Houston-Galveston Area Council

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DESIGNWORKSHOP

URBAN HOUSTON FRAMEWORK

Houston, Texas

A CASE STUDY FOR THE H-GAC REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

May 2013

Houston-Galveston Area Council

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DESIGNWORKSHOP

petersgroup consulting

WALTER P MOORE

CobbFendley

UCC

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Members:

Linda Porras-Pirtle - Planning Commissioner (SAC Chair)
Keiji Asakura - Planning Commissioner
Antoine Bryant - Planning Commissioner
Veronica Chapa-Jones - COH - Housing and Community Development
Marlene Gafrick - COH - Planning and Development
Mark Loethen - COH - Public Works and Engineering
Diane Schenke - Greater East End Management District
Ashby Johnson - H-GAC - Transportation & Air Quality
Jeff Taebel - H-GAC – Community & Environmental
Filo Castore - American Institute of Architects (AIA)
Ed Taravela - Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA)
Casey Morgan - Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA)
David Crossley - Houston Tomorrow
Bob Collins - Houston Real Estate Council (HREC)
Bill Huntsinger - Houston Real Estate Council (HREC)
Joshua Sanders - Houstonians for Responsible Growth (HRG)
Amanda Timm - Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Clint Harbert - Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)
Kim Slaughter - Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)
Shon Link - Urban Land Institute (ULI)
Irma Sanchez - Westchase District

URBAN HOUSTON FRAMEWORK

A Case Study for the H-GAC Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

May 2013

Client contact:
Kelly Porter, AICP
Regional Planner
Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)
3555 Timmons, Suite 120, Houston, TX 77027
kelly.porter@h-gac.com
713.993.4529

Amar Mohite
Administration Manager
City of Houston Planning & Development Department
611 Walker Street, 6th Floor, Houston, TX 77002
amar.mohite@houstontx.gov
713.837.7701

Consultant contact:
Rebecca Leonard, AICP, LEED-AP
Principal
Design Workshop, Inc.
800 Brazos Street, Suite 490, Austin, TX 78701
rleonard@designworkshop.com
512.499.0222

Executive Summary

Project Background

Throughout the nation, Texas and Houston-Galveston area, policy makers, planning organizations, community residents, real estate developers, transit proponents and housing interests are striving to prioritize and implement projects, policies, and programs that will lead to more vibrant, healthy and accessible communities.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) – in conjunction with the City of Houston, Harris County and 22 other regional partners – applied for and received a 3.75 million dollar regional planning grant administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Initiative, and funded in partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). To learn more about the greater Houston-Galveston Regional Plan for Sustainable Development as it relates to the 13-County Texas Gulf Coast Planning Region, please visit: **http://www.ourregion.org/**.

A portion of these funds are being used to test six case studies throughout the region, one of which is highlighted by this Urban Houston Framework.

As the fourth largest city in the US, and with an array of new residents moving to Houston every day, the development of a Framework which promotes a more sustainable and targeted approach to Houston's current development practices is vital to the greater success of the region as a whole. As such, the purpose of this Study is to develop a comprehensive Toolbox of policy and regulatory incentives that Houston can use to strategically encourage dense, sustainable Urban Centers in appropriate locations, while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.

The intent of the Urban Houston Framework is to help integrate land use and transportation planning by coordinating land development standards with new transit investments, and by providing affordable housing in dense areas around new transit lines.

The importance of creating a Framework now is that, despite strong growth, there are no comprehensive policies to encourage sustainable forms of development in Houston. Today, Houston is a polycentric city facing many challenges in promoting walkable, bikeable areas with a balance of housing and jobs.

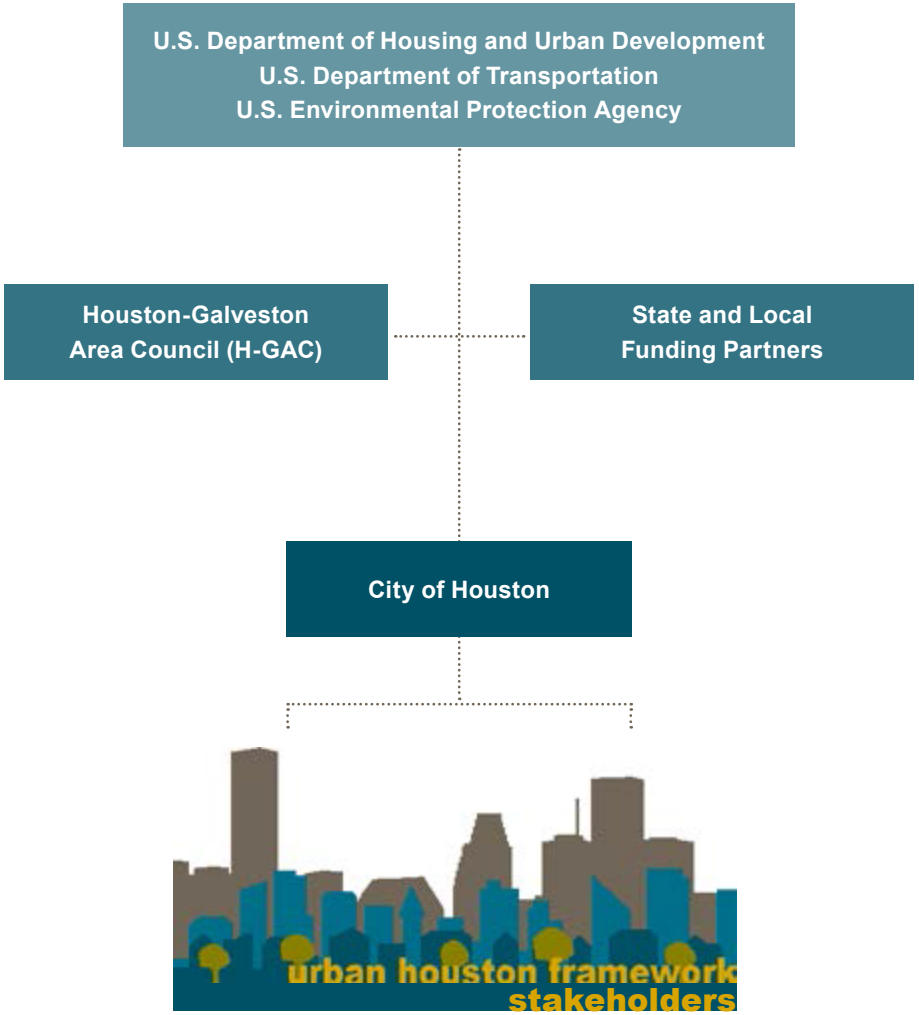


Figure 1: *Urban Houston Framework Partners*

Executive Summary

In response to the unique diversity within Houston's existing context, the Study works to evaluate what constitutes an Urban Center – or an area of live/work/play – where all individuals congregate providing for maximum use of existing city and regional resources including, but not limited to, enhanced pedestrian and transportation related infrastructure/services, coordinated utilities, drainage as well as other benefits detailed in this Study.

However, recognizing that "one size does not fit all" this Study works to identify the proper characteristics that comprise such Centers, as well as evaluate the tools required to help ensure such development practices. **Table 1: Key Findings** summarizes conclusions identified by stakeholders throughout the Urban Houston Framework.

The findings of the Urban Houston Framework are intended not only to increase housing, economic and transportation opportunities at the local level, but also demonstrate various ways in which sustainability Tools can be applied to address planning issues within a variety of geographic contexts. Additionally, the initiative aims for the implementation of strategic projects, policies and programs that move above and beyond the ongoing, higher-level efforts of the Houston-Galveston Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

Table 1: *Key Findings*

VISION	CATEGORIES OF CENTERS	GOAL	CHARACTERISTIC	MEASURABLE CHARACTERISTICS
Urban Centers are vibrant places in which people from all walks of life can live, work and play	**Large Centers Medium Centers Small Centers**	**Address local and regional housing needs**	Housing Character, Diversity	Residential Density (Dwelling Units)
				Housing Type
				Housing Affordability
				Housing Choice and Mobility (Fair Housing Factor)
				Housing Starts (New Construction)
				Mixed-Land Use (Housing and Localized Services)
		Contribute to high- quality infrastructure	Infill/ Redevelopment Potential	Vacant Land (%)
				Improvement to Land Value Ratio
				Significant Potential for Development/Redevelopment
		Encourage economic viability and diversity	Funding Mechanism, Management Entity	Management District
				Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)
			Land Use Diversity	Land Use Diversity Index
				Average Residential/Commercial/Office FAR
				Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio
				Area of Center in Acres
				Parks and Open Space
		Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity	High Employment, Population Density	Job Density
				Population Density
			Access to Amenities, Attractions, Destinations	Amenity Density
				Amenity Diversity
				National/Regional (vs. Local) Attractions/Destinations
		Promote sustainable, healthy design	Bike/Pedestrian Accessibility	Bikeway Density
				Trail Density
				Sidewalk Accessibility
		Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Access to Streets, Freeways	Intersection Density
				Street Density (Freeways, Thoroughfares, Streets)
				Access to Freeways
				Access to Thoroughfares
			High Quality Transit	Type of Transit
				Type of Transit Facilities
				Transit Frequency and Connectivity

Executive Summary

Framework Synopsis

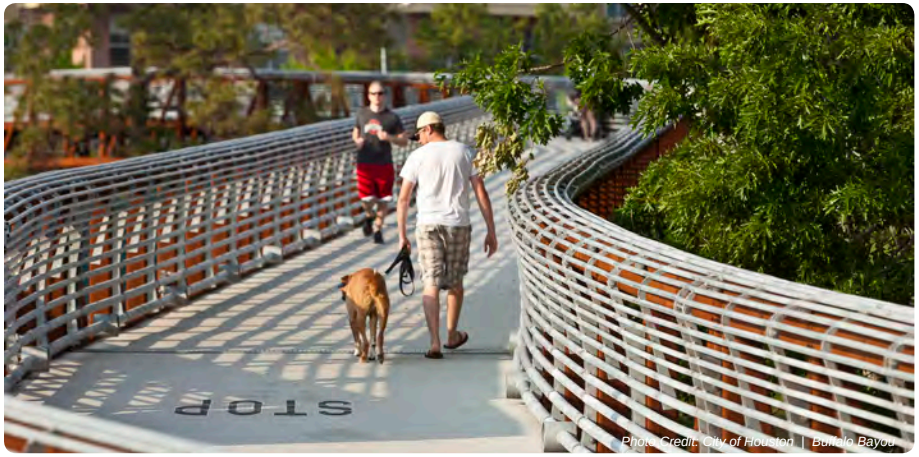
This Study captures the outcomes of the Urban Houston Framework Focus Group and interested public dialogues led by Design Workshop from October 2012 to April 2013 in which various issues and solutions involving urban sprawl, low density, lack of pedestrian safety, and inequitable access to housing, economic and transit opportunities were discussed.

The Framework is intended to assist stakeholders interested in creating vibrant live/work/play environments. Stakeholder expertise consisted of realtors, developers, policymakers, engineers, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, housing interests and special districts.

These groups were identified early in the process as the key stakeholders and were engaged in each step of the process. Phone calls, e-mail invitations and advertisements on various social media websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) were posted prior to events to encourage participation from these audiences. City departments and policy making agencies participated, creating a strong platform for on-going dialogue regarding Urban Centers.

This Urban Houston Framework Study is the first of many phases in developing a comprehensive set of regulatory incentives that the City of Houston, as well as its regional partners, can use to selectively encourage dense, sustainable neighborhoods in appropriate locations, while protecting the character of existing, stable residential communities.

The Framework is intended to assist stakeholders interested in creating vibrant live/work/play environments.



This Urban Houston Framework Study is the first of many phases in developing a comprehensive set of regulatory incentives

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Envisioning Urban Centers

Stakeholders developed a single, over arching Vision for all Urban Centers: To create vibrant Urban Centers in Houston where people from all walks of life can live/work/play. These Urban Centers will be in varying sizes and provide:

- Better connections between destinations in the city;
- Better coordination of land development standards with transportation investments and related regulations;
- Real housing choice for everyone;
- The elimination of food deserts where they currently exist;
- More walkable and bikeable areas with a balance of housing and jobs, and transportation choices.

In providing these elements, Urban Centers will decrease household transportation costs and the air pollution and traffic congestion associated with a very high percentage of single-passenger vehicle trips per day. This will lead to improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. It will also promote public health, which results in an enhanced quality of life for all Houstonians.

Large Centers have the highest housing and job densities accompanied with intense cultural and recreational amenities. People arrive via train, bus, bike, car or taxi and are able to walk to regional, national and international attractions. Tall, mixed-use buildings inhabit an interconnected street grid that encourages pedestrian-oriented retail and public transit usage.

Medium Centers have more housing, transit, jobs, amenities and activities than other areas and Small Centers. People arrive via bus, bike, car or taxi and walk various distances to citywide destinations. Mid- to high-rise buildings and transit enhances community stability by providing access to goods, services, schools and public spaces.

Small Centers cater to community needs and have low- to mid-rise buildings and a street grid that attracts small businesses. Although there is a mix of uses, they do not typically have high housing and job densities. Instead, they provide amenities, services and opportunities fitting for the neighborhoods they support and contribute to economic vitality by attracting entrepreneurship. Minimal transit exists in the form of local routes connecting to destination routes.

Photo Credit: City of Houston | Houston International Festival

***Large Centers** have tall, mixed-use buildings and an interconnected street grid that accommodates the highest densities of housing, jobs and amenities.*

Photo Credit: City of Houston | Sugar Land Town Center

***Medium Centers** have mid- to high-rise buildings and transit that enhances access to goods, services, schools and public spaces.*

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Rice Village

***Small Centers** have low- to mid-rise buildings and a street grid that attracts businesses and services. People spend a majority of their time in Small Centers that cater to every-day, community needs.*

Executive Summary

Because what gets measured gets done, both the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development and Urban Houston Framework Study identify Goals and develop benchmarks for measuring long- and short-term sustainability. The establishment of six Goals for achieving the Vision ensures all Centers epitomize best practices that lead to walkable, bikeable areas with a balance of jobs, housing and transportation.

Stakeholders were adamant that "one size does not fit all" in categorizing and designating Houston's Urban Centers. They differ by size, audience (who is drawn to them), mix of land uses, density, accessibility, and community character. Through the Urban Houston Framework process, the following Center descriptions were molded in an attempt to capture these subtle differences.

Designating Urban Centers

Stakeholder dialogue revealed a process by which Urban Centers could be designated and through which interested parties could voluntarily opt-in to the Framework. Three, alternative processes were discussed: a City Initiated Process, a Voluntary Area Initiated Process, and an Applicant Initiated Process.

A hybrid of the City and Voluntary Area Initiated Processes was preferred. City departments and other partners will identify areas meeting a series of Urban Center Criteria, such as job density, residential density, population density, number of transit facilities, etc. Areas meeting the Criteria would be assigned boundaries avoiding stable neighborhoods, yet capturing key redevelopment parcels in the area. A publicly accessible database would be available that interested applicants use to determine whether or not a land parcel is located within an Urban Center, and therefore eligible to have access to incentives included in the Toolbox.

Interested applicants provide the City with development plans that incorporate incentives outlined in the Toolbox crafted by stakeholders. The applicant then contributes to the implementation of more sustainable live/work/play environments near transit by building in accordance with Goals for Urban Centers.

Incentivizing Better Development

The first phase of the Urban Houston Framework Study tests and evaluates, in the most transparent manner possible, incentives that could work alongside existing and future regulations to promote scalable, transferable and sustainable infill development/redevelopment practices. These Tools range from Universal Improvement Tools to Developer Incentives.

Universal Improvement Tools are those that help to improve services within Urban Centers that benefit the area as a whole. These Tools require both municipal and other organizations to work together to improve services over time, such as transit quality and the encouragement of sustainable development practices.

Developer Incentives are available to encourage developers who meet Criteria within designated Urban Centers, to develop in a character that is more in keeping with the goals of Urban Houston Framework Study.

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Monitoring the Framework

Some performance measures will continue to increase regardless of Center size, location or function. These Characteristics are noted with "↑" in **Table 2: Future Performance Measures**. Examples of Characteristics that should increase into the foreseeable future are housing affordability, diversity and population/employment density, which should become more dense as Urban Centers continue to attract in-migrating populations from around the region.

The performance of a select group of Characteristics should decrease in the future. These are noted with "↓". For example, as Centers become more established, the percentage of Vacant Land would decrease.

Other metrics may increase or decrease, depending on context. Characteristics of this nature are noted with "↓↑". An example of a Characteristic for which optimum performance could be indicated by increasing or decreasing numbers is Housing Starts (New Construction). Some Centers may require retail or commercial construction in lieu of residential to meet demands of a growing population.

Finally, " ⊘ " is used for those Criteria performance targets are not applicable or measurable. Criteria of this nature, such as the Funding Mechanism/Management Entity Criteria, simply require a target of yes or no (i.e. yes - a Center has a Management District or TIRZ or no - it does not have a Management District or TIRZ).

As with any new policy effort, there should be a review time frame established for each Urban Center to assess whether or not Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives are the appropriate mechanisms for achieving performance targets and Goals identified by stakeholders. The time frame of review for each Urban Center may vary, but should generally occur every 2-3 years following designation. Similarly, Urban Center designation procedures need to be monitored semi-annually to ensure the overall Implementation Framework for Urban Centers remains accountable to stakeholders' Vision.

Table 2: *Future Performance Measures*

GOAL	MEASURABLE CHARACTERISTICS	FUTURE PERFORMANCE TARGET
Address local and regional housing needs	Residential Density (Dwelling Units)	↑
	Housing Type	↓↑
	Housing Affordability	↑
	Housing Choice and Mobility (Fair Housing Factor)	↑
	Housing Starts (New Construction)	↓↑
	Mixed-Land Use (Housing and Localized Services)	↑
Contribute to high- quality infrastructure	Vacant Land (%)	↓
	Improvement to Land Value Ratio	↓
	Significant Potential for Development/Redevelopment	↑
Encourage economic viability and diversity	Management District	⊘
	Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)	⊘
	Land Use Diversity Index	↑
	Average Residential/Commercial/Office FAR	↑
	Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio	↓
	Area of Center in Acres	↓↑
	Parks and Open Space	↑
Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity	Job Density	↑
	Population Density	↑
	Amenity Density	↑
	Amenity Diversity	↑
	National/Regional (vs Local) Attractions/Destinations	↑
Promote sustainable, healthy design	Bikeway Density	↑
	Trail Density	↑
	Sidewalk Accessibility	↑
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Intersection Density	↑
	Street Density (Freeways, Thoroughfares, Streets)	↑
	Access to Freeways	↓↑
	Access to Thoroughfares	↑
	Type of Transit	↓↑
	Type of Transit Facilities	↑
	Transit Frequency and Connectivity	↑

↑ *Increasing measurement indicates optimum performance*

↓ *Decreasing measurement indicates optimum performance*

↓↑ *Increasing or decreasing measurement may indicate optimum performance*

⊘ *Performance target not applicable*

Executive Summary

Organization of Study

Purpose highlights the key findings of stakeholder engagement exercises involving approximately 13,818 participants from a variety of backgrounds and interests. In the **Existing Conditions Assessment** chapter, various challenges and opportunities to more dense, efficient building practices are explored. A Peer Review of how other regions in the nation are approaching similar regional planning issues using Urban Centers highlights best practices and insights from other parts of Texas and the country.

Characteristics of regionally sustainable live/work/play environments are discussed in the **Urban Center Pattern Book** chapter that creates a concise snapshot of how ideal Urban Centers are physically designed.

Multiple ways in which H-GAC and City of Houston could move towards the creation of vibrant, dense Urban Centers are explored in the **Urban Center Recommendations** chapter. This chapter discusses the Process and Criteria used to define an Urban Center. It also defines Universal Improvement Tools that will generally elevate the quality of Urban Centers as well as direct Developer Incentives that could be used in Urban Centers.

Although findings for Urban Houston Framework Study recommendations were largely driven by public and stakeholder input, this Study is also grounded in the realities of technical, market and political feasibility considerations. The final chapter of this Study, **Urban Center Implementation**, provides a schedule for achieving policy, project, and program aims as well as identifies important roles, responsibilities, costs and ongoing monitoring techniques for gauging the performance of urban environments in Houston into the future.

Towards the Future

Establishing accurate, reliable thresholds for measuring the performance of live/work/play environments will be important to the overall sustainability of the Urban Houston Framework. Similarly, monitoring thresholds for emergent Centers may differ from those of established Centers and from those of Centers transitioning from one size to the next.

While more research is required to assess exact targets for ongoing performance of Urban Centers (and the Characteristics thereof) today, it is crucial that the refinement of Criteria, Tools, Expectations and Processes ensue with the ultimate goals of monitoring implementation in mind.

Although additional phases of the Urban Houston Framework will need to focus on thresholds for measuring Urban Center Characteristics, the analysis and stakeholder dialogue included in this Study provided an understanding of general performance targets for Criteria in the future.

It is recognized that this Study will not lead immediately to implementation of improvements and new developer incentives for Urban Centers, but it does fulfill several Critical Success Factors defined early in the process such as:

1. Address local and regional housing needs;
2. Contribute to high-quality infrastructure;
3. Encourage economic viability and diversity;
4. Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity;
5. Promote sustainable, healthy design; and
6. Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.

Nevertheless, dialogue that has arisen from the Urban Houston Framework Study is essential to crafting a program that diverse stakeholders can rally around. The terminology, approach and outcomes resulting from this dialogue will form the foundation for continued collaboration among stakeholders, making the recommendations in this Study more realistic and supportable in the years to come.

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PURPOSE

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Chapter Introduction

Throughout the nation, Texas and the Houston-Galveston area, policy makers, planning organizations, community residents, real estate developers, transit proponents and housing interests are striving to prioritize and implement projects, policies and programs that will lead to more vibrant, healthy and accessible communities.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) - in conjunction with the City of Houston, Harris County and 22 other regional partners - applied for and received a 3.75 million dollar regional planning grant administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Initiative, and funded in partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). A portion of these funds are being used to test six case studies throughout the region, one of which is the Urban Houston Framework.

To learn more about the greater Houston-Galveston Regional Plan for Sustainable Development as it relates to the 13-County Texas Gulf Coast Planning Region, please visit: **http://www.ourregion.org/**.

As the fourth largest city in the US, and with an array of new residents moving to Houston each day, the development of a Framework which promotes a more sustainable and targeted approach to Houston's current development practices is vital to the greater success of the region as a whole.

Focus on the fact that Houston is an International region. Its economic relationships are primarily global. Its population is the most diverse in the world.

Curtis D
Interactive Blog Participant
www.urbanhoustonframework.com

Purpose

The purpose of the Urban Houston Framework Study is to develop a comprehensive Toolbox of policy and regulatory incentives the City can use to strategically encourage dense, sustainable neighborhoods in appropriate locations, while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods. The Urban Houston Framework will integrate land use and transportation planning to promote consistent, affordable and sustainable development strategies throughout the city - particularly in Urban Centers.

The stakeholder engagement was designed to heighten knowledge of and commitment to a better urban form. The dialogue started during this seven-month Study will form the foundation for future agreement on Criteria, Process, Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that help to implement dense, vibrant Urban Centers that achieve six important livability principles established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.[1]

Housing and Urban Development Livability Principles

1. Decrease household transportation costs, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.
2. Promote equitable, affordable and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races.
3. Enhance the City of Houston's economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs of workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
4. Support existing communities through transit-oriented, mixed-use development, land recycling and community revitalization.
5. Coordinate policies to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods by enhancing unique characteristics and investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods.

1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). Sustainable Housing Communities Six Livability Principles. (S. Donovan, Producer) Retrieved January 2012, from HUD.gov: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/Six_Livability_Principles

Why this Framework is Needed

Over the last few decades, development patterns in Houston have generally resulted in low-density development (3,400 people per square mile), sprawl, and a lack of continuous pedestrian-and bike-friendly environments. Although the city has made strides to improve these practices through tighter regulations of parking, setbacks, park dedication and landscaping these regulations form a "one-size fits all" approach to planning and development that lacks flexibility and has produced mixed results.

The investigation of a new Framework that guides the development of urban environments, however, is timely for the City of Houston, as certain trends such as shifting demographics, economic classes, economic drivers and mobility concerns are creating new challenges and intensifying the need for land- and transportation- based solutions to issues arising from increased population growth and diversification.

In the face of no formal zoning code, a comprehensive Framework of policies and regulatory incentives gives the city the tools it needs to guide development in a way that is both context-sensitive and sustainable.

Unlike previous "one-size fits all" approaches to planning and development, the Urban Houston Framework Study recognizes the importance of appropriately-scaled development. Recommendations for revitalizing existing neighborhoods through densification and increased transportation and housing options are specifically tailored to the size and function of each Urban Center and designed specifically to preserve the unique character of neighborhoods.

While the recommendations may differ slightly depending on the appropriate scale of development, the guiding principles are the same. Livable places, no matter what their size, improve the quality of life for all residents by increasing the number of safe, reliable and economical transportation choices, providing affordable housing options and improving access to employment opportunities and diverse services.

Development Trends

Development patterns in Houston to date have been characterized by an outward expansion that, in addition to consuming vast amounts of previously undeveloped land, is requiring huge investments in water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure at the expense of existing neighborhoods. At the current rate of development, 81.4 percent of the land within the City of Houston will be developed by 2040 (compared to 62.7 percent of the land in 2006).[1]

This outward expansion of development is characterized by low-density, auto-centric neighborhoods that have failed to provide high quality and safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. A lack of comprehensive policies that encourage and/or incentivize a more sustainable urban form is part of the problem. While the City of Houston has adopted some of the same regulations found in zoned cities, these policies are even more critical to promoting dense, walkable, bikeable areas with a balance of housing - including affordable housing - and jobs, in a polycentric environment with no formal zoning code.

Adopting a comprehensive Framework that focuses on accommodating future growth by enhancing the quality of life in existing neighborhoods slows the consumption of undeveloped land in Houston and lowers infrastructure costs to the city.

If an Urban Houston Framework is not implemented to refocus investments into existing neighborhoods, these areas may experience a decline as infrastructure ages and development patterns continue to attract more residents and revenue to the periphery of the city. Accommodating growth in this manner will be at a much greater cost to the city, as infrastructure will continually have to be expanded to keep pace with growth.

1 City of Houston. (2012). Case Study Overview. Houston, Texas.

Why this Framework is Needed

Shifting Demographics

Houston has experienced a tremendous population boom since the 1990s - growing from 1.6 million to 2.1 million people, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The 13-county Texas Gulf Coast Planning Region is home to more than 6 million people (or nearly a quarter of Texas' total population) and is expected to grow by 3.7 million residents and more than 2 million jobs by the year 2040.[2]

In 2012, the share of the region's residents who are people of color grew to 60 percent. Latinos (predominantly Mexican-Americans) and Asian populations have comprised a large portion of the region's total population over the last decade, primarily due to immigration - making Houston the eighth most diverse region in the nation. By 2040, H-GAC predicts 76 percent of Houston's total population will be people of color.

Changes in the distribution and/or trends related to such factors as gender, age, socioeconomic status and household size and composition create new and unique demands on a city. Immigrant populations, for example, often rely more heavily on walking, bicycling and public transportation, increasing the need for these types of investments in certain areas of the city. It is important that the City of Houston take into account changing demographics in all transportation and land use planning decisions to ensure investments in neighborhoods are equitable and increase the quality of life for all of Houston's residents.

In his March 2013 article, titled Class-Divided Cities: Houston Edition, Richard Florida[3] uses U.S. Census data to explore phenomena of class divisions in the nation's largest cities. The author suggests that Houston's class divides are sharp and well defined. Today, these class divides are reflected in the quality of infrastructure and the provision of basic services in neighborhoods across Houston.

The Creative Class, defined as working professionals employed in science, engineering, health care, business and education, typically clusters in and around Houston's Central Business District, the upscale Montrose neighborhood, Rice University, West University Place, and neighborhoods adjacent to the Texas Medical Center.

Areas inhabited by the Creative Class are characterized by eclectic services such as art galleries and upscale restaurants, and housing typologies that range from restored historic homes to modern lofts. In contrast with the services and building typologies experienced by the Creative Class, the Service Class populations surrounding these professional clusters have occurred southwest of Loop 610. These predominantly Latino communities contend with high crime[4] in landscapes characterized by aging residential and commercial infrastructure. Historic Ward communities, in particular, have been negatively affected by shifting demographics and the transformation of existing structures.

A Framework for development that encourages equitable investments in existing communities and takes into account the needs of different populations in all land use and transportation planning decisions will help to ensure all neighborhoods become vibrant centers for activity and economic development. If development patterns continue to expand outwards, class disparities will likely increase as residential and commercial infrastructure continues to deteriorate in these neighborhoods.

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

2 Houston-Galveston Area Council. (2012, December). Our Region Interim Existing Conditions Report. Retrieved from Houston-Galveston Regional Plan for Sustainable Development: http://www.ourregion.org/ExistingConditionsReport.html

3 Florida, R. (2013, March 12). Class-Divided Cities: Houston Edition. Retrieved March 2013, from The Atlantic Cities Place Matters: http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2013/03/class-divided-cities-houston-edition/4850/

4 Florida, R. (2013, March 12). Class-Divided Cities: Houston Edition. Retrieved March 2013, from The Atlantic Cities Place Matters: http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2013/03/class-divided-cities-houston-edition/4850/

Why this Framework is Needed

Education

Houston neighborhoods are characterized by some of the region's lowest percentages of high school graduates (adults without a high school degree); indicating gaps in equitable access to quality educational facilities.[5] The region's population (age 25 and older) has a college completion rate of 27.9 percent which is equivalent to the national average. Houston is behind peer cities such as Atlanta (34.1 percent) and Dallas (30.0 percent). In addition, only 33.6 percent of the region's age 25+ population has at least an associate degree, lower than many of its peer regions (e.g., Atlanta 40.5 percent, Dallas 36.3 percent, and Denver 46.0 percent).

A Framework for better urbanism must consider the importance of these educational trends. As stated in the book, Comeback Cities, "[Community development groups] could fix housing, revive shopping areas, raise the level of public services, even reduce crime. But the schools - probably the biggest factor in families' decision about whether to remain or flee - were simply beyond the realm of the organized community".[6]

Historically, families make decision on where to live based on accessibility to high quality education. Urban Centers should acknowledge this trend and work to accommodate and promote both diverse and high quality educational opportunities near or within Center Boundaries. Where education is not directly provided, ample infrastructure and/or multimodal transportation alternative should be considered.

5 Houston-Galveston Area Council. (2012, December). Our Region Interim Existing Conditions Report. Retrieved from Houston-Galveston Regional Plan for Sustainable Development: http://www.ourregion.org/ExistingConditionsReport.html

6 Grogan, Paul and Tom Procio. Comeback Cities: Blueprint for Urban Neighborhood Revival. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000.

Economic Drivers

Houston has a booming economy, and is one of the nation's largest areas of job growth. Houston added 118,700 net jobs in 2012, and recouped all of the jobs lost during the 2008 recession by the fall of 2011. The unemployment rate stood at 6.3 percent in February 2013, which is almost 2 points below the nation's rate of 8.1 percent.[7]

The sectors experiencing the most job growth include:

- Architectural and engineering;
- Government;
- Manufacturing;
- Mining and logging;
- Leisure and hospitality; and
- Financial activities sectors.

Sectors experiencing a decline include:

- Retail trade;
- Health care and social assistance sectors.

Job growth from 2005 - 2010 tended to occur in Major Activity Centers (MAC), as currently defined by Chapter 42.[8] According to analysis conducted by the City of Houston Planning and Development Department, the city added 124,425 jobs between 2005 - 2010, 59.6 percent of which were located in MACs. The Central Business District (20 percent), the Medical Center (15 percent) and Memorial City (15 percent) were the top three MACs for job growth.[9]

Adopting policies that encourage the development of higher density housing - including affordable housing - within these and other Urban Centers and investing in appropriately-scaled transportation choices - such as express bus, streetcar, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and light rail - helps to reduce household transportation costs and air pollution by shortening commute times and encouraging density levels that support public transit. In the absence of a policy Framework, the quality of life of Houston residents will continue to be eroded by high transportation costs and long commute times.

7 Greater Houston Partnership (2013, April), The Economy at a Glance - Houston, http://www.houston.org/pdf/research/eag.pdf

8 City of Houston Code of Ordinances, Ch. 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting, http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10123

9 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, http://lehd.ces.census.gov

Why this Framework is Needed

Mobility Challenges

Despite the fact that most of Houston's employment growth is within the city limits, more than 870,000 new residents are expected to move to areas located outside the city limits.[10] Simultaneously, the city as a whole is expected to grow by over half a million residents. The implications for travel mean longer commute times and increases in automobile-generated air pollution.

Traffic is already ranked as a top concern among Houston residents and the city's projected population growth will only present further challenges in transportation and mobility in coming years.[11] Expanding existing roadways and constructing new streets does not offer a sustainable, long-term solution to congestion.

Improving mobility both within the city and into the city from outlying areas will elevate the quality of life for Houston residents by decreasing transportation costs and travel times.

A policy Framework that builds upon the important relationship between transportation, land use and urban form to expand transportation choices and increase system efficiency offers a more sustainable solution to congestion relief at a lower cost to taxpayers.

If the city does not adopt policies that better link land use and transportation and utilize urban form to encourage non-automobile forms of transportation, congestion will continue to be a serious problem, requiring significant investments in new roadways to keep pace with growth.

Houston cannot be seen as green as long as its citizens drive more than in any other metro region, emit more carbon than anywhere else, use more gasoline than anywhere else, and so on. Until public policies change to allow and encourage walkable urbanism, Houston will never be truly green.

David C1
Interactive Blog Participant
www.urbanhoustonframework.com

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Expanding existing roadways and constructing new streets does not offer a sustainable, long-term solution to congestion

10 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, http://lehd.ces.census.gov

11 City of Houston (2009), City Mobility - Phase I: Executive Summary http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/_cmp/resources/CMP_ExecutiveSummary.pdf)

What this Framework Hopes to Achieve

Over the course of the last seven months, the Framework's Vision, Goals and Approach were developed, discussed and agreed upon with the participating stakeholders and the interested public. It was determined early on that there should not be a "one size fits all" approach to Urban Centers in Houston as their Characteristics are very diverse. In addition, the recommendations should be flexible enough to fit the political and economic conditions today and in the future. See *Appendix A* for a complete recap of the input from the stakeholder engagement process.

Vision

Stakeholders agreed upon a Vision for Urban Centers, stated as "Urban Centers are vibrant places in which people from all walks of life can live, work and play". The Urban Houston Framework can be used by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, City of Houston, and other local and regional planning partners can use to selectively encourage dense, sustainable development in appropriate locations while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.

This Study will help integrate land uses with transportation planning by coordinating development standards with financial investments while considering barriers to development (especially in densely populated areas, along transit corridors and along corridors where urban/suburban building types merge). It also considers existing and potential connections between Urban Centers within the region, and identifies Tools for better connecting these Centers in the future.

Goals

The following goals and objectives were established by stakeholders and interested citizenry. All Urban Centers should, at a minimum, aim to achieve the following:

1. Address local and regional housing needs;
2. Contribute to high-quality infrastructure;
3. Encourage economic viability and diversity;
4. Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity;
5. Promote sustainable, healthy design; and
6. Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.

These goals are based on the following six livability principles established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development[1] which include: 1) provide more transportation choices; 2) promote equitable, affordable housing; 3) enhance economic competitiveness; 4) support existing communities; 5) coordinate policies and leverage investment and 6) value communities and neighborhoods.

1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). Sustainable Housing Communities Six Livability Principles. (S. Donovan, Producer) Retrieved January 2012, from HUD.gov: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/Six_Livability_Principles

Approach

To meet these goals, the Consultant Team collaborated with the Houston-Galveston Area Council and City of Houston during the early phases of the Study to identify a series of important Goals for the project that encompass key areas of sustainability such as environment, economics and community. A transparent process that is accountable to the Goals was envisioned from the start. A variety of stakeholders were engaged through a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and Focus Groups consisting of the interested public as well as invited realtors and developers, policymakers and agencies, engineers, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, housing interests and special districts.

Using this approach, the Urban Houston Framework helps to provide a foundation for creating true housing choice throughout the city by promoting walkable, bikeable areas serviced by safe, reliable and economical transportation options that decrease household costs, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gases and contribute to better environments and public health. Results from the testing and evaluation of the Framework Criteria, as applied to three case studies, helps identify strategies that can later be applied to other locations long after the Study's completion.

Timeline

Oct 2012

Project Kickoff
H-GAC, the City of Houston and the Consultant Team meet to begin efforts and form a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to help oversee and guide the Urban Houston Framework Study.

SAC Kickoff
H-GAC, the City of Houston and the Consultant Team meet with the SAC to discuss objectives and scheduling for the Urban Houston Framework Study.

Nov 2012

SAC Meeting
The SAC develops project strategies and refines a project approach based on Houston-specific development trends.

Peer Review
The Consultant Team researches Urban Center projects, policies, programs and best practices from around the globe.

Launch of MindMixer Online Blog Website
An online blog website is launched to spur dialogue and awareness about the Urban Houston Framework initiative.

Winter 2013

Workshop 1
A community-wide dialogue with the interested public is initiated to introduce the Urban Houston Framework project and define challenges and Characteristics associated with Urban Centers.

SAC Meeting
The SAC meets to review findings from the Values Workshop and conclusions from the Consultant Team's peer review. The SAC is introduced to the Criteria/ Expectation/Tool/ Process alternatives being developed by the Consultant Team.

Online Poll 1
An online survey is launched to gather citywide feedback about desirable Urban Center Characteristics and challenges to achieving desired Characteristics.

March 2013

Workshop 2
The community-wide dialogue continues with the interested public helping to refine the Characteristics/Criteria/ Expectation/Tool/ Process alternatives identified during the Values Workshop.

Keypad Polling
An interactive voting system during the Vision Workshop helps to narrow down and prioritize various Framework alternatives.

SAC Meeting
The SAC conducts a review of Vision Workshop findings, visits real-life Urban Houston Framework Pilot Projects and discusses the findings of peer reviews to date.

April 2013

Workshop 3
The interested public are introduced to potential development Tools and the findings from the Urban Houston Framework Pilot Projects.

Online Poll 2
An online survey gathers additional citywide feedback regarding Tools for successfully implementing Urban Centers.

SAC Meeting
The SAC discusses Study findings to date and begins to finalize the Characteristics/ Criteria/Expectation/ Tool/Process recommendations.

Interim Report
An interim report draft documenting the process and findings of the Urban Houston Framework Study is drafted.

May 2013

SAC Meeting
The SAC gathers to discuss Study conclusions and Interim Report revisions to be incorporated into the final report for the Urban Houston Framework Study.

Final Report
The final report documenting conclusions from the Urban Houston Framework Study is published.

Implementation
The implementation of Urban Center policy and program recommendations moves forward.

Figure 2: *Urban Houston Framework Timeline*

Stakeholder Engagement

The Framework's Platform for Development - Stakeholder Engagement

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee was formed from a spectrum of environmental, development, community and transportation interests. The SAC provided feedback throughout the entire project to ensure transparency and to encourage friends, relatives and colleagues in their communities to participate in Urban Houston Framework events.

Focus groups participating in Urban Houston Framework meeting events consisted of the interested public as well as invited realtors and developers, policymakers and agencies, engineers, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, housing interests and special districts. Approximately 13,818 stakeholders participated in the Urban Houston Framework Study (as seen below in **Table 3: Stakeholders Engaged**).

Table 3: *Stakeholders Engaged*

OUTREACH CATEGORY	PARTICIPANTS
Online Poll 1	5,838
Online Poll 2	1,605
Interactive Blog	6,165
Workshop 1	93
Workshop 2	53
Workshop 3	64
Total Participants	**13,818**

Prior to events, phone calls and e-mail invitations were sent and advertisements on various social media websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) were posted. The project also included the following:

- A publicly accessible page for downloading project materials on the City of Houston's website;
- An interactive blog to inspire new ideas and spur dialogue between meeting events;
- A series of online polls for gathering citywide feedback on Urban Centers; and
- A dedicated e-mail address through which people could submit additional comments, questions or feedback.

Feedback received from public outreach efforts helped define the relative characteristics of Urban Centers as they relate to size and location. Key findings are summarized throughout this Study. Details of stakeholder engagement can be found in *Appendix A*.

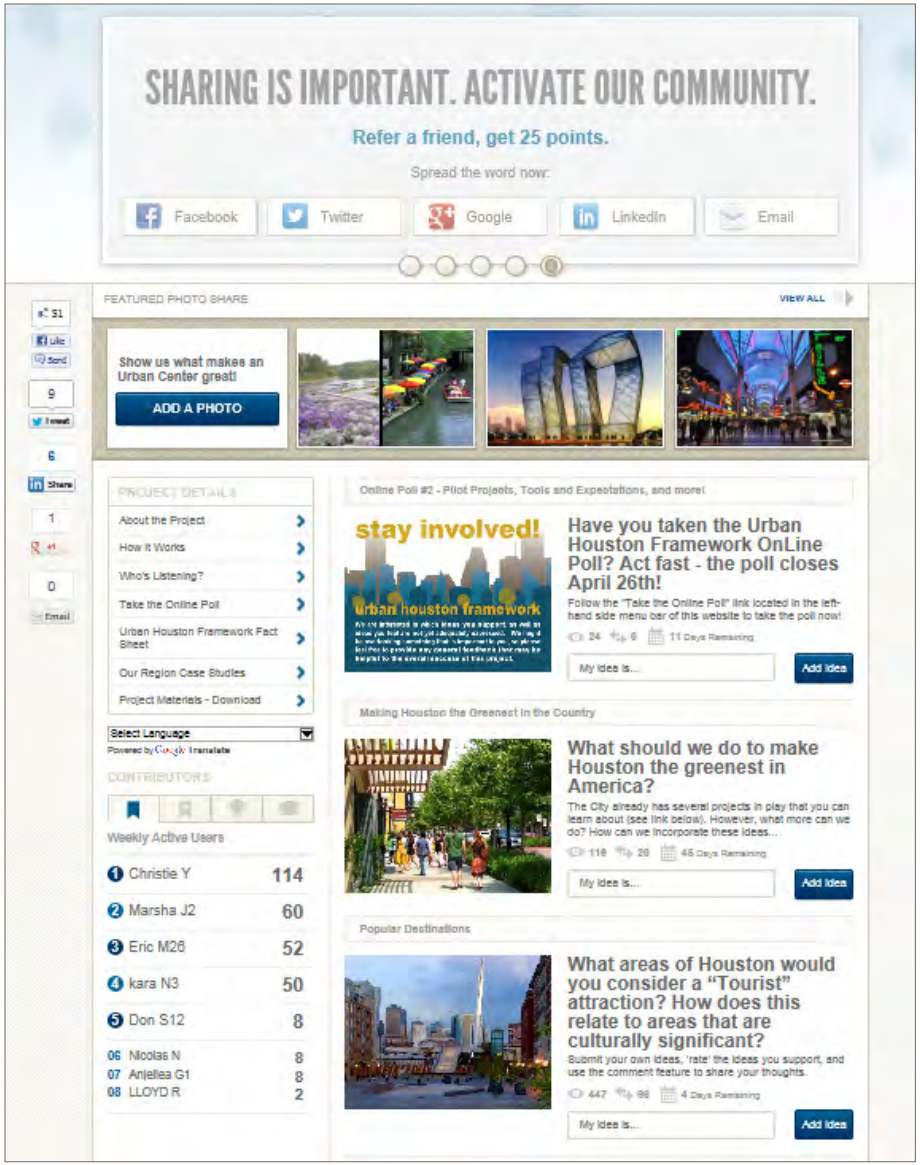

Figure 3: *Urban Houston Framework Interactive Blog Website*

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2

EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Chapter Introduction

Stakeholders and Focus Groups worked to determine the definition of Goals and their associated Criteria (seen in **Table 4: Example Framework for Measuring Characteristics of Urban Centers**). Once established, the next step was to gain an understanding of the baseline, or existing conditions, in Houston for each. For the purposes of this Report, an *Existing Conditions Assessment* is an exercise in gaining knowledge about various Characteristics of built environments that could be used to designate Urban Centers throughout the city.

The intent of conducting an *Existing Conditions Assessment* for this Study was to identify various challenges and opportunities that arose for each Goal and to answer the following questions:

- What are the conditions of places that might be existing Urban Centers today?
- How might these existing conditions and Characteristics affect the achievement of Urban Center goals identified by stakeholders?
- Is there a best practice or optimum threshold for measuring the performance and changing conditions of Urban Centers (both now and in the future)?

To begin to answer these questions, each goal was analyzed by mapping various Geographic Information System (GIS) datasets of demographic, housing, economic, environment, transportation and other Urban Center characteristics. These datasets were then overlaid to assess general locations, characteristics and existing conditions of Urban Centers throughout Houston in relation to the six goals for Urban Centers identified by stakeholders (as seen in **Table 4: Example Framework for Measuring Characteristics of Urban Centers**).

Sources for the analysis include GIS data, previously completed reports/ case studies, peer reviews of scholarly articles and dialogue with agencies and experts involved in development or development regulation in Houston. Examples of sources used include datasets from the H-GAC, U.S. 2010 Census, City of Houston, METRO, Harris County Flood Control District, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

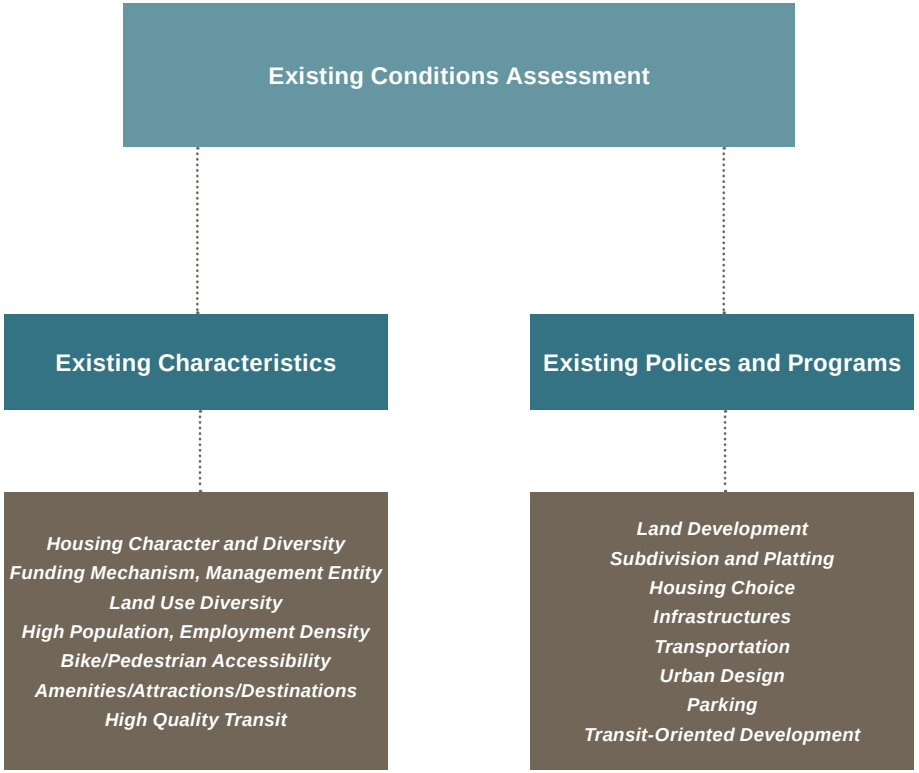


Figure 4: *Existing Conditions Assessment Framework*

Towards a Preferred Framework

By integrating datasets with stakeholder feedback and knowledge of on-the-ground conditions, the Urban Houston Framework *Existing Conditions Assessment* explores development patterns occurring within the city and identifies where potential challenges and opportunities to achieving Urban Centers exist. This helps to ensure that project, program and policy recommendations will work toward meeting the goals of this Study.

Table 4: Example Framework for Measuring Characteristics of Urban Centers shows how, through comparing stakeholder Goals with suggested Criteria, a Preferred Framework for measuring characteristics of Urban Centers began to emerge. The following pages in this chapter explore various categories within this table to discuss the potential challenges and opportunities associated with existing conditions in Houston.

Throughout future phases of the Urban Houston Framework, these findings will serve as a starting point (or benchmark) for establishing more precise, measurable criteria for implementing Urban Centers. The *Existing Conditions Assessment* also informs various recommendations discussed throughout the subsequent chapters of this Study.

Table 4: *Example Framework for Measuring Characteristics of Urban Centers*

GOAL	CHARACTERISTIC	EXAMPLES OF MEASURING CHARACTERISTICS
Address local and regional housing needs	Housing Character and Diversity	Residential Density (Dwelling Units)
		Housing Type
		Housing Affordability/Housing Cost
		Housing Choice and Mobility (Fair Housing Factor)
		Housing Starts (New Construction)
		Mixed-Land Use (Housing and Localized Services)
Contribute to high-quality infrastructure	Infill/ Redevelopment Potential	Vacant Land (%)
		Improvement to Land Value Ratio
		Significant Potential for Development/Redevelopment
Encourage economic viability and diversity	Funding Mechanism, Management Entity	Management District
		TIRZ
	Land Use Diversity	Land Use Diversity Index
		Average Residential/Commercial/Office FAR
		Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio
		Area of Center in Acres
		Parks and Open Space
Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity	High Employment, Population Density	Job Density
		Population Density
	Access to Amenities, Attractions/Destinations	Amenity Density
		Amenity Diversity
		National/Regional (vs. Local) Attractions/Destinations
Promote sustainable, healthy design	Bike/Pedestrian Accessibility	Bikeway Density
		Trail Density
		Sidewalk Accessibility
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Access to Streets & Freeways	Intersection Density
		Street Density (Freeways, Thoroughfares, Streets)
		Access to Freeways
		Access to Thoroughfares
	High Quality Transit	Type of Transit
		Type of Transit Facilities
		Transit Frequency and Connectivity

Housing Character and Diversity

Residential Density

Target residential densities for Centers would vary depending on the size of the Urban Center. Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development recommend the following residential densities for Centers.[1]

Table 5: *Example Centers for Comparison*

CENTER CLASSIFICATION	RESIDENTS PER ACRE
Local Centers of economic/ community activity	20 - 75
Suburban Centers having significant economic/cultural activity with regional-scale destinations	35 - 100
Urban Centers having significant economic/cultural activity with regional-scale destinations	50 - 150
Regional Centers of economic/cultural activity	75 - 300

Houston's current average residential density is 2.2 residents/acre. 24.8 percent of all housing units are located within Loop 610 at a residential density of 3.7 residents/acre. Comparatively, three quarters (75.2 percent) of all housing in Houston is located outside of Loop 610, at a significantly lower residential density of 1.9 residents/acre.

Only 37 percent of the City has a population density higher than the citywide average of 2.2 residents/acre. Similar to Houston's overall population density (people/acre), the majority of higher density residential areas are found inside of Loop 610 and in the western portions of the City (as seen in **Figure 5: Residential Density**).

The majority of Houston (81 percent) has less than 3.7 residences/acre - which is significantly less than density levels recommended by the Center for Transit-Oriented Development for any Center type.

Another method of measuring whether a place is addressing local and regional housing needs is to look at "housing starts", or the number of new houses being built within the city. The real estate sector is often one of the first sectors impacted by impending economic instability, making housing starts a highly reliable economic indicator.

As a result of the recent economic recession, new home construction has been extremely limited in Houston; comprising only 1.15 percent of all construction completed in 2012.[2] Other land uses such as commercial, retail and office comprised the majority of development and redevelopment projects completed.

Challenges

As the economy emerges from recession, Urban Centers will help meet the challenge of concentrating residential and commercial projects in areas having good infrastructure capacity. This will help to reduce the amount of greenfield development projects (i.e. the development of untouched, raw land resources) further utilizing the City's existing infrastructure and helping promote infill and redevelopment practices where development already exists.

Successfully implementing Urban Centers will require a commitment to achieving higher residential densities near transit services that support a live/work/play environment, walkable urban form and increased employment opportunities.

