

2.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE



History of Aldine

Community Assessment

- ◆ Local Government
- ◆ Demographics
- ◆ Local Economy
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Community Facilities
- ◆ Infrastructure
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Parks and Services
- ◆ Urban Design



2.1 HISTORY OF ALDINE

In the 1800's the International and Great Northern Railroad laid ground for a railway between Houston and Palestine. Prairie Switch (the Aldine area) located along the railway, served as a point where trains would switch engines. As Aldine grew, the International and Great Northern Railroad became essential as people used it to travel as well as ship products such as cattle and poultry to other areas. The International and Great Northern Railroad was later renamed the Missouri Pacific Railroad. It still passes through Aldine.

There is much debate about the how Aldine received its name. One story is that as the train stopped in Prairie Switch to switch cars, the conductor would yell "All dine!" to the passengers. This would alert passengers that they could leave the train and find a place to dine close to the depot. Other settlers claimed that the community was named after a 15th century Italian printer.

Faculty at North Harris Montgomery Community College compiled the history of Aldine discussed in this document.

Aldine was primarily a farming and dairy area. The railroad allowed farmers easy access to distant markets. Although most citrus crops failed due to unpredictable weather and insect problems, figs were a success. This sparked John C. Carpenter in 1910 to open a fig cannery in Aldine near the railway. However, in 1917, sugar rationing during World War I caused the cannery is closed.

Aldine has continued to grow and develop. One major development having an impact on the area was the Bush Intercontinental Airport, one of the largest airports in the country. The airport was built in the northeastern part of the Aldine district in June 1968 (Figure 1). Although the Missouri Pacific Railroad line no longer stops in the Aldine area, the airport has continued to boosted commerce in the surrounding area. North Belt and Greenpoint Mall construction added to the area's growth. Both, the airport and mall, have brought business and economic diversity to the area. This growth has allowed local residents and businesses to investigate revitalization strategies to improve the existing conditions in Aldine.

Revitalization Efforts

The Aldine community has been instrumental in redevelopment efforts in the area. Activities have included: submitting grant proposals, successfully bringing the Sheriff's Storefront to the community, and the construction of sidewalks on Aldine Mail Route FY2001–2003. In 1999, Aldine sought to establish a Special Taxing District, however, the district failed to receive State authority to form. The community has also been active in developing partnership agreements with the Health Department, Harris County Sheriff's Department, Aldine Independent School District, Business Chambers, Harris County Commissioner's, U.S. Attorneys, the Harris County Community Development Department, and the Texas Department of Transportation.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Aldine despite having the characteristics associated with a small city, is unincorporated and resides within Houston’s extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Houston’s annexation plan for the area has been to acquire large sections in and around Aldine that are economically viable and have an existing infrastructure. The city limits of Houston include a section of land in the middle of the Aldine boundary. This has had significant impact on the area’s social and economy condition.

Local Government

In an attempt to improve the conditions and retain some authority in the face of encroaching forces, area leaders sought to create a special improvement district that would have the authority to operate, construct, and maintain development projects in Aldine and generate revenue to support those projects. The district was, however, vetoed by the Governor in 1999 leaving Aldine with little governance over its destiny. Consideration has been given to the creation of a community development corporation (CDC) by community leaders with a purpose similar to the deposed improvement district.

Demographic Analysis

Key Map	373, 374, 375, 413, 414
Census Tracts	22201, 22202, 22301, 22302, 22303, 24002, 24003, 24103
County Precinct’s	Precinct One Commissioner El France Lee Precinct Two Commissioner Jim Fonteno Precinct Four Commissioner Jerry Eversole
Zip Codes	77039, 77093
School District	Aldine Independent School District

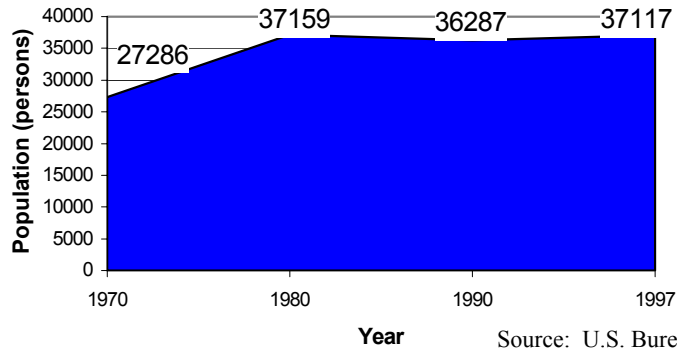
Analyzing demographic trends in a community is advantageous to any planning effort. Data from the last official census taken in 1990 describes demographic characteristics of the Aldine community. Population estimates for 1997 provide a general idea of the current demography of the community. The community is comprised of block groups from census tracts, which are small, relatively permanent areas into which the U.S. Census for the purpose of providing statistics for small areas divides standard metropolitan statistical areas and other areas. Aldine census tracts are 22201, 22202, 22301, 22302, 22303, 24002, 24003, and 24103.

The average resident in Aldine was male, young, and Hispanic in 1990. The average level of education attained was high school with no diploma received and the median household income was \$23,670.

Population Size

A community’s population size can reflect the demand for public services and utilities. Over the last twenty years the population size of Aldine has remained relatively stable (Figure 2). This has not been the case for the county as a whole. Harris County grew 17 percent during the same period.

