

City of Oak Ridge City Blueprint High Ridge West Subarea Draft Plan

Prepared by the City of Oak Ridge
Municipal Planning Commission
Assistance provided by City of Oak Ridge
Community Development Department
July 27, 2017



UNDER CONSTRUCTION
CONTENT WILL BE AVAILABLE SOON

High Ridge West Area

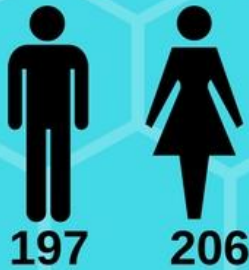
424 acres

Population Information

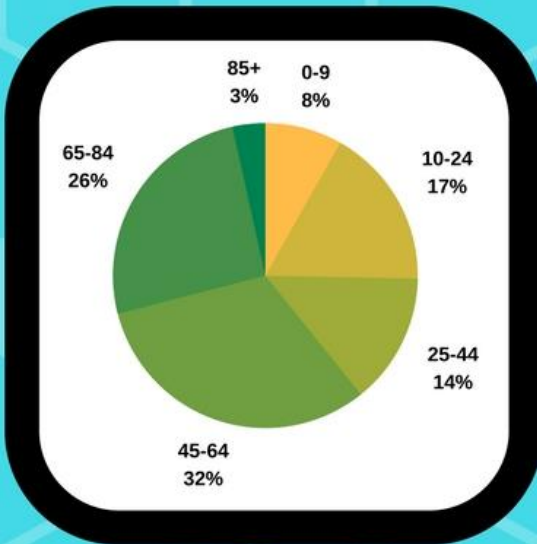


2016 Total
Population: 403

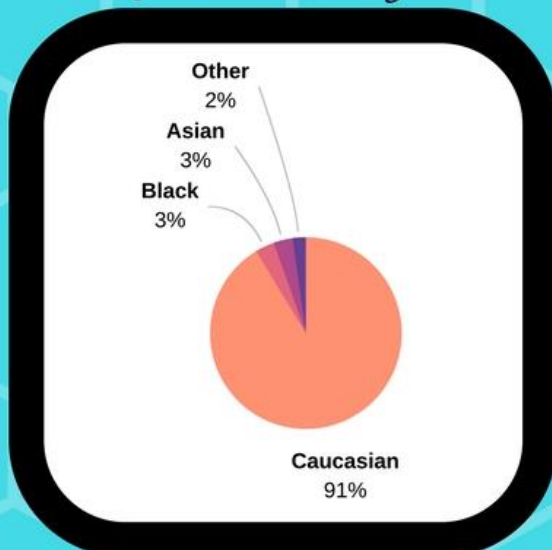
2016 Population by Gender



2016 Population by Age



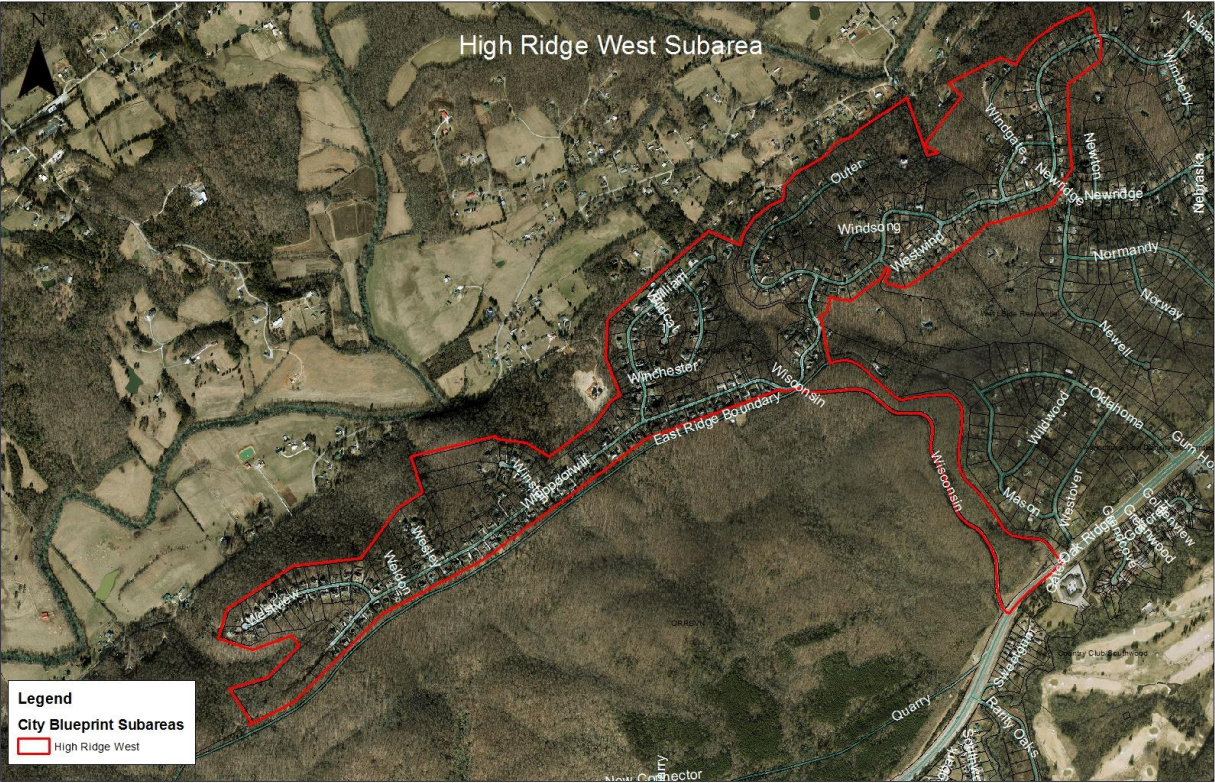
2016 Population by Race/Ethnicity



Median Household Age:
52.80 years old

HIGH RIDGE WEST SUBAREA

The High Ridge West sub-area is a long linear area limited to single family homes that exhibits steep topographic grades and resulting dead-end streets. The bulk of the sub-area is situated between property owned by the Department of Energy (DOE) and our northern municipal boundary. The primary street connections are Wisconsin/Whippoorwill and West Outer. This sub-area is unique in that the east-west axis is very linear with very little depth. In some areas it is limited to a single street. In addition, the land use is single family detached homes with no public activities or municipal property.



LIVABILITY AND BEAUTIFICATION



Challenges

Due to the singular land use and age of housing in this sub-area there are extremely few challenges to livability and beautification of this area.

Assets

Much of the housing in this area is owner occupied and built within the last 20-25 years. The average home value is \$222,959 and exhibits a median household income of \$95,530. To date

