

REIMAGINE LONG POINT



FINAL REPORT

SPRING BRANCH LIVABLE CENTERS STUDY
2018



swa

TEI

DHK DEVELOPMENT, INC.

BLACK SHEEP

“REIMAGINE LONG POINT” - MAKING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD A LIVABLE CENTER

The Livable Centers Program is funded through the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) with the end client/primary implementer as the Spring Branch Management District. The goal is to propose implementable ideas that create or further enhance communities people perceive as safe, convenient and desirable, while addressing projected growth for the Houston-Galveston Region. Primary points of consideration which compose a “livable” center include:

- **Increase in options for alternative modes of transportation**
- **Improved environmental quality**
- **Stronger sense of community**
- **Continued economic development**

The subject of this Livable Centers Study is the Long Point corridor in Spring Branch between Conrad Sauer Drive to the west and Hempstead Road to the east. The Reimagine Long Point Livable Center Study was identified as one of four major action items in the Spring Branch Comprehensive Plan, completed in 2015. Other major action items include Flood Damage Reduction, a trail within the east-west CenterPoint easement that spans the District, and Neighborhood Stabilization and Identity.

Over the course of September 2017 to June 2018 a team of planning and design consultants led by SWA and composed of TEI (Traffic Engineers Inc.), DHK Development and The Black Sheep Agency conducted a Needs Assessment analysis and developed a Conceptual Plan and Implementation Plan for specific recommendations, all with guidance by stakeholders and the Spring Branch community.

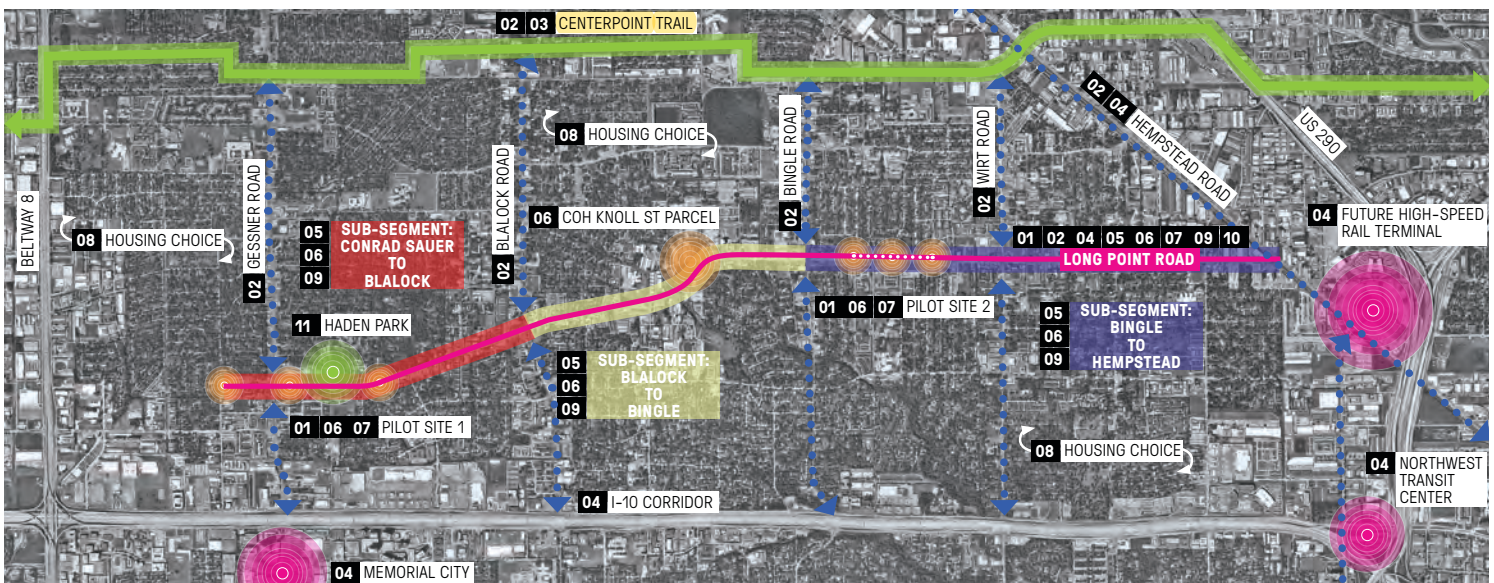
A robust public engagement process yielded a set of implementable ideas that were both thoroughly vetted and received broad support. This public engagement process consisted of three major streams

(the public engagement strategy is further detailed in the Public Engagement Appendix):

- **Stakeholder Meetings:** Monthly meetings (open to the public and advertised on the SBMD website) at the Spring Branch Management District office with the primary stakeholder group comprised of the SBMD Comprehensive Plan Committee (which is composed of business owners in the District), representatives of H-GAC, the City of Houston Planning and Development Department and interested members of the public.
- **Public Outreach:** This consisted of three major public events as well as online surveys and ongoing email and social media engagement.
- **Small Group Meetings:** These were targeted meetings between members of the consultant team and individual property and/or business owners and others with special interests in Long Point, to identify concerns and opportunities in parallel to the public events.

