

# HOUSING

We will preserve our historic housing and build new housing that reflects the different contexts that characterize our neighborhood. We will focus on affordable housing that meets the needs of our existing residents and prevents displacement.

## ADVOCATING FOR OUR FAMILIES

We will work with our families to ensure they are secure in their housing and have the tools and resources necessary to live and thrive in our neighborhood.

### 1.1 Empowering Our Renters

- Create or support renter assistance programs, including tenant counseling, emergency rental assistance, eviction protection, credit assistance and other financial training and resources, to ensure that existing residents can remain in the neighborhood

### 1.2 Safeguarding Our Homeowners

- Create a program to support existing homeowners with information on property taxes, exemptions, wills, predatory lending and other resources

### 1.3 Housing Advocacy and Policy

- Create a Northern Third Ward Housing Advocacy team to work with residents, city agencies, property owners and developers to prioritize and advocate for truly affordable housing (30-50% of Area Median Income) that meets diverse needs in our community, builds on the existing character, and minimizes displacement.

## PRESERVING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING HOUSING

We will work together to preserve our historic housing

### 1.4 Saving Our History and Homes

- Preserve existing historic housing by developing or supporting a program to assist with home maintenance and repairs, focus on seniors; Explore the potential for this to be a neighborhood volunteer corps or workforce program for local residents
- Identify historic housing that is at risk of being demolished; create partnerships to move (if necessary) and renovate this housing to provide truly affordable units and infill vacant lots in target areas.
- Acquire vacant or abandoned homes and buildings for new housing

## NEW HOUSING THAT MEETS OUR NEEDS

We will advocate for and attract new housing that meets the needs of all our residents.

### 1.5 New Housing

- Identify housing trends and market needs, focused on existing residents
- Identify vacant lots, opportunity sites and create a plan for affordable infill housing, rental housing, innovative housing models, and mixed-use housing (Focus on housing at 30 - 50% of Area Median Income)
- Work with partners for the strategic development of mixed-use housing along commercial corridors, with a focus on truly affordable rental housing
- Work with public agencies, churches and CDCs to advocate for truly affordable housing-both renter and owner-that meets our needs for affordability (Median Income below \$30,000, housing at 30-50% of AMI)
- Work with partners for the strategic development of single-family houses that reflects the historic character of the neighborhood, but meets contemporary needs.
- Secure funding to realize housing goals
- Minimize displacement through the development of temporary housing for residents awaiting new or restored homes

### 1.6 Housing Design Guidelines

- Develop guidelines to regulate the architectural character of new housing as a means to strengthen the context of the different neighborhoods that comprise the Northern Third Ward, particularly for publicly owned or subsidized properties and developments (including facing the street and front porches)

# NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING

Our neighbors, leaders, and institutions are connected and mobilized for change, the rich history and culture of our historically black neighborhood is celebrated and preserved, and our community is safe and beautiful

**MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY** We will work together to connect and mobilize our neighbors, leaders, institutions, and others to build our political power, organization and leadership

## 2.1 Building Our Collective Capacity

- Create a Mobilization Team to work in partnership with the Third Ward Community Cloth and other community and faith-based organizations to develop ways to share and improve resources, services and collaboration across the neighborhood.
- Create a grassroots social media campaign and web-based presence to connect neighbors, leaders, businesses, institutions and organizations.
- Develop strong community networks to relay information within the neighborhood by developing a block captain program that will also nurture or create community leaders.

## 2.2 Celebrating Our Community

- Create a team or committee to develop and implement a grassroots early action grant program, "Community Building Grants" to be available to support schools, students, youth, parent organizations, civic and business groups, and others to organize community events and celebrations, block parties, clean-ups, fairs, etc.
- Organize an annual neighborhood summit, "State of the Northern Third Ward" to bring everyone together and celebrate and share successes and redefine priorities for the coming year.

## 2.3 Growing Our Leaders

- Work iWork in partnership with area churches, universities and organizations to create youth leadership opportunities and nurture young neighborhood leaders
- Support existing programs, such as Change Happens Youth Leadership program and work to bring new programs that provide youth leadership opportunities such as Junior Achievement.