the large lot homes and properties are well landscaped and maintained with tree lined streets and mature canopy hardwoods along with great attention to understory detail.

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND HOUSING



Once again the singular land use within the Westwood sub-area is limited to single-family detached housing. There are few challenges to the sub-area with regard to Economic Vitality and Housing. The homes along Whippoorwill were constructed within the last 10-15 years and have overwhelming similar architectural design. The homes along West Outer

are older and well maintained but exhibit a diversity of architectural style ranging from mid-century modern to Cape Cod styles, which gives a unique depth and texture to the streets east of Whippoorwill.

High Ridge West Area

424 acres

Housing Information

2016 Average Family Size:

2.88

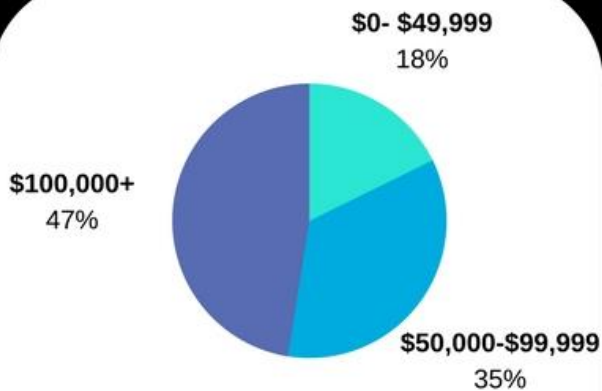


2016 Housing Unit Information



Median Home Value:
\$222,959

2016 Households by
Income



Median Household Income
\$95,530

TRANSPORTATION

Challenges



High Ridge West sub-area has significant challenges when it comes to a transportation network. The Oak Ridge municipal boundary is to the north and west and the southern limit is bordered by DOE property or severely limited due to topographic constraints. As such only two streets lend through vehicular access into the sub-area: Wisconsin which extends from the Oak Ridge Turnpike and West Outer extending from the east. This scenario may present difficulties for emergency personnel