A number of goals for the Study were developed early in the process through community input. They are as follows:

1. **Promote a healthy urban lifestyle by easing access to recreation and cultural education opportunities.**
2. **Ensure the community is actively involved in shaping the future of its neighborhood.**
3. **Promote environmental resiliency in the design of urban systems.**
4. **Prioritize environmental comfort in the experience of and movement through the area.**



SUMMARY MAP OF STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

5. **Design for ecological benefits in the urban natural systems.**
6. **Promote a diversity of housing choices in the area.**
7. **Support transportation choices with infrastructure that provides easy access to alternatives to driving.**
8. **Promote local and authentic businesses in the area by supporting their commercial endeavors.**
9. **Support the regional significance of the area as a visitor's destination while preserving the scale and intimacy of local living.**

The organizing elements for the Conceptual Plan framework include five subject areas:

- Transportation,
- Economic Development,
- Housing Choice,
- Placemaking/Branding/Wayfinding,
- Sustainability/Open Space;

Three scales of sites to which particular project recommendations apply:

- Neighborhood,
- Corridors,
- and Nodes;

and six livability principles as defined by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Transportation. Each component of the plan fits within this framework as well as reflects the specific goals of the Study. The eleven Conceptual Plan Recommendations were ranked by the community and endorsed as future projects that could enhance the character of Long Point and contribute to general livability of the Spring Branch area.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) RECOMMENDATIONS

01 MOBILITY PILOT

Collaborate with the City of Houston Public Works & Engineering (PW&E), local businesses and other partners to implement the temporary installation of a modified street section on Long Point from four to three lanes in one or more locations for a period of approximately six months to test the modified street configuration.

02 LOCAL MOBILITY

Collaborate with the City of Houston PW&E and other partners to implement Houston Bike Plan in Spring Branch with priority given to connectivity between Long Point and the CenterPoint Trail along north-south and east-west corridors.

03 CENTERPOINT TRAIL

Collaborate with CenterPoint, Houston Parks Board, Harris County (Precincts 3 and 4), City of Houston PW&E, Bike Houston and other partners to implement the significant, uncompleted portions of the CenterPoint Trail that ultimately connects Spring Branch to the Energy Corridor and Westchase Districts to the west and the White Oak Bayou Greenway Corridor to the east.

04 CONNECTING DEVELOPING HUBS

Collaborate and advocate for coordinated planning and general economic development associated with TOD opportunities from private and public investment including the High Speed Rail and Northwest Transit Center

hubs to optimize public improvements, private development and local job creation. Key partners include Texas Central, METRO, Uptown, City of Houston PW&E, and property owners.

05 BRANDING AND IDENTITY

Build on and extend the work of the Capital Improvement Project #07 Landscape Pilot project following its successful completion to incorporate Tier Two and Tier Three streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, transit shelters, street lights, pedestrian lights, and signage on Long Point. These new installations are likely to be node-based and occur where other, private improvements are underway or completed and exhibit a development density / clusters consistent with and supportive of neighborhood-oriented destinations.

06 LONG POINT ART PROGRAM

Inaugurate a rotating art program on Long Point using public and private property for temporary installations by local artists.

07 STREETScape PILOT

Collaborate with the City of Houston PW&E, private property owners and tenants, and other partners to implement a temporary, small scale installation of a prototypical streetscape in the same location(s) and in conjunction with the Mobility Pilot. This CIP will deploy at least Tier 1 streetscape elements including street trees, pedestrian lights, bike racks and benches and possibly some Tier 2 elements consisting of a prototypical custom bus shelter for a period of approximately six months, or longer.

08 HOUSING CHOICE

Collaborate with housing advocates and the City of Houston to expand housing choice in Spring Branch for a wide spectrum of the population, both renter and owners. Promote the development of senior housing and the preservation of existing housing stock in older neighborhoods.

09 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Provide regular and consistent promotion and programming for the Reimagine Long Point initiative to build awareness and identity, support local businesses both existing and new and to generally grow the economic development of the area.

10 LONG POINT CHARACTER STANDARDS

Collaborate with the City of Houston P&D, local property owners and businesses to codify discretionary character standards for the Long Point area based on the recommendations for this CIP element.

11 HADEN PARK

Collaborate with COH HPARD and the Spring Branch Community to launch the phased improvements to Haden Park based on the adoption of the Haden Park Master Plan.

This Study's recommendations seek to clearly articulate the Spring Branch community's vision and its component projects in order to help leverage the investments in the area by SBMD and partners. Partnerships and funding sources are explored in the Implementation Plan section of this report.