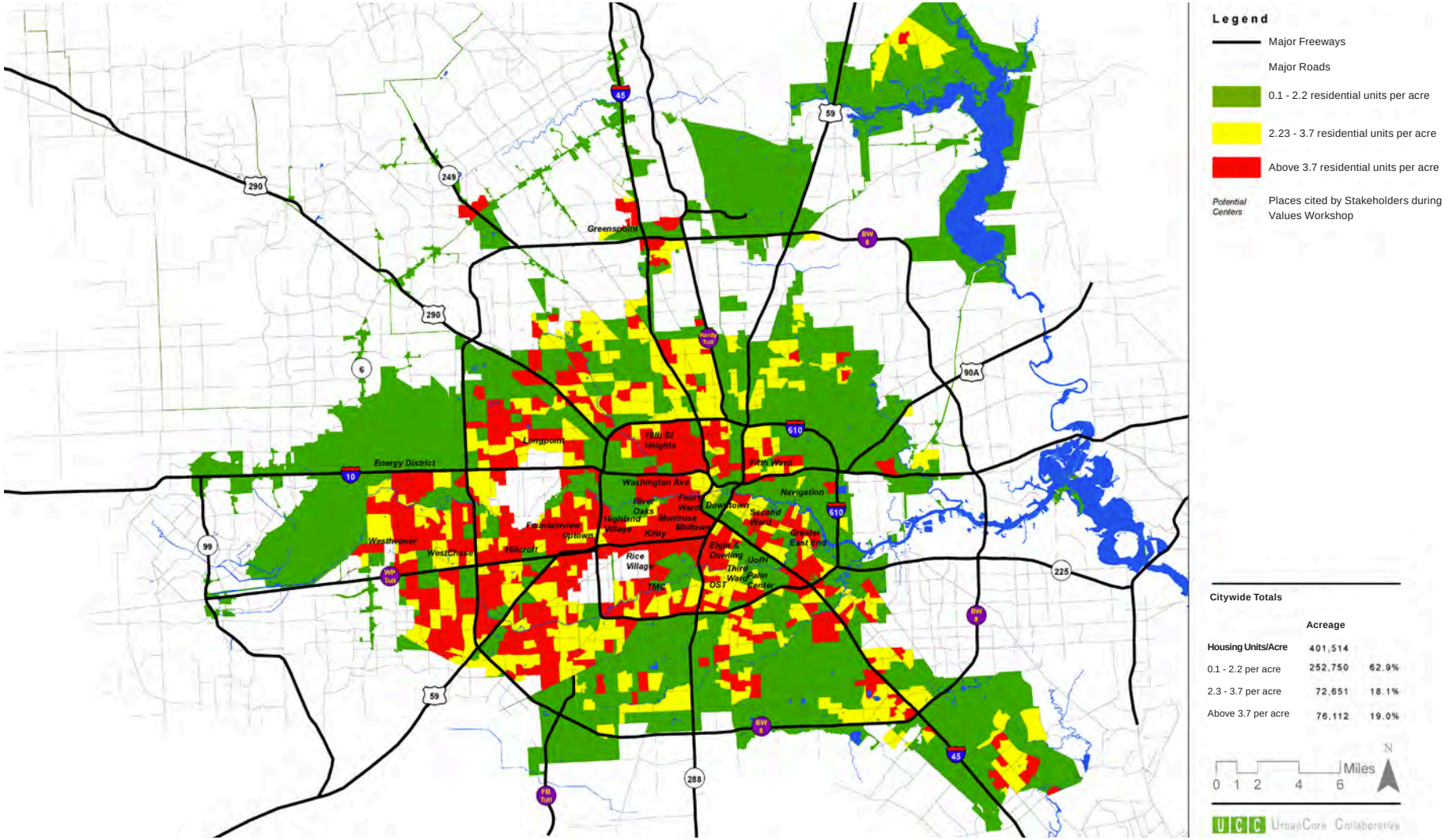
Opportunities

Despite the fact that 40 percent of Houston jobs are located inside Loop 610, this area accounts for only 24.8 percent of all housing units. This means that many employees commute from outside of Loop 610, contributing to traffic congestion, lengthy commute times, and tremendous amounts of air pollution. Much of the area inside Loop 610 has greater than 3.7 residences/acre, therefore focusing job growth inside Loop 610 may be beneficial - as this is where high density residential tends to locate. There are also opportunities to increase residences/acre within or in close proximity to Loop 610 using infill, mixed-use, multi-family, and small lot single-family development approaches. Infill can help neighborhoods develop into communities in which people from all walks of life can live/work/play.

1 Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development. (N.d.). STATION AREA PLANNING: How to Make Great Transit-Oriented Places. Retrieved 2013, from Reconnecting America: People Places Possibility: http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/tod202.pdf

2 City of Houston Planning and Development Department. (2012, February). Geographic Information System (GIS) Data. (S. Lee, Ed.) Houston, Texas.

Figure 5: *Residential Density*
Data sources: City of Houston; 2010 U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data



Housing Character and Diversity

Housing Type

Single-family housing is a free-standing building or duplex while multi-family residential housing includes apartments, triplexes and quadriplexes.[1] Houston has a fairly evenly split between single-family housing and multi-family housing (52 percent and 48 percent, respectively) both inside and outside Loop 610. However, **Figure 6: Housing Type** suggests this fairly even split is misleading as single-family housing accounts for an astonishing 96 percent of the total land area in Houston due to its lower residential density (i.e. a house on a substantially bigger piece of land).[2]

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

New single-family residential development within the City of Houston's Corporate City Limits should strive for higher densities (residences per acre) such as the community depicted above.

Challenges

A high percentage of affordable, residential units within Houston's Corporate City Limits priced below $130,000 are single-family (i.e. a free-standing building or duplex) while only 33.6 percent of housing below $130,000 are multi-family (such as condominiums, apartments or quadriplexes). This poses a challenge in that as Urban Centers densify in population and jobs, there may continue to be a lack of affordable, multi-family housing options for professionals and their families inside of Loop 610 near transit, parks and other forms of infrastructure required for live/work/play environments.

There is also a lack of higher density, affordable, multi-family outside of Loop 610. Approximately 78.4 percent of housing below $130,000 outside of Loop 610 is low-density, single-family. Only 21.6 percent of affordable units are multi-family.

This indicates that, regardless of location inside or outside of Loop 610, there is a general shortage of quality multi-family dwellings in walkable neighborhoods, which is vital to creating sustainable live/work/play environments in which people of all backgrounds can thrive.

Opportunities

Between 2000 and 2010, the City's population grew by 7.5 percent - adding 145,820 new residents. Areas outside of Houston's Corporate City Limits grew by 83.6 percent (with 129,913 single-family lots platted for new residents since 2008).[3] Comparatively, the area inside Loop 610 only grew by 2.4 percent (with 27,320 single-family lots platted since 2008).

Projections for population growth through 2020 show similar growth rates for both areas inside and outside of Houston's Corporate City Limits as more and more residents, especially young professionals and empty nesters, move back into the City and region as a whole.[4] The area inside Loop 610 is projected to grow by 19.5 percent.

To address local and regional housing needs, Houston will need to maximize opportunities for balancing single-family and multi-family housing stocks. Multi-family housing provides the residential density levels needed to support Urban Center jobs, retail, services, walkability and transit.

Vacant and under utilized parcels suitable for infill development, particularly within identified Urban Centers and inside of Loop 610, represent opportunities for increasing multi-family housing and overall residential densities. Infill development also offers a chance to focus growth in areas served by existing infrastructure and/or transit. Adding more urban forms of housing will increase the diversity of housing options in the City and contribute to greater residential density overall.

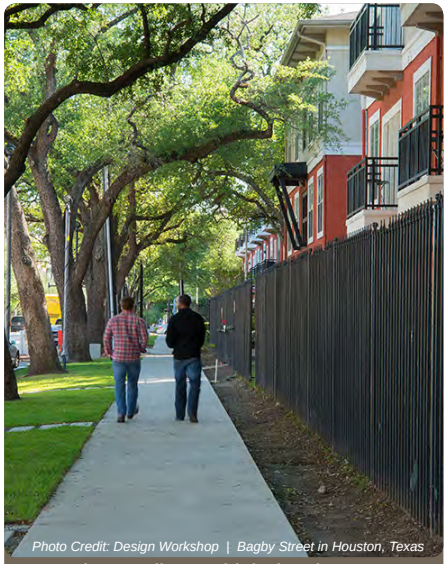


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Bagby Street in Houston, Texas

Focusing medium to high density residential development in Urban Centers will work to increase jobs, retail, walkability and transit.

1 City of Houston. (2012). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting. Retrieved from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level2/COOR_CH42SUDEPL.html#fn_169

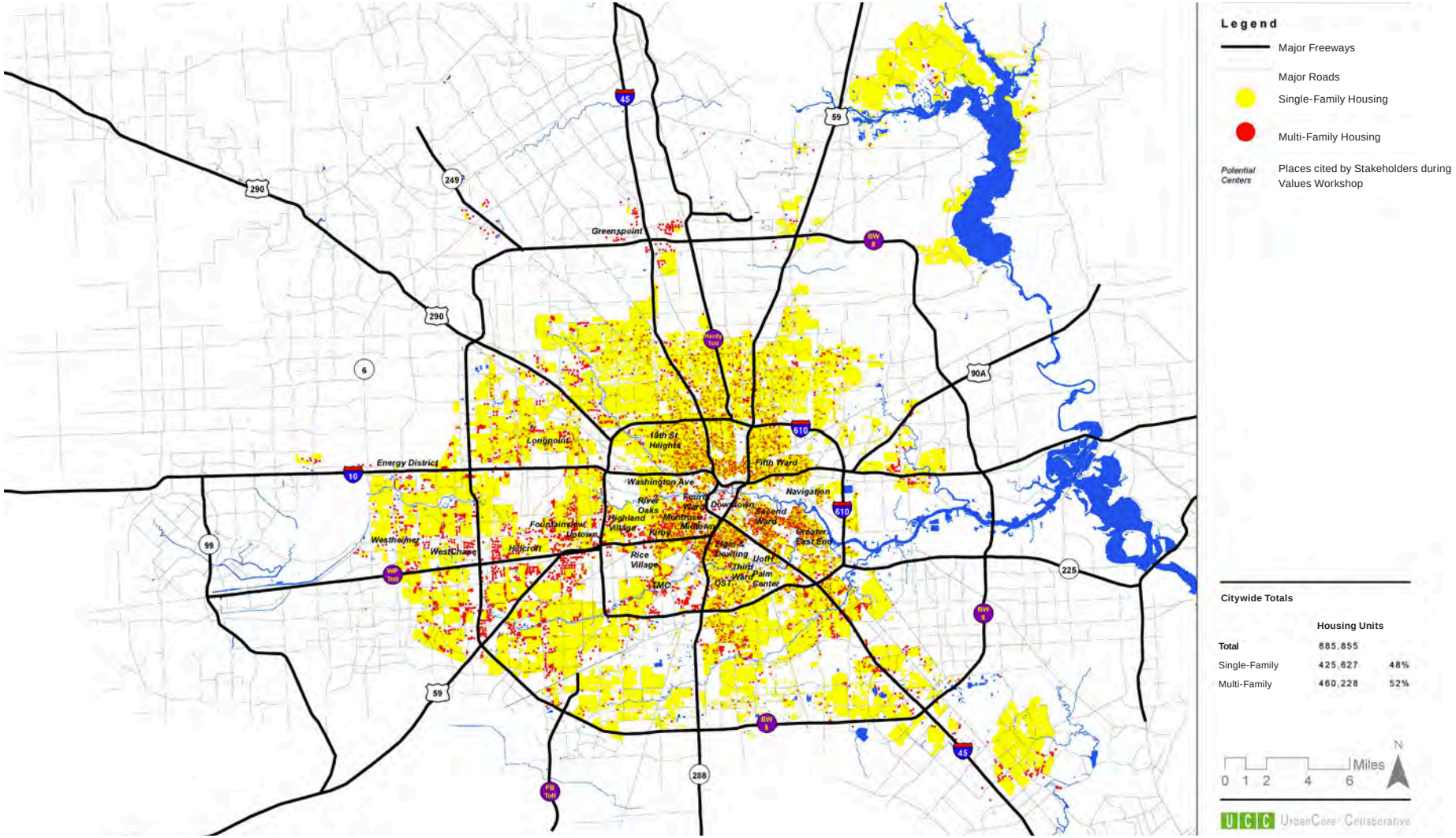
2 City of Houston Planning and Development Department. (2012). Geographic Information System (GIS) Data. (S. Lee, Ed.) Houston, Texas.

3 Houston-Galveston Area Council. (N.d.). Population & Employment Projection Change (1990 - 2010). H-GAC Projection for 2020, 2030, & 2040. Houston, Texas.

4 Houston-Galveston Area Council. (N.d.). Population & Employment Projection (2010 - 2040). H-GAC Projection for 2020, 2030, & 2040. Houston, Texas.

Housing Character and Diversity

Figure 6: *Housing Type*
Data sources: City of Houston; 2010 U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data



Housing Character and Diversity

Housing Affordability

Approximately 37.5 percent of all housing units in Houston are affordable (cost $130,000 or less), however the majority of higher quality, affordable single-family units are located outside of Loop 610. The development of mixed use, subsidized housing allows individuals of all ages and incomes to live in Urban Centers. Subsidized housing is not strictly limited to low-income housing, it may also include workforce housing and housing that accommodates middle range income earners.

Workforce housing helps to provide Houston residents such as teachers, police officers, firemen, public employees, librarians, medical technicians and administrative personnel the opportunity to purchase a home in areas near jobs in Houston. The aim of workforce housing is to assist families whose combined gross annual income is 80 – 110 percent of Houston's median income with down payment, closing cost and pre-paid items assistance.

Figure 7: Housing Affordability indicates that inside of Loop 610, housing is expensive. Approximately 32 percent of residential units have a current market value greater than $650,000 while 19.1 percent of all residential units are valued between $260,000 - $650,000. Only 16.1 percent of housing units within Loop 610 are valued between $131,000 -$260,000 while 32.6 percent of residential units are valued at $0 - $130,000. Although this data suggests that affordable units priced below $130,000 exist within Loop 610, the physical conditions of these homes and the quality of life experienced by residents vary tremendously.

The **East End Livable Centers Plan (2009)** explores the complexity of housing challenges Urban Centers will help to overcome. Many of East End's residences are in poor condition or approaching the end of their useful life. Others are vacant while some remain occupied, despite poor conditions. Houses that are not in good condition have efforts being made to maintain them, however, should maintenance cease, these could easily fall into a state of disrepair. Stakeholders have noted that eastern portions of Houston are under served by transit and revitalization efforts, so it is important that Urban Centers help to focus revitalization equitably across all parts of the City in the future.

Housing outside of Loop 610 is also expensive. Approximately 42.3 percent of residential units outside of Loop 610 have a current market value greater than $650,000 while 6 percent are valued between $260,000 - $650,000. Only 12.5 percent of housing units outside of Loop 610 are valued between $131,000 -$260,000 while 39.1 percent of residential units are valued at $0 - $130,000.

Challenges

The majority of housing is not located within Loop 610 where jobs are located. Despite the fact that nearly a quarter of the region's jobs are within Loop 610, only 24.8 percent of Houston's housing is located there. Comparatively, the portion of the city located outside Loop 610 accounts for 60 percent of the jobs and 75.2 percent of the total housing units. 63 percent of employees working within the city currently reside outside the city limits. 59.1 percent of housing units located inside Loop 610 are over $195,000.

People who work inside Loop 610 who cannot afford a single-family/multi-family home over $195,000 must commute to their job from areas outside of the city. Another challenge is maintaining affordability in redevelopment areas that are close to jobs and services.

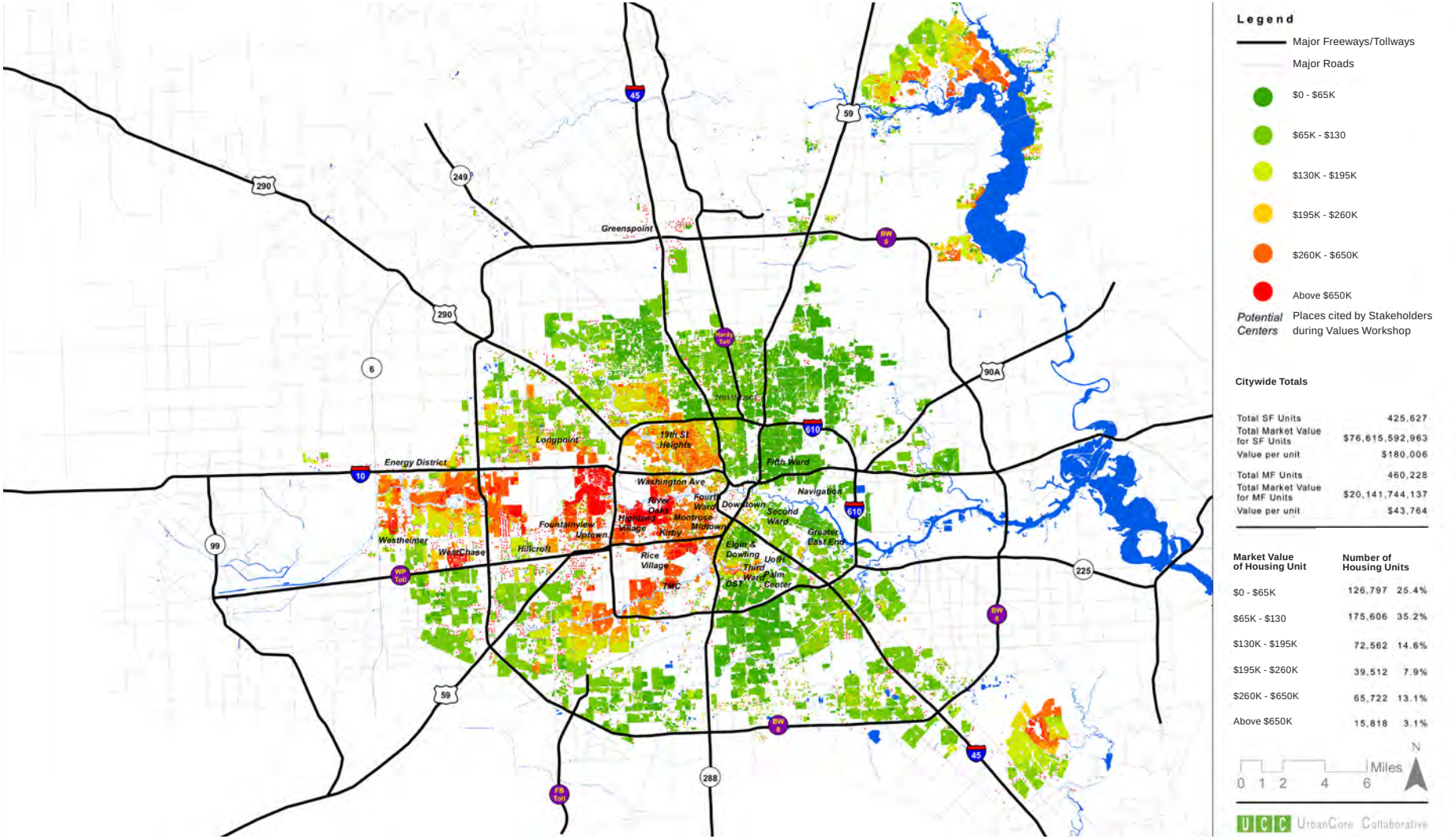
Opportunities

Housing that is affordable to a wide range of income earners can be incorporated into emergent or transitioning Urban Centers or other areas where density is increasing and where jobs are being located. Increasingly higher density, urban forms of infill housing could be added inside of Loop 610 as well as in or near areas identified as existing Urban Centers to increase residential density. This will be key to increasing the number and diversity of affordable housing options available to all.

Since the recent economic recession, market-rate residential and commercial investment has been limited in the city. Going forward, more affordable, mixed-use residential development will serve a critical need for housing in the region. Due to a scarcity of raw land inside Loop 610, sometimes new housing units must commingle with aging housing types. For example, a dilapidated, home might neighbor a brand new, loft. **The Northside – Livable Centers Study (2010)** encourages infill development on vacant or underutilized properties. Thirty percent of housing units in Northside are overcrowded, meaning there is more than one resident per room. This is nearly twice the rate found throughout the rest of the city and three times the rate in the region as a whole; indicating a large number of multi-generational households as well as unrelated individuals living in homes to reduce their rent burden. Areas such as Northside are vulnerable to increases in housing costs as new development occurs during the recovery period following the recent economic recession.

Housing Character and Diversity

Figure 7: *Housing Affordability*
Data sources: City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data



Infill/Redevelopment Potential

Age-in-Place Potential

Addressing local and regional housing needs by increasing the housing stock to accommodate Houston's growing population will be important for creating sustainable live/work/play environments. Having quality housing choices in close proximity to schools increases the potential for an individual to age-in-place - the idea that a community provides its residents enough housing options and services such as pharmacies, doctors offices and dry cleaners that allow them to live in the same area throughout a lifetime - birth, youth, adulthood and senior years - regardless of income level. This age-in-place analysis explores the mix of single- and multi-family housing units near educational facilities.

To complete the age-in-place analysis, the following map layers were combined:

- Multi-family units;
- Single-family units; and
- Education facilities.

From the 1,943 educational facilities that were mapped, 62 percent were within 0.25 mile distance from single- and multi-family units. The distance parameter of a 0.25 mile distance approximates to a five-minute walk.

The closer educational facilities are to homes, the more likely children are to walk to school. This has many benefits, including introducing daily activity into children's lives, reduction of vehicle miles traveled to school and the feeling of a safer neighborhood with more activity on the street.

The proximity of homes to schools indicates that there is potential for active, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. Of the 62 percent of Houston's schools that are located within residential communities comprised of a mix of single- and multi-family units, it is questionable if the infrastructure is in place to actually provide a safe, continuous routes to schools. Programs such as **Safe Routes to School** help to enable children to walk and bike to school.[1] Continuing to create and/or focus available funding on programs similar to Safe Routes to School will help fill in gaps existing between schools and residential neighborhoods.

1 Texas Department of Transportation. (2013). Safe Routes to School. Retrieved from Safe Routes Texas: http://www.saferoutestx.org/contact.php

Infill Development Potential

Infill development is an important part of community revitalization efforts that can be used in Urban Centers to provide increased opportunities for diversifying the housing supply in an area so that community residents are able to age-in-place in the face of continued population growth. Infill development potential measures the acreage of vacant, undeveloped or underdeveloped land available for future development. This is expressed in a ratio of improved value to land value by census block.

Parcels with an infill/redevelopment ratio value of less than one are very likely to be redeveloped.[2] Ratios lower than two point to areas of potential redevelopment in the long-term. Data sources used for this analysis were provided by the City of Houston and the Harris County Appraisal District.

Over half of the City (60 percent) has a higher improved value to land value ratio, making infill development more challenging in these areas. Approximately 39.9 percent of the City has some level of infill redevelopment potential. This analysis would suggest that concentrating denser urban development in areas that are primed for infill redevelopment has many opportunities, including existing infrastructure and transit service.

2 City of Austin & AngelouEconomics

Land Use Diversity

Land Use Diversity

Land use diversity is a good measure of the proportion of mixed (or dissimilar) land uses and the spatial distribution of these differing uses within a boundary. Having a mixture of land uses - such as single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, office, industrial, and public use - ensures that communities have access to variety of services, jobs and entertainment. This also measures the diversity of land use types present and their spatial distribution within a boundary.

Typically, ideal land use mixes[1] range from 0 (homogeneous land use, such as in rural areas or single-family residential suburban subdivisions) to 1 (highly mixed land use, such as a diverse central business district).

Challenges

Future developments should strive for a diversity of uses, ensuring that people from all walks of life have the opportunity to live/work/play in one place.

Opportunities

Areas in Houston which have a diversity index of .75 or higher make up 11.4 percent of the total acreage of the City. This indicates a high diversity of uses. Urban Centers should build upon areas having a high diversity of land uses. This is essential to ensuring that these Centers are economically viable, live/work/play environments in which people from all walks of life are able to age-in-place.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The intensity of residential, commercial and office uses is a good indicator of an Urban Center's economic viability and diversity. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a good measurement of how much square footage of building structure is present on a given piece of land. For example, an FAR of 1.0 is the equivalent of a one-story building over the entire lot, or a two-story building over half of the lot.

Challenges

The majority of Houston (80.6 percent) has an average FAR between 0 and 0.25. This indicates relatively low-density development. Walkable urbanism and healthy transit require FARs to be at least 1.5 to 3.0. Approximately 0.12 percent of Houston falls in this category, which is concentrated in Uptown, the Central Business District and the Medical Center areas.

Opportunities

Other Sunbelt communities, such as San Diego, require at least 0.5 FAR near bus stations while Orlando requires both a minimum and maximum FAR for most commercial areas. Urban Centers should strive for the highest FAR possible to encourage density and better urbanism.

1 Frank, A. M., & Schmid, T. M. (2004). Obesity Relationships with Community Design, Physical Activity, and Time Spent in Cars. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 27, pp. 87-96.

Land Use Diversity

Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio

This measures the amount of surfaces within the City that allow for stormwater to percolate and absorb into the ground versus surfaces that are impenetrable to stormwater. A low impervious/pervious cover ratio, on a scale from one to ten, indicates a lack of permeable surfaces. For example, an area having an average impervious/pervious coverage ratio per acre of less than two will be characterized by more trees and vegetation and less concrete, whereas an area having an average impervious/pervious coverage ratio per acre of greater than five would be characterized by high levels of pavement.

High amounts of pavement increases the likelihood of flooding during rain events because there is no grass, soil or vegetation to capture stormwater runoff moving over streets, parking lots, sidewalks, etc. Low impact development (LID) techniques such as pervious paving, rainwater cisterns, bioswales and rain gardens can help to offset this flooding.

Studies have also correlated impervious/pervious cover ratio with urban heat island effect.[1] Urban heat island effect is defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as built up, urban areas that are hotter than nearby rural and/or suburban areas. According to the EPA, the annual mean air temperature of an urban area with one million people or more upwards of 22°F warmer than its surroundings.

Paved surfaces and concrete absorb rays from the sun and produce heat. Chemicals emitted by cars, built structures and even trees can trap sun in urban areas and produce more heat. Heated air rises, and then collides with moist air from nearby bodies of water – which usually releases rain precipitation somewhere downwind from the heat island. This warm air and precipitation can affect winds and weather patterns for hundreds of miles surrounding an urban heat island.

Challenges

City of Houston data and Google Earth 2011 Satellite Imagery showed that Houston's urban areas have more impervious surfaces than the suburbs (as seen in **Figure 8: Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio**). Most of the City's pavement is concentrated within Loop 610, as this is where the impervious/pervious cover ratio begins to get closer to 1 (which indicates high levels of pavement and concrete). As Urban Centers build upon the density already in existence within Loop 610, it will be important to encourage LID techniques to help offset the negative effects of pavement such as flooding and urban heat island effect.

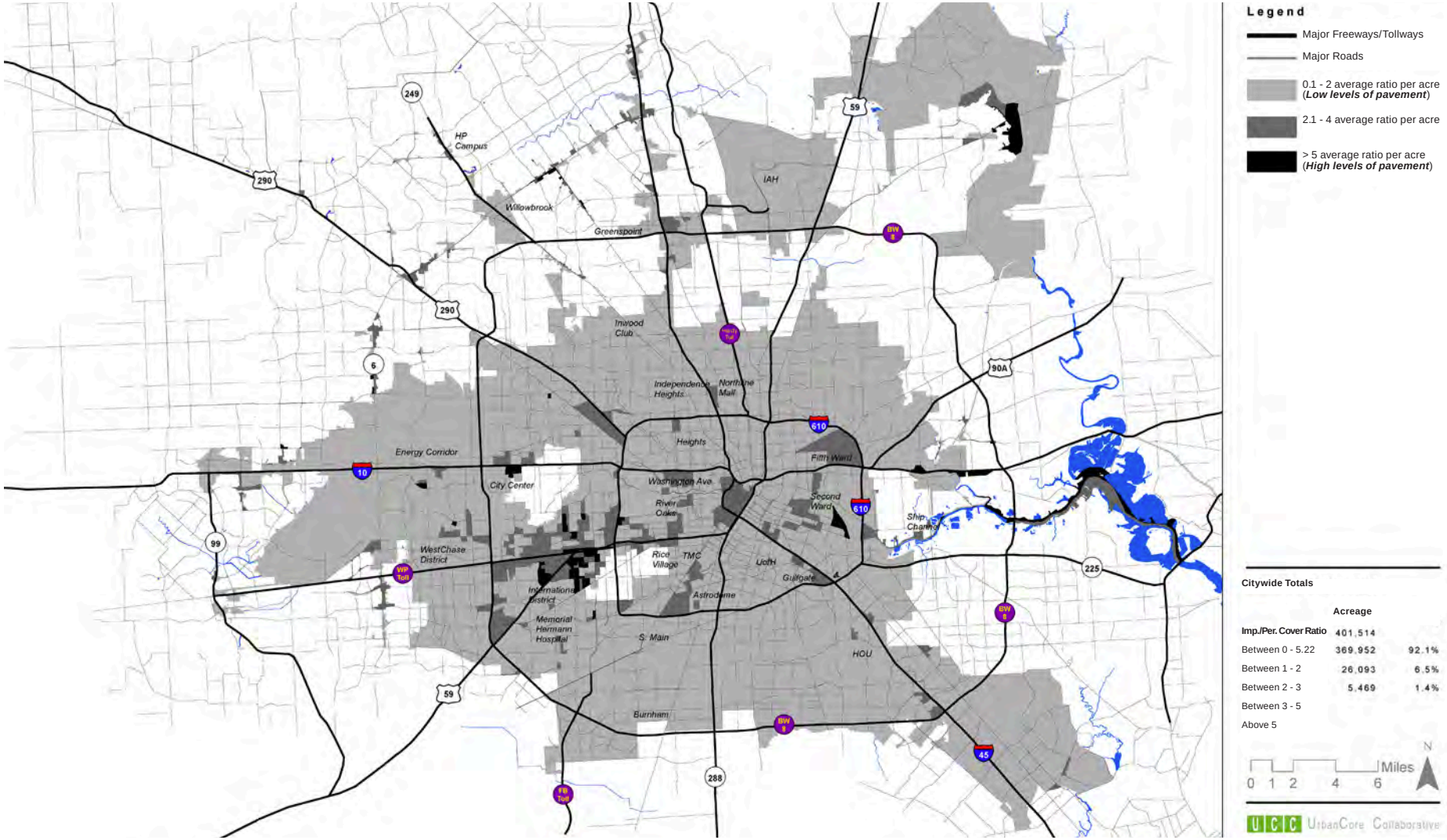
Opportunities

Sidewalks, roads and plazas are part of an urban environment, but there are ways to offset the impacts of paving on stormwater through LID techniques. These techniques are discussed in greater detail in the **Urban Center Recommendations** chapter.

1 United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2013, January 15). Basic Information. Retrieved 2013, from Heat Island Effect: http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/about/index.htm

Land Use Diversity

Figure 8: *Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio*
Data sources: City of Houston; Google Earth 2011 Satellite Imagery



Land Use Diversity

Parks and Open Space

Park land is defined as a minimum of half of a contiguous acre of recreation land inside of Loop 610 or one contiguous acre outside of Loop 610. Park definitions vary (i.e. Neighborhood Parks, Linear Parks, Natural Areas) and sizes may range anywhere from half an acre to 150+ acres of contiguous land.[2] This includes parks, green space and trails. Today, parks comprise 33,833 acres, or 8.05% of the total land area in the City.

Open spaces in Houston are defined as club houses, country clubs with and without golf courses, residential open spaces, retention pond and wetlands.[3] These spaces comprise approximately 15,522 acres, or 3.7% of the total land area of the city.

Data sources used to identify existing parks and open spaces include City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department and Harris County Parks datasets and the City of Houston Open Space - Harris County Appraisal District land use dataset. The scale of analysis used was the census block level.

Challenges

Houston has many beautiful park spaces, however, some parks lack connectivity meaning that people may have to travel to these areas by vehicle. Also, open spaces are not public land, and as such may not be accessible to all users of the park's network.

Opportunities

Approximately 41.71 percent of land in within Houston's Corporate City Limits is within a quarter mile distance of an existing park or open space. Focusing efforts on connecting parks and open spaces both in and around existing/future Urban Centers will benefit the health and well-being of individuals using the spaces. Continuous green spaces also allow for people to use these spaces for travel between work and home, which provides multiple environmental benefits. Well connected parks and open spaces may also increase the value of lands adjacent to them.[4]

The **Ensemble/HCC Livable Centers Study Final Report (2010)** establishes parkland, gardens, and recreational space, as some of the best tools available for attracting tax-paying businesses and residents. The inclusion of parkland in Urban Centers will reduce costs of handling stormwater, reduce impervious materials, and allow for regional detention all the while serving as important features for promoting recreational, exercise and healthy communities.

Houston's **Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update (2008)** recommends amounts of acreage that need to be acquired for the additional park facilities to accommodate growing populations. Future plans created for Urban Centers should incorporate these findings as the foundation for filling gaps in levels of service and infrastructure across the City. The City needs to acquire approximately 3,616 acres of land of parkland to meet 2020 population demands and to ensure equity and balance in Houston's park system.[1]

To reduce impervious surfaces and increase access to parkland, the **Upper Kirby Livable Centers Study (2010)** suggests identifying vacant properties or properties having structures requiring demolition that could transform into parks, community gardens or connections with the Bayou. As Urban Centers evolve, policy makers and community leaders should partner together to identify vacant, dangerous structures in floodplains that could be removed or re-purposed. The creation of floodplain redevelopment guidelines could help determine how and what can be built in the floodplain after vacant structures have been cleared.

1 City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. (2008, May 26). Reports and Publications. Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update Houston, Texas 2007 (pp. Executive Summary-3, Executive Summary-4). Houston, Texas. Retrieved 2012, from http://www.houstontx.gov/parks/publications_Masterplan.html

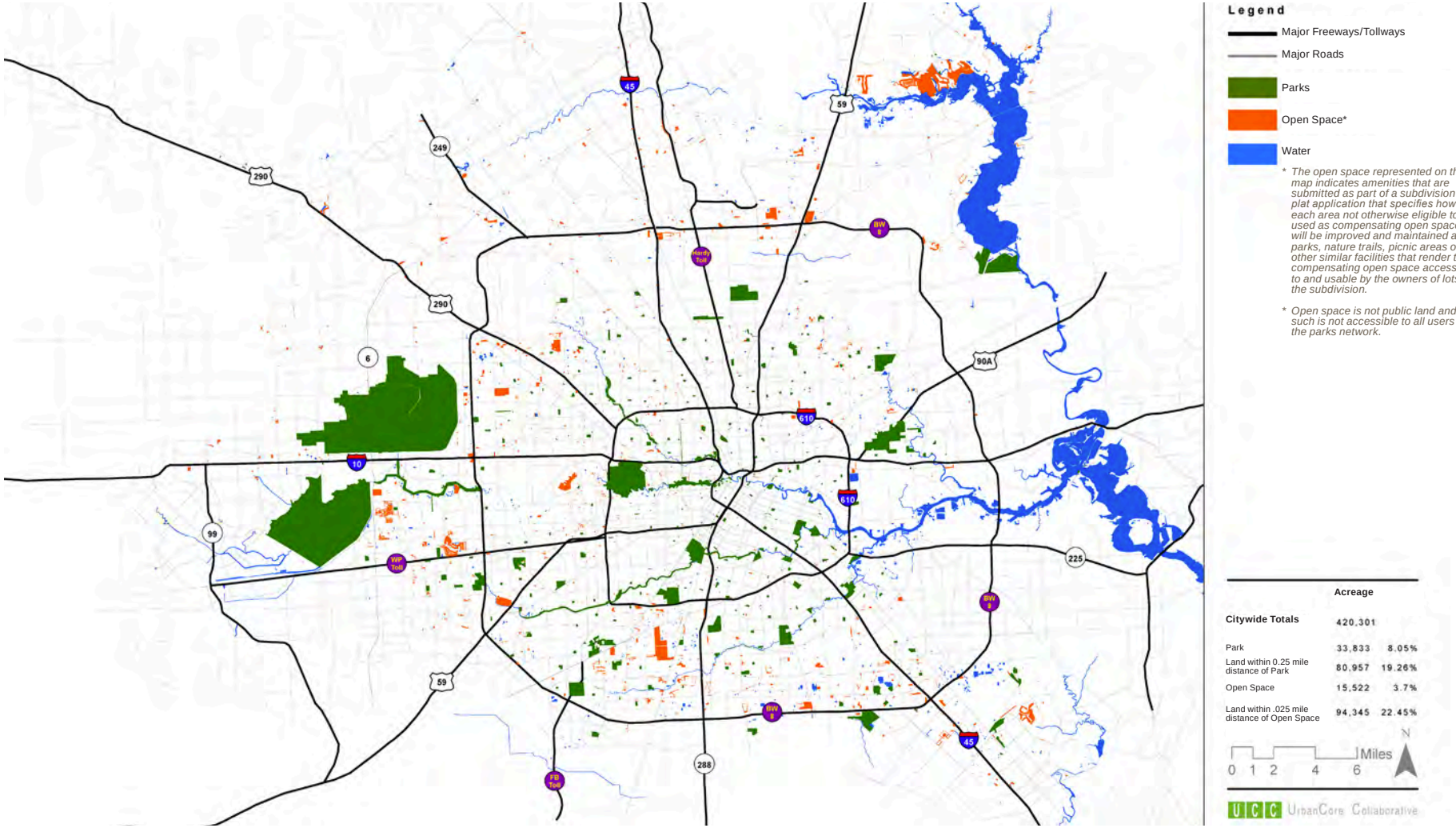
2 City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. (2008, May 26). Reports and Publications. Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update Houston, Texas 2007 (pp. IV-5 to IV-7). Houston, Texas. Retrieved 2012, from http://www.houstontx.gov/parks/publications_Masterplan.html

3 City of Houston. (2012). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting. Retrieved from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level2/COOR_CH42SUDEPL.html#fn_169

4 U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service. (n.d.). Real Property Values: Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors. Retrieved 2013, from http://www.nps.gov/pwro/rtca/econ1.pdf

Land Use Diversity

Figure 9: *Parks and Open Space*
Data sources: City of Houston



High Employment, Population Density

Employment Density

Target employment densities for Urban Centers will vary based on the size of the Urban Center, however, the Urban Land Institute, a nonprofit education and research institute providing responsible leadership in the use of land to enhance the total environment, recommends the following minimum employment densities for an area to be capable of successfully supporting transit.[1]

Table 6: *Minimum Employment Densities Near Transit*

TRANSIT SERVICE	JOBS PER ACRE
Local Bus, Intermediate Service	20
Local Bus, Frequent Service	75
Light Rail	125+

In comparison with other major cities, Houston ranks sixth in the nation with an average employment density of 3.76 jobs/acre (seen in **Table 7: Employment Densities for Major Cities, 2010**). However, it is important to note the differing acreages of these cities. Houston is nearly four times the size of New York and twice the size of Los Angeles.

1 Dunphy, R., Myerson, D., & Pawlukiewicz, M. (2003). Ten Principles for Successful Development Around Transit. Retrieved 2013, from www.uli.org: http://www.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/TP_DevTransit.ashx_.pdf

Los Angeles has a smaller total land area, but out performs Houston in jobs per acre. Houston's employment density is further explored in **Figure 10: Employment Density**. Currently, 40 percent of all jobs in Houston are concentrated inside Loop 610 at an employment density of 10.2 jobs/acre. The remaining 60 percent of jobs are outside Loop 610 at 2.63 jobs/acre. Only 21 percent of the city has employment density levels greater than the citywide average (3.76 jobs/acre), and the majority of these job concentrations are located in the western portion of the city.

Challenges

Jobs are disproportionately concentrated in west Houston. Discrepancies in employment densities between outside and inside of Loop 610 means that workers are more likely to have to travel by personal automobile (or public transit when available) to reach jobs. As **Figure 10: Employment Density** indicates, this especially burdens citizens residing in the eastern portions of the city. This fact, compounded with people living outside of the city and commuting in for work, means traffic congestion and pollution levels increase and the quality of life of Houston residents is diminished due to increased travel time to work.

To counteract these trends, Urban Centers will help Houston focus increased density in strategic places. This will ensure that Houston does not lose its share of in-migrating businesses to other areas in the county or region. Infrastructure, services and transit in these areas in which growth focuses must be expanded to support denser populations.

Opportunities

The City of Houston added 124,425 jobs between 2005 and 2010. Approximately 55 percent of these new jobs occurred in Houston's Major Activity Centers (as defined in Chapter 42). The Central Business District received 20 percent of new jobs, Texas Medical Center 15 percent and Memorial City 10 percent.

This job growth is expected to continue. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of jobs in Houston is projected to grow 15.7 percent, with jobs inside Loop 610 projected to grow 6.2 percent.[2] This future job growth presents an opportunity to encourage employment in Urban Centers where housing occurs, especially in areas characterized by higher than average residential densities. Planning for job growth in areas proximate to residential development has many benefits, including decreased traffic congestion and pollution and increased opportunities for people across many different income levels to experience live/work/play environments.

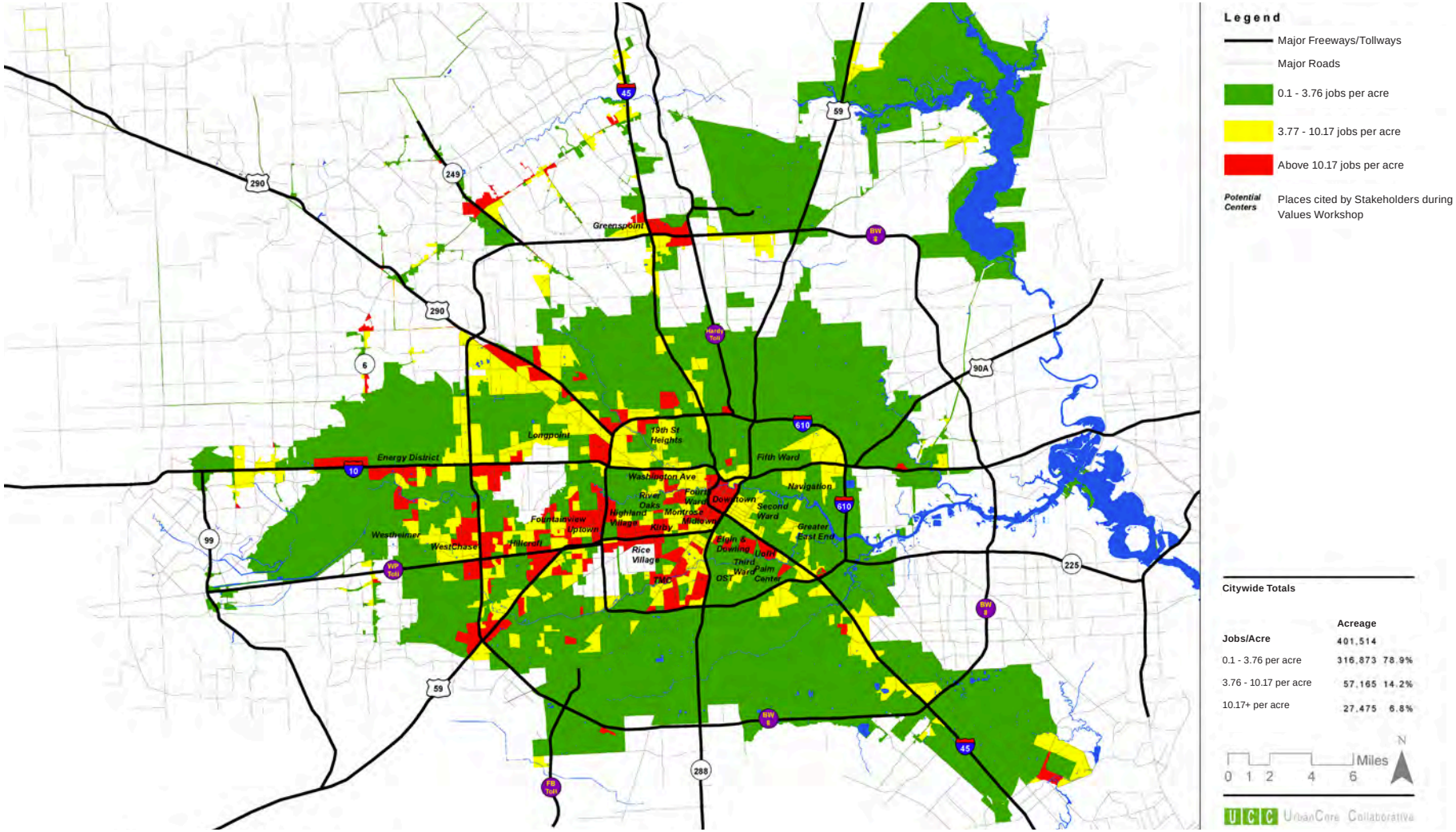
2 Houston-Galveston Area Council. (n.d.). Population & Employment Projection (2010 - 2040). H-GAC Projection for 2020, 2030, & 2040. Houston, Texas.

Table 7: *Employment Densities for Major Cities, 2010*

CITY	AREA (ACRES)	EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT DENSITY (JOBS/ACRE)
New York	193,692	3,698,646	19.1
San Francisco	29,999	560,854	18.7
Chicago	145,686	1,239,035	8.5
Philadelphia	85,825	628,522	7.3
Los Angeles	299,949	1,604,925	5.4
Houston	401,514	1,507,848	3.76
Dallas	217,932	790,099	3.6
San Diego	208,120	702,839	3.4
San Jose	112,977	357,127	3.2
Austin	190,653	574,027	3

High Employment, Population Density

Figure 10: *Employment Density*
Data sources: 2010 U.S. Decennial Census American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership Data; U.S. Census Labor Force Statistics Data



High Employment, Population Density

Population Density

Encouraging the economic viability, diversity and accessibility of places in Houston is an important goal of the Urban Houston Framework. Population density, calculated as the amount of people per acre, is an indicator of economic vitality and diversity.

Data analysis shows that 40 percent of Houston's total land area has a population density higher than the citywide average (5.23 people/acre), however the majority of these higher density places are concentrated within Loop 610 and in the western portions of the city.

While Houston is currently the fourth largest city in the nation, it trails behind other major metropolitan areas in terms of population density per acre. Philadelphia, for example, has 500,000 fewer people, but its average population density is 16.9 people per acre - nearly three times that of Houston's average population density of only five people per acre.

Yet, when compared to other cities in Texas, Houston fares well - ranking above Austin, San Antonio and Dallas in average people per acre. Within Houston, there is a stark contrast between Houston's population density inside Loop 610 (7.43 people/acre) versus the city's population density outside of Loop 610 (4.84 people/acre). Although target population densities for Urban Centers will vary depending on the size of the Center, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) in Austin offers a few baseline population densities that could help guide the development of Centers within the context of Texas:

- **Large Centers (2 mile radius)** 15.5 - 62.17 people/acre
- **Medium Centers (1 mile radius)** 4.48 - 37.30 people/acre
- **Small Centers (0.5 mile radius)** 3.98 - 19.89 people/acre

Challenges

Between 2000 and 2010 the Greater Houston area grew by 1.2 million people, increasing by more than 123,000 individuals per year over the decade. The City of Houston is projected to increase its population by 17.9 percent between the years of 2010 and 2020. This means that the City of Houston will need to focus this increased density in strategic areas or it may risk losing its share of in-migrating residents and businesses to other areas in the county or region. This also means that the infrastructure, services and transit services in these areas in which growth will focus should be able to support denser populations.

Opportunities

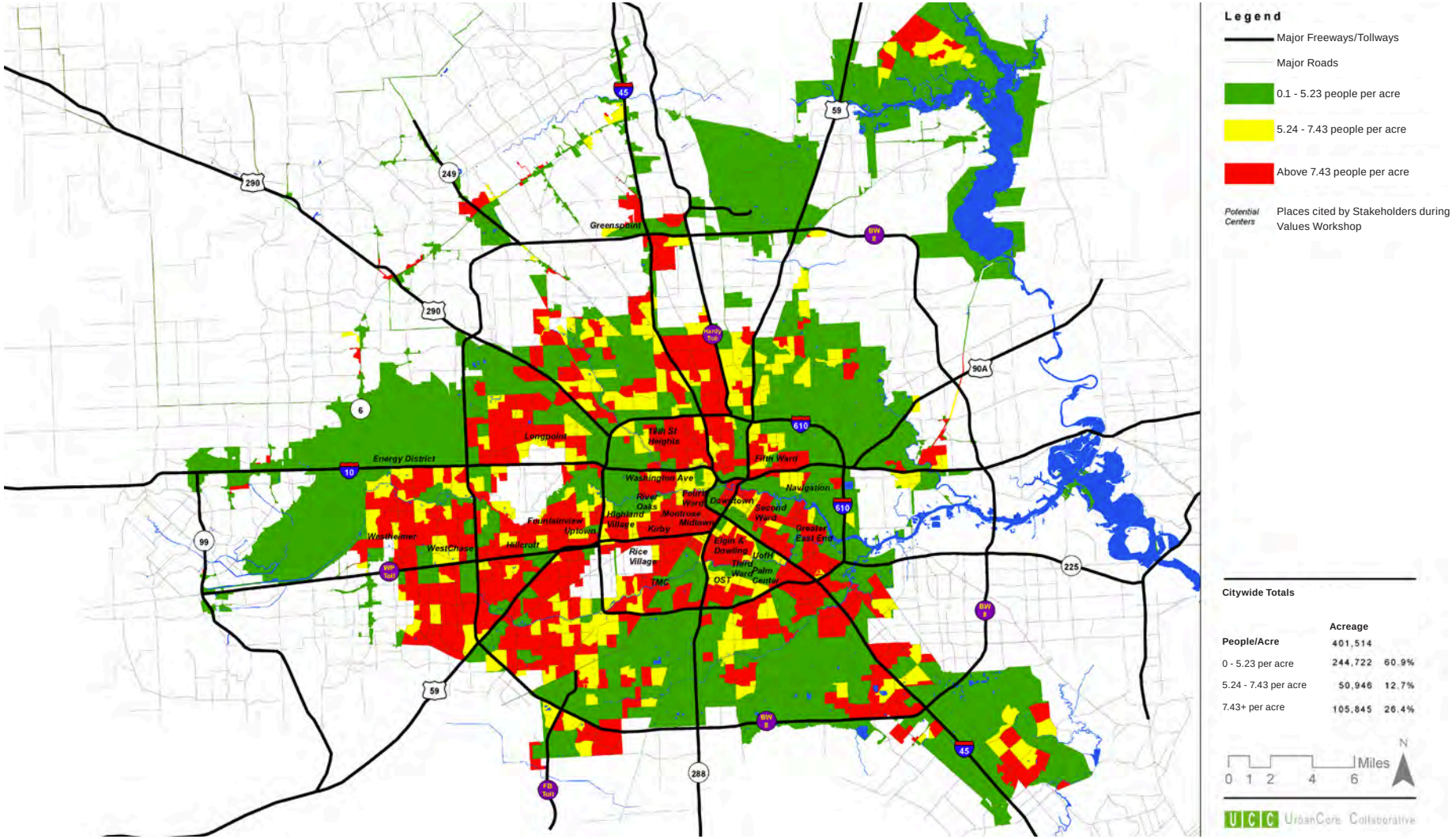
In previous years, the growth rate of the entire city has exceeded that of the inner Loop 610. Between 2010 and 2020, however, the area inside Loop 610 is estimated to grow faster than the rest of the city, increasing by as much as 19.5 percent due to young professionals and empty nesters moving back into central Houston from the outer suburbs. This presents a great opportunity for funneling in-migrating residents to parts of the city that have the infrastructure, services and transit to support growth.

