Neighborhood Planning Academy

Executive Summary 2010

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Neighborhood Planning Academy

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Neighborhood Planning Academy was developed through a partnership between The University of Oklahoma Urban Design Studio (OUUDS) and the Tulsa Area Community Schools Initiative (TACSI).

The development of the Neighborhood Planning Academy was funded by a grant through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC). The Community Service Council through its support of TACSI provided the funds for piloting the Academy.

Over a period of eighteen months, the Academy was created through research and collaboration. Research was conducted on similar planning and leadership programs in over 30 cities. Additionally, many neighborhoods and neighborhood leaders throughout the Tulsa area contributed to the development process by participating in seven focus groups.

Goals

The Neighborhood Planning Academy is a program used to train neighborhoods to deal with current issues and plan for the future by addressing neighborhood leadership, commitment, encouraging social development and teaching rudimentary planning techniques.

The goals of the Neighborhood Planning Academy are:

1. To create a more meaningful role for neighborhoods in planning and decision-making processes.
2. To educate neighborhoods on their roles and responsibilities and empower them to organize and accomplish their goals, as a result building pride in communities.
3. To encourage understanding and collaboration across neighborhoods and with experts and city officials.

Methodology

The initial Neighborhood Planning Academy was piloted in ten community schools within the Tulsa Public Schools and Union Public Schools systems in 2008. A second NPA was held in 2010, with four schools participating. The data collected from the second NPA is presented in the following summary. The meetings were facilitated by a teacher or professional staff from the school. The Neighborhood Planning Academy is an open, inclusive and transparent process that invites any citizens or neighborhood leaders from the schools' adjacent neighborhoods to participate.

Each teacher was trained in facilitation, group dynamics and neighborhood planning techniques before and during the Academy. A detailed manual was created to guide the facilitators through the various steps of the process, as outlined below:

Meeting ONE: *Facilitation Training*
       Introduction
       History of NPA
       Goals of NPA
       Description of Future Meetings
       Expected Outcomes of NPA
       Expectations of Facilitators
       Q&A
Meeting TWO: *Facilitation Training*
       Role of the Facilitator
       How to Run a Successful Meeting
       How to Deal with Emotions
       How to Intervene and Resolve Conflict
       How to Prepare for the Academy
       Data Management, Collection and Evaluation
       Q&A
Meeting THREE: *NPA Meeting One-Neighborhood Definition*
       Academy Overview
       Neighborhood Definition
       Neighborhood Organization
       Meeting Review
Meeting FOUR: *NPA Meeting Two-SWOT*
       Recap of Previous Meeting
       SWOT Analysis
           Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
       Meeting Review
Meeting FIVE: NPA *Meeting Three-Nominating Neighborhood Representative*
       Recap of Previous Meeting

Developing Priorities
Nominating a Neighborhood Representative
Meeting Review
Meeting SIX: *NPA Meeting Four-Producing an Action Plan*
Recap of Previous Meeting
Producing an Action Plan
Meeting Review

Outcomes for 2010 NPA

The Neighborhood Planning Academy is a successful program. Attendance was initially small but most NPA's saw increases in their numbers as the weeks progressed. Child care was provided and that proved extremely valuable to the process. As a result, parents were able to relax and engage in problem solving without unnecessary concern about their children.

In the beginning the NPA had a few C.A.V.E.'s-Citizens Against Virtually Everything, but before it was over we were able to help see these CAVEs find purpose as stated by a former CAVE: **"When I came here (NPA) I didn't want this school, now I am beginning to understand the school needs me"**

Other positive quotes include:
- "The NPA creates awareness, It shows HOW TO! 48% of our school is Hispanic, we are a Title 1 school, there is a lot of poverty-they want to tell their story, it creates an environment like a fire side chat powerful message, it is informal."
- "I wrote an email-thanking Shawn for the opportunity to reach out and help others help themselves."
- Each week the Eugene Fields representative was brought to tears, during the recap, at the thought of the change she saw in her families, as they were empowered to make changes in their neighborhood. "Powerful, I live inside the neighborhood…I told them, "moving up does not mean moving out" and now they are all saying the same thing.
- "This program developed the *community piece* of community school; it is teaching how to fish". "Cooking with gas!"
- Other teachers were excited about the new "parental encouragement and lifelong learning skills" they were receiving from the NPA.
- Many facilitators felt the NPA was an "Exciting way to facilitate change/perception."
- Another participant commented the NPA provides "Catalyst for change parent/teacher."

