



# neighborhood

## Profile and Priorities

MEDICAL CENTER AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN:  
DENMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

*JUNE 28, 2023 DRAFT*

# Acknowledgements

## Steering Committee

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Lawrence Mann, 8000 Del Donore  
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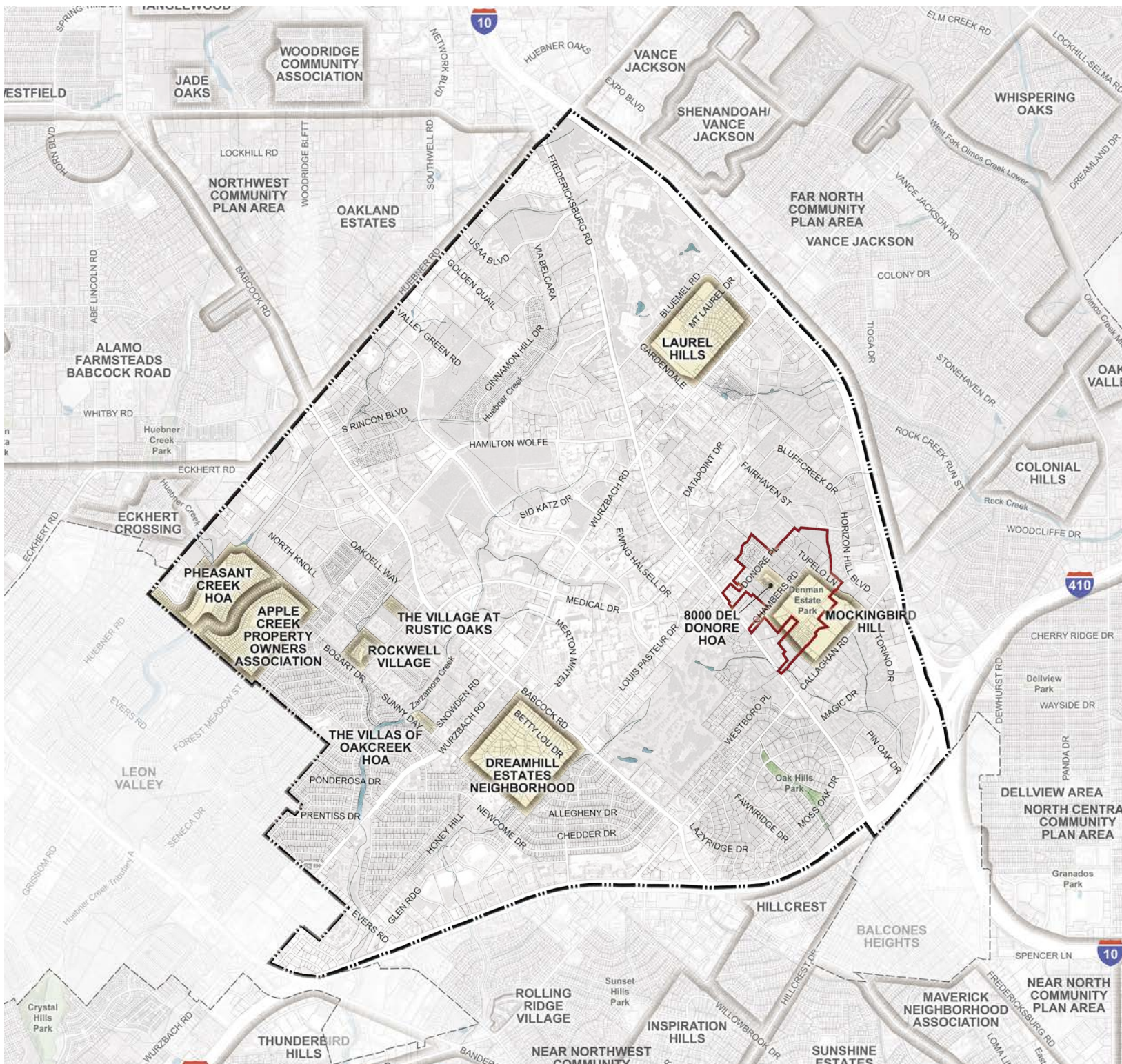
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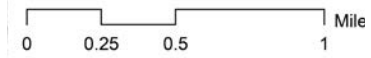


Medical Center Area  
REGIONAL CENTER

DENMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

LEGEND

- Medical Center Area Regional Center Boundary
- City Boundary
- Denman Neighborhood
- Neighborhood Association
- Parcels



# Neighborhood Profile and Priorities



## WHAT ARE NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE AND PRIORITIES?

San Antonio is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique history, qualities, and character. Many neighborhoods throughout the City have developed Neighborhood Plans that reflect local values and priorities. These plans, adopted by the City, have guided local investments and improvements for many years and helped strengthen the relationship between residents and the City.

