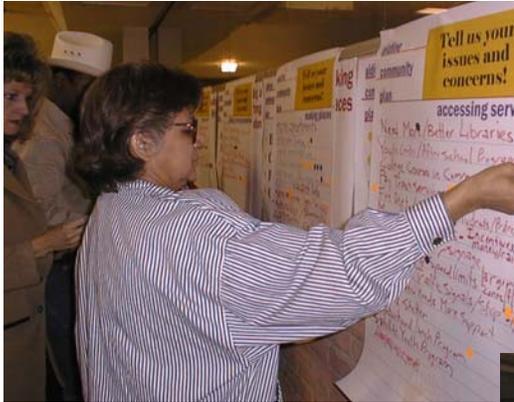


3.0 COMMUNITY VISION



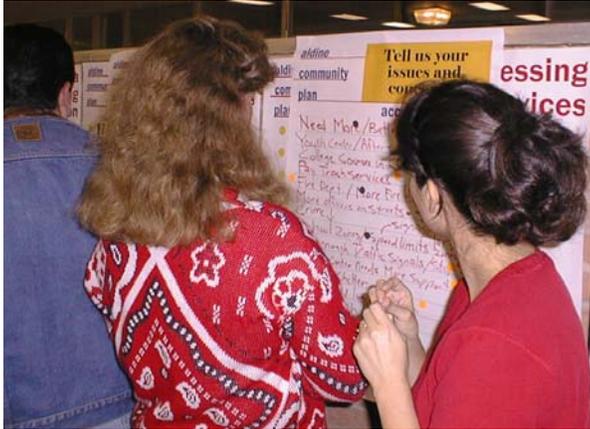
Community Meetings Issues and Concerns

Community Goals



3.1 ISSUES, CONCERNS AND RESPONSES

This section focuses on issues and concerns identified by the residents and business owners of Aldine. Through the utilization of community meetings and surveys, citizen and business opinions on the existing conditions and future need



of Aldine were determined. These were separated into four planning topics; Making Places, Creating Work, Building A Strong Foundation, and Accessing Services.

Making Places

Making Places is concerned with housing, community facilities, parks and green spaces, and urban design. Examples of

topics in this category may include the need for streetlights in the community or need to demolish a vacant buildings and houses. The citizens of Aldine through community meetings, have identified issues important to them under the Making Places classification.

The highest priority for the residents of Aldine was the need for streetlights throughout the community. This was followed closely by a desire for a community center for youth activities and community-wide activities. Other issues and concerns included:

- More pocket parks;
- Demolishing vacant buildings and houses;
- Sidewalks throughout community (particularly in neighborhoods, around schools, and along Aldine Mail Rd/Aldine Westfields, Hwy 59 to Otterbury);
- Providing infill housing on vacant lots and maintaining vacant and weeded lots;
- Providing fixed entrances (gateways) into neighborhoods;
- Requiring landscaping and supporting neighborhood beautification activities.

Creating Work

Creating Work refers to activities involving employment, job creation, and workforce development. The citizens of Aldine through community meetings and surveys, have identified issues and concerns important to them under the Creating Work classification.



The most significant needs in this area, according to Aldine citizens, is the creation of job and attracting and retaining new businesses, industries and corporations. This was followed by need for better public transportation to jobs in the area. Additional issues identified

were:

- Offering job counseling and training to youth;
- Creating school to work programs and provide postings of employable students;
- Providing incentives for businesses (particularly retail and food shopping centers, restaurants, and large chain stores);
- Provide better commercial water and sewer system for new business development;
- Assistance of workforce development and development of career satellite center.

Building A Strong Foundation

Topics covered in Building A Strong Foundation related to activities and developments involving water and sewer improvements, flood control, and road, sidewalk and trail improvements. Aldine citizens identified several community facilities and infrastructure in need of improvement. These items included several issues also considered in other sections. These were a need for sidewalks and streetlights and improved water, sewer and drainage systems (particularly Sunbelt MUD). Other elements included:

- Street widening, repair, and maintenance as well as the introduction of speed bumps to control traffic speeds;
- Maintenance of ditches and culverts (cleaning and trimming);
- The control of flooding in neighborhoods;
- Elevating the heavy auto traffic caused by the Hardy Toll Rd.;
- Providing walking and bike trails throughout the community.

Accessing Services

Topics covered by Accessing Services refer to education, public health, public safety, youth and senior services, homeless services, and additional civic

enrichment. Resident responses gave the highest priority to the improvement of public transportation in Aldine. Their concern was access to important community sites such as the Bush airport, community college campus, and jobs. The second ranked priority was the addition of traffic signals and stop signs to provide greater safety and improve traffic flow. Further items recommended by citizens were:

- Mosquito control programs;
- Additional police patrols, fire stations and hydrants, and EMS;
- After school programs;
- Programs to dispense community resource information such as through a newsletter or the use of community billboards;
- Expansion of school zones and the addition of flashing lights.