Table 8: *Population Densities for Major Cities, 2010.*

CITY	LAND AREA (ACRES)	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION DENSITY (PEOPLE/ACRE)
New York	191,588	8,175,133	42.70
San Francisco	30,182	805,235	26.70
Boston	31,590	617,594	19.60
Chicago	147,725	2,695,325	18.25
Miami	23,404	399,407	17.06
Philadelphia	90,112	1,526,006	16.90
Los Angeles	302,700	3,792,621	12.50
Seattle	63,744	608,860	9.60
Houston	401,513	2,099,451	5.23
Dallas	246,937	1,197,816	4.90
Atlanta	85,766	420,003	4.90
San Antonio	298,688	1,327,407	4.50
Austin	200,695	809,036	4.03

High Employment, Population Density

Figure 11: *Population Density*
Data sources: City of Houston; 2010 U.S. Decennial Census data



Access to Amenities, Attractions/Destinations

Amenity Density

Access to amenities, attractions and destinations is an important factor in enhancing community stability, accessibility and equity within Urban Centers. Amenities are defined as services that enhance and maintain people's quality of life within a city. Amenities are important components of any live/work/play environment.

For the purpose of this Study, amenities have been divided into five categories, including civic, cultural, educational, health and retail/commercial amenities as follows:

Civic amenities

- Community centers
- Libraries
- Post offices

Cultural amenities

- Historic sites
- Movie theaters
- Museums
- Performing arts/theaters

Educational amenities

- Child day care services
- Colleges, universities and professional schools
- Nursery and kindergarten, elementary/junior/high schools
- Youth organizations/centers

Health amenities

- Emergency medical services
- Hospitals
- Medical centers
- Nursing homes
- Pharmacies

Retail/Commercial amenities

- Banks
- Bars
- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Shopping centers/malls

Each amenity in the City was mapped and then an analysis was run on the total number of amenities at the census block group level. Houston averages less than 6 amenities for every census block group. Amenities are more frequently located within Loop 610, which accounts for 67 percent of the total amenities at a density level of 8 amenities per acre. Currently, 33 percent of the total amenities in Houston are located outside Loop 610 at a density level of 6 amenities per acre outside Loop 610.

Challenges

The majority of Houston's total population (71 percent) lives within a census block group served by 10 or fewer amenities. Approximately 13.4 percent of Houston's census blocks are served by 10 to 20 amenities within their block group, and less than four percent are served by more than 20 amenities. Nearly 13 percent of Houston's population, or 256,133 people, live in a census block group with zero amenities.

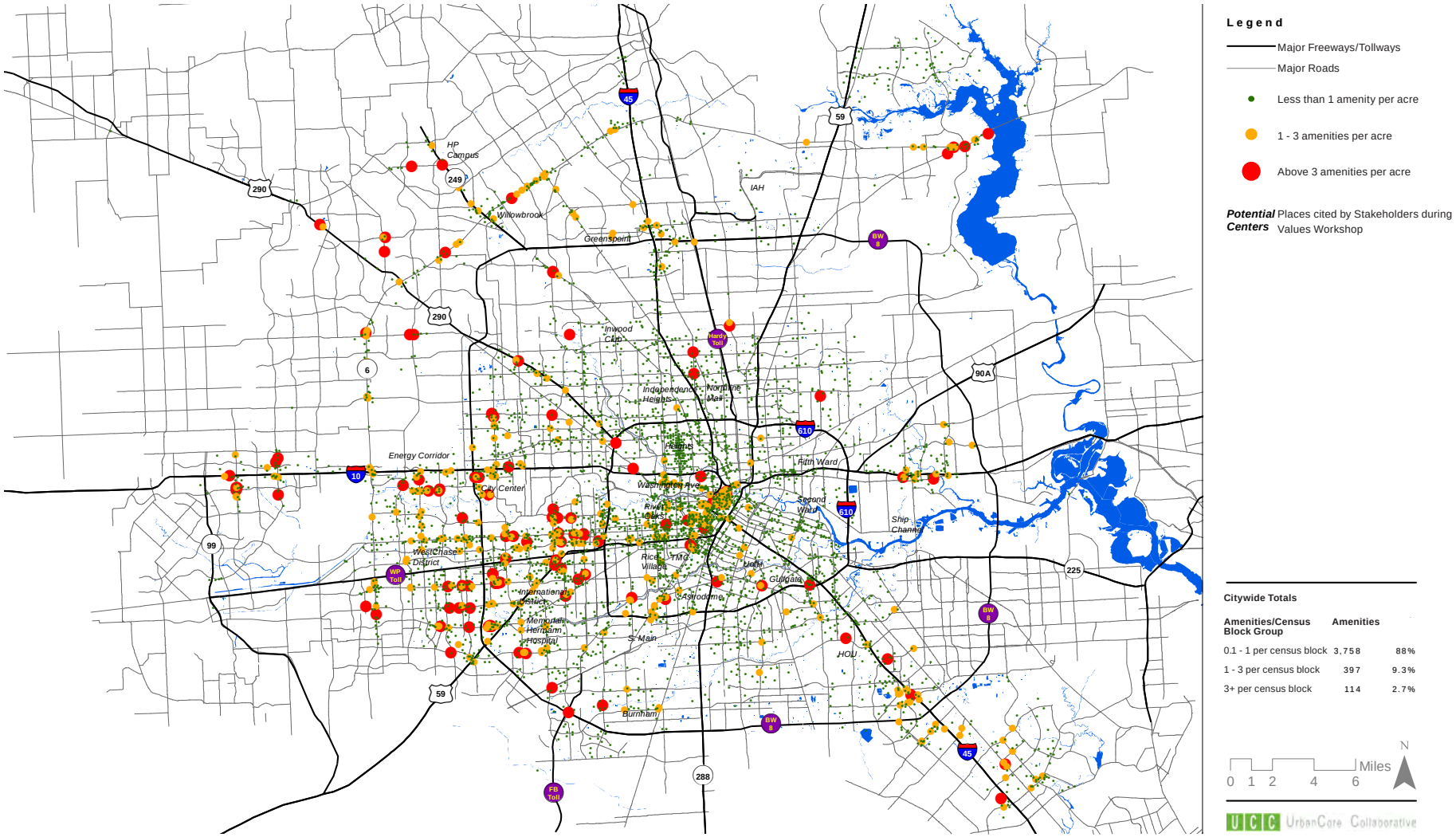
This analysis is also limited to showing only the density of amenities. What this does not indicate is the quality or existence of walkable or bikable connections to them. To truly create a live/work/play environment, connections between amenities, jobs and residences must be safe, accessible and built for human comfort, which is particularly important in Houston's summer months.

Opportunities

Opportunities lie within the areas that have an existing amenity density of over one amenity per acre, which is 12 percent of the City. Population and job densities should be focused near areas that have a higher amenity density, so as to build upon existing infrastructure.

Access to Amenities, Attractions/Destinations

Figure 12: *Amenities*
Data sources: City of Houston



Access to Streets, Freeways and Transit

Walkable Communities

As sustainable, live/work/play environments, Urban Centers need to be places characterized by a high level of walkability. Studies have shown that higher intersection densities (calculated as the total number of street intersections divided by area in acres) are more responsible for increases in walking and transit use than any other factor.[1]

Intersection density is closely related to block size - the greater the intersection density, the smaller the block sizes, the more connected a street network, and thus the more walkable a neighborhood. This increased connectivity also has the added benefit of reducing traffic congestion in that consistent, regularly shaped street grids are the most efficient mechanism for handling high traffic volumes. To explore intersection density and Houston's potential for walkable communities, this *Existing Conditions Assessment* layers the following datasets:

- Intersection density;
- Population density; and
- Employment density.

1 Ewing, R., & Cerver, R. (2010, May 11). Travel and the Built Environment: A Meta-Analysis. Journal of the American Planning Association, 76(3), 31.

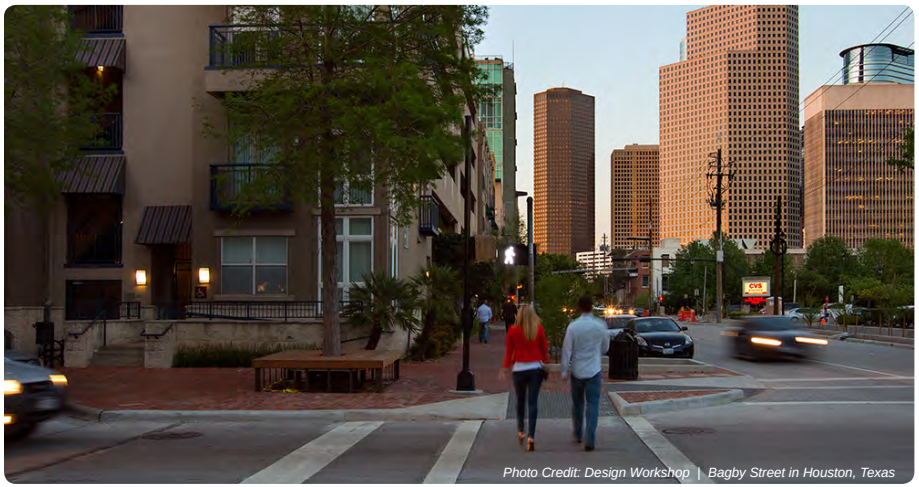
Findings showed that the highest intersection, population, and employment densities occur within Loop 610. Population and employment densities correlate with areas having a higher intersection density. The most walkable areas are the Central Business District, Montrose, Fourth Ward, Midtown and Greater Third Ward.

Challenges

The majority of Houston has low intersection densities. Over 65 percent of the City has an intersection density of 0.25 intersections per acre or less, indicating a general need for more walkable communities citywide. Few areas outside of Loop 610 have high intersection densities. It is critical to preserve the existing street network to maintain pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity as Houston continues to grow in population throughout the future.

Opportunities

Population density for areas having an intersection density of 0.50 intersections per acre or higher is eight people/acre - 41 percent higher than Houston's overall population density. Employment density for areas with a higher intersection density is 13.7 - or 73 percent higher than the City average. As areas with low intersection densities redevelop, protecting street grids will be very important.



Good sidewalks are unbroken, wide enough for people to walk and pass each other shielded from traffic and shaded. Buildings built up to the street creating a continuous street wall are essential to dense, urban neighborhoods.

The **Northside – Livable Centers Study (2010)** recommends that building massings in Urban Centers should create a "street wall." Facades can be defined through rhythmically placing vertically-oriented windows and building entry points every 25'-50' and insetting windows to create shade, shadow and detail. This Study also noted that Urban Centers should foster dense, urban neighborhoods through pedestrian-level detailing that includes quality materials, unique signage, shade awnings and intricate details that reinforce the pedestrian nature of the street.

Near Northwest Management District Livable Center Study participants requested opportunities to walk in safety, with some protection from the sun and to destinations with activities that are currently missing or non-existent. Visual preference surveys indicated a clear preference for transit facilities that were more than just a typical shelter isolated at the edge of a road - emphasizing that design architectural details encourage ridership by making transit stations much more safe and inviting. Ways in which the future growth of population and employment will result in more traffic congestion are also discussed. Due to various natural and man-made barriers - such as bayous, floodplains, railroads, and existing development patterns - street connectivity will remain a constraint for movement within and amongst Urban Centers in the future. According to this study, "there is simply no room to add streets or lanes to increase vehicular connectivity in any significant manner in [an] area in the near-term. In addition, shared and reduced parking strategies should be explored as transit service increases. As [an] area develops, new connections in the street grid should be created".

Access to Streets, Freeways and Transit

Residential Access to Transit

Transit is defined as METRO light rail, express bus routes and regular service bus routes. Houston currently has 16 METRO rail stations and 3,903 miles of bus routes. This analysis compared housing costs and existing transit services to identify areas currently under served by transit - particularly areas having the lowest housing costs and the highest need for transit in order to access jobs. To show which residents have access to transit, with a focus on low-cost areas which have deficiencies in transit service, the following map layers were combined:

- Housing costs;
- Percentage of multi-family;
- Overall housing unit density;
- METRO transit stops; and
- Major Thoroughfares.

Findings showed that 82 percent of Houston's total population is located within a 0.25 mile distance from transit stops. The distance of 0.25 mile was used because it is equal to a 5-minute walk. Over 80 percent (350,172) of the total multi-family units in Houston (400,678) are within 0.25 miles of transit stops.

The housing unit density within 0.25 miles from transit slightly higher than the City average. Transit options are important to the entire City, but particularly important where housing costs are lower. If people are to find other options to commute in lieu of a personal vehicle, those options need to be convenient to the place of residence.

Employee Access to Transit

The areas that are both under served by transit with higher concentrations of employment are the most in need of transit to access jobs. To explore whether employees have access to transit, this *Existing Conditions Assessment* combined the following data sets:

- Employment density;
- METRO transit stops; and
- Major Thoroughfares.

Findings showed that 93 percent of the total jobs in Houston are within 0.25 miles from transit and employment density is 26.7 percent higher in these areas than the City overall. Nearly all of the jobs in Houston are located in a five minute distance from transit. This link clearly shows the importance of providing alternative modes of transportation for access to jobs. Future policies may consider incentivizing creative ways for employers to provide alternative modes of transit for their workforce. Sources used in analyzing residential and employee access to transit include City of Houston and METRO data.

Challenges and Opportunities

Although Houston has extensive bus and light rail service, the outer edges of the City lack direct public transit access, especially to stops within a 0.25 mile walking distance. Concentrating housing and jobs on existing transit connections increases the likelihood that people will use mass transit to commute to work. It will also decrease household transportation costs and environmental pollution. Plans for future routes should be focused on areas that have denser residential and employment areas that are currently outside of the 0.25 mile distance from routes and transit stops.

Access to Streets, Freeways and Transit

Transit-Oriented Development

Urban Centers will help to support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity through encouraging transit-oriented development in strategic places. These types of development are typically higher in density and maximize the potential for live/work/play environments. To measure Houston's potential for transit-oriented development, the following datasets were layered:

- Undeveloped land;
- Land value; and
- Proximity to planned and existing light rail transit.

Undeveloped land is defined as vacant or undeveloped parcels, however, not all undeveloped land can be looked at as having the potential for redevelopment. Some areas include floodplains, lakes, airports and reservoirs that make development unfeasible.

Challenges and Opportunities

Houston has 7.5 miles of light rail that currently runs between the Central Business District, Midtown, the Museum District and the Texas Medical Center.[1] By the end of 2014, however, there will be an expansion of 38.9 miles of new METRORail tracks constructed that increases access to destinations using the METRO's Red, Southeast, North, East End, Uptown, and University Lines.[2] This expansion will also increase the total number of METRORail stations, providing a great opportunity for undeveloped areas near these existing and proposed stations to become characterized by transit-oriented development.

Transit stops that provide shaded seating and unique architectural details help encourage ridership by making facilities much more safe and inviting.

1 Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston, Texas. (n.d.). Rail Lines: Red Line. Retrieved 2013, from GO METRORAIL: http://www.gometrorail.org/go/doc/2491/1328607/

2 Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston, Texas. (n.d.). METRORail Expansion Updates East End Fast Facts. Retrieved March 1, 2013, from METRO Going Places: http://ridemetro.org/CurrentProjects/METRORailExpansion.aspx

Existing Polices and Programs

Land Development

Houston's ability to remain economically competitive will depend on its ability to manage development challenges created by rising land values, high construction costs and decreasing land availability. Encouraging infill development and sustainable reuse of undeveloped and underutilized land to effectively increase the city's tax base will be vital to meeting these challenges. There are currently regulations in place that help to regulate land development and building activities. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 Subdivisions, Development and Platting; and the
- Infrastructure Design Manual.

Code of Ordinances Chapter 42: Subdivisions, Development and Platting establishes regulations for the platting, subdividing and development of land within Houston's Corporate City Limits to ensure that development and redevelopment efforts in Houston occur in a safe and healthy manner. The following sections of Houston's Code of Ordinances were determined to be most applicable to the implementation of Urban Centers:

- Sec. 42-154 - Urban area - Major thoroughfares with planned right-of-way of 80 feet or less;
- Sec. 42-155 - Urban area - Major thoroughfares with planned right-of-way of 80 feet or less - Retail commercial center;
- Sec. 42-159 - Collector streets and local streets - Urban area;
- Sec. 42-185 - Standards for compensating open space; and
- Sec. 42-274 - Major Activity Center designation.

The **Infrastructure Design Manual** establishes various site design research and submittal requirements for projects within Houston's Corporate City Limits and its ETJ. The following sections of this manual were determined to be most applicable to the implementation of Urban Centers:

- Chapter 4 Platting Requirements;
- Chapter 10 Street Paving Design;
- Chapter 13 Stormwater Quality Design; and
- Chapter 16 Miscellaneous.

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** provides six Livability Principles[1] that help guide efforts in responsible land development that should guide building practices occurring in existing, future and transitioning Urban Centers. These six Livability Principles are:

1. Decrease household transportation costs, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.
2. Promote equitable, affordable and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races.
3. Enhance the City of Houston's economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs of workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
4. Support existing communities through transit-oriented, mixed-use development, land recycling and community revitalization.
5. Coordinate policies to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods by enhancing unique characteristics and investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods.[2]

1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). Sustainable Housing Communities Six Livability Principles. (S. Donovan, Producer) Retrieved January 2012, from HUD.gov: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/Six_Livability_Principles

Existing Polices and Programs

Land Development

Challenges and Opportunities

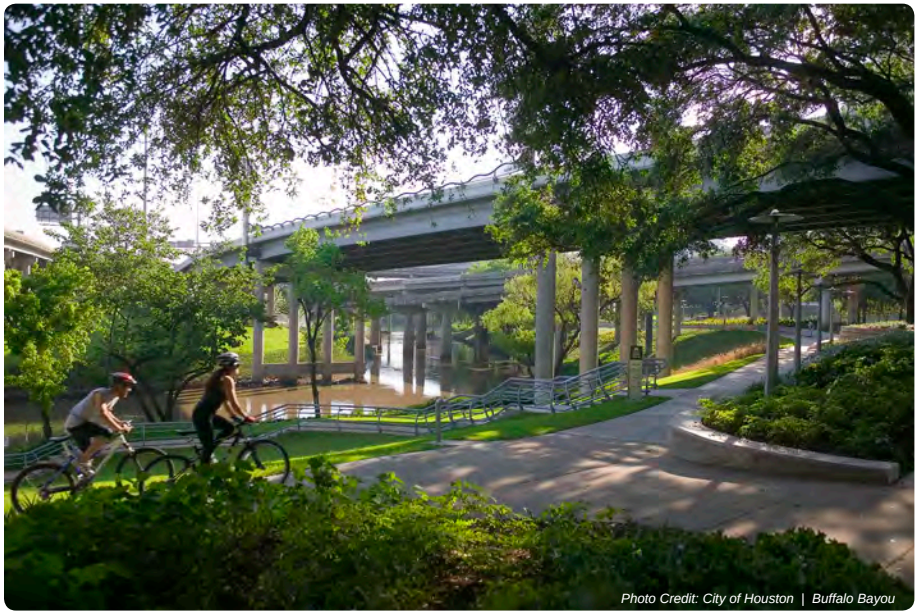
Code of Ordinances Chapter 42: Major Activity Center Designation Section 42-274 favors large-scale development and redevelopment projects by requiring 10,000,000 square feet of gross floor area for uses other than single-family residential and 400+ acres of land overall. This is an opportunity to accommodate large-scale development and redevelopment projects which may be more appropriate for Large or Medium Centers. This section of the existing code also provides buffering of mid- to high-rise developments adjacent to traditional single-family residential communities outside of Major Activity Centers, which helps to protect the character of existing neighborhoods.

Today, divergent audiences using **Code of Ordinances Chapter 42** and Houston's **Infrastructure Design Manual** exist. The **Infrastructure Design Manual** is intended for architects and engineers and is not intended to act as a development guide for the greater public. New LID or other innovative practices may be accepted, but need to be presented to the City Engineer's office.

A few stakeholders, however, noted that given the level of expertise needed to properly interpret the manual, many design ideas and/or innovative solutions expressed by developers are not open for interpretation and are left to the discretion of the architect or engineer. Stakeholders noted that this becomes an issue when templates have been set, leaving little to no room for discussion of "out of the box" LID techniques that could serve as new prototypes and models of better building practices.

Other stakeholders noted that the **Infrastructure Design Manual** is very appropriately esoteric (i.e. geared only towards professional engineers and architects) in that it is intended to be a technical document that guides the design and construction of public infrastructure.

While there may never be consensus among stakeholders on this topic, there are opportunities to find a middle ground. Technical principles from the **Infrastructure Design Manual** that relate to transit-oriented, live/work/play environments could be abbreviated and marketed to various private sector audiences that will be a part of achieving the implementation of Urban Centers throughout the future.



The Infrastructure Design Manual is geared towards professional engineers and architects and is intended to be a technical document guiding the design and construction of public infrastructure.

Existing Polices and Programs

Land Development

Challenges and Opportunities

There are currently no requirements for LID in Houston - but this is not a gap in sustainability in that LID techniques may not be appropriate for every project type. Houston's **Infrastructure Design Manual Chapter 13 Stormwater Quality Design Requirements** specifies design criteria, inspection and maintenance requirements for bioretention, infiltration trenches, porous pavement, vegetative swales, roof surfaces and rain barrels. However, these only apply to new development on undeveloped parcels of five or more acres or significant redevelopment (defined as changes of one acre or more to existing impervious surfaces) on developed parcels of five or more acres.

Harris County's Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure Design Criteria for Storm Water Management does not require conventional development projects to follow LID requirements. Requirements only apply to new development or redevelopment projects choosing to incorporate LID for the purpose of satisfying current Harris County Public Infrastructure Department Architecture & Engineering Division (HCPID-AED) and Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) Storm Water Management requirements for detention, infrastructure and stormwater quality. If requirements are met, applicants are then eligible to receive Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) of Municipal Utility District (MUD) reimbursements for LID and green infrastructure elements.

Requiring LID for all projects (regardless of context) was noted as an inhibitor to development by some stakeholders. Yet, there was support on behalf of the development community for using Urban Center development projects as an opportunity to exemplify what LID techniques work and do not work in Houston.

There was also support for working towards a list of acceptable best management practices that would help contribute to more high-quality infrastructure design and to promote responsible and sustainable design. This may be one area lacking sustainability that Urban Centers could work towards addressing in the future.

Existing Polices and Programs

Housing Choice

Houston's capacity to attract and retain residents and protect the vibrancy of communities depends on housing choice throughout the city. This entails guaranteeing the availability, affordability, equitable distribution, quantity and quality of housing options. Similarly, the availability of quality education, food and services will be vital to Urban Centers in the future. There are currently several policies in place that help to promote housing choice in Houston. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated 2010-2014 Annual Action Plan; and
- Minimum Property Standards for New Construction, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Maintenance of Multi-family Facilities.

The **Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated 2010-2014 Annual Action Plan** is the City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department's (HCDD) official application for HUD grant funding. It proposes programs and services to be funded during the City's fiscal year and includes the following:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**,
- **HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**,
- **Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA); and**
- **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)**.

While all of the grants are important to Urban Centers, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a great tool for financing housing, public and private facility improvements, as well as for providing public services such as childcare for families with young children and meals for the elderly.

The **Minimum Property Standards (MPS) for New Construction, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Maintenance of Multi-family Facilities** document is important to Urban Centers because it establishes standards and design criteria for multi-family facilities receiving federal assistance through HCDD. The goal of the MPS is to ensure that all multi-family developments meet various health and safety standards and adhere to local building codes for new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation and accessibility.

In addition to setting standards for foundations, drainage, sidewalks, parking, windows, doors, stairways, electrical wiring, plumbing, ventilation and roofing these standards address energy conservation measures such as insulation and weather stripping.

Parking is another factor affecting housing choice and quality of life that is addressed in the MPS document. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs, services, and activities provided or made available by public entities. To comply with the law, ADA accessible parking must be provided. These parking calculations are based on building square footage for apartment units and common areas, number of living units per floor, amount of bedrooms and total square footage of each individual unit.

Existing Polices and Programs

Housing Choice

Challenges and Opportunities

The objectives of HCDD's **2012 Annual Action Plan** - such as economic development, housing availability, housing accessibility, housing affordability and sustainability - align perfectly with the goals of Urban Centers expressed by stakeholders. The implementation of Urban Centers is an excellent opportunity for overcoming challenges targeted in HCDD's **2012 Annual Action Plan** such as:

- Lack of affordable rental housing supply for the elderly population and minority families with children;
- Need for more affordable supportive housing accommodating special needs populations;
- Demand for public neighborhood spaces far surpasses available funding supplies; and
- Low wages impeding individuals' ability to secure affordable housing.

Urban Center implementation efforts should coincide with and address topics identified in existing and future HCDD Annual Action Plans.

This is particularly important in regards to housing because, due to a variety of economic, financial and social reasons, the production of dwelling units that are affordable to lower income earning families does not occur without subsidies and/or encouragement. A comprehensive housing policy could help to mandate the production of a number of more affordable units as a percentage of the production of all new housing units in Houston. This could work towards the goals identified by stakeholders for Urban Centers.

The limited availability of land, as well as high lot value cost, are two known challenges to subsidized housing in Houston. Market forces have led to significant amounts of land, otherwise suitable for subsidized housing, cost-prohibitive for such use. One opportunity for addressing this could be the creation of a fund targeted specifically at providing gap-financing to subsidized housing projects. This could be funded in part by fees assessed against market-rate projects in the city, and could provide an additional financing mechanism for projects that would otherwise be infeasible due to overall development cost.

Where the City owns viable properties for infill development or redevelopment, investors - meeting certain favorable terms and conditions - may be awarded access to such properties at bargain rates in exchange for viable housing options contributing to HCDD initiatives in Urban Centers.

These more affordable housing units could in the form of a stand-alone residential community or integrated with market-rate housing in a mixed-income project. This would help to offset the high market price of land in neighborhoods where land costs make subsidized housing too expensive to rent or sell. Similarly, maximizing the potential of Houston Revitalization Areas - communities specially targeted for economic and residential revitalization and increased home ownership, through public and private entity funding - is another opportunity to align public investments in infrastructure with various community development efforts targeting improvements in Urban Centers.

Another potential barrier to housing choice noted by stakeholders is the expense of providing parking in smaller-scaled, residential infill development projects. The monetary costs and gross floor area (GFA) needed to construct parking facilities was cited as a burden to the financial feasibility of smaller residential projects.

Parking requirements for low- to moderate-income multi-family housing projects are currently the same as parking requirements for regular market rate residential projects. During future phases of this Study, it might be beneficial to initiate further dialogue with stakeholders regarding the effects of parking requirements on subsidized versus regular market rate residential projects.

Existing Polices and Programs

Infrastructure & Transportation

High-quality transportation and infrastructure is a key Urban Center characteristic identified by stakeholders. Ensuring the creation of quality roadways lined with continuous, walkable sidewalks that provide safe, accessible gathering spaces for citizens will be paramount to ensuring Urban Centers are live/work/play environments.

Multimodal transit, increased connectivity and clear wayfinding and signage are key to solving complex growth issues created by changing populations. The creation of complete, context sensitive street designs that work to incorporate all users of a roadway will assist visitors and residents in navigating within and between Urban Centers. The City currently has several policies aimed at regulating construction of and alterations to infrastructure. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Infrastructure Design Manual;
- 2013 - 2017 Adopted Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); and
- Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP).

The **Infrastructure Design Manual** sets standards for all development plans by addressing various drawing conventions such as scales, labeling, computer-aided design line symbology, paper sizing, ink type, etc. The following sections of this document were determined to be most applicable to infrastructure and transportation in Urban Centers:

- Chapter 1 General Requirements;
- Chapter 2 Survey Requirements;
- Chapter 3 Graphic Requirements;
- Chapter 9 Stormwater Design Requirements; and
- Chapter 15 Traffic and Signal Design Requirements.

The **2013 - 2017 Adopted Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** serves as the City's infrastructure improvement strategy through the year 2017. In 2012, voters established the following funding priorities through 2017 (listed in order of greatest amount of funding to lowest amount of funding).

- Street and Bridge Improvements
- Public Safety Facilities Improvements
- General Public Improvements
- Parks and Recreation Facility Improvements
- Library Improvements
- Subsidized Housing Improvements

This is the structure by which public projects are prioritized, funded and implemented. The goal is to create achievable steps for meeting facility and infrastructure needs of the city.

The **Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP)** guides mobility within Houston's Corporate City Limits and areas of Harris, Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery and Liberty Counties.[1] Published in 1942, the MTFP is a long standing document that coordinates thoroughfare and highway improvement efforts amongst various state and local governmental agencies. Annual amendments to the MTFP incorporate citizen feedback about traffic congestion, general mobility issues and development plans that will affect the functionality of Houston's Street Hierarchy System.[2] All streets within Urban Centers are categorized as Principal Thoroughfares, Thoroughfares, Collector Streets or Local Streets based on:

- Length of road;
- Existing/projected traffic volumes;
- Character of nearby properties; and
- Possibility of future expansion, including man-made/natural barriers.

1 City of Houston Planning and Development Department. (n.d.). Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan Policy Statement. Retrieved May 21, 2013, from The City of Houston Official Site for Houston, Texas: http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/DevelopRegs/mobility/docs_pdfs/07policy_statement.pdf

2 City of Houston Planning and Development Department. (2013). Major Thoroughfare & Freeway Plan (MTFP). Retrieved 22 2013, May, from The City of Houston Official Site for Houston, Texas: http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/DevelopRegs/mobility/MTFP.html

Existing Polices and Programs

Infrastructure & Transportation

Challenges and Opportunities

There are several challenges associated with current stormwater mitigation standards. Detention rates are subject to change at City discretion based upon sound engineering analysis/practices. The Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) has not changed rates in 30 years and the City has not changed rates since it started requiring off-street stormwater detention, yet stakeholders noted perceived risk within the development community that rates could undermine the financial stability of a project.

Second, stormwater detention must occur on the site for which stormwater runoff is being mitigated. Smaller development projects may have trouble financing detention devices required to meet regulations - making development of the property financially unfeasible. In general, this will be a challenge throughout the future for smaller development projects attempting to locate in Urban Centers.

While the 2013-2017 CIP aligns very well with the goals established by stakeholders for Urban Centers, there are no funds specifically set aside for areas designated as Centers. Monies are currently spread throughout all parts of the city. Investments to infrastructure (and hydraulic infrastructure in particular) will need to be directed more towards Urban Centers throughout the future. However, it is important to note that for capital improvement projects, Houston voters approved a “worst first” approach to stormwater and street drainage. Thus, if the worst areas in need of improvement occur within Urban Centers, these would take precedence over areas outside of Center boundaries.

Current infrastructure standards are also geared towards accommodating automobile traffic and do not explicitly address travel modes required by other uses of roadways such as cyclists or public transit users. It will be important to better address these other modes of travel as polices and programs are revised and updated going forward.

Existing Polices and Programs

Urban Design & Density

Citizens recognize the need for increasingly dense, sustainable design that utilizes infrastructure in a more efficient and effective manner. The reduction of impervious surfaces and reclamation of vacant or underdeveloped land (i.e. brownfields) have been noted as important approaches for improving the physical form and functionality of Houston's built environments. Yet new development and redevelopment must respect existing character.

Urban design is not explicitly addressed by the **City of Houston Code of Ordinances**. Density, however, is addressed by current code, but standards are not found in a centralized location. H-GAC has conducted a number of corridor and area planning studies through its Livable Center Program that can help to guide policy and decision makers in the creation of urban design standards affecting Urban Centers going forward. The following documents help to inform urban design patterns. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 Subdivisions, Development and Platting Article III Planning Standards Division 3. - Building Lines;
- Chapter 42 Subdivisions, Development and Platting Article III Planning Standards Division 4. - Lots And Reserves; and
- Code of Ordinances Chapter 33 Planning and Development Article VII Historic Preservation; and
- H-GAC Fourth Ward Livable Centers Study: Final Report.

Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 establishes Minimum Lot Sizes (MLS) and Minimum Building Lines (MBL) that preserve and protect the established character of communities and neighborhoods by requiring new development or redevelopment projects to respect existing community building typologies.

Chapter 33 is intended to preserve and protect historically significant structures and sites. Landmark and Protected Landmark designations allow for the recognition and protection of individual historic structures while Historic District designations help neighborhoods by classifying a specific area of a community as historically important. The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) administers this ordinance.

The **H-GAC Fourth Ward Livable Centers Study: Final Report** discusses conflicts that have arisen as a result of current setbacks along major thoroughfares and offers solutions for historic districts characterized by setbacks that are significantly smaller than today's standards outlined in Chapter 42. In response to conflicts arising between old and new building types, several districts have adopted tougher standards for historic preservation.[3] Amendments have taken inconsistencies by adopting:

- Elimination of the 90-day waiver for historic properties when a Certificate of Appropriateness is denied by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission;
- A revised historic district designation process;
- Compatibility guidelines for new construction in an historic district such as setback, exterior features and proportions of contributing and potential contributing structures on the block-face and facing block faces; and
- Clarifications regarding the use of new building materials.

3 City of Houston. (2010, October 13). Houston, Texas Code of Ordinances Chapter 33, Article VII Historic Preservation Ordinance. Retrieved from The City of Houston Official Site for Houston, Texas: http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/hist_pres_amend.html

Challenges and Opportunities

According to the **Fourth Ward Livable Centers Study: Final Report** the Historic Preservation Ordinance at that time was ineffective in protecting historic structures and thus the process of reviewing this set of ordinances was underway. The changes helped align the tools for preservation and work in conjunction with the goals for Urban Centers identified by stakeholders. There is more work to be done to ensure increased density aligns with historic preservation efforts.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Fourth Ward Houston, Texas

*Amendments to Houston's **Historic Preservation Ordinance** helped address conflicts arising between old and new building types within Urban Centers.*

Existing Polices and Programs

Parking

One of the biggest challenges identified by stakeholders in reaching Urban Center goals is the construction and availability of parking facilities to support increased densities. This is a challenge because the amount of time, money and energy expended in planning and constructing parking spaces is great. Past development practices have also resulted in too much parking. However, as Urban Centers continue to become more dense, and parking structures become a more viable option, Urban Centers much acknowledge the added cost associated with providing adequate parking.

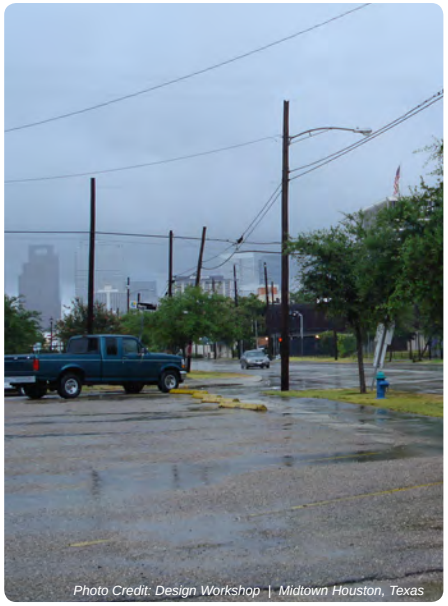
According to a recent parking impact analysis of empty land parcels, and vacant, unoccupied developments, the cost of assessing the impacts of a development project in Houston - which includes an anticipated number of parking spaces - can range from $20,000 for surface parking up to $30,000 for structured parking.[4]

To add to the complexity of issues, construction costs may vary tremendously. For example, the time, materials, and labor costs associated with constructing spaces can range from $4,500 per surface parking space to $7,500-12,500 per structured parking space (located in a multi-level, shared garage facility). Parking facilities that go below ground-level, can cost upwards of $30,000 per parking space.[5]

The high costs of planning for and constructing parking (including time and materials, in addition to money spent) have a significant influence on urban design and the quality of street-life and pedestrian environments - which are key determinants of transit choice in a community.[6] These costs also vary by location. For example, the cost of providing parking in an established Urban Center such as the Central Business District where land values are high and large, vacant land parcels are rare, would be much greater than providing parking in less dense areas in the city.

Developments on smaller land parcels are burdened not only by the monetary costs of completing a traffic and parking assessments, they are also burdened by the physical space taken up by off-street parking garages. Parking garages mean less income generating gross floor area (GFA) or usable floor area (UFA) - which reduces the profitability and therefore probability of more dense, mixed-use projects.

Regardless of context, however, the cost of parking affects on many other economic and environmental challenges that Urban Centers should address, such as traffic congestion, air quality, water quality, land uses and the overall density of development. These unintended consequences can reinforce dependence on cars by undermining the availability of parking facilities near transit or by generally reducing the pedestrian-friendliness of urban environments.



In addition to flooding challenges created by impervious surfaces, excessive parking can undermine community revitalization efforts.

4 Walter P. Moore. (2013, January). Urban Houston Framework Parking and Transportation Analysis. Houston, Texas: Lee Anne Dixon.

5 Ibid.

6 Weinberger, R., Kaehny, J., & Rufo, M. (2010, February). U.S. Parking Policies: An Overview of Management Strategies. New York, New York. Retrieved from http://www.itdp.org/documents/ITDP_US_Parking_Report.pdf

Existing Polices and Programs

Parking

In reviewing existing policies in light of varying hurdles generally affecting parking in Houston, the following documents were determined to be most applicable to Urban Centers. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Off-Street Parking;
- Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Article XI - Parking Benefit Districts; and
- Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Article VIII - Special Parking Areas.

Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Off-Street Parking prohibits construction of development or redevelopment projects unless off-street parking facilities are provided. Residential parking is calculated per single-family dwelling unit, multi-family dwelling unit, bedroom, sleeping room, or beds (depending on type of residential facility).

Parking space requirements for all non-residential uses are calculated based upon the "parking factor", or unique quality, for each use classification. Examples of parking factors include gross floor area, usable floor area and the number of dwelling units, employees, sleeping rooms, storage units or bays, or occupants, depending on the specific use classification being considered.

Shared parking requirements are also addressed in that a parcel of land can be eligible for a shared parking credit schedule if it contains mixed-use development. Single family residential uses are not eligible for a shared parking adjustment.

Within **Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Parking Article XI** a Parking Benefit District (PBD) is defined as a geographic area in the city (typically in the Central Business District or along major commercial or transit corridors) in which revenue generated from parking facilities is used to fund improvements.

Only City Council has the authority to designate a PBD. Revenues generated through parking meters are used to offset the City's administrative costs and financial contributions to signage, enforcement, debt service, installation, operation and maintenance of parking meters. Revenues in excess of $250,000 go to projects recommended by an advisory committee or deposited into the City's parking management special revenue fund. Revenue generated from a PBD may be used in conjunction with other public or private funds. Currently, there is only one PBD in Houston - the Washington Avenue Corridor Parking Benefit District (bounded by Houston Avenue, Center Boulevard, Lillian Street/ Decatur Street and Westcott Street).

Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Parking Article VIII also establishes Special Parking Areas (SPA) in which specialized off-site parking requirements apply. Unlike a City operated PBD, an SPA is maintained by a management entity that must submit a parking management plan to the Planning Commission every two years to remain designated. The City maintains a website that lists all SPA's and their approved parking management plans. Currently the Central Business District, Texas Medical Center and Uptown are the only areas in the city with an SPA.

Existing Polices and Programs

Parking

Challenges and Opportunities

While having parking is pivotal to promoting multimodal transportation, the funding required to meet parking requirements sometimes pose challenges to development efforts. In attempting to guarantee parking for tenants and their guests, many residential projects tend to "err on the side of caution" and go above and beyond current parking requirements to "over park" projects.

While this may seem to be a positive trend, it can increase the construction cost of a project which decreases the affordability of residential units. In other cases, high-levels of parking accommodation have reduced the overall profitability of redevelopment in an area, undermining community revitalization efforts.

Moreover, residential parking spaces in many areas go unoccupied during the daytime while residents are at work, so the benefits of providing the parking facilities could be greater if shared with nearby retail or commercial uses. Recent amendments to **Code of Ordinances Chapter 26: Parking Article VIII**[7], however, ensure that Urban Centers will help address these challenges in the future.

Stakeholder feedback suggests that balanced parking regulations will be key to creating places in which people will want to live/work/play. This will lay the groundwork for land developers and housing interests to be able to supply facilities that meet parking demands but does not overly burden smaller land parcels that oftentimes have more difficulty in successfully funding profitable projects.

As Urban Centers move towards achieving goals for multi-modal transportation, opportunities for continued dialogue with the development community about optimal parking arrangements for mixed-use infill projects in Large, Medium and Small Urban Centers should be pursued. Although many of these challenges are addressed in recent amendments to **Code of Ordinances Chapter 26**,[8] parking regulations in Urban Centers should strive to strike a balance between ensuring parking is available for daytime and nighttime users of a place.

7 City of Houston. (2013, March 6). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 26 - Parking, Article VIII - Off-Street Parking aned Loading, Division 2 Requirements for Parking Spaces, Amended Version. Retrieved May 22, 2013, from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level3/COOR_CH26PA_ARTVIIIOREPALO.html#TOPTITLE

8 City of Houston. (2013, March 6). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 26 - Parking, Article VIII - Off-Street Parking and Loading, Division 2 Requirements for Parking Spaces, Amended Version. Retrieved May 22, 2013, from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level3/COOR_CH26PA_ARTVIIIOREPALO.html#TOPTITLE

Peer Review

In addition to exploring Existing Characteristics, polices and programs related to Urban Centers in Houston, a peer review of other cities' Urban Center plans, documents, policies, processes and programs was conducted to inform the this Study.

Peer reviews focus on areas comparable to Houston in size, population and/or overall regional context (such as having an economy dependent upon industrial/ manufacturing located near a major waterway port). Publications from the following areas were reviewed during this Study:

- Pinal County, Arizona;
- Puget Sound, Washington;
- Tysons Corner, Virginia;
- Western Australia Region;
- Portland, Oregon Metropolitan Area;
- Broward County, Florida;
- Alexandria, Virginia;
- Bloomington, Indiana;
- Hillsborough County, Florida;
- Kirkland, Washington;
- Miami-Dade County, Florida;
- State of Michigan;
- Kings County, New York;
- San Francisco, California; and
- Montgomery County, Maryland.

Examples of sources reviewed include Miami-Dade County, Florida's Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (2012) and the Puget Sound Regional Council's Regional Centers policy (2002). Findings highlight what other areas have done to successfully encourage Urban Centers and also explore potential criteria, expectations and tools that might be applicable to Houston. This overview highlights these general findings, however, a more detailed list of findings and related sources are included in **Appendix B: Peer Review**.

Process Findings

The comprehensive planning process, which is required by state law to guide decision-making about built and natural environments, was the most commonly used process by municipalities and regional councils reviewed for the purposes of this Study. During the comprehensive planning (or comprehensive plan review/update process), many jurisdictions engaged in dialogue with citizens about Urban Centers and formulated both the criteria and administrative processes for designating Urban Centers.

Stakeholder engagement, transparency and dialogue were key to all peer reviewed sources. Municipalities, often working with many inter-jurisdictional planning groups, relied heavily on interactive public engagement to develop criteria for identifying and designating Urban Centers. The shapes and sizes of Urban Centers varied tremendously throughout peer reviewed sources.

Goal Findings

Several reoccurring themes emerged among peer reviewed visions and associated goals. The most commonly noted goal adhered to increased density within strategic locations of a greater region or area. Cluster, or the compilation of multiple nodes, was especially important for areas of employment in terms of accessibility via transit. Other goals identified included the following:

- Encouragement of affordable, subsidized housing;
- Stimulation of job growth;
- Support or creation of multimodal transit;
- Encouragement of sustainability through urban design;
- Support of historic preservation;
- Linkage of parks and open spaces; and
- Increase of livable, family-friendly environments.

Peer Review

Challenges Findings

Many areas are grappling with population growth and infrastructure challenges very similar to Houston. Sources peer reviewed suggest that cities are tailoring Center policies to address issues, including but not limited to the following:

- Protection of neighborhood character;
- Prevention of large, pedestrian unfriendly super-block land development patterns;
- Mitigation of environmentally damaging “leapfrog “development;
- Reduction of vitality in aging commercial and residential areas; and
- General lack of multimodal transit connectivity.

Criteria Findings

The following baseline Criteria are commonly used in other cities of the nation to verify the location of Urban Centers and to establish boundaries thereof:

- Land area (in acres);
- Population or population per gross acre;
- Employment or employment per gross acre;
- Housing units or employees per housing unit; and
- Land use.

Generally, Criteria for Urban Centers in peer cities was expanded upon to establish differing levels, or sizes of Urban Centers based on:

- Types of existing land uses - such as office, civic/educational, medical, commercial or residential;
- Overall capacity for growth - such as housing, transportation, stormwater and utilities infrastructure;
- Function - i.e. local destination versus national or international destination; and
- Intensity/Density - low levels of density, mixed uses and transit versus high levels of density, mixed uses and transit.

Overall Outcomes of Established Polices/ Programs

In addition to Criteria and Tools for encouraging Urban Centers, oftentimes design guidelines were needed to strategically guide the creation of built environments that were more consistent with community goals. All cities and regions have met or exceeded goals for economic growth, new development, redevelopment, connectivity and housing - although many had to amend their original Urban Center policies following adoption to guarantee this success.

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3

URBAN CENTER PATTERN BOOK

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Chapter Introduction

Previous chapters of this Study examined existing Characteristics, policies and programs relevant to Urban Centers to pinpoint challenges and opportunities for encouraging better development practices in Houston.

In an effort to start addressing these challenges and opportunities, the following provides a summary of key definitions and discussions as presented by this Framework. The intent of this chapter is to build upon previous findings to create a concise “pattern book” that conveys how the physical form of built environments can help to overcome various “gaps” in sustainability to achieve Urban Center goals identified by stakeholders.

Framework

A Framework is an outline or blueprint of a general concept or idea. It’s intent is to not only highlight the general vision and goals of a project (see *Purpose* chapter), but also indicate the various components of an idea that must be fully enhanced and executed for the final desired result.

Frameworks, however, are not intended to be constant and should alter throughout the developmental process as the general concept continues to mature at all phases of development - including reevaluation of the Framework years after implementation. Framework components for this Study include:

- Goals/Characteristics;
- Criteria;
- Tools;
- Expectations; and
- Process.

Definitions, as they pertain to this Study, are provided in this chapter.

Goals

Goals are defined as ideal results that the City, Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), focus groups and citizens desire to achieve through the establishment of well-planned, well-designed Urban Centers. These overarching goals will guide how Criteria and Expectations for Centers are determined. Simply put, these are ideals that all Urban Centers should strive for (i.e. encourage economic viability and diversity, enhance community stability). For the full list of Goals, refer to *Purpose*.

Characteristics

Characteristics are measurements established through SAC, focus group and citizen input used to validate Large, Medium or Small Center eligibility as vetted through peer review. These may also function as a mechanism by which locations and boundaries for Urban Centers could be established. Generally, Urban Centers have higher measurements than the rest of the city on average for several categories such as density, intensity of use, diversity of use and connectivity. Examples include jobs/housing ratio, average commercial/office floor-to-area ratio, land use diversity index and average block size.

Definitions

Toolbox

A Toolbox includes incentives offered by the City to encourage more sustainable development practices that fall into two categories: Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives. Universal Improvement Tools, are those that improve services within Urban Centers that benefit the area as a whole. Universal Improvement Tools are coordinated through various agencies to encourage higher quality, urban development. For example, additional transit services or prioritizing funds towards improvements in an Urban Center are efforts requiring both municipal and other organizations to work together to improve services over time. These efforts are often done with the expectation that development practices will align with improved services by creating denser, more pedestrian-friendly environments. However, the benefits of Universal Improvement Tools apply to all development projects in an area, regardless of development practices.

Developer Incentives are available to individuals meeting Criteria to develop in a character that is more in line with the goals of Urban Centers. Developer Incentives may vary by Urban Center, but all are intended to reduce the time, financial risk and resources expended by developers building in alignment with the Goals of the Framework.

Expectations

Expectations are standards for higher quality, urban development that an applicant proposing a project (new construction, infill or otherwise) must meet in order to gain access to Developer Incentives provided by the Framework. Expectations require all applicants to adhere to various design standards, performance levels and construction best practices before receiving building development or other City permits. An example of an Expectation in the Toolbox is a building's doors may never swing into the pedestrian realm (Transit Corridor Ordinance[1]). A detailed matrix of all the Universal Improvement Tools, Developer Incentives and Expectations explored during this Study is available in *Appendix E: Toolbox*.

Process

Process is the overall methodology, eligibility criteria and regulatory tools/incentives for encouraging Urban Centers in Houston. The Process determines how boundaries are established, who initiates the application and designation Process, and how long Urban Center designations are valid. The preferred Process identified during Urban Houston Framework meetings and workshops must gain approval by the City of Houston legal department and adhere to all existing citywide policies to date. A detailed exploration of all processes explored during this Study may be found in *Appendix C: Process*.

Pilot Projects

Pilot Projects are defined as three real-life case studies in Houston that will be used to evaluate the preferred Process, eligibility Criteria and regulatory Tools identified through SAC and citizen input. Findings from these pilot projects will be used to guide policy revisions, decision making and implementation of Urban Centers throughout the future. Pilot Project sites selected by the City include:

- OST/Griggs and Cullen Streets in southeast Houston/Third Ward;
- Montrose and Westheimer area; and
- Westchase District.

Detailed Pilot Project analyses are available in *Appendix F: Pilot Projects*.

1 City of Houston. (n.d.). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting Article IV Transit Corridor Development. Retrieved 2012, from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level3/COOR_CH42SUDEPL_ARTIVTRCODE.html

Narrowing Possibilities

Beginning with the research outlined in the *Existing Conditions Assessment* chapter of this Study, Urban Center Characteristics were further explored and vetted through the public participation process. As discussed in subsequent pages, Center Characteristics are comprised of two potential categories. These include:

1. Expectations - or what is expected to be developed in a Center that may be currently lacking or absent - and;
2. Criteria - those characteristics expected (to some degree) within all Urban Centers.

The following outlines the overall approach used to define such a matrix during the Urban Houston Framework Study.

Characteristics

Feedback received from public outreach efforts also helped to define an assortment of characteristics for Urban Centers in Houston. After brainstorming dozens of characteristics, the following were cited as aspects that all Urban Centers should have in order to meet stakeholders' Vision and Goals.

1. Housing character and diversity
2. Infill/redevelopment potential
3. Funding mechanism or management entity
4. Land use diversity
5. High population & employment density
6. Access to amenities, attractions and destinations
7. Bike/pedestrian accessibility
8. Access to streets & freeways
9. High quality transit

Expectations

The following represent measures of characteristics that indicate what a Center should achieve. It is acknowledged that through adjustments to services offered by various agencies in the Center or by using incentives to encourage better development practices in the Urban Centers, these measures of character can be improved from baseline conditions.

1. Residential density
2. Housing type/cost/starts
3. Vacant land (%)
4. Improvement to land value ratio
5. Management District, TIRZ
6. Average FAR, land use diversity
7. Impervious/pervious cover
8. Parks and open space
9. Job density
10. Population density
11. Amenity density/diversity
12. National/regional destinations
13. Bikeway density, trail density
14. Sidewalk accessibility
15. Intersection density, street density
16. Streets/freeways/thoroughfare access
17. Type of transit, transit facilities
18. Transit frequency and connectivity

Criteria

The following characteristics were cited as aspects that all Urban Centers should have in order to meet stakeholders' vision and goals for dense, vibrant Centers.

