

# The Woodlawn Lake Area

**Neighborhood Conservation District**





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the City's 1997 Master Plan and the 1998 Community Revitalization Action Group Report, the concept of the Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) was determined to be a proactive tool to use to address neighborhood sustainability through compatible infill construction and rehabilitation in unique areas of the city. Since the adoption of the NCD enabling ordinance and development of the NCD program, seven (7) NCD Ordinances have been approved by City Council: South Presa Street/ South St. Mary's Street (NCD-1), Alta Vista (NCD-2), Ingram Hills (NCD-3), Whispering Oaks (NCD-4), Beacon Hill (NCD-5), Mahncke Park (NCD-6), and Jefferson (NCD-7).

The Woodlawn Lake Area neighborhood was selected for designation based on goals identified in the Near Northwest Community Plan, adopted in February, 2004. Section 3.3.3 of the Plan states, "Investigate Neighborhood Conservation Districts as a way to protect the architectural character of the neighborhood." There are approximately 1,244 parcels within the 527-acre district.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts can be established in areas that possess distinctive character-defining features, where at least 75% of the land area within the district is improved or developed. The Woodlawn Lake Area NCD meets the ordinance requirements with 97% of the land area containing structures that are at least 25 years old and 93% of the land area presently improved. 84% of the NCD area was improved before 1960, and only 9% of the area was improved after 1960. According to Bexar County Appraisal data, 7% of the Woodlawn Lake Area parcels do not have recorded improvement dates (unknown).

Various styles of single story Craftsman architecture is prevalent throughout the Woodlawn Lake Area. In addition, a scaled mixture of post-World War II modern, Tudor, Mission, and Cottage style homes contribute to the architectural diversity and character of the area. While this architecture is an important feature, the design standards found in this plan do not intend to enforce architectural style, but are crafted to perpetuate historical arrangements of buildings, scale, massing of building volumes, celebrate the original character of buildings, de-emphasize and conceal spaces designed for the automobile, increase the amount and quality of spaces designed for interaction between neighbors and improve the visual appeal of the entire area. Design standards are not intended to make improvements or development costly.

The completion of the designation process brings to fruition the neighborhood's vision of protecting and preserving the unique character of the Woodlawn Lake Area. This designation meets the intent and upholds the spirit of the Neighborhood Conservation District Program.

**\*\*\*Civic buildings and religious sanctuaries are exempt from the design standards of this document.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Woodlawn Lake NCD Planning Team

Alejandro Soto  
Marisa Bono  
Norma Gonzales  
George Martinez  
Pam Martinez  
Mary Wright  
Andres Perez  
Lou Kaplan  
Fred Garcia  
Leo York  
Yolanda Santos  
Martha Klein

### Woodlawn Lake NCD Contributors

The Woodlawn Lake Community Association  
District 7 Council Office  
Justin Rodriguez  
Cris Medina  
St. Mary's University  
Arturo Vega  
Jefferson High School

## CITY OFFICIALS

### Mayor

Julian Castro

### City Council

Mary Alice P. Cisneros  
Ivy R. Taylor  
Jennifer V. Ramos  
Philip A. Cortez  
David Medina Jr.  
Ray Lopez  
Justin Rodriguez  
W. Reed Williams  
Elisa Chan  
John G. Clamp

### Zoning Commission

Ralph A. Medina  
Bennie Cole  
Andrew M. Anguiano  
James L. Myers  
Christopher R. Martinez  
David D. Christian  
Billy J. Tiller  
Susan M. Wright  
Milton R. Mcfarland  
Brenna G. Nava

### Planning & Development Services Department

Roderick Sanchez, AICP, CBO, Director  
Patrick Howard, AICP, Assistant Director

Andrea Gilles, Interim Planning Manager  
Gary Edenburn, Project Planner  
Sidra Maldonado, Planner  
Michael Taylor, AICP  
Rebecca Paskos  
John Osten  
Loretta Olison  
Tyler Sorrells, AICP  
Robert Acosta

---

## ABOUT THIS PLAN

The development of Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) in San Antonio is a response to the 1997 Master Plan and 1998 Community Action Revitalization Group (CRAG) recommendations. The NCD addresses concerns regarding the protection of neighborhood character for new residential and commercial construction.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts identify geographic areas in context of the total streetscape. Neighborhood based design standards address the character-defining elements of local identity and perception, and may reflect a specific architectural style and/or character of the neighborhood block. Neighborhood Conservation District designation, whether used to protect distinctive architectural or natural features, helps to stabilize property values and deter incompatible or insensitive development. It is a neighborhood revitalization planning tool that provides:

- a more predictable course of development for both neighborhood property owners and the development community;
- an efficient building permit process without the necessity of a Commission review, and;
- a means of self-determination for residential and commercial neighborhood organizations.