The City is currently in the process of creating Sub-Area Plans to implement the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. These Sub-Area Plans are intended to provide a more coordinated, efficient and effective structure for neighborhood planning. The Sub-Area Plans are intended to increase equity citywide, by ensuring that all of San Antonio's neighborhoods have a base level of policy guidance, as many neighborhoods within the City lack an existing Neighborhood Plan or a registered neighborhood organization. In this way, each Sub-Area Plan will integrate key elements of existing Neighborhood Plans for those neighborhoods that have a plan, while

promoting citywide policy consistency and providing key recommendations and strategies for those neighborhoods currently lacking that direction.

Typically, the Neighborhood Profile and Priorities section of the Sub-Area Plans is intended to provide special attention to prior neighborhood planning efforts and recognizes the community groups and individuals who were instrumental in their creation. However, the Medical Center Area does not encompass any areas that have previously adopted Neighborhood or Community Plans.

### How was it developed?

At the time the Medical Center Area Regional Center Plan was developed, the plan area included 18 single-family residential subdivisions and approximately 100 multi-family developments ranging from duplexes to large apartment complexes. But, only nine neighborhoods, homeowner associations, or condo associations within the plan area were registered with the City. Although all registered

associations were invited to participate in the planning process, some chose to not participate directly in the development of the plan.

Planning Department staff met with residents from the neighborhood area in a series of Steering Committee and Community meetings where they were able to identify specific strengths, opportunities, challenges, priorities, and recommendations to more efficiently direct public and private investment within the city to help the neighborhood achieve short-term goals and long-term visions.



Existing Conditions Along Chambers Rd.

# Neighborhood Snapshot

## NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS AND CHARACTER



Denman Estate Park

Denman Neighborhood is located within the Medical Center Area Regional Center, which is an activity center that is located in the northwest portion of the City of San Antonio. The neighborhood is generally bound by Horizon Hill Boulevard to the northeast, Callaghan Road to the southeast, Fredericksburg Road to the southwest, and Medical Drive to the northwest. It is comprised of the Mockingbird Hill Neighborhood Association, 8000 Del Donore Homeowner Association, Songbird Apartment Homes, and individual homes not affiliated with an existing association. The area has a mix of housing types including single-family

homes, apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Immediately southwest of the neighborhood is Fredericksburg Road, which is a major transportation corridor and key connector between the Central Business District, the Medical Center, and beyond. Fredericksburg Road provides a variety of commercial developments types including but not limited to, offices, restaurants, shops, and medical facilities. The eastern portion of the neighborhood includes the Denman Estate Park that serves as a recreation and leisure area for adjacent residents as well as the broader community and acts as a refuge for local wildlife.

### Strengths



The Denman Neighborhood offers a diverse mix of housing types that aid in supporting vibrant communities.



Denman Estate Park provides opportunities for residents to enjoy and connect with nature, improving health and well-being.



The unique neighborhood character can help inform and shape future development.



Local wildlife contributes to the unique identity and quality of life for the neighborhood.

# Neighborhood Snapshot

## NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Denman Neighborhood is nestled between two major transportation corridors providing it easy access to other key destinations in the city. The neighborhood boasts a diversity of housing types that border Denman Estate Park. The park provides tree covered trails as well as other park amenities and attracts local wildlife. There is a great opportunity to increase safety for pedestrians and wildlife, enhance park amenities, and help mitigate flooding and stormwater issues.