Figure 2:
Aldine Population Over Time, 1970-1997



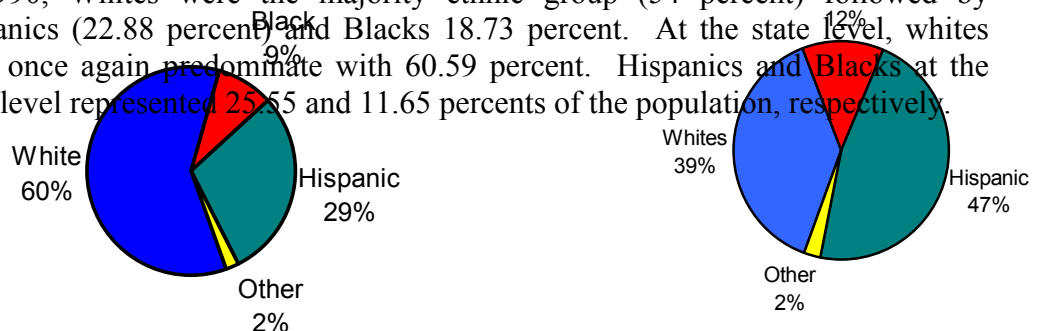
Aldine does contain a relatively high population density. In 1990, the region contained 36,287 residents in an area of 14.79 square miles. This equates to 2,453.5 persons per square mile, substantially greater than the county’s average of 1,628.6 persons per square mile. When compared to a city of comparable population size in 1990, such as Missouri City, Aldine was almost twice as dense.

Ethnic Composition

In Aldine, the average resident in 1990 was Hispanic. This was a change from 1980 which identified Whites as the predominate ethnic group in Aldine (Figure 3). A drop in the White population of 20% was noted during that ten year period. The shift in Aldine’s ethic distribution had significant effect on social and economic conditions. For example, businesses and services began catering to a growing bilingual or Spanish-only speaking community by adding bilingual personnel. Educational institutions required a greater number of bilingual teachers and materials.

Figure 3:
Proportion of the Aldine Population by Ethnicity, 1980 and 1990

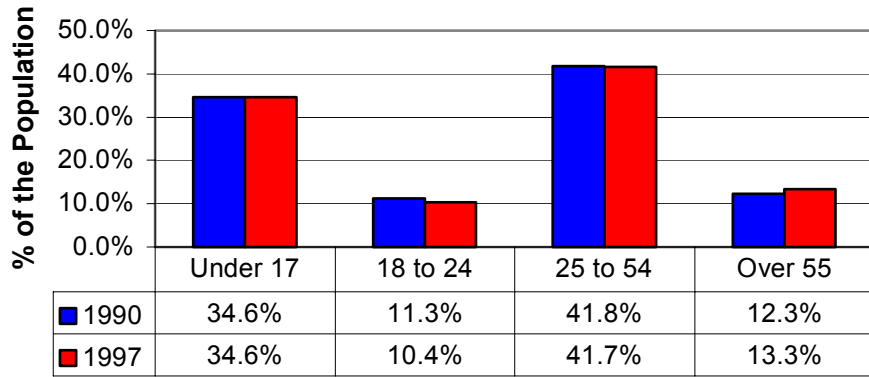
In 1990, Aldine contained 46.8 percent Hispanics and 39.5 percent Whites. The Black population represented 12.3 percent of Aldine’s population. Aldine’s population differed significantly from the county as a whole. At the county level in 1990, Whites were the majority ethnic group (54 percent) followed by Hispanics (22.88 percent) and Blacks 18.73 percent. At the state level, whites were once again predominate with 60.59 percent. Hispanics and Blacks at the state level represented 25.55 and 11.65 percents of the population, respectively.



Age and Gender

The Aldine area was consistent with National and State gender patterns. The gender breakdown of Aldine showed males holding a slight majority in 1990 with 50.3 percent. In 1997, the proportion of males fell slightly. The young in Aldine were predominantly male, 57%. In contrast, those over 65 years in Aldine were principally female, 57%.

**Figure 4:
Distribution of Age in Aldine, 1990 & 1997**



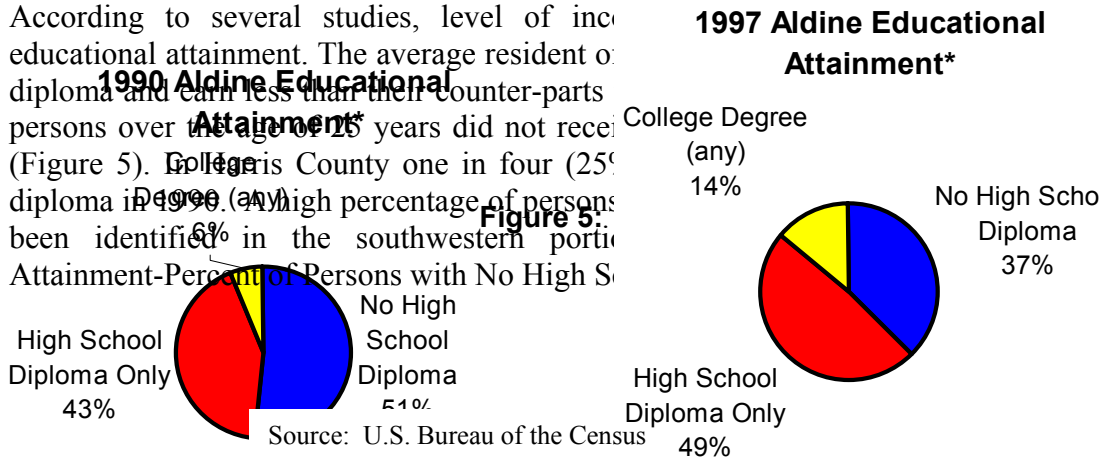
Age Source: 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census