---

**The Woodlawn Lake Neighborhood Conservation District Plan** is intended to provide design standards that encourage, promote, and facilitate compatible development within the area. Design standards have been adopted in order to promote the existing development pattern and architectural diversity of the neighborhood. This document serves as a planning tool to guide future development by promoting the desired elements of the existing neighborhood character.

Over the course of several months, residents developed these standards based on character survey maps of the area. These maps identify dominant features such as sidewalk condition, front walk and driveway configurations, building materials, roof pitch, fencing and fence materials, front porch configuration and window proportions. During this year-long process, residents held planning team meetings, public meetings, and used various outlets to promote and advertise this transparent process. Members of the community were invited and encouraged to assist in the creation of this plan, to comment on the proposed standards, and to actively participate in the planning process. The Woodlawn Lake Area Neighborhood Conservation District plan represents the culmination of this effort.

The design standards identified in this plan will apply and take precedence over interpretations, discrepancies, or adopted Unified Development Code standards.

# **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MATRIX**

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD	
Building Height/ Number of Stories	Height of Primary Dwelling	35 feet with a roof pitch of at least 12/12 or greater. When roof pitch is less than 12/12, the maximum height is 30 feet.	
	Height of Accessory Structures	Height not to exceed 80% of primary structure, up to a maximum of 24 feet in height.	
Building Size, Massing	Size of Primary Dwelling	Front-facing façade (width of primary dwelling) shall not exceed 50 feet.	
	Lot Size and Coverage	Minimum lot frontage width: 25 feet Maximum lot frontage width: 75 feet	
	Front and Side Yard Setbacks	Side setbacks are determined by the base zoning of the property and as determined by the Unified Development Code.  Front yard setbacks shall be between 20 feet and 35 feet, and/or within 20% of the mean of the structures within one block face.	
Off Street Parking and Loading Requirements	Driveways	Driveway widths shall not exceed 18 feet in width. It may be widened beyond 18 feet beginning 5 feet behind the front façade.  Circular driveways are prohibited on residential streets; Circular drives are permitted on collector streets and major roads.	<b>Residential/ Local Streets:</b> 48' ROW, with pavement road width between 22' and 27'.  <b>Collector/ Major Roads:</b> 70' ROW, with a pavement road width greater than 44'.
	Curb Cut	Maximum curb cut width: 25 feet	
	Parking Areas	Driveways shall be located to the side of the primary dwelling structure unless the driveway leads to the front façade of an attached garage.  Circular driveways are permitted only on collector streets and major arterials.	Driveways shall not be extended or constructed to terminate at the front façade of the principal structure unless the driveway terminates in front of an attached garage.

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD
<p>Paving, Hardscape Covering</p>	<p>Front walks &amp; Side Walkways</p>	<p>An impervious, non-meandering front walk shall be constructed from the primary dwelling structure to the front street or public sidewalk. The front walk may meander in order to avoid a physical feature; tree, etc.</p> <p>The front walk shall be a minimum of 3 feet in width, not to exceed 4 feet in width.</p> <p>If a side walkway is constructed, connecting the front walk and the driveway, a 4 foot minimum grass or landscaped separation between the front walk and driveway shall be achieved. Side walkways shall be a maximum of 4 feet in width.</p>
<p>Garages and Carports</p>	<p>Garage Location</p>	<p>Garage entrance location shall be located and recessed at least five feet behind the front façade.</p> <p>Rear yard garages shall be setback from the rear property line at a minimum of 5 feet.</p>
	<p>Garage enclosures</p>	<p>Attached garages shall not be enclosed or converted to living space.</p>
	<p>Carports</p>	<p><b>Detached:</b> shall be open on three sides and shall have unobstructed vehicular access.  <b>Attached:</b> shall be open on at least two sides of primary structure and shall have unobstructed vehicular access.</p> <p>Materials and roof pitch shall match primary structure;</p> <p>Temporary carports such as those constructed of canvas or vinyl tent material with pole supports are prohibited. Carports must have an approved, engineered foundation for each pole or column base.</p> <p>Carports and similar structures shall not be the dominating feature of the streetscape.</p>