3.2 Community Goals

Using citizen responses, goals were developed in each of the four categories; Making Places, Creating Work, Building A Strong Foundation, and Accessing Services. The goals will be used to develop strategies for directing the growth and improvement of Aldine.

Making Places

Goal: Provide more single-family affordable housing, opportunities for quality rental housing, and repair of housing in need of rehabilitation.

Goal: Reinstate the Coalition for Aldine Neighborhoods, and reinstate and enforce deed restrictions.

Goal: Expand resources and services for community centers and parks in the Aldine target area.

Goal: Provide streetlighting and sidewalks throughout neighborhoods, especially around schools.

Goal: Improve overall urban design of neighborhoods to include gateways and subdivision markers.

Goal: Provide clean-up and beautification programs for the community.

Creating Work

Goal: Create new employment opportunities.

Goal: Provide a better transportation system to and from jobs.

Goal: Encourage and attract new businesses and industries for the creation of employment opportunities.

Goal: Provide job counseling, training, and referrals for employment opportunities.

Goal: Encourage new business development and the retention of area businesses.

Building A Strong Foundation

Goal: Provide street improvements, including signals, curbs and gutters, and streetlights.

Goal: Create or improve pedestrian traffic systems for schools (i.e. sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)

Goal: Improve sanitary sewer system, and repair or replace the existing storm drainage system.

Accessing Services

Goal: Increase activities for youth, seniors, the disabled and the homeless, and increase public awareness of these activities.

Goal: Eliminate gangs, gang-related activity, and crime.

Goal: Offer advanced educational opportunities in the Aldine community.

Goal: Provide and/or improve accessible transportation for elderly residents.

Goal: Promote increased public safety and public health.

4.0 STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS



**Making Places
Creating Work
Building A Strong Foundation
Accessing Services**



4.1 Making Places

In this section an analysis is made of effective strategies to accomplish the goals involving community structure, housing, community facilities and overall urban design. Strategies were developed in cooperation of Aldine residents and community leaders. Using a planning process that combined an understanding of the community's existing resources and innovative community development models, strategies were created.

Housing

Goal: Provide more single-family affordable housing, opportunities for quality rental housing, and repair of housing in need of rehabilitation.

Goal: Reinstate the Coalition for Aldine Neighborhoods, and reinstate and enforce deed restrictions.

The challenge for the Aldine community is linking the drive to encourage new affordable housing while still retaining residential character. There are a number of factors that can negatively affect neighborhoods. Many Aldine neighborhoods



have no deed restrictions and others that have lapsed. Deed restrictions give the neighborhood the power to protect neighborhood character. Aldine also suffers from deterioration and poor housing conditions. Many lots, whether vacant and occupied, are overgrown with weeds, contain junk vehicles in the front yard, and have incompatible land uses. These factors have been identified by the

community as a nuisance and eyesore. Solutions may lie in the creation of a Community Housing Development Organization, enforcement of new deed restrictions, and construction of infill housing that will encourage neighborhood revitalization.

Deed Restrictions

Deed restrictions in Aldine neighborhoods are highly recommended and supported by residents for the revitalization and beautification of the community. Most subdivisions developed for residential use have had deed restrictions in the past, however, there is no legal requirement for a developer to

Deed restrictions are written agreements that restrict, or limit, the use of activities that may take place on property in a subdivision. These restrictions appear in the deed records. Deed restrictions are private

establish deed restrictions in a subdivision. All subsequent owners become a party to those agreements when they purchase property in a deed-restricted subdivision.

Numerous older subdivisions in Aldine have restrictions that have not been renewed and thus have lost the legal sanction that prohibits commercial or industrial use in the community. To establish the status of or obtain a copy of deed restrictions contact the County Clerk who is located in the County Clerk's Office, fourth floor of the County Administration Building at 1001 Preston (See Appendix 7.5).

Infill Building and Neighborhood Revitalization

Some strategies recommended to accomplish Aldine's housing goals are infill and revitalization. Infill housing is the building of homes on vacant lots within existing neighborhoods. Citizens, as a desirable means to create new affordable housing in their area, stressed the need for infill development. Revitalizing older structures was also important to community members. These efforts would be assisted by the creation of a non-profit such as a CHDO with the authority to discuss and implement housing plans in the name of Aldine community. The non-profit should analyze available vacant land for the best residential land use and contact owners for purchase (See Proposed Improvements Map). A list of vacant areas was discussed in the Community Profiles' Housing section.

The Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) program is designed to encourage non-profit organizations to develop affordable housing.