Meeting one focused on defining: WHAT IS MY NEIGHBORHOOD? Facilitators handed out aerial maps of the school and surrounding areas, asking participants to identify their neighborhood. Results varied from one or two houses being circled, to entire city blocks. Green dots on maps represent physical landmarks or barriers in community. Some facilitators added smiley faces to indicate areas the participants liked, while frowns were added to dots representing areas which were significant for negative reasons. This dot/face method was innovative and will be added to future NPA processes.

Meeting two enabled participants to develop a detailed SWOT Analysis: recognizing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the neighborhood. Once these lists were developed they were categorized to prevent redundancy then printed off on large paper.

Meeting three At this meeting, participants prioritized the SWOT decisions as follows: each participant was given three green dots to vote on the issue (from previous SWOT Analysis) they felt most needed addressing. The issue receiving the most votes was determined to be the subject for additional action.

Following the issue vote, a neighborhood resident, property owner or business person was asked to step up and actively lead the group by volunteering to be the NEIGHBORHOOD REPRESENTATIVE. If no one volunteered someone was nominated. Lastly, a vote was held and unanimously approved by the group to confirm the representative for each plan produced. The primary responsibility of the representative was to be the contact for the action plan.

Meeting four ACTION PLAN: One or maybe two issues were selected from the SWOT list to address. It was recommended they select one issue the group could do themselves, requiring only local participation. In addition, it was suggested, other issues requiring help from the staff and/or City of Tulsa could be addressed later. At the end of the Academy, participants were able to produce Action Plans addressing their primary concerns in their respective neighborhoods. The five Action Plans that were created by the neighborhoods were thorough and well thought out. These plans were then documented and will be presented to representatives of Union and Tulsa Public Schools, as well as the City of Tulsa.

There are lessons to be learned for future Neighborhood Planning Academies. For instance, in the future in order to improve participation, the recruitment strategy should be further developed and set in place months before the Academy begins. This allows for the families and guardians of students to see the flyers around the school/community and ask questions. Additionally, the advertising of the Academy should extend well into the neighborhood, at businesses, libraries, places of worship, fire stations, etc. with one cohesive flyer when neighborhoods share a common border.

At the conclusion of the Neighborhood Planning Academy, many of the neighborhoods had detailed plans to continue meeting in order to reach the goal of the Action Plan. The goals the neighborhoods wished to reach ranged from the implementation of a Neighborhood Watch Program to an Active Transportation Schools Program.

The goals were:

Neighborhood	Action Plan Goal
Eugene Fields	COMMUNITY PLACE- The primary goal of these neighbors was to create a safe community where neighbors do not fear one another.
Boevers	NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH- Neighborhood watch in their area due to concerns regarding safety issues and improving their neighborhood.
Roy Clark	ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION- create a walking school bus committee.
Rosa Parks	TRAFFIC SAFETY-Traffic guard-safe bus stops. PARENTAL HOMEWORK EDUCATION-program to educate parents on children's homework, etc.

Conclusion

The Neighborhood Planning Academy helped neighborhoods around the Tulsa area come together as a community and work to achieve their goals. The training that led up to the Academy helped to train four local teachers and community school coordinators to facilitate neighborhood planning sessions, as well as, students from the Urban Design Studio. These skills of facilitation will be useful and applicable in a wide range of situations.

The benefit of this form of neighborhood planning is the empowerment of the neighborhoods themselves. The neighborhood is given the choice of goals and implementation. This method was well received by each community; it could be used as a model for neighborhood planning in active neighborhoods. Additionally, the Academy could serve as a useful tool for the City of Tulsa's Comprehensive Planning effort.

In the pages that follow we have included detailed analysis of each NPA conducted in 2010.

UNION PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Boevers Elementary
 Rosa Parks Elementary
 Roy Clark Elementary