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD	
Principal Elevation Features	Front Porch	<p>Front porches shall not be reduced in size. Front porches may be enclosed with certain materials and certain materials are prohibited. No appliances or similar items may be used or stored on the front porch.</p> <p>Front porches may be enclosed with woven/ open wire mesh (excluding chicken wire, burglar bars, chain link, and similar materials), and shall maintain 80% transparency. Glass, plexi-glass, or similarly solid transparent materials are not permitted.</p> <p>A porch or stoop is required for all new construction. Solid metal, wood or decorative doors are not permitted on porch enclosures. The use of storm or screen doors for porch enclosures is permitted.</p>	
	Utilities	<p>All utility boxes, HVAC equipment and other utility services shall be screened with vegetative or other screening materials.</p> <p>Utility services, public or private, shall be screened and concealed from street views.</p>	
	Fencing	<p>Front Yard Fencing: maximum height of 48". Fence may consist of solid materials up to 12" above grade. Front yard fencing shall maintain a 50% transparency</p> <p>Rear fences abutting an alley shall have a gate or access opening to the alley.</p> <p>Prior to the installation of NEW front yard fencing, all fencing occupying the same or approximate footprint of the new fence shall be completely removed.</p>	<p><b>Prohibited fencing materials:</b> barbed wire, chicken wire.</p> <p>Design standards are not applicable to side or rear yards.</p>

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD	
Principal Elevation Features	Wall Openings, Fenestrations, and Front Entry	<p>The sum of the first floor glazing, doors, and other fenestrations shall be at least 25% of the front elevation surface area.</p> <p>A front door shall be located on the front façade of the primary structure, and shall be directly accessible from the front porch.</p> <p>Sliding glass doors are not permitted on the principal front elevation. French doors are not permitted on the first floor of the principal elevation or front-facing façade of the primary structure.</p>	
	Windows	<p>Window proportions shall be maintained. Windows for new construction shall have a vertical 2:1 ratio dimension and a minimum 6" vertical separation from other windows. Tint, aluminum foil, and similar coating materials are prohibited.</p>	
	Ramps and Similar Structures	<p>Ramps and similar structures shall be built parallel to the front wall of the structure, if feasible. All ramps and railings must meet the most recent City of San Antonio building code and shall be engineered to meet Americans with Disabilities guidelines. Non-wooden structures (metal aluminum, plastic, etc.) are not permitted.</p>	
	Mailboxes	<p>Freestanding, curb-side mailbox poles and support bases shall maintain a low profile and shall be supported by a single pole or similar structure. Rock, brick, stucco, wood, stone, or similar materials are not permitted for mailbox base or form support.</p>	
	Façade Materials	<p>Metal siding is prohibited. Faux siding is prohibited. Replacement siding shall match existing siding in profile and form.</p>	

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD	
Lighting	Glare	New outdoor fixtures having a total output of more than 1800 lumens must be full-cut-off fixtures.	
	Light Trespass	Light trespass is prohibited.	
Covering	Impervious Cover	Front yards shall maintain a minimum of 50% pervious covering area.	
	Landscaping	<p>The most current provisions of the Unified Development Code of the City of San Antonio shall be upheld as minimum landscaping standards for all new projects.</p> <p>Front yard water features and similar devices requiring a plumbing or electrical permit are not permitted.</p> <p>Front yard statuary, including bird baths and similar permanent decorative structures, shall not exceed 7' in height.</p> <p>Fixed sprinkler systems are permitted.</p>	
Roof Line and Pitch	Pitch	Maximum roof pitch for all new construction shall be no greater than 12/12. Existing roof lines and pitch shall be maintained.	
	Eaves and Overhang	Maximum eave overhang shall extend no further than 3' beyond the exterior wall, and shall not extend more than 3' below the principal façade. The roof overhang shall be a minimum distance of 9' from the closest grade.	

\*\*\*Civic buildings and religious sanctuaries are exempt from the design standards of this document.

# **NON-RESIDENTIAL DESIGN MATRIX**

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD
Principal Elevation Features	Signage	Digital, video, LED, flashing, strobe signage is prohibited.
	Building Materials & Front Façade	<p>Prohibited building materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood fiber hardiboard,</li> <li>• Plastic/ fiberglass panels,</li> <li>• Corrugated, ribbed, galvanized, aluminum coated, zinc-aluminum coated or unpainted exterior metal finish,</li> <li>• Unfinished concrete masonry units (i.e. cinderblock),</li> <li>• Vinyl siding,</li> <li>• Unfinished plywood,</li> </ul> <p>Covering of original brick or other masonry system details or facing materials on the front façade, with materials such as wood, metal or simulated wood siding or any other textured finish that conceal the original exterior system details is prohibited.</p> <p>Existing buildings with other types of exterior skin systems shall be maintained and/or repaired or replaced with materials that match in physical composition, size, scale and proportion.</p>
	Roofing Materials	Existing terra cotta, clay, ceramic, and similar roofing materials shall be maintained, repaired, and replaced with materials that match in physical composition, size, scale and proportion.
	Fencing	Front yard fencing is prohibited.

CATEGORY	ISSUE	DESIGN STANDARD	
<p>Off Street Parking and Loading Requirements</p>	<p>Parking/ Driveway</p>	<p>Asphalt, pavement, or permanently installed pavers are permitted. Dirt, gravel, or similarly loose pervious driveway surfaces are prohibited.</p>	