1. Residential density (dwelling units)
2. Vacant land (%)
3. Improvement to land value ratio
4. Management District, TIRZ
5. Area of center in acres
6. Job density
7. Population density
8. Amenity density
9. National/regional destinations
10. Access to freeways, thoroughfares
11. Type of transit, transit facilities

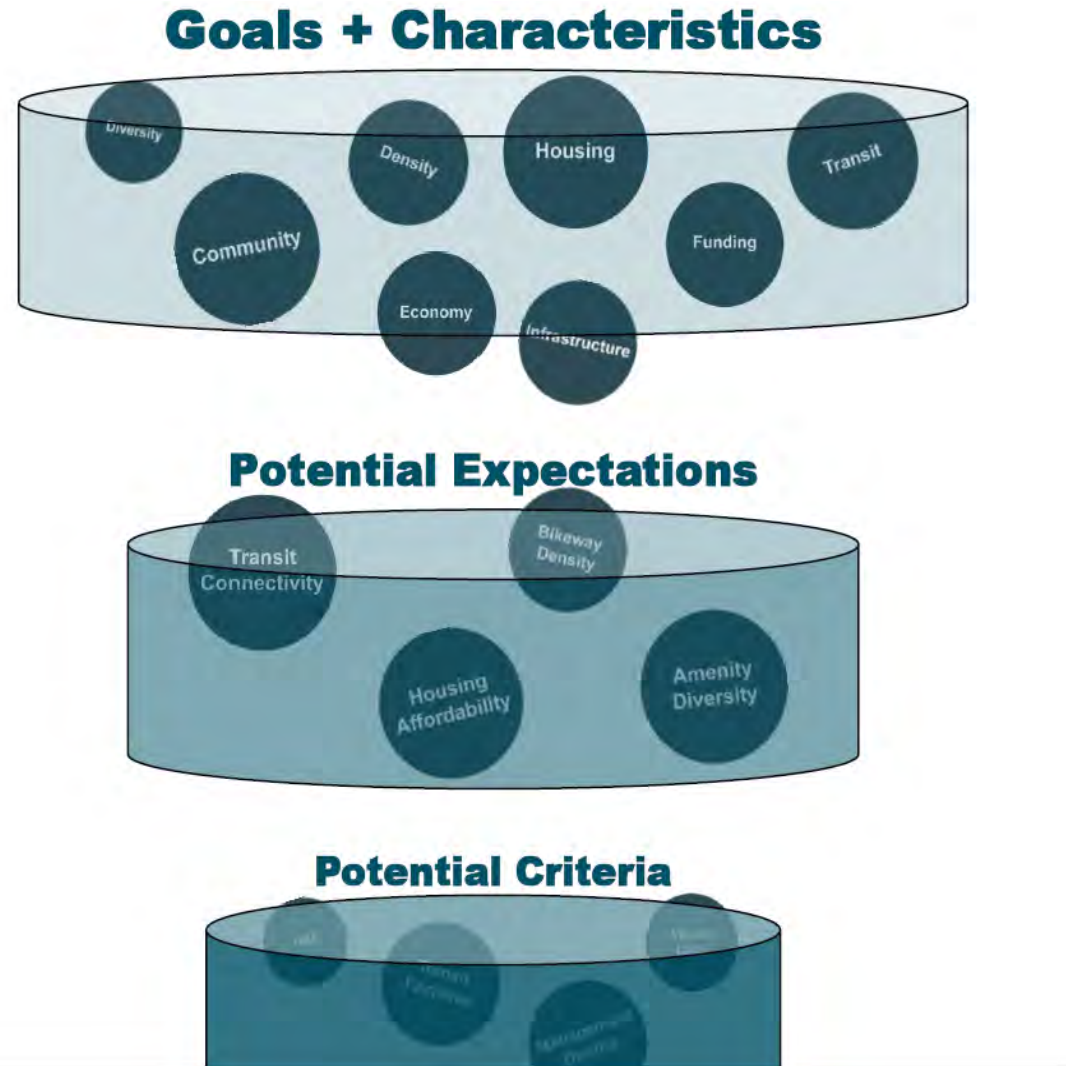


Figure 13: *Potential Goals, Characteristics, Expectations and Criteria*

General Findings

Throughout the Urban Center Framework process, stakeholders, focus group members and interested citizenry shared ideas regarding their desired characteristics for Urban Centers. The diagrams below indicate those items that were identified as key characteristics from community workshops and online polls. The results of the first Online Poll revealed the most important challenges facing tomorrow's Urban Centers.

As challenges were identified for each Urban Center size (Large, Medium and Small) several challenges emerged as major concerns for all Urban Centers. These included: 1) lack of funding to maintain existing infrastructure, 2) poor pedestrian infrastructure, 3) lack of policies and funding to increase safety, and 4) lack of connectivity between nodes. The following pages expand on the general functions and definitions established by stakeholders to explore how the physical environments of Centers should help to further regional sustainability goals.

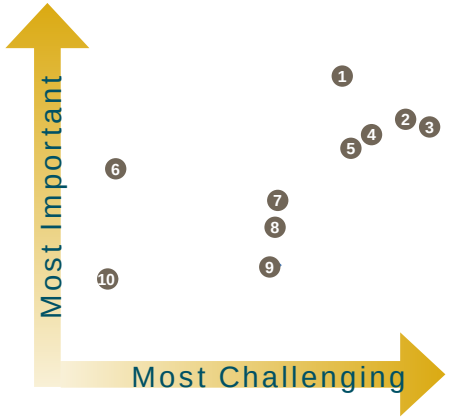
Large Centers

1. Planning/fiscal support for transit
2. Quality of life
3. Multimodal transportation (rail)
4. Pedestrian infrastructure
5. Funding to maintain infrastructure
6. Policies requiring developers to bear cost of infrastructure (rail)
7. Connectivity between nodes
8. Policies/funding to increase safety
9. Funding for education
10. Ability to change policies with the Independent School District

Medium Centers

1. Planning/fiscal support for transit
2. Policies requiring developers to bear cost of infrastructure (rail)
3. Multimodal transportation (rail)
4. Connectivity between nodes
5. Policies requiring developers to bear cost of infrastructure (bike)
6. Funding to maintain infrastructure
7. Bicycle infrastructure
8. Pedestrian infrastructure
9. Policies/funding to increase safety
10. Lack of skilled and trained workforce

Small Centers



1. Multimodal transportation (bike)
2. Connectivity between nodes
3. Funding for education
4. Funding to maintain infrastructure
5. Poor bicycle infrastructure
6. Poor pedestrian infrastructure
7. Ability to change policies with the Independent School District
8. Policies/funding to increase safety
9. Funding park programming and maintenance
10. Poor sidewalk maintenance

Center Descriptions

Stakeholders were adamant that “one size does not fit all” when it comes to Houston’s Urban Centers. They felt that Centers differed by their size, audience (who is drawn to the Center), mix of land uses, density, accessibility, and community character. Through the Urban Houston Framework process, the following Center descriptions were molded in an attempt to capture these subtle differences.

Following, each characteristic of a Center is described comparing the generalized current conditions with the generalized planned conditions. These provide a compass point with which to navigate toward full implementation of the program.

Large Centers

Large Centers have higher housing and employment densities than other areas in the city along with more intense cultural activities and recreational amenities. People arrive via train, bus, bike, car or taxi and are able to walk to destinations. Large Centers cater to regional, national and international needs and consist of tall buildings and a street grid that encourages pedestrian activity, multi-use retail opportunities and public transit usage. These Centers enhance community stability by offering services such as educational programs, post offices, police and fire stations and civic amenities such as museums, performing arts venues and public parks. The types of parks in Centers may vary, but Large Centers conserve environmental resources and have a network of parks and/or open spaces connected by high-quality infrastructure and urban design.

Medium Centers

Medium Centers have more cultural activities, recreational amenities, housing options, transportation choices and employment opportunities than other areas in the city and Small Centers. People arrive via bus, bike, car or taxi and are able to walk longer to destinations through systems of good connectivity. Medium Centers draw citywide users and have a mix of mid- to high-rise buildings. They enhance community stability by providing varied access to goods, services, schools and public spaces. The types of parks in Centers may vary, but Medium Centers conserve environmental resources and have a network of parks and/or open spaces connected by high-quality infrastructure and urban design.

Small Centers

Small Centers cater to community needs and may have low- to mid-rise buildings. Although there is a mix of uses, they do not typically have high housing and employment densities. Instead, they provide amenities, services, opportunities and activities fitting for the neighborhoods they support and contribute to economic vitality by attracting and retaining small businesses. A minimal amount of transit exists in the form of local routes connecting to destination routes. Small Centers support multimodal transportation by being a place in which people arrive via foot, bicycle, car or bus and are able to bike or walk short distances to destinations. The types of parks in Centers may vary, but Small Centers conserve environmental resources and have a network of parks and/or open spaces connected by high-quality infrastructure and urban design.

Figure 14: *Small, Medium and Large Centers cited by Values Workshop participants*

General Character

Large

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Seagler Road & Meadowglen Lane, Houston

Today, the Large Center is national and international destination within the city. Development may be compact, however land use patterns typically tend to be auto-oriented. Land area comprising the Large Center is 500 acres or greater* characterized by boundaries that are fairly regular and geometrical in shape (i.e. circular, rectangular or triangular). There may be infill and redevelopment opportunities as evidenced by vacant or underutilized parcels.

In the future, the Large Center is a national and international destination within the city. Due to the number of people present at various times of the day/night, walkability of the Large Center is compact and pedestrian-oriented. The Large Center is typically greater than 700 acres*.

Photo Credit: City of Houston | Buffalo Bayou

Medium

Photo Credit: Petersgroup Consulting | University Boulevard & Morningside, Houston

Today, the Medium Center is a citywide destination. Development patterns may be compact or auto-oriented. The Medium Center is typically 200 - 500 acres in size*. It may be characterized by regular, geometrically shaped boundaries or may exist in the form of a linear, corridor-like environment (similar to the high density corridors of Washington or Westheimer Avenue). There are infill and redevelopment opportunities as evidenced by vacant or underutilized parcels.

In the future, the Medium Center is a citywide destination. Due to the number of people present in the Center at various times of the day/night, development patterns are more compact and walkability is better than in other areas in the city. The land area of the Medium Center is typically between 300 and 700 acres*.

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Baldwin & Gray Street, Houston

Small

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Calhoun Street, Houston

Today, the Small Center is a neighborhood destination containing goods and services needed by local residents daily. Development patterns are auto-oriented. The Center is typically less than 200 acres* of land in size and characterized by boundaries that are fairly geometrical or linear in shape. There are infill and redevelopment opportunities as evidenced by vacant or underutilized parcels.

In the future, the Small Center is a neighborhood destination containing services and retail opportunities needed daily. Development patterns are more compact and walkability is better than in other areas in the city. The Small Center is typically less than 300 acres* in size.

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Note: Acreages were derived first, by looking at peer reviewed sources (specifically Puget Sound Regional Centers) and then by comparing acreages to known Urban Centers in Houston (such as the Central Business District) and picking a range for each Urban Center size based on existing conditions and the current Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting Sec. 42-274. - Major Activity Center (MAC) designation in which designation is applicable to areas comprised of at least 400 acres of land. All acreages in this Study are subject to change based on future analysis.

Density

Large

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority

Today, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors (such as tourists, shoppers, teachers, students, medical professionals and patients) creates activity levels essential to the character of the Large Center. These densities support public transportation options such as light rail and express bus service in the Central Business District and the Texas Medical Center.

In the future, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors creates activity levels essential to a Large Center. Densities should grow to support increased public transportation options such as commuter rail, light rail, streetcars or express bus service.

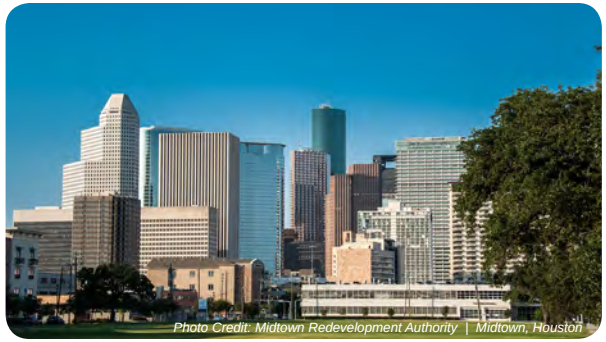


Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Medium


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Midtown, Houston

Today, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors (such as shoppers, students and professionals) creates activity levels essential to the character of a Medium Center. These densities only support public transportation options such as express or local bus service in the Medium Center.

In the future, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors (such as shoppers, students and professionals) creates activity levels essential to the character of a Medium Center. These densities should grow to support public transportation options such as light rail, streetcars or express bus service.


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Portland

Small


Photo Credit: Petersgroup Consulting | Montgomery Street, Houston

Today, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors (such as shoppers and students) creates activity levels essential to the character of a Small Center. These densities only support transit options such as local bus service in the Small Center.

In the future, the combined densities of population, jobs and visitors (such as shoppers and students) creates activity levels essential to the character of a Small Center. These densities should grow to support transit options such as streetcars, express bus service or enhanced local bus service.


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Portland

Land Use Diversity

Large

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Tranquility Park, Houston

Today, the Large Center has a horizontal and vertical mix of uses. Due to the Center's function as a national and international destination, land uses typically include high-rise multi-family residential, large office, retail, health care and educational or cultural facilities. The presence of parks is inconsistent.

In the future, the Large Center has a horizontal and vertical mix of uses that are accessible by all forms of multimodal transit. As a national and international destination, land uses include high-rise residential, large office, retail, health care and educational or cultural facilities. A hierarchy of parks is present, but there is typically at least one regional park or open space area connected to a larger network of open space with trails.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Riverfront Park, Denver

Medium

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Today, the Medium Center has a horizontal and vertical mix of uses. Due to the Center's function as a citywide destination, land uses typically include mid-rise multi-family residential, office, retail, health care and educational or cultural facilities. The presence of parks is inconsistent among Medium Centers.

In the future, the Medium Center has a horizontal and vertical mix of uses that are accessible by multimodal transit. As a citywide destination, land uses typically include mid-rise multi-family residential, office, retail, health care and educational or cultural facilities. A hierarchy of parks are present, but there is typically at least one community park or open space area connected to a larger network of open space with trails.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | The Woodlands, Houston

Small

Photo Credit: Petersgroup Consulting | Rice Village, Houston

Today, the Small Center has a horizontal mixture of uses. Due to the Center's function as a neighborhood destination, land uses typically include low-scale multi-family residential, townhomes, small retail, and educational and cultural facilities. The presence of parks is inconsistent among Small Centers.

In the future, the Small Center has a horizontal mixture of uses that are accessible by walking or biking. As a neighborhood destination, land uses typically include low-scale multi-family residential, townhomes, small retail, and educational and cultural facilities. A hierarchy of parks are present, but there is typically at least one neighborhood park or open space area connected to a larger network of open space.

Photo Credit: Petersgroup Consulting | City Centre, Houston

Transit Quality

Large

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Today, light rail, express and local bus services are present in select Large Centers. The frequency of bus stops and service is fairly often, especially in the Texas Medical Center (TMC) and the Central Business District (CBD). Light rail is limited to the CBD and TMC. Light rail operates seven days a week and the quality and user-friendliness of rail stops is high.

In the future, the Large Center is served by light rail, express bus and local bus services. The frequency of bus stops and service is often. Light rail connects multiple Large Centers and runs seven days a week. The quality and user-friendliness of all rail and bus stops is very high.


Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Medium


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Midtown, Houston

Today, light rail, express and local bus services are present in the Medium Center. The frequency of bus stops and service is often. Light rail, however, is limited to the CBD, TMC, Midtown and the Museum District. The quality and user friendliness of bus stops varies, but current METRORail expansions are underway that will increase trail services in Medium Centers.

In the future, light rail, express and local bus services are present in the Medium Center. The frequency of bus stops and service for is often. Light rail is accessible to multiple Medium Centers via multimodal transportation seven days a week. The quality and user friendliness of stops is consistent and makes public transit an attractive option to residents and visitors of the Medium Center.

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Small


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Montrose Boulevard & Westheimer Avenue, Houston

Today, express bus, local bus and METROLift services are present in Small Centers, however, the frequency of bus stops and service varies. Hours of operation for local bus services are available most days of the week but METROLift has limited hours. The existence and quality of the stops varies and may act as a barrier for people considering alternative modes of transit.

In the future, express bus, local bus and METROLift services are present or in very close proximity to Small Centers. The frequency of bus stops and service is consistent and predictable, which encourages people to take alternative modes of transit. Hours of operation for local bus services run most days of the week and stops are of very high quality.


Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Uptown Houston, Texas

Housing Mix

All Centers

Today, <u>some</u> Centers include a variety of housing. High-rise multi-family residential units typically locate in Large Centers and are very expensive. Mid-rise townhome units tend to locate in Medium Centers. Today, Small Centers include few, if any, housing types other than single-family residential units or low density apartments and there are very few housing starts (new construction of residential units). The cost of a residential unit in a Large, Medium or Small Center varies based on the land/property values of surrounding neighborhoods. Depending on the age of the Center and the amount of vacant or under utilized land, there may be new or existing units being bought and sold in the marketplace. Today, people spend hundreds of dollars a month on fuel commuting to jobs, adding to congestion and pollution. Urban Centers could be more beneficial if they were more able to house a portion of the “diverse” (income) workforce.

In the future, <u>all</u> Centers include a variety of housing. Large Centers include high-rise multi-family residential units to mid-rise residential units. While many of these units are very expensive, a percent of them are subsidized to provide affordable options near transit opportunities for the workforce of an area. Medium Centers include a range of mid-rise multi-family residential units to townhome units available at a variety of price points. Small Centers include a variety of housing types ranging from mid-rise multi-family residential units to caretaker and accessory dwelling units. A variety of price points that make units affordable to the workforce in Small Centers are offered, also. Depending on the age of the Center and the amount of vacant or under utilized land, there may be new or existing units consistently bought and sold. All Centers have housing mixes and typologies built to the street edge that help to form continuous, dense, pedestrian-oriented, live/work/play environments.


Photo Credit: Design Workshop


Photo Credit: Design Workshop


Photo Credit: Design Workshop


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Photo Credit: Design Workshop

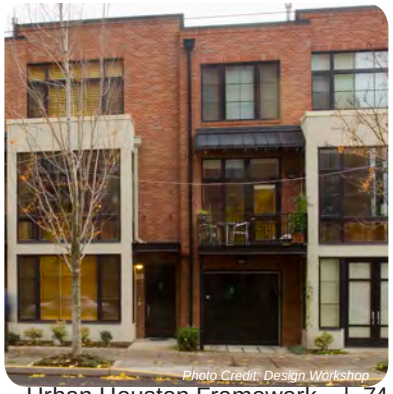


Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Bicycle and Pedestrian Accessibility

All Centers

Today, all Centers have uneven qualities of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that rarely allows people to travel throughout a Center or connect to other Centers without using a personal automobile. Where bikeways, trails and sidewalks do exist, they are rarely accessible to a variety of users - commuters, people exercising for fitness, people strolling and individuals with disabilities.

In the future, all Centers have a hierarchy of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that allows people to travel throughout a Center as well as connect to other Centers without using a personal automobile. Bikeways, trails and sidewalks are key elements of this network. Centers must be accessible to a variety of users - commuters, people exercising for fitness, people strolling and individuals with disabilities.

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority


Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority

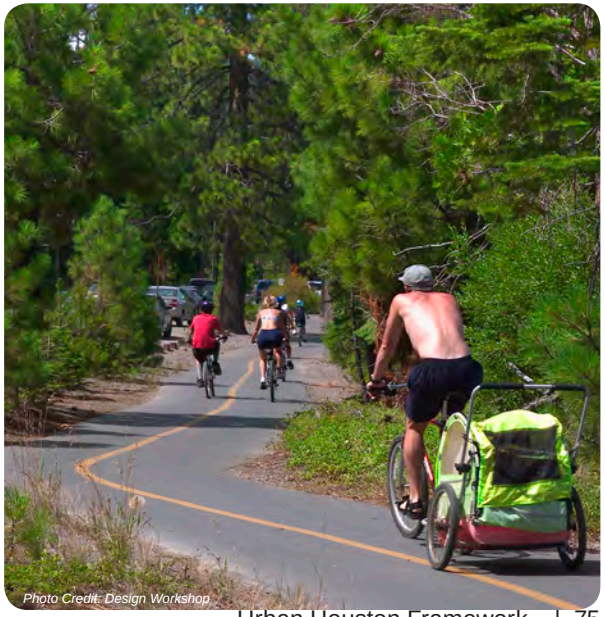


Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Access to Amenities

All Centers

Today, the diversity and density of amenities vary and Urban Centers tend to be focused narrowly on one type of user - resident, worker, shopper, visitor, student or patient. Large Centers cater to local, regional, national and international audiences that visit the Center. Attractions include cultural amenities such as universities and museums. Medium Centers cater to local and regional audiences and include citywide destinations such as festivals and theaters. Small Centers cater only to local audiences and are usually home to local serving amenities such as post offices, libraries, health care facilities and schools, although these may also be found in Large and Medium Centers.

In the future, the diversity and density of amenities vary in each Urban Center would grow to accommodate a variety of users. Large Centers cater to local, regional, national and international audiences that visit and include destination cultural amenities like universities, museums, convention centers, public plazas and arts districts. Medium Centers cater to local and regional audiences and include citywide destination amenities such as farmers markets, festivals and theaters. Small Centers cater to local audiences. All Centers anchor increasing densities of local serving amenities such as post offices, libraries, health care facilities and schools.

Photo Credit: City of Houston

Photo Credit: Design Workshop | Cherry Creek North, Denver

Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

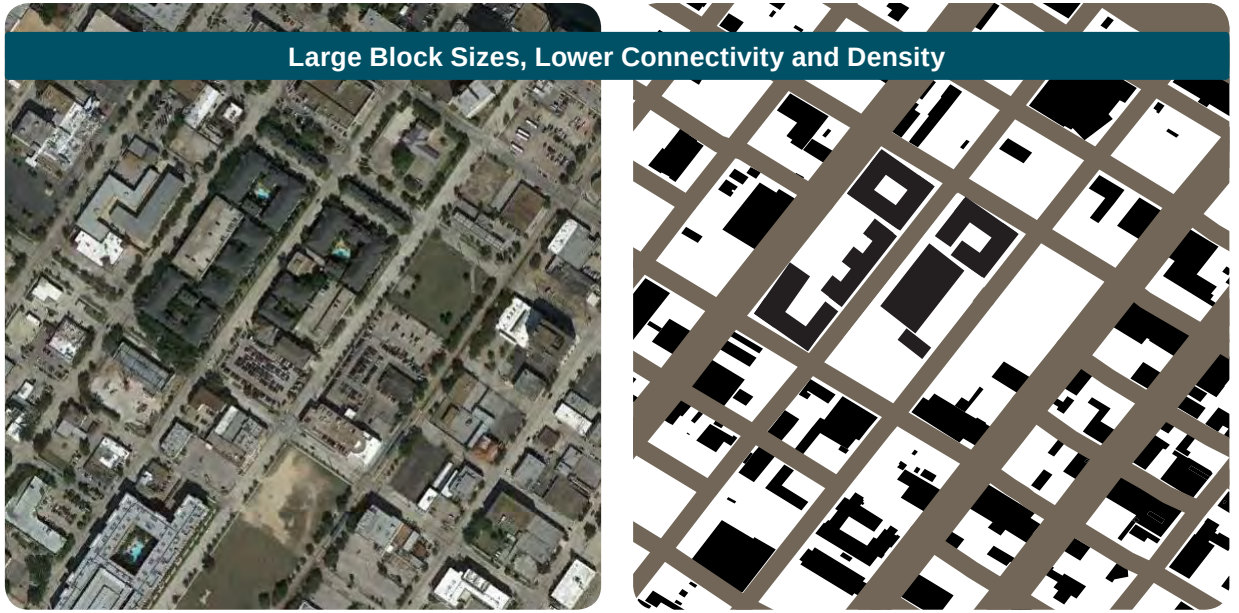
Photo Credit: Midtown Redevelopment Authority | Midtown, Houston

Street Hierarchy and Connectivity

All Centers

Today, streets in all Urban Centers provide for safe, direct, and convenient access by automobile, but the quality of the experience for bicycles and pedestrian users is uneven. Blocks are often large and act as barriers to travel through the Center. Large Centers have direct access to freeways and thoroughfares. Medium Centers have direct access to thoroughfares and collectors. Small Centers have direct access to collectors and local roads. Despite access to roadways, all Centers suffer from uneven conditions or streets that occasionally create barriers to movement throughout a Center.

In the future, streets in all Centers form a well-connected network that provides for safe, direct, and convenient access by automobile, bicycle and pedestrian. Small blocks sizes and a well-connected street network accommodates increased travel choices, helps to disperse traffic, and encourages pedestrian and bicycle travel. Large Centers have direct access to freeways and thoroughfares. Medium Centers have direct access to thoroughfares and collectors while Small Centers have direct access to collectors and local roads. No Centers have block sizes or street patterns that hinder movement or accessibility by all modes of travel. Where direct access has been hindered by past development practices, alternative connections are provided to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle movement through easements, etc.



Large Block Sizes, Lower Connectivity and Density

Small Block Sizes, High Connectivity and Density

Designing for Safety in Multimodal Environments

All Centers

Today, there is a lack of pedestrian connectivity across large blocks and parcels. This places barriers between neighborhoods and transit facilities, as well as limits retail opportunities. This challenge is present in all Urban Centers, but more common in Large and Medium Centers. This challenge is present in relatively "new" centers such as Westchase, established areas with large single users such as the Energy Corridor and Texas Medical Center, and established area like Midtown where streets have been abandoned.

In the future, parks and pedestrian access ways will provide activated passage for pedestrians throughout and between Urban Centers. Streets with pedestrian facilities or, at minimum, pedestrian access ways will be provided every 500 - 700 feet for new development on large blocks.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Photo Credit: Kelly Porter

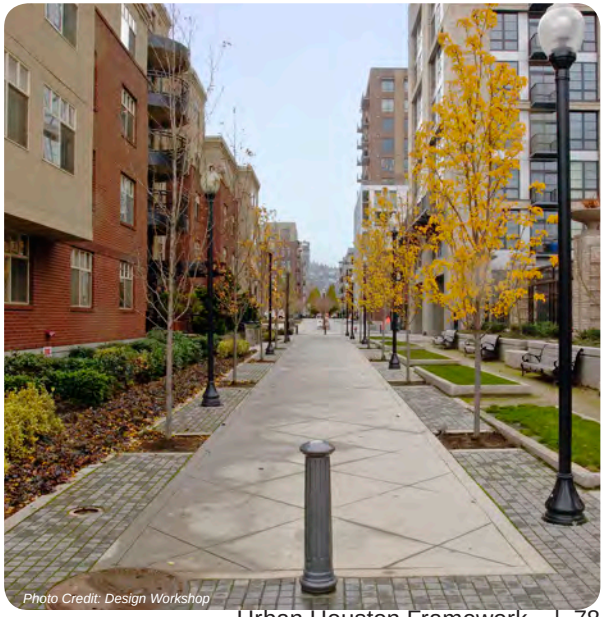


Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Designing for Safety in Multimodal Environments

All Centers

Today, there is a lack of quality, pedestrian friendly, transit-oriented design in Large, Medium and Small Centers. Large Centers experience conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles where there are frequent parking garage access points and few, if any crosswalks. Medium Centers experience issues with on-site parking facilities creating “dead zones” with very little activity at the pedestrian level. Small Centers are faced with a multitude of small auto-oriented businesses like fast food establishments and drive through banks.

In the future, pedestrian and bicycle movement will be considered paramount (or at least on par) with vehicular movement. Vehicular access to sites will be minimized and strategically located to minimize pedestrian conflict. Buildings will be pushed to the lot line and the ground floor will be activated with retail and amenity areas. Parking will be provided both on-site at reduced levels and on the street with the intent of keeping a strong edge to the street.

Photo Credit: Jana Ellis

Pedestrian-Friendly Multimodal Design


Photo Credit: Google Earth

Automobile Centric Design

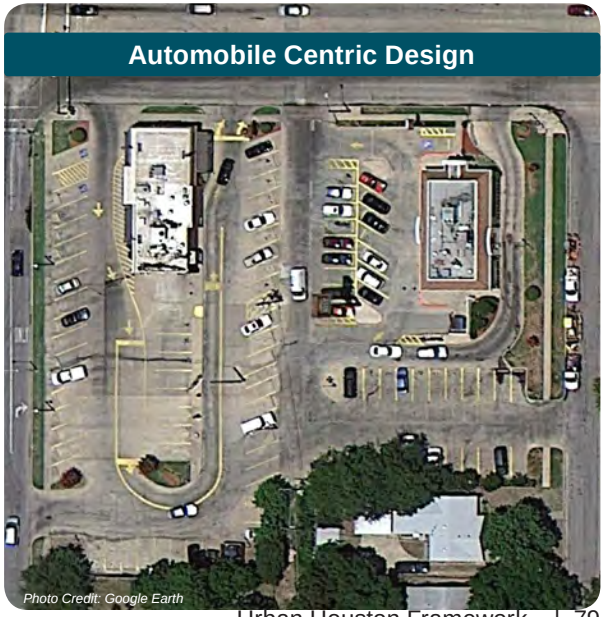


Photo Credit: Google Earth

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4

URBAN CENTER RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Introduction

Feedback received from public outreach efforts helped to define a process by which Urban Center boundaries could be designated and through which interested parties could voluntarily opt-in to Urban Houston Framework Toolbox. The City Initiated Process was the preferred option out of the following three alternative scenarios that were voted on by stakeholders (see **Appendix C: Process**):

1. City Initiated Process;
2. Community Initiated Process; and
3. Applicant Initiated Process.

Figure 15: Recommended Process outlines the City Initiated Process in which Houston's Planning & Development Department, Housing & Community Development Department, Public Works & Engineering Department, Parks & Recreation Department, and other partners identify areas meeting a series of thresholds required for Urban Center Criteria--such as job density, residential density, population density, number of transit facilities, etc.

Feedback received from public outreach efforts helped to define a process by which Urban Center boundaries could be designated and through which interested parties could voluntarily opt-in to Urban Houston Framework Toolbox.

Process to Become and Urban Center

Areas meeting the Criteria would be assigned boundaries and the City would maintain a publicly accessible database that interested applicants could use to determine whether or not a land parcel is located within an Urban Center, and is therefore Toolbox eligible.

To gain access to the Toolbox, an applicant provides the City with development plans that incorporate at least some (but preferably all) of the Tools outlined by the Urban Houston Framework.

Once the City has evaluated the applicant's development plans to verify Toolbox eligibility, it would then provide the applicant with the Tools needed to complete the plans. The applicant then proceeds to conduct building practices that adhere to Toolbox expectations; contributing to the implementation of more sustainable live/work/play environments near transit.

It is important to note that the City Initiated Process would include a voluntary opt-in process for anyone interested in participating in better building practice Tools offered through the Urban Houston Framework. This opt-in process would be very similar to the current opt-in process for Transit Corridor Development participation today.[1] For more detail on how this voluntary opt-in application process would work, see **Figure 15: Recommended Process**.

1 City of Houston. (n.d.). Houston, Texas, Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 - Subdivisions, Developments and Platting Article IV Transit Corridor Development. Retrieved 2012, from municode: http://library.municode.com/HTML/10123/level3/COOR_CH42SUDEPL_ARTIVTRCODE.html

1
City Designation
City identifies and maps the locations and boundaries of potential Urban Centers.

2
Voluntary Designation
A Voluntary Opt-in Process will always be available for any area seeking to become an Urban Center. This procedure would be very similar to the process for becoming a Special Parking Area that exists today.

3
City maintains publicly accessible map that can be used to determine if a site is located in an Urban Center and Toolbox eligible.

4
Once the new Urban Center is added, parties interested in accessing the Framework's Toolbox opt-in to it. The procedure for accessing the Toolbox would be very similar to the Transit Corridor Development opt-in process that exists today.

5
Applicant provides the City with development plans incorporating some/all Tools and Expectations from the Toolbox.

6
City evaluates plans based on Toolbox and provides the applicable Tools. The applicant conducts building practices that adhere to Toolbox Expectations.

Figure 15: *Recommended Process*

Criteria for Urban Centers

Towards a Framework

Table 9: Recommended Framework for Criteria and Expectations outlines an approach for merging Urban Center Goals and Characteristics identified by stakeholders with available data. Characteristics with a "dot" in the Criteria column indicate items for which accurate, up-to-date, citywide data exists (or is feasible to create or obtain) and could therefore become a mandatory Criteria for all Centers. For example, population density is freely and routinely available through the U.S. Census Bureau.

Characteristics having a "dot" in the Expectation column, however, are items for which adequate data sources do not currently exist and for which creating data may be unfeasible (due to funding challenges, lack of data, or both). For instance, a comprehensive, citywide inventory of sidewalks does not exist. Until a database can be built, it is recommended that sidewalks be an Expectation of the program and not a Criteria to qualify as a Center.

Other Characteristics are recommended as Expectations because it would be unrealistic to require them for all Centers and because few places in Houston currently meet the Expectation today. For example, not all places have access to light rail, so that cannot be a Criteria.

Table 9: *Recommended Framework for Criteria and Expectations*

GOAL	CHARACTERISTIC	EXAMPLES OF MEASURING CHARACTERISTICS	CRITERIA	EXPECTATION
Address local and regional housing needs	Housing Character, Diversity	Residential Density (Dwelling Units)	●	●
		Housing Type		●
		Housing Affordability/Housing Cost		●
		Housing Choice and Mobility (Fair Housing Factor)		●
		Housing Starts (New Construction)		●
		Mixed-Land Use (Housing and Localized Services)		●
Contribute to high- quality infrastructure	Infill/ Redevelopment Potential	Vacant Land (%)	●	
		Improvement to Land Value Ratio	●	●
		Significant Potential for Development/Redevelopment		●
Encourage economic viability and diversity	Funding Mechanism, Management Entity	Management District	●	●
		Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)	●	●
	Land Use Diversity	Average Residential/Commercial/Office FAR		●
		Land Use Diversity Index		●
		Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio		●
		Area of Center in Acres	●	
		Parks and Open Space		●
Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity	High Employment, Population Density	Job Density	●	●
		Population Density	●	●
	Access to Amenities, Attractions/Destinations	Amenity Density	●	●
		Amenity Diversity		●
		National/Regional (vs. Local) Attractions/Destinations	●	●
Promote sustainable, healthy design	Bike/Pedestrian Accessibility	Bikeway Density		●
		Trail Density		●
		Sidewalk Accessibility		●
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity	Access to Streets, Freeways	Intersection Density		●
		Street Density (Freeways, Thoroughfares, Streets)	●	●
		Access to Freeways	●	
		Access to Thoroughfares	●	
	High Quality Transit	Type of Transit	●	●
		Type of Transit Facilities	●	●
		Transit Frequency and Connectivity		●

Criteria for Urban Centers

Three potential scenarios were explored for requirements to be considered an Urban Center by the City of Houston. These include the following:

- Prerequisite Only;
- Prerequisite plus Optional; and
- Point System.

Of the three scenarios explored (see **Appendix D: Criteria**), the Prerequisite plus Optional received the greatest support from the SAC, Focus Groups, interested public and City staff, alike.

This following scenario illustrates one example of how the Characteristics, Criteria and Expectations - as illustrated in **Table 9: Recommended Framework for Criteria and Expectations** - may be incorporated for identifying Urban Centers. The accompanying analysis includes preliminary findings. Thresholds will need to be calibrated as current and future Urban Centers are mapped.

Challenges encountered during this analysis are also documented to better understand the potential incorporation of future phases within the Framework for furthering research on precise, measurable thresholds for Small, Medium and Large Center Criteria.

Prerequisite Plus Optional Criteria Example Rationale

The intent of the Prerequisite plus Optional example is to provide the highest level of flexibility for designating areas as Urban Centers; therefore, the only required prerequisite Criteria is a combined jobs + population density.

This combined density has universal application across all Center types; accounting for centers both more residential or commercial in nature. Potential thresholds are defined in **Table 10: Criteria under Prerequisite plus Optional Example** and are reflective of analysis conducted on areas as defined by the SAC as potential Urban Center locations given today's exiting conditions (seen in **Table 11: Prerequisite plus Optional Example Analysis**).

Stakeholders cited jobs + population per acre density as one of the best indicators of Urban Center size. Under the Prerequisite plus Optional example, all Centers would be required to meet the baseline or prerequisite density thresholds as well as a minimum number of the following options - as defined by **Table 10: Criteria under Prerequisite plus Optional Example**.

Table 10: *Criteria under Prerequisite plus Optional Example*

	LARGE CENTER	MEDIUM CENTER	SMALL CENTER
Jobs + Population Density	25 or more	12 to 25	Less than 12
Funding Mechanism	Plus meet thresholds of 6 - 8 Optional Criteria	Plus meet thresholds of 6 - 8 Optional Criteria	Plus meet thresholds of 4 - 6 Optional Criteria
Infill/Redevelopment Potential			
Major Thoroughfares			
Amenities			
Intersection Density			
Bus Routes			
Bikeways			

***Note**: All thresholds in this Study are subject to change based on future analysis. Further research will be needed to determine the number and combination of these "optional" Criteria. For this example, the only criteria considered a prerequisite is Jobs + Population Density allowing for greatest flexibility and starting point for future consideration.*

Criteria for Urban Centers

Funding Mechanism - All areas intersecting TIRZ or Management District boundaries can apply to become Urban Centers or other as defined - and further validated - by the City or applicant.

Infill/Redevelopment Potential Ratio - Infill redevelopment is an important part of community revitalization that can be used to provide more opportunities for residents to age-in-place in the face of continued population growth. This measures the acreage of vacant, undeveloped or underdeveloped land available for future development. It is expressed in a ratio of improved value to actual land value by census block.

If the ratio is less than or equal to one, the parcel offers an opportunity for development or redevelopment.[1] Ratios lower than two indicate areas less likely to redevelop through infill development. In the Prerequisite plus Optional analysis, all areas having a ratio greater than one qualify to be designated as Urban Centers.

***Note**: The ratios for this Criteria are preliminary findings. Thresholds provided in this Study will need to be calibrated as current and future Urban Centers are identified and mapped. Future analysis should also incorporate the consideration of barriers - such as bayous, highways or other obstacles to pedestrian passage - within a 0.25 - 0.50 mile pedestrian shed.*

Major Thoroughfare(s) - Access to major roadways is important for the efficient movement of people and goods. The threshold of a 0.25 mile distance from a Major Thoroughfare was deemed the best threshold for designating Urban Centers as this threshold is used in City of Houston, Texas Ordinance No. 2009-762 and represents reasonable access to the Center from the Major Thoroughfare for vehicles.

Amenities - Centers provide access to a mixture of amenities within a comfortable 0.25 mile distance. The greater the number of amenities nearby, the larger the center designation. For a definition of facilities defined as amenities see *Amenity Density* in the *Existing Conditions Assessment* chapter. Future analysis should incorporate the consideration of barriers - such as bayous, highways or other obstacles to pedestrian passage.

***Note**: There is a great need (and great potential) for continued research on access to amenities and access to attractions/destinations as Urban Centers begin to develop and densify throughout the city. For example, there are many remaining questions that future analyses will need to better assess. These include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- *How can we better define, categorize and locate amenity types?*
- *Are there differing amenity types that could/should be prioritized or more heavily valued based on Center size, function, location, etc?*
- *Is there an optimally sustainable combination of amenities for creating vibrant live/work/play Centers?*
- *What network barriers must be overcome to guarantee equitable access to amenities - such as Bayous, large "super block" developments, disjointed sidewalks, etc?*

The Urban Houston Framework Existing Conditions Assessment does not explicitly address the interplay between multimodal connections and Center amenities, so future research in this regard is highly recommended.

Food Amenities: Food Amenities include farmers markets, grocery stores and super markets. The understanding is that Urban Centers provide access to a mixture of establishments providing raw produce and healthy food options. The greater the number of food amenities in each census block, the larger the Urban Center designation.

***Note**: After several iterations of analyses, it was found that the 0.25 mile distance threshold to food amenities disqualified many Centers identified by stakeholders. Therefore, the threshold was expanded to a 0.50 mile distance.*

1 City of Austin & AngelouEconomics

Criteria for Urban Centers

Intersection Density - Safe, comfortable walking environments are key to the success of Urban Centers. Intersection density is defined as the frequency of intersections per acre. In order to maximize the potential of this Criteria, the Houston-Galveston Area Council's StarMap - which includes all local roads along with minor arterials, major arterials, freeways and tollways - was used for determining intersection density.

A density of 0.39 intersections per acre or greater is cited by the Journal of the American Planning Association as the universal indicator of pedestrian friendly, walkable environments.[2] Initial analysis for this optional Criteria used 0.39 intersections per acre as the minimum threshold for qualifying as a Center.

***Note**: Multiple iterations of analysis revealed that the 0.39 intersections per acre threshold is too high for Houston. The reasoning behind this determination was that the Central Business District, Texas Medical Center and Greater Uptown areas (the most walkable environments cited by stakeholders), could not qualify as Large Centers until the threshold was lowered to 0.20 intersections per acre. Thus, in future phases, the threshold of 0.20 intersections per acre or greater is recommended.*

Transit Stop(s): Access to transit is also important for the movement of people. All Centers should provide access to bus and/or light rail stops within a comfortable 0.25 mile distance. This distance represents a comfortable five minute walking distance.

***Note**: It is assumed that most transit riders in Centers will walk from their home or place of employment to access METRO bus stops. While the number of bus stops is also an important factor, it was determined that access to bus routes and the location of transit stops were better measures of the goals expressed by the Urban Houston Framework's stakeholders.*

Oftentimes the number of transit stops in an area does not necessarily mean equitable access to transit routes. Stakeholder dialogue also revealed that equitable access to transit stops also requires the presence of high quality, ADA accessible ramps and continuous, unobstructed sidewalks. This is a future consideration that should be addressed throughout later phases of dialogue and research.

Bikeways: All centers should provide access to bikeways. The threshold 0.50 mile distance is used in this analysis. This distance is considered adequate for people on bicycles to access the major bicycle routes through the city.

An overview of recommendations for how these Optional Criteria could work to designate Urban Centers is provided in **Table 10: Criteria under Prerequisite plus Optional Example**. It is important to note that this is only intended to serve as one example of potential Criteria that would have to be further explored. The more detailed findings of this analysis are seen in **Table 11: Prerequisite plus Optional Example Analysis** and **Figure 16: Prerequisite plus Optional Example**.

2 Ewing, R., & Cerver, R. (2010, May 11). Travel and the Built Environment: A Meta-Analysis. Journal of the American Planning Association, 76(3), 31.

Criteria for Urban Centers

Table 11: *Prerequisite plus Optional Example Analysis*

***Note**: All thresholds in this Study are subject to change based on future analysis. Further research will be needed to determine the number and combination of these "optional" Criteria. For this example, the only Criteria considered a prerequisite is Jobs + Population Density allowing for greatest flexibility and starting point for future consideration.*

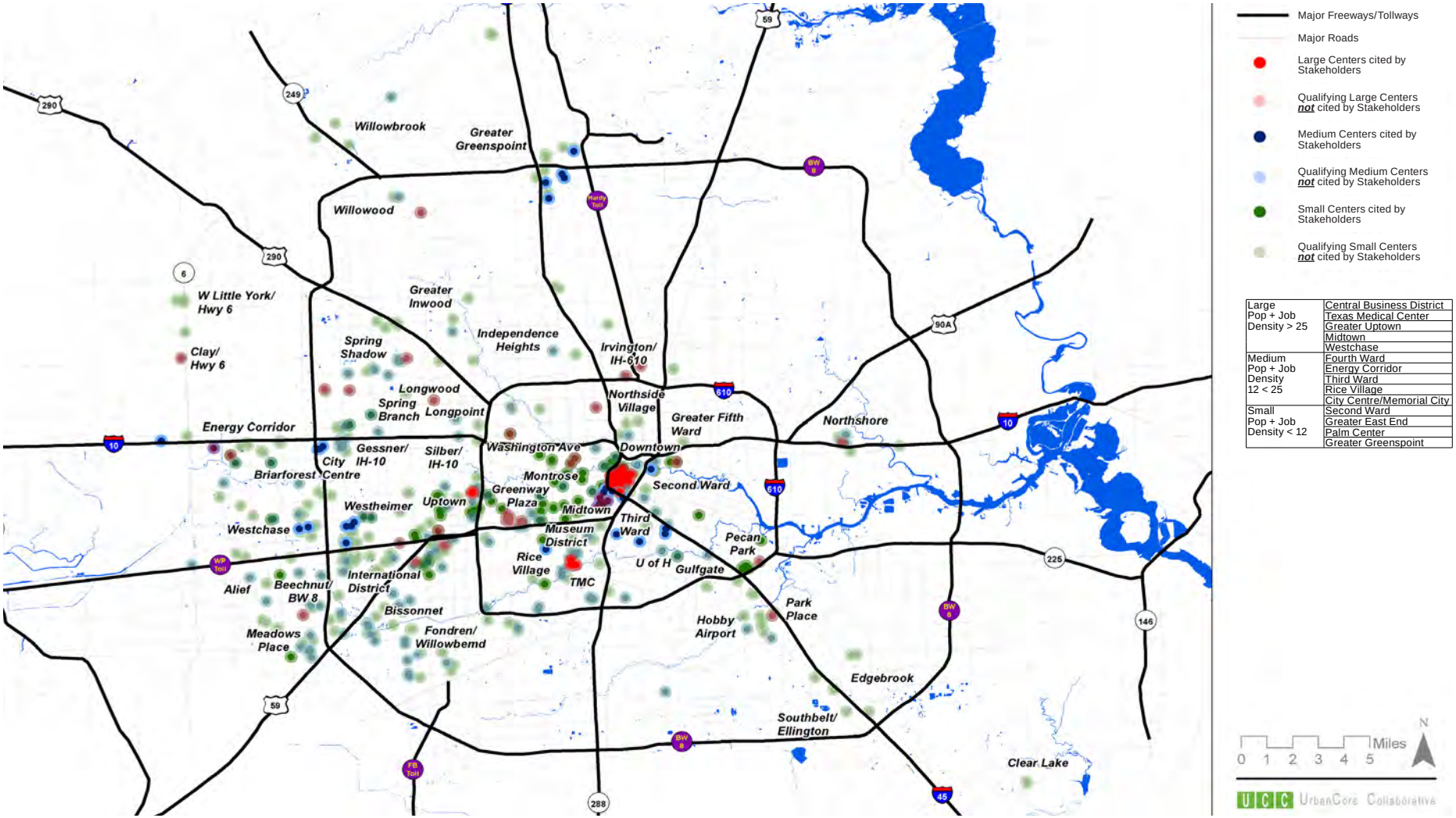
	Name	Boundary Used	Prerequisite	Optional Criteria											
			Population + Job Density	Funding Mechanism	Infill Redevelopment Potential (Residential)	Infill Redevelopment Potential (Com., Office, Ind.)	Major Thoroughfare (w/in 1/2 mile)	Major Thoroughfare (w/in 1/4 mile)	Amenities	Food Amenities	Amenity Density	Intersection Density	Bikeways	METRO Transit Stops
Large Center Threshold *Population + Job Density > 25*	Central Business District	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			139.34 (Average)	-	0.32	4.42	-	-	359	7	0.32	0.81	-	-
	Texas Medical Center	Super Nbrhd.	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			68.19 (Average)	-	2.38	1.63	-	-	64	1	0.05	0.26	-	-
	Greater Uptown	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			62.37 (Average)	-	2.91	1.57	-	-	154	3	0.19	0.27	-	-
	Midtown	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			37.36 (Average)	-	2.05	0.36	-	-	122	6	0.17	1.02	-	-
	Westchase	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			29.24 (Average)	-	1.43	1.69	-	-	138	7	0.05	0.1	-	-
	Fourth Ward	TIRZ	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			20.57 (Average)	-	1.7	1.02	-	-	23	0	0.16	1.12	-	-
	Energy Corridor	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			18.73 (Average)	-	2.77	3.5	-	-	63	0	0.03	0.29	-	-
Medium Center Threshold *Population + Job Density 12 < 25*	Third Ward	Super Nbrhd.	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			17.3 (Average)	-	0.64	0.78	-	-	59	14	0.04	0.63	-	-
	Rice Village	Super Nbrhd.	-	No	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			16.77 (Average)	-	0.49	0.67	-	-	116	4	0.07	0.4	-	-
	City Centre/Memorial City	Proposed Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	No	Yes	No	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			12.51 (Average)	-	2.71	0.48	-	-	32	2	0.05	0.32	-	-
	Greater East End	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			10.44 (Average)	-	1.54	1.37	-	-	224	34	0.02	0.47	-	-
Small Center Threshold Population + Job Density < 12	Greater Greenspoint	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			5.33 (Average)	-	2.54	2.73	-	-	127	12	0.02	0.16	-	-
	Palm Center	Super Nbrhd.	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			8.85 (Average)	-	1.98	1.21	-	-	67	13	0.03	0.4	-	-
	Greater Greenspoint	Mgmt. District	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
			5.33 (Average)	-	2.54	2.73	-	-	127	12	0.02	0.16	-	-

Criteria for Urban Centers

Figure 16: *Prerequisite plus Optional Example*

Data sources: City of Houston; H-GAC StarMap; U.S. Decennial Census 2010 and 2012 data

***Note**: This is a draft to be calibrated through City and Community-initiated processes. Subject to change; not final.*



Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

The intent of this section is to present, and further discuss, potential Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives to be incorporated into the Urban Houston Framework. Provided Tools are presented as a means of advertising, streamlining and further providing incentives for promoting desired characteristics within defined Urban Centers. Related Expectations are also defined based on those expected by both individual developers as well as the greater Urban Center.

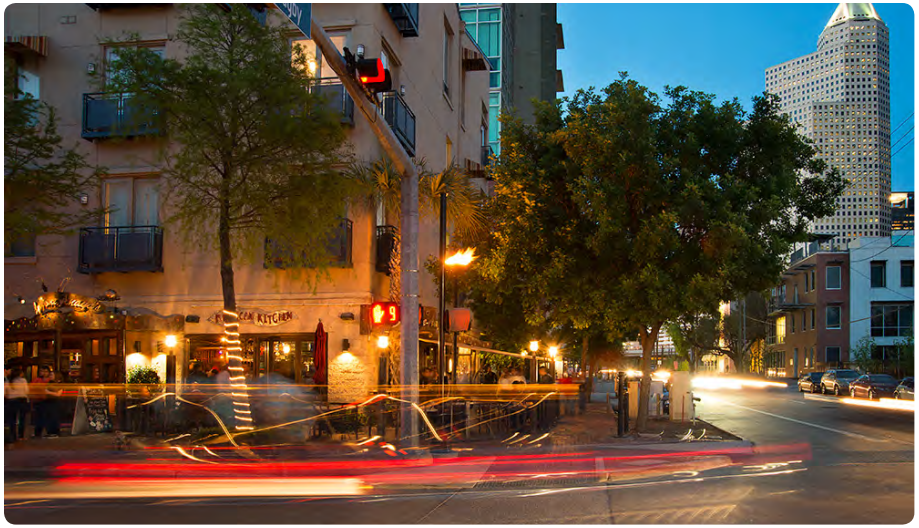
How Tools were Developed

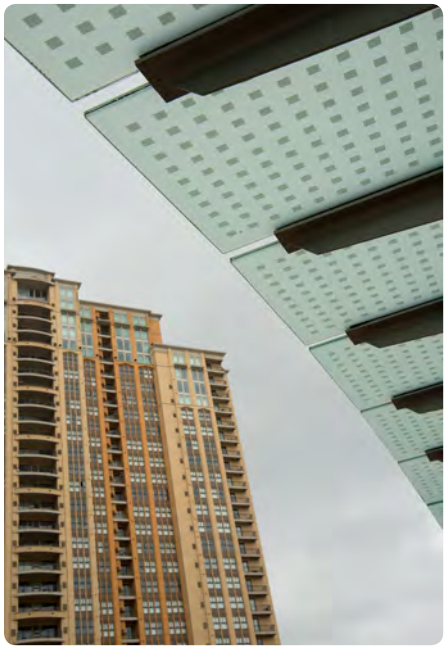
When developing the Tools and Expectations - as defined in the **Urban Center Pattern Book** - two categories emerged: Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives.