### Opportunities

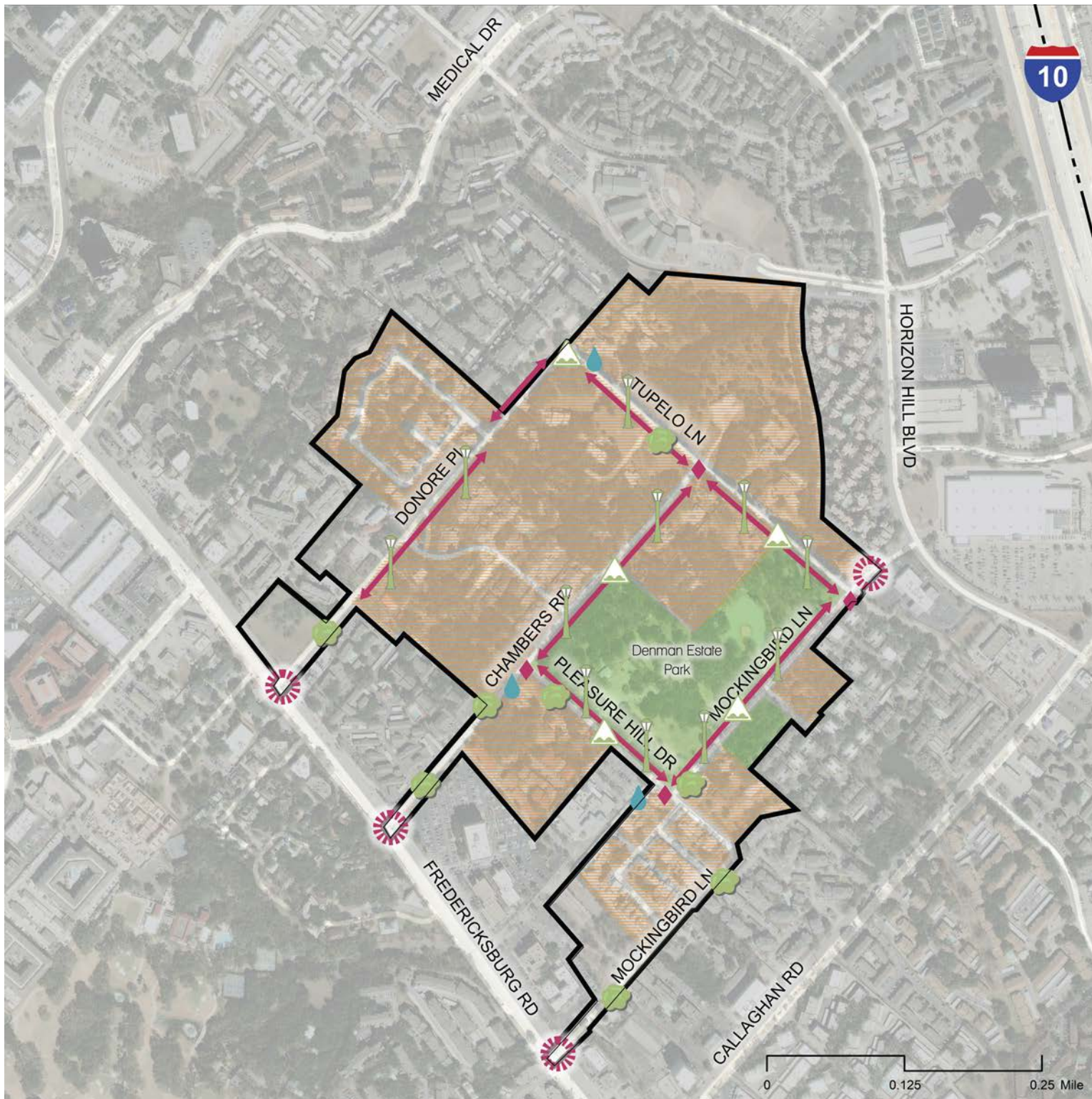
- Establish gateway and connections to key destinations.
- Introduce dark sky-friendly lighting that helps improve safety while not increasing light pollution.
- Enhance the streets adjacent to the park by increasing pedestrian amenities that work in harmony with Denman Estate Park.
- Increase connectivity by implementing a walking trail loop that connects the surrounding neighborhood to Denman Estate Park.
- Establish wildlife corridors and safe pathways in order to preserve and protect local wildlife.
- Generate a sense of place through public art, wayfinding and signage.
- Increase neighborhood activities and other programmed events.
- Reduce vehicle speeds on roads throughout the neighborhood and adjacent to the park to increase pedestrian safety.

