

**Housing**

Housing is of profound importance to Airline residents. Housing is an anchor, providing a link to family, neighbors, and the greater community. The home provides an important foundation for obtaining and maintaining employment, creating a secure and supportive environment for raising children, accessing public and private services and for building the web of relationships that underpin a socially cohesive community.

*Housing Supply*

Although Airline is an urban/suburban community, the housing stock has characteristics of a rural environment. While single family detached homes are the most prevalent type of housing (69.74 percent); manufactured homes (mobile homes) account for 23.31 percent of all housing in Airline. The increasing percentage of Airline residents living in manufactured home communities contributes to the area’s increasing population density, water and sewer capacity challenges, and public safety. Many of the single family lots in Airline are home to multiple manufactured homes and communities. Manufactured homes are a viable option for Airline residents seeking decent, affordable housing and typically require less square footage than single family attached/detached homes. The challenge for the Airline manufactured home community is not that there are too many manufactured homes; rather are too many homes on single lots that are ill-equipped to handle multiple connections, taxing the water and sewer infrastructure and creating difficulties for a timely response from the Little York Volunteer Fire Department and Harris County Sheriff’s Department.



Picture 4.1: Manufactured Home Community  
Source: HCCEDD, 2005



Picture 4.2: Apartment Complex  
Source: HCCEDD, 2005

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Picture 4.3: Single-Family Attached  
Source: HCCEDD, 2005



Picture 4.4: Single-Family Detached  
Source: HC CEDD, 2005

Airline's distribution of housing stock provides limited housing options for residents. While over 95 percent of the Airline population resides in single family attached/detached homes or manufactured homes, a small minority reside in multi-family housing (4.93 percent). Airline's multi-family housing is inclusive of individual lots with four to twelve small apartments, multi-story homes converted into multiple apartment homes, or apartment complexes with more than forty units.

Table 4.1: Population in Housing Stock by Type

<b>Housing Type</b>	<b>Airline</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Harris County</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single-family (attached)	330	2.01%	129,430	3.85%
Single-family (detached)	11,439	69.74%	2,132,243	63.49%
Multi-family	809	4.93%	979,096	29.15%
Mobile Home, Boat, RV, Van, etc.	3,824	23.31%	117,661	3.50%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 4.2 illustrates the total Airline population occupied in housing. More than 75 percent (75.51 percent) of Airline residents reside in owner occupied housing; approximately 25 percent (24.49 percent) reside in renter occupied housing. This indicates that the Airline community is stable as residents have made an economic investment in the community. More than 73 percent of the Airline population resides in owner occupied single family detached homes; 24 percent reside in owner occupied mobile homes.

Table 4.2: Total Population Occupied in Housing

	<b>Airline</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Harris County</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total Owner Occupied</b>	<b>12,385</b>	<b>75.51%</b>	<b>1,992,104</b>	<b>59.32%</b>
1, detached	9,127	73.69%	1,790,198	89.86%
1, attached	215	1.74%	74,705	3.75%
2	0	0.00%	4,935	0.25%
3 or 4	0	0.00%	8,807	0.44%
5 to 9	14	0.11%	7,576	0.38%
10 to 19	0	0.00%	5,539	0.28%
20 to 49	0	0.00%	3,224	0.16%
50 or more	0	0.00%	12,168	0.61%
Mobile home	3,029	24.46%	83,894	4.21%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.00%	1,058	0.05%
<b>Total Renter Occupied</b>	<b>4,017</b>	<b>24.49%</b>	<b>1,366,326</b>	<b>40.68%</b>
1, detached	2,312	57.56%	342,045	25.03%
1, attached	115	2.86%	54,725	4.01%
2	121	3.01%	41,990	3.07%
3 or 4	0	0.00%	91,978	6.73%
5 to 9	6	0.15%	125,719	9.20%
10 to 19	101	2.51%	159,637	11.68%
20 to 49	445	11.08%	86,676	6.34%
50 or more	122	3.04%	430,847	31.53%
Mobile home	795	19.79%	32,059	2.35%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.00%	650	0.05%