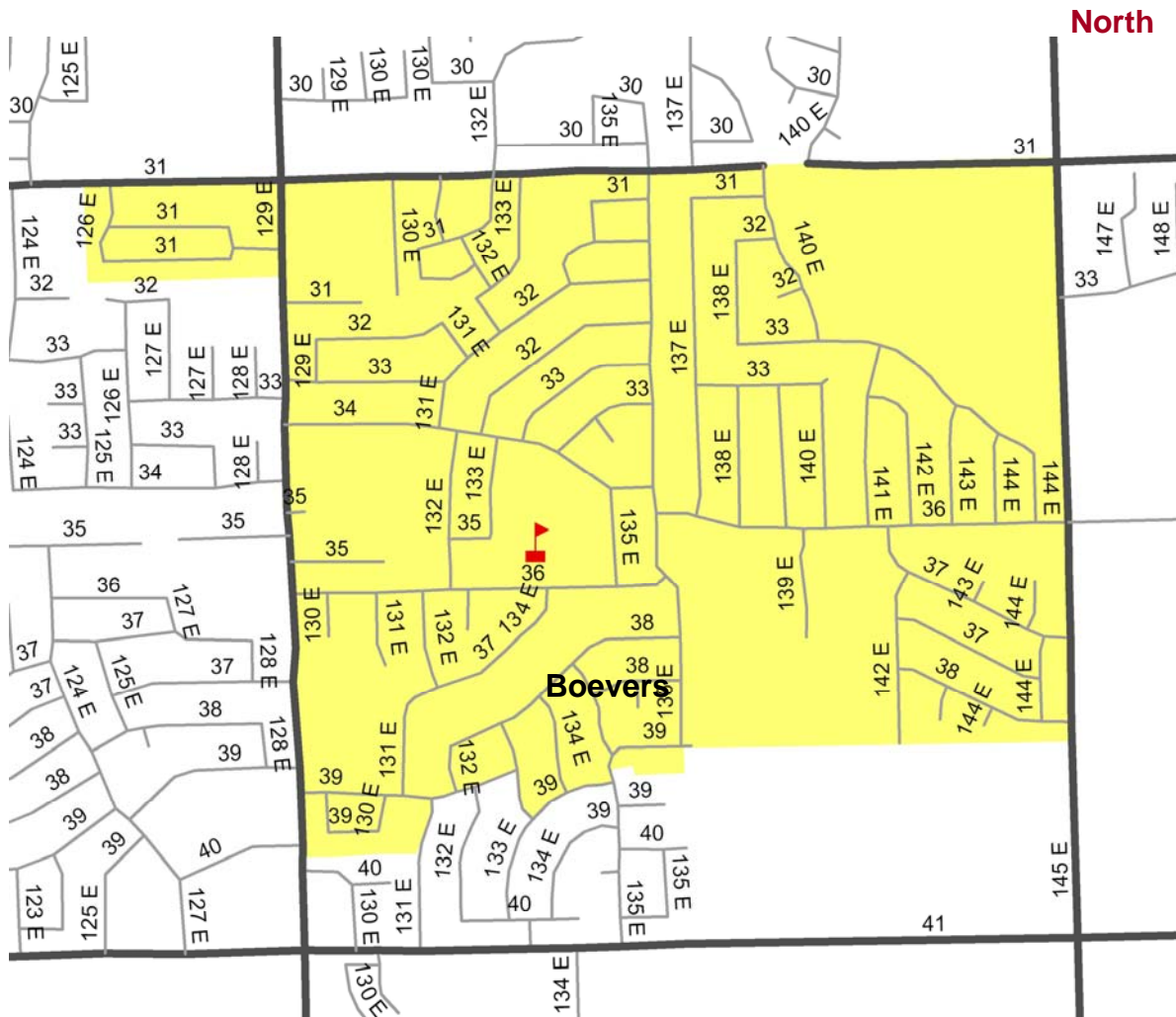TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Eugene Field Elementary

**Boevers Neighborhood Planning Academy
Action Plan**

Facilitator: Diana Bland

Boevers Elementary School Enrollment Area
Known Neighborhood Associations Active in the Area:
    Summerfield South
    Park Plaza East III and IV
    Eagle Ridge
    Sunwood Hill

North

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Boevers Meeting Dates and Attendance

February 11th, 2010 – 0 participants

February 18th, 2010 – 16 participants

February 25th, 2010 – 0 participants

March 4th, 2010 - 4 participants

Boevers Neighborhood Demographics
(Source: 2000 Census)

Total Population:	5,753	Tulsa	368,725
Median Income:	$41,951	Tulsa	$48,457
Median Age:	30.5 years	Tulsa	36.1
Owner-occupied housing:	45%	Tulsa	67%
Renter-occupied housing:	55%	Tulsa:	33%

What/Where is my neighborhood?
On February 11th, at the first meeting of the Neighborhood Planning Academy no participants attended. Therefore meetings one and two were combined on February 18th; participants were given a map of the area surrounding Boevers. Residents were asked to draw the area they personally identified as their neighborhood. Then mark with green dots the significant areas. Smiley faces indicate positive areas while frowns represent negative areas within the community.