### Challenges

- Mitigate ongoing flooding and stormwater issues.
- Change in topography creates poor pedestrian and vehicle visibility.
- Concern about reduced tree canopy on individual lots due to new development.
- Lack of street lighting resulting in safety concerns.
- Potential for development that is not compatible with or complementary to the existing character of the neighborhood.



Wildlife Local to the Neighborhood



## Medical Center Area REGIONAL CENTER

### DENMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

- Denman Neighborhood
- Park or Open Space
- Stream, Creek or River
- Body of Water

### PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS MAP

#### #1 - Comfort & Safety

- Increased Street Lighting
- Traffic Calming Features
- Maintain Tree Canopy

#### #2 - Connectivity

- Sidewalk Connections
- Gateway Element & Intersection Improvements
- Wayfinding

#### #3 - Drainage

- Drainage Improvements

#### #4 - Future Land Use

- Potential City-Initiated Land Use Updates and/or Rezoning

#### #5 - Park & Neighborhood Programs

- Community/Neighborhood Events in the Park
- Formalize Neighborhood Association/Coalition


#### #6 - Neighborhood Character



# Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

 Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

 Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

 Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

## #1: COMFORT & SAFETY

Increased Street Lighting



Traffic Calming Features



Maintain Tree Canopy



Providing dark sky-friendly street lighting is one of the priorities for the Denman Neighborhood. Community members have expressed the need for additional lighting on streets directly adjacent to the park and throughout the neighborhood. The recommended dark sky-friendly lighting aims to increase safety in the area while taking into account the local wildlife that moves throughout the neighborhood. Artificial light at night can have negative effects for wildlife. As such, lighting elements should be dark sky-friendly outdoor fixtures. Lighting elements are focused on Tupelo Lane, Mockingbird Lane, Chambers Road, and Donore Place.

Community members have noted that cars often exceed posted speed limits as they cut through the neighborhood to access nearby Fredericksburg Road and IH-10. Speed bumps have been implemented along Mockingbird Lane, however other traffic calming measure are needed on adjacent streets. To aid with traffic calming, street narrowing is proposed to reduce vehicle speeds, expand the sidewalk realm, and create safer pedestrian crossings. Traffic calming features should be introduced along Tupelo Lane, Mockingbird Lane, Pleasure Hill Drive, and Chambers Road.

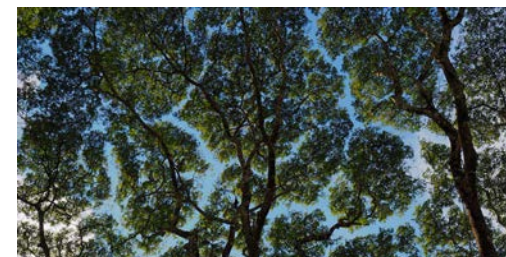
Community members are concerned with the reduced tree canopy that could come with new development. They have noted that there has been a reduction in tree canopy on private properties and on sites that have introduced new development. An increase in tree canopy could result in shade and cooling, reduction in air pollution, public health improvements, and safer, more walkable streets. Additionally, trees can provide important habitats for wildlife. To increase tree canopy, trees should be planted, where space allows, especially along Tupelo Lane, Mockingbird Lane, Pleasure Hill Drive, Chambers Road, and Donore Place.



