

ORDINANCE NO. 4354

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MESQUITE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE MESQUITE ZONING ORDINANCE ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1973, AND RECODIFIED ON NOVEMBER 21, 1988, BY AMENDING PART IV OF THE MESQUITE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN THEREBY MODIFYING POLICIES PERTAINING TO NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION AND REDEVELOPMENT; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, a major component of “Project Renewal” includes the revitalization of older neighborhoods through new infrastructure, upgraded housing conditions and the rehabilitation of distressed commercial corridors; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2007, the City Council approved a series of neighborhood plans containing strategies for neighborhood revitalization, and some of those strategies require the introduction of new planning policies, innovative principles for infill development and non-traditional approaches for regulating the built environment in order to achieve the broader aims of “Project Renewal;” and

WHEREAS, the City of Mesquite holds a large inventory of residential tax-foreclosed properties, which can adversely impact property values and neighborhood quality of life unless such properties are infilled, backfilled and redeveloped through rehabilitation, new construction or repurposing for civic use; and

WHEREAS, the Mesquite Comprehensive Plan does not adequately address those policies, principles or means of regulation necessary in the context of neighborhood infill, backfill and redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2015, the Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing on the proposed amendment pertaining to Neighborhood Revitalization and Redevelopment and recommends its adoption as a means to improving older neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Local Government Code, Section 211.004, provides that local zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan, and it is deemed prudent to amend the Mesquite Comprehensive Plan to strongly support and validate the planning policies, principles and approaches that may be employed in the future to help revitalize and redevelop the City’s older neighborhoods and commercial corridors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MESQUITE, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That the Mesquite Comprehensive Plan, last updated on October 17, 2011, be and the same is hereby amended by adopting revisions to Part IV, attached hereto as Exhibit “A,” pertaining to neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment.

SECTION 2. That all ordinances, or portions thereof, of the City of Mesquite in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance, to the extent of such conflict are hereby repealed. To the extent that such ordinances or portions thereof not in conflict herewith, the same shall remain in full force and effect.

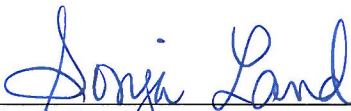
SECTION 3. That should any word, sentence, clause, paragraph or provision of this ordinance be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. That the present ordinances of the City of Mesquite are inadequate to provide for the proper protection of the public interest, comfort and general welfare of the City of Mesquite, creates an urgency and emergency for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare, and requires that this ordinance shall take effect immediately from and after its passage and publication of said ordinance, as the law in such cases provides.

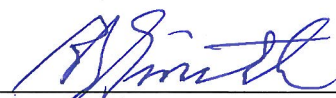
DULY PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Mesquite, Texas, on the 16th day of March, 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Monaco  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sonja Land  
City Secretary

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
B. J. Smith  
City Attorney

## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION & REDEVELOPMENT

### **Fact**

*As of February 2015, the City held or was processing 66 residential tax lien foreclosure properties*

### **Policy Implications for Neighborhood Program Design:**

*Comprehensive – multi-faceted to achieve programmatic synergy*

*Nimble – flexibility to adjust quickly without recreating program structure*

### **Target Neighborhoods**

*More small-sector plans are needed to improve neighborhoods with potential for economic and physical revitalization*

### **A Dual Approach: Vitality and Restoration**

Mesquite's neighborhoods were built as any other first-ring suburb. Common zoning and design practices, now largely discredited as unsustainable, created block after block of housing and public infrastructure that is increasingly difficult to maintain. The city's challenging income demographic makes private reinvestment even more difficult.

The single-family housing collapse of 2008-2012 compounded the pressures on Mesquite neighborhoods. It coincided with an unusually high jobless rate. Appraised values plummeted in some areas, leaving homeowners "upside down" on their mortgage, which prompted further disinvestment. Tighter lending criteria impacted the new and used housing market. Many overburdened owners simply walked away from their homes, leaving behind poorly maintained and unproductive properties. As a result, Mesquite must contend with a sizable inventory of bank-owned and government-foreclosed properties scattered across the city.

A major objective of Project Renewal is implementing the right revitalization and redevelopment programs to help these aging neighborhoods. Revitalization imbues new life and vitality into an area through economic and physical change. Redevelopment restores or replaces what once existed, and in the process brings stability. Mesquite's evolving neighborhood programs must be comprehensive and nimble enough to employ both strategies.

The choice of strategies begins with recognition that no two neighborhoods are alike. Each has its own character and a unique set of needs and assets. Neighborhood definition and design, housing diversity, retail adjacency, and proximity to schools are a few of the factors that influence the best approach. Every neighborhood has a different story and demands a tailored solution.

### **Opportunities**

In 2006 the City initiated small sector plans in four target neighborhoods. The Casa View Heights and Truman Heights areas show potential for economic revitalization and have been designated as Neighborhood Sustainability Zones.

### Neighborhood Sustainability Zones

A NSZ is a walkable area built around a core residential neighborhood, and includes abutting commercial corridors that serve neighborhood residents. By definition a NSZ should promote land use and development policies that make it possible to both renew economically and sustain a socially interactive residential environment. Within a Neighborhood Sustainability Zone, policies

established elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan for conserving homogeneous neighborhoods will not achieve the desired results.

- ☑ Identify new Neighborhood Sustainability Zones and provide City resource planning and support.
- ☑ Partner with owners of outdated shopping centers that impact neighborhoods. Incentivize building and parcel upgrades with the objective of attracting higher-tiered tenants.
- ☑ Improve neighborhood connections to supporting civic and commercial land uses

Backfill, Infill and Redevelopment

Other target neighborhoods have been the focus of enhanced housing and code enforcement. They lack the requisite commercial and transportation infrastructure for the revitalization approach. But they do have some of the largest concentrations of vacant and foreclosed properties. These areas have the potential for redevelopment involving new construction on raw parcels, housing rehabilitation, and more aggressive façade and code compliance. These needs typify most of Mesquite's aging neighborhoods.

**Goals of Urban  
Redevelopment:**

*Return deteriorated and unproductive properties to the tax rolls*

*Enhance the value of home ownership to surrounding properties*

*Raise quality of life in deteriorating areas*

- ☑ Repurpose vacant and foreclosed properties through a series of actions:
  - Eliminate blight by condemnation and demolition of substandard structures.
  - Rehabilitate habitable housing through established grant programs such as CDBG and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.
  - Sale of parcels for new home construction to non-profits such as Habitat for Humanity and local housing development organizations.
  - Selling rehabilitated or new homes only to qualifying households that fit the neighborhood income demographic.
  - Utilize parcels for open space or civic functions.
- ☑ Provide administrative flexibility for approving new housing construction standards that are contextual to the neighborhood.
- ☑ Partner with home improvement stores and other vendors to provide expertise and low-cost resources to homeowners for exterior improvements.