as flashing light speed signs to change behavior
- Conduct a traffic study for appropriate locations for traffic signs
- Introduce traffic calming measures such as colorful crosswalks and medians to slow speeds

Strategy 4. Create more awareness for rehabilitation from drugs and alcohol, consider counseling programming.

Strategy 5. Direct resources to a community center in a neutral location and support after school programming to keep kids busy and out of trouble.

Strategy 6. Decrease burglaries by increasing the number of installed home security cameras by 30%.

Goal #4. Community-Building Build Community by Changing Perception

Strategy 1. Improve Eastridge Elementary School Park in ways that are consistent with the new Parks Master Plan recommendations for parks of that scale.



- Build a multi-use amphitheater in this location to support cultural events and school events. Include cultural art elements in the design.
- Remove dead trees and plant new trees.
- Consider painting restrooms and existing structures fun colors that appeal to kids.

Vision and Goals

Strategy 2. Develop a new Community Park (20-30 acres) consistent with the new Parks Master Plan recommendations for parks of that scale. Primary amenities would include soccer fields, a lake amenity for fishing and acreage set aside for a partnership to create an urban farm.

- Recommend suitable pieces of property.
- Develop a site plan and conduct community outreach
- Combine sources of funding including Neighborhood Plan funds, Parks Capital funds and grants such as Texas Parks & Wildlife.

Strategy 3. Work on strategies that enhance and promote Eastridge's multi-cultural identity.

- Install welcome signs and street toppers that express multi-culturalism.
- Explore ways to celebrate the rich cultural traditions through a festival or event that builds off of existing efforts
- Develop a marketing campaign to promote and celebrate special events and holidays to attract other Amarilloans to Eastridge

Strategy 4. Utilize an existing vacant or under-utilized building for a community/event center – it should provide a flexible space for meetings, events, social services and youth programming especially sports. Consider a large enough building for indoor soccer.

Strategy 5. Establish a neighborhood organization that fairly represents all of Eastridge's residents

- Follow the Recognized Neighborhood Association guidelines created for all participants in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative.

Strategy 6. Preserve and protect original Route 66 historic elements as part of neighborhood gateway and beautification projects on Amarillo Boulevard

- Install a gateway sign or other photo-worthy opportunity as travelers on original Route 66 enter Amarillo here in Eastridge.
- Target code enforcement in this area so the first impression when entering Amarillo from the East is positive.
- Market restaurants to travelers.
- Work with the Potter County Historical Commission to install a subject marker.
- Work with property owners of National Register eligible properties to apply for Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Status (RTHL) through the Texas Historical Commission and/or utilize the new Local Landmark historic preservation tax incentive as proposed in the zoning code revision project.
- Create a sign grant program to encourage preservation of existing historic signs or construction of new high-quality signs that are consistent with roadside architectural style.

Vision and Goals

Project Highlight: Community Park

The Eastridge Elementary School Park is currently the only park in Eastridge. The park is 10 acres with limited facilities. Most residents believe the park is underserved and in need of upgrades. Responses from the neighborhood surveys mention a desire for a park with more amenities such as an amphitheater for cultural celebrations, a pond for fishing, and soccer fields for youth recreation.

While the Eastridge Elementary School park is lacking amenities, it does not have enough space for the type of projects Eastridge residents would like to see. In addition, the new Parks Master Plan (adopted December 2021 – verify) identifies the need for a new “community park” in this part of Amarillo. A “community park is defined as...

The planning process helped develop some initial leads with land owners who may be able to eventually dedicate parkland to the City of Amarillo for operation as a new, larger community park which will be designed, built, and operated by Parks and Recreation.

Building a new community park will be an expensive endeavor. This project could take advantage of some of the American Rescue Plan Act funds for initial conceptual design work. Once designed, it will be well-suited for grants such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Local Parks Grant and the National Recreation and Park Association various grant opportunities. The future neighborhood association could agree to use some of the bond funding and organize additional fundraisers.

Before a new community park is built, taking action to improve the existing Eastridge Elementary Park is a priority. Removing dead trees and planting new ones, repairing the broken splash pad, replacing park signs, and restoring the basketball court would immediately make the the park more desirable to spend time in. In addition, a portable stage made available by Parks and Recreation could help meet the need for cultural celebrations.

Case Study

Boone Park West

Atlanta, Georgia

<https://parkpride.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Boone-Park-West-Vision.pdf>



City of Plano Jack Carter Park Renovation, 2018



Colombia Heights Soccer Fields, 2017

Vision and Goals

Goal #5. Neighborhood Quality of Life

Enhance Neighborhood Quality of Life with Public Improvements and Beautification

Strategy 1. Designate and improve a Safe Routes to Schools and Community Spaces pathway that combines sidewalks, bike paths and walking trails for people to move more easily and safely through the neighborhood. See Vision Map.