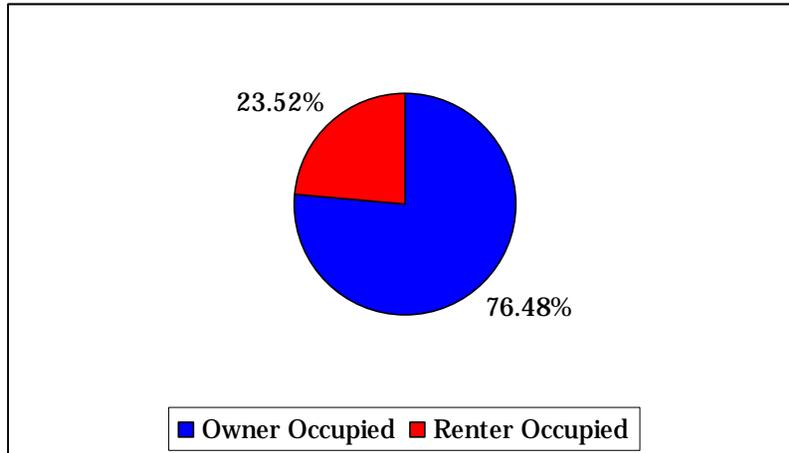
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### *Housing Tenure*

Homeownership enhances the lives of individual households and increases the social capital of communities. Homeownership provides public and social benefits to communities; namely improved social and academic outcomes to children; increased civic involvement; better maintenance of homes and greater neighborhood stability; an improved sense of individual and community well-being; and increased savings and wealth.

Studies indicated that homeowners spend more in dollar terms and personal labor on maintaining their residences than landlords of comparable rental properties. Moreover, areas with higher rates of homeownership also witness greater rates of property value appreciation.

Figure 4.1: Owner/Renter Occupied Housing Units in Airline



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Further research suggests that homeowners are more involved in their communities and local governments than renters. Homeowners commonly participate in a greater number of non-professional or civic organizations; have higher church attendance, and higher voter participation rates. Homeowners tend to remain in their homes longer, adding stability and familiarity to a neighborhood.

Table 4.3: Housing Units: Owner/Renter Occupied

Housing Tenure	Airline	Percent	Harris County	Percent
Owner occupied	3,599	76.48%	667,129	55.34%
Renter occupied	1,107	23.52%	538,387	44.66%
Total	4,706	100%	1,205,516	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 4.3 demonstrates the number of owner and renter occupied housing units in Airline and Harris County. Note the high percentage of owner occupied housing units in Airline. More than 75 percent of all housing units in Airline are owner occupied. This high percentage indicates a high level of community stability, pride and civic involvement in the community. In contrast, fifty-five percent of all housing units in Harris County are owner occupied. This is more than a 20 percent difference. The Airline community has a higher percentage of owner occupied housing units than the United States; 66.19 percent of all housing units in the United States are owner occupied.

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### *Overcrowding*

Overcrowding in homes has many negative consequences. Conditions found in overcrowded housing units often permit easier transmission of communicable diseases. The lack of private space can be stressful to occupants of overcrowded households. Overcrowding is often related to socioeconomic levels; the poor often have limited housing options and therefore must live in cramped quarters. The phenomenon of overcrowding is often said to be born from the demand of blue-collar workers attempting to fill low-paying jobs combined with the lack of affordable housing.

Many residents often find overcrowding a threat to property values, public safety, and public infrastructure. It also creates problems for trash removal and debris. Overcrowding is often the result of housing unit owners (primarily single family homes and mobile homes) converting units into apartment complexes for personal profit and gain. This is a common occurrence in Airline as many Hispanic/Latino families commonly live in housing units with a large number of intergenerational family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and siblings) living in a single home. Overcrowding is also the result of unit size and availability.

Table 4.4 demonstrates the average household size of housing units in Airline. Note the average total household size in Airline is larger than Harris County. The average household size of renter occupied housing units is almost twice as many as Harris County.