Overall Aldine is a relatively young community. This may be due to the high proportion of Hispanics in the area that historically have larger families than other ethnic groups. The most striking feature of Aldine’s age distribution is its stability between 1990 and 1997 (Figure 4). Very little change was noted in this point within which age group.

Across age groups, however, the proportion of Aldine residents at ages 18 to 24 decreases slightly from 1990 to 1997 to increase at ages 25 to 54. This decrease in 18 to 24 years olds in the Aldine population shows significant life changes. At this age group, many young people are going off to college, finding jobs, or marrying and moving out of the area.

Household Income and Educational Attainment

According to several studies, level of income and educational attainment. The average resident of Aldine has a high school diploma and earn less than their counter-parts persons over the age of 25 years did not receive a college degree in 1990. In Harris County one in four (25%) of persons in 1990. A high percentage of persons have been identified in the southwestern portion of the area.



In 1990, 6% of Aldine residents over 25 years had achieved a college degree of some kind. Over the last seven years, however, the proportion of Aldine residents without high school diplomas (37%) has been decreasing and residents with a college degree more than doubling to 14% in 1997. The percentage of persons with a college degree, the geographic distribution reported higher percents of college degree holding residents in the northwest and central zones (See Educational Attainment-Percent Persons with a College Degree).

**Table 1:
Aldine and Harris County Income and Poverty Proportions**

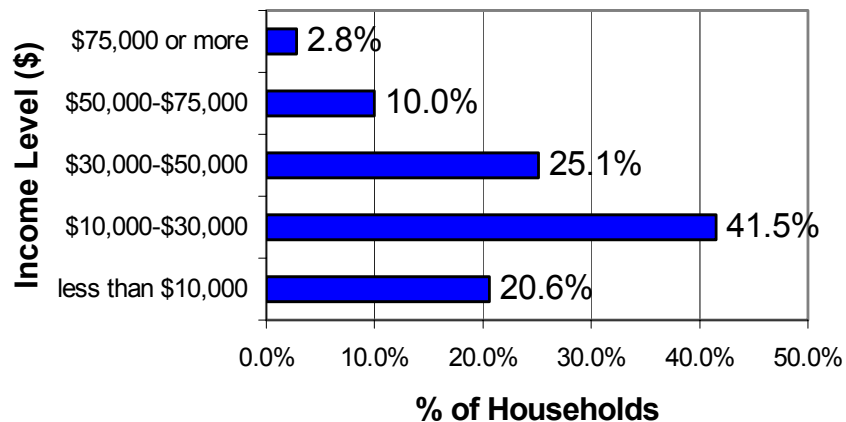
Population (1990)	36,287
Median Household Income (1990)	\$26,021
Poverty	
Persons below Poverty (1990)	22.6%
Persons below Poverty Harris County (1990)	15.7%
% Unemployment (98-99)	6.19%
% Unemployment Harris County (98-99)	4.1%

Source: 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census

The Aldine community had 10,294 households in 1990. By 1997, the number increased by 21 households to 10,315 households. Persons per household are often used as indicators of overcrowding in an area. In Aldine, the average persons per household is 3.5 persons, compared to the 2.7 for the county.

The median household income in the Aldine community in 1990 was \$23,670. This was over \$7,000 less than the county's median household income of \$30,970. Comparing the geographic distribution of person with a college degree (See Educational Attainment-Percent Persons with a College Degree) with the geographic distribution of median household income (See Median Household Income Map), the area with the highest median income, \$30,000 to \$39,999, has one of the lowest percents of residents with a college degree.

**Figure 6:
1990 Aldine Household Income**



As with educational attainment, Aldine’s household income increased to \$27,432 in 1997. The percent of persons below poverty in the area was 22.6% in 1990, almost 50% to the county’s 15.7% (Table 1). As shown in Figure 6, the largest segment of the Aldine population, 41.5% had an income between \$10,000 and \$30,000. In addition, one in five Aldine residents (20%) were earning less than \$10,000 in the same year.

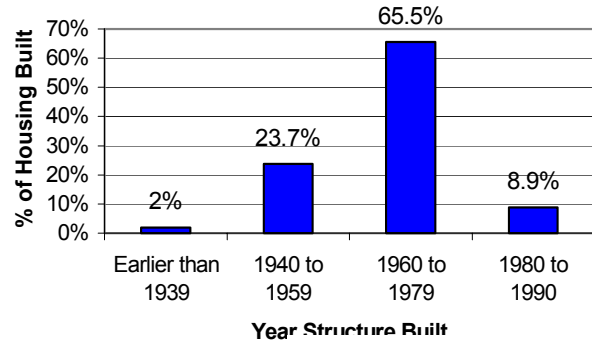
Conclusion

The Aldine community has remained relatively stable over the last twenty years at around 37,000 persons. The density is high for the area, especially when compared to the overall county’s and a similar sized city’s density. The average resident is young, male, and Hispanic. The overall education attainment level in the community is low with 51% of the population without a high school diploma in 1990. This has had significant lowering effect on household income levels.