- Install missing sidewalks along NE 24th from Travis Middle School to Eastridge neighborhood.
- Install missing sidewalks along NE 13th Ave between Eastern and Evergreen.
- Designate on-street bike lanes where Traffic standards allow
- Connect NE 16th Ave to new development east of Whitaker
- Work with property owners for undeveloped property to designate access easements for trail construction.
- Install regular crosswalks and colorful community crosswalks at key points along the Safe Routes pathway.



Strategy 2. Install bus shelters for students that wait in the elements.

Strategy 3. Prioritize bulk trash and large debris removal from alleys and private property.

- Coordinate clean-ups and utilize the City's new roll-off rental program.
- Educate residents about curb-side bulk trash removal
- Work with the City to target and enforce illegal dumping activities
- Contract for additional solid waste pick-up routes in alleys in the target revitalization area.

Strategy 4. Build an overpass for automobile and pedestrian traffic on NE 24th Avenue over the railroad tracks.

Strategy 5. Address areas where stormwater does not drain properly

Vision and Goals

Moving from Plan to Action

As a participant in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative, it is expected that a neighborhood association will form to oversee implementation. The plan creates a unifying vision for all of Eastridge and outlines specific projects to achieve that vision. Every group and organization will play a critical role within the implementation framework. The overarching neighborhood association should remain focused on projects that universally impact and improve the conditions of Eastridge; each existing group or organization should be working within the larger vision on their areas of speciality. New committees and collaborative efforts will be necessary.

Neighborhood Planning staff will continue to support the neighborhood association and project committees through open communication, direct coordination with city departments, project management on city-related items, and assistance with administering the 2016 bond funds allocated to Eastridge.

As the formal plan liaison, the neighborhood association is expected to enter into an annual partnership agreement with the City as a Recognized Neighborhood Association and commit to an annual work plan, also called Projects in Motion, which will include more specific timelines for implementation. The neighborhood association is not required to become a 501 c3 non-profit, but working towards that status is recommended in order to fundraise and be eligible for additional grants, partnerships, and programs.

Other Partners and Funding

As noted previously, the City Council reinforces the City's commitment to all the neighborhood plans by formally adopting them as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. This plan, like all city plans, is a policy guide. Its approval does not legally obligate the City to implement any particular action item.

However, as a policy guide, it should motivate action and inspire collaboration among many partners. It should serve as a unifying tool for city staff, an organized neighborhood association, the private sector, and other non-profits, churches, and schools invested in Eastridge.

In addition to partnerships and collaboration, a variety of funding sources will be necessary. While some public funding is provided to kick-start implementation, the community has an important responsibility to seek opportunities to pair potential funding sources with desired project outcomes. This may include fundraising, finding private investors or partnering with non-profits.

The Eastridge neighborhood is expected to allocate its portion of the 2016 bond funding (\$654,500) in the first year of implementation which will begin on the date of adoption by City Council. These funds are intended for public improvement projects that can create visible change and increase neighborhood buy-in for the planning efforts. Some flexibility in the spending of these funds is possible, but there are limitations based on the official statement presented to taxpayers. Generally, they may be directed to improvements in the public right-of-way including streets, sidewalks, lighting, drainage, traffic calming, signage, banners, urban design features, and multi-modal enhancements.

In addition, funding sources available through other city departments may be directed to Eastridge. The prioritized projects will help other departments understand the areas of highest needs during implementation. With increased collaboration among staff, there will be opportunities to share resources and strategically utilize program funds that would not have been possible without the plan in place.

Vision and Goals

Finally, the plan identifies infrastructure items that require major capital expenditures. These will be presented as neighborhood plan priorities during the city's 5-Year Community Investment Program (CIP) budgeting process and, as such, they will receive consideration and some scoring benefits.

Implementation Matrix

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project Budget	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
			1	2-3	4+	Ongoing		
Goal 1: Break the Cycle of No Upward Mobility by Creating New Economic Opportunity								
Strategy 1: Support Small Businesses								
Provide small business training in native languages	X-OA	<\$25K		X			AEDC, Amarillo College	
Work with businesses to upgrade appearances, meet code requirements and enhance conditions for cleanliness		TBD					COA Code Enforcement	
Facilitate a coordinated marketing strategy for Eastridge restaurants		TBD					COA Communications	
Complete a market assessment to determine entrepreneurial opportunities to support large businesses and companies							AEDC	
Introduce high school students to entrepreneurial career opportunities – help them become their own bosses; (partner with WT Enterprise Center and Amarillo College)							AEDC, Amarillo College, WT Enterprise Center	
Connect small businesses with tax and other incentive programs		TBD					AEDC	
Strategy 2: Provide opportunities for those with agricultural skills to make a living here from those skills.								
Join Amarillo's efforts for a community center to support refugee families for business development and social services. Consider the opportunity for satellite programs/locations in Eastridge specifically related to urban agriculture.		TBD					HPFP, Square Mile	
Work with Amarillo College to develop agricultural related curriculum.		TBD					Amarillo College	
Strategy 3: Create strategies for Eastridge residents to work at nearby major employers.								
Provide English language classes at convenient times and locations							Refugee Language Project, Amarillo College.	
Convene ACC, AEDC and major employers to discuss workforce needs and develop workforce training programs that are tailored in date/time, language and content to Eastridge residents							Amarillo College, AEDC	