Boevers SWOT Analysis

On February, 18th, 2010, at the second meeting of the Boevers Neighborhood Planning Academy, community members took part in a SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The participants came up with different characteristics of their neighborhood, falling under each of these four categories. The results of the SWOT analysis follow.

Strengths

    Having the School
    Soccer fields (great during the day)
    Churches (Garnett church has ESL classes, Community Meals and Market)
    Good access to the school
    Homeowners- take care of their properties
    Improvements in the road conditions

Weaknesses
- Soccer fields (cause concerns after dark)
- Speeding
- Traffic gridlock after school
- Jaywalkers
- Yard Parkers
- Graffiti
- Some areas without sidewalks
- Prostitution Place at 31st and 129th E Ave

Opportunities
- Widen 129th E Ave
- Improve Drainage
- More lights in area
- Neighborhood watch and police contact
- Safe places
- Tornado shelters
    - Having more in area
    - Publicize their locations
- Reroute student pick-up traffic

Threats
- Lack of knowledge of bad weather shelters
- Car theft
- Sex offenders in neighborhood
- Safety of students walking home

Boevers Results of voting and Neighborhood Representative
No participants attended on February 25th, so meetings three and four were combined on March 4th, 2010.

Boevers Issue Voting
At this final meeting of the Boevers Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants voted for the top priority to become the Action Plan:
- **Neighborhood Watch**- residents would create a watch in their area due to concerns regarding safety and a desire to improve their neighborhood.

Boevers Neighborhood Representative
They elected the Huerta family as their neighborhood representatives for fulfilling their plans.
- **Roberta Huerta**

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Boevers Action Plan

Objective

On Thursday March 4, 2010 the meeting attendees voted to start a neighborhood watch in their area because of their concerns regarding safety issues and improving their area. The lives of the families and especially the children will be much richer and rewarding if the ongoing concern for safety can be relieved through the joint efforts of members of the community, along with the support system that is in place, such as the police department and other groups within the city.

Actions

      Talk to our neighbors
      Ask if they want to participate
      Get Info
      Meet
      Invite Police or a city representative to guide or educate us about a neighborhood   watch
      Set up a calling list or tree

Implementation

      Send email with information about the meeting
      Robert Huerta will contact the interested people
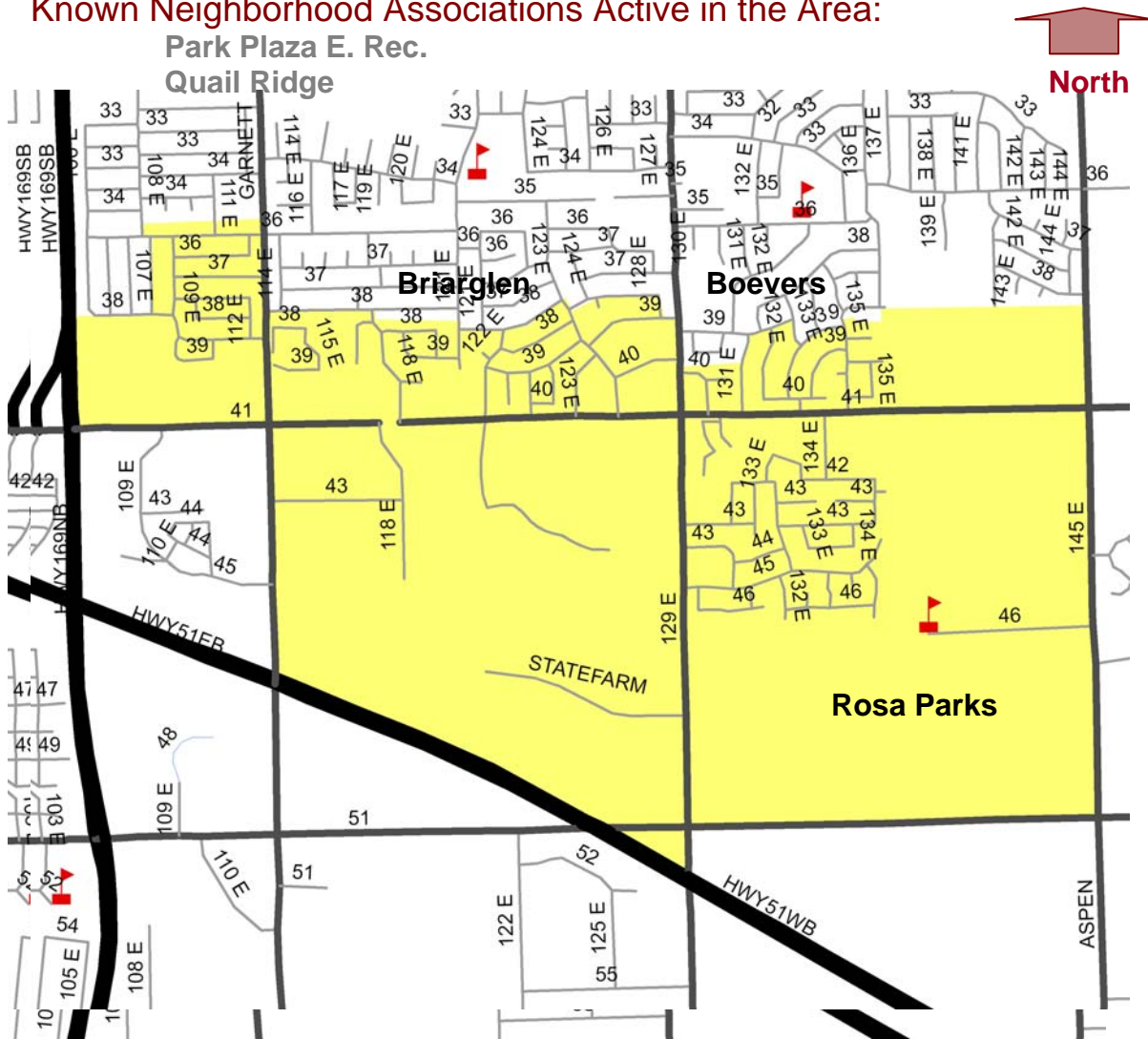
Rosa Parks Neighborhood Planning Academy
Action Plan