After identifying viable tracts for development, projects can then be developed to provide infill housing or development of vacant subdivision. Programs that are available to assist Aldine include:

- Self-help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) who provides non-profit organizations funds to purchase home sites and improve infrastructure needed to set the stage for sweat equity and volunteer-based homeownership programs for low-income families.
- Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation-A public, nonprofit corporation providing seed grants and technical assistance to local public-private partnerships dedicated to revitalizing declining neighborhoods.
- Habitat For Humanity provides decent housing to families or persons in need of assistance. Using donated funds and volunteer labor, the affluent and the needy work side by side to build simple, decent houses which are then sold to the needy family or person at no profit and no interest. An additional requirement for participating families or persons includes performance of a minimum number of "sweat equity" hours building other Habitat homes.
- Lead Based Paint Division of Harris County Community Development Department-Lead is a powerful toxin that attacks the central nervous

system and is particularly damaging the children. Lead based paint are often found in homes built before the 1960s (which several units, 25.7%, in Aldine were).

Potential funding sources that are available to the community to accomplish their housing strategies are:

- **HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM (HUD)**
Provided funds to States, units of local government, and Indian tribes to implement local housing strategies designed to increase homeownership and affordable housing opportunities for low- and very low-income persons.
- **HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA)**
Provides housing for persons with AIDS and their families.
- **EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT (ESG) PROGRAM**
Provides grants for safe, sanitary shelter, supportive services, and other assistance to homeless people and families.
- **SHELTER PLUS CARE (S+C)**
Provides grants for rental assistance, in combination with support services to homeless persons with disabilities.
- **SECTION 8 MODERATE REHABILITATION SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY (SRO) PROGRAM**
Assists very low-income, single, homeless individuals in obtaining decent, safe, and sanitary housing in privately owned, rehabilitated buildings.
- **TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM**
Provides multi-year housing strategies for “participating Jurisdictions” (PJs) to strengthen public-private partnerships and provide more affordable housing for people at or below 80% of the average median family income as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These funds are available to cities and counties that have not received a separate PJ status from HUD.
- **HOUSING TRUST FUND**
A statewide program that allocates funds to nonprofit organizations, units of local government, public housing authorities, community housing development organizations (CHDOs), and income eligible individuals to achieve a broad geographical distribution of affordable housing. Eligible activities include acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction technical assistance, and capacity building.

- **LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS (LIHTC)**
The primary means of directing private capital towards the creation of affordable rental housing.
- **SECTION 8 ASSISTED HOUSING**
Provides rental assistance to low-income families, elderly, disabled, and handicapped individuals. Provides financial assistance to eligible families whose annual gross income does not exceed 50% of HUD's median income guidelines.
- **THE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (TEA 21)** is a federally funded program administered by the Texas Department of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The program provided for the implementation of a variety of nontraditional projects ranging from restoration of historic transportation facilities to bicycle and pedestrian facilities to landscaping and to the mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff.
- **FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK OF DALLAS (FHLB)-THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM (AHP)**
Initiated to assist stockholder institutions in meeting critical affordable housing needs in the communities they serve. FHLB provides loans or direct grants to stockholder institutions engaged in lending for long term, very low, low, and moderate income, affordable, owner-occupied, and rental housing.
- **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT-THE HOUSING PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM**
Provides qualified public agencies, private nonprofit organizations and other eligible entities grant funds to assist very low- and low-income homeowners repair and rehabilitate their homes in rural areas. Funds are also available to assist rental property owners and cooperative housing complexes to repair and rehabilitate their units if they agree to make such units available to low- and very low-income persons.

Overall Urban Design

Goal: Overall urban design of neighborhoods to include gateways or subdivision markers.

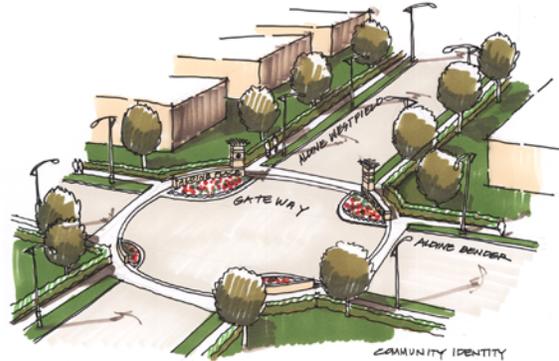
Goal: Provide overall clean-up and beautification programs for the community.

Goal: Provide streetlighting and sidewalks throughout neighborhoods, especially around schools.

Residents of Aldine expressed image and aesthetics are representative of their community's health, stability and general attitude. Images seen in a community tell a story about the place and its residents. For the Aldine community, a clean and attractive neighborhood represents a symbol of pride, and for visitors it is a

sign of a concerned and caring community. The application of urban design elements through a strategic neighborhood planning effort can aid in the aesthetic quality of the Aldine community. Since the plan is implemented over time, these design elements should be applied as part of a site plan review.