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
			1	2	3	4		
Plan for adequate public transportation to and from major employers with dependable schedules							COA Transportation	
Strategy 4: Create a childcare training program to meet childcare needs and provide business opportunities.								
Goal 2: Put the Pride Back by Improving Housing Conditions								
Strategy 1: Create a coalition among social service providers in the neighborhood to better connect people with the services they need.								
Install additional street lighting and alley lighting for safety.	X-OA	\$ -					COA Traffic	
Focus home security camera installation in the target area in years 1-2 after adoption.		\$ -	X				COA NPO	
Focus code enforcement activities in this area in years 1-2 after adoption especially with renter-occupied properties and multi-family units.		\$ -	X				COA Code Enforcement	
Contract for additional solid waste pick-up routes in alleys.	X-OA		X				COA Public Works	
Pilot dumpster art program.			X				COA Public Works	
Install missing sidewalks.	X-RS		X				COA Engineering	
Focus on educating residents about property maintenance, renter responsibilities and sub-standard housing procedures in this area in years 1-2.							COA Community Development	
Install community crosswalks and stop signs for safe access to Eastridge Elementary.	X-OA		X				COA Traffic	
Focus Pride in Property grants in this area to improve conditions along streets that are high traffic corridors.	X-OA	\$ -					COA Community Development	
Strategy 2: Explore all available tools for improving the conditions of existing owner and renter-occupied housing with other neighborhood partners and the City of Amarillo.								
Educate homeowners about available programs through Community Development and develop a neighborhood committee to assist those interested with applications.		\$ -					COA Community Development	
Use existing code enforcement tools to improve the condition of multi-family apartment complexes.	X-RS						COA Code Enforcement	

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
Create a community awareness program for expectations about property maintenance.								
Create a Pride in Property Grant program to assist property owners with exterior improvements to public street facing facades such as doors, windows, shutters, awnings, front porches, front steps and landscaping.	X-OA		X					
Create a first-time renters education program.								
Educate resident about and create an anonymous process for renters to report sub-standards housing condition						COA Code Enforcement		
Partner with Potter County on acquiring tax foreclosed properties for rehabilitation and resale.						Potter County, COA Planning		
Work with the City to proactively demolish condemned homes and rebuild.		TBD	X			COA Planning		
Strategy 3: Leverage new commercial development in the area to facilitate quality new home construction.								
Identify infill lots and determine development barriers to new home construction.		TBD						
Partner with Habitat for Humanity and other affordable developers to build new homes that are that are cleaner, safer, more affordable homes such as those in Tradewinds subdivision.						Habitat for Humanity		
Assess utilities and infrastructure needed for new residential subdivisions on nearby vacant land.						COA Engineering, COA Planning		
Identify opportunities for larger lot homes with land area to grow gardens, have workshops, etc.						COA Planning		
Follow this plan's zoning recommendations to ensure future compatibility with residential development.						COA Planning		
Develop a reputable program for alternative financing such as a payment plan to assist with home ownership and equity-building.								
Strategy 4: Educate residents about code requirements and the enforcement process.								
Determine what offenses residents do not want to see and begin first with education.		<\$25K				COA Code Enforcement		
Conduct targeted enforcement in areas where there in consensus on the violations by the neighborhood (as represented by a neighborhood association)	X-RS	TBD				COA Code Enforcement		

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
Goal 3: Safer Places and Spaces - Crime and Public Safety								
Strategy 1: Continue to support the Neighborhood Police Unit program and ensure Eastridge is staffed with officers that are multi-lingual who can focus on communication and building trust with the neighborhood.								
Provide NPO a new office in a neutral location central to the neighborhood. Many people prefer to come speak in-person but are not comfortable going to a religious space.	X-RS	TBD					COA NPO	
Strategy 2: Develop a community crime watch program with more support from APD.								
Strategy 3: Monitor and enforce traffic speeding with cameras.								
Strategy 4: Create more awareness for rehabilitation from drugs and alcohol, consider counseling programming.								
Strategy 5: Direct resources to a community center in a neutral location and support after school programming to keep kids busy and out of trouble.								
Strategy 6: Decrease burglaries by increasing the number of installed home security cameras by 30%.			X					
Goal 4: Change the Perception: Community-Building Projects								
Strategy 1: Improve Eastridge Elementary School Park in ways that are consistent with the new Parks Master Plan recommendations for parks of that scale.								
Build a multi-use amphitheater in this location to support cultural events and school events. Include cultural art elements in the design.	X-RS	TBD					COA Parks and Rec	
Remove dead trees and plant new trees.	X-OA		X				COA Parks and Rec	
Consider painting restrooms and existing structures fun colors that appeal to kids.							COA Parks and Rec	
Strategy 2: Develop a new Community Park (20-30 acres) consistent with the new Parks Master Plan recommendations for parks of that scale. Primary amenities would include soccer fields, a lake amenity for fishing and acreage set aside for a partnership to create an urban farm.								
Recommend suitable pieces of property.							COA Planning	