Table 4.4: Average Household Size of Occupied Housing Units by Tenure

	<b>Airline</b>	<b>Harris County</b>
Owner Occupied	3.36	2.99
Renter Occupied	3.67	2.54
Average Household Size Total	3.43	2.79

*Source: 2000 U.S. Census*

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 72.10 percent of Airline households have four persons or less. More than 85 percent of Harris County households have four persons or less. Airline residents have larger household sizes than Harris County. Almost 28 percent of Airline households have five persons or more; approximately 15 percent of Harris County households have five persons or more.

Table 4.5: Number of Persons per Household

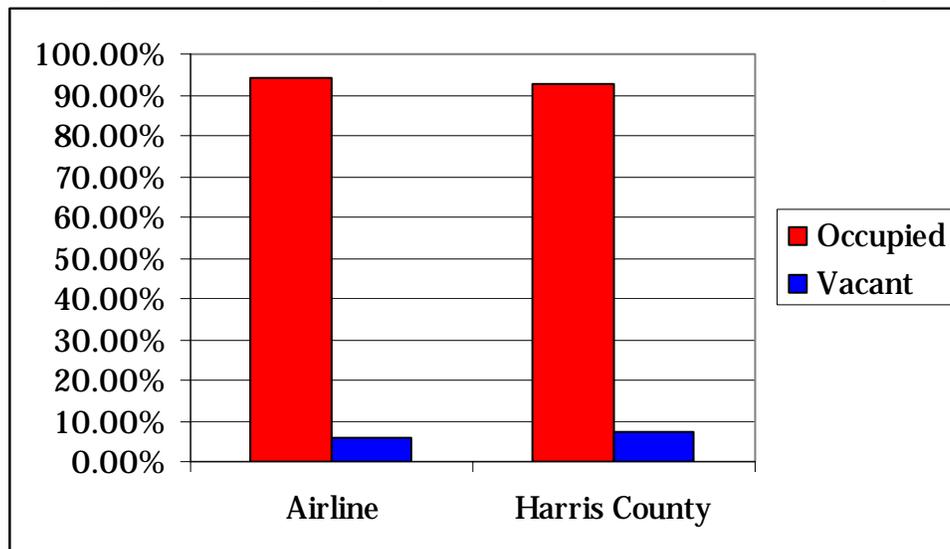
Household Size	Airline	Percent	Harris County	Percent
1-person household	694	14.75%	302,235	25.07%
2-person household	1,046	22.23%	338,032	28.04%
3-person household	819	17.40%	205,097	17.01%
4-person household	834	17.72%	183,561	15.23%
5-person household	640	13.60%	99,462	8.25%
6-person household	346	7.35%	44,870	3.72%
7-or-more-person household	327	6.95%	32,259	2.68%
Total	4,706	100%	1,205,516	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

*Vacancy*

Housing vacancy rates are an indicator of the saturation of the total housing stock. High vacancy rates, particularly in concentrated areas, often lead to vandalism, vagrancy and depressed home values. This might also indicate that the demand for housing in a particular community is low. Conversely, low vacancy rates may indicated a strong housing market, but might suggest that community housing needs are not being addressed, particularly when increased housing costs are present. If vacancy is low and housing costs are increasing, low-income households might move into substandard housing or create overcrowded housing situations.

Figure 4.2: Occupancy Status in Airline and Harris County



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

With an increasing household size and multiple homes inhabiting a single lot, one would expect the housing vacancy rate to be minimal. This is the case for the Airline community. As Figure 4.2 and Table 4.6 indicate, approximately 6 percent of housing units in Airline are vacant compared to 7.13 percent for Harris County.

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Table 4.6: Occupancy Status

Occupancy Status	Airline	Percent	Harris County	Percent
Occupied	4,706	94.21%	1,205,516	92.87%
Vacant	289	5.79%	92,614	7.13%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### Housing Values

Housing values are often associated with high levels of housing maintenance and property value appreciation. Property values not only measure the utility and condition of a residential structure, but also the value of the location in terms of a community and a neighborhood. According to the National Association of Realtors, the average single family home price in Airline is \$111,368; in Harris County, \$133,555.<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that almost 40 percent of owner occupied housing units in Airline are valued less than \$50,000. This is more than twice the percentage of Harris County owner occupied housing units valued less than \$50,000. This might be attributed to the high percentage of owner occupied mobile home units in Airline. While the costs of mobile homes are more affordable than single family homes, mobile homes depreciate in value faster than other housing types. This results in depreciated housing values for the entire community. More than 58 percent of owner occupied housing in Airline is valued between \$50,000 and \$149,999 compared to 60.63 percent for Harris County.

