

# Workshop 'first step' in revitalizing corridor

Implementation plan for NNWD's Livable Centers Study 'will be rolled out' in the fall

By Greg Densmore  
Editor

Hundreds of northwest Houston residents shared their thoughts and visions of what the Antoine Corridor could be during a recent open house workshop to discuss a Livable Centers Study being conducted by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

The H-GAC awarded a Livable Centers Study grant to the Near Northwest Management District to provide urban planning and design recommendations to create a Town Center along the Antoine Corridor. The Livable Centers Study focuses on a one-mile section

of the Antoine Corridor from Pinemont to West Gulf Bank, and T. C. Jester to Bingle/North Houston Rosslyn.

Held last month at Advent Lutheran Church, the open house workshop provided area residents with the opportunity to envision what kind of new development and public spaces they would like to see in the study area. Possible improvements include improved pedestrian walkways, increased residential and retail properties, public transit and connections to the new bike trail along White Oak Bayou.

"It's a start," said Wayne Norden, President/CEO of the Near Northwest Management District who is also a longtime resident of Inwood Forest. "We're holding very preliminary discussions and have just started to work on a solid plan."

## Job Fair set for May 11

The Near Northwest Management District hosts a community job fair from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, at Advent Lutheran Church, 5820 Pinemont

Employers will be present and some will interview on the spot. Attendees are asked to bring at least 20 copies of their resume and dress to impress.

"We're laying the groundwork for a positive future for this area," said Melanie Fahey, community affairs director for the Near Northwest Management District. "It's a good first step."

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## Implementation plan for revitalizing Antoine Corridor expected in summer

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"But it won't happen overnight," said Norden.

Those who attended the open house event visited nine interactive activity stations set up inside the church, where they were asked to point out where they lived and worked, and what they liked and disliked about the Antoine Corridor.

Residents who attend the workshop also took part in market research for their respective neighborhoods, helped urban planners to design a future community, worked with landscape architects to design green space and gave the thumbs-up or thumbs-down to infrastructure suggestions during a visioning exercise.

What NNWD staff and board members envision for the Antoine Corridor is spelled out in a vision statement calling for a complete transformation of the neighborhood "into a destination intertwined with the waters of White Oak Bayou and Vogel Creek, linked to the heart of Houston by waterside trails, punctuated by unique parks, community gardens and reborn as a walkable, bikable, mixed-use corridor anchored by landmark buildings, lively public spaces and served by enhanced transit."

"The workshop provided us with a draft plan that we will take back to the stakeholders and get more of their input," said Norden. "An implementation plan will be rolled out in late September or early October."

"Once the momentum grows, there will be pressure to make this all happen," said Fahey.

While the NNMD has taken the lead in the

Livable Centers Study and helped facilitate the Advent Lutheran workshop, Norden made it clear that there are plenty of other community partners who are working to revitalize the Antoine Corridor.

"It's not just the Management District doing it," he said. "It's a total community effort with lots of partners."

Among those partners and their revitalization efforts include:

- City of Houston, which purchased the former Inwood Golf Course to create a park and community center; and approved Ike recovery funding to pay for the renovation of Holly View, Sterling Grove and Linda Vista apartments.

- Harris County Flood Control, which created a flood control plan for the Antoine Corridor area, using sections of the former Inwood Forest Gold Course for water detention.

- Houston Parks Board, which identified White Oak Bayou as a priority for green space and is expanding the bike trail from Pinemont to Antoine.

- Houston METRO, which recognized that the Antoine bus route has one of the highest riderships in the city.

- Urban Land Institute, which selected the Antoine Corridor as one of four national study areas for a Rose Center Fellowship.

- Aldine ISD, which is partnering Smith Academy with the University of Houston.

- Greater Inwood Partnership, which provides ongoing beautification efforts of parks and esplanades, tree planting and litter pickup.

- Lone Star College System, which is building the Victory Center.