Dark Sky-Friendly Lighting



Street Narrowing



Tree Canopy

# Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

● Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

● Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

● Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

## #2: CONNECTIVITY

Sidewalk Connections



Gateway Element & Intersection Improvements



Wayfinding

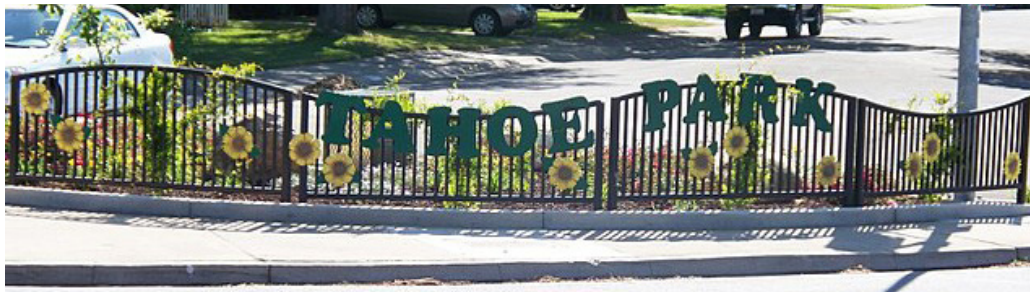


Currently, many of the roads in the neighborhood have sidewalks that are missing, are in poor condition, or are too narrow. These conditions do not provide a safe or comfortable experience for pedestrians. The existing right-of-way would allow the placement of sidewalks along most key streets and would create better connected paths to the park and to Fredericksburg Road. New sidewalks are recommended along the park side of Tupelo Lane, Mockingbird Lane, and Chambers Road; while sidewalk improvements are recommended along Donore Place where some sidewalk segments are missing.

The Denman Neighborhood is nestled between two major transportation corridors, Fredericksburg Road along the southwest and IH-10 along the northeast. There are several streets that lead to these two major corridors, providing the opportunity to introduce gateway elements at key intersections. The gateway elements could help

communicate a welcoming arrival to the Denman Neighborhood. In addition to gateway elements, intersection improvements such as high-visibility crosswalks, intersection painting, ADA ramps, and traffic signals could be introduced.

The community also expressed the desire for wayfinding elements to Denman Estate Park. The directional wayfinding elements should blend in with the context and character of the neighborhood. These elements should be prioritized at the intersections of Pleasure Hill Drive and Chambers Road, Pleasure Hill Drive and Mockingbird Lane, Tupelo Lane and Mockingbird Lane, and Tupelo Lane and Chambers Road.



Gateway Element



Wayfinding

## Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

● Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

● Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

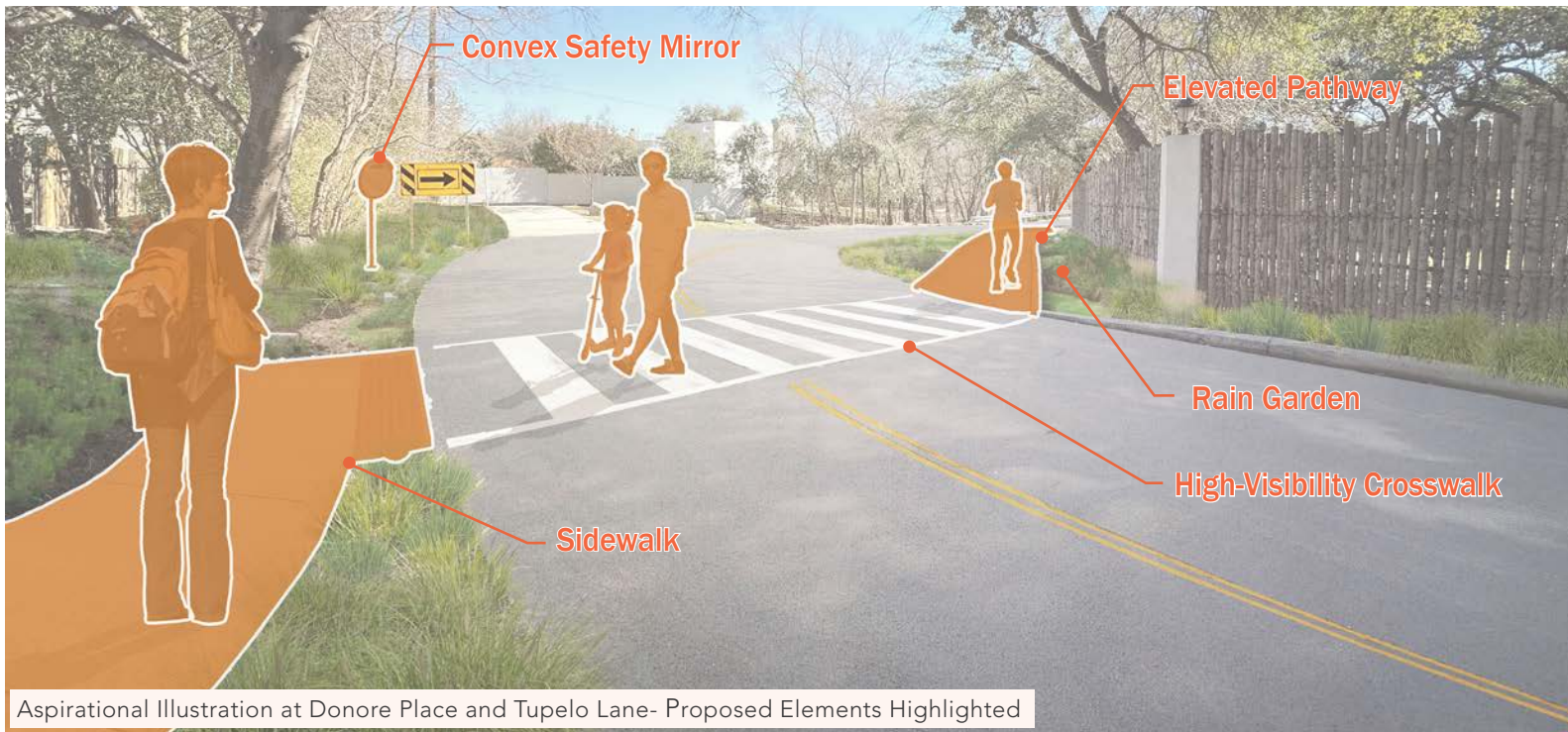
● Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