Housing

Housing combines the basic need for shelter with the human desire for a sense of a home, safety, history, comfort, ownership and pride. Throughout the community meeting process, affordable housing, elderly housing, housing rehabilitation, and preserving and improving the character of the neighborhoods were high priority for Aldine residents.

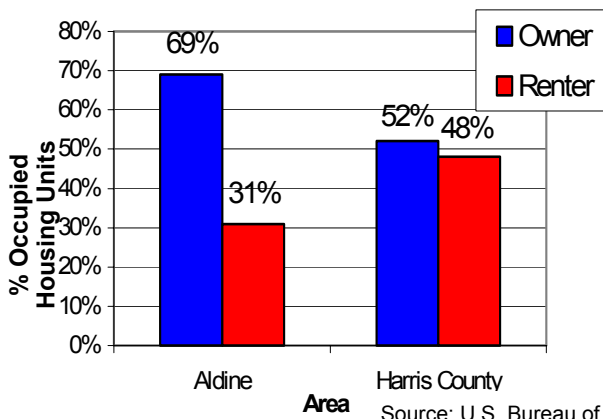
**Figure 7:
Aldine Housing Stock by Age**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The housing stock in the Aldine community is largely comprised of single-family aging housing stock and values. Two of three single-family houses were built during the 1960's and 1970's and one in four in 1940 to 1959. Several of these houses are in disrepair or have reached deterioration stage (Figure 7).

**Figure 8:
1990 Housing Units by Tenure**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

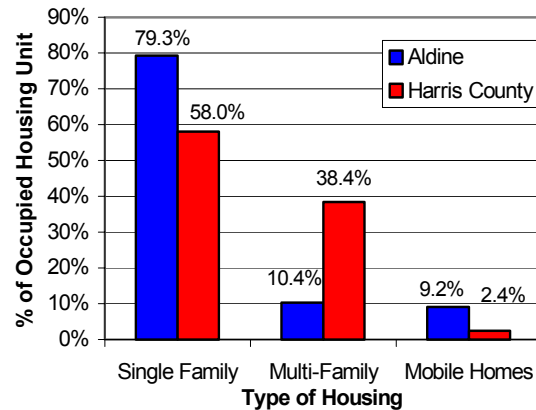
The community maintains a relatively high proportion of homeownership nearly 69% compared to 52% of the county's housing stock (Figure 8). Many of the homes are built of masonry or brick materials while the remainder are constructed of wood. Residents of the Aldine community feel that homeownership is an important

ingredient to maintaining their residential character.

The citizens of Aldine desire housing that promotes and preserves the character of neighborhoods, and expands homeownership opportunities. A diverse range of affordable housing types may include infill housing, conventional single-family homes, patio homes, townhomes, and manufactured housing which all may provide a range of housing alternatives for homeownership.

Aldine residents recognize that safe, decent and affordable housing promotes community stability. Four out of five existing houses in Aldine are single-family, 79.3%. Only 10.4% are multi-family and 9.2% are mobile homes (Figure 9). In comparison, single-family dwelling units in Harris County represents less than six in ten units or 58% of the total housing stock. Multi-family units account for 38.4%, and only 2.4% are mobile homes. Many of the mobile homes are located on the western portion of Aldine in areas with no sewer and water infrastructure (see Multi-family Housing Map). Residents expressed a strong interest in new developments as well as rehabilitation and infill housing.

Figure 9
1990 Proportion of Housing Type



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Vacant Areas

An area of Aldine highly populated with vacant lots for infill housing, is the area south of Mierianne Street and North of Little York Road (see Map Single Family Homes by Square Footage-Vacant Lots). Clusters of vacant residential lots are focused predominately along Mierianne Street and Exeter Street in this area.

In the northern portion of Aldine, large vacant tracts are available for potential residential development. Many of these tracts have roadway and drainage systems already in place. These areas are centered around streets where development has not been completed. One such grouping is located off John F. Kennedy Blvd and Cypress Knee Lane and includes streets such as Honey Bee Ct, Hunters Cove Ct, Lanceoak Ct, and Amber Rose Lane. This area contains approximately 130 vacant lots. Another vacant section is located on Lakemont Drive and has 30 lots currently vacant.

Recent market conditions in Aldine have not been conducive to the production of new housing developments. The development of master-planned communities in newer suburban areas has drawn many younger residents to move in search of new and better housing. The supply of multi-family housing, rental apartments, and condominiums have also suffered. These types of units have not been produced at a rate comparable to the surrounding communities (i.e. Greenspoint).

Local Economy

Economic development is important to the vitality and growth of any community. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, Aldine has a 6.19% unemployment rate compared to 4.1% for Harris County. Aldine is recognized as a low income, blue collar community with a declining job base. But, in spite of business closures and unemployment, there are a few bright spots. With the extension of the Eastex Freeway - Highway 59 and the Hardy Toll Road, Aldine is now home to many new and remodeled retail centers and businesses along both freeways. These business have taken advantage of access to downtown, Bush Intercontinental Airport, and surrounding areas. Aldine now has the potential for economic growth, new business development, and expansion.

