

## GUEST COMMENTARY

# 2011 shaping up to be really good year for northwest Houston property owners

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The year 2011 is shaping up to be a really good one for property owners in the Near Northwest District. With two blighted buildings demolished and more in the works, the District is finally able to turn our energies to rejuvenating the area to make this the place we all want to live and do business. But how do we do that?

First, we are continuing the efforts of the Weed & Seed Grant by continuing to weed out crime and seed in revitalization. Law enforcement initiatives coordinated by the Harris County Precinct 1 Constables will continue, as will efforts to increase educational and employment opportunities in the area. The opening of Lone Star College's Victory Campus in the fall of 2011 will be an incredible benefit to the area. In addition to GED preparation and associate degree programs for students who are seeking a college education, the Victory Campus will also offer industrial certification programs for those interested in careers in construction, plumbing or electrical contracting. (In a related matter, the 6th Near Northwest Community Job Fair will take place on May 11 and businesses with positions to fill are encouraged to participate.)

Second, the District continues to bring resources into the area to help redefine our community. The Houston-Galveston Area Council's Livable Centers Study is underway and upon

completion in the fall will provide an area revitalization plan. In the meantime, community members are needed to come to public meetings on April 26 and 28. These meetings are the community's opportunity to tell urban planners what they like about our area and what they would like to change. Both meetings will be held at Advent Lutheran Church and more information is available in an ad in today's *Leader* or on our web site at [www.nearnorthwestdistrict.com/programs/livablecenters](http://www.nearnorthwestdistrict.com/programs/livablecenters).

Additionally, the Urban Land Institute has awarded Houston a Rose Fellowship to study new ways to use land to support revitalization. The Antoine Corridor was chosen as the study area by Houston's Rose Fellows who are led by Mayor Annise Parker. This study will also be completed in the fall and the findings presented at the ULI National convention in Los Angeles, which should attract investment into our area.

Finally, working with the City and Harris County Flood Control on the redevelopment of the former Inwood Forest Golf Course into a park and community center will help to make our community a destination for people all over Houston. Discussions to get the park up and running are in progress and there is the potential for the pool to be open to the public by summer. As we move forward we will be seeking corporate partnerships in the renovation of this 227-acre property.

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