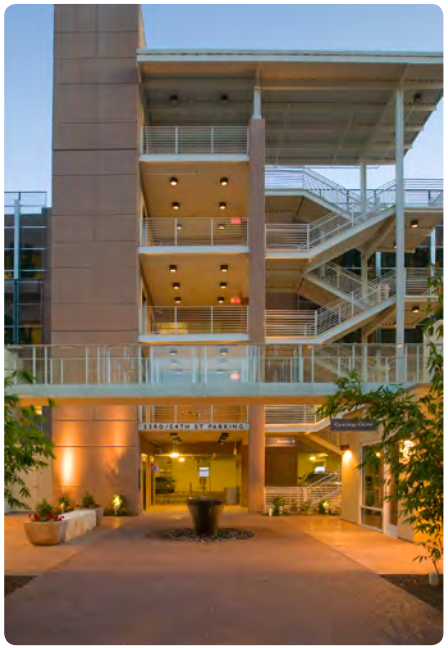
1. Universal Improvement Tools are those that help to improve services within Urban Centers that benefit the area as a whole. Universal Improvement Tools require both municipal and other organizations to work together to improve services over time, such as transit quality and the encouragement of sustainable development practices.

2. Developer Incentives are tools available to developers who meet the Criteria within designated Urban Centers, to build in a character that is more in line with the goals of Urban Centers.

Based on these two provided categories, it is evident that the City of Houston maintains several viable tools and policies in use today. However, due to current legislative procedures, they are only available via a variance or additional permitting processes.







The toolbox will help incentivize the desired built form for Urban Centers.

Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

Towards a Future, Comprehensive Toolbox

To help streamline the development process and eliminate costs associated with these additional steps, Urban Houston Framework participants would have access to the Toolbox without having to go through the variance or permitting process.

Developer Incentives would automatically become available to those developers that meet, or could provide proof of meeting, the established criteria upon final build out.

Some Universal Improvement Tools included in the Toolbox are existing policies modified to be more applicable to Urban Centers. For instance, in an urban area, there may not be enough land to meet parkland dedication requirements. Reduced acreage urban parks, as currently allotted on a case-by-case basis in section 42-252 (f) of the City's current code, could be provided as a more standardized policy.

Other Tools built on current policies to involve programs and projects that could be used as incentives for developers include economic development tools like 380 Agreements and state-funded bond programs for community development.

New Tools within the Toolbox, however, are provided as innovative concepts not currently utilized by the City, but expressed as viable options within peer reviewed studies (see **Appendix B: Peer Review**) or as expressed by stakeholders (**Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement**).

The list of Tools that follows is the beginning of a comprehensive Toolbox that touches on implementation efforts toward all of the Framework goals. Some of these can move forward soon and many others will need to be phased in over a longer duration of time. Phasing will be discussed in the **Urban Center Implementation** chapter.

This is the first step towards a comprehensive Toolbox that touches on implementation efforts toward all of the Framework goals.

Universal Improvement Tools in Urban Centers

Urban Center Plans

The development community has requested that Urban Centers describe, in more detail, what is needed in each area of the city. An Urban Center plan does just that by providing an idea of what a potential Urban Center could yield when fully redeveloped with compatible dense, mixed-use building forms. Similarly, plans for Centers also help anticipate commitments regarding needed infrastructure such as drainage, sewage, roadway connectivity, key transit consideration, as well as other considerations providing a benefit to the greater Urban Center.

Individual developers also benefit from these plans, as potential investors may better target project dollars where they know the infrastructure required to support their project exists. These plans will project the necessary infrastructure to support the anticipated level of development in the Urban Center.

Similarly, these plans will help guarantee that Centers have consistent, rectilinear roadway grids with short, walkable block lengths - essential ingredients in creating sustainable, mixed-use, multimodal environments.

Irregular roadways grids have been cited by stakeholders as posing challenges to the construction of some mixed use building typologies. As a result, developers sometimes seek modifications to existing roadway segments to better accommodate short-term project goals (often at the expense of long-term, large-scale mobility goals).

Urban Center Plans will help maximize street grid connectivity by identifying areas in which new roads should be added to serve long-term transit and connectivity needs (at the local, citywide and regional scale). This allows for the possibility of denser development and the preservation of pedestrian connectivity and walkability in strategic areas.

Universal Improvement Tool 1

A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) done on a centerwide scale and in conjunction with the Urban Center Plan will help support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity by holistically considering the traffic impacts of all development and/or redevelopment projects. TIAs should take into account various forms of transit and include a pedestrian and bicycle mobility analysis.

When a governing entity completes a TIA prior to development, investors have additional assurance that their project can be built in a timeline that protects their investments. TIAs also help to provide a streamlined approach and assurance for all developments in Urban Centers regardless of size.

Universal Improvement Tool 2

The Urban Center Plan should encourage a more dense street grid for circulation, and it is not the practice of the City to encourage the abandonment streets within such Centers. However, there are instances in which a very fine street grid may actually inhibit certain sustainable development practices. In such instances Urban Center Plans preemptively determine which utilities, street segments and ROW must remain in place to serve local, citywide and regional connectivity goals so that it is clear to developers owning property on both sides of the right-of-way which may be abandoned.

The Urban Center Plan and centerwide Traffic Impact Analysis would work together to provide individual development and redevelopment projects clear direction about how more urban, dense forms and land uses could affect the traffic patterns of an area, saving time, energy and resources for individuals opting into in the Urban Houston Framework.

High Quality/Capacity Transit

As an Urban Center becomes more dense with residents and employment, the quality and capacity of the transit must increase.

Universal Improvement Tool 3

METRO and other partners will coordinate to provide high quality and high capacity transit services for Large and Medium Centers perhaps upgrading facilities around stops or stations, providing better pedestrian connectivity to the stops or stations, and installing new transit options.

Houston's light rail line carries many riders from Downtown south to the Texas Medical Center.

Universal Improvement Tools in Urban Centers

Developer Participation Contract (DPC) Utility Infrastructure Upgrade Reimbursement

Allowing for upgrades to water and wastewater infrastructure systems earlier than might be possible if the City had to finance the improvement will provide the capacity needed to accommodate denser, urban forms of development. A DPC is an existing tool that allows developers to be reimbursed for a portion of the cost of upgrading infrastructure. DPCs are principally used for infrastructure construction in residential projects.

Universal Improvement Tool 4

There are several DPCs included in **Code of Ordinances Chapter 47 Article IV** beginning with **Section 47-161**:

- 30-70 DPCs: Intended for reimbursement of water and wastewater infrastructure for new construction. The cap on reimbursement is limited to $1,000,000 and only includes construction costs.
- 50-50 DPCs: Intended for reimbursement of water and wastewater infrastructure. There is no provision for reimbursement of storm sewer costs. The cap on reimbursement is limited to $50,000 and includes construction and engineering costs.

Parking Benefit District (PBD)

PBDs are defined geographic areas, typically in the Central Business District or along commercial corridors in which a majority of the revenue generated from on-street parking facilities within the district is returned to the district to finance neighborhood improvements.

The primary goal of a PBD is to effectively manage an area's parking supply and demand so that parking is convenient and easy for motorists. PBDs typically employ a number of parking management techniques to manage parking supply and demand. By implementing a PBD, the parking will be managed more effectively and a majority of the revenue is reinvested back into projects determined by the community.

Universal Improvement Tool 5

The City coordinates with stakeholders in the area, installs meters and distributes funds back to the district according to the agreement with the stakeholders.

Special Parking Areas allow smaller areas to reduce their parking demand.

Special Parking Area

Formerly known as "Parking Management Areas", the eligibility criteria was written for large areas like Uptown and the Texas Medical Center. SPAs now allow City Council to establish smaller areas that would benefit from different parking requirements than what is otherwise required by ordinance.

Additional consideration should be paid to surrounding development and ensure that shared parking assumptions are convenient to all participants.

Universal Improvement Tool 6

This Tool establishes who may apply for SPA designation. It also specifies functions and responsibilities, application submittal requirements, review process, potential impact analysis and a once-every-two-years reviewing process. A 20 percent parking reduction for Transit Oriented Developments may be granted, if the pedestrian realm is provided by the developer.

Reduced Park Requirement

Pocket parks are allowed in areas that are considered denser and well served by other parks in lieu of larger parks. The current parkland dedication can be burdensome to developers in urban areas who must provide valuable land towards parks. The more dense a development is, the more parkland must be dedicated, but this may not necessarily reflect a more urban environment. If there is not enough land to dedicate to parkland, then the developer must pay a fee instead. This fee is based on the number of units and can be costly, potentially preventing denser development in urban areas.

Universal Improvement Tool 7

A full set of guidelines are developed for Urban Center Parks that includes minor improvements and maintenance agreements. The Parks Director agrees to approve these if they meet the guidelines.

Providing parkland in highly urban areas can be a challenge due to scarcity of land, but it should still be encouraged.

Universal Improvement Tools in Urban Centers

Stormwater Facilities

Supporting privately or publicly created and maintained stormwater detention facilities that serves multiple developments will help contribute to high-quality infrastructure. Creating denser development through use of off-site/regional stormwater mitigation may also lead to better return on investments given the potential for high land prices in highly demanded Urban Centers.

Universal Improvement Tool 8

Privately or publicly held stormwater facilities are oversized and the additional cost of oversized, publicly held facilities is recouped by selling surplus capacity to private developers. This commitment would only be available in cases where implementation of the Tool benefits the Urban Center as a whole.

Stormwater Treatment Credits

Encouraging stormwater filtration methods in landscape buffer zones through stormwater credits can reward efforts to incorporate low impact development and to manage stormwater at the source. Allowing an Urban Center to bank quality credits, which could then be traded or sold between adjacent properties, is a potential strategy for contributing to high-quality infrastructure and encouraging the cleaning and reuse of stormwater.

Universal Improvement Tool 9

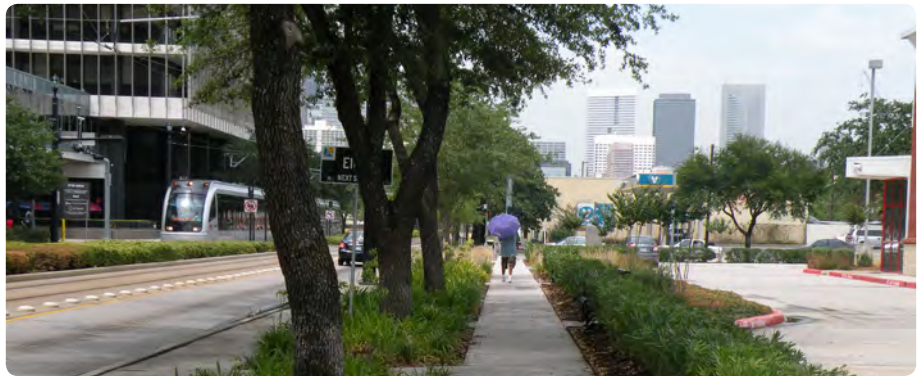
Water quality credits for treating stormwater within the public rights-of-way could be traded or sold between adjacent properties (within the watershed) provided the use does not interfere with pedestrian clear zone and is outside the bike and vehicle travel ways.

Low Impact Development (LID)

Exemplifying what works and doesn't work in Houston and agreeing upon a list of acceptable Best Management Practices (BMPs) will help contribute to high-quality infrastructure and promote responsible and sustainable design in Houston. Sustainable development practices are integrated into public developments such as roads, parks, public facilities such as the Green Building Resource Center.

Universal Improvement Tool 10

The City identifies areas of common ground in achieving sustainable urban developments in partnership with private sector developers. The City will encourage better development practices by demonstrating innovative LID principles and techniques in City projects.



An Urban Center could bank water quality credits, which can then be traded or sold between properties to further stormwater infrastructure goals.

Celebrating Sustainable Development Practices

Marketing sustainable projects will provide an incentive for developers to include innovative design elements. In addition to responsible environmental design, noteworthy development practices may encompass other areas of sustainability, such as historic preservation efforts, cutting edge cyclist facilities that promote transit, educational wayfinding amenities, etc.

Universal Improvement Tool 11

Sustainable projects are celebrated through an awards program and press releases by agencies throughout the region.

Shared stormwater facilities allow for denser development in urban areas.

Developer Incentives in Urban Centers

Flow Chart

Addressing local and regional housing initiatives is a key goal for Urban Centers cited by stakeholders. Ensuring a smooth and timely progression through building permit/plat review processes will be important to ensuring Urban Centers successfully become live/work/play environments. Encouraging the development of mixed use, mixed income, affordable and workforce housing options will allow a range of income groups and ages to live in Urban Centers.

Developer Incentive 1

A city-approved flow chart is developed indicating the order, department and associated contact person responsible for the approval and processing of Urban Center development applications. Maintaining an assigned representative, each relative department may then facilitate the permitting/plat review process and discusses a variety of options available for successfully achieving mixed-use, affordable or workforce housing.

Expectation

The developer and City utilize the provided flowchart to help streamline Urban Center development practices. Updates to the flowchart will be provided as needed ensuring a “cradle to grave” approach to center developments.

Entitlement Grant Gap Financing for Housing

There are four HUD entitlement grants administered by Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD) that finance annual HUD objectives, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). Two of the grants, CDBG and HOME may be utilized as a form of gap financing for affordable housing. Multifamily Housing Program activities are funded at various times throughout the year through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

Developer Incentive 2

Financing projects that contribute to housing supplies in Urban Centers should be a priority in submitting grant applications (regardless of whether grant applications are submitted by the Housing Authority, HCDD, etc.).

Expectation

The developer works to obtain grants earmarked for Urban Centers as long as they provide a minimum percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points and the project develops in keeping with the character and needs identified for the Urban Center.

Local Tax, Bond and Development Incentives for Community Development

In addition to federal entitlement grants, other sources of funds for community development activities work cooperatively with tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation.

Developer Incentive 3

Several tax incentives are available for Urban Centers and funding resources are prioritized for Centers. These include:

- Tax Abatement Ordinance
- Chapter 380 of the State of Texas Local Government Code
- Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)
- Private Activity Bonds and Mortgage Revenue Bond Program
- Developer Participation Contract (70-30 DPCs)

Expectation

The developer works to obtain tax incentives earmarked for Urban Centers as long as they provide a minimum percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points and the project develops in keeping with the character and needs identified for the Urban Center.

State-Funded Bond Programs for Community Development

In addition to local and federal grants, other sources of funds for community development activities. Programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation

Developer Incentive 4

- State of Texas Bond Program
- Tax-Exempt Bonds, TSAHC - The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)

Expectation

The developer works to obtain these bond funds earmarked for Urban Centers as long as they provide a minimum percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points and the project will be developed in keeping with the character of Urban Centers and meet the needs identified for the Urban Center.

Developer Incentives in Urban Centers

Federal Tax Incentives for Community Development

HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation.

Developer Incentive 5

- Section 202 - HUD: Provides capital advances to finance the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition with or without rehabilitation of structures that will serve as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons, and provides rent subsidies for the projects to help make them affordable.
- Section 811: HUD provides funding to develop and subsidize rental housing with the availability of supportive services for very low-income adults with disabilities.

Expectation

The developer works with HCDD to obtain these tax incentives earmarked for Urban Centers as long as they provide a minimum percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points and the project will be developed in keeping with the character of Urban Centers and meet the needs identified for the Urban Center.

Other Federal Incentives for Community Development - US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Along with local grants, HCDD uses other sources of funds for community development activities. HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation.

Developer Incentive 6

- New Market Tax Credits
- State of Texas Housing Tax Credit Program
- Historic Preservation Tax Credit
- Raza Development Fund: Pre-development loans, acquisition loans for vacant land or improved lots, and construction/rehabilitation financing for multi- and single-family units.

Expectation

The developer works with HCDD to obtain these other incentives earmarked for Urban Centers as long as they provide a minimum percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points and the project will be developed in keeping with the character of Urban Centers and meet the needs identified for the Urban Center.

Off-Street Parking

Providing public parking in dense Urban Centers that can be shared, reducing the requirement to provide on-site parking for each project, will help developers and encourage an active and transparent ground floor. This strategy also seeks to balance the needs of area residents with the parking needs of the district. It does so by encouraging mixed use development within close proximity of a public parking amenity without creating a shortage of parking that might impact neighboring properties and existing stable residential communities.

Developer Incentive 7

A 20 percent reduction of parking requirement. This is in line with the TOD reduction currently in place. If there is a Special Parking Area in place, then that takes precedent.

Expectation

The developer provides an active and transparent ground floor and a mixed-use development where at least two of the uses have compatible uses for parking.

Developer Incentives in Urban Centers

Pedestrian Realm Improvement

Improving pedestrian environments helps support multimodal transportation by ensuring public safety and by increasing connectivity near street grids. Connecting properties and destinations using wide sidewalks along major thoroughfares will encourage walking as an alternative to private automobile trips.

As an area grows more dense and includes additional transit services, walkability becomes a critical element of pedestrian accessibility. In exchange for reduced building setbacks and a reduction in parking requirements for Large, Medium and Small Centers, a development project may provide improvements to pedestrian environments. This would include contributing to a continuous built form along streets that includes parking for automobiles behind the building or screened from public view.

Encouraging developers to provide parking behind the building, not between the right-of-way and front entrance to buildings will help to promote sustainable, healthy design, universal accessibility to building entrances and better construction practices. The details of the Tools and Expectations per size of each Urban Center can be found in *Appendix E*.

Developer Incentive 8

- Reduced building setback from proposed back-of-curb (width varies based on size of center and street type)
- No parking requirements or parking managed by Special Parking Area

Expectations

- Certain width of Pedestrian Realm with sidewalk and clear zone (width varies based on size of Urban Center enter and street type)
- Pedestrian access corridor
- Maximum uninterrupted block face of no more than 450’
- Intersecting streets are placed at intervals of 500 to 600’ and no greater than 800’ apart any single stretch
- 70% of building frontage within 10’ of pedestrian realm
- Public entrance adjacent to pedestrian realm
- Active and transparent ground floor use
- Screened parking garages adjacent to the street
- No on-site parking or driveways between building façade and pedestrian realm
- Vegetative buffer between pedestrian realm and any surface parking

Expectations (Continued)

- No doors swinging into the pedestrian realm
- 30% of façade surface less than 8’ above the ground be transparent
- Door, window, or other opening at least every 20 feet where the building is within 10 feet of the pedestrian realm
- Softscape planting area limited to 20%
- Softscape at least 2’ back from any on-street parking

Expectations (Continued)

- Street furniture (benches, bicycle parking, etc.)
- Public/Civic Art or Cultural/Heritage Attractions
- Publicly accessible and walkable parks or plazas
- LID or other sustainable infrastructure practices

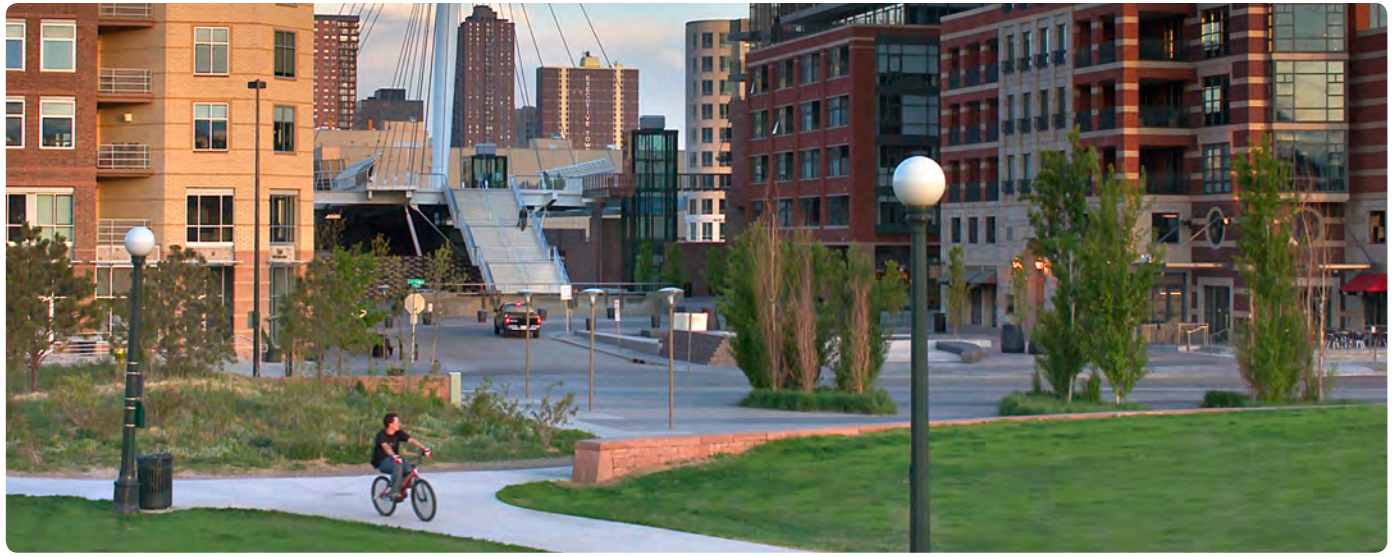
Pedestrian realm improvements create a more comfortable, safe environment for citizens of communities.

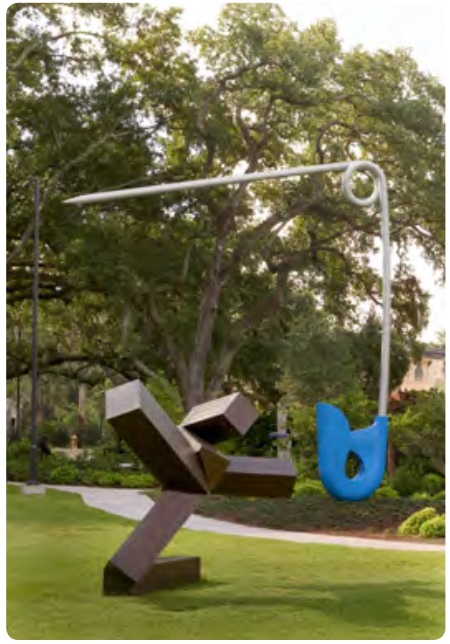
Tools Yet to be Addressed

The Toolbox has Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that touch on, to some degree, the six Goals. These include:

1. Advance local and regional housing initiatives
2. Contribute to high-quality infrastructure
3. Encourage economic viability and diversity
4. Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity
5. Promote sustainable, healthy design and better construction practices
6. Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity

Other tools should be explored in the future including those that incent the integration of arts and culture into developments. Civic art funding assistance will help to ensure that Urban Centers are the focal point of arts and culture in Houston, and that visitors have a strong urban environment to enhance their experience. Additional housing Tools could also be explored. For example, the City could consider leveraging publicly owned land to reduce the cost of development. This could include parking areas, green space, or other City owned parcels. The City could also identify under utilized areas lacking useful functions today, such as freeway underpasses or other areas, for future parking Tools.





Public art provides a cultural experience to both residents and visitors.

5

URBAN CENTER IMPLEMENTATION

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Chapter Introduction

This chapter outlines the next steps towards implementing Urban Centers. Tools, Criteria, Process and other steps are divided into short- and long-term strategies to explain what the City may move forward with immediately and various other steps that will take longer to implement.

Roles, responsibilities and potential costs are provided to show who the partners are in moving the Framework towards implementation and how much cost a project, policy or program may have.

Performance metrics are provided at the close of this chapter so that City departments may monitor the effects of what gets implemented. This is an important tool, as what gets measured gets done.

The six Livability Principles of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), one of the funding partners, were met through the goals from this Study. These principles include:

1. Providing more transportation choices.
2. Promoting equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhancing economic competitiveness.
4. Supporting existing communities.
5. Coordinating policies and leveraging investment.
6. Valuing communities and neighborhoods.

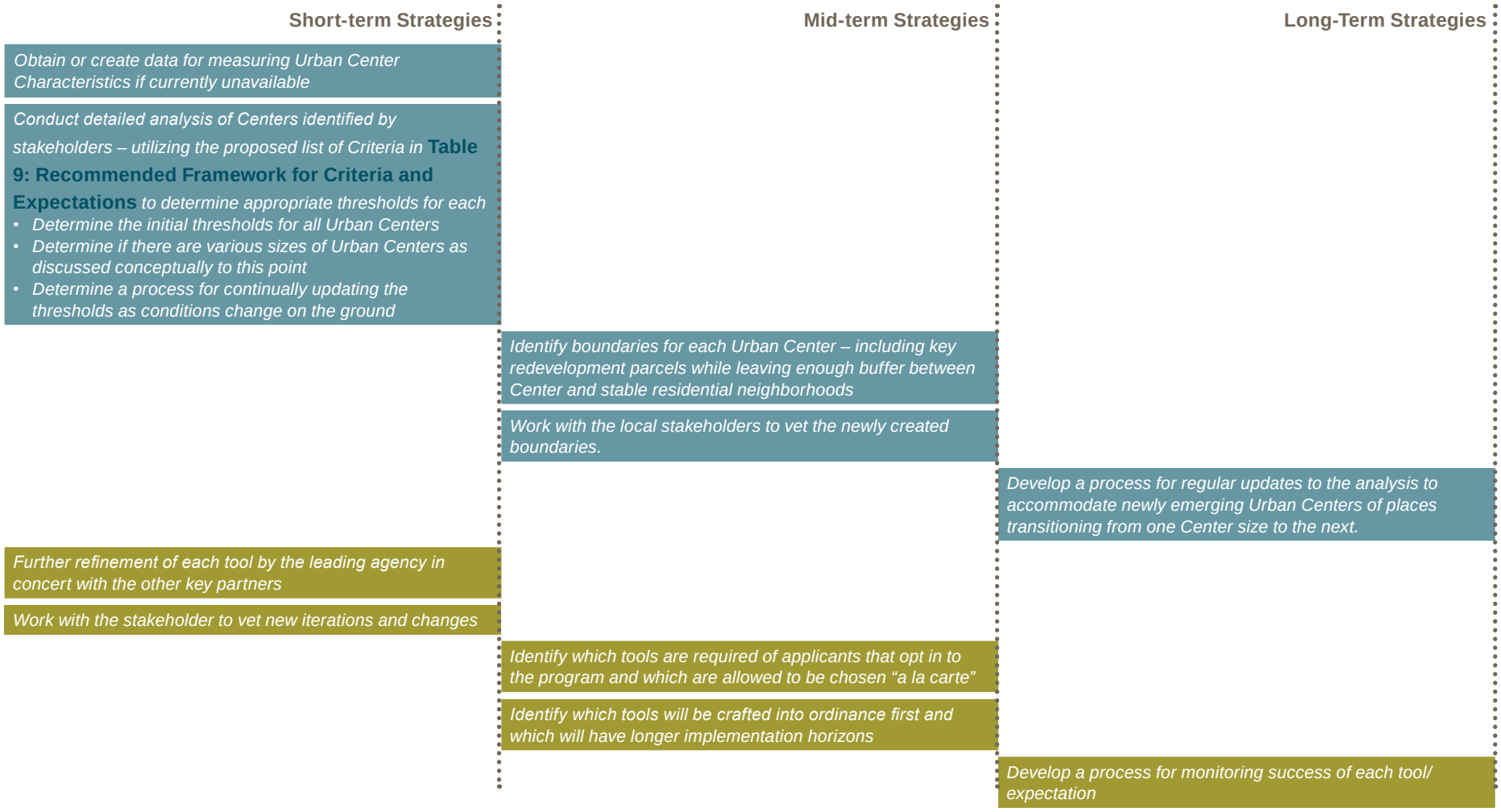
This chapter explores next steps towards implementing Urban Centers.

Implementation Schedule

Legend

Criteria Refinement

Tools/Expectations Refinement

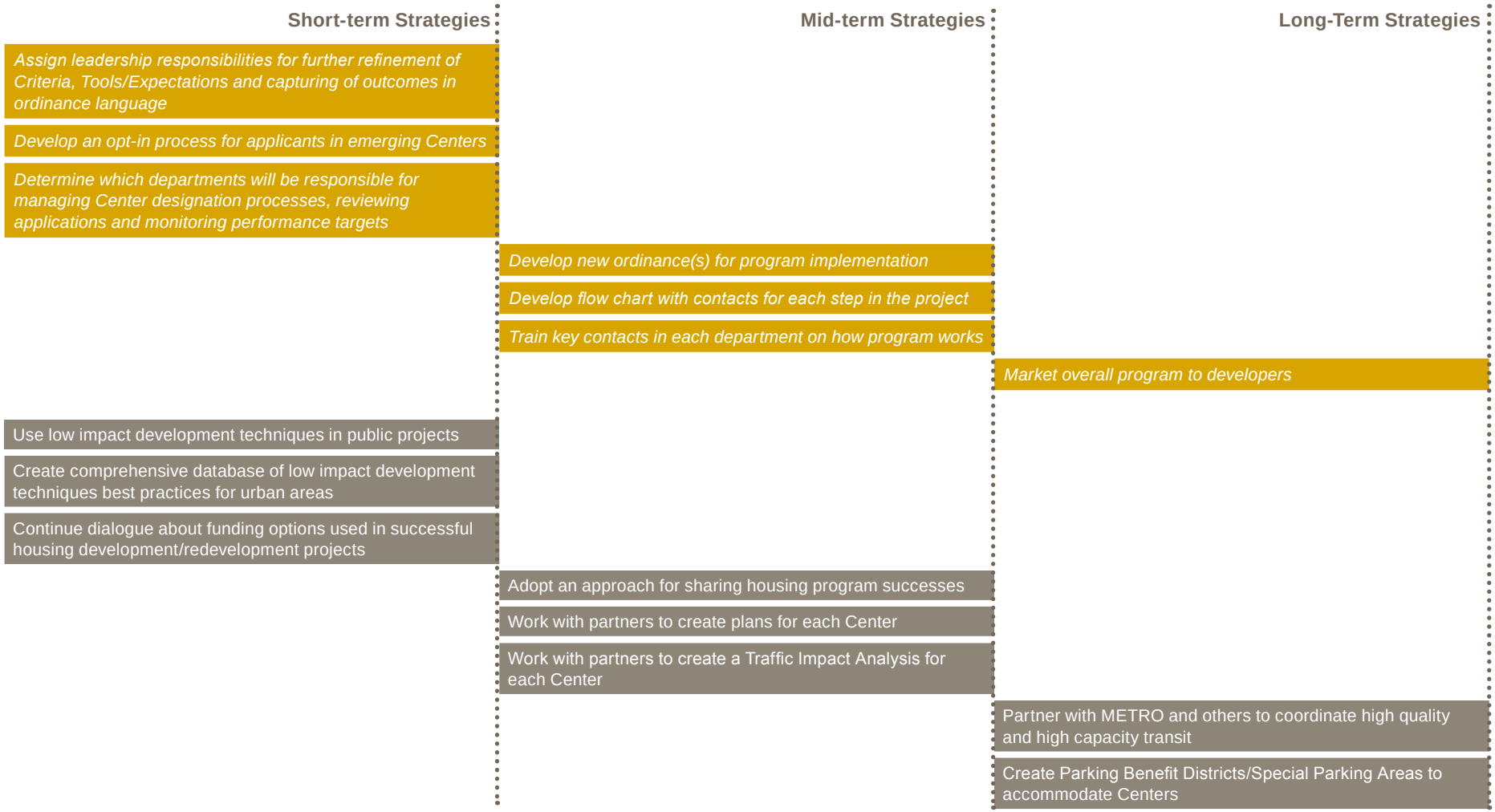


Implementation Schedule

Legend

Process Refinement

Other



Roles, Responsibilities and Potential Costs

Legend

- ● Implementation Responsibility
- ● Coordinating Partnership

$	0 - 50,000 dollars
$$	50,000 - 250,000 dollars
$$$	250,000 - 1,000,000 dollars
$$$$	1,000,000+ dollars

Table 12: *Framework Implementation Roles, Responsibilities and Costs*

TOOLBOX	ARA	CDC	CDFI	CSH	ECP	GHP	HAHC	HCDD	HCFCD	HCHA	H-GAC	HISD	HMD	HPD	HUD	LISC-GH	LISC-N	MD	METRO	NDC	P&D	PRD	PWE	SN	TDHCA	TIRZ	TSAHC	ESTIMATED COST
Urban Center Plan		●				●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●		●		●	●		●		$
High Quality/Capacity Transit								●			●	●	●	●				●	●		●		●	●		●		$ $ $ $
Developer Participation Contract																							●					$ $
Parking Benefit District	●	●						●										●	●				●	●				$
Special Parking Area		●						●										●	●		●		●	●		●		$
Reduced Park Requirement																					●	●						$
Stormwater Facilities									●									●					●					$ $
Stormwater Treatment Credits									●									●					●					$
Low Impact Development						●		●	●												●	●	●					$ $
Celebrating Sustainable Practices						●		●	●		●							●			●	●	●	●		●		$
Flow Chart								●													●		●					$
Entitlement Grant Gap Financing							●	●		●					●								●					$ $
Local Tax, Bond and Development Incentives				●				●								●							●					$
State-Funded Bond Programs								●															●		●		●	$
Federal Tax Incentives			●		●			●							●		●			●			●					$
Other Federal Incentives			●					●																	●			$
Off-Street Parking								●										●	●		●		●	●		●		$
Pedestrian Realm Improvement											●			●							●		●					$

Abbreviations for organizations included below are defined on the following page.

Roles, Responsibilities and Potential Costs

Table 13: *List of Abbreviations*

	ABBREVIATION	ORGANIZATION
○	CDC	Community Development Corporations
○	CDFI	Community Development Finance Institutions
○	CSH	Corporation for Supportive Housing
○	ECP	Enterprise Community Partners
○	GHP	Greater Houston Partnership
○	HAHC	Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission
●	HCDD	Housing & Community Development Department
●	HCFCD	Harris County Flood Control District
○	HCHA	Harris County Housing Authority
○	HPD	Historic Preservation Districts
○	H-GAC	Houston-Galveston Area Council
○	HISD	Houston Independent School District
○	HMD	Houston Museum District
○	HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
○	LISC-GH	Local Initiatives Support Corporation of Greater Houston
○	LISC-N	Local Initiatives Support Corporation National Office
○	MD	Management Districts
○	METRO	Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston
○	NDC	National Development Council
●	P&D	Planning & Development Department
●	PRD	Parks & Recreation Department
●	PWE	Public Works and Engineering Department
○	SN	Super Neighborhoods
○	TDHCA	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
○	TIRZ	Tax Increment Financing Zones
○	TSAHC	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation

Legend

● Leadership Responsibility

○ Implementation Partnership

Leadership Organizations

Housing & Community Development Department (HCDD)

Houston's HCDD manages and administers federal and non-federal funds earmarked for the development of viable urban communities in Houston. This Department will play a key role in successfully implementing Urban Centers by leading efforts to provide housing in ways that create live/work/play environments that expand economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons. This will include leadership responsibility for helping to provide/coordinate the following Tools:

- State-Funded Bond Programs for Community Development
- Federal Tax Incentives for Community Development
- Other Federal Incentives for Community Development – US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD)

HCFCD will be a key partner (in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) in protecting businesses and homeowners through ensuring Urban Center projects do not contribute to flood risks in Harris County. As Urban Centers emerge and grow, HCFCD should be a partner in devising and implementing flood reduction plans and maintaining infrastructure in watersheds. This will include leadership responsibility for helping to provide/coordinate the following Tools:

- Stormwater Facilities
- Stormwater Treatment Credit

Planning & Development Department (P&D)

P&D will lead City efforts in Urban Center research. It will help guide and implement the development of all future policies and incentives that may be used by developers, citizens and the community at large for responsible, sustainable development throughout Houston.

Parks & Recreation Department (PRD)

PRD manages over 38,992 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston; develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities; and manages all PRD facilities.

Roles, Responsibilities and Potential Costs

Public Works and Engineering Department (PWE)

The City of Houston Public Works and Engineering Department (PWE) provides many of the basic services that affect the daily lives of everyone who lives and works in Houston. The department is primarily responsible for the administration, planning, maintenance, construction management and technical engineering of the City's infrastructure. The department is also responsible for implementing the storm water, street, wastewater and water programs of the Mayor's five-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Partnership Organizations

Community Development Corporations (CDC)

Partnerships with Houston's many non-profit, Community Development Corporations to preserve the stability of residential neighborhoods in Centers will be key to a successful Urban Houston Framework. CDCs create balanced live/work/play environments in which individuals of all backgrounds and income groups are able to age-in-place. Moreover, they are instrumental to providing affordable neighborhood services such as medical care, pharmacies and grocery stores and will be contributors to the development of affordable housing, retail centers and commercial businesses. CDCs help achieve economic stability and protect the spirit and culture of historic Houston communities by leading physical and socioeconomic improvement efforts in areas having populations at or below the area median income.

Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFI)

New Market Tax Credits (NMTCs) are administered by Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) or banks that have applied to administer NMTCs locally. New Market Tax Credits are an important resource for providing tax incentives for businesses that make commitments to investments and job creation in Urban Centers.

Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) provides technical assistance in a range of areas that include: project feasibility, planning, finance, community support building, service delivery design, employment programs, property and asset management. CSH also works with local governments to help finance and implement plans to end homelessness and to design initiatives targeting specific populations, such as mentally ill ex-offenders.

Enterprise Community Partners (ECP)

Enterprise is a national charitable organization offering expertise for affordable housing for low- and moderate income people, driving social and financial innovation across private, public and government sectors. Enterprise authors the Green Communities Criteria, the only national framework for building and preserving green affordable housing. Enterprise could partner in providing debt and equity financing for Urban Center housing initiatives such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits and New Market Tax Credit Equity for multifamily projects. ECP could also be a partner in creating public policy for housing initiatives in Urban Centers.

Greater Houston Partnership (GHP)

The Greater Houston Partnership, which traces its roots back to Houston's original Chamber of Commerce founded in 1840, could be a partner in the economic prosperity of Centers. GHP facilitates national and international business outreach initiatives and economic planning that could support the goals of Urban Centers - particularly those hoping to attract investment in catalyst development or redevelopment projects. GHP also works to improve the quality of life for Houston's residents by developing green space, bike trails, parks and other amenities, as well as promoting green building practices.

Roles, Responsibilities and Potential Costs

Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA)

HCHA is an important resource for providing housing opportunities for area residents and could be a potential partner in promoting innovative housing solutions that go beyond conventional boundaries of subsidized housing. The goals of HCHA may align with emergent Urban Centers to provide communities with jobs and to help provide balance and stability for individuals who might otherwise not have access to much needed services.

Historic Preservation Districts (HPD)

Historic Preservation Districts should be partners in preserving the significant reminders of Houston's collective past as represented through built environments. As Urban Centers emerge, Landmark and Protected Landmark designations will help emphasize and protect culturally important, historic structures while Historic District designations will protect historically significant communities.

Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC)

HAHC is a potential partner for implementing historic designations in Urban Centers. It will review all projects seeking to alter the exterior appearance of a City designated historic property and help to further the historic preservation goals of stable, residential communities.

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)

H-GAC is the regional leader in solving area wide problems and using strategic planning studies to conserve public funds. The H-GAC consists of the region's local governments and their elected officials, and partners with multiple public and private sector organizations and volunteers to achieve area wide change. It will be important to include H-GAC in conversations regarding the development of Urban Center Plan(s) as well as efforts to provide High Quality/Capacity Transit, as these efforts work in tandem with many other aspects of regional planning.

Houston Independent School District (HISD)

Equitable access to quality educational facilities was cited as an important factor in achieving a successful, live/work/play environments through the Urban Houston Framework. HISD will be a key partner in making this goal a reality for all Centers. As Houston's population continues to grow and change, levels of service in education should remain at the forefront of planning and development efforts throughout the city. Moreover, schools are catalysts for creating a powerful sense of place that will help Houston attract and retain the best and the brightest within the region.

Houston Museum District Association (HMD)

The Houston Museum District is comprised of a number of artistic, scientific and educational institutions that house resources that should be accessible to all citizens of and visitors to Houston. HMD will need to be a partner in discussions regarding levels of transportation service in Urban Centers and infrastructure accommodations for a growing number of visitors to the arts district.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD administers national programs that create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. Section 202 provides capital for the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition of structures serving as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons. Section 811 provides supportive housing for disabled individuals in Urban Centers as well as funding to develop and subsidize rental housing with supportive services for very low-income adults with disabilities. HUD entitlement grants administered by HCDD will finance annual objectives associated with Urban Centers including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

Roles, Responsibilities and Potential Costs

Local Initiatives Support Corporation of Greater Houston (LISC)

LISC of Houston works to overcome affordability gaps by providing financial resources (loans, grants), technical assistance (consulting), and relationships with local and national policymakers to local community development corporations. This organization will be an important partner in helping distressed communities transform into more sustainable, live/work/play environments in which residents are able to raise families and age-in-place.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation National Office (LISC-N)

The national LISC office is a potential partner for connecting local organizations and community leaders to revitalize neighborhoods and improve quality of life. LISC specializes in helping funding partners leverage investments to transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy, sustainable communities of choice. LISC staff could help to identify priorities and challenges to deliver the most appropriate support to meet local needs of Urban Centers.

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston

METRO will be a major partner in successfully achieving multimodal transportation connectivity and ridership amongst Urban Center by planning and providing bus routes, rail service and transit facilities. METROLift services will be key to protecting and enhancing community stability through it's pre-scheduled, curb-to-curb, shared-ride transportation for persons with disabilities and it's management of emergency transportation services throughout Houston. As Centers emerge and grow, METRO will help accommodate growing populations.

National Development Council (NDC)

NDC is the oldest national non-profit community development organization in the U.S. and works to provide assistant to under served urban areas for job creation and community development through debt and equity for residential, commercial, public and non-profit facilities projects. It also offers a variety of services for Urban Centers such as development finance and small business lending, new markets tax credits, historic rehabilitation tax credits and real estate recycling, just to name a few.

Super Neighborhoods (SN)

Houston has been divided into 88 Super Neighborhoods where residents of neighboring communities are encouraged to work together to identify, plan, and set priorities to address the needs and concerns of their community. The Super Neighborhood Council serves as a forum where residents and stakeholders can discuss issues, establish priority projects for the area and develop a Super Neighborhood Action Plan to help them meet their goals.

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) receives approximately $45 million annually for distribution and administers the The Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program. An application for State of Texas Housing Tax Credits does not guarantee support or award of funds; however, proposals that meet the multi-family policy priorities of Urban Centers should partner with HCDD to apply.

Tax Increment Financing Zones (TIRZ)

A Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone is a municipality created to implement tax increment financing, a type of public financing that is used as a subsidy for redevelopment. They are created by the City Council to attract new investment to an area. TIRZ help finance the cost of redevelopment and encourage development in an area that would otherwise not attract sufficient market development in a timely manner. Taxes based on new improvements are put in a fund that finance public improvements within boundaries of the zone.

Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)

A 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that was created by the Texas Legislature in 1994 to serve as a self-sustaining, statewide affordable housing provider. TSAHC's multifamily tax-exempt bond issuance program was established in 2001 and has since provided more than $600 million in financing to help build or preserve affordable housing in Texas. As one of only two authorized statewide issuers of housing bonds, TSAHC receives 10% of the statewide volume cap for multifamily private activity bonds and has unlimited authority to issue 01(c) (3) bonds for rental housing projects.

Performance Metrics for Ongoing Monitoring

Looking to the Future

Establishing accurate, reliable thresholds for measuring the performance of live/work/play environments will be important to the overall sustainability of the Urban Houston Framework. This may, however, prove to be an ongoing challenge in that metrics for monitoring Urban Centers would vary based on size, location and function.

For example, the monitoring thresholds for Small Centers would likely vary from those of Large Centers and vice versa. Similarly, monitoring thresholds for emergent Centers may differ from those of established Centers and from those of Centers transitioning from one size to the next. Moreover, this will become increasingly complex as Centers begin to collide with each other or as the functions of these urban environments become more balanced with socioeconomic demands and available infrastructure capacity.

While more research is required to assess exact targets for monitoring the ongoing performance of Urban Centers (and the Characteristics thereof) today, it is crucial that the refinement of Criteria, Tools, Expectations and Processes ensue with the ultimate goals of monitoring implementation in mind.

Although future phases of the Urban Houston Framework will need to focus on thresholds, the analysis and stakeholder dialogue included in this Report provided a general of understanding of targets for Criteria in the future, and ensured that the HUD Livability Principles were met through the goals. **Table 14: Recommendations for Ongoing Monitoring Targets** is an overview of these conclusions.

Some measurements of Urban Center performance will need to continue to increase in number regardless of Center size, location or function. These Characteristics are noted with "⇑" in **Table 14: Recommendations for Ongoing Monitoring Targets**. Examples of Characteristics that should increase into the foreseeable future are housing affordability, diversity and population/employment density, which should become more dense as Urban Centers continue to attract in-migrating populations from around the region.

The performance of a select group of Urban Center Characteristics will need to decrease in the future. These Characteristics are noted with "⇓" in **Table 14: Recommendations for Ongoing Monitoring Targets**. For example, optimum performance for Improvement to Land Value Ratio is characterized by a decreasing ratio of 2.0:1 or lower. As Urban Centers become more established, the percentage of Vacant Land would also decrease.

Other metrics may increase or decrease in number depending on the Center. Characteristics of this nature are noted with "⇕" in **Table 14: Recommendations for Ongoing Monitoring Targets**. An example of a Characteristic for which good performance numbers could be indicated by either increasing or decreasing numbers is Housing Starts (New Construction). Some Centers may require retail or commercial construction in lieu of residential to meet demands of a growing population.

Finally, " ⃠ " is used for those Criteria performance targets are not applicable or measurable. Criteria of this nature, such as the Funding Mechanism/Management Entity Criteria, simply require a target of yes or no (i.e. yes - a Center has a Management District or TIRZ or no - it does not have a Management District or TIRZ).

As with any new policy effort, there should be a review time frame established for each Urban Center to assess whether or not Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives are the appropriate mechanisms for achieving performance targets and Goals identified by stakeholders. The time frame of review for each Urban Center may vary, but should generally occur every 2-3 years following designation. Similarly, Urban Center designation procedures need to be monitored semi-annually to ensure the overall Implementation Framework for Urban Centers remains accountable to stakeholders' Vision.

Performance Metrics for Ongoing Monitoring

Table 14: *Recommendations for Ongoing Monitoring Targets*

GOAL	CHARACTERISTIC	MEASURABLE CHARACTERISTICS	BASELINE THRESHOLD TODAY	FUTURE PERFORMANCE TARGET
Address local and regional housing needs	Housing Character, Diversity	Residential Density (Dwelling Units)	20 - 300 residences per acre	↑
		Housing Type	Varies	↓↑
		Housing Affordability	Varies	↑
		Housing Choice and Mobility (Fair Housing Factor)	Varies	↑
		Housing Starts (New Construction)	Varies	↓↑
		Mixed-Land Use (Housing and Localized Services)	.75 or higher	↑
Contribute to high-quality infrastructure	Infill/ Redevelopment Potential	Vacant Land (%)	Varies	↓
		Improvement to Land Value Ratio	2.0:1 or lower	↓
		Significant Potential for Development/Redevelopment	Varies	↑
Encourage economic viability and diversity	Funding Mechanism, Management Entity	Management District	Yes	⊘
		TIRZ	Yes	⊘
	Land Use Diversity	Average Residential/Commercial/Office FAR	1.5 to 3.0	↑
		Land Use Diversity Index	1	↑
		Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio	0.1 - 2	↓
		Area of Center in Acres	Varies	↓↑
		Parks and Open Space	Varies	↑
Enhance community stability, accessibility and equity	High Employment, Population Density	Job Density	12 - 25 + people per acre	↑
		Population Density	12 - 25 jobs + people per acre	↑
	Access to Amenities, Attractions/Destinations	Amenity Density	3+ amenities per census block	↑
		Amenity Diversity	Needs additional data/research	↑
		National/Regional (vs. Local) Attractions/Destinations	Needs additional data/research	↑
Promote sustainable, healthy design	Bike/Pedestrian Accessibility	Bikeway Density	Bikeway w/in mile distance	↑
		Trail Density	Trail w/in mile distance	↑
		Sidewalk Accessibility	Needs additional data/research	↑
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Access to Streets, Freeways	Intersection Density	0.22 intersections per acre	↑
		Street Density (Freeways, Thoroughfares, Streets)	Varies	↑
		Access to Freeways	Varies	↓↑
		Access to Thoroughfares	Varies	↑
	High Quality Transit	Type of Transit	Varies	↓↑
		Type of Transit Facilities	Varies	↑
		Transit Frequency and Connectivity	Varies	↑

↑ *Increasing measurement indicates optimum performance*

↓ *Decreasing measurement indicates optimum performance*

↓↑ *Increasing or decreasing measurement may indicate optimum performance*

⊘ *Performance target not applicable*

Houston-Galveston Area Council

PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

DESIGNWORKSHOP

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A

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Stakeholder Engagement Process

Overview

Buy-in from key stakeholders and the community is important to the future success of creating an Urban Centers in Houston. This buy-in started early in the Urban Houston Framework planning process, and is an integral part of this Study. Implementing Urban Centers will require partnerships with the community, property owners, businesses, City and other appropriate agencies and utility companies.

The overall Stakeholder Engagement Plan included a steering committee, focus groups, online polls, project website/blog for brainstorming ideas and public workshops. The process was specifically developed to create successful outcomes, gain valuable input, and build consensus among the public and stakeholder interest groups about the Urban Houston Framework.

Project Kick Off

A Strategic Kick Off Meeting was held on October 30th, 2012 to discuss goals and expected outcomes of the Urban Houston Framework Study, develop a community engagement strategy and identify Stakeholder Advisory Committee members.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Kick Off

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) was formed by the City of Houston Planning Department. The purpose of the SAC is to provide input from a spectrum of interests within Houston's community, including those with environmental, development, community and transportation interests. Regular meetings with the SAC throughout the project ensured that the Urban Houston Framework process reflected the thoughts and ideas of Houston's stakeholders.

Stakeholder Outreach

There were various forms of stakeholder outreach conducted during the Urban Houston Framework Study, including three stakeholder workshops.

MindMixer Website

UrbanHoustonFramework.com was launched on December 7th, 2012 and will remain active through at least December 2013. The purpose of the website was to provide a convenient and interactive forum for sharing ideas about what makes Houston great, what needs to change, and how to increase the city's diversity and competitiveness while preserving the character of existing neighborhoods.

Values Workshop

The first round of stakeholder meetings occurred over a two day time period on December 4th and 5th, 2012. The purpose of the Values Workshop was to introduce the targeted public to the project, discuss Urban Centers, and receive feedback on initial challenges and potential tools for development.

Online Poll 1

Concurrent with each stakeholder meeting series, the Consultant Team launched an online poll. The first online poll (active from December 10th to January 30th, 2013) was aimed at reaching out to a broader public to elicit feedback on the most important criteria within an Urban Center, and challenges to creating active Urban Centers in Houston.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 2

The second Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held December 3rd, 2012) presented the analysis of Urban Center characteristics from the first SAC meeting and concepts for the applicant Process, Criteria, and Tools and Expectations.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 3

The third Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held January 10th, 2013) reviewed the outcomes from the first public workshop, presented an analysis of comparable cities, and presented initial Framework Process alternatives and Toolbox.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 4

The fourth Stakeholder Advisory Committee meting (held February 13th, 2013) introduced the Pilot Project analysis and assumptions to gain feedback and sign-off prior to finishing the analysis.

Vision Workshop

The second round of stakeholder meetings occurred over a two day time period on February 13th and 14th, 2013. The purpose of these workshops was to review the benchmarking analysis and results from online poll, present proposed Framework Process alternatives and resultant Toolbox.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 5

The fifth Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held March 27th, 2013) reviewed the outcomes from the Vision Workshop and further discussed the development standards Framework.

Stakeholder Engagement Process

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 6

The sixth Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held April 11th, 2013) was focused on an affordable housing discussion and appropriate Tools and Expectations for the City of Houston.

Implementation Workshop

The third round of stakeholder meetings occurred on April 11th, 2013. The purpose of this workshop was to present the results of the Pilot Project analysis and Toolbox to the general public.

Online Poll 2

The second online poll (active April 12th to April 26th, 2013) allowed the general public to provide feedback on Tools and Expectations.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 7

The final Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held on May 1st, 2013) presented the final plan to the SAC and outlined next steps for the City in order to move the Urban Houston Framework plan for development forward.