Business and Industrial Base

Table 2:

Businesses in the Aldine Community		
Type of Business	Number of Businesses	SIC Prefix
Miscellaneous Retail	178	59
Retail- Industry and Consumer Products	174	55, 35, 52, 34, 56, 38, 24, 30, 27
Business Services and Contractors	114	73, 17, 16, 15, 87
Dining and Drinking Establishments/ Stores	102	58, 47
Repair Services: Automotive and Miscellaneous	93	76, 75
Wholesale Goods and Miscellaneous	62	51, 50, 86, 99
Services Industry	53	72, 7, 79, 43, 80, 82, 95, 49, 48
Manufacturing/ Refining/ Production	38	39, 27, 33, 42, 78, 13, 20, 28, 1,2, 23, 25, 32, 38

Source: 1997-1998 SIC Business Codes: City of Houston, Planning and Development Department

Service industries represent the fastest growing employment sector in the Aldine community. The service industry has historically employed more people than manufacturing, particularly since the end of World War II. While the services industry is not the dominant sector in the U.S. economy, it is also the fastest growing employment sector of the U.S. economy.

A survey was completed detailing the types of businesses in the community focusing on the

Types of Businesses in Aldine

Ashbrook Corp
 Southern Crushed Concrete, Inc
 Ace Machines & Fabricating
 Bilden Plastic, Inc
 Superior Wellhead, Inc
 B&B Heat Treating, Inc
 Boring Specialties
 Control Panel Specialists
 Cobra Roll Industries
 Action Sign Service
 Doortown Corp
 Flame Metallurgical, Inc
 Herbeco
 Gray Welding, Inc
 Houston Poultry & Egg, Inc

two ZIP codes (77039, 77093) in the Aldine study area (Table 2). The survey was based on 1997 SIC Business Codes. Findings are summarized in Table 2. We find that Aldine has a high level of service oriented businesses with manufacturing or refining businesses only a small fraction of the total, 4.9%. The types of manufacturing business in Aldine were diverse. They included crushed concrete, machine fabrication and printing and publishing. Jobs in the service industry often employ unskilled labor at low wages.

Workforce Development

AISD Workforce Development Programs	
Name of Program	Activities
COOP Program	Attend school ½ day and work in a career interest area ½ day.
Clinical Rotation Program	Health profession students receive hands on training in hospital or clinic environment.
Shadowing Program	Students spend part of the day shadowing professionals in various organizations and companies.
Hospitality Management Training Program	Students receive up to 2 years training in hotel/restaurant/travel industry.
Youth Apprenticeship Program	Students apprentice in a high tech company for up to 2 years.
Computer Numerical Control (CNC)	Students receive college credit for courses, and placed in an internship program.
Magnet School for Engineer Careers	Accelerated classes in engineering.
North Harris County Community College	Offers articulated dual classes with the community college.
Trade School Program	Offers courses in: Accounting, Agriculture, Automotive Tech., Business/Office Education, construction Trade, Drafting (CAD), Cosmetology, electronics, Home Economics, Health Sciences, HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning), Marketing Education, JROTC, and Technology Education.

Source: AISD School Information

Aldine is in fact a community that also wants business opportunities, career training, and career counseling especially for its youth. Through programs offered by the Aldine Independent School District, students can acquire awareness in career areas that exist in business, health, and industry. College level and basic skills courses and career counseling can be taken at the North Harris County Community College.

Strengthening the workforce, infrastructure, and existing business base in the Aldine community is essential to attracting new industry to the area. Identifying the target industries would be valuable. Then by addressing the requirements of these targeted companies, the community will be better prepared to attract such companies to Aldine.

Community Facilities

Education

The education concerns of the residents in Aldine focused on early childhood development, primary and secondary education, enrollment in the community/junior colleges, and the development of the skills necessary to get a job. The North Harris County Community College offers college level and English/literacy classes at MacArthur Senior High School. Residents at the community meetings discussed the realization of student potential as a way to increase prosperity in the Aldine community.

Aldine Independent Schools in the Aldine Community		
School	Enrollment	Program
Oleson Elem.	983	YMCA Afterschool Program until 5:30 p.m.
Orange Grove Elem.	617	Extended day until 4:30 p.m., OM- Odyssey of the Mind until 4:30 p.m.
Raymond Elem.	760	Extended Day until 4:30 p.m.
Stephens Elem.	762	Tues. – Thurs. Extended Day until 4:45 p.m.
Worsham Elem.	774	Tues. – Weds. Extended Day until 5:00 p.m.
Reed Intermediate	937	No longer have a program
Aldine Middle	932	Tutoring Tues. – Thurs. until 5:30 p.m.
Grantham Middle	947	Tutoring until 5:00 p.m.
Hambrick Middle	956	Tutoring until 5:30 p.m.
MacArthur 9 th Grade		Under construction, opens Fall 1999
MacArthur Senior High	2481	Extended hours Mon. – Fri. for extracurricular activities, athletic events, programs, tutorials, meetings
EC/PK Center		No program

Source: Aldine ISD

The Aldine community is home to the Aldine Independent School District (AISD) which is the 10th largest school district in Texas. AISD has nine schools in the Aldine target area (see Educational Resources Map). Many of them offer after school programs and extended hours for the students. In 1996-1997 AISD experienced an overall 2.6% dropout rate. When analyzed by ethnic group, both Hispanics and Blacks experience the highest dropout rate, 2.7. Black dropout rates rose .3 percentage points where as Hispanics rates dropped by .4 percentage points for 1995-1996. Those students participating in AISD programs offering those economically disadvantaged assists, only a dropout rate of 1.4 was reported.