Facilitator: Erin Velez
Lindsay Smith

Rosa Parks Elementary School Enrollment Area
Known Neighborhood Associations Active in the Area:
Park Plaza E. Rec.
Quail Ridge

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Rosa Parks Meeting Dates and Attendance

February 11th, 2010 – 11 participants

February 18th, 2010 – 7 participants

February 25th, 2010 – No meeting, conflict of interest at Rosa Parks

March 4th, 2010 - 19 participants

Rosa Parks Neighborhood Demographics
(Source: 2000 Census)

Total Population:	4,692	Tulsa	368,725
Median Income:	$28,675	Tulsa	$48,457
Median Age:	27.8 years	Tulsa	36.1
Owner-occupied housing:	63%	Tulsa	67%
Renter-occupied housing:	37%	Tulsa:	33%

What/Where is my neighborhood?
On February 11th, at the first meeting of the Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants were given a map of the area surrounding Rosa Parks Residents were asked to draw the area they personally identified as their neighborhood. Later they were asked to mark with green dots the significant areas. Smiley faces indicate positive areas while frowns represent negative areas within the community. The red dots represented areas where most students live, primarily apartment complexes.

Rosa Parks SWOT Analysis
On February, 18th, 2010, at the second meeting of the Rosa Parks Neighborhood Planning Academy, community members took part in a SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The participants came up with different characteristics of their neighborhood, falling under each of these four categories. The results of the SWOT analysis are below.

Strengths
    Education
    Diversity
    Communication
    Corporate/Support
    Community Focus
    Neighborhood Aesthetics
    School Staff
    Thriving Businesses
    Clinics
    Easy access to major highways
    Safe educational environments
    Family
    Community Services
        Library, pharmacy, grocer
        Child care opportunities
            Sports

Weaknesses

- Lack of community outreach
- Lack of community activities
- Safety and Crime
- Language barriers/Cultural Responsibility
- Education and Job Training
- Healthy food options
- Teen employment opportunities
- Number of schools (not enough)
- Fragmented housing types
- Not enough funding for neighborhood
- Budget cuts for the city
- Low morale / community negative
- Traffic safety
- Racism-bias toward diversity
- Spanish Translators-Police, public services
- Ell Classes
- Parks and Community Centers
- Adult Education Services
  - Homework Assistance Program

Opportunities

- Non-Profits and HOA's letter writing campaign to state officials
- Community Centers-middle school student activities
- Eastside Community Coalition Support
- School open in evenings
  - Game, Library, Gym, and Computer Lab
- Increase after-school sport activities
- Advertise Clinic and school services
- Pool gathering at apartment complex
- Local business for financial support
- Partner with universities
- Cultural diversity-education about other ethnicities
- Homework assistance
- Traffic guard
- Healthcare fair
- Driver's permit for Hispanic communities
- Parks with pools
- Diversity education
- Adult education classes at Rosa Parks

Threats
Lack money
Lack of time
Volunteers
Lack of community communication
Broken homes
Racism-lack of understanding
Security lacks at events
Apathy of city officials
Voices not being heard
Fear of driving-need license
Crime and lack of security
Officers not speaking the language
Weapons in the community
Lack of specialized personnel
Student mobility
Students behind academically

Rosa Parks Results of voting and Neighborhood Representative

Rosa Parks had scheduling conflicts the third week and chose to combine weeks three and four on March 4th, 2010. This combination was smooth and the group easily accomplished the remainder of their NPA Goals.