Figure 17: *SAC members appointed by the City of Houston*

Urban Houston Framework Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)

1. Linda Porras-Pirtle - Planning Commissioner (SAC Chair)
2. Keiji Asakura - Planning Commissioner
3. Antoine Bryant - Planning Commissioner
4. Veronica Chapa-Jones - COH - Housing and Community Development
5. Marlene Gafrick - COH - Planning and Development
6. Mark Loethen - COH - Public Works and Engineering
7. Diane Schenke - Greater East End Management District
8. Ashby Johnson - H-GAC - Transportation & Air Quality
9. Jeff Taebel - H-GAC – Community & Environmental
10. Filo Castore - American Institute of Architects (AIA)
11. Ed Taravela - Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA)
12. Casey Morgan - Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA)
13. David Crossley - Houston Tomorrow
14. Bob Collins - Houston Real Estate Council (HREC)
15. Bill Huntsinger - Houston Real Estate Council (HREC)
16. Joshua Sanders - Houstonians for Responsible Growth (HRG)
17. Amanda Timm - Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
18. Clint Harbert - Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)
19. Kim Slaughter - Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO)
20. Shon Link - Urban Land Institute (ULI)
21. Irma Sanchez - Westchase District

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Kick Off Meeting: Overview

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) was formed by the City of Houston Planning Department. The purpose of the SAC is to provide input from a spectrum of interests within Houston's community, including those with environmental, development, community and transportation interests.

Purpose

The purpose of the SAC Kick Off meeting was to present a preliminary project vision, introduce the Urban Centers concept, gather feedback on goals, identify challenges, and determine criteria of Large, Medium and Small Centers. The SAC also helped formulate the project schedule and weigh in on upcoming next steps for creating Urban Centers in Houston.

Regular meetings with the SAC throughout the project ensured transparency and collaboration throughout the Urban Houston Framework creation process. The goal of the SAC Kick Off meeting being held prior to the public Values Workshop focus groups was to ensure the Urban Houston Framework process reflected the thoughts and ideas of Houston's key stakeholders.

Process

Prior to the SAC Kick Off meeting, the Consultant Team met with the City of Houston and the Houston-Galveston Area Council to identify SAC members and present the overall scope and goals for the Urban Houston Framework project. During the SAC Kick Off meeting, the City, H-GAC and Design Workshop received feedback from key stakeholders on goals and concerns for the project. There was also a review of analysis materials on Urban Center concepts completed prior to the Kick Off.

The Kick Off was held on Wednesday, October 30th, 2012 from 3pm - 5pm at 611 Walker Building, downtown Houston, John B. Raia Conference Room #A603. The meeting session lasted approximately 120 minutes.

Activities included a presentation by the Consultant Team on the scope of the Urban Houston Framework project, expected outcomes, 2012-2013 schedule of activities, and a group discussion about Urban Center goals, challenges and criteria.

SAC Kick Off was held October 2012 in downtown Houston, Texas.

SAC Kick Off was held October 2012 in downtown Houston, Texas.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Kick Off Meeting: Key Findings

Centers

A Large Center caters to regional, national and international needs and may consist of tall buildings and a street grid that allows for pedestrian activity, retail activities and public transit access throughout.

A Medium Center caters to citywide needs and has a mix of mid to high-rise buildings, shopping centers, housing and transportation options.

A Small Center caters to community needs and may have low-rise buildings (such as single-family houses, small apartment complexes or locally owned businesses) and a street grid that primarily encourages transit by personal automobile. Additionally, a Small Center may encompass one neighborhood or multiple, smaller neighborhoods.

Geographic Locations of Existing/ Potential Centers

The Consultant Team also asked the SAC to name areas in the city that might serve as examples of existing Centers. The SAC identified the Central Business District as an example of an existing Large Center. The Medical Center was cited as a potential Large Center. Rice Village and Greenspoint were defined as existing Medium Centers. The SAC named 19th Street in the Heights, Fountain View, Kirby Montrose, Old Spanish Trail, Palm Center and Westheimer as potential Small Centers.

Defining Criteria of Centers

The following page is a synopsis of prerequisite (required) and optional (recommended) criteria for Large Centers identified by the SAC during the Kick Off.

Generally, feedback received from the SAC fell into the following four categories (this applies to Large, Medium and Small):

1. Community,
2. Heritage and Attraction,
3. Economy, and
4. Systems.

Community Criteria refer to housing typologies, education and access to basic services such as food or health care.

Heritage and Attraction Criteria refer to art, historic sites or other civic landmarks/facilities that create the meaning and value of a place.

Economic Criteria refer to land uses and activities contributing to the overall economic viability of an area.

Systems Criteria refer to both natural and man-made infrastructure required to meet commercial/residential demands such as transportation networks, parks and open space connections or storm-water control.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Kick Off Meeting: Key Findings

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES			• Mixture of commercial land uses that cater to regional, national and international needs	• Access to major freeway or thoroughfare • Multimodal transportation options that at minimum includes high-frequency bus routes, bikeways and shared parking structures • Walkable pedestrian environment
OPTIONAL CRITERIA	• Civic/institutional land uses (museums, performing arts centers, court houses, hospitals, City offices, universities), access to City agencies • Active super neighborhood alliance, Management District or TIRZ		• Promotes 24-hour activity • Attracts and retains outside dollars	• Rail transit service

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES			• Industrial or manufacturing land uses • Medium financial impact (per capita pending annually) • Medium intensity of development (## people per square acre)	
OPTIONAL CRITERIA			• Retail land uses	

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Kick Off Meeting: Key Findings

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES				• Access to park land, open space and recreational facilities • Walkable pedestrian environment
OPTIONAL CRITERIA	• Active super neighborhood alliance, Management District or TIRZ • Mixture of multi-family housing options (i.e. apartments, condominiums, townhouses) offered at a range of purchase/ rental rates • Mixture of low to medium-density, single-family housing. • Community focal point (such as community center, recreational complex or public park)		• Locally owned small businesses	• Walk to work trips

Values Workshop: Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the Values Workshop was to present a preliminary project vision, introduce the Urban Centers concept, gather feedback on goals, identify challenges, and determine Criteria of Large, Medium and Small Centers.

Process

The Values Workshop was held on Tuesday, December 4th and Wednesday, December 5th, 2012 at the West Gray Recreation Center located in Houston, Texas. Each of the five meeting sessions lasted approximately 90 minutes.

Activities included a presentation by the Consultant Team, group discussion about Urban Center goals and challenges, a "brainstorming" activity in which participants discussed Urban Centers Criteria, and a concluding mapping exercise in which participants placed dots on maps to signify locations of existing or potential Urban Centers in the city.

Outreach

Public outreach for the Values Workshop included phone calls and e-mail invitations to key stakeholders and focus group members and advertisements on the City's social media websites (Twitter and Facebook).

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were held. The purpose of these focus groups was to get key stakeholders together to discuss topics related to their professional experience or areas of expertise regarding the creation of Urban Centers. The following five focus groups for the Values Workshop were identified by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee:

1. ***Realtors and Developers*:** Tuesday, December 4th;
2. ***Policymakers and Agencies:*** Wednesday, December 5th;
3. ***Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners:*** Tuesday, December 4th;
4. ***Housing Interests:*** Wednesday, December 5th; and
5. ***Special Districts (Management, Historic, TIRZ, etc..):*** Wednesday, December 5th.

Interested Public Workshop

The two-day Values Workshop concluded with an Interested Public meeting held Wednesday, December 5th from 6:00 – 8:00 PM in the same room as the focus groups. The purpose of this meeting was to reach out to the general public or those who could not attend the daytime focus group meetings. This meeting was open to all individuals interested in learning about the project and offering feedback on goals and challenges.

Members of the Interested Public were also asked to provide feedback on the required prerequisite and optional criteria for Large, Medium and Small Centers.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Figure 18: *Focus Groups*

Urban Houston Framework
Values Workshop Participants

1. **Realtors and Developers**
2. **Policymakers and Agencies**
3. **Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners**
4. **Housing Interests**
5. **Special Districts (Management, Historic, TIRZ, etc..)**
6. **Interested Public**

Values Workshop: Key Findings

Large Centers

A Large Center caters to regional, national and international needs and may consist of tall buildings and a street grid that allows for pedestrian activity, retail activities and public transit access throughout.

Geographic Locations of Existing/ Potential Large Centers

After receiving feedback validating the general definition for Large Centers, the Consultant Team asked participants to name areas in the city that might serve as examples of existing Centers.

The Special District Focus Group identified the Central Business District as an example of an existing Large Center. The Medical Center and Uptown area were also identified as existing Large Centers. Greenspoint and Westchase were cited as potential Large Centers.

In addition to verbally discussing examples of Large Centers, a concluding map exercise was also conducted. Upon exiting, participants were provided dots that they could place on maps of the study area to signify locations of other existing/potential Urban Centers (either Large, Medium or Small) near their communities.

Defining Criteria of Large Centers

The following page is a synopsis of prerequisite (required) and optional (recommended) criteria for Large Centers identified by stakeholders and the interested public during a sticky note brainstorming exercise conducted with each group during the Values Workshop.

Generally, feedback received from focus group brainstorming exercises fell into the following four categories:

1. Community,
2. Heritage and Attraction,
3. Economy, and
4. Systems.

Community Criteria refer to housing typologies, education and access to basic services such as food or health care.

Heritage and Attraction Criteria refer to art, historic sites or other civic landmarks/facilities that create the meaning and value of a place.

Economic Criteria refer to land uses and activities contributing to the overall economic viability of an area.

Systems Criteria refer to both natural and man-made infrastructure required to meet commercial/residential demands such as transportation networks, parks and open space connections or stormwater control.


Photo Credit: Design Workshop


Photo Credit: Design Workshop

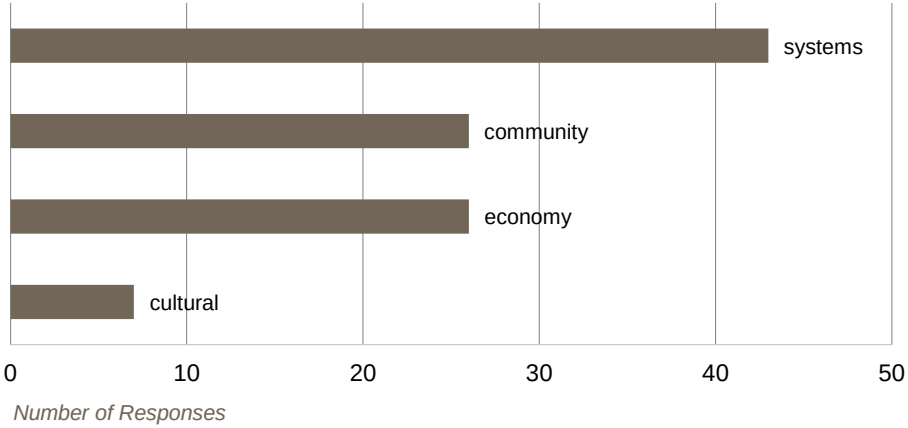


Figure 19: *Values Workshop Meeting Results - Large Center Criteria*

Values Workshop: Key Findings

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES	• Quality retail, dining and shopping (includes access to healthy food by non-vehicular transit) • Educational opportunities for individuals of all ages • Established funding mechanism/management entity • Mixture of high-density, multi-family housing options (i.e. apartments, condominiums, townhouses) offered at a range of purchase/rental rates • Civic/institutional land uses (museums, performing arts centers, court houses, hospitals, City offices, universities). • Programmed public space (parks, courtyards and plazas) • Subsidization or utilization of housing affordability programs and incentives	• Venues that accommodate cultural activities, events, festivals, trade shows or exhibits • Spaces that promote daytime and nighttime activities	• Mixture of commercial land uses that cater to regional, national and international needs • Low to high-wage employment opportunities • Land uses that accommodate large-scale conventions, meetings or conferences (such as convention centers, visitor centers or hotels) • Attracts and retains outside dollars (retail surplus leakage) • High financial impact • High intensity of development	• Access to park land, open space and recreational facilities • Floodwater control/ stormwater management system • Infrastructure capacity capable of meeting future commercial/residential demands • Within service zone of a police station, fire department and 24-hour emergency medical facility • Clear wayfinding and signage system that promotes regional, national and international destinations • Access to major freeway or thoroughfare • Multimodal transportation options that at minimum include high-frequency bus routes, bikeways and shared parking structures • Walkable pedestrian environment that encourages internal circulation • Well-engineered ingress and egress
OPTIONAL CRITERIA	• Access to City agencies • Active super neighborhood alliance, Management District or TIRZ • Vertical-mixed use buildings that include residential uses.	• Historic buildings, structures or sites • Opportunities for publicly accessible art	• Entertainment venues • Food stores • Hotels • Spaces that promote 24-hour activity • High land values	• Underground utilities • Walkable street grid • Close proximity to the Central Business District • Express bus/shuttle services • Limited surface parking • Rail transit service • Public facilities that promote shared riding (carpools) or bike transit • Bikeways that link to regional systems

Values Workshop: Key Findings

Medium Centers

A Medium Center caters to citywide needs and has a mix of mid to high-rise buildings, shopping centers, housing and transportation options.

Geographic Locations of Existing/ Potential Medium Centers

After receiving feedback validating the general definition for Medium Centers, the Consultant Team asked participants to name areas in the city that might serve as examples of existing Centers. The Housing Interest and Policymakers and Agencies Focus Groups identified Rice Village as an existing Medium Center.

Greenspoint was also identified as an existing Medium Center by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, Policymakers and Agencies, and Special Districts (management, historic, TIRZ, etc..) Focus Groups; meaning Greenspoint could potentially be either a Large or Medium Center.

Other Medium Centers identified during the Values Workshop include the Midtown District, 2nd and 3rd Ward communities, the Energy Corridor, City Centre, Highland Village and Westchase District.

In addition to verbally discussing examples of Medium Centers, a concluding map exercise was also conducted. Upon exiting, participants were provided sticky dots that they could place on maps of the study area to signify locations of other existing/potential Urban Centers (either Large, Medium or Small) near their communities.

Defining Criteria of Medium Centers

The following page is a synopsis of prerequisite (required) and optional (recommended) criteria for Medium Centers identified by stakeholders and interested public during a sticky note brainstorming exercise conducted with each group during the Values Workshop.

Generally, feedback received from focus group brainstorming exercises fell into the following four categories:

1. Community,
2. Heritage and Attraction,
3. Economy, and
4. Systems.

Community Criteria refer to housing typologies, education and access to basic services such as food or health care.

Heritage and Attraction Criteria refer to art, historic sites or other civic landmarks/facilities that create the meaning and value of a place.

Economic Criteria refer to land uses and activities contributing to the overall economic viability of an area.

Systems Criteria refer to both natural and man-made infrastructure required to meet commercial/residential demands such as transportation networks, parks and open space connections or stormwater control.

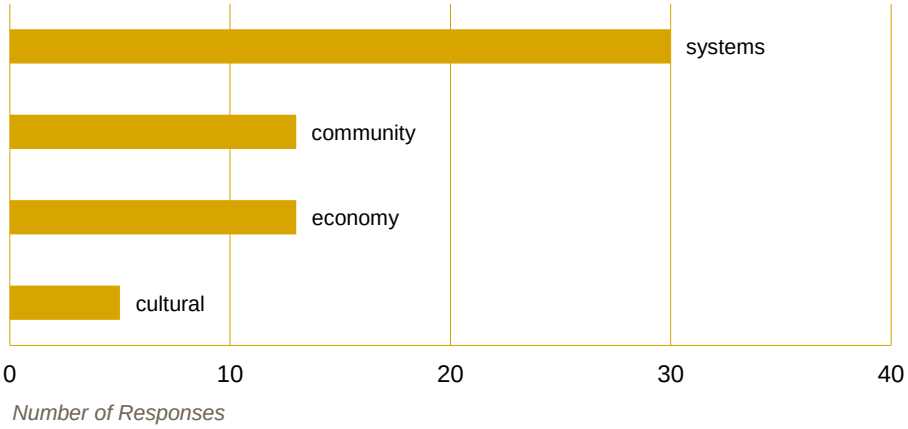


Figure 20: *Values Workshop Meeting Results - Medium Center Criteria*

Values Workshop: Key Findings

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES	• Quality retail, dining and shopping (includes access to healthy food by personal vehicle) • Educational opportunities for individuals of all ages • Established funding mechanism/management entity • Mixture of medium-density, multi-family housing options (i.e. apartments, condominiums, townhouses) offered at a range of purchase/rental rates • Mixture of medium-density, single-family housing	• Major civic or public destinations	• Mixture of commercial land uses that cater to citywide needs • Low to high-wage employment opportunities • Health care facilities • Industrial or manufacturing land uses • Medium financial impact • Medium intensity of development	• Access to major freeway or thoroughfare • Access to park land, open space and recreational facilities • Floodwater control/ stormwater management system • Sewer and water infrastructure capacity capable of meeting current commercial/residential demands • Multimodal transportation options that at a minimum include close proximity to medium-frequency bus routes, bikeways and shared parking opportunities
OPTIONAL CRITERIA	• Access to high quality K-12 schools • Job training or evening professional development programs • Religious institutions or places of worship • Established funding mechanism/management entity	• Venues that accommodate cultural activities, events, festivals, trade shows or exhibits • Historic buildings, structures or sites • Opportunities for publicly accessible art	• Raw land available within boundary for future development • Variety of dining options • Mixed use • Retail land uses • Visitor services	• Well planned connectivity to nearby Large and Small Centers • Campus-like development • Complete streets • Express transit service • Managed parking structures that promote multimodal transportation • Walkable street grid • Sewer and water infrastructure capacity capable of meeting future commercial/residential demands • No overhead utilities • Close proximity to the Central Business District • Safe bikeways

Values Workshop: Key Findings

Small Centers

A Small Center caters to community needs and may have low-rise buildings (such as single-family houses, small apartment complexes or locally owned businesses) and a street grid that primarily encourages transit by personal automobile. Additionally, a Small Center may encompass one neighborhood or multiple, smaller neighborhoods.

Geographic Locations of Existing/ Potential Small Centers

After receiving feedback validating the general definition for Small Centers, the Consultant Team asked participants to name areas in the city that might serve as examples of existing Centers.

The Housing Interests; Policymakers and Agencies, and Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners Focus Groups identified 19th Street in the Heights and Westheimer as existing Small Centers. Montrose was identified as an Small Center by Policymakers and Agencies and the Interested Public.

Several other Small Centers were identified during the Values Workshop include the Palm Center, 4th Ward community, Alameda Road, Avondale Street district, East End, Elgin and Dowling, Fountain View, Greater East End, Highland Village, Hillcroft, King Harbor, Kingwood, Kirby, Kirkwood, Long Point, Memorial Drive, Navigation, Old Spanish Trail, Rice Village, River Oaks, The Heights, Washington Avenue and West Grey Street.

In addition to verbally discussing examples of Medium Centers, a concluding map exercise was also conducted. Upon exiting, participants were provided sticky dots that they could place on maps of the study area to signify locations of other existing/potential Urban Centers (either Large, Medium or Small) near their communities.

Defining Criteria of Small Centers

The following page is a synopsis of prerequisite (required) and optional (recommended) criteria for Small Centers identified by stakeholders and interested public during a sticky note brainstorming exercise conducted with each group during the Values Workshop. Generally, feedback received from focus group brainstorming exercises fell into the following four categories:

1. Community,
2. Heritage and Attraction,
3. Economy, and
4. Systems.

Community Criteria refer to housing typologies, education and access to basic services such as food or health care.

Heritage and Attraction Criteria refer to art, historic sites or other civic landmarks/facilities that create the meaning and value of a place.

Economic Criteria refer to land uses and activities contributing to the overall economic viability of an area.

Systems Criteria refer to both natural and man-made infrastructure required to meet commercial/residential demands such as transportation networks, parks and open space connections or stormwater control.

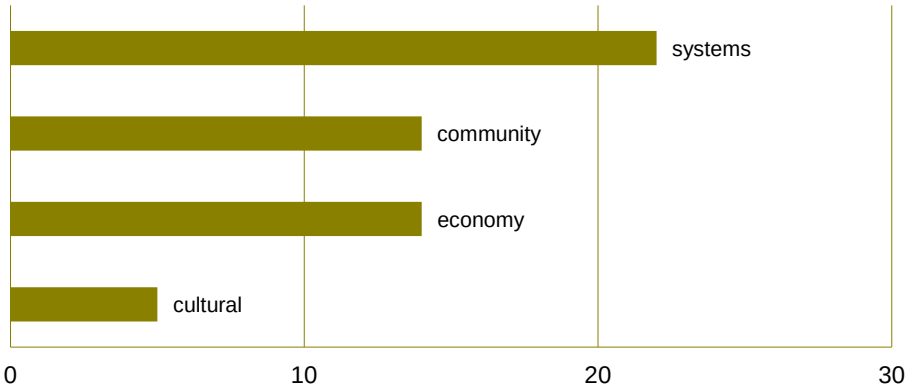


Figure 21: *Values Workshop Meeting Results - Small Center Criteria*

Values Workshop: Key Findings

CRITERIA	COMMUNITY	HERITAGE AND ATTRACTION	ECONOMY	SYSTEMS
REQUIRED PREREQUISITES	• Quality retail, dining and shopping • Access to healthy food • Mixture of multi-family housing options (i.e. apartments, condominiums, townhouses) offered at a range of purchase/rental rates • Mixture of low to medium-density, single-family housing	• Historic buildings, structures or sites	• Mixture of commercial land uses that cater to community needs • Low intensity of development	• Collector streets that serving as minor arterials or thoroughfares • Access to park land, open space and recreational facilities • Sewer and water infrastructure capacity capable of meeting current commercial/residential demands • Multimodal transportation options that at a minimum include close proximity to low-frequency bus routes and bikeways that tie into a larger regional network
OPTIONAL CRITERIA	• Access to high quality K-12 schools • Educational opportunities for individuals of all ages • Job training or evening professional development programs • Civic uses • Established funding mechanism/management entity • Deed restrictions • Community focal point (such as community center, recreational complex or public park) • Access to health care facilities and neighborhood pharmacies	• Venues that accommodate cultural activities, events, festivals, trade shows or exhibits • Opportunities for publicly accessible art	• Raw land available within boundary for future development • Deed restrictions • Locally owned small businesses • Full-service supermarket that includes healthy food options and fresh produce • Does not include large office blocks or commercial business parks	• Walkable street grid • Complete streets that encourage walk-to-work trips • Multimodal transportation options including bikeways and bus service

Urban Houston Framework Website

Purpose

The purpose of the Urban Houston Framework website was to keep the public up-to-date with information about the planning process, and to generate new ideas by giving the public an opportunity to discuss their own thoughts about how to improve Houston while maintaining its unique character.

Process

The website was launched on December 7th, 2012 and will remain active through at least December 2013. As of May 20th, 2013, 188 users had participated in discussions on the website.

The goal of the Urban Houston Framework website was to keep the public informed and engaged throughout the planning process by providing an opportunity to voice their opinions at their own convenience. The website also aimed to gather feedback from interested members of the public that were unable to attend the Values or Vision Workshops and those who wished to stay involved in the planning process.

Activities included the opportunity to discuss a variety of topics with others interested in the future of Houston's Urban Centers, "second" other participants' ideas, share photos about what makes Houston great, vote on strategies for improving Houston's quality of life, and pinpoint the locations of existing and future Urban Centers. Discussion forums were provided for the following six topics:

- ***Calling Houston Home:*** How can we make Houston a more permanent home for our residents? Where should we get started?
- ***Urban Center Locations:*** Show us where existing and future Urban Centers are located.
- ***Visioning Houston's Future:*** What is your vision for Centers in Houston?
- ***Making One Change:*** If you could change one thing about Houston what would it be?
- ***Diversifying Houston:*** How can we make Houston an economically and globally competitive city to work and live?
- ***Preserving Our Character:*** How can Houston grow and expand, while protecting the character of each of our neighborhoods?

Outreach

Public outreach for the website included an announcement at the Values and Vision Workshops and e-mails to a number of interested stakeholders, including:

- CitizensNet
- SAC constituents
- H-GAC "Our Region" Corporate Constituents
- Planning & Development Staff
- Green Team Houston
- The Houston Chapter of the American Planning Association
- Super Neighborhoods
- Civic Clubs

Key Findings

Comments on the website reveal a number of recurring themes and concerns. Transportation remains an important consideration for tomorrow's Urban Centers. Comments frequently referenced Houston's growing traffic problem and voiced their support for expanded public transportation options and car sharing programs that reduce the number of vehicles on the road or parked for an extended period of time.

Expanded public transportation options were tied not only to traffic reduction, but also viewed as opportunities to boost tourism, reduce pollution, and connect Urban Centers efficiently. In addition to public transportation, comments also mentioned the need for better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Website participants also support the idea of developing Urban Centers as distinct destinations. Comments express a desire to capitalize on Houston's rich history and cultural landmarks to draw tourists and residents from around the city to future Urban Centers. Attractive public spaces and public art are mentioned as important considerations in developing unique Urban Centers that serve as citywide destinations for tourists and residents alike.

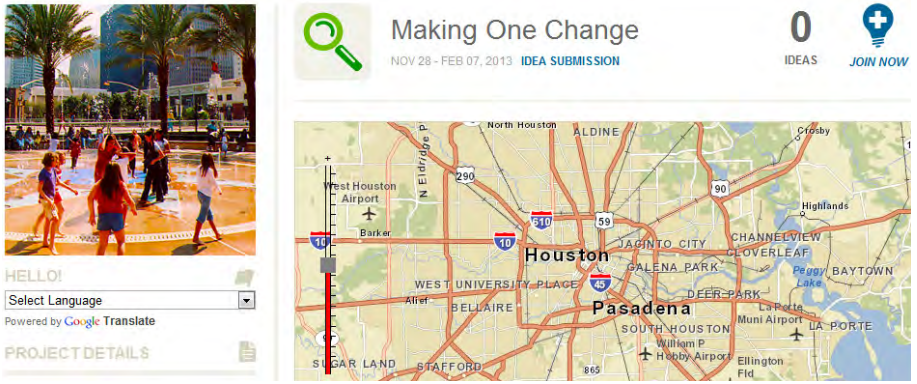


Figure 22: *Urban Houston Framework Website*

Online Poll 1

Purpose

Concurrent with each stakeholder meeting series, the Consultant Team launched an online poll. The purpose of the first online poll was to reach out to a broader public to elicit feedback on the most important criteria within an Urban Center and challenges to creating active Urban Centers in Houston.

Process

The online poll was launched on December 10th, 2012 and remained active through January 30th, 2013. A total of 3,713 people visited the site and 2,125 visitors (57 percent) completed the poll.

The majority of respondents accessed the poll between January 7th and January 11th, 2013 following an e-mail sent through the City's CitizenNet website.

Survey respondents were fairly evenly split between the three age groups "20 to 39", "40 to 59", and "60 and older". The largest proportion of respondents were between the ages of 40 to 59, but an almost equally large share were between the ages of 20 to 39. A slightly smaller proportion were age 60 or older. The vast majority of respondents identified as "individuals" - only a small number of respondents identified as having a "business" "government", "institution", or "nonprofit" affiliation.

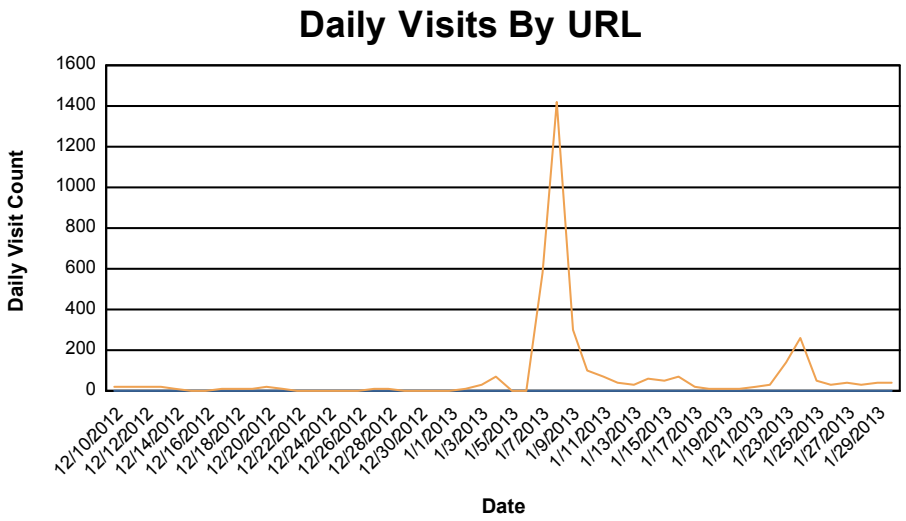


Figure 23: *Daily Visit Count for Online Poll 1.*

The online poll asked respondents to choose the top 5 characteristics they would like to see in each of the proposed Urban Center sizes from a list of twenty-nine possible characteristics. Respondents then rated the level of difficulty and importance of overcoming challenges associated with each of the selected characteristics. Respondents also had the opportunity to suggest additional characteristics and challenges that were not included in the list of options provided.

Outreach

Public outreach for the website included an announcement at the Values and Vision Workshops and e-mails to a number of interested stakeholders, including:

- CitizensNet
- SAC constituents
- H-GAC "Our Region" Corporate Constituents
- Planning & Development Staff
- Green Team Houston
- The Houston Chapter of the American Planning Association
- Super Neighborhoods
- Civic Clubs

Urban Center Characteristics

1. Reduced Setbacks
2. Connectivity
3. Short Block Lengths
4. Increased Building Height
5. Greater Number of Businesses
6. Civic Amenities
7. Population Density
8. Diversity of Housing
9. Higher Floor to Area Ratio
10. Historic Structures/Landmarks
11. Increased Number of Jobs
12. Management Entity
13. Access from Major Roads
14. Access from Minor Roads
15. Park Once, But Do Many Things
16. Parks and Open Space
17. Higher Density of Students
18. Street Intersection Density
19. Reduced Street Width
20. Air Transportation
21. Automobile Transportation
22. Bicycle Transportation
23. Bus Transportation
24. Rail Transportation
25. Pedestrian Options
26. Reduced Vacancy Rates
27. Quality Education
28. Security
29. Residential Amenities

Figure 24: *Top five Characteristics for each Urban Center Size.*

Online Poll 1 (Continued)

Key Findings

Urban Center Criteria

The results of the first online poll reveal the preferences of Houston residents regarding the most important criteria for developing Urban Centers. The most frequently selected characteristics differed only slightly between the three Urban Center sizes. While security and connectivity ranked high for all three Urban Centers, population density was unique only to Large Centers and parks and bikability to Small Centers.

Top Ranked Criteria: Large Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following characteristics as being the most important to Large Centers:

1. Security
2. Population Density
3. Quality Education
4. Increase Number of Jobs
5. Connectivity
6. Greater Number of Businesses
7. Civic Amenities
8. Diversity of Housing
9. Rail Transportation
10. Pedestrian Options

Top Ranked Criteria: Medium Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following characteristics as being the most important to Medium Centers:

1. Connectivity
2. Greater Number of Businesses
3. Security
4. Civic Amenities
5. Quality Education
6. Diversity of Housing
7. Rail Transportation
8. Residential Amenities
9. Pedestrian Options
10. Automobile Transportation

Top Ranked Criteria: Small Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following characteristics as being the most important to Small Centers:

1. Connectivity
2. Security
3. Quality Education
4. Civic Amenities
5. Diversity of Housing
6. Residential Amenities
7. Automobile Transportation
8. Pedestrian Options
9. Bicycle Transportation
10. Parks and Open Space

Urban Center Challenges

The results of the first online poll reveal the most important challenges facing tomorrow's Urban Centers. Challenges were identified for each Urban Center size, but several emerged as major concerns for all three sizes. These challenges include:

- Lack of funding to maintain existing infrastructure
- Poor pedestrian infrastructure
- Lack of policies and funding to increase safety
- Lack of connectivity between nodes

Top Ranked Challenges: Large Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following challenges as being the most important to address for Large Centers:

1. Lack of planning and fiscal support for mass transit
2. Lack of focus on quality of life characteristics
3. Lack of a multimodal approach to transportation (rail)
4. Poor pedestrian infrastructure
5. Lack of funding to maintain existing infrastructure
6. Policies that require developers to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements (rail)
7. Lack of connectivity between nodes
8. Lack of policies and funding to increase safety
9. Lack of funding for education
10. Lack of ability to change policies with the Independent School District

Survey respondents were also asked to rank the level of difficulty in overcoming challenges associated with each Urban Center characteristic. Poll results indicate that while people perceive all challenges as relatively difficult to overcome, "policies that require developers to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements (rail)" was ranked as slightly more difficult to address, and "poor pedestrian infrastructure" as slightly easier.

Figure 25: *Large Center challenges ranked by level of difficulty and importance.*

Online Poll 1 (Continued)

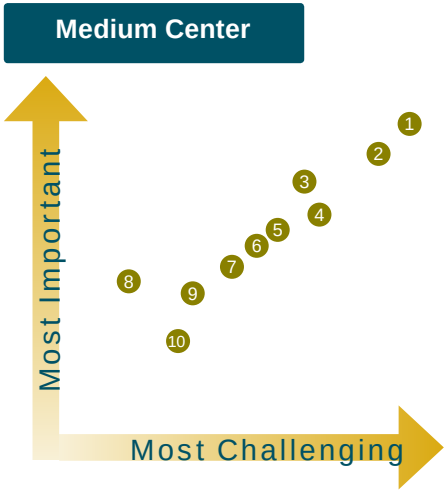
Top Ranked Challenges: Medium Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following challenges as being the most important to address for Medium Centers:

1. Lack of planning and fiscal support for mass transit
2. Policies that require developers to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements (rail)
3. Lack of a multimodal approach to transportation (rail)
4. Lack of connectivity between nodes
5. Policies that require developers to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements (bike)
6. Lack of funding to maintain existing infrastructure
7. Poor bicycle infrastructure
8. Poor pedestrian infrastructure
9. Lack of policies and funding to increase safety
10. Lack of a skilled and trained workforce

Poll results for Medium Centers also indicate that people view all the challenges as significant roadblocks. However, “lack of planning and fiscal support for mass transit” was ranked as the most difficult challenge to address and “poor pedestrian infrastructure” as the easiest.

Figure 26: *Medium Center challenges ranked by level of difficulty and importance.*



Top Ranked Challenges: Small Centers

Rankings submitted in the first online poll indicate the following challenges as being the most important to address for Small Centers:

1. Lack of a multimodal approach to transportation (bike)
2. Lack of connectivity between nodes
3. Lack of funding for education
4. Lack of funding to maintain existing infrastructure
5. Poor bicycle infrastructure
6. Poor pedestrian infrastructure
7. Lack of ability to change policies with the Independent School District
8. Lack of policies and funding to increase safety
9. Lack of funding for park programming and maintenance
10. Poor sidewalk maintenance

Poll results indicate that people perceive “lack of a multimodal approach to transportation (rail)” as the most difficult challenge to address and “lack of a skilled and trained workforce” as the least difficult.

Figure 27: *Small Center challenges ranked by level of difficulty and importance.*

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 2-4

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 2

Prior to the Values Workshop (see following page for a summary), the second Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held December 3rd, 2012) presented the analysis of Urban Center characteristics from the first SAC meeting and concepts for the applicant process, criteria and tools and expectations.

Goal refinements were requested, such as creating more public space, preserving civic uses and protecting existing character. There was concern about how existing, stable neighborhoods would be protected from Urban Center development.

There was discussion of which criteria and what thresholds would be required for a place to become an Urban Center, with an emphasis on magnitude of activity density.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 3

The third Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held January 10th, 2013) reviewed the outcomes from the first public workshop, the peer review, initial Framework process alternatives, and Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives.

The Consultant Team reviewed the tools that other cities had used in their Urban Centers. The SAC highlighted the fact that it is difficult to find peer cities to Houston because there is no zoning. Some members stressed the importance of first providing a general or comprehensive plan prior to defining Urban Centers.

The Urban Center process discussion had support for all of the three alternatives (City-initiated, applicant-initiated and community-initiated) for different reasons: the different processes seem to correlate to different sizes of Centers.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 4

The fourth Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held February 13th, 2013) introduced the pilot project analysis and assumptions to gain feedback and sign-off prior to finishing the analysis.

There was some questioning of the assumptions used for the pilot project, in particular, the rental rates. But the sources for the information were verified.

Tools and expectations were further discussed in this meeting. SAC members suggested that financial incentives will be the most effective, while non-financial are secondary. Affordable housing was brought up as a challenge in Houston to keep the affordability from getting pushed to the fringes, but not impossible to overcome. Other tools recommendations included arts and culture and a better way to promote this ideal.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Vision Workshop: Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the Urban Houston Framework Vision Workshop was to build upon previous findings regarding Urban Center visions, goals and functions, review benchmarking analysis and results from the first online poll and to present proposed Framework scenario alternatives and toolboxes.

Meeting participants were asked to help narrow down a lengthy list of potential criteria, expectations/tools, and processes alternatives for creating Urban Centers in Houston. The overall aim of the meeting was to gather input from Focus Groups, Stakeholder Advisory Committee members and interested citizenry that could be analyzed by the Consultant Team to determine a single, preferred Framework scenario for implementation.

Process

Vision Workshop meetings were held on Wednesday, February 13th and Thursday, February 14th, 2013 at the West Gray Recreation Center and Houston Garden Center. Each meeting session lasted approximately 120 minutes. Each meeting began with a brief introduction, review of the overall Urban Houston Framework process (schedule, scope, time line) and previous findings from the Values Workshop and first online poll.

The Consultant Team then presented a series of Scenario Options for criteria, expectations/tools, and processes - pausing for group discussions with meeting attendees regarding various pros, cons and administrative requirements for each. In addition to verbal feedback, participants were also asked to weigh in on each of the Scenario Options through a series of keypad polling questions.

Outreach

Public outreach for the Vision Workshop included phone calls and e-mail invitations to key stakeholders and Focus Group members, and advertisements on the City's social media websites (Twitter and Facebook).

Focus Groups

Five Focus Group meetings were conducted. The purpose of these focus groups was to get key stakeholders together to discuss topics related to their professional experience or areas of expertise in relation to various potential criteria, expectations/tools, and processes alternatives for creating Urban Centers in Houston. Stakeholders were identified through previous meetings conducted with Stakeholder Advisory Committee members.

The following Focus Groups participated in the Vision Workshop:

1. Realtors and Developers: Wednesday, February 13th;
2. Policy Makers and Agencies: Thursday, February 14th;
3. Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners: Wednesday, February 13th;
4. Housing Interests: Thursday, February 14th; and
5. Special Districts (Management, Historic, TIRZ, etc..): Thursday, February 14th.

Interested Public Workshop

The two-day Vision Workshop also included an Interested Public meeting held on Wednesday, February 13th from 6:00 – 8:00pm at the Houston Garden Center.

The purpose of this meeting was to reach out to the general public or those who could not attend the focus group meetings and to get input reflective of a broad range of perspectives. This meeting was open to all individuals interested in learning about the project and offering feedback on criteria, expectations/tools, and processes alternatives.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Vision Workshop: Key Findings

Criteria Alternatives

How does an area gain access to the Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives outlined in the Urban Houston Framework? The Consultant Team formulated three criteria alternatives that could be used to determine which Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives would be appropriate for development, redevelopment, or infill projects in Large, Medium or Small Centers. At the Vision Workshop, meeting participants were asked to weigh in on these three criteria alternatives. Key findings are discussed below.

Prerequisites Only Scenario

Under the Prerequisites Only Scenario, Large, Medium or Small Center designation is achieved by meeting a series of requirements. For example, to become a Large Center a site must meet a select group of criteria such as combined job and population density and close proximity to a freeway or major road. If the site does not meet all of these required prerequisites, the applicant would be unable to obtain Urban Center status and access the development incentive Toolbox.

Vision Workshop participants provided feedback on which Urban Centers they felt the Prerequisite Only Scenario applied to. Keypad polling results indicated that the Prerequisites Only Scenario was the least supported scenario of all possible options presented during the Workshop. Twenty eight percent of respondents felt the scenario did not apply to any Urban Center due to the fact that the system would be “too black and white” to ensure applicability to the variety of Centers found in Houston. Thirty five percent of respondents indicated that the Prerequisites Only option could be applicable to Large Centers; however, it was recommended that applicants unable to meet all of the required prerequisites should be given an option to reapply under one of the more flexible Center designation scenarios.

Prerequisites plus Optional Scenario

Under the Prerequisites plus Optional Scenario, Large, Medium or Small Center designation is achieved by meeting a combination of required and optional criteria. For example, to become a Small Center an applicant must prove the project meets prerequisite criteria plus 2-3 optional criteria. Prerequisite criteria could be job and population density and proximity to a freeway while optional criteria could be residential dwelling unit density, proximity to METRO bus or civic amenities within a ½-mile walking distance.

Vision Workshop participants provided feedback on which Urban Centers the Prerequisite plus Optional Scenario applied to. Thirty eight percent of respondents felt the scenario was most applicable to Medium Centers, however, there was general agreement that it could also apply to Large or Small Centers.

Group discussions revealed more support for the Prerequisites plus Optional Scenario than the Prerequisites Only Scenario due to higher levels of perceived flexibility to applicants. Respondents emphasized that “the ability to make a choice is a hallmark of development” so it would be imperative for the preferred Framework scenario “to leave as much control as possible in the hands of the developers” ultimately building the Urban Center.

Point System Scenario

Under the Point System Scenario, Large, Medium or Small Center designation is achieved by meeting varying levels of point requirements. Like other well-known rating systems, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES), an applicant must achieve a minimum score of points to become a Large Center under this scenario. To become a Medium Center, an applicant must meet a lower threshold of points than the Large Center, and to become a Small Center an applicant must earn even fewer points.

Vision Workshop participants provided feedback on which Urban Centers the Point System Scenario applied to. Thirty seven percent of respondents felt this scenario was most applicable to Medium and Small Centers. Group discussions revealed that Workshop participants were less supportive of the Point System Scenario for Large Centers because they felt that there was merit in requiring certain expectations for walkable, urban building forms in Large Centers to ensure “consistent coherence to building standards” that may not be as well encouraged by a point system.

Overall, Workshop participants agreed the Point System scenario offers the greatest flexibility of options for meeting enter requirements. Focus Group members also noted support for this scenario due to the fact that it could include criteria such as security and walkability that are difficult to require and/or measure under the Prerequisite Only Scenario or the Prerequisite plus Optional scenario. Several stakeholders indicated that this scenario would be more difficult to administer causing added expense to the developer and the City.

Vision Workshop: Key Findings

Tool and Expectation Alternatives

The Consultant Team formulated a series of Universal Improvement Tools that could be offered to encourage more sustainable development practices. Rules an applicant proposing a development project (new construction, infill or otherwise) must meet in order to gain access to Developer Incentives, were also discussed. Vision Workshop participants were asked to weigh in on each combination of Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives, voicing likes, dislikes, improvements and concerns for each. Key findings are outlined below.

Realtors and Developers

The Realtors and Developers Focus Group suggested that Tools involving City assistance/fee waivers to encourage the construction of diverse housing be revised to extend beyond permitting fee waivers to include reduced impact fees per unit (park land dedication, for example) as these would be more effective. The realtors and developers voiced support for Tools providing utility infrastructure tax abatements and greater involvement by the City in coordinating stormwater facilities.

The inclusion of Stormwater Treatment Credits were cited as something developers could market as being “green”; thereby being a good incentive for encouraging private sector opt-in to the Framework.

This focus group felt that a City-led infrastructure plan for each Urban Center would be very helpful for coordinating better building practices with multiple landowners. Moreover, developers were very supportive of tools promoting LID; citing that LID techniques are an “excellent addition to the traditional development models used by developers in the City” that should be encouraged, acknowledged and advertised more often in Houston.

Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives involving park land dedication and street abandonment were more controversial. Realtors and developers felt that Tools involving streets should be revised to include a caveat requiring strategic implementation on a case-by-case basis in areas where positives created by increasing pedestrian access outweigh negative impact on through-traffic. This group also suggested that Tools requiring park land dedication be expanded to also require connectivity to park land or open space.

Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners

The Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners Focus Group suggested that Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives involving City assistance/fee waivers to encourage the construction of diverse housing are good but it would ultimately be a Houston-wide policy for affordable housing on behalf of the City that would positively impact the region’s housing needs; not Urban Centers. In addition to a citywide policy, additional requirements would need to be included in the Framework to focus funding in certain Centers.

Tax abatements were cited as an ineffective tool for meeting the infrastructure goals of Urban Centers. Instead, tax rebates were preferred, but developer 380 Agreements would be ideal.

This focus group largely supported LID inclusive Tools, however emphasized that the Preferred Framework Scenario should not mandate LID requirements because lack of financial feasibility could be exclusionary and potentially deter high density, walkable urban development.

Similar to realtors and developers, the Engineers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners Focus Group voiced concerns regarding Tools involving street abandonment; citing that decreasing the overall connectivity of the City could have long-term effects impossible to fully account for and predict, despite rigorous case-by-case analysis.

This group recommended that Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives involving park land dedication be refined to require dedications that are publicly accessible (not reserved for residents of a private property only). In general, the focus group encouraged the Consultant Team to consider more creative, alternative Tools for park land dedication and aggregating open spaces or increasing connectivity to parks. For urban trail networks, it was recommended that Tools be improved by adding parameters to ensure that connectivity is well maintained, trails are well lit and that developers are being required to address what is limiting access to trail networks.

Policy Makers and Agencies

This group, while supportive of Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that promote housing diversity, noted that how the City defines "affordability" would be of great long-term importance, as the accommodation of low-income groups as well as middle-income groups is integral to citywide housing needs. Policy makers also emphasized that most affordable housing is tax credit based, so Tools in the Preferred Framework Scenario should reflect this reality.

Housing Interests

The Housing Interests Focus Group recommended Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that promote housing diversity but desired additional Tools promoting the alignment of subsidies with citywide goals, preferably in the form of a per door subsidy guarantee. A major concern voiced by the Housing Interests Focus Group was that all affordable housing may only be directed to Urban Centers; excluding neighborhoods in desperate need of housing opportunities falling outside of Urban Center boundaries. It will be very important for the City to clearly define "affordable" and a target mix of housing typologies and quantities developers are expected to contribute to in order to meet Urban Center goals.

Similar to previous groups, the Housing Interests Focus Group suggested that the most effective Tool for overcoming these challenges would be the creation of a citywide, long-term housing program that accommodates an expanded range of income levels needing to be met in addition to traditional definitions of what comprises affordable housing.

This focus group also discussed that in order to meet housing goals, the City may have to pre-pay future tax dollars in the form of subsidizing more strategic, housing developments in order to get people to move back into the City.

One participant suggested using petition initiated a tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ) in which 30% of funding is set aside for the implementation of affordable housing projects *within* that TIRZ' boundaries. Considerable discussion followed this statement.

Several meeting attendees validated the participant's concern about TIRZ' inappropriately spending money collected and earmarked for affordable housing noting that many TIRZ' use affordable housing funds for land-banking (the purchasing of raw land with the intent to hold on to it until it is profitable to sell. Not only are these acquired lands located outside of the TIRZ, they are not being utilized for affordable housing. Thus participants supported the use of petition initiated TIRZ in conjunction with traditional City initiated TIRZ to better align projected revenues with housing needs. Another Tool recommended by the Housing Interests Focus Group for the Preferred Framework Scenario was employer assisted housing. Washington Courtyard, located in Houston, was cited as a very successful mixed-income employer assisted housing benchmark.

Special Districts

The Special Districts Focus Group was supportive of Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that promote housing diversity but were concerned about Tools involving infrastructure tax abatements and how improvements would be coordinated to make sure they would be worthy of developers' investments. This group also supported Tools promoting on site parking reductions for shared parking initiatives, but offered that Urban Center goals may be more effectively furthered if the Tool was extended to include private development (Tool currently includes parking facilities owned by City or governmental agencies, only).

Vision Workshop: Key Findings

Interested Public

Interested Public meeting participants supported Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives that involve City assistance/fee waivers to encourage the construction of diverse housing. The only concern noted in regard to housing related tools was the displacement of lower income populations to the suburbs.

Tools involving tax abatements were also supported. Phoenix, Arizona was cited as a good benchmark for setting standards for holding developers to long-term, sustainable infrastructure alterations.

Park land dedication waivers were acknowledged as an appropriate Tool for meeting Urban Center goals. One challenge with park land dedication however is that large parcels used for low-density housing have not typically been offset by the City's low $700 compensation fee.

Tools involving the creation of community-based vision and infrastructure plans for Urban Centers also received support, although Interested Public meeting participants emphasized concern over how often these vision plans would need to be changed/updated. Ideally, an Urban Center vision would evolve over time to be reflective of market realities. The Preferred Framework Scenario should accommodate this.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop


Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Vision Workshop: Key Findings

Process Alternatives

The Consultant Team formulated three Process Alternatives that could be used to determine how Urban Center boundaries are established, who initiates the application and designation process, and how long Urban Center designations are valid. Vision Workshop participants were asked to weigh in on these Process Alternatives. Key findings are discussed below.

City Initiated Process

In the City initiated Urban Center designation process, the Planning & Development, Housing & Community Development, Public Works & Engineering, and Parks & Recreation departments identify areas eligible for Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives. Using this process, the City would maintain a comprehensive database that interested applicants could access to determine whether or not a development project/ land parcel is located within an Urban Center, and therefore Toolbox eligible.

To gain access to the Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives, an applicant provides the City with development plans and proof a parcel exists within Urban Center boundaries. Once the City has reviewed the applicant's plans it would issue a letter certifying the parcel as Toolbox eligible for finite length of time (5 years recommended). Keypad polling indicated that Focus Groups and members of the Interested Public find the City Initiated Process most applicable to Large Centers, although the Interested Public felt that for all Centers, the City Initiated Process should include an option for applicant petition.

Community Initiated Process

In a community initiated Urban Center designation process, a neighborhood management district, tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ), historic district or non-profit organization identifies an area to be established as an Urban Center and approaches the City. After receiving the community's request, the City assigns boundary lines (valid for up to five years) to the Urban Center.

An applicant would then provide the City with development plans and proof the parcel of land to be accessing the Toolbox exists within the Urban Center boundaries. Once the City has reviewed the applicant's plans it would then issue a letter certifying the parcel as Toolbox eligible for a finite period of time (5 years recommended).

Throughout the Vision Workshop meetings, a reoccurring theme emerged. Creating a "one-size-fits-all solution" in Houston for opting into an Urban Center is not recommended and largely viewed as unfeasible for encouraging private sector buy-in to the program. There was advocacy across meetings for a flexible application process in which individual property owners unable to meet prerequisite criteria for Large, Medium or Small Centers have access to another avenue for opting in to the Framework - such as a larger community or management district led application process under a point system or prerequisites plus optional system.

Applicant Initiated Process

In an applicant initiated Urban Center designation process, a residential developer, commercial property owner or company redeveloping a land parcel (or group of land parcels) starts the process by proving the proposed development project creates a new Urban Center that should be eligible for Toolbox access *or* by proposing a project in a pre-existing Urban Center and providing the City with development plans. Once the City has reviewed the applicant's plans it would then issue a letter certifying the parcel as Toolbox eligible for a finite period of time (5 years recommended).

Several Focus Groups mentioned concern with the Consultant Team's proposed 5-year eligibility period, recommending this be extended to up to 20 years in the Preferred Framework Scenario. The reasoning for meeting participants' concern was that development projects sometimes require greater than five years to get started, and upwards of 10 years to be constructed.

A potential revision suggested for the Preferred Framework Scenario was to change the eligibility period definition to include that applicants have 5 years to commence construction in order to access the Toolbox (rather than 5 years total Toolbox eligibility). While Peer Reviews indicated that most other cities implementing Urban Centers require eligibility renewal every 5 years, the Preferred Framework Scenario should be reflective of the real estate development and market realities of Houston.

Vision Workshop: Conclusions

Top Ranked Tools

Top Tools: Large Centers

Keypad poll ranking from Focus Groups and members of the Interested Public indicated the following tools will be most applicable to Large Centers.