To enhance the urban design of the neighborhood, gateways or subdivision markers could be incorporated into the community. Proposed locations to maximize community visibility are at the community boundaries on streets such as Aldine Mail Route, Aldine Bender Road, and Aldine Westfield Road (See Aldine Improvements Map). The community could develop themes for these markers that would communicate the community's history or the diverse cultures of its residents. Funding for construction could be through fundraisers or private sponsorships.



Aldine is encouraged to establish programs that assist business centers to create more aesthetically pleasing environments by renovating and adding landscaping to commercial locations. The picture below to the left shows a current commercial area of Aldine and to the right what that same area could look like after the addition of curbs and landscaping. Signs on the lot have been consolidated into a single sign. This provides passing drivers a single information source that is less intrusive on the environment.



One such program is the Storefront Improvement Program (SIP). The program provides small businesses with matching to assist in eligible storefront renovation costs. Several goals of the program are to generate additional revitalization by focusing the investment on visible improvements, beautify the Aldine service area so that they positively reflect on the residential areas, and increase the number businesses in Aldine by making the commercial district more attractive.

Neighborhood Safety and Beautification

Other concerns and needs addressed by Aldine residents regarding aesthetics and overall urban design included the need for public beautification program, enforcement of ordinances, and additional community involvement.

Safety of the residents, especially the children, is another concern expressed by the residents of Aldine. Residents expressed a need for more streetlighting and sidewalks throughout the community, especially around all schools and on major streets. Funding has been approved in Aldine for the construction of sidewalks along Aldine Mail Route. The project is scheduled for Fiscal Year 2001-2003, and will fund construction of sidewalks from 5 miles west of JFK Blvd. to US 59. This action should be followed by other sidewalk and streetlight projects to link neighborhoods and commercial areas.



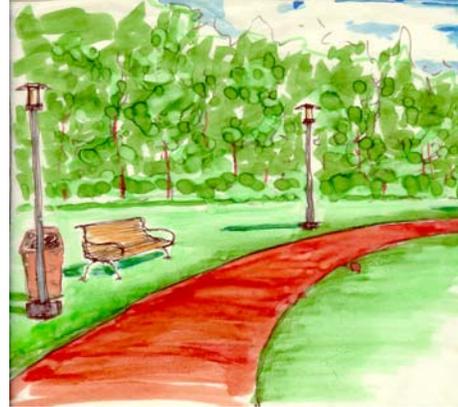
Parks and Recreation Areas



Aldine has several potential areas for park and trail improvements. The current park system does not provide coverage for all of Aldine. The addition of pocket parks and a trail system linking the park would allow for greater accessibility. A potential site for a trail system is along the bayou.

Although walkways are present in some areas of the bayou, they are often blocked by fencing and in need of repair. Extension of the trail system could be beneficial to the community in that a variety of community facilities could be linked with residential areas for improved access (See Aldine Improvements Map).

There is also the lack of aesthetics to the location. Graffiti is present on signage, bridges and walls. Also of benefit to residents is the addition of trail lighting especially at trail and roadway intersections. Current and additional parks should be outfitted with park furniture such as benches and picnic tables. Here too lighting should be added for park users' safety and convenience.



4.2 Creating Work

Goal: Create new employment opportunities.

Goal: Provide a better transportation system to and from jobs.

Goal: Encourage and attract new businesses and industries for the creation of employment opportunities.

Goal: Provide job counseling, training, and referrals for employment opportunities.

Goal: Encourage new business development and the retention of area businesses.

Improving the viability of economic development leads to the creation and retention of jobs, creates entrepreneurial opportunities for local ownership, and offers better linkages for job training. Through a series of community meetings, residents identified several issues as needs for the economic development of Aldine. Among the most pressing cited was the overriding need to attract new and stable businesses, while providing assistance and support for the expansion of existing businesses. The community's interest in attracting high paying jobs is incompatible with the educational level of the area workforce. Statistics show only 48.5% of the adult population with at least a high school education as compared to Harris County average of over 74.9%. If Aldine's residents want to attract high wage jobs, a more educated and trained workforce is imperative.

A solution that encompasses the goals for encouraging business development and the creation of new jobs, is the formation of a main street commercial corridor along Aldine Mail Route. Aldine Mail Route is centrally located in the community and has easy access points into Aldine. This corridor would take advantage of existing commercial establishments in the area and could be the focus of new commercial ventures. By taking advantage of the commercial aesthetic improvements discussed in the Overall Urban Design section and locating the main street corridor along Aldine Mail Route for maximum access by residents, the Aldine community can establish an economically viable commercial district.