According to the Texas Education Agency report, the Aldine Independent School District reported a total enrollment of 48,585 students during the school year 1997 – 1998 (AISD extends beyond the target area of this report). Ethnic distribution was to 15.4% White, 36% Black, 45.0% Hispanic, 3.5% Asian, and 0.1% other. The economically disadvantaged represents 63.5% of the school population, 19.1% have limited a proficiency in English. For 1997-1998 AISD had 86.6% passing rate on the TAAS Cumulative test. This was lower than the region's passing rate, 88.1% and the State's passing rate, 88.7%.

Public Safety

Public safety consists of police protection, fire protection, and emergency assistance area (see Police Station, Fire Station and Hospital Map). As an unincorporated area, Aldine has no municipal police force. The Harris County Sheriff's Department is the primary service provider for police protection in the Aldine area. On average, three shifts of 9 deputies patrol Aldine daily. The Sheriff's Department recently opened the Storefront in Aldine that provides outreach services and activities. The community supports the Storefront through fundraisers and private contributions. The storefront is open on Monday – Saturday, and offers outreach services to the Aldine community. These services include: walk in reports, programs for youth, tip information, home inspections for insurance discounts, registered vehicles program HEAT (Help End Auto Theft), RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) classes, public outreach with the schools, and facilities for public meetings to the local residents.

The Weed and Seed program is one innovated program that the community has participated to reduce crime. The goals of the Weed and Seed Program are to reduce crime and educate the community. The Program is separated into two task forces. The Weed's objective is to disrupt and dismantle the structure of gang organizations and prevent new gangs from developing. The objective of the Seed task force is to educate the community and promote gang awareness and intervention. The Seed agenda also provides conflict and dispute resolution, leadership training, and promotes positive youth activities. Aldine is struggling with serious criminal activity relatively comparable to that seen within inner city neighborhoods, however because it is in an unincorporated area, it is left to combat this menace without the necessity of strong local law enforcement. Aldine relies instead on the Harris County Sheriff's Department with its limited resources spread across a wide area.

Volunteer Fire Department's		
Name	Established Date	Equipment
Westfield Fire Department	1938	Three Engines, One Aerial Ladder Truck, One Chiefs Vehicle
Aldine Fire Department	Mid 1960's	Two Engines, One Booster/Grass Truck, One 5,000 gal. Tanker, One Heavy Duty Rescue, One Chiefs Vehicle
Eastex Fire Department	1950's	Two Engines, One Grass Truck

As for fire protection, Aldine has 3 Volunteer Fire Departments that provide emergency/EMS services to the target. These fire departments have limited personnel, equipment and resources.

Crime Analysis

Over the past several years, the Aldine community has been plagued with an increase in juvenile crime including narcotic and gang activity. The area now has one of the highest crime rates within the unincorporated areas of Harris County.

In 1997 – 1998, the Harris County Sheriff's Department found a consistent pattern to crime occurring in the Aldine community. The area to the immediate east of the Aldine boundary between Aldine Mail Rt. to the south and Lauder Rd. to the north, constituted the highest concentration of criminal activities in Aldine. This area was the source of well over half of the calls for service in the three most common crimes. In rank order they are burglary, theft, and assault. Roughly 95 percent of these crimes dealt with either burglary of a residence or a motor vehicle.

Theft and assault calls occur at similar frequencies in Aldine. These crimes were evenly distributed throughout the area. Still, the percentage of calls from area east of Aldine Mail Route and Lauder Road account for over 50 percent of all calls regarding for theft and assault. Theft is the most frequent business related crimes. For the remaining criminal activities receiving service calls in Aldine, robberies, drug-related crimes and major traffic accidents roughly follow the same pattern of geographical dispersal.

Public Health

Public Health is defined as the overall physical and mental well being of area residents. The delivery of services is a major problem for many residents in the Aldine community.

Aldine Community Health Clinic Services		
Aldine Community Health Clinic 4755 Aldine Mail Rt.		
Adult Dental Clinic	Laboratory and Pharmacy	Health Education
Geriatric Specialty Clinic	Free Pregnancy Testing	Smoking Cessation
Pediatrics – EPSDT	Mammography	Prenatal Care
Adult Medicine	Nutrition Counseling	Healthy Eating
Podiatry	Social Services	Breast Health
Midwifery	Chaplaincy	Healthy Heart
Obstetrics & Gynecology	Gold Card Eligibility Workers	Dental/Oral Health

In 1996, the Harris County Hospital District built the Aldine Community Health Clinic right in the heart of the Aldine target area, at the intersection of Aldine Mail Route and Boreas. The hours of operation are Tuesday through Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 6:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The clinic offers many health and health education services that the community has lacked.