with regard to response time. In addition, due to the lack of diverse land use patterns and limited access, all activities generally require vehicular trips.

Another aspect to the transportation system in High Ridge West is the design of Whippoorwill Drive. The road is generally straight with wide roadway lanes and large setbacks on adjacent properties. With the exception of limited vertical alignment issues Whippoorwill lends itself to high rates of speed. The lack of sidewalks or other encroachments contribute to excessive traffic speeds. Pedestrian connectivity is limited as are bicycle activities. Roadways were constructed with adequate width for vehicular movement but even wide shoulders for safe pedestrian or bicycle activity is minimal if present at all.

Assets

While the street pattern limits through vehicular traffic this scenario greatly adds to the quiet ambiance of the neighborhood. The tree lined streets are largely used by residents within the sub-area which is very appealing when perspective homeowners are looking for a quiet place to purchase.



Another significant asset of High Ridge West is the close proximity to major employment centers. This includes Horizon Center, Heritage Center, and Department of Energy facilities accessible from State Route #95. Vehicular access to these job sites does not require travel through the center of Oak Ridge and therefore congestion is limited with a resultant easy commute.

RECREATION

Challenges

There are no municipal recreational improvements in the High Ridge West Sub-area. The closest municipal recreation opportunity is Big Turtle Park, which offers playground, athletic and Dog Park facilities, and is located to the east on Oak Ridge Turnpike.

Assets



Located along the south boundary of the High Ridge West sub-area is the North Boundary Trail which is a whopping 12.7 miles long. Originally the trail was used as a patrol road along the boundary of the Department of Energy property. As such, the path is well established with a stone base and is wide with a high degree of visibility making it a perfect trail for hikers as well as bicycle enthusiast. As users move further west other less structured paths are available which are more typical hiking trails. This facility is widely known and extends to the west side of Horizon Center and serves as a regional asset with users from the Knoxville area as well as residents from adjacent counties and rural areas.

SCHOOLS

No schools are present in this area. School age children are served by Linden Elementary and Robertsville Middle School as well as Oak Ridge High School. The existing schools adequately serve the school age population.

SAFETY

Challenges

Once again, due to the presence of a singular land use type, safety in this area does not represent a significant challenge. The lack of sidewalks and space adjacent a typical suburban street does create concern for pedestrian and bicyclists; however, many of the side streets in High Ridge West are circular or dead-end streets and afford a neighborhood character that presents a safe haven especially for children who may use the street to visit friends or for recreational purposes.



Assets

Due to limited access into the area and overwhelming residential characteristics High Ridge West has the feel of a neighborhood with residents who are familiar with each other and typical daily habits and activities. As such neighbors have an “eye” on fellow resident’s family especially children and private property. This singular aspect makes this a great place to live and raise a family.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

High Ridge West appears to be a great place to live and raise a family. It is difficult to identify challenges in an area that is thriving, aesthetically attractive and retains fairly high property values. However the following improvements could have a positive impact:

- Clearly delineate City-owned property surrounding Westwood which serves as a buffer from potential nuisances/development in the unincorporated county
- The High Ridge West sub-area would be difficult to retro-fit with public sidewalks. However traffic calming measures would slow traffic down to ensure any pedestrian/bicycle activity was protected
- Continue to pursue future transfer of DOE property for future Westwood expansion
- Establish highly visible pedestrian crossing with attractive signage on Wisconsin Avenue for North Boundary Greenway
- Establish the desire for a Neighborhood Park within the sub-area boundary
- Any site design for the proposed airport at Heritage Center should take into account any offsite impact anticipated for the High Ridge West sub-area