- Assistance/fee waivers for mixed use/affordable housing
- Utility infrastructure tax abatements
- Coordinated stormwater facilities
- Stormwater treatment credit
- Urban Center infrastructure plan
- Promoting sustainable design
- Pedestrian realm improvement tax abatement
- Traffic impact analysis waiver
- Downtown setbacks
- Urban Center traffic impact study

Top Tools: Medium Centers

Keypad poll ranking from Focus Groups and members of the Interested Public indicated the following tools will be most applicable to Medium Centers.

- LID
- Street abandonment
- Park land dedication
- Build to property line allowance
- On-site parking
- Parking benefit district
- Urban Center vision plan
- Urban trail networks

Top Tools: Small Centers

Keypad poll ranking from Focus Groups and members of the Interested Public indicated the following tools will be most applicable to Small Centers.

- LID
- Urban trail networks
- Urban Center infrastructure plan
- Urban Center vision plan
- Build to property line allowance
- Stormwater treatment credit
- Promoting sustainable design

Figure 28: Vision Workshop keypad polling results showing Tool ranking by Center Size shows the combined findings for all three sizes of Urban Center.

Application of Key Findings to Pilot Projects

The Consultant Team will apply all possible tools and expectations, in addition to those ranked highest by stakeholders, to three Pilot Projects located in Houston. In applying revised tools to the following three Pilot Projects the Consultant Team will be able to explore and validate which tools are most applicable to Large, Medium and Small Centers and test whether these will produce desired outcomes identified by stakeholders for built environments.

Pilot Project analyses will also provide insight as to the validity of various Center criteria - such as walking distance, roadway proximity and density per acre - for achieving both long-range and short-range goals of the Framework.

Vision Workshop: Top Ranked Tools by Center Size

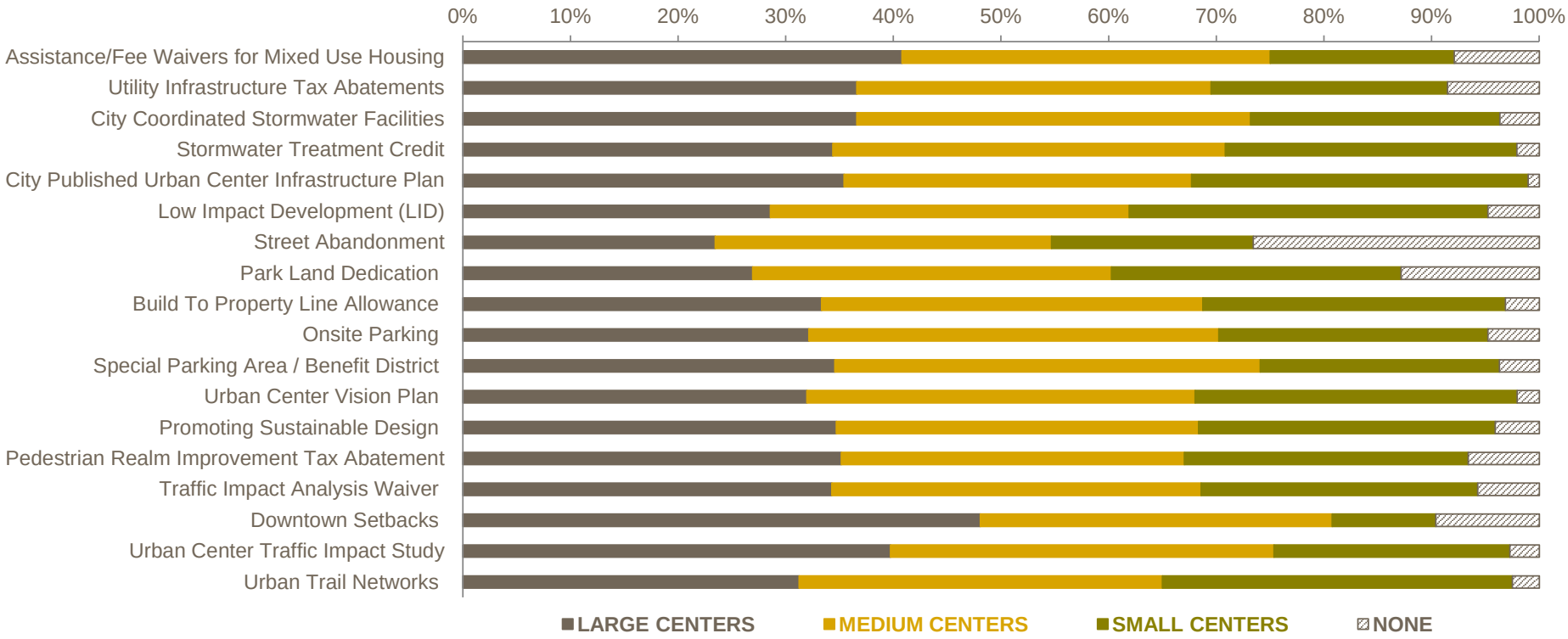


Figure 28: *Vision Workshop keypad polling results showing Tool ranking by Center Size*

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 5-6

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 5

The fifth Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting (held March 27th, 2013) reviewed the outcomes from the Vision Workshop and reviewed the Pilot Project analysis to date.

The three Pilot Project sites were reviewed with the SAC in order to gain feedback and adjustments to be made prior to the Implementation Workshop. It was suggested that park land dedication be taken into account for the Westchase model, and that the Montrose-Westheimer Pilot Project show a more similar comparison than what exists on site today versus an 11-story multi-family building.

Criteria were discussed and there was concern about setting the correct thresholds so as not to deter development and undermine the Framework goals. Urban Center boundaries will be very important and very difficult to define in order for developers and land owners to be able to determine whether they are in an Urban Center.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting 6

The sixth Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting (held April 11th, 2013) was an affordable housing discussion about which Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives are most appropriate for the City of Houston.

The following Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives were reviewed: the Affordable Housing Tool, Mixed Use Tool and Infrastructure Reimbursement Tool. A question arose on the effectiveness of reduced permitting fees and whether they are currently so burdensome as to deter development. It was decided that this incentive might not really be effective. But a good incentive would be to have an ombudsman to shepherd a development through the permitting process and/or inform a developer about the grants and financing that is available to build affordable housing.

The Mixed Use Tool, which required a certain mix of uses in exchange for reduced impact fees, was determined as not appropriate for Houston at this point in time. But the City could still require an activated, transparent ground floor, even if it is not a commercial use.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Implementation Workshop

The third round of stakeholder meetings occurred over a two day time period on April 11th and 12th, 2013. The purpose of this workshop was to present the Universal Improvement Tools and Developer Incentives, and the results of the Pilot Project analysis to the general public.

There were two meetings held at the West Gray Multi-Service Center - one at 2 PM and one at 6 PM. This was an effort to make the workshop accessible to people with varying schedules. Approximately 40 people in total attended the workshops.

After presentation of the Pilot Projects, discussion included questions of why a developer would choose to develop using the Toolbox, when the return on investment was not that much greater than how they may be able to develop today. It became evident that Management Districts may have a greater role in initiating Urban Center projects. Partnerships between the City and its various departments, METRO and Management Districts will be imperative to implementing a more urban form of development.

Many comments were about the size of the Toolbox and that as many Tools as can be included in it should be included. Attendees also cautioned against the negative effects of redevelopment to existing, stable neighborhoods. Gentrification and the displacement of long-term residents is a real side effect of increasing land value.

The workshop facilitated much great discussion about the appropriateness of certain Tools in Houston and the concerns of those who live in areas who will border Urban Centers.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

Online Poll 2

The second online poll (active April 12th to April 26th, 2013) allowed the general public to provide feedback on tools and expectations.

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B

APPENDIX B:
PEER REVIEW

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Peer Review

Source Peer Reviewed *(The document, plan or City policy reviewed)*	**URL** *(Internet hyperlink to the document, plan or City policy reviewed)*	**Challenge/Goal Identified** *(Issues and opportunities brought up by Focus Groups, SAC, Interested Public, etc.)*	**Description** *(Supporting text further describing the criteria, expectation, tool or process under review)*	**Area Demographics** *(Size in acreage or square miles, population, etc.)*	**Purpose/Intent** *(of Criteria, Expectation, Tool or Process reviewed)*	**Impact** *(of Criteria, Expectation, Tool or Process reviewed)*	**Relevance to Houston** *(how peer reviewed item relates to UHF)*
Are We Planning for Sustainable Development? An Evaluation of 30 Comprehensive Plans. Authors: Philip R. Berke and Maria Manta Conroy. APA Journal, Winter 2000, Volume 66, Number 1, pp. 21-33.	Not applicable.	Developers are unaware of sustainable building practices.	Collaborate with local organizations to host an annual workshop for construction professionals looking to learn more about the future of sustainable building innovations. Focus on raising awareness within the professional construction community about green buildings and building materials and how green building practices use key resources such as water, land and construction materials much more efficiently than buildings that are built to code.	Not applicable.	Builders looking for assistance in executing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Built Green Projects can get the answers they need. Ensuring regular dialogues with Houston's contractor community could help the City identify challenges to using new construction methods and technologies to create Urban Centers.	This workshop could focus on how the choice of materials contributes to sustainable design, durability, health and efficiencies in any building project. It could also feature a "hands on" sampling of new products in the marketplace, including items manufactured locally.	One of the biggest challenges mentioned during the Values Workshop is public education about the advantages of redevelopment and better building practices. Prioritizing funding towards educational workshops will help raise public awareness about Urban Centers, as well as advocate for green building and construction techniques.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Approximately 2 miles in radius, population of at least 125,000 residents and 200,000 employees by 2035.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Allows different Criteria for different center types.	No data available.	The size, population, residential and employment parameters for establishing Tier levels is consistent throughout the majority of peer reviews. Austin's CAMPO 2035 is an example of how they designated Tiers through a comprehensive planning process. Also, the numbers used by CAMPO are aimed for 2035 goals for handling population projections. The Urban Houston Framework effort should also maybe identify a long-term date for when Urban Centers should be created by (i.e. are we really aiming for major progress by 2020, 2030, 2040 or 2050) as this may inform how decisions and implementation components are prioritized.

Peer Review

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Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Approximately 1 mile in radius, population of 9,000 to 75,000 residents and 9,000 to 40,000 employees.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Allows different Criteria for different center types.	No data available.	The size, population, residential and employment parameters for establishing Tier levels is consistent throughout the majority of peer reviews. Austin's CAMPO 2035 is an example of how they designated Tiers through a comprehensive planning process. Also, the numbers used by CAMPO are aimed for 2035 goals for handling population projections. The Urban Houston Framework effort should also maybe identify a long-term date for when Urban Centers should be created by (i.e. are we really aiming for major progress by 2020, 2030, 2040 or 2050) as this may inform how decisions and implementation components are prioritized.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Approximately 1/2 mile in radius, population of 2,000 to 10,000 residents and 2,000 to 9,000 employees.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Allows different Criteria for different center types.	No data available.	The size, population, residential and employment parameters for establishing Tier levels is consistent throughout the majority of peer reviews. Austin's CAMPO 2035 is an example of how they designated Tiers through a comprehensive planning process. Also, the numbers used by CAMPO are aimed for 2035 goals for handling population projections. The Urban Houston Framework effort should also maybe identify a long-term date for when Urban Centers should be created by (i.e. are we really aiming for major progress by 2020, 2030, 2040 or 2050) as this may inform how decisions and implementation components are prioritized.

Peer Review

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Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Protect environmental resources.	Minimize development in sensitive areas.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Locations identified as Centers are not required to develop in any certain way. Rather the local jurisdictions are to encourage development through their own means and methods.	No data available.	Goals are almost identical to what has been discussed by Urban Houston Framework stakeholders. Urban Centers are established through a case by case review process that doesn't rely on overly prescriptive development regulations.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Inconsistent development practices and gaps in infrastructure.	Focusing and minimizing infrastructure costs.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Locations identified as Centers are not required to develop in any certain way. Rather the local jurisdictions are to encourage development through their own means and methods.	No data available.	Goals are almost identical to what has been discussed by Urban Houston Framework stakeholders. Urban Centers are established through a case by case review process that doesn't rely on overly prescriptive development regulations.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Protecting existing community character.	Creating areas with a unique sense of place.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Locations identified as Centers are not required to develop in any certain way. Rather the local jurisdictions are to encourage development through their own means and methods.	No data available.	Goals are almost identical to what has been discussed by Urban Houston Framework stakeholders. Urban Centers are established through a case by case review process that doesn't rely on overly prescriptive development regulations.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Creating live/work/play environments.	Locating businesses and civic amenities closer to where people want to live.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Locations identified as Centers are not required to develop in any certain way. Rather the local jurisdictions are to encourage development through their own means and methods.	No data available.	Goals are almost identical to what has been discussed by Urban Houston Framework stakeholders. Urban Centers are established through a case by case review process that doesn't rely on overly prescriptive development regulations.
Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Lack of housing diversity, choice and access to quality schools.	Greater mix of Housing options.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Locations identified as Centers are not required to develop in any certain way. Rather the local jurisdictions are to encourage development through their own means and methods.	No data available.	Goals are almost identical to what has been discussed by Urban Houston Framework stakeholders. Urban Centers are established through a case by case review process that doesn't rely on overly prescriptive development regulations.

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Austin, Texas - CAMPO Regional Growth Concept (part of CAMPO 2035 Plan)	http://www.campotexas.org/pdfs/CAMPO%202035%20Growth%20Concept_07_516Revised.pdf	Lack of housing diversity, choice and access to quality schools.	Encourage development within identified centers with specific residential density targets.	4,285 square miles in Metro Area; 1,783,519 population. Density 3,263 per square mile.	Minimize development in sensitive areas; greater mix of housing options; minimize infrastructure costs; focus infrastructure investment; amenities closer to where people want to live; creates unique sense of place.	No data available.	Minimize development in sensitive areas; greater mix of housing options; minimize infrastructure costs; focus infrastructure investment; amenities closer to where people want to live; creates unique sense of place
Bellevue, Washington - Downtown Bellevue Urban Center Puget Sound Regional Council Growth Management Policy Board January 14, 2010 Presentation by Dan Stroh, Bellevue Planning Director	http://www.psrc.org/assets/3479/Bellevue_RGC_to_GMPB_01-2010.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Increased density near center (8.0 FAR and 450 height, scaling down further from the center.	39.5 square miles; 122,363 population; Density 3,827.4/square mile; 6 miles east of Seattle.	Regulate the building massing and building heights of newly constructed developments.	See Success Stories from the Regional Growth Centers Puget Sound Regional Council (August 2003) at http://www.psrc.org/assets/227/toolkit.pdf.	This criteria addresses issues with new development being massed appropriately for encouraging density in a central Center location and radiating to lower heights moving away from the central point so as to ensure buildings blend well with existing residential/commercial fabric.
Bellevue, Washington - Downtown Bellevue Urban Center Puget Sound Regional Council Growth Management Policy Board January 14, 2010 Presented by Dan Stroh, Bellevue Planning Director	http://www.psrc.org/assets/3479/Bellevue_RGC_to_GMPB_01-2010.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Buildings that are more than 50% residential are allowed substantial extra height over office or retail only buildings.	39.5 square miles; 122,363 population; Density 3,827.4/square mile; 6 miles east of Seattle.	Incentivize dense, mixed use development.	See Success Stories from the Regional Growth Centers Puget Sound Regional Council (August 2003) at http://www.psrc.org/assets/227/toolkit.pdf.	Like Houston, Bellevue is also attempting to increase it's housing stock.
Broward County, Florida - 2004 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).	http://www.broward.org/PlanningAndRedevelopment/TransitHousingOrientedRedevelopment/Documents/sec1.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Activity Centers shall be either the subject of an Area-wide Disaster Recovery Initiative (DRI), centers of regional tourist activity, employment or education, or provide direct access to existing or proposed airports, ports and rail mass transportation facilities.	1,320 square miles; 1,780,172 population (2011).	Following the adoption of regional activity centers in 2002, the planning council recommended criteria be added to ensure boundaries follow logical limits (e.g. major roadways and redevelopment parcels) and are not proposed in an effort solely to meet RAC criteria to capture and/or relocate density or intensity to areas not meeting the intent of the RAC category. When originally passed, the County had not defined criteria for how boundaries should be delineated (only required certain land uses be found within the boundary).	Following the adoption of regional activity centers in 2002, the planning council recommended criteria be added to ensure boundaries follow logical limits (e.g. major roadways and redevelopment parcels) and are not proposed in an effort solely to meet RAC criteria to capture and/or relocate density or intensity to areas not meeting the intent of the RAC category. When originally passed, the County had not defined criteria for how boundaries should be delineated (only required certain land uses be found within the boundary).	Offers potential strategy for justifying Urban Center location and designation process.

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Broward County, Florida - 2004 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).	http://www.broward.org/PlanningAndRedevelopment/TransitHousingOrientedRedevelopment/Documents/sec1.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Policy assigning an explicit purpose and percentage of land uses for each center (e.g. commercial, residential, office, etc.)	1,320 square miles; 1,780,172 population (2011), its county seat is Fort Lauderdale, Florida.	Control of employment and residential densities as well as land uses in each level of Urban Center.	Following the adoption of regional activity centers in 2002, the planning council recommended criteria be added to ensure boundaries follow logical limits (e.g. major roadways and redevelopment parcels) and are not proposed in an effort solely to meet RAC criteria to capture and/or relocate density or intensity to areas not meeting the intent of the RAC category. When originally passed, the County had not defined criteria for how boundaries should be delineated (only required certain land uses be found within the boundary).	Although this process could not be tied to zoning in the City of Houston, predefining percentages for residential/employment densities could provide the City greater control over infrastructure impacts and areas of cluster development.
Broward County, Florida - 2004 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).	http://www.broward.org/PlanningAndRedevelopment/TransitHousingOrientedRedevelopment/Documents/sec1.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Policy specifying geographic area no greater than XXX gross contiguous acres, unless within an approved redevelopment area. When 75% of area originally designated is developed/redeveloped consistent with Centers policy an expansion of up to 100% may be proposed.	1,320 square miles; 1,780,172 population (2011).	Imposes a boundary requirement and minimum acreage for each level of Center designation. Allows for expansion of boundaries as reward for compliance with policies and development regulations.	Following the adoption of regional activity centers in 2002, the planning council recommended criteria be added to ensure boundaries follow logical limits (e.g. major roadways and redevelopment parcels) and are not proposed in an effort solely to meet RAC criteria to capture and/or relocate density or intensity to areas not meeting the intent of the RAC category. When originally passed, the County had not defined criteria for how boundaries should be delineated (only required certain land uses be found within the boundary).	Offers potential terminology for writing policy regarding Urban Center boundary specifications and incentivizing alignment with Urban Center initiatives.

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City of Alexandria, Virginia - Housing Opportunities Fund.	http://alexandriava.gov/housing/info/default.aspx?id=361#HOF	Land assembly and discontinuous ownership of parcels. Parcel-by-parcel, inconsistent redevelopment projects due to rising land costs. Lack of available, raw land for affordable housing initiatives.	Supplement other sources of project funding by providing low interest loans or grants to produce housing units affordable to households with incomes at or below 60% of the area's median income. Funding may be used to cover costs such as: feasibility analysis; pre-development activities; housing preservation; and development costs. The creation of a funded Land Trust could help acquire undeveloped and under-developed land for use in the development of mixed-income, Moderately-Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) and/or Affordable Housing Units (ADUs) projects only. Potential Eligibility Criteria: Requests for funding may be submitted to develop or preserve affordable housing within City limits only. Priority for federal HOME funding will be given to City-certified Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). Developers are expected to leverage funding from all available sources; assistance from the Fund will be provided only in the amount required to meet identified gaps in financing to produce or preserve affordability.	15.4 square miles; population of 144,301 (2011).	A program aimed at reducing the speculative warehousing of undeveloped land, limiting available land for development of affordable housing and making land costs prohibitively expensive for affordable housing. The City of Alexandria's Housing Opportunity Fund provides project gap-financing to support development and preservation of affordable (60% and below AMI) rental and sales housing in the City, using a combination of voluntary developer contributions, an appropriation from the city's General Fund, and an allocation of the City's federal HOME funds. Funding is made available through an application process to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee	Alexandria's rental housing stock has been shrinking over the past decade for people who are middle income or less. In 2000, more than 18,000 units were considered affordable; In 2012, fewer than 6,000 units can fit into the budgets of people who make up to $63,660, which is 60 percent of the area's median income. Real estate developers who have completed development or redevelopment projects in the City of Alexandria make cash contributions to the Housing Trust Fund (HTF), which supports a variety affordable housing activities. During FY 2013 $900,000 in Housing Trust Fund monies are projected be received from developers for projects completed during that period. Currently, there are approximately $25 million in contributions pledged through the development process. These funds are expected to be received in future years as projects are delivered.	Market forces in Houston have effectively made significant amounts of land otherwise suitable for affordable housing development cost-prohibitive for such use. Creating a fund specifically allocated to providing gap-financing for affordable housing projects, funded in part by fees assessed against market-rate projects in the City, could help to effectively address the extent to which land costs make the overall TDC of a project infeasible for affordable housing.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Incentives that are attractive enough to developers to promote 'green' design practices.	Features that meet the energy and resource efficiency goal include green roofs, improved building performance rating, the use of non-polluting and/or renewable on-site energy sources, recycling and/or salvaging at least 50 percent of non-hazardous construction and demolition debris, or utilizing building materials and products sourced within a 500 mile radius	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals.	No data available.	Promoting sustainable, good design is also a part of Houston's efforts regarding Urban Centers. Bloomington's incentive Framework is a good example of incorporating LEED parameters into expectations for development.

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City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Incentives that are attractive enough to developers to promote 'green' design practices.	Qualifying designs include the use of at least 25 percent permeable pavement, utilization of natural vegetation and other techniques to convey and filter storm water, employ systems to recycle at least 50 percent of gray water and storm water, retention of 90 percent of area tree canopy, and/or conservation of land with a slope of 12 percent or greater.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals.	No data available.	Promoting sustainable, good design is also a part of Houston's efforts regarding Urban Centers. Bloomington's incentive Framework is a good example of incorporating LEED parameters into expectations for development.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/code/level2/TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST.html#TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST_20.05.049GDGRDEINEN	Incentives that are attractive enough to developers to promote 'green' design practices.	At least 2 energy and resource efficiency projects, 1 landscape and site design project, 1 public policy project, and 1 public transportation project. See URL for definitions of project typologies and applicable incentives. A development may utilize the level one incentives detailed in subsection (b)(2) of this section if the reviewing authority determines that the development meets all four goals listed in subsection (a), Sustainable Development Practices, of this section through the incorporation of the following: (A) At least two sustainable development practices from Goal 1 as specified in subsection (a)(1) above; and (B) At least one sustainable development practice from each of Goals 2, 3 and 4 as specified in subsections (a)(2), (a)(3) and (a)(4) above. (2) Developments described in subsection (b)(1) above may utilize the following changes to development standards: (A) Side Building Setbacks. For residential districts, side building setbacks shall be reduced to six feet regardless of the number of stories. For nonresidential districts, side building setback requirements shall be reduced by twenty-five percent. (B) Rear Building Setbacks. For residential districts, rear building setbacks shall be decreased to twenty feet. For nonresidential districts, rear building setback requirements shall be reduced by twenty-five percent. (C) Density. For multifamily districts and nonresidential districts where multifamily uses are permitted, maximum residential density shall be increased by twenty-five percent.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	The growth policies plan recognizes sustainability as a key component of nurturing a City's environmental integrity. As a result, incentives are being provided to encourage the use of sustainable development practices throughout the planning jurisdiction. Implementation of these practices will help to make Houston a more sustainable community.	No data available.	Promoting sustainable, good design is also a part of Houston's efforts regarding Urban Centers. Bloomington's incentive Framework is a good example of incorporating LEED parameters into expectations for development.

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City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/code/level2/TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST.html#TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST_20.05.049GDGRDEINEN	Incentives that are attractive enough to developers to promote 'green' design practices.	A development may utilize the level two incentives detailed in subsection (c)(2) of this section if the reviewing authority determines that the development meets all four goals listed in subsection (a), Sustainable Development Practices, of this section through the incorporation of the following: (A) At least three sustainable development practices from Goal 1 as specified in subsection (a)(1) above; and (B) At least two sustainable development practices from each of Goals 2, 3 and 4 as specified in subsections (a)(2), (a)(3) and (a)(4) above. (2) Developments described in subsection (c)(1) above may utilize the following changes to development standards: (A) Side Building Setbacks. For residential districts, side building setbacks shall be reduced to five feet regardless of the number of stories. For nonresidential districts, side building setback requirements shall be reduced by fifty percent. (B) Rear Building Setbacks. For residential districts, rear building setbacks shall be decreased to fifteen feet. For nonresidential districts, rear building setback requirements shall be reduced by fifty percent. (C) Density. For multifamily districts and nonresidential districts where multifamily uses are permitted, maximum residential density shall be increased by fifty percent.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	The growth policies plan recognizes sustainability as a key component of nurturing a City's environmental integrity. As a result, incentives are being provided to encourage the use of sustainable development practices throughout the planning jurisdiction. Implementation of these practices will help to make Houston a more sustainable community.	No data available.	Promoting sustainable, good design is also a part of Houston's efforts regarding Urban Centers. Bloomington's incentive Framework is a good example of incorporating LEED parameters into expectations for development.

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City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/code/level2/TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST.html#TIT20UNDEOR_CH20.05DEST_20.05.049GDGRDEINEN	Incentives that are attractive enough to developers to promote 'green' design practices.	(1) A development may utilize the level three incentives detailed in subsection (a)(2) of this section if the reviewing authority determines that the development meets all four goals listed in subsection (a), Sustainable Development Practices, of this section through the incorporation of the following: (A) At least four sustainable development practices from Goal 1 as specified in subsection (a)(1) above; and (B) At least two sustainable development practices from each of Goals 2, 3 and 4 as specified in subsections (a)(2), (a)(3) and (a)(4) above. (C) An allocation of at least fifteen percent of the total number of housing units located in the development as affordable housing. Such housing units must be entered into an affordable housing program administered by the local, state or federal governments. (2) Developments described in subsection (d)(1) above may utilize the following changes to development standards: (A) Side Building Setbacks. For residential districts, side building setbacks shall be reduced to five feet regardless of the number of stories. For nonresidential districts, side building setback requirements shall be reduced by fifty percent. (B) Rear Building Setbacks. For residential districts, rear building setbacks shall be decreased to fifteen feet. For nonresidential districts, rear building setback requirements shall be reduced by fifty percent. (C) Density. For multifamily districts and nonresidential districts where multifamily uses are permitted, maximum residential density shall be increased by seventy-five percent.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	The growth policies plan recognizes sustainability as a key component of nurturing a City's environmental integrity. As a result, incentives are being provided to encourage the use of sustainable development practices throughout the planning jurisdiction. Implementation of these practices will help to make Houston a more sustainable community.	No data available.	Promoting sustainable, good design is also a part of Houston's efforts regarding Urban Centers. Bloomington's incentive Framework is a good example of incorporating LEED parameters into expectations for development.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects. All 3 levels are eligible for fee waivers of filing fees with the plan commission and/or board of zoning appeals, fees associated with right-of-way excavation permits, and sewer hook-on fees. In addition, projects may be subject to less strict development standards	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011)	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased to 6 feet and rear building setbacks decreased to 20 feet.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.

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City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased by 25%, rear building setbacks decreased by 25%, and maximum residential density increased by 25%.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased to 5 feet and rear building setbacks decreased to 15 feet.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased by 50%, rear building setbacks decreased by 50%, and maximum residential density increased by 50%.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased to 5 feet and rear building setbacks decreased to 15 feet.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
City of Bloomington, Indiana - Sustainable Development Incentives. Section 20.05.049 of Bloomington's Unified Development Ordinance.	http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2194	Increase density of residential housing units.	Side building setbacks decreased by 50%, rear building setbacks decreased by 50%, and maximum residential density increased by 75%.	19.9 square miles, 81,381 population (2011).	Offer developers certain bonuses and allowances for buildings including features that help meet particular sustainability goals. These benefits are for developers, not individual residents.	No data available.	Incentives are based on a three tiered system, with bonuses accorded to the number of sustainable practices included in the projects.
Hillsborough County, Florida - City-County Planning Commission Report on 2008/2009 Workshops on Infill Development	http://www.theplanningcommission.org/Full%20Combined%20Report.pdf	NIMBYism and community push-back regarding infill development.	Collaborate with local organizations to host an annual workshop discussing the pros of infill development and redevelopment. Focus on using this workshop as a platform to emphasize the importance of encouraging infill and development of vacant parcels in built-up areas where public facilities such as sewer systems, roads, schools, and recreation areas are already in place.	1,266 square miles; 1,267,775 population (2011).	Increase city-wide political support for development and/or building interests who plan, develop and market residential and mixed use projects. Garner support from community/neighborhood interests who live near such projects and are impacted.	Hosting annual workshops that address current issues and concerns with infill development could help communities and neighborhoods understand the impacts of infill development.	One of the biggest challenges mentioned during the Values Workshop is public education about the advantages of redevelopment and better building practices. Prioritizing funding towards educational workshops will help raise public awareness about Urban Centers, as well as advocate for green building and construction techniques.

Peer Review

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Kirkland, Washington - Totem Lake Urban Center Growth Management Policy Board Puget Sound Regional Council March 11, 2010 Presentation.	http://www.psrc.org/assets/3636/Kirkland_RGC_to_GMPB_03-2010.pdf	Increase density of residential housing units.	Minimum residential density of 50 units/acre and FAR of 1.0.	11.1 square mi; 48,787 population; Density 4,521.5/square mi; 8 miles northeast of Seattle	Increase the City's housing stock.	Since Urban Center adoption in 2003 the City has seen improvements in all targets it had set in establishing Centers. In 2007, Totem Lake Urban Center represented: 13% of City acreage; 11% of population 36% of jobs; 31% of sales tax receipts; and had retained the largest employer –Evergreen Hospital (approx. 3,000 employees). Findings acknowledge that building height is the key incentive to successful centers in Kirkland.	Like Kirkland, Houston stakeholders have also expressed concerns regarding lack of housing, affordable housing, diversity of housing and choice of housing. Heavily incentivizing residential land uses could be an important component of the preferred Urban Houston Framework.
Kirkland, Washington - Totem Lake Urban Center Growth Management Policy Board Puget Sound Regional Council March 11, 2010 Presentation.	http://www.psrc.org/assets/3636/Kirkland_RGC_to_GMPB_03-2010.pdf	Lack of housing diversity, choice and access to quality schools.	Minimum of 10% affordable housing in all residential projects.	11.1 square mi; 48,787 population; Density 4,521.5/square mi; 8 miles northeast of Seattle	Increase the City's affordable housing stock.	Since Urban Center adoption in 2003 the City has seen improvements in all targets it had set in establishing Centers. In 2007, Totem Lake Urban Center represented: 13% of City acreage; 11% of population 36% of jobs; 31% of sales tax receipts; and had retained the largest employer –Evergreen Hospital (approx. 3,000 employees). Findings acknowledge that building height is the key incentive to successful centers in Kirkland.	All of the Puget Sound region Centers have been successful. The Kirkland Totem Lake Urban Center offers a great spreadsheet that outlines the population per gross acre, employment per gross acre, and housing units targets that clearly shows what they wanted to achieve. Neighborhood plans were viewed as quintessential to the process and success of creating Center connectivity. This case study also includes successful funding partnerships between the City and developers to make community improvements happen.

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Kirkland, Washington - Totem Lake Urban Center Growth Management Policy Board Puget Sound Regional Council March 11, 2010 Presentation.	http://www.psrc.org/assets/3636/Kirkland_RGC_to_GMPB_03-2010.pdf	Lack of connectivity and quality infrastructure improvements.	Dedication required with development when increased building height incentive is used.	11.1 square mi; 48,787 population; Density 4,521.5/square mi; 8 miles northeast of Seattle	Address reduced development potential due to new street grid and ensure road dedication and improvement for new street grid with future development.	Since Urban Center adoption in 2003 the City has seen improvements in all targets it had set in establishing Centers. In 2007, Totem Lake Urban Center represented: 13% of City acreage; 11% of population 36% of jobs; 31% of sales tax receipts; and had retained the largest employer –Evergreen Hospital (approx. 3,000 employees). Findings acknowledge that building height is the key incentive to successful centers in Kirkland.	Offers flexibility for property owner in floor plate size, reduced impact fees, lot coverage and non-conformance of existing development.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	1) At least 30% of the total residential units shall be priced affordable to households at or below 140% of the AMI, and no less than 20% of the total units shall be priced affordable to households at or below 80% of the AMI for a period of no less than 30 years, pursuant to a deed restriction; 2) The site shall have a land use designation of Low-Medium Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium-High Density Residential, Office/Residential, or Business and Office (Estate, Low Density or High Density land use designations shall not be eligible); 3) The site shall front a major roadway and be located within ¼ mile radius of transit service, which is defined as a transit station or bus stop with at least one route that provides 20 minute peak-hour headways or better during weekdays; 4) The location of the site shall be consistent with the guidelines for urban form; 5) The site is located within ½ mile radius of activity nodes with neighborhood retail establishments; 6) The property is located within ½ mile radius of public recreational open space or a public school, unless 15% of the site is set aside for recreational open space facilities. Recreational facilities are defined as play areas, swimming pools, tennis courts, and other active outdoor facilities. 7) Existing and planned public services and facilities, including water and sewer facilities, shall be adequate to serve the maximum development allowed on the proposed site; and 8) The development shall obtain a certification rating from LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or a similar organization accredited by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGB); and A maximum of 25% of the proposed building structure may be used for business and office uses if mixed-use development is found to be compatible with	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Ensure developers are meeting a variety of sustainability principles that helps the area meet it's goals for Centers.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	1) the developer is a not-for-profit affordable housing provider, a government/public sponsored affordable housing provider and 2) all the conditions for the 30% Density Bonus for Affordable/Workforce Multifamily Infill housing are satisfied. A government/public sponsored affordable housing provider is defined as a private developer or organization that has been awarded public funding or is participating in a public housing program to develop affordable/workforce housing, and/or a private developer or organization that has received approval to develop affordable/workforce housing on a County or publicly owned site either through donation of the land, a lease, or other form of legal agreement. Density Bonus programs of 30% or higher shall only take effect upon the adoption of an ordinance for the "Multifamily Infill Housing Zoning Overlay." Upon the adoption of the aforementioned zoning overlay, approval of any density bonus of 30% or higher shall require a zoning boundary change through a resolution.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Ensure developers are meeting a variety of sustainability principles that helps the area meet it's goals for Centers.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Uses in Urban Centers may include retail trade, business, professional and financial services, restaurants, hotels, institutional, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses, moderate to high density residential uses, and well planned public spaces. Incorporation of residential uses is encouraged, and may be approved, in all centers, except where incompatible with airport or heavy industrial activities. Residential uses may be required in areas of the County and along rapid transit lines where there exists much more commercial development than residential development, and creation of employment opportunities will be emphasized in areas of the County and along rapid transit lines where there is much more residential development than employment opportunity. Emphasis in design and development of all centers and all of their individual components shall be to create active pedestrian environments through high-quality design of public spaces as well as private buildings; human scale appointments, activities and amenities at street level; and connectivity of places through creation of a system of pedestrian linkages. Existing public water bodies shall also be incorporated by design into the public spaces	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Ensure Regional and Metropolitan Centers accommodate a concentration and variety of uses and activities which will attract large numbers of both residents and visitors while Community-scale Urban Centers will be planned and designed to serve a more localized community.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Urban Centers shall be developed in an urban form with a street system having open, accessible and continuous qualities of the surrounding grid system, with variation, to create community focal points and termination of vistas. The street system should have frequent connections with surrounding streets and create blocks sized and shaped I-48 to facilitate incremental building over time, buildings fronting on streets and pedestrian pathways, and squares, parks and plazas defined by the buildings around them. The street system shall be planned and designed to create public space that knits the site into the surrounding urban fabric, connecting streets and creating rational, efficient pedestrian linkages. Streets shall be designed for pedestrian mobility, interest, safety and comfort as well as vehicular mobility. The size of blocks and network of streets and pedestrian access ways shall be designed so that walking routes through the center and between destinations in the center are direct, and distances are short. Emphasis shall be placed on sidewalks, with width and street-edge landscaping increased where necessary to accommodate pedestrian volumes or to enhance safety or comfort of pedestrians on sidewalks along any high-speed roadways. Crosswalks will be provided, and all multi-lane roadways shall be fitted with protected pedestrian refuges in the center median at all significant pedestrian crossings. In addition, streets shall be provided with desirable street furniture including benches, light fixtures and bus shelters. Open spaces such as public squares and greens shall be established in urban centers to provide visual orientation and a focus of social activity. They should be located next to public streets, residential areas, and commercial uses, and should be established in these places during development and redevelopment of streets and large parcels, particularly parcels 10 acres or larger. The percentage of site area for public open spaces, including squares, greens and pedestrian promenades, shall be a minimum of 15 percent of gross development area. This public area provided outdoor, at grade will be counted toward satisfaction of requirements for other common open space. Some or all of this required open space may be provided off-site but elsewhere within the subject urban center to the extent that it would better serve the quality and functionality of the center.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Ensure high level of urban design and the creation of quality infrastructure improvements.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Regional activity centers FAR greater than 4.0 in the core, not less than 2.0 in the edge with max densities (DU per acre) of 500. Metropolitan Urban centers FAR greater than 3.0 in the core, not less than .75 in the edge and maximum densities (DU per acre) of 200. Community Urban Centers FAR greater than 1.5 in the core and not less than 0.5 in the edge with max densities (DU per acre) of 125.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Create Centers that have a dense core that decreases in height/intensity towards Center edges.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	The area developed as an urban center shall extend to a one-mile radius around the core or central transit station of a Regional Urban Center designated on the LUP map.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Establish boundary/extent of various sizes of Urban Centers.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	"Designated Metropolitan Urban Centers shall extend not less than one-quarter mile walking distance from the core of the center or central transit stop(s) and may extend up to one-half mile from such core or transit stops along major roads and pedestrian linkages."	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Establish boundary/extent of various sizes of Urban Centers.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Community Centers shall have a radius of 700 to 1,800 feet but may be extended to a radius of one-half mile where recommended in a professional area plan for the center, consistent with the guidelines herein, which plan is approved by the Board of County Commissioners after an advertised public hearing. Urban Center development shall not extend beyond the UDB	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Establish boundary/extent of various sizes of Urban Centers.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Workforce Housing.	Through the Voluntary Inclusionary Zoning program, a density bonus of up to 25% may be allowed for projects that set aside residential units for workforce housing. Miami-Dade County does not recognize workforce housing as being a category distinct from affordable housing for working families of varying household incomes. The Voluntary Inclusionary Zoning program defines workforce as households with incomes between 65 and 140% of the County's median income. Workforce housing is defined as housing that is affordable to natural persons or families whose total household income is at or below 140 percent of the area median income (AMI).	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Lessen the financial burden on developers for including workforce housing. Close the gap between workforce housing supply and workforce housing demand. Also intended to increase the variety and supply of housing that is affordable to workforce populations.	No data available.	Like Houston, Miami-Dade County needed a progressive development management strategy that tackled problems associated with exponential population growth. Miami is also trying to incentivize concentration and intensification of development around centers of activity, development of well designed communities containing a variety of uses, housing types and public services, renewal and rehabilitation of blighted areas, and contiguous urban expansion when warranted, versus sprawl.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Affordable Housing.	17% Density Bonus for Affordable Housing: A density bonus up to 17% above the maximum land use designation may be approved if it is certified that that no less than 30% of the units in the development, excepting accessory dwelling units, will be priced affordable to low and very-low income households (households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income [AMI]). The various income limit categories are: Extremely Low: At or below 30% of the AMI. Very Low: 30.01 to 50% of the AMI. Low: 50.01% to 80% of the AMI. Moderate: 80.01% to 140% of the AMI1.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Lessen the financial burden on developers for including affordable housing. Close the gap between workforce housing supply and workforce housing demand. Also intended to increase the variety and supply of housing that is affordable to workforce populations.	No data available.	Like Houston, Miami-Dade County needed a progressive development management strategy that tackled problems associated with exponential population growth. Miami is also trying to incentivize concentration and intensification of development around centers of activity, development of well designed communities containing a variety of uses, housing types and public services, renewal and rehabilitation of blighted areas, and contiguous urban expansion when warranted, versus sprawl.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Affordable/Workforce Multifamily Infill Housing.	A density bonus of up to 30% above the maximum allowable density may be approved for projects that are located in close proximity to transit service and provide a mix of market rate, workforce and affordable housing opportunities. There is a whole list of conditions (expectations) that must be met for the 30% density bonus to be awarded. See URL link.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Lessen the financial burden on developers for including affordable/workforce infill housing. Close the gap between workforce housing supply and workforce housing demand. Also intended to increase the variety and supply of housing that is affordable to workforce populations.	No data available.	Like Houston, Miami-Dade County needed a progressive development management strategy that tackled problems associated with exponential population growth. Miami is also trying to incentivize concentration and intensification of development around centers of activity, development of well designed communities containing a variety of uses, housing types and public services, renewal and rehabilitation of blighted areas, and contiguous urban expansion when warranted, versus sprawl.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Not-for-Profit or Government/Public Sponsored Affordable Housing Provision	A density bonus of up to 60% above the maximum allowable density may be permitted. A government/public sponsored affordable housing provider is defined as a private developer or organization that has been awarded public funding or is participating in a public housing program to develop affordable/workforce housing, and/or a private developer or organization that has received approval to develop affordable/workforce housing on a County or publicly owned site either through donation of the land, a lease, or other form of legal agreement. Density Bonus programs of 30% or higher shall only take effect upon the adoption of an ordinance for the “Multifamily Infill Housing Zoning Overlay.” Upon the adoption of the aforementioned zoning overlay, approval of any density bonus of 30% or higher shall require a zoning boundary change through a resolution. See expectations tab for additional requirements.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Super bonus for non-for-profit or public sponsored affordable housing developments.	No data available.	Like Houston, Miami-Dade County needed a progressive development management strategy that tackled problems associated with exponential population growth. Miami is also trying to incentivize concentration and intensification of development around centers of activity, development of well designed communities containing a variety of uses, housing types and public services, renewal and rehabilitation of blighted areas, and contiguous urban expansion when warranted, versus sprawl.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009). Page 46 - 60.	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Shared parking to reduce development costs.	Reductions from standard parking requirements shall be authorized where there is a complementary mix of uses on proximate development sites, and near transit stations. Parking areas should occur predominantly in mid-block, block rear and on-street locations, and not between the street and main building entrances. Parking structures should incorporate other uses at street level such as shops, galleries, offices and public uses.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Less the financial burden on developers and ensure the creation of Centers.	No data available.	There were many comments made by Urban Houston stakeholders regarding the need for greater shared parking facilities and incentives.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element (Ord. No. 09-29, adopted May 2009). Page 46 - 60.	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/cdmp/plan/cdmp-land-use-element.pdf	Ground level retail opportunities uninterrupted by utility poles, parking garages, etc.	Buildings and their landscapes shall be built to the sidewalk edge in a manner that frames the adjacent street to create a public space in the street corridor that is comfortable and interesting, as well as safe for pedestrians. Architectural elements at street level shall have a human scale, abundant windows and doors, and design variations at short intervals to create interest for the passing pedestrian. Continuous blank walls at street level are prohibited. In areas of significant pedestrian activity, weather protection should be provided by awnings, canopies, arcades and colonnades.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Ensure high level of urban design and the creation of quality infrastructure improvements.	No data available.	there were many comments made by Urban Houston stakeholders regarding the need for more regulations ensuring pedestrian safety and consistent development practices.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department Development Services Division: Article XXXIII(K) Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (amended through October 2, 2012).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/reports/standard-urban.pdf	Prevent flooding and manage stormwater.	For all land uses except for single-family or duplex, tree requirements for private property shall be based on sixteen (16) trees per net acre of lot area and, in addition to the placement on the lot, may be placed in greens, squares, plazas and medians within the Urban Center.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Set high standards for sustainability and landscape design.	No data available.	A potential tool for promoting sustainable, good design.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department Development Services Division: Article XXXIII(K) Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (amended through October 2, 2012).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/reports/standard-urban.pdf	Convoluted design standards.	Include a very simple table that has major roadway, minor roadway, main street, service road and pedestrian passage build-to-line requirements for each level of urban center (Tier-1 (Large, Tier-2 (Medium), Tier-3 (Small).	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Create a one-page synopsis that is easy for developers to locate on the City website and for City administrators and applicants to read.	No data available.	Streamlining permitting and site plan approval processes.

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Miami-Dade County, Florida - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department Development Services Division: Article XXXIII(K) Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (amended through October 2, 2012).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/reports/standard-urban.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Specifications regarding building frontages, built-to-lines, interior side/rear setbacks, on site parking and access points	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Clearly show on one page expectations for each type of development intensity exactly what the City is looking for in terms of setbacks, build-to-lines, ingress and egress and internal parking structures built into new development projects.	No data available.	Streamlining permitting and site plan approval processes.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department Development Services Division: Article XXXIII(K) Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (amended through October 2, 2012).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/reports/standard-urban.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Include a simple table conveying size (square feet) and frontage (feet) for residential uses.	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density.	Make Urban Center regulations user friendly.	No data available.	Streamlining permitting and site plan approval processes.
Miami-Dade County, Florida - Regulatory and Economic Resources Department Development Services Division: Article XXXIII(K) Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (amended through October 2, 2012).	http://www.miamidade.gov/business/library/reports/standard-urban.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Urban Center levels are determined based on distance from the central part of the city (versus size, function, or goal). Three scales of centers are planned: Regional, the largest, notably the downtown Miami central business district; Metropolitan Centers such as the evolving Dadeland area; and Community Centers which will serve localized areas	2,431.18 square mi, 2,554,766 population (2011), 1,315.5/square mi population density	Make Urban Center regulations user friendly.	No data available.	Streamlining permitting and site plan approval processes.

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Michigan Legislative Website - Land Bank Fast Track Act, Public Act (PA) 258, 2003.	http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(g3ji0145o3rdrl550bvkzfiv))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-258-2003-1	Land assembly and discontinuous ownership of parcels. Parcel-by-parcel, inconsistent redevelopment projects due to rising land costs. Lack of available, raw land for affordable housing initiatives.	Counter speculative warehousing of undeveloped land, limiting available land for development of affordable housing and making land costs prohibitively expensive for affordable housing. Example: A direct land-banking program using a jurisdiction's funds to secure title to undeveloped, underdeveloped, and blighted and distressed properties before they are acquired and assembled by land speculators.	Not applicable.	This tool involves state legislation providing the necessary authority to counties, cities, and localities in Michigan to adopt fast-track ordinances and related procedures to facilitate the acquisition through purchase, condemnation or exercise of tax liens of distressed properties for assembly and later reuse for community and economic revitalization purposes	In 2004, enabled by the Land Bank Fast Track Act and an intergovernmental agreement between the state's land bank authority and the Treasurer of Genesee County, The Genesee County Land Reutilization Council (GCLRC) evolved into the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA). That present-day public entity is independently governed by a board of directors consisting of the County Treasurer and residents of the City of Flint and Genesee County. With its own set of by-laws and a full-time staff, the land bank acquires tax foreclosures and determines the best use for these properties, in keeping with the long-term vision for the community. During the five-year period 2004 through 2008, GCLBA returned 1,500 properties to some form of productive reuse.	Market forces in Houston have effectively made significant amounts of land, which would otherwise be suitable for affordable housing development, cost-prohibitive for such use. Adopting expedited procedures to facilitate the City's acquisition of blighted, distressed, undeveloped and underdeveloped properties through purchase, condemnation, and tax-lien foreclosures, favorable purchase prices by land speculators could help to effectively address the extent to which land costs make the overall TDC of a project infeasible for affordable housing.

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Missing	Missing	Land assembly and discontinuous ownership of parcels. Parcel-by-parcel, inconsistent redevelopment projects due to rising land costs. Lack of available, raw land for affordable housing initiatives.	Counter speculative warehousing of undeveloped land, limiting available land for development of affordable housing and making land costs prohibitively expensive for affordable housing. Example: Partnerships between the City and non-profit housing developers through which the City contributes undeveloped/underdeveloped land it owns to help bring down Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) and Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) project Total Development Costs (TDCs).	71 square miles, 2.5 million population.	To assure the provision of affordable housing in the Cobble Hill neighborhood, the New York City Department of Housing sold to the private developer, as surplus property, land comprising approximately 50% of the project site, and rezoned it from manufacturing to residential; the developer purchased the adjoining site from a private land-owner to complete the project site. In addition to the City's support in the land assemblage, the project also utilized 9% LIHTCs allocated by the City and taxable bonds issued by the City's Housing Development Corporation (a quasi-public agency).	Delivery of 137 units of affordable rental and moderately priced homeownership units, including 95 workforce housing rental units affordable to the following household income ranges: 39 units affordable at 80%or less of AMI; 10 units affordable at 120% or less of AMI; and 46 units affordable to households earning 160% or less of AMI . 100% of AMI equals $80,200. Additionally, the project offered 42 homeownership units ranging in price from $399,000 to $935,000 in a neighborhood with market-rate sales prices for co-op units in the $800,000 range and townhomes ranging from $1.4 million to $4	The City's willingness to contribute outright, or sell at a bargain price or on otherwise favorable terms and conditions, properties the City owns for the purpose of developing MPDUs, ADUs or some combination thereof, alone or with market-rate housing in a mixed-income project, can overcome the high market price of land in neighborhoods where land costs make affordable housing prohibitively expensive to rent or sell.