SPRING
BRANCH
DISTRICT

**REIMAGINE
SPRING BRANCH**
SPRING BRANCH
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2015 - 2030

AUGUST 2015



6.0 IMPLEMENTATION

6.0 INTRODUCTION + METHODOLOGY

6.1 ACTION PRIORITY

- 6.1.1 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
- 6.1.2 COMMUNITY STABILIZATION + ENHANCEMENT
- 6.1.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS
- 6.1.4 LONG POINT CORRIDOR TRANSFORMATION
- 6.1.5 STREET NETWORK MULTI-MODAL DESIGN + CAPACITY
- 6.1.6 TRANSIT
- 6.1.7 BIKEWAYS
- 6.1.8 PARKS + TRAILS

6.2 IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- 6.2.1 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
- 6.2.2 COMMUNITY STABILIZATION + ENHANCEMENT
- 6.2.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS
- 6.2.4 LONG POINT CORRIDOR TRANSFORMATION
- 6.2.5 STREET NETWORK MULTI-MODAL DESIGN + CAPACITY
- 6.2.6 TRANSIT
- 6.2.7 BIKEWAYS
- 6.2.8 PARKS + TRAILS

6.1 ACTION PRIORITY



INFRASTRUCTURE

6.1.1 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- A. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERING / LEVERAGING INVESTMENTS IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PROJECTS THAT IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROVIDE A STRONG RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR THE DISTRICT.
- B. CONDUCT A REGIONAL DRAINAGE STUDY FOR THE WHITE OAK BAYOU WATERSHED.
- C. LEVERAGE REBUILD HOUSTON.



LANDUSE / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

6.1.2 COMMUNITY STABILIZATION + ENHANCEMENT

- A. SUPPORT COMMUNITY INTEGRITY PROGRAMS.
- B. DEVELOP NEIGHBORHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE TOOLBOX.
- C. CONTINUE AND ELEVATE SAFETY AND SECURITY PROGRAMS BY HIRING PRIVATE SECURITY WITH SBMD PATROL CARS.

6.1.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

- A. CREATE A PROJECT ASSESSMENT TOOL THAT PROVIDES COST/ BENEFIT ANALYSIS. FOR "GO / NO GO" PARTNERING / LEVERAGING INVESTMENT BY THE DISTRICT IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.
- B. DEVELOP FUNDING MECHANISMS TO ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS.
- C. MAKE STRATEGIC ANNEXATIONS OF AREAS TO WEST AND NORTH / NORTHEAST TO SECURE THE DISTRICT'S NATURAL BORDERS.

6.1.4 LONG POINT CORRIDOR TRANSFORMATION

- A. ESTABLISH NEW CORRIDOR DESIGNATION / MAIN STREET PROGRAM FOR MORE SPECIFIC AND FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.
- B. LANDBANK PROPERTY ON LONG POINT AS PART OF IMPLEMENTING THE PILOT PROJECT(S).
- C. ESTABLISH INCENTIVES FOR ENHANCED STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT.
- D. ADVOCATE FOR AND OBTAIN FUNDING FROM LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS TO PLAN AND DEVELOP A PILOT PROJECT IN THE VICINITY OF WIRT AND LONG POINT.



MOBILITY

6.1.5 STREET NETWORK MULTI-MODAL DESIGN + CAPACITY

- A. DEDICATE RESOURCES TO COORDINATE WITH CITY OF HOUSTON (COH) ON SUB-REGIONAL MOBILITY PLAN.
- B. IDENTIFY NEW ROADWAY CONNECTIVITY TO BETTER DISTRIBUTE TRAFFIC ACROSS AREA ROADWAYS.
- C. ADD ADDITIONAL CAPACITY ENHANCEMENTS AT LOCATIONS WHERE DEVELOPMENT WILL ADD TO INCREASED PRESSURE ON CORRIDORS.

6.1.6 TRANSIT

- A. COORDINATE WITH METRO FOR NEW NORTH / SOUTH ROUTES ENHANCING THE GRID OF ROUTES PROPOSED THROUGH METRO SYSTEM REIMAGINING.
- B. CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR INCREASED FREQUENCIES AND SPANS ON NEW ROUTES.
- C. PURSUE FUNDING THAT LEVERAGES FUTURE UPTOWN BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PROJECT FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) OPPORTUNITIES AND CONNECTIONS TO NORTHWEST TRANSIT CENTER.
- D. ENHANCE SUCCESS OF FUTURE TODS BY PROVIDING PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND INCENTIVES.

6.1.7 BIKEWAYS

- A. ENGAGE WITH CITY OF HOUSTON'S (COH) NEW BICYCLE MASTER PLAN TO SUPPORT THE DISTRICT'S BIKEWAY GOALS TO CONNECT EXISTING ON-STREET ROUTES, OFF-STREET ROUTES AND LOCAL AND REGIONAL DESTINATIONS.
- B. ENHANCE EXISTING ON-STREET BIKE ROUTES INCLUDING CLEANING, SWEEPING, SIGNAGE, INTERSECTION ENHANCEMENTS, STRIPING / WIDENING, REPAVING.



PUBLIC REALM

6.1.8 PARKS + TRAILS

- A. CREATE ONE TO TWO NEW URBAN PARKS.
- B. **EXTEND AND COMPLETE THE EAST - WEST CENTERPOINT TRAIL.**
- C. ESTABLISH NEW SPARK PARKS AT SCHOOLS.
- D. BUILD CRITICAL TRAIL LINKS TO KEY DESTINATIONS.
- E. ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS.
- F. COORDINATE WITH TIRZ 17, ENERGY CORRIDOR, TIRZ 16, BAYOU GREENWAYS, COH BIKEWAY PLAN.