### #3: DRAINAGE

#### Drainage Improvements



Community members commented on the flooding and drainage issues that occur in the area. Green infrastructure elements such as rain gardens, permeable paving, and bioretention ponds could be used to reduce flood risks. Where possible, green infrastructure elements with native vegetation should be implemented. The aspirational illustration at Donore Place and Tupelo Lane demonstrates how a rain garden could be implemented within the right-of-way. The sunken rain garden allows an elevated wooden pathway, keeping pedestrians above the drainage area and away from traffic at a low-visibility intersection.



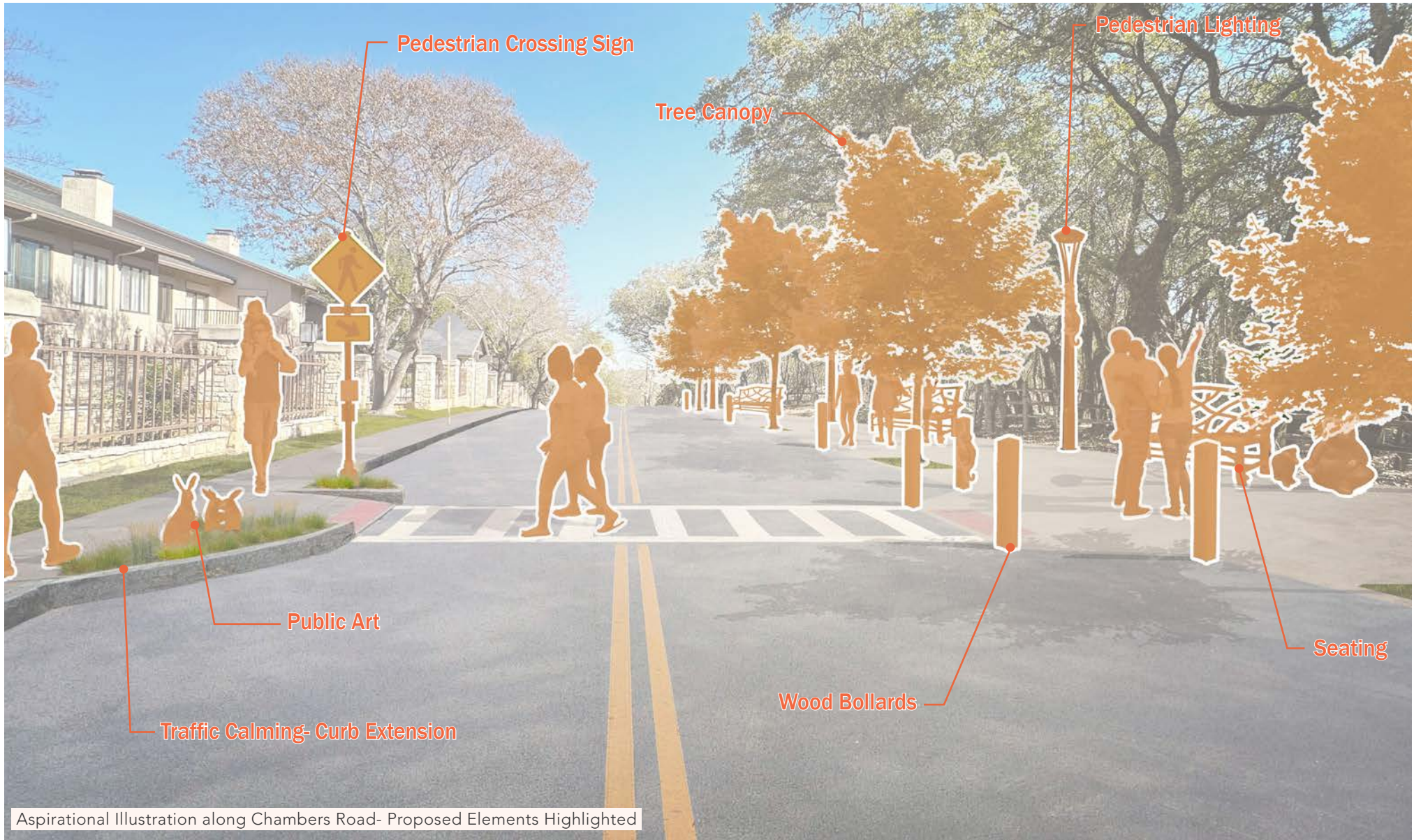
Aspirational Illustration at Donore Place and Tupelo Lane- Proposed Elements Highlighted