Table 4.7: Value of Owner Occupied Housing

	Airline	Percent	Harris County	Percent
Less than \$50,000	1,419	39.43%	129,006	19.34%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	1,984	55.13%	283,693	42.52%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	136	3.78%	120,817	18.11%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	23	0.64%	58,254	8.73%
\$200,000 or more	37	1.03%	75,359	11.30%
Total	3,599	100%	667,129	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 4.8 demonstrates the number of renter occupied dwellings per gross rent level. Of the Airline residents who rent, approximately 70 percent pay rent between \$300 and \$699/month for housing compared to 63.57 percent in Harris County.

<sup>2</sup> The National Association of Realtors. (2006). *Houston, TX 77037: Neighborhood Summary*. Accessed January 6, 2005 from the National Association of Realtors Web site: <http://www.realtor.com/FindNeig/NeigDetail.asp?detzp=77037&poe=realtor>

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Table 4.8: Gross Rent

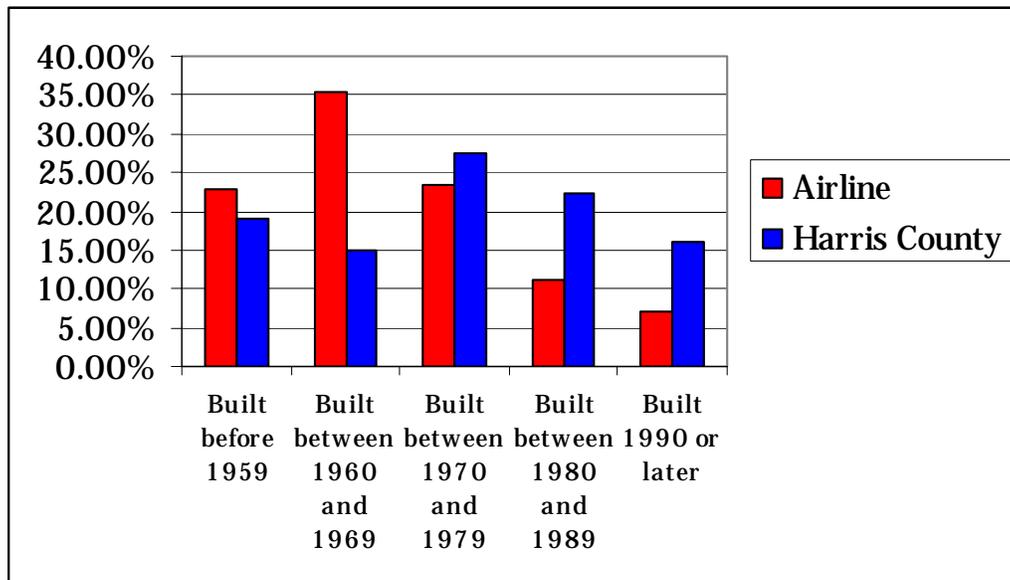
	Airline	Percent	Harris County	Percent
Less than \$300	124	11.71%	25,235	4.82%
\$300 to 499	406	38.34%	137,492	26.26%
\$500 to 699	326	30.78%	195,356	37.31%
\$700 to 899	176	16.62%	97,303	18.58%
\$900 to 999	15	1.42%	24,019	4.59%
\$1000 or more	12	1.13%	44,232	8.45%
Total	1,059	100%	523,637	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### Age of Housing Structures

The age of a community's housing stock is one of the indicators used to measure the overall availability and quality of housing. The percentage of older homes in a community commonly indicates a large number of distressed housing units. It is interesting to note that Airline did not equally share in the substantial growth in housing construction that occurred in Harris County in the 1970s and 1980s. The median year housing was built in Airline is 1968; in Harris County it is 1976. Due to the median year housing was constructed in Airline, lead-based paint may pose a potential health risk to children and adults.