Rosa Parks Issue Voting
- Traffic Safety
- Parental Homework Education

Rosa Parks Neighborhood Representative

The group also voted on their neighborhood representatives, these representatives will work to continue the efforts of the group. The neighborhood representatives for the Rosa Parks neighborhood are:
- **Traffic Safety**

Beatriz

Delia
- **Parental Homework Education**

Talisha McClain

Rosa Parks Action Plan

On March 4th, 2010, at the final meeting of the Rosa Parks Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants voted on their top priority and as a result there were two items that surfaced. We then proceeded to vote again, and once more the vote resulted in a tie. So they adopted two issues to become the Action Plan.

ISSUE ONE: TRAFFIC SAFETY- The families of RP created an aggressive plan to increase traffic safety especially at bus stops and for pedestrians. Their plan included getting TPD involved, developing an educational campaign, recruiting volunteers such as grandparents, implementing additional safety signage, and getting reports on traffic violations from bus drivers.
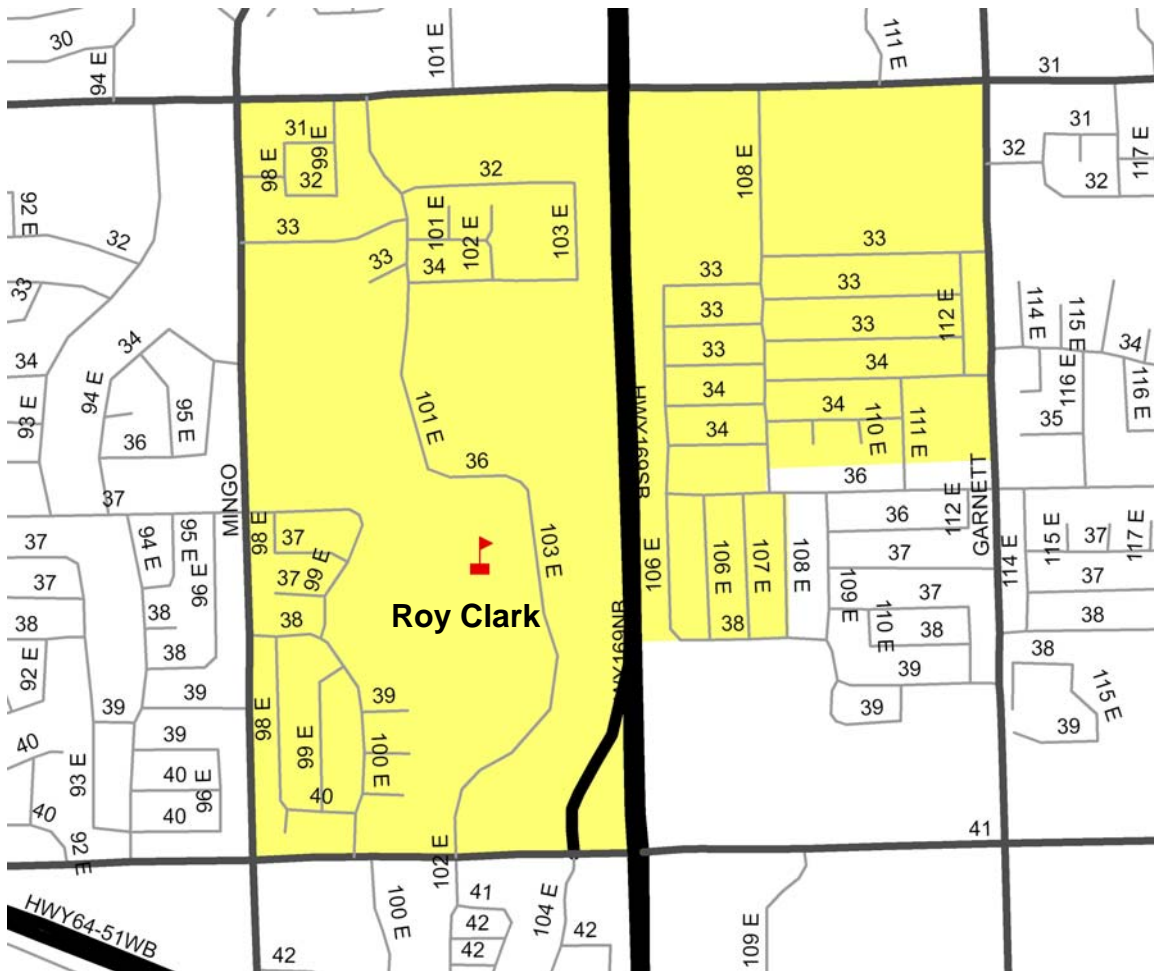
ISSUE TWO: PARENTAL HOMEWORK EDUCATION- This program will help equip parents in the education of their children, by increasing their understanding of the curriculum and educational system, increasing parental involvement and building school community with teachers, parents and children. The first step will be to survey the parents in order to discover where to focus the training and education efforts. It will also include a class for parents in study and learning tips.