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
Develop a site plan and conduct community outreach							COA Planning, COA Parks and Rec	
Combine sources of funding including Neighborhood Plan funds, Parks Capital funds and grants such as Texas Parks & Wildlife.	X-OA						COA Planning, COA Parks and Rec	
Strategy 3: Work on strategies that enhance and promote Eastridge’s multi-cultural identity.								
Install welcome signs and street toppers that express multi-culturalism.			X				COA Planning	
Explore ways to celebrate the rich cultural traditions through a festival or event that builds off of existing efforts								
Develop a marketing campaign to promote and celebrate special events and holidays to attract other Amarilloans to Eastridge							COA Communications	
Strategy 4: Utilize an existing vacant or under-utilized building for a community/event center – it should provide a flexible space for meetings, events, social services and youth programming especially sports. Consider a large enough building for indoor soccer.								
Strategy 5: Establish a neighborhood organization that fairly represents all of Eastridge’s residents								
Follow the Recognized Neighborhood Association guidelines created for all participants in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative.	X		X				COA Planning	
Strategy 6: Preserve and protect original Route 66 historic elements as part of neighborhood gateway and beautification projects on Amarillo Boulevard								
Install a gateway sign or other photo-worthy opportunity as travelers on original Route 66 enter Amarillo here in Eastridge.							COA Planning	
Target code enforcement in this area so the first impression when entering Amarillo from the East is positive.							COA Code Enforcement	
Market restaurants to travelers.	X						COA Communications	
Work with the Potter County Historical Commission to install a subject marker.							COA Planning, Potter County	
Work with property owners of National Register eligible properties to apply for Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Status (RTHL) through the Texas Historical Commission and/or utilize the new Local Landmark historic preservation tax incentive as proposed in the zoning code revision project.							COA Planning, TxHC	

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
			1	2	3	4		
Create a sign grant program to encourage preservation of existing historic signs or construction of new high quality signs that are consistent with roadside architectural style.							COA Planning	
Goal 5: Enhancing Neighborhood Quality of Life - Public Improvements and Beautification Projects								
Strategy 1: Designate and improve a Safe Routes to Schools and Community Spaces pathway that combines sidewalks, bike paths and walking trails for people to move more easily and safely through the neighborhood. See Vision Map.								
Install missing sidewalks along NE 24th from Travis Middle School to Eastridge neighborhood.	X-OA		X				COA Engineering	
Install missing sidewalks along NE 13th Ave between Eastern and Evergreen.	X-OA		X				COA Engineering	
Designate on-street bike lanes where Traffic standards allow							COA Traffic, MPO	
Connect NE 16th Ave to new development east of Whitaker							COA Planning	
Work with property owners for undeveloped property to designate access easements for trail construction.							COA Planning, COA Parks and Rec	
Install regular crosswalks and colorful community crosswalks at key points along the Safe Routes pathway.			X				COA Traffic, MPO	
Strategy 2: Install bus shelters for students that wait in the elements.								
Strategy 3: Prioritize bulk trash and large debris removal from alleys and private property.								
Coordinate clean-ups and utilize the City's new roll-off rental program.	X-RS		X				COA Public Works	
Educate residents about curb-side bulk trash removal	X-RS		X				COA Public Works	
Work with the City to target and enforce illegal dumping activities	X-RS		X				COA Public Works	
Contract for additional solid waste pick-up routes in alleys in the target revitalization area.	X-RS		X				COA Public Works	
Strategy 4: Build an overpass for automobile and pedestrian traffic on NE 24th Avenue over the railroad tracks.								

Implementation Plan	High Priorities	Planning Level Estimated Project	Project Timeframe (Years)				Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Source
It is understood that there is little to no room for negotiating the relocation of trains stopping on this route. They stop in this location to pass and are restricted by their own rail facilities. This is a major, \$10+ Million project and should start to be incorporated into long-range transportation and capital improvements planning for the City, especially with increased commercial and industrial activity to the east.					X		COA Traffic, COA Engineering, MPO	