Based on goals relative to economic development, other strategies recommended to create jobs and enhance the workforce should include the following:

- The Aldine community should invite Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) to meet with Aldine leaders to determine steps needed to develop a Community Development Corporation or a coalition of existing corporations;

- In the area of workforce development, Aldine can apply to Gulf Coast Careers to assign two or more job training counselors to work with residents in the area of skills development, training and referral for employment opportunities;
- The Corporation for Economic Development of Harris County can in conjunction with SBA and SBDC, conduct workshops to inform Aldine residents interested in starting or expanding a businesses of the step involved;
- A partnership between a coalition of Aldine Corporations, Aldine ISD, and local businesses should be form to assist Aldine youth in job and career development. By developing into a committee, the group can provide opportunities such as a summer job database, career and professional skills development programs, and scholarships;
- A relationship could be developed with the Gulf Coast Careers-Greenspoint to develop a satellite career center in Aldine;
- The Aldine community should identify criteria for the establishment of a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) satellite office and work with the Small Business Administration (SBA) and SBDC to get an office located in Aldine;
- The partnership between local community colleges and the Aldine community should be enhanced to provide business and professional training to residents. This partnership can assist residents in obtaining the skills needed to start their own businesses or enter the business community at a higher technical level;
- The community should consider developing a program to assist small businesses to renovate their business locations. One such program is The



Storefront Improvement Program (SIP). SIP provides small businesses with matching grants (up to \$5000) to assist in eligible storefront renovation costs. The four goals of the program are:

To work in partnership with the private sector to stimulate private investment in the Aldine area.

To generate additional revitalization by focusing the investment on visible improvements. The pictures on the previous page show an existing commercial area in Aldine and ideas that could be utilized to renovate the same site. The proposed renovation

would be in keeping with recent commercial development exteriors.

To beautify Aldine so that they positively reflect on the residential areas.

To increase business by generally making the community more attractive;

- Programs such as the Wealth-Building Initiative for Self-Enhancement (WISE) could offer a successful model to assist the community develop an education program to assist small businesses with start-up costs, market research, and asset purchases. Business development assistance could be found using resources in the community such as the University of Houston's Small Business Development Center, the Houston Community College's Business School, and financial institutions.

Using a two-phase process to assist clients:

1. The objective in phase one would be to train and develop professional skills necessary to avoid or overcome pitfalls that might cause a small business to fail.
 2. In phase two involves training and development in areas such as preparing for and securing a small business loan, managing a small business, and repaying a small business loan;
- Citizens should invite a Metro representative to meet with community leaders to address the issue of extending bus routes for residents in the area for better access to and from their job and investigate the placement of a park and ride station on Aldine Mail Route (See Aldine Improvements Map);
 - Arrange a meeting with community members and local Chambers of Commerce to begin a discussion on developing a plan to promote business expansion and recruitment in the area;
 - Create entrepreneurial opportunities by working with the Corporation for Economic Development-Harris County to utilize the Micro-loan program to assist in the development of small businesses.

Funding sources that can assist Aldine meet their creating work goals are as follows.

- **YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANTS**
The Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration sponsor programs to increase the long-term employment of youth that live in empowerment zones, enterprise communities, and high-poverty areas. Programs should help individual youth find better jobs and increase their educational attainment.
- **INNOVATION IN APPRENTICESHIP FOR WOMEN SOLICITATION**
The Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration sponsor grants for community based organizations, employers, labor/management organizations, employer associations, apprenticeship

sponsors, educational entities, state and local governments, partners and stakeholder providing services that identify and eliminate barriers to recruiting, retention, training, and placement of female apprentices in non-traditional occupations.

- **SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT: INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION/BUSINESS CONSORTIUM SOLICITATION**
The Department of Labor and Education jointly invite proposals to support industry/trade groups or associations/coalitions with national memberships or participation and to local/regional business-led consortia to undertake outreach, technical assistance, and other activities to increase the number and capacity of employers to participate in STW systems.
- **PUBLIC WORKS DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES PROGRAM**
U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration provides grants to help distressed communities attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate long-term private

Building A Strong Foundation

Goal: Provide street improvements, including signals, curbs and gutters, and streetlights.

Goal: Create or improve pedestrian traffic systems to schools (i.e. sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)

Goal: Improve sanitary sewer system, and repair or replace existing storm drainage system.

The ability to attract and keep businesses is an obstacle to Aldine's economic and residential development. Clogged sewers, unsafe water, broken watermains, and potholes all affect the cost of living and doing business in Aldine. Infrastructure is an important factor in a firm's or future resident's decision to relocate or expand. Poor infrastructure services may increase the costs of residing or doing business in the Aldine community, and thus affect its ability to sustain populations and businesses. The Aldine community is in need of improved and expanded sewer, water, and drainage service for residential and commercial use.

The need for sidewalks throughout the Aldine Community is also a top priority among the residents of Aldine. Civic leaders and area residents have longed complained about the danger of walking on the roadways. Many of the roadways in Aldine are bordered by steep drainage ditches, making it difficult for pedestrians to walking about the community.