**Roy Clark Neighborhood Planning Academy
Action Plan**

**Facilitator: Lisa Gildea
Harriet Patterson**

Roy Clark School Enrollment Area
Known Neighborhood Association Active in Area?
Shannon Park IV
Millwood Estate

North

Roy Clark Meeting Dates and Attendance

February 11th, 2010 – 0 participants

February 18th, 2010 – 22 participants

February 25th, 2010 – 18 participants

March 4th, 2010 - 11 participants

Roy Clark Neighborhood Demographics
(Source: 2000 Census)

Total population:	6,003	Tulsa:	368,725
Median Income:	$40,938	Tulsa:	$48,457
Median Age:	34.8	Tulsa:	36.1
Owner-occupied housing:	63.4%	Tulsa	67%
Renter-occupied housing:	36.6%	Tulsa:	33%

What/Where is my neighborhood?
On February 11th, no one attended the first meeting of the Neighborhood Planning Academy. However on February 18th, the participants were given a map of the area surrounding Roy Clark Residents were asked to draw the area they personally identified as their neighborhood. Then mark with green dots the significant areas. Smiley faces indicate positive areas while frowns represent negative areas within the community.

Roy Clark SWOT Analysis

On February, 18th, 2010, at the second meeting of the Roy Clark Neighborhood Planning Academy, community members took part in a SWOT analysis. SWOT is and acronym, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The participants came up with different characteristics of their neighborhood, falling under each of these four categories. The results of the SWOT analysis are below.

Strengths
    School
    Extended Day Program
    Bedlam clinic
    Four Year Old Program
    Location
    Open Area
    Walk, Bike, Sledding

Strengths Continued
    Grew up here
    Union Public Schools
    Quick Trip
    Highways
    Grocery Stores
    Bus Routes
    Library

Weaknesses

Walking Trail
Speeding
Gunfire
Destruction of Property
Bars
Two Bucks, Trapeze, Night
Blues Biker
Drunk Drivers
Vacant Building
Car lot
Noise in Neighborhood
Loud music
Curfew
Bus Routes
Wait is 45min.
Nordberg Park
Police Response Time
Gangs
Parent Interaction
Website Notice
Student Agenda Notice
Parent Pick-Up/Drop-Off
Classroom socialization
Opportunities for parents
Violence

Opportunities

Transportation to School
Safe Shelter at bus stops
More stops for bus
Before school opportunities
Speed Bumps
Neighborhood Watch
Program
Signage
Fence along creek walking
path
Crossing Guards
Parent Classes
Increased Parent Involvement
Color Paper for Parent
Notices
Parent Meeting Association
Wider Streets

Threats

Late Buses
Gunfire
Drugs/Drug Dealers
Hicks Park Closing
Gangs

Roy Clark Results of voting and Neighborhood Representative Meeting three saw a slight decrease in participants but still accomplished the following:

Roy Clark Issue Voting
- **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**- create a walking school bus committee

Roy Clark Neighborhood Representative
The group also voted on their neighborhood representative, the Bond Family, the husband and wife team will work to continue the efforts of the group.
- **Bond Family**

Roy Clark Action Plan
On March 4th, 2010, at the final meeting of the Roy Clark Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants voted on their top priority to become the Action Plan.