Aspirational Illustration at Donore Place and Tupelo Lane



Existing Conditions at Donore Place and Tupelo Lane





Aspirational Illustration along Chambers Road



Existing Conditions along Chambers Road

## Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

● Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

● Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

● Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

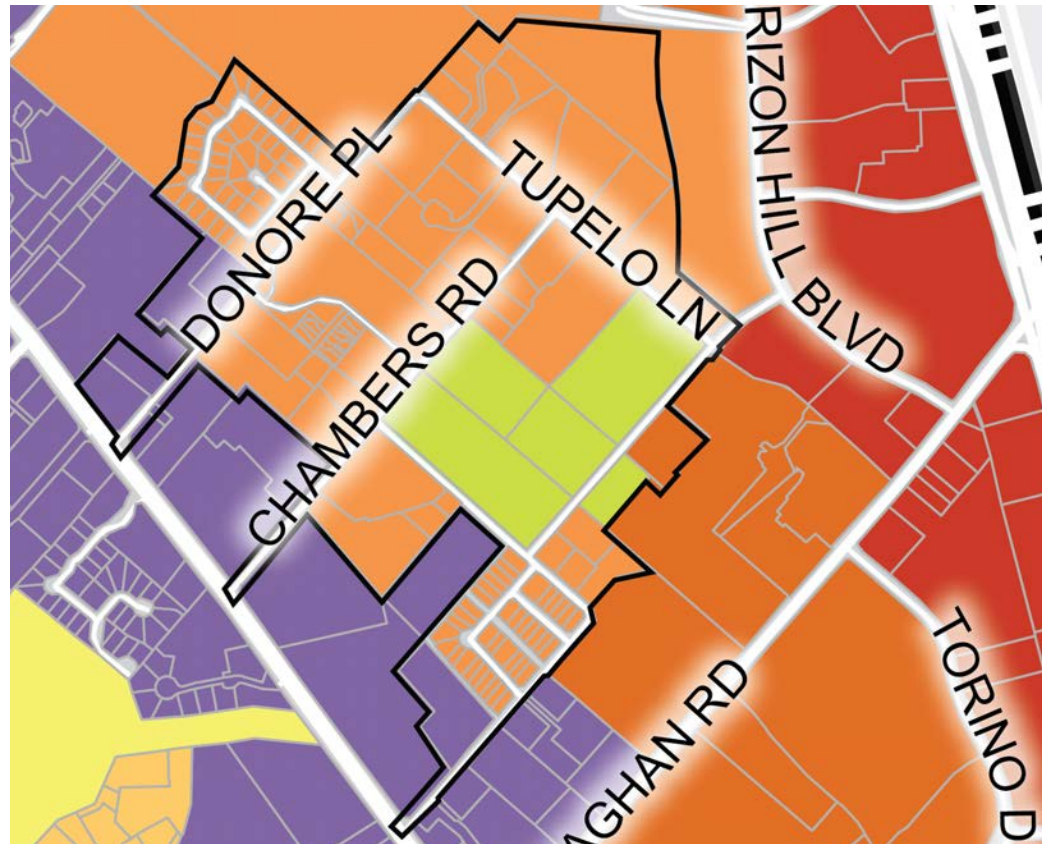
### #4: FUTURE LAND USE

Potential City-Initiated Land Use Updates and/or Rezoning



The Medical Center Area Regional Center Plan was adopted on October 3, 2019. A major element of that plan is the Future Land Use map, which serves as a growth framework and was developed based on community input and feedback. The map designates where various scales and ranges of mixed-use, commercial, and residential land uses are appropriate and desired. The overall intent of a Future Land Use map is to support existing uses and community character, while providing opportunities for economic development and higher density uses where appropriate.

Based on community input and the priorities for the Denman Neighborhood, the Future Land Use map should be updated to reflect existing conditions and desired development within the neighborhood. This includes potentially amending the future land use designation of larger lots from Medium Density Residential to categories that better reflect the existing lot sizes and densities in the area around Denman Estate Park.



Denman Neighborhood, Future Land Use Plan as adopted in the Medical Center Area Regional Center Plan on October 3, 2019

# Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

● Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

● Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

● Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

## #5: PARK & NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS

Community/Neighborhood Events in the Park



Formalize Neighborhood Association/Coalition

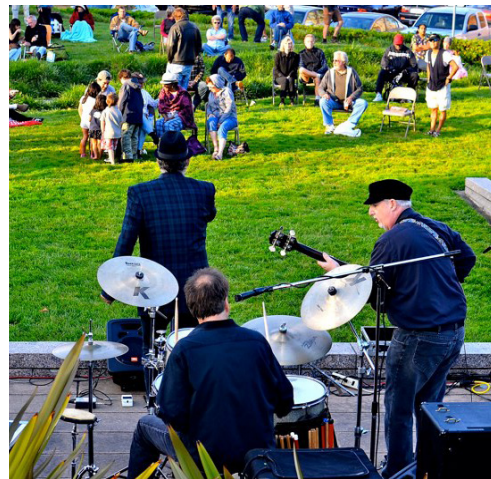


Denman Estate Park is the central gathering place for residents in the neighborhood and surrounding areas. The residents desire to have more community and neighborhood events in the park, such as movies, music, and yoga. Neighborhood Associations are groups of residents who organize to meet specific goals to improve and maintain the quality of life in their neighborhood. Some benefits of organizing and registering a neighborhood association with the City include: receiving news from the City and City Council offices; receiving notice about nearby proposed development (zoning, plan