## 2.4 Raising Our Voice (Political Engagement)

- Create an annual public policy agenda and advocacy plan for the Northern Third Ward around issues of gentrification, land control, economic development, public spending and equity. Present this agenda at the annual neighborhood summit.
- Partner with national organizations and leaders to shape this policy agenda to meet our vision and goals
- Work with elected officials and agency representatives, such as the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) and Management District,

## EYES ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND STREETS

We will work together to ensure we are secure and share a sense of well-being in our neighborhood

## 2.5 Lighting Our Way

- Identify and prioritize areas with poor street lighting
- Work in partnership with Centerpoint energy and others to install LED lighting

## 2.6 Community Policing

- Develop stronger relationships, build trust and share priorities between residents and police. Advocate for more police on bikes in the neighborhood.
- Organize formal and informal events to bring law enforcement together with residents, such as neighborhood bike rides, and basketball games
- Work together to decrease crime, for example by creating a neighborhood watch program, block walking or block captain program
- Create a campaign to encourage residents to use non-emergency number to report suspicious activity

## 2.7 Eyes on the Streets

- Work with residents and leaders to identify areas with drug activity or other problems
- Create partnerships to address these areas through collective activities or other alternative means, such as the mobile security trailers with cameras.

## ENHANCING THE BEAUTY AND CELEBRATING THE HISTORY OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

We will work together to ensure our neighborhood is well maintained and celebrate our rich and diverse culture

## 2.8 Right of Way and Drainage Improvements

- Evaluate existing drainage and develop a plan for necessary improvements (areas with challenges include Sampson and Drew, Columbia Tap Trail)
- Work with property owners to keep ditches and right-of-ways clean, well-maintained and free of debris or dumping.

## 2.9 Mobility and Connectedness

- Identify and prioritize areas for sidewalk construction or repair; Work with partners to secure funding and implement
- Develop a neighborhood ride share program or transit bus with a weekly schedule to visit banks, grocery stores, healthcare, etc. Target to seniors and others without transportation
- Expand B-Cycle Stations in Northern Third Ward

## 2.10 Cleaning Up

- Address litter and illegal dumping by encouraging residents to use the city's 311 phone helpline service.
- Work together and with the City to ensure property owners and renters are keeping lots clean and mowed
- Work with METRO and the Houston Southeast to create a public art and youth program to design and install new "ART" trash receptacles in the community
- Organize neighborhood clean-ups

## 2.11 Re-purposing Vacant Lots

- Identify and prioritize vacant land to be re-purposed (even temporarily) for mini-parks, plazas or urban gardens that serve as gathering places for formal and informal activities such as barbeques, games and other social events.

## 2.12 Beautiful Streets

- Identify and prioritize streets for improvements including sidewalks, lighting, and beautification, focus on the northern section of Emancipation Avenue, Holman, Alabama, Elgin, McGowen and Scott

## 2.13 Restoring and Re-Using Our Historic Buildings

- Identify historic buildings that are underutilized or vacant
- Partner with area organizations, businesses or others to create plans for re-using these resources

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE

Our existing local businesses will thrive, new businesses will be attracted to the neighborhood, and we will have increased access to local jobs.

## **GROWING AND SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES**

We will work together to support and grow our local businesses

### **3.1 Buy Local | Shop Third Ward**

- Create a “Buy Third Ward” program to encourage people to shop at locally owned and black owned businesses
- Work in partnership with area publishers and organizations to create a business directory for the neighborhood

### **3.2 Facade Improvement Program**

- Create a storefront improvement program to assist local businesses and provide local jobs, or partner with a youth mentorship program or neighborhood volunteer corps (housing) to improve building facades

### **3.3 Building the Capacity of Local Businesses**

- Expand access to small business support programs including financial support, loans and funding opportunities
- Work in partnership with the Greater Houston Black Chamber (GHBC) and the UH Sure Program to create a mentorship program for locally owned and black owned businesses in organized monthly meetings

## **BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE AND COOPERATIVE ECONOMY**

We will work together to create new business models that grow our amenities, meet our needs, and support local and black entrepreneurship

### **3.4 Seed New Community-Owned or Worker-Owned Cooperatives and Businesses**

- Work together to identify key needs and develop a plan to seed new community-owned or worker-owned cooperative businesses in our community (similar to NuWaters)
  - Focus on full service grocery stores, restaurants, basic services, washateria and hardware store, banks and financial services .
- Identify sites and key areas for new retail, workspaces and amenities, focus on key neighborhood corridors such as Emancipation Avenue

### **3.5 Activate Vacant Storefronts, Historic Buildings and Lots with Pop-Up Shops**

- Spark entrepreneurship by working in partnership with property owners to identify vacant storefronts, historic buildings and lots to activate new pop-up shops at low or no cost.