The Action Plan focuses on transportation to and from school and is broken up into two parts. The first part creates a walking school bus committee that will gather parent information, have a parent sign up, and create identifiers for the parents walking. The committee would also arrange an active transportation meeting to discuss the community's feelings on active transportation with City of Tulsa officials. Oklahoma department of Transportation officials would also be invited to address the maintenance issues for the tunnel below Highway 169.

The second part of the Action Plan is to focus on problems with the current bus transportation, specifically making it safer and more efficient. Making the bus stops safe would require moving the loading and unloading of the school bus away from the intersections. The school buses would be used more efficiently by making the buses more available for, before and after school programs. The community also decides to continue meeting once a month to discuss other issues.

Eugene Field Neighborhood Planning Academy
Action Plan

Facilitators: Christy Keenan
Kristen Granstaff

Known Neighborhood
Associations Active in the Area:
Eugene Field Coalition
Riverview Resident Assoc.

Eugene Field Neighborhood Demographics
(Source: 2000 Census)

Total population:	6,249	Tulsa:	368,725
Median Income:	$21,419	Tulsa:	$48,457
Median Age:	32	Tulsa:	36.1
Owner-occupied housing:	45%	Tulsa	67%
Renter-occupied housing:	55%	Tulsa:	33%

Eugene Field Meeting Dates and Attendance

February 11th, 2010 – 11 participants

February 18th, 2010 – 7 participants

February 25th, 2010 – 9 participants

March 4th, 2010 - 10 participants

What/Where is my neighborhood?
On February 11th, at the first meeting of the Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants were given a map of the area surrounding Eugene Field. Residents were asked to draw the area they personally identified as their neighborhood. Later they were asked to mark with green dots the significant areas. Smiley faces indicate positive areas while frowns represented negative areas within the community.

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Eugene Field SWOT Analysis
On February, 18th, 2010, at the second meeting of the Eugene Field Neighborhood Planning Academy, community members took part in a SWOT analysis. SWOT is and acronym, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The participants came up with different characteristics of their neighborhood, falling under each of these four categories. The results of the SWOT analysis are below.

Strengths
School / Family Atmosphere
Fireworks
Free River parks functions
Harvest Market
Global Gardens
Multi-generations
Central location-good access

Strengths Continued
> Bookmobile
> Community partners/Local support
> Convenient fast food
> Church's
> Resource centers
> Rail and Refineries - jobs, support of school

Weaknesses
> Lack of security
> Lack of TPD presence
> Drugs/Guns/Crime
> Vagrants
> Rail - jobs, sound/smell
> Income level segregation
> Stereotypes
> Abandoned pool
> Fearful of neighbors
> Road conditions
> Abandoned commercial property
> Lighting

Opportunities
> 1st time home buyers
> Abandoned pool - potential splash park
> River
> Route 66

Threats
> Kids involved in gangs
> Ecological threats (floods)
> Lack of stewardship
> parking

Eugene Field Results of voting and Neighborhood Representative
Eugene Field Issue Voting
- **COMMUNITY PLACE**- The primary goal of these neighbors was to create a safe community where neighbors do not fear one another.

Eugene Field Neighborhood Representative
- **Johana Burgos**

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Eugene Field Action Plan
On March 4th, 2010, at the final meeting of the Eugene Field Neighborhood Planning Academy, participants voted on their top priority to become the Action Plan. The group decided to take action regarding West Tulsa Park and abandoned pool.

Goals and Measurements
The goal was the creation of a safer community where neighbors do not fear one another.
Actions
Take back West Tulsa Park as a community place for family gatherings and fun with a splash park where neighbors meet and become acquainted. Leave what works in the park.
Implementation
Fundraising: Contact local groups for sponsorship

Hold events to market and promote park such as: movie night, health events, basketball tournament for different ages, football games, music and cultural celebration events

Survey to determine how residents want to use the park (e.g.: basketball hoops, volleyball, separate little kid and big kid areas)

Gather information:
1. Who owns the land?
2. What do people want in the park?
3. Where to get money. Donations in kind.
4. Service learning projects
5. Identify resources and interest

Create Facebook page and/or webpage

Plant Trees (contact Up With Trees)
Evaluation
- Continuation of Thursday evening meetings
- By Thursday March 11th or 18th determine who owns the park, get a name and solicit support.
- Hold first event: neighborhood Easter egg hunt on Saturday, April 3rd
- *Have parents sign kids in to event*
- *Resident volunteers*
- *Talent show/karaoke*
- *Raffles/gifts – must be present to win*
- *People who need to do community service*
Promotion: Bhadri graphics, Boys and Girls Club, Free Will Baptist Church