amendments, historic designations, etc...); ability to review reports on calls for police service in the area; reserving no-cost meeting space at City libraries; and receiving invitations to special City events and programs. Registering an association with the City also allows residents to find active groups in their area, and creates a route for developers to connect with groups about potential projects.

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Movies in the Park



Music in the Park




Yoga in the Park

## Neighborhood Priorities & Recommendations

 Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan

 Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation

 Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

### #6: NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Denman Neighborhood is considered a jewel in the Medical Center Area. The central amenity is the Denman Estate Park, but the neighborhood also features a beautiful canopy of large heritage trees that house local wildlife and extend a park-like ambience throughout the larger community. The neighborhood boasts a diversity of housing types that are often missing from other areas of the city, ranging from large-lot single-family homes to townhomes and condominiums, with abundant garden-style apartment complexes encompassing the area in all directions.

Denman Neighborhood residents want to maintain the lower-density character that exists today and are concerned about the encroachment of higher residential densities and commercial uses into the neighborhood's core. New development and redevelopment should aim to complement the existing densities and character of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood has increasing concerns related to tree canopy preservation/restoration, protection of local wildlife, and debris on vacant lots and within the park. Recommendations include increasing public information campaigns specific to local regulations regarding wildlife poaching, illegal dumping, maintenance of vacant lots, and tree canopy preservation, as well as how to report code violations and the City's Code Enforcement process. Incorporating wildlife crossing signage along the roadways in the neighborhood would help remind residents and visitors to slow down and be observant of their surroundings. Increased police patrols could deter poaching and illegal dumping. Single-family property owners should be informed of the benefits of a healthy tree canopy, and the importance of tree maintenance and replacement; while other property owners should be informed of the City's Tree Ordinance and how it applies to multi-family and non-residential lots.