Figure 4.3: Year Housing Built in Airline & Harris County



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

More than 58 percent of Airline's housing stock was constructed before 1969. In Harris County during the same time period, only 24.18 percent of the housing was constructed. Since 1980, 38.46 percent of Harris County's housing stock has been built. Only 18.20 percent of the Airline housing stock has been built since

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1980. Elderly and low income individuals are more likely than other groups to live in older housing units because those units are often the most affordable, however these households often lack adequate means to maintain the units, thus accelerating the deterioration of a community's housing stock. Residents have commented about the lack of resources for home repairs and infill housing to strengthen the housing stock.

Table 4.9: Year Housing Built

	<b>Airline</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Harris County</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Built before 1959	1,147	22.96%	248,510	19.14%
Built between 1960 and 1969	1,773	35.50%	195,267	15.04%
Built between 1970 and 1979	1,166	23.34%	355,100	27.35%
Built between 1980 and 1989	556	11.13%	289,435	22.30%
Built 1990 or later	353	7.07%	209,818	16.16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,995</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,298,130</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### *Condition of Housing Structures*

Property values are primarily determined by the physical condition of a particular property and value of the land. The condition of housing in a community is due in part to the age of its existing structures. Traditionally, the need for major repairs or rehabilitation becomes evident when housing reaches an age of 50 years. Housing quality depends in part on the age, housing characteristics, and location of the dwelling unit.

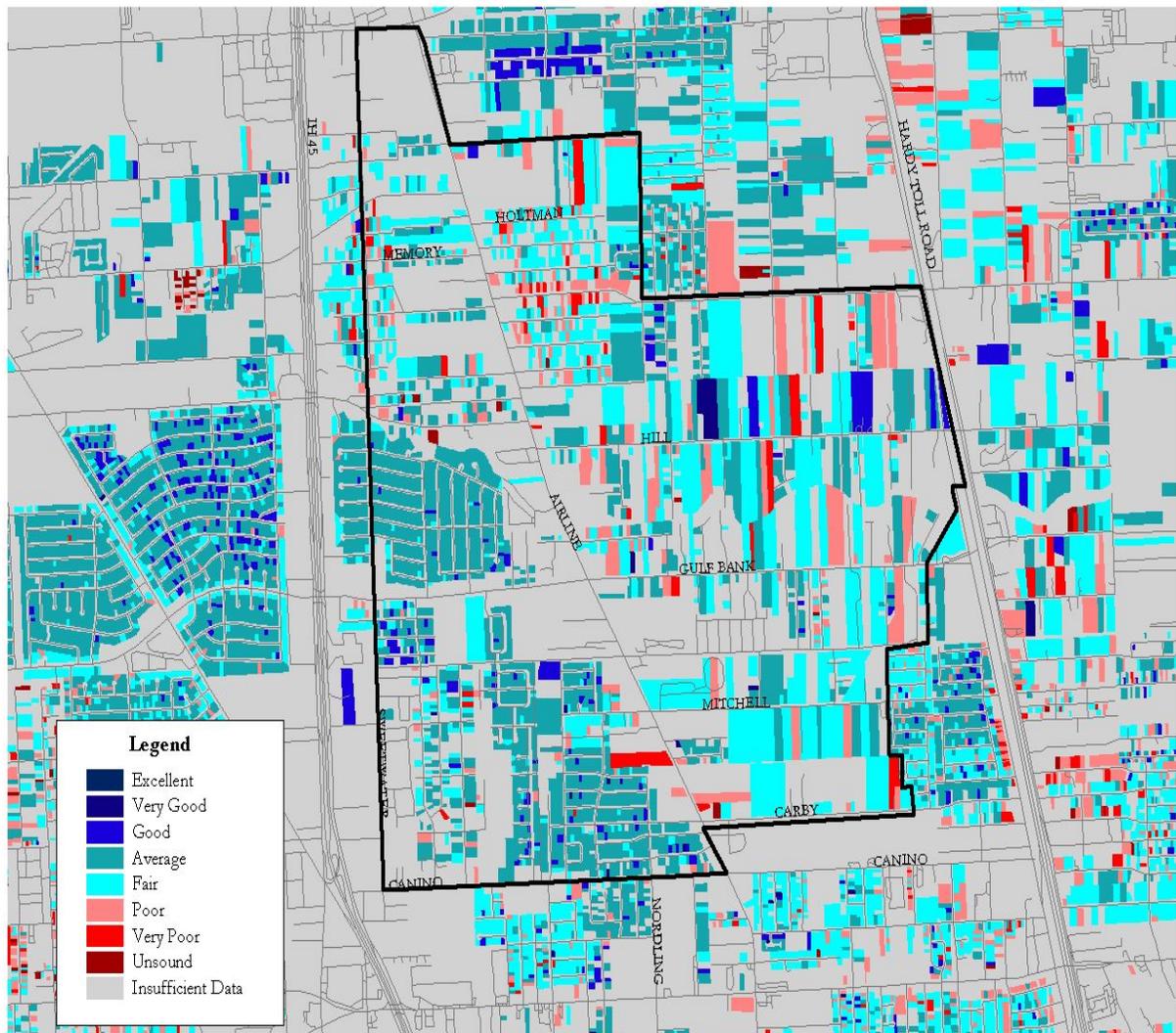
Harris County relies on the Harris County Appraisal District's (HCAD) assessment of housing to determine housing conditions throughout the county. The annual inspection survey measures the overall physical condition of the dwellings relative to its age or level of maintenance one would expect of a dwelling of a particular age. Consideration is given to the foundation, porches, walls, exterior trim, roofing, chimneys, wall finish, interior trim, kitchen cabinets, heating system and plumbing. Eight alternatives are provided:

1. **Excellent** – The dwelling exhibits an outstanding standard of maintenance and upkeep relative to its age.
2. **Very Good** – The dwelling exhibits light evidence of deterioration; but is still attractive and desirable
3. **Good** – The dwelling exhibits an above average standard of maintenance and upkeep in relation to its age
4. **Average** – The dwelling displays only minor signs of deterioration caused by normal 'wear and tear'. The dwelling exhibits an average standard of maintenance and upkeep in relation to its age.
5. **Fair** – The dwelling is in structurally sound condition, but has greater than normal deterioration present (deferred maintenance) relative to its age.

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6. **Poor** – The dwelling displays signs of structural damage (sagging roof, foundation cracks, uneven floors, etc.) possibly combined with a significant degree of deferred maintenance.
7. **Very Poor** – The dwelling displays a condition that approaches unsoundness; extremely undesirable and barely useable.
8. **Unsound** – The dwelling is structurally unsound, not suitable for habitation and subject to condemnation. It is possible some dwellings may be occupied, but still suitable for classification as unsound.

Map 4.1: Housing Conditions in Airline



Source: Harris County Appraisal District, 2002

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The 2002 HCAD Housing Inspection survey of houses in Airline indicate that the majority of dwellings are classified as *average*. This simply indicates that the dwellings display minor signs of deterioration caused by normal 'wear and tear' and have an average standard of maintenance and upkeep in relation to its age. This bodes well for the community as a majority of the homes in Airline are 26 years of age or older. The survey rated more than 30 percent of Airline homes as *fair*. This suggests that the housing stock is in need of rehabilitation and consistent maintenance. More than 8 percent of housing units in Airline were classified as *poor or very poor*. This indicates that home repair and rehabilitation programs are needed in the community. Only 170 housing units (4.44 percent) were classified as *very good* or *good*. No homes were classified as *excellent*.