Through the efforts of the Aldine residents, State Rep. Kevin Bailey, Commissioner El Franco Lee, and the Texas Department of Transportation, funding will be approved for the construction of sidewalks along Aldine Mail Route. The project is scheduled for Fiscal Year 2001 – 2003, and calls for the construction of sidewalks from 5 miles west of JFK Blvd. to U.S. 59, at a cost of \$591,900. Federal funds from the Hazard Elimination Program will provide 90% of the cost, and a 10% local match will be provided by Commissioner El Franco Lee, Precinct One.

Another problem in many Aldine neighborhoods is the lack of insufficient street lighting, street repair and maintenance, and street widening. A number of streets are of insufficient width making it difficult for two-way traffic to pass, and dangerous for pedestrians walking along the street. Signals or stop signs are recommended at the intersection of Aldine Mail Route and John F. Kennedy Boulevard (See Aldine Improvements Map). Additional enhancement of certain intersections may be necessary for improved traffic flow and street beautification. These intersections include Aldine Mail Route and Aldine Westfield Road, Chrisman Road and Aldine Mail Route, and Chrisman Road and Aldine Westfield Road. The extension of John F. Kennedy Boulevard would provide additional access points to Aldine Mail Route from the southern portion of Aldine and assist

traffic flow into and out of the area. Furthermore, in some neighborhoods, cut through traffic to the major streets surrounding subdivisions is a dangerous problem, especially for children that live and play in these neighborhoods, the addition of speed humps would discourage excessive speeds on these streets.

Based on the goals expressed by the residents relative to infrastructure, strategies to improve and enhance infrastructure systems should include the following.

- A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is one solution for long-term financing of infrastructure improvement in Aldine. CIP is a multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements. The scheduling is based on studies of fiscal resources available and the choice of specific improvements to be constructed for a period of five to six years in the future. The process includes:
 1. Defining eligible projects
 2. Identifying potential inter-related projects and the benefits to aggregating them over time
 3. Developing a priority ranking system
 4. Developing and coordinating potential funding sources (bonds, taxes, grants) and assessment of the community's capacity to service additional debt
 5. Preparing the Capital Budget
 6. Implementation of Plan
 7. Evaluation of Process

- The community should develop a cost and need analysis for additional improvements to streets, ditches, gutters, curbs, and water and sewer systems;
- By forming a partnership with Reliant HL&P, Aldine can develop a street lighting program for all neighborhoods;
- Provide a covered bus stop for school children at each school;
- Provide speed humps in neighborhoods with excessive cut-through traffic;
- Aldine should develop a cost and needs analysis for sidewalk expansion, especially around schools;
- The community should establish partnerships, particularly with Aldine corporations and local business, for assistance with the financing and construction of sewer, water and drainage system improvements or expansion;
- Aldine should partner with the Precinct and the Harris County Engineering Department to develop a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to assist in the funding of future infrastructure projects.

A source of funding, which may assist Aldine in improving infrastructure, can be found from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration and the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS). Both

organizations provide grants to help distressed communities fund projects to improve water and wastewater facilities, redevelop brownfields, and other infrastructure projects that will in turn assist in attracting economic development to the area.

4.4 Accessing Services

Civic Enrichment

Civic enrichment deals with the composition of those quality of life issues that promote civic pride and community vitality. Aldine's residents want their community to be a place where family values and community pride is strong. The residents in Aldine expressed a need for dissemination of information throughout the community, community enhancement and enrichment efforts, building community resources, improvement and development, and access to information that will help in decisions making. The residents have begun the civic and community enrichment process by coming together and taking ownership of their community through community planning efforts.

Residents are pleased to have a strong network of churches existing in the Aldine community. This existing network could form the basis for extensive volunteer organizations that could serve the community in many aspects. The church network can be used to distribute information concerning existing and planned health services.

At one time, the Aldine Community's civic and homeowner associations partnered to form the Coalition of Aldine Neighborhoods, C.A.N., which once served as a nucleus for community improvement and enhancement. One of the missions of the C.A.N. association was to keep the residents of Aldine informed about upcoming and ongoing events, and acted as the voice of the community. Presently, the C.A.N. organization no longer exists, but many of the civic and homeowners associations throughout the Aldine community are still active. Re-instating C.A.N. would assist the community to achieve its goal of better information dissemination.

Civic and Homeowners Associations in the Aldine Target Area

- Aldine Place Association
- Green Forest Association
- Sequoia Estates Association
- Parkwood Association
- Western Homes Association
- High Meadows North Association
- High Meadows South Association
- Pine Village North Association
- Aldine Westfield Area Crime Watch
- North Houston Heights Association
- Oakwilde Estates Association
- United Civic Clubs

Based on the goals expressed by the Aldine community, strategies recommended to improvement and enhance civic enrichment and social services should include the following.