A 24-hour emergency hospital is available at Northside General Hospital. The hospital is located at on the southern boundary of the Aldine target area on Little York Road. In addition to emergency service, the hospital contains 39 beds for in-patients services, and a full surgical facility.

Transportation

Major Thoroughfares

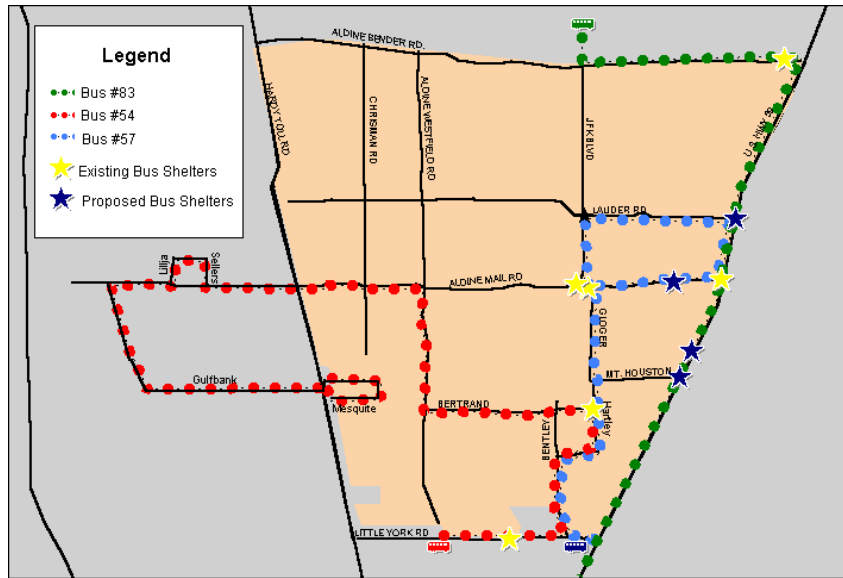
Major thoroughfare planning is the process used by municipalities and other governmental entities to assure the development of the most efficient and appropriate street system to meet existing and future travel needs. A major thoroughfare system is comprised of existing and planned freeways, major streets, and highways that may or may not need widening or new right-of-way. A thoroughfare plan should also designate collectors and local streets.

Aldine is bordered by two highway systems, Hardy Toll Road to the west and U. S. Highway 59 North to the east (See Major Streets Map). Existing major roads in Aldine are Aldine Mail Route, Aldine Bender Road, JFK Boulevard, and Aldine Westfield Road. Traffic accident calls were, more numerous than robbery and drug-related crime calls combined (See Major Traffic Accidents Map). These were the most dispersed service calls with the most occurrences from the major thoroughfares Aldine Mail Rt. and Aldine Westfield Rd.

Although no immediate plans for improvements or amendments to the major streets in Aldine are under consideration, the widening of Aldine Mail Route has been suggested in the next ten years. Residents have, however, expressed a need for new traffic flow monitoring at intersections, predominately along Aldine Mail Route. These include the intersections of Aldine Mail Route and J.F.K. Boulevard, Aldine Mail Route and Aldine Westfield Road, and Aldine Mail Route and Chrisman Road.

Bus Routes

Three Metro bus routes primarily serve the southern portion of Aldine and connect with the Tidewell Transit Center. Residents of Aldine feel the current public transportation routes do not adequately serve the population, especially those making their way to work and home within the community. Currently, the Metro bus routes serving Aldine are routes 54, 57, and 83.



The bus route 54 enters Aldine from Little York Road and Bentley Road and takes a circular pathway through the southeastern portion of the community. Another route, 57, also enters Aldine at Little York road and Bentley, however, the route passes through the western portion of the community. Finally, route 83 passes only on the boundaries of Aldine, U. S. Highway 59 and the western portion of Aldine Bender Road.

These routes offer bus passenger shelters to protect riders from the elements. Metro has constructed several sites in Aldine predominately on routes 57 and 83. Existing sites are on Bertrand Road at Hartley, Eastex US 59 Freeway at Aldine Mail Route, Gloger at Aldine Mail Route, JFK Blvd at Aldine Mail Route, JFK Blvd at Lauder Road, Lee Road at Aldine Bender Road, and Little York Road at Shady Lane. Metro has proposed installing new shelters at Aldine Mail Route at MacNaughton Road, Eastex US 59 at Mt. Houston, Eastex US 59 at Orange Grove, and Lauder Road at Eastex US 59.

Infrastructure

In the Aldine area, public services and facilities have longed suffered from the lack of adequate infrastructure. One of the primary concerns in Aldine is the provision of adequate water and sewer services. The Sunbelt Fresh Water Supply District, a privately run district, is the largest provider of services to the

Public Services and Facilities in the Aldine Community	
Sunbelt Fresh Water Supply District	Fairgreen Water Treatment Plant
Water Control & Improvement District #74	Oakwilde Seven Mile Waste Water Treatment Plant
Harris County Municipal Utility District #182	Oakwilde Waste Water Treatment Plant
Aldine Public Utility District	Oakwilde Water Treatment Plant
Sequoia Public Utility District	High Meadows Waste Water Treatment Plant
Harris County Municipal Utility District #4	High Meadows Water Treatment Plant

Aldine Community. The Sunbelt Fresh Water Supply District has expanded its boundaries and extended its services over the years. Many Aldine residents, however, are still without adequate services and have their own septic and well systems (see MUD Map).