### **3.6 Hire Local**

- Work with major employers and anchor institutions to create a “Hire Local” program that employs local residents and connects with local businesses
- Identify employer needs, required skills and job training initiatives to meet the needs of local employers

### **3.7 Job Training**

- Increase job-training resources in the neighborhood, including trade programs.

# EDUCATION

Our historic neighborhood schools, our families and our children have the resources and support they need to succeed; our many educational institutions—that serve people of all ages—combine their strengths to ensure early and lifelong success for us all.

## STRENGTHENING OUR HISTORIC LOCAL SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

Our neighborhood will be home to educational pathways of choice, building upon historic and strong institutional and community relationships

### 4.1 Yates Magnet Program

- . Yates Magnet Program

### 4.2 Parent Teacher Engagement

- . Build relationships between parents and teachers to ensure academic success, including increasing participation in school activities and PTA/PTOs. Work to provide holistic staff, parent and faculty resources

### 4.3 Strong Historic and Local Schools

- . Support Yates High School and its feeder institutions to enhance their success and support parents' voices in shaping the future of the schools, including support groups to fundraise, supervise field trips, and advocate for improvements
- . Create a strategy to engage leaders and teachers at Yates, Blackshear and other feeder institutions to better understand their needs and where support is needed from the community

### 4.4 Partnerships for Progress

- . Inventory all organizations and institutions working in Northern Third Ward Schools, ensure partners are working together and holistically to support neighborhood schools
- . Work to build strong relationships and partnerships between organizations, local schools and universities to create a holistic education system in the neighborhood and encourage residents to go to local schools

## EXPANDING AFTER-SCHOOL AND SUMMER ENRICHMENT

Our children and youth will have access to programs and resources they need to succeed

### 4.5 Publicize Out of School Programs

- . Create a directory of after-school and summer enrichment programs for children and youth, ensure that this information is reaching residents
- . Target University summer programs for youth to Northern Third Ward schools

### 4.6 Expanding Out of School Enrichment Programs

- . Work in partnership with community centers, non-profit organizations, and parks to expand and grow after-school and summer enrichment programs for children and youth such as S.H.A.P.E. Center's summer civil rights freedom tour
- . Focus programs on motivating students to increase academic performance and to set high career goals
- . Expand knowledge of after-school zone programs provided by the Smith Family library

### 4.7 Youth Mentorship

- . Develop youth mentorship programs with local leaders and role models, including churches, universities, and the Hermann Park Rotary program.
- . Create a college-bound experience program with area universities

# FAMILIES, CHILDREN, AND SENIORS

Our seniors, children and families will thrive in a neighborhood that is connected, informed and rich with opportunities and resources.

## **STRONG FAMILIES**

Support the strength and connectedness of our families and seniors through knowledge and services

### **5.1 Connected Generations**

- . Build a stronger community of support through inter-generational gatherings and events

### **5.2 Directory of Family and Senior Services**

- . Create a directory of services and programs in multiple formats (printed, web, app) to ensure families are connected to the available resources in the neighborhood, including those at Shape Community Center and Change Happens

## **ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE**

Improve and expand our access to healthcare

### **5.3 Support Services**

Provide counseling and other supportive resources, including financial literacy and credit counseling, to families in need to ensure they can thrive

### **5.4 Staying Healthy**

- . Expand access to preventive healthcare, such as diabetes awareness programs, HIV prevention, STD prevention, and mental health support through outreach and health fairs
- . Expand knowledge of and access to healthcare and other health services in the community, such as behavioral and substance abuse services (e.g. Central Care Clinic, UH Eye Institute, DAWN Center)
- . Expand and improve outreach programs