- Develop a community wide Hispanic cultural awareness.
- Expand or remodel existing community facilities to include activities for both youth and seniors all year long.
- Develop cultural enrichment programs and activities, and develop a community calendar.

Youth and Senior Activities

Goal: Increase activities for youth, seniors, the disabled and the homeless, and increase public awareness of these activities.

Goal: Offer advanced educational opportunities in the Aldine community.

Goal: Provide and/or improve accessible transportation for elderly residents.



The residents of Aldine identified several deficiencies in services for the youth and senior community. Residents felt that the lack of transportation is a major problem, since these groups are more likely to have transportation needs than the remainder of the population. Currently, the community of Aldine has been dependent on private means of transportation since public transportation is limited in the area.

A volunteer-based transportation system is one solution the Aldine community could utilize to meet the needs of youth and elderly populations without a means of transportation. The service could draw volunteers from civic association and businesses. The program can use as its model the transportation services of the Guardianship Program of Harris County. In this model, a defined population receives transportation to primary destinations such as medical facilities and Guardianship satellite offices. Using this same model, Aldine can select sites that are vital to the elderly and youth populations such as the Aldine medical clinic, grocery stores, and community centers for transportation destinations. Another solution to the transportation problems of Aldine is to petition Metro for additional routes and stops within the community (See Aldine Improvements

Map). These stops should coincide with commercial, residential, and industrial centers as well as trail systems.

Youth services can benefit the child and the community by providing education and enrichment programs that help keep child out of gangs, and out of trouble. In order to be effective, however, they must be accessible. The School Based Youth Services Program's (SBYSP) is a “wellness” program for teens based in or near local schools. Its goal is helping youths stay in school, graduate, continue their education or gain employment with good skills. It emphasizes the value of being mentally and physically healthy, and drug free. The program provides a whole host of services, including individual and family therapy, employment counseling, substance abuse treatment, and recreational facilities. Each site is located in or near a secondary school and is open after school hours, on weekends, and during the summer. Services are free and available to all 13 - 19 year olds.

Youth programs can also be beneficial when targeted at parents. Missouri's Parents as Teachers Program is a home-school partnership that begins, ideally, at birth. Organized through local public school districts, it supports parents in their role as the child's first teachers. The program helps parents give their children a solid foundation for lifelong educational development. The Aldine community can implement a similar program to residents. The information provided could include information ranging from infant development to teen-parent conflict resolution. Volunteer speakers could be developed from local civic groups, Department of Health, medical facilities, and community colleges.

Homeless

Residents also expressed a grave concern for the homeless in the community. Services and programs for the homeless that assist them with basic needs, getting them off the streets, and providing them shelter was a major topic of concern at the community meetings. Residents suggested that the churches might be able to provide some of the needed services and assistance to the homeless, since there isn't a homeless shelter in the community.

A coalition of Aldine non-profit corporations and civic organizations could also have an impact on the homeless. Guidance could be drawn from the Coalition for the Homeless established by a partnership between Harris County and the City of Houston. Though a study on the homeless in Harris County, the Coalition addressed several issues of the homeless and developed a comprehensive service plan for a delivery system to assist the homeless.

Funding Sources

Foundations that can assist Aldine improve and expand services to the community are as follows.

- **THE MEADOWS FOUNDATION**

The Meadows Foundation exists to assist people and institutions of Texas improve the quality and circumstances of life for themselves and future generations. Eligible applicants are those public entities and charities serving the people of Texas.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Arts and Culture
- Civic and Public Affairs (including the natural environment)
- Education
- Health
- Human Services

- **THE FORD FOUNDATION**

The Ford Foundation supports activities that help build common understanding, enhance excellence, enable people to improve their lives, and reinforce their commitment to society by encouraging initiatives by those living and working closest to where problems are located promoting collaboration among the nonprofits and government and business sectors, and assure participation for diverse communities and at all levels of society.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Asset Building and Community Development
- Peace and Social Justice
- Education, Media, Arts and Culture

- **KELLOGG FOUNDATION**

The Kellogg Foundation support efforts in each of several programming areas, as well as in the integrative themes of leadership, information systems, capitalizing on diversity, and social and economic community development.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Health
- Food Systems and Rural Development
- Youth and Education
- Higher Education
- Volunteerism
- Social and Economic Development

- **HOUSTON ENDOWMENT INC.**

The Houston Endowment Inc., is a private foundation dedicated to the support of charitable undertakings. The projects eligible for funding include education, health, arts and cultural, human service, and civic and environmental programs.

Public Safety

Goal: Eliminate gangs, gang-related activity, and crime.

Goal: Promote increased public safety and public health.