A significant number of residents are without public water or sewage services. These residents must rely on wells and septic tank provided at the cost of the resident. These types of systems can possess a health risk if they are not maintained properly. According to the 1990 Census, 21.9% of the Aldine residents are without public/private water service, and 38.7% are without public sewer service. The drainage system in Aldine consists of roadside ditches, driveway culverts, and road crossing culverts. Poor drainage conditions in the community exist in many subdivisions.

Parks and Services

People want to live in a community that have strong family values and community awareness; ample recreational opportunities with readily available parks; and a well tended environment. As natural amenities, parks and open spaces provide an environmental resource while their status as a gathering place make them focal points for the community. Currently, there are five area parks, two community centers, a county library, and many associations and clubs located in Aldine that offer a variety of passive and active leisure opportunities, while providing meeting and outreach facilities for the community.

Community Facilities in Aldine		
Name	Address	Precinct
Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. Community Center	4700 Aldine Mail Rt.	1 – El Franco Lee
James Driver Park & Community Center	10918 ½ Bentley @ Sagebrush	2 – Jim Fonteno
Bill Crowley Park	5100 Lauder Road	1 – El Franco Lee
Gerber Park	4735 Gaston Street	1 – El Franco Lee
Hall Bayou Jogging Trail	Little York @ Halls Bayou	2 – Jim Fonteno
Keith Weiss Park	Aldine Westfield	City of Houston
High Meadows Library	4500 Aldine Mail Rt.	1 – El Franco Lee

There are currently two facilities in the Aldine community that provide recreational and leisure activities to local residents, Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. Center and James Driver Community Center and Park (see Parks and Community Centers Map). Neither of these, however, offer services or shelter for the homeless in Aldine.

Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. Center is a non-profit organization incorporated in 1990 that serves over 200 residents a month. The majority are low-income youth. The Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. Center offers drug prevention and counseling, GED/ESL classes, Defensive Driving, CPR training, Women, Infant, and Children program (WIC), after-school youth activities, space for community meetings and events, and operates a food pantry. Aldine Y.O.U.T.H. receives funding through private and public contributions, fundraisers, and sponsors. They have also received numerous awards and recognition for the activities and services provided to the Aldine community.

The James Driver Community Center and Park, a Harris County owned facility, is currently under construction to expand its facilities. The community center upon completion will have a Great Hall that has dining space for 400 people, and activity and craft rooms. Future programs for the new center will include Country & Western Dancing, Ballroom Dancing, bingo games, and an after school program for the youth. The existing facility, although much smaller, currently offers a Senior Citizen Program from 8:00 – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Neighborhood parks are an important aspect of any community. Currently, there are four Harris County parks and one City of Houston owned park in the Aldine area (see Parks and Community Centers Map). Many of the parks contain picnic facilities, playground equipment, basketball courts, tennis courts, jogging/biking trails, exercise stations, baseball fields, BBQ areas, and offer a variety of activities for local residents.

Also in the heart of Aldine is the Harris County High Meadows Branch Library. The library offers a variety of services and resources to the community that includes: a children’s story hour during the week, volunteer tax assistance for

low/moderate income residents, monthly theme programs (i.e. Black History Month), and a variety of resource and reference information to the community.

The people of Aldine have made it clear that the availability of usable green space and recreational facilities are essential if they are to enjoy a better quality of life. They specifically expressed interest in developing more community centers, more park space and walking/fitness trail, recreational programs for persons of all ages and particularly those designed for youth, and the improved safety at neighborhood facilities.

Parks and recreation areas enhance a community's quality of life and provide a space for neighborhood events. They also are important to quality of life in business location decisions. The success of many businesses, particularly those in the intensely recruited high-technology, research and development, and company headquarters categories, depends on their ability to attract key employees. The deciding factor on where these individuals choose to work is often quality of life in the geographic vicinity of the business. No matter how "quality of life" is defined, park and recreation opportunities are likely to be a major component of it.

Urban Design

Urban design is the functional and visual relationship between people and their physical environment, and the ways in which those relationships can be improved. This relationship serves many needs that may be directly involved with housing, transportation, open space, institutional services, commerce, and industry. The elements of urban design address major thoroughfares issues, open space and recreational needs, utility planning, and other land use concerns. Consideration of design needs should be based on the boundaries of the community in conjunction with the population, density, and acreage's devoted to various land uses.



When planning the urban design of a community many factors must be considered, they include:

- ◆ Urban form;
- ◆ Points of entrance to the community;
- ◆ View and movement corridors;
- ◆ Screening and buffering;
- ◆ Variation in design;
- ◆ Architectural structures;
- ◆ Signs, Lighting, Utilities;
- ◆ Parks and open spaces, and open space linkage system (i.e., hike and bike trails, greenway/floodplain corridors, etc.);
- ◆ Landscape features and plantings;
- ◆ Street furniture;
- ◆ Historic structures;
- ◆ Public art.

One program assisting the community to eliminate the problem of heavy trash throughout the neighborhoods is the County Commissioner's annually sponsor a heavy trash pickup day. Communities are encouraged to publicize the service date and create a beautification event atmosphere around the date.