Table 4.10: Housing Conditions in Airline Target Area

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Excellent	0	0%
Very Good	12	0.31%
Good	158	4.13%
Average	2158	56.42%
Fair	1164	30.43%
Poor	265	6.93%
Very Poor	68	1.78%
Unsound	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Harris County Appraisal District, 2002

Note that many homes to the west of Airline Drive are classified as *good*, *average* or *fair*. Housing units to the north and east are primarily classified as *fair* and *average*, yet populated with several *poor*, *very poor* and *unsound* units.

## ***Recommendations***

The purpose of the following recommendations and goals is to support the Airline Improvement District and community's commitment to sustainable, quality and affordable housing through the implementation and enforcement of appropriate incentives and programs.

### **1. Demolish abandoned properties**

Reinvestment of abandoned properties supports the existing housing stock and increases property values in communities. To demolish abandoned properties:

- Identify the properties (residential and commercial) that need to be demolished in the Airline community
- Meet with the Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services Department to determine the process to clear abandoned properties in the area
- Investigate re-use opportunities for properties (possible pocket parks, infill housing, community center)

### **2. Deed Restriction Enforcement**

Deed restrictions protect property values, residential character, and guard against locally unwanted land uses in communities. Northline Terrace and Bellmar Civic Associations have active deed restrictions that limit lots to residential use only. The Northline Terrace and Bellmar Civic Associations must work with property owners to ensure the proper and effective enforcement of deed restrictions in communities. Sections of the Airline community that are not governed by deed restrictions can either create deed restrictions (refer to Texas Property Code, Chapters 201 and 202) or work with the Airline Improvement District, the Harris County Sheriff's Department and the Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services Department to ensure public safety is paramount.

### **3. Homeownership Program/Campaign**

Homeownership provides economic, social and civic benefits to communities. The Harris County CEDD Down-payment Assistance Program (DAP) assists prospective homeowners with down-payment and closing cost assistance. The Airline Improvement District will partner with the HCCEDD DAP to educate families about homeownership.

To develop a program/campaign:

- The Airline Improvement District, in collaboration with the Bellmar and Northline Civic Associations, and local business should decide what type of campaign to conduct (community fair, seminars, information flyers, National Night Out)
- Determine logistics, advertising for event
- Contact the HCCEDD DAP Administrator to assist with the campaign activities

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- Determine frequency of event

### **4. Infill Housing Program**

Infill housing is an alternative for providing affordable housing to many low-income residents in Airline. To implement an Infill Housing Program:

- The Airline Improvement District along with the civic associations can contact LISC for housing program development information. Members of the civic associations and members of the Airline Improvement District could develop a CDC to become a certified CHDO (Community Housing Development Corporation) and build affordable housing on vacant lots.
- Partner with existing CHDOs and HCCEDD for technical assistance
- Select and purchase vacant properties within existing neighborhoods and the entire Airline Improvement District for infill housing development
- Meet with housing developers and realtors, banks, renters to discuss needs in community and plan programs

### **5. Home Repair Program**

A home repair and rehabilitation program that includes minor home repairs and lead-based paint screening will assist local residents, particularly seniors, the disabled population, and families with young children with repairs, painting, etc.

To implement this program:

- Meet with HCCEDD to discuss how to get involved with the HCCEDD program. HCCEDD has a home repair and lead based paint screening program.
- Contact LISC for housing program development information

### **6. Nuisance Abatement (garbage, noise, weeds, rodents, insects, junk etc.)**

The Neighborhood Nuisance Abatement Act (NNAA) is designed to abate public nuisances in unincorporated areas of Texas counties. To assist in the elimination of public nuisances:

- File a complaint with the Consumer Health Section of the Harris County Health Department
- If the nuisance remains unabated for 30 days after county abatement notice has been received, a health inspector may enlist the assistance of property owners to act as witnesses in court.
- In addition to criminal prosecution by the Health Department, the complainant can file a civil suit in county or district court

### **7. Restrictions on Trucks with more than 2 Axles in neighborhoods**

To restrict trucks in the Airline community with more than 2 axles in neighborhoods (ex. Northline Terrace and Bellmar):

- Contact Harris County Precinct One and the Harris County Road and Bridge Department to learn specifics of the restriction (the number of petitioners needed, the area included in the restriction, etc.)