For many years, the Aldine community has played an active role in revitalizing and solving problems prevalent to the Aldine community. Once again, the Aldine community joined its forces together to develop a non-profit organization called Aldine Communities Together, A.C.T. A.C.T. is responsible for bringing the storefront to the Aldine community and its continued presence and funding priorities. Programs that could influence crime in the area include:

- The community in partnership with Aldine Storefront should develop a neighborhood crime watch program in all neighborhoods.
- The community is advised to enforce youth curfews to reduce the incidence of juvenile crime. Juvenile curfew hours as set for all unincorporated areas of Harris County are midnight to 6 a.m. seven days a week Sheriff's officers should be encouraged to enforce the curfew. Aldine ISD can also play a role in informing the Aldine youth of the curfew's time and a violator's punishment.
- Develop and participate in an action oriented gang task force (i.e. Weed and Seed Task Force).
- Create after-school and summer programs for children to give them other opportunities besides joining a gang.
- Establish a mentor program for children using business community leaders which can be combined with after school and summer activities to provide role models.

Other programs and funding sources to assist in the advancement of public safety are:

- **JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION**
In FY 1999, within the \$42.75 million Congress had provided to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) for Part C Discretionary Grants for National Programs and Special Emphasis Programs, Congress has directed OJJDP to review the following proposals and provide a grant if warranted to (excluding programs not effecting Aldine):

1. Parents Anonymous

2. Center for Research on Crimes against Children
 3. Intensive Services Program for Juveniles and Families
 4. Teens, Crime and the Community Program
 5. Juvenile Offender Transition program
- **DRUG-FREE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**
 In FY 1999, Congress appropriated \$20 million to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) for the Drug-Free Communities program. ONDCP will allocate funds to be determined for grants to community anti-drug coalitions to be administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) through an interagency agreement with ONDCP. Discretionary grants will continue to be used to increase citizen participation and strengthen community anti-drug coalition efforts to reduce substance abuse among youth in communities throughout the United States and, over time, to reduce substance abuse among adults.
 - **DRUG PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM**
 In FY 1999, Congress has appropriated \$10 million to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to continue its Drug Prevention Demonstration Program. Discretionary grant funds will be used to develop, demonstrate, and test programs to increase perceptions among children and youth about the unappealing aspects and danger of drug use.
 - **ENFORCING UNDERAGE DRINKING LAW PROGRAM**
 In FY 1999, under the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs, Congress has designated a total of \$25 million to OJJDP to administer the Enforcing Underage Drinking Law Program. Of this amount, OJJDP will award \$360,000 to each state, and \$6.64 million shall be available for discretionary grants for states, for programs and activities to enforce state laws prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages by minors, and for technical assistance and training.

Projects include:

1. Statewide task forces of state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies to target establishments suspected of a pattern of violations of state laws governing the sale and consumption of alcohol by minors
 2. Public advertising programs to educate establishments about statutory prohibitions and sanctions
 3. Innovative programs to prevent and combat underage drinking
- **JUVENILE ACCOUNTABILITY INCENTIVE BLOCK GRANT**

PROGRAM PURPOSE: Designed to promote greater accountability in the juvenile justice system by expanding the current system, and establishing new

programs to augment the current system, such as Juvenile Drug and Gun Courts, interagency information sharing, and controlled substance testing.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES--TWELVE (12) Designated:

1. Improving existing or building new facilities (plus training new personnel)
2. Develop & Administer accountability-based sanctions for Juvenile offenders
3. Hiring additional court system employees (Judges, Probation Offices, Defense Attorneys, etc.)
4. Hiring additional prosecutors
5. Funding to enable prosecutors to address drug, gang and youth violence issues
6. Technology, equipment and training for prosecutors
7. Funding for courts and offices to reduce recidivism
8. Establish court-based juvenile justice programs
9. Establish drug court programs
10. Establish and maintain information sharing programs between Juvenile and criminal Justice systems, schools and social services
11. Establish and maintain accountability-based programs
12. Establish policy of controlled substance testing for juveniles within the system

- **JUVENILE MENTORING PROGRAM**

In FY 1999, Congress has designated \$12 million to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) for continuation and expansion of the Juvenile Mentoring program (JUMP). Within this amount, Congress also recommends that OJJDP provide a grant in an amount greater than the current year level to the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program.

- **SAFE KIDS-SAFE STREETS PROGRAM**

A Program Funded by a Number of Discretionary Accounts

The program focuses on breaking the cycle of early childhood victimization and later juvenile or adult criminality through community approaches including system reform, provisions of services, prevention education, and data collection and evaluation.

- **SAFE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE**
Discretionary grant program to reduce and prevent increasing levels of school violence, especially incidents of juvenile gun violence in and around schools.
- **MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT PREVENTION PROGRAM**
Discretionary grant program to assist states in developing a national voluntary motor vehicle theft prevention program.