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Missing	Missing	Flexible parking requirements that encourage dense, urban building forms. Deductions in parking requirements for sites adjacent to transit stations.	An automatic waiver from parking requirements for projects meeting Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU)/Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) minimum requirements (including selected mixed-income projects) that demonstrate that a lesser parking standard will meet the needs of prospective residents and protect surrounding properties from undue parking impacts.	The maximum development program includes: 6,000 DUs, 1,700 (28%) affordable to moderate, low, and very low-income households. Non-profit developers will build 1,445 of the ADUs on 16 acres of land contributed by the master developer. The remaining 255 affordable units will be included in privately developed projects, 4.4 million sq. ft. of office/life science/biotechnology commercial space, a new UCSF research campus with 2.65 million sq. ft. of space on 43 acres of land donated by the master developer and the City, a state-of-the art UCSF hospital complex serving children, women, cancer patients, 500,000 sq. ft. of retail space, a 500-room hotel, 41 acres of new public open space, plus 8 acres of open space within the UCSF campus, a new 500-student public school, a new public library and new fire and police stations and other community facilities. The master developer will construct more than $700 million in public infrastructure in Mission Bay, to be financed through special assessments and increased property taxes generated by the development. Upon completion, the right-of-way and utility improvements will be accepted for operation and maintenance by the City. The Redevelopment Agency will operate the park system, funded by annual assessments against private property in the redevelopment areas. Mission Bay is served by transit by Muni's new 3rd Street Light Rail system, bus lines and the regional-serving Caltrain.	Interject greater flexibility in administering parking requirements. Lower-income households are less likely to own cars because of the high costs of vehicle ownership, operation, and maintenance. Consequently, traditional parking requirements for market-rate projects, where two vehicles for a two-bedroom apartment may be required, may result in more parking capacity than is needed where lower-income households, which tend to be much more reliant on public transportation, are the targeted tenants. Reduced parking requirements that better match the needs of lower-income households may result in both lower construction costs (because the unnecessary parking spaces do not have to be constructed or maintained) and higher revenues to the extent that what would otherwise have been dedicated parking spaces may instead become revenue-generating retail, commercial or residential space (in the case where usable space is constructed on top of above-grade parking).	Conventional standards would require 130 to 190 parking spaces for such a building, but it was constructed with only 85 parking spaces, due to proximity to high-quality public transit services, the provision of two car share parking spaces in the building, and the fact that the building provides affordable housing, with tenants who are less likely to own a car. Reduced parking supply freed up space in the project for a childcare center and more ground-level retail stores. Just seventeen (17) avoided spaces allowed the project to generate $132,000 in additional annual revenues (300 square feet per space at $25.80 per square foot in rent), making housing more affordable. Two car share vehicles are available to residents, giving them access to a car without the costs of ownership—a particularly important benefit for low-income households.	Both the limited availability of land for the development of affordable housing and prohibitively high land costs have been identified as two challenges to the production of affordable housing in the City. Limiting the amount of land that must be devoted to parking and the proportion of TDC (Total Development Costs) of a project that must be devoted to non-revenue-generating uses, such as parking, will increase the affordability of the resultant project

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Missing	Missing	Flexible parking requirements that encourage dense, urban building forms. Deductions in parking requirements for sites adjacent to transit stations.	Partnerships between a jurisdiction and developer to create public parking facilities on top of which the developer's project can be built, providing parking solution for the community's residents and visitors and for the project. Example: A public-private partnership (PPP) between Montgomery County, MD, and a three-party, private-sector development joint venture to redevelop two surface parking lots providing a total of 270 surface, metered parking spaces (97 short-term and 173 long-term) serving Downtown Bethesda, into a premier, gateway, mixed-use project featuring 250 residential units and 40,000 square feet of street retail to be constructed above a public parking garage that will accommodate approximately 950 cars.	13.2 square miles; 60,858 population (2010). Downtown Bethesda is a quasi-urban, mixed-density, mixed-use enclave of almost 200 restaurants and bars, 75 home fashion retailers, numerous boutiques and spas, plus high-end mid and high-rise residential and small-lot single-family detached housing (with a median value of over $725,000), accommodating over 61,000 residents, plus a significant component of commercial office space, all served by the Bethesda Metro Station on the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) Red Line, and located just a few miles north of the north-western boundary of the District of Columbia.	Interject greater flexibility in administering parking requirements. With its large number of marquee restaurants and high-end retail offerings, Downtown Bethesda has a well-recognized reputation as a dining and shopping destination in the Washington-Metro Area. Downtown Bethesda's greatest growth over the past two decades has been in the West End, starting with the initial development of Bethesda Row, which was augmented recently by the addition of the mixed-use Bethesda Lane project. The redevelopment of Lot 31 will interject additional retail and residential offerings while providing substantially greater parking capacity to meet the area's increasing demand.	This project will more than triple the parking capacity of the current surface lots it will replace, will adding significantly to Downtown Bethesda's retail offerings and to its population of permanent residents.	In an extremely auto-dependent city like Houston, being able to accommodate passenger vehicles is critical to the marketability of residential, retail, and commercial projects. Innovative public-private partnerships such as this could be applicable in the future development and redevelopment of new mixed-use centers in the City
Missing	Missing	Lack of education in developing communities about availability of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and Texas' Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP).	Educate communities and housing developers about the opportunities to finance affordable housing using Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs). After conducting fairly exhaustive research, I have been unable to find a municipal jurisdiction that undertakes this type of education program. While LIHTC training is available for those who seek it (generally for a price), little effort is made at the governmental level to promote affordable housing tools generally	Not applicable.	Make community leaders and local affordable housing developers more aware of the availability of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) as well as other affordable housing financing techniques as a means of improving the affordable housing stock in their communities.	Devising strategies for (i) informing and educating distressed communities and those lacking high-quality affordable housing and (ii) attracting regional and national affordable housing developers to the City could, over time, improve the overall affordable housing stock in the City.	Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) equity as a financing tool for affordable housing does not appear to have produced affordable housing of a quality on a par with other, LIHTC-financed projects throughout the country. Similarly, the City has not attracted the attention of high-profile LIHTC developers, although the recent entrance into the market of St. Louis-based McCormack Barron Salazar is an encouraging sign.

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Oregon Metro - Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Committee: Appendix B. Affordable Housing Production Goals (Fair Share) of the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, June 2000. Accepted by the Oregon Metro Council July 2000.	http://library.oregonmetro.gov/files/appendix_bfairshare.pdf	Adoption of a comprehensive affordable housing policy for the city.	A policy mandating that Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) are spread equally and/or adequately throughout all geographic locations within the City of Houston. “Fair share” is defined as an equitable distribution of a diverse range of affordable housing throughout the region. Determination of fair share shall be based upon an analysis of factual information concerning: the existing housing stock; regional and sub regional demand, supply, and cost of housing and buildable lands; and the income levels and housing needs of all current and future residents, including elderly people, people with disabilities, families with children, single heads of households, and racial and ethnic minorities.	250,000 acres; 1.5 million population (2006).	To promote five principles comprising the definition of “equitable distribution”: (1) a diverse range of housing types is available within the region and within cities and counties inside the urban growth boundary; (2) sufficient and affordable housing opportunities are available to households of all income levels that live or have a member working in each jurisdiction and sub region; (3) an appropriate balance of jobs and housing exists within sub regions; (4) the current and future need for and supply of affordable housing in the region is addressed in the distribution; and (5) concentrations of poverty are minimized.	As of the 2011 Urban Growth Management Functional Plan Compliance Report (March 2012), based on the Functional Plan in effect as of December 12, 2010, of the 28 jurisdictions within Metro required to report their UGMFP compliance, 27 had adopted ordinances and regulations in compliance Title 7 of the UGMFP, promoting Housing Choice and mandating a "fair share" approach to meeting regional housing needs.	For a variety of economic, finance, market, and sociographic reasons, the production of ADUs does not occur without government requirement, subsidies, and/or encouragement, and when it does occur generally occurs in more-distressed communities. Such a policy would mandate that every community provide its fair share of affordable housing, rather than continuing to allow concentrations of low-income housing in overly-impacted communities.
Pinal County, Arizona - We Create Our Future Pinal County Comprehensive Plan (Adopted November 2009).	http://www.pinalcountyaz.gov/Departments/PlanningDevelopment/ComprehensivePlanUpdate/Documents/Pinal%20County%20Comprehensive%20Plan.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Classifications based on: Acreage, Types of land use, Three classifications resulted. Low Intensity – 100 acres, office, commercial, tourism and hospitality uses, as well as medium to high density residential. Mid Intensity – 500 acres, with mix of clustered professional office, commercial, tourism and hospitality uses, medical and medium to high density residential. High Intensity – 1,000 or more acres, mix of professional office, business parks, and industrial uses, campus-like setting, high and medium residential.	5,374 square miles; 382,992 population (2011).	Pinal County's vision stresses the importance of sense of community. The primary purpose of this guideline manual is to influence the general character of new projects within designated activity centers in an effort to create a strong sense of community.	No data available.	Each embedded zone within the Center has different criteria. This could be something to consider as we move forward. Can there be sub-Centers within centers or different variations embedded?

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Puget Sound Regional Council, Washington - Central Puget Sound Regional Growth Centers 2002	http://www.psrc.org/assets/229/growthcenters.pdf	Consistent, measurable, administrable, effective process for creating Urban Centers.	Classifications based on: Types of existing development Capacity of existing infrastructure Role each area would play in accommodating future development Transportation service that would be provided in support of that future role Six classifications resulted. Regional center, Metropolitan centers, Sub regional centers, Activity clusters, Pedestrian pockets, Small towns.	Not applicable.	Create a region composed of diverse economically and environmentally healthy communities framed by open space and connected by a high-quality, efficient transportation system. This report focusses on how the region has responded to the key goal of focusing development in urban growth areas, and attracting an increased portion of regional jobs and housing growth that occurs within urban areas into regional growth centers.	See Success Stories from the Regional Growth Centers Puget Sound Regional Council (August 2003) at http://www.psrc.org/assets/227/toolkit.pdf.	Well established Center policy that has been adopted and revised to better ensure the success of Urban Centers.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Require a certain percentage of all development to be located within 1/2 mile of a Metro transit station.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Over the past six decades, Tyson's Corner has developed as an area dominated by office space and retail shopping. With the planned extension of the Washington METRO Silver Line identifying 4 stations in Tyson's, a Land Use Task Force was create and tasked with creating a development plan for the area. Tyson's plan focuses on how to turn an area dominated by the vehicle in to a livable/walkable area with more residential and less congestion.	No data available.	Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector will be achieved by reducing vehicle miles traveled. Focusing development near Metro stations and the dedicated right of way circulator, and constructing walkable, bikeable, mixed use developments will reduce VMT. Aggressive TDM programs, including parking management, are critical to achieving VMT reduction goals.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008)	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Require a 4 jobs per each household.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Provide a dramatic increase in housing for different income levels, especially within walking distance of Metrorail.	No data available.	A potential approach for requirement jobs and housing density.

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Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Lack of incentives that encourage 'green' building techniques.	All buildings approved in 2013 or thereafter shall be certified at least LEED-silver or equivalent. Prior to 2013 all new buildings shall achieve LEED basic certification or equivalent.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	More compact development uses less energy consumption than low density, suburban style development. For residential housing, the energy consumption rates decrease on a per capita basis as the density increases. Green building design, as encouraged through the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program reduces operating costs which is a measure of energy consumption. By requiring LEED certified buildings, or the equivalent certification, the carbon footprint can be further	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Lack of mobility, walkability and accessibility.	Require all new projects contribute to a transportation system that includes circulator routes, community shuttles, feeder bus service, and improved pedestrian and bicycle routes and connections.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Promote multimodal transportation and improved connectivity.	No data available.	Multimodal transportation was mentioned by all Focus Groups.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Lack of connectivity.	Revise policies to ensure all new projects increase all non-auto trips. In addition to increasing transit mode share and decreasing vehicle use by making travel within the City as well as travel to and from the City more attractive, Center circulators should work as a pedestrian accelerator, making walking more convenient and easy.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Create better connections and provide a safer environment for bikes and pedestrians.	No data available.	As the grid of streets becomes refined and detail is added, careful thought could be given to how pedestrians and bicycles will be integrated into the street grid, and how connections will be made to transit. In general, the pedestrian and bicycle network should be more extensive closer to the transit stations, with alleys and dedicated bike and pedestrian paths mid-block. Bicycle racks and other storage facilities should be located near transit stations wherever possible.

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Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/	Lack of 'complete streets'.	Revise policies to ensure roadway projects aim at having complete streets that are context sensitive.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Promote the following "Great Streets" principles: Create streets that are memorable and magical; Help make community; Engaging to the eye, and artful; Supportive of social contact and participation; Are physically comfortable and safe; and Exhibit quality design, construction, and maintenance.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/finalreports/transforming-tysons.pdf	Lack of funding.	Establish strategy for funding public infrastructure. Ideas include: tax increment financing, improvement districts, PPPs, pro-rata contributions by land owners, land exchanges, and/or parking fees.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Over the past six decades, Tyson's Corner has developed as an area dominated by office space and retail shopping. With the planned extension of the Washington METRO Silver Line identifying 4 stations in Tyson's, a Land Use Task Force was create and tasked with creating a development plan for the area. Tyson's plan focuses on how to turn an area dominated by the vehicle in to a livable/walkable area with more residential and less congestion.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/finalreports/transforming-tysons.pdf	Lack of development incentives in Chapter 42.	Agreements made with owners of property to be exempt from taxation on a portion of the value of the real property or of tangible personal property, or both. The duration of an agreement may be for a period of time determined appropriate by the City Council and County based on the economic life of the improvements and consistent with the provisions of this policy, but in no case for more than ten years in accordance with state law. Special terms and conditions may be set in the agreement governing each specific tax abatement.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Over the past six decades, Tyson's Corner has developed as an area dominated by office space and retail shopping. With the planned extension of the Washington METRO Silver Line identifying 4 stations in Tyson's, a Land Use Task Force was create and tasked with creating a development plan for the area. Tyson's plan focuses on how to turn an area dominated by the vehicle in to a livable/walkable area with more residential and less congestion.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.

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Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/finalreports/transforming-tysons.pdf	Lack of policy alignment and interdepartmental coordination.	Partner with local transportation agencies to ensure that guidelines are in line with Urban Center visions.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Over the past six decades, Tyson's Corner has developed as an area dominated by office space and retail shopping. With the planned extension of the Washington METRO Silver Line identifying 4 stations in Tyson's, a Land Use Task Force was create and tasked with creating a development plan for the area. Tyson's plan focuses on how to turn an area dominated by the vehicle in to a livable/walkable area with more residential and less congestion.	No data available.	Potential policy wording.
Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/finalreports/transforming-tysons.pdf	Encourage Mixed Use Development	FARs for different uses are additive, not cumulative for the development as a whole. The highest FAR will be allowed in areas within 1/8 mile of a Metro station – a distance roughly equivalent to one city block or a three minute walk – and will be 6.0 before any bonus densities. Densities then decrease at distances of 1/4, 1/3, and 1/2 mile from each station. Within 400 and 600 feet of a circulator route, densities will be 2.5 and 1.5 FAR, respectively. In most areas the FAR for residential uses will be higher than that for non-residential uses.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	This distinction creates incentives for housing development and reflects the goal of improving the current imbalance of residents and jobs. Areas beyond these distances, as well as areas adjacent to the residential communities outside the City, will have densities consistent with the existing standards. Additionally, projects with buildings expected to receive LEED Silver, LEED Gold or LEED Platinum certification receive additional Floor Area Ratio bonuses	No data available.	This is an interesting model for Houston to study. The additive approach to FAR incentives provides more flexibility. Throughout the Values Workshop and SAC meetings we have heard that FAR bonuses have been unsuccessful in promoting sustainable building practices and incentivizing affordable housing. Perhaps creating an additive FAR bonus framework is a better alternative?

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Tysons Corner, Virginia - Tysons Land Use Task Force Transforming Tysons: Vision and Area Wide Recommendations, September, 2008 (Revised October, 2008).	http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/finalreports/transforming-tysons.pdf	Suburban sprawl created traffic congestion issues and lengthy commuter times.	Reduce the number of car trips and increase the efficient use of all transportation resources. The expected outcome of applying TDM strategies is an increase in transit ridership and a reduction in auto trips. A broad, systematic program of TDM strategies will be critical to ensure maximum exposure throughout the region. In the areas closest to Metrorail, TDM strategies can be expected to decrease vehicle trips by 10 percent on a daily basis. Potential TDM strategies include: transit coordinators; carpool/vanpool incentives; transit subsidy flex-work arrangements; guaranteed ride home; and parking management. A large component of TDM will be the promotion of the programs to the various stakeholders. Areas closest to the Metrorail stations should have higher transportation demand management requirements. For example, within ¼ mile of the stations, development should be required to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips by a certain percentage.	4.9 square miles; 19,627 population. Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area 5,564.6 square miles; 5,703,948 population.	Over the past six decades, Tyson's Corner has developed as an area dominated by office space and retail shopping. With the planned extension of the Washington METRO Silver Line identifying 4 stations in Tyson's, a Land Use Task Force was create and tasked with creating a development plan for the area. Tyson's plan focuses on how to turn an area dominated by the vehicle in to a livable/walkable area with more residential and less congestion.	No data available.	Outreach with area stakeholders to reduce trips during peak hours.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Inclusion of a rail station (or bus station) as a defining attribute of all Centers.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Prohibit development that fails to incorporate public transportation.	Requiring that public transit stations are included as focal points of all new Centers will be important for reaching regional and City-wide goals for multi modal transit. It will also promote the integration of public transport planning from the inception of Center projects.	Multimodal transportation was mentioned by all Focus Groups.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Apply maximum rather than minimum parking standards in Centers located along rail corridors.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Discourage the use of personal automobile trips in Centers having rail transit available.	No data available.	Multimodal transportation was mentioned by all Focus Groups.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Current regulations not encouraging dense development near transit stations.	Locate trip-generating land uses near high frequency public transport.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Encourage multimodal transportation.	No data available.	Multimodal transportation was mentioned by all Focus Groups.

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Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Support local communities.	Provide services, employment and activities that are appropriate and accessible to the community a Center supports.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Ensure local, universal accessibility to goods and services.	Drafted in 2009, the Activity Centers discussion paper resulted in the creation of a State Planning Policy Centers for various regions throughout Australia, including Perth and Peel (which is also included in	The Center planning rhetoric from Australia emphasizes the importance of local communities throughout the Center design and designation process.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Encourage efficient transportation networks.	Be integrated with and encourage the efficient operation of the city's transport network, with particular emphasis on promoting public transport, walking and cycling and reducing the number and length of trips.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Increase usage of multimodal transportation options.	No data available.	Aligns with Houston's core goals for Centers.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Promote sustainable, good design.	Be designed on transit oriented development principles.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Encourage sustainable building practices.	No data available.	Aligns with Houston's core goals for Centers.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Create live/work/play opportunities.	Provide opportunities for places to live through higher-density housing (with the exception of industrial centers) and the development of social and cultural networks.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Creating live/work opportunities and preserving/enhancing the cultural fabric of a city.	No data available.	Aligns with Houston's core goals for Centers.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Cluster economic activities.	Encourage the concentration of economic activity and cultivation of business synergies in centers.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Cluster commercial/industrial/retail activities to minimize impact on infrastructure, conserve resources and create interactive business districts.	No data available.	Aligns with Houston's core goals for Centers.
Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Enhance 'sense of place'.	Support the development of local identity and a sense of place.	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Emphasize the importance of cultural connectivity and community networks in the success of a Center.	No data available.	Offers an additional goal/expectation not yet included in/refined in the Urban Houston Framework. Need to consider including and expanding on this.

Peer Review

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Western Australian Planning Commission - Planning Activity Centers for Communities and Economic Growth Discussion Paper 2009.	http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/planning_policy_activity_centres_com_eco2_web.pdf	Create a sizeable economic impact and increase the City's tax base.	Activity center plans will be required to include a measure of the intensity of activity (planned population and jobs/gross ha).	1,021,478 square mi, 2,410,600 population (2012)	Ensure a compact and walkable urban form and to support additional growth and infrastructure such as public transport and demonstrate a diverse land use mix.	No data available.	Planning for Urban Centers offers additional opportunities to expand the role of economic impact assessments as decision making tools (especially for development projects involving major retail uses).

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C

APPENDIX C: PROCESS

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Process Alternatives: Applicant Initiated

During the Framework process, alternate visions of the process to become an Urban Center were put on the table, including a City Initiated Process, a Voluntary Area Initiated Process, and an Applicant Initiated Process. The two processes shown here - Applicant and Voluntary Area Initiated Processes - are those that were deemed as not appropriate for Houston, but could be appropriate in other areas in the region. The City Initiated process is discussed in full on page 78.

The Applicant Initiated process is currently available in Houston through the use of Chapter 42 variance process. The difference seen here is that a variance would not be needed in order for an applicant to apply to become an Urban Center. An Applicant is defined as a residential developer, commercial developer, property owner or real estate corporation.

The benefits of this process are:

- It is entirely voluntary and reliant upon private market forces
- It is the simplest application process of the three alternatives (City Initiated, Community Initiated and Applicant Initiated)
- That developers will likely favor this option

The challenges associated with this process are:

- It is not conducive to long-range, citywide planning
- It could result in parcel-by-parcel, status quo development challenges
- That the City is in a responsive role in steering development, versus an anticipatory role
- Developers are responsible for mapping criteria, which in turn increases time and money costs

Process Alternatives: Voluntary Area Initiated

The Voluntary Area Initiated process is one where residential and commercial property owners, Management Districts, Redevelopment Authorities, Historic Districts, non-profit organizations and Community Development Corporations would be able to initiate the process for their area to become an Urban Center.

During the Framework process, it was decided that a City Initiated process would be more appropriate for Large and Medium Centers. The concern for The Applicant and Voluntary Area Initiated processes for Small Centers is that development may negatively effect existing stable neighborhoods and Small Centers in particular. The City Initiated process will allow the City to determine whether a Small Center can become an Urban Center, taking into account all of the outlying factors in the area. Therefore, at least for the immediate future, the Voluntary Area Initiated process will not be used in Houston, but this could be used in other areas within the region.

The benefits of this process are:

- It creates an immediate partnership for implementation
- It grants the City more leeway in coordinating planning and development efforts
- Management districts/ TIRZ's already have protocol in place for gathering signatures so it fits into already established operating procedures for these entities
- It emphasizes empowerment of community groups
- That increased dialogue with community organizations could help the City more easily identify gaps in infrastructure in services throughout Houston
- It encourages sustainable development practices in all areas of the City (versus only in pre-established Centers)
- It is available to any group interested in reaching out to property owners to gather signatures required for Center designation

The challenges associated with this process are:

- That nebulous boundaries could slow down the application process
- The City is in responsive role in steering development (versus anticipatory)
- That this process could result in high amounts of applications being submitted to the City

2 Voluntary Area Initiated Process

residential property owners
commercial property owners
management district or redevelopment authority
historic district
non-profit organization

D

APPENDIX D: CRITERIA

DESIGNWORKSHOP

Criteria

GOAL ADDRESSED?	CRITERIA (METRIC)?	DEFINITION (INTENT)?	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE(S)?	SUFFICIENT DATA AVAILABLE?
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Dwelling Unit Density (Multi-Family)	Determines balance/variety of housing.	City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Dwelling Unit Density (Single-Family)	Determines balance/variety of housing.	City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Food Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures food/grocery amenities (such as supermarkets, grocery stores, farmers markets) within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Housing Starts	The number of new houses that are being built within the United States. The real estate sector is often one the first impacted by impending economic instability, making housing starts a highly reliable economic indicator.	City of Houston; U.S. Census Bureau New Residential Construction Report	No
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Housing Type	A measure of housing type diversity (i.e. percent Single-Family versus Multi-Family, Duplex, Apartments; etc..).	City of Houston	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Housing Value	Measures the cost of housing in dollar amount.	City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data	Maybe
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Infill Development Potential	Measures acreage of vacant, undeveloped or underdeveloped land available for future development.	City of Houston	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Median Household Income	Measures income of householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not.	U.S. Census Bureau	N/A
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Percent Multifamily Dwelling Units within X mile(s) of educational institution(s) or # educational institutions within X miles of parcel	Measures level of housing choice in close proximity to schools.	City of Houston	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Percent Single-family Dwelling Units within X mile(s) of educational institution(s) or # educational institutions within X miles of parcel	Measures level of housing choice in close proximity to schools.	City of Houston	Yes

Criteria

GOAL ADDRESSED?	CRITERIA (METRIC)?	DEFINITION (INTENT)?	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE(S)?	SUFFICIENT DATA AVAILABLE?
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Residential Density	Measures households per acre.	City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Residential Dwelling Unit Vacancy Rate	Determines capacity for residential infill development/potential to accommodate population growth (new residents relocating to Houston) or migrating populations (existing residents moving to new locations within the City).	City of Houston; U.S. Census Bureau Housing Vacancies and Homeownership Survey (CPS/HVS)	Yes
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Transit-Oriented Residential Density	Measures the proximity of public transit to housing as an indicator of the likelihood for residents to use public transit. Having public transit stops within short walking distances from housing encourages residents of a neighborhood to use public transportation thus reducing vehicular energy use and emissions. The Transit-Oriented Residential Density measures the average walking distance in feet from all residents of a neighborhood to the closest public transit stop. A travel distance of ¼ mile (1,320 feet) is typically considered walkable. (Number of Housing Units per Acre).	City of Houston	No
Address local and regional housing initiatives.	Transportation Cost	Measure of affordability.	No sufficient data available	N/A
Contribute high-quality infrastructure.	Parks and Open Space Acreage	Measure of recreational/fitness opportunities. Park land is defined as minimum of 0.5 contiguous acres inside the Loop 610 or 1.0 contiguous acres outside the Loop 610. Park definitions vary (i.e. Neighborhood Park, Linear Parks, Natural Areas) and size ranges anywhere from 0.5 - 150+ acres of contiguous land. Includes parks, green space, trails, and open space.	No sufficient data available	N/A
Contribute high-quality infrastructure.	Walk Score Average	Measure of “pedestrian friendliness” using intersection density and average block length.	http://www.walkscore.com/	N/A
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Average Residential/ Commercial/Office Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Determines the intensity of residential, commercial and office uses.	City of Houston	No

Criteria

GOAL ADDRESSED?	CRITERIA (METRIC)?	DEFINITION (INTENT)?	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE(S)?	SUFFICIENT DATA AVAILABLE?
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Civic Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures civic amenities within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Civic Amenity Density	Measures density of civic uses.	City of Houston	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Cultural Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures cultural amenities within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Employment Density	Measures employment (jobs) per acre.	City of Houston; U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS); U.S. Census Labor Force Statistics Data	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Facilities within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) Walking Distance	Measure proximity to facilities. Facilities is defined as _____.	City of Houston	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Jobs/Housing Ratio	Determines the ratio of jobs to housing dwelling units.	City of Houston; U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS); U.S. Census Labor Force Statistics Data	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Other User Densities	Measures density of other users. Others Users is defined as _____.	City of Houston; U.S. Census Bureau	No
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Population Density	Measure persons per acre.	City of Houston; U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS) Homeownership data	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Recreational Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures recreational amenities (such as gyms, sports stadiums, recreational complexes) within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	No
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Retail/Commercial Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures retail/commercial amenities within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	Yes
Encourage economic viability and diversity.	Walk Score Average	Measures mixture of uses based on neighborhood service/amenity category. Amenities included in calculation include: grocery stores, restaurants, shopping, coffee, banks, parks, schools, book stores and entertainment.	http://www.walkscore.com/	N/A
Enhance Community stability, accessibility and equity.	Educational Amenities within 0.25 mile Walking Distance	Measures accessibility to educational institutions within 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston	Yes

Criteria

GOAL ADDRESSED?	CRITERIA (METRIC)?	DEFINITION (INTENT)?	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE(S)?	SUFFICIENT DATA AVAILABLE?
Enhance Community stability, accessibility and equity.	Funding Mechanism or Other Management Entity	Determines which areas have a funding mechanism or other management entity.	City of Houston	May be
Enhance Community stability, accessibility and equity.	Historical Site/Structure Density	Identifies important historical amenities.	No sufficient data available	N/A
Promote sustainable, healthy design.	Impervious/Pervious Cover Ratio	Measure of heat island effect impact.	City of Houston; Google Earth 2011 Satellite Imagery	No
Promote sustainable, healthy design.	Number LEED certified projects	Measures sustainability through identifying number of LEED certified projects.	No sufficient data available	N/A
Promote sustainable, healthy design.	Percent Tree Canopy Cover	Measure of heat island effect impact.	City of Houston tree inventory?	N/A
Promote sustainable, healthy design.	Vehicular Greenhouse Gas Emission	Measure of atmospheric gases contributing to the greenhouse effect.	No sufficient data available	N/A
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Average Block Size	Measure of walkability and connectivity.	City of Houston	No
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Average Grid Density of Roadways, Bikeways and Sidewalks	Measures the length of streets per acre for vehicular roadways, bicycles pathways and pedestrian sidewalks.	City of Houston	Maybe
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Bike Score	Measures whether a location is good for biking on a scale from 0 - 100 based on four equally weighted components: bike lanes, hills, destinations and road connectivity, bike commuting mode share.“	http://www.bikescore.com/	N/A
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Bikeway Proximity	Measures proximity to bikeways based on 0.50 mile (2,640 feet) distance.	City of Houston	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Freeway or Grand Parkway Density	Measure of connectivity.	City of Houston, METRO	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Freeway or Major Thoroughfare Density	Measure of connectivity.	City of Houston, METRO	Yes

Criteria

GOAL ADDRESSED?	CRITERIA (METRIC)?	DEFINITION (INTENT)?	POTENTIAL DATA SOURCE(S)?	SUFFICIENT DATA AVAILABLE?
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Inland Port Proximity	Measure of freight activity.	City of Houston, METRO	No
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Land Use Composition	Measures percentage of land use composition. Land use composition is defined as _____.	City of Houston	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Major Collector Density	Measure of connectivity.	City of Houston, METRO	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	METRO Bus Routes	Measures proximity to METRO Bus Routes based on 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston, METRO	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	METRO Rail Station Proximity	Measures proximity to METRO Rail Service Routes based on 0.25 mile (1,320 feet) walking distance.	City of Houston, METRO	Yes
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Port Proximity	Measure of industrial/manufacturing intensity.	City of Houston, METRO	No
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Transit Score	Calculates a “transit friendliness” score for a specific point by summing the relative “usefulness” of nearby routes. Usefulness is defined as the distance to the nearest stop on the route, the frequency of the route, and type of route.	http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&ved=0CDUQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ct.gov%2Fdot%2Flib%2Fdot%2Fdocuments%2Fdpolicy%2Ftransitscore%2Ftransitscoremethod.doc&ei=ubr9UPiQCaji2gXq54CIAw&usg=AFQjCNHnPlPyqEVWTw8-anCLTF9KxVCDJw&sig2=03itm9y6i21-b3QVQGgq6g&bvm=bv.41248874,d.b2I	No
Support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity.	Walk Score Average	Measures “pedestrian friendliness” using intersection density and average block length.	http://blog.walkscore.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/WalkScoreMethodology.pdf	No

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E

APPENDIX E: TOOLBOX

DESIGNWORKSHOP

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Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

	Universal Improvement Tool - - or - - Developer Incentive	Overview	Tools for Development Community	Expectations of Development Community	Potential Partnerships, Roles, and Responsibilities	Changes from Current Code/Policies
#	*Does the approach benefit everyone generally (regardless of development practices) or does it incent an individual to go above and beyond standard practices currently in effect today?*	*What is the reasoning behind establishing this tool for Urban Centers? Which size of activity center could benefit from this tool?*	*What are the incentives for the developer?*	*What must the developer do?*	*Are there key partnerships needed for implementation of this tool/expectation? What are their roles and responsibilities?*	*How will this differ from current policy? What resources exist that clarify rational for starting values?*
1	**Universal Improvement Tool**	**Urban Center Plan(s) (includes Traffic Impact Analysis and Preventative Street Abandonment Plans)** Developers will build where they know the infrastructure required to support their project exists. Parks are an important part of infrastructure which may or may not be available in a specific area. With additional density, added park space is needed to serve new residents. Promoting sustainable, healthy design and better construction practices through Urban Center Plans will help guide occurrences of more dense urban development throughout the city. Encourages management entities within the Urban Centers to provide a Transportation Plan for Traffic Analysis will help support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity by holistically considering the traffic impacts of development and/or redevelopment projects. When a governing entity completes a Traffic Impact Analysis prior to development, investors have additional assurance that their project can be built in a timeline that protects their investments. Small parcels created by roadway grids of 250' or less may not be desirable for developers. Small roadway grids have been cited by stakeholders as creating challenges to the construction of more dense, mixed use building typologies. Abandoning certain streets allows for the possibility of denser development and the preservation of pedestrian connectivity and walkability in certain areas. This will encourage economic viability and diversity and create larger parcels that support denser development. Laying out a plan will give developers an idea of what the area could yield when fully redeveloped with compatible dense, mixed-use building forms. This will also help to support multimodal transportation and increased connectivity by encouraging development along the major corridors where transportation improvements can benefit the most users. Traffic and transportation improvements can be planned and implemented where they will benefit the most users; creating solutions based on area trends, not just addressing changes brought on by a singular development.	Development does not need to complete a Traffic Impact Analysis if located on a Major Thoroughfare or Major Collector and if there is a minimum density of jobs and dwelling units per acre (as defined by an Urban Center Plan). Potential tool cited by stakeholders – offer credit for existing pedestrian opportunities. Allowable street closures are pre-determined so that it is clear to developers owning property on both sides of the right-of-way which areas in Urban Centers there could be abandoned right-of-way in. Determining abandonment would entail studying areas to determine which strategic places in which abandonment would not negatively impact traffic patterns, surrounding communities, nor planning objectives. Once these areas are determined, air rights exceeding 20' above the street level may be abandoned in the right-of-way (ROW) and the developer would not be required to pay for the abandoned right-of-way.	Development must meet the intent and base expectations outlined by an Urban Center Plan.	METRO H-GAC HCDD P&D PWE ReBuild Houston	There are currently no vision plans in existence for urban centers. The intent of these plans that developers must meet the will need to be substantiated with a specific manual of requirements so as to create a predictable and transparent process by which developments are approved. An example of an instance in which the City, private developer, community, or other organization created a plan for Urban Center may be reviewed at this location: http://www.capitolriverfront.org/_files/docs/caprivudfp13web.pdf). Currently the City, management entities or private developers can create a Transportation Plans for areas in Houston.. Development or Redevelopment projects must complete Transportation Impact Analysis (TIAs) to show that proposed designs will not produce more Peak Hourly Trips (PHT) than the area's Transportation Plan allows. If so the applicant is required to either amend the Plan or submit a separate Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA). This tool would speed up the approval process for developers. Current rules allow for individual properties in Major Activity Centers to be exempt from TIA requirements if the MAC has conducted and received approval for an overall TIA and the proposed development is consistent with that TIA. **Traffic Analysis in Major Activity Centers** The City Engineer, together with the Planning and Development Department, may cooperate with management districts, development authorities or other public or private organizations to prepare a transportation plan within a Major Activity Center. While the City may provide oversight, the preparation of the plan is not the responsibility of the City. **Transportation Plan and Traffic Analysis** a. The horizon year projections can be used to generate trips for the Major Activity Center study area. A Traffic Impact Analysis can be prepared using this transportation plan identifying impacts and mitigation measures. A plan can be included for how mitigation measures are implemented and these can be incorporated into transportation plans and capital improvement programs within a Major Activity Center. b. It may be necessary for the Transportation Plan and Traffic Analysis to be updated once every five years. c. Any proposed development within the Transportation Plan and Traffic Analysis Study Area that will produce the same or less PHT than a use described in the Transportation Plan shall be exempt from preparing a TIA. d. Any proposed development within the Transportation Plan and Traffic Analysis Study Area that will produce more PHT that described in the Transportation Plan shall be required to amend the Plan or submit a separate stand-alone TIA. Developments within a Major Activity Center without a Transportation Plan and associated Traffic Analysis Ordinarily require a TIA will still require a TIA in order to determine the impacts of the development and mitigation measures, if any, required. Developments within a Major Activity Center always have the option of preparing a separate TIA specifically for their development. Current regulations allow for a Major Activity Center to complete an overall traffic plan that can be used for future development. The Infrastructure Design Manual Chapter 15: Traffic and Signal Design Requirements reviews design considerations regarding traffic impacts on dwelling unit density and connectivity, but besides the H-GAC Livable Centers Plans and Mobility Plans, there aren't plans specific to centers. Moreover, Capital Improvement Plan funding allocations are based on needs and conditions assessments across the City. There is no guarantee that H-GAC Livable Center Plan and Mobility Plan recommendations receive priority for funding because the CIP is designed to address the worst-first, and to a lesser degree, consider future growth. HPARD's 21 Park Sector Plans may provide guidance in maintaining current acres of parkland/1,000 people. Appropriate benchmarks have not yet been determined and may vary by Center type. This removes the current requirement that a Traffic Impact Analysis be completed for all developments outside the Central Business District area if they generate more than 100 trips during the peak hour.

Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

	Universal Improvement Tool - - or - - Developer Incentive	Overview	Tools for Development Community	Expectations of Development Community	Potential Partnerships, Roles, and Responsibilities	Changes from Current Code/Policies
#	*Does the approach benefit everyone generally (regardless of development practices) or does it incent an individual to go above and beyond standard practices currently in effect today?*	*What is the reasoning behind establishing this tool for Urban Centers? Which size of activity center could benefit from this tool?*	*What are the incentives for the developer?*	*What must the developer do?*	*Are there key partnerships needed for implementation of this tool/expectation? What are their roles and responsibilities?*	*How will this differ from current policy? What resources exist that clarify rational for starting values?*
2	Universal Improvement Tool	**High Quality/Capacity Transit**			METRO H-GAC HCDD P&D PWE	
3	Universal Improvement Tool	**Developer Participation Contract (DPC) Utility Infrastructure Upgrade Reimbursement** Allowing for upgrades to systems earlier than might be possible if the City had to finance the improvement will provide the capacity needed to accommodate denser, urban forms of development. The City currently has a program in place through use of Developer Participation Contracts to offset developer costs for water and sanitary sewer infrastructure. Any oversizing/additional capacity is covered by the City.	A DPC is an existing tool that allows developers to be reimbursed for a portion of the cost of upgrading infrastructure. There are three types of DPCs covered in Code of Ordinances, Chapter 47 Article IV beginning with Section 47-161. **30-70 DPCs** Intended for reimbursement of new water and wastewater infrastructure construction only. ***Housing is not associated with these type projects and there is no provision for reimbursement of storm sewer costs***. The cap on reimbursement is limited to $1,000,000 but only includes construction costs. **50-50 DPCs** Intended for reimbursement of new water and wastewater infrastructure construction only. ***Housing is not associated with these type projects and there is no provision for reimbursement of storm sewer costs***. The cap on reimbursement is limited to $50,000 and includes construction and engineering costs.	The developer updates utility infrastructure systems as specified within a Developer Participation Contract.	P&D PWE	http://documents.publicworks.houstontx.gov/documents/procedures/developer_participation_contract_dpc/resource_documents/dpc_manual_2011.pdf 100 percent of the Eligible Over Sizing Costs for the Main, 70 percent of the balance of Eligible Construction Costs for the Main, (100 percent of the Eligible Design Costs, Interest on the reimbursement cost as calculated above at the interest rate described in Article I of this Contract for the period of time between the Developer's loan disbursement and payment by the City. Greater coordination with City reviewers regarding utilities research conducted (as required per Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual) will help encourage increased opportunities for public/private partnerships in implementing alternate solutions and utility upgrades in key areas. City staff is available to assist any applicant with research of existing utilities if the applicant is unable to discern the information from the web-based maps and inventories. Utilizes existing financing models to better accomplish desired goals and reduce perception of financial risk to developers.
4	Universal Improvement Tool	**Parking Benefit District** PBD's are defined geographic areas, typically in downtown areas or along commercial corridors in which a majority of the revenue generated from on-street parking facilities within the district is returned to the district to finance neighborhood improvements. The primary goal of a PBD is to effectively manage parking supply and demand so that parking is convenient and easy for motorists. PBDs typically employ a number of parking management techniques to manage parking supply and demand. By implementing a PBD, the parking will be managed more effectively and a majority of the revenue is reinvested back into projects determined by the community. Additional consideration should be paid to surrounding development and ensure that shared parking assumptions are convenient to all participants. Amar will give us feedback on that.	The City coordinates with stakeholders in the area, installs meters and distributes funds back to the district according to the agreement with the stakeholders.	Amar will get back to us.	METRO HCDD P&D PWE	**American Planning Association Press--The High Cost of Free Parking** **Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth – Toolbox/Handbook: Parking Best Practices & Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area** **Driving Urban Environments: Smart Growth Parking Best Practices** **A publication of the Governor's Office of Smart Growth** **Code of Ordinances Chapter 26:** Parking Article XI (amended 3.6.2013) defines parking benefit districts as areas designated by City Council (typically in the Central Business District or along major commercial/ transit corridors) in which revenue generated from parking facilities may be used to finance improvements. All monies generated through parking meters are used to offset the City's financial contributions to signage, enforcement, maintenance, etc. Revenues in excess of City costs go to advisory committee recommended projects—such as landscaping, parking studies and pedestrian realm improvements—or deposited into the City's parking management special revenue fund. Currently Washington Avenue is the only parking benefit district within City limits.
5	Universal Improvement Tool	**Special Parking Area**		The developer provides parking off-site, provided that it is within an eighth of a mile walking distance of the main entrance to the development.	METRO HCDD P&D PWE	

Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

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6	Universal Improvement Tool	**Reduced Park Requirement** Pocket parks are allowed in areas that are considered denser and well served by other parks in lieu of larger parks.	The potential use of reduced acreage for park dedication.	The developer must provide basic amenities like benches, signage and trash cans.	PARD HCDD P&D PWE	**Ch. 42-252** Parks Director may approve the dedication of less than one half acre of property in the urban area or one acre of property in the suburban area if the proposed park is a pocket park the need for which is identified in the Parks Master Plan, is adjacent to an existing park or other public space, provides access to a park, or otherwise presents an opportunity to enhance the City parks system consistent with the Parks Master Plan.
7	Universal Improvement Tool	**Stormwater Facilities** Supporting privately or publicly created and maintained stormwater detention facility that serves multiple developments will help contribute to high-quality infrastructure. Creating denser development through use of offsite/regional stormwater mitigation may also lead to better return on investments given the potential for high land prices in highly demanded Urban Centers.	Privately or publicly held stormwater facilities are oversized and the additional cost is recouped by selling capacity to developers.	Developer reserves capacity in regional stormwater detention facility within certain proximity to site and, when applicable, integrates the site's storm water detention facilities with recreational spaces and trail connectivity.	HCFCD HCDD P&D PWE HPRD	The City of Houston is undertaking a study of regional stormwater mitigation options. Chapter 13 currently requires of the PWE Infrastructure Design Manual currently requires Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWP3) and Best Management Practices (BMPs). Current regulations allow this opportunity for developers if they can bring the facility location forward. Stormwater detention capacity must be in place prior to development. As part of the City's long range planning efforts, PWE currently addresses this issue for Capital Improvement Projects. PWE does not speculate on land acquisition to support "possible" future development. Houston"s Parks and Recreation Department's 2008 Master Plan Update recommends specific amounts of acreage in each Council District to be acquired for the additional park facilities. Future Urban Center plans should incorporate these findings as the foundation for filling gaps in detention infrastructure. According to HPARD, approximately 3,616 acres of land of the following park typologies needs to be acquired in order to meet 2020 population demands. • Community Parks • Neighborhood Parks • Linear Park/Greenways • In-Park Trails • Connecting Trails
8	Universal Improvement Tool *and/or - -* Developer Incentive	**Stormwater Treatment Credits** Encouraging stormwater filtration methods in landscape buffer zones through stormwater credits can rewards efforts to incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) and to manage stormwater at the source. Allowing an Urban Center to bank quality credits which could then be traded or sold between adjacent properties could be a potential strategy for contributing to high-quality infrastructure and for encouraging the cleaning and reuse of stormwater.	Receive credits that could then be traded or sold between adjacent properties (within the watershed) for treating stormwater within the public rights-of-way provided the use does not interfere with pedestrian clear zone and is outside the bike and vehicle travel ways.	The developer goes above and beyond local and state standard requirements for cleaning and reuse of stormwater, and participates in a joint maintenance agreement.	HCFCD HCDD P&D PWE	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Procedures are currently required by Chapter 13 of the Infrastructure Design Manual. SWP3 contents must include, at a minimum, the following: 1. Site or Project Description 2. Best Management Practices (BMPs) 3. Structural Control Practices 4. Permanent Storm Water Controls 5. Other Controls 6. Consistency with Approved State and Local Plans 7. Maintenance 8. Inspections of Controls (written documentation of inspections of controls required) 9. Non-Storm Water Discharges Chapter 14 also requires applicants to prove: • compliance with all standards contained in the Infrastructure Design Manual, • Adequacy of service availability for: (1) Water, (2) Wastewater, (3) Storm sewer or storm water detention, and Other design standards of the Department of Public Works and Engineering
9	Universal Improvement Tool	**Low Impact Development (LID)** Sustainable development practices are integrated into public developments such as roads, parks, public facilities, and the Green Building Resource Center. If proven successful under the Exemplifying what works and doesn't work in Houston and agreeing upon a list of acceptable Best Management Practices (BMPs) will help contribute to high-quality infrastructure and promote responsible and sustainable design in Houston.	Identify areas of common ground in achieving sustainable urban developments in partnership with private sector developers. Encourage better development practices by demonstrating Low Impact Development (LID) principles in City projects. There is an approved list of acceptable BMPs.	Developers use LID techniques such as pervious paving, rainwater cisterns, bioswales, rain gardens, etc.	HCFCD HCDD P&D PWE	PWE considers LID techniques for its infrastructure projects and where it makes economic sense from a cost/benefit standpoint. Houston's Infrastructure Design Manual Chapter 13 Stormwater Quality Design Requirements specify design criteria, inspection and maintenance requirements for bio retention, infiltration trenches, porous pavement, vegetative swales, roof surfaces and rain barrels, but these criteria only apply to new development on undeveloped parcels of five acres or larger (regardless of amount of land that will actually be disturbed), and *significant redevelopment* (defined as changes of one acre or more to the impervious surface in existence) on five acre or larger developed parcels. Harris County's Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure Design Criteria for Storm Water Management do not require conventional development projects to follow LID requirements. Requirements only apply to new development or re-development projects choosing to incorporate LID for the purpose of satisfying current HCPID-AED and/or HCFCD requirements for detention, infrastructure, and stormwater quality to receive Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) of Municipal Utility District (MUD) reimbursements for LID and green infrastructure (GI) elements. • Harris County Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure Design Criteria for Storm Water Management • City of Houston, Harris County and Harris County Flood Control District Storm Water Management Handbook for Construction Activities

Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

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10	**Universal Improvement Tool**	**Celebrating Sustainable Development Practices** Additional marketing of sustainable projects will provide an incentive for developers to include sustainable design elements.	Sustainable projects are celebrated through an awards program and press releases by agencies throughout the region.	Development meets minimum standards for SITES, LEED, or other comparable third-party validation performance rating systems.	HCDD P&D PWE HCFCD	Example: Green Office Challenge ULI Houston - Development of Distinction Awards US Green Building Council American Planning Association American Society of Landscape Architects
11	**Developer Incentive**	**Affordable Housing Flow Chart** Addressing local and regional housing initiatives is a key goal for Urban Centers cited by stakeholders. Ensuring a smooth and timely progression through building permit/plat review processes will be important to ensuring Urban Centers successfully become live/work/play environments. Encouraging the development of mixed use, affordable and workforce housing options will allow a range of income groups and ages to live in Urban Centers. Reduced impact fees per unit have been noted by Focus Groups as a tool for promoting mixed-use. Creating a TIRZ for Large and Medium Urban Centers was noted as a tool for bettering economic growth, population growth and housing supply. Impact fees are only assessed for the contemplated uses in a building, so the cost of service is covered. Permit fees and impact fees are set by City Ordinance and cannot be reduced or waived.	The project is assigned a city-approved flow chart indicating which department and which person within each department is assigned to development in Urban Centers. Then, a representative(s) is assigned by each relative department that facilitates the permitting/plat review process and discusses a variety of options available for successfully achieving mixed-use, affordable or workforce housing.	The developer may be required to provide a certain percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points.	HUD HCDD P&D PWE	There are currently no minimum affordable housing requirements within Houston. Current process for permitting reviews must be completed within 30 days (Current permitting review period is 11 calendar days for non-single family residential. Total time to permit is based on the quality of the submittal and the number of resubmittals which is in the control of the applicant).
12	**Developer Incentive**	**Entitlement Grant Gap Financing for Housing** There are four HUD entitlement grants administered by HCDD that finance annual objectives associated with HUD activities, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). Of note, ESG and HOPWA are primarily supportive service grants awarded through a competitive process to social service agencies. However, two of the grants, CDBG and HOME may be utilized as a form of gap financing for affordable housing. HCDD's Multifamily Housing Program activities are funded at various times throughout the year through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Financing projects that contribute to housing supplies in Urban Centers should be a priority in submitting grant applications (regardless of whether grant applications are submitted by the Housing Authority, Housing and Community Development Department, etc.). For example, Urban Centers will be the targets for most of the following grant applications.	**The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program** Finances a variety of activities including housing, public facilities and improvements, public services, and economic development assistance activities. These activities support the low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and residents. **The HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program** Promotes public/private partnerships as a vehicle for expanding the stock of affordable housing, both single and multifamily, for the homeowner and rental markets. HOME Program funds support homebuyer assistance and single and multifamily development/rehabilitation/repair activities. **Houston Housing Authority** The Houston Housing Authority (HHA) receives federal funding to provide quality affordable housing options in Houston. The HHA is the local administrator of the federal Low-Rent Public Housing Program and the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) (formerly Section 8), as well as other homeownership, and self- sufficiency programs for low- and extremely low-income families, seniors, and persons with disabilities. The agency's programs provide more than 19,000 units of affordable housing and serve more than 55,000 Houstonians. **Harris County Housing Authority** While the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) serves areas outside the City limits of Houston, it is an important resource for area residents. In FY 2011, HCHA proposed to serve 3,715 families in the Section 8 HCV, 8 families in the Section 8 Mod Rehab, 75 families in the HUD-VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing), and 72 households in Single Room Occupancy.	The developer may be required to provide a certain percentage of affordable housing units at a variety of price points.	HCDD P&D PWE	

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13	**Developer Incentive**	**Local Tax, Bond, and Development Incentives for Community Development** In addition to federal entitlement grants, HCDD uses other sources of funds for community development activities. HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation.	Several tax incentives are available for Urban Centers and funding resources would need to be prioritized accordingly. **Tax Abatement Ordinance** Provides abatement of property tax for up to 10 years for owners of businesses that make new capital investments and commitments to job creation. **Chapter 380 of the State of Texas Local Government Code** Allows Texas cities to make loans or grants of funds to developers or investors as well as provide certain staff and services, at minimum or no charge, to help stimulate economic development. As an example, this is Downtown's new 380 Program that incentives new multifamily residential mixed-use developments. **Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) and the TIRZ Affordable Housing Set-Aside** Dedicates tax increment revenues to infrastructure developments in designated TIRZs and provides set-aside revenues dedicated to affordable housing development. **Private Activity Bonds and Mortgage Revenue Bond Program** Through Houston Housing Finance Corporation, local bond financing of single family and multifamily developments is available to partners in the private sector. The primary purpose of these programs is to encourage the development of affordable housing using below-market financing and tax exempt incentives. **Developer Participation Contract (70-30 DPCs)** Principally for water and wastewater infrastructure construction in new residential subdivisions. The Department of Public Works and Engineering is principally responsible for reimbursements involving water and wastewater funds. If applied for, some developers may receive funds from the Department of Housing and Community Development for Storm Sewer infrastructure construction on affordable housing development. The cap on reimbursements for these type projects is $1,000,000 and includes construction and engineering costs.		Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) of Greater Houston Corporation for Supportive Housing HCDD P&D PWE	**Existing Programs** 380 Agreements Enterprise Zones Historic Site Tax Exemption Industrial Districts Tax Abatements http://www.houstontx.gov/ecodev/index.html **Example: Downtown Living Initiative - 380 Agreement** The purpose of the Downtown Living Initiative Chapter 380 Program (Program) is to promote economic development and stimulate business and commercial activity in the target area by providing economic and other development incentives for certain new multifamily residential mixed-use developments. The Program incorporates financial and other benefits to assist in the development of mixed use residential development. Applicants have to meet program requirement which included design guidelines. http://downtownhouston.org/site_media/uploads/attachments/2012-08-30/DLI_Final_Application_Materials.pdf

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14	**Developer Incentive**	**State-Funded Bond Programs for Community Development** In addition to local and federal grants, HCDD uses other sources of funds for community development activities. HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation	**State of Texas Bond Program** As an issuer for the Texas Private Activity Bond program, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) issues tax-exempt and taxable multifamily mortgage revenue bonds to finance the acquisition, rehabilitation, or development of affordable rental housing units. Approximately $447 million is available statewide. HCDD does not directly participate in selection or award of the State multifamily mortgage revenue bonds, but may provide gap financing to proposals through its HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Community Development Block Grant, or local revenue programs. TDHCA administers the program as a "first-come, first-served" program throughout the year. As with other housing programs, affordability periods, rent limits, and income limits will apply to recipients receiving State bond funds. Additional information is available online. **Tax-Exempt Bonds, TSAHC – The Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)** 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that was created by the Texas Legislature in 1994 to serve as a self-sustaining, statewide affordable housing provider. TSAHC's multifamily tax-exempt bond issuance program was established in 2001 and has since provided more than $600 million in financing to help build or preserve affordable housing in Texas. As one of only two authorized statewide issuers of housing bonds, TSAHC receives 10% of the statewide volume cap for multifamily private activity bonds and has unlimited authority to issue 501c3 bonds for rental housing projects. Developers may submit proposals at any time.		Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation Texas Association of Affordable Housing Providers Texas Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies HCDD P&D PWE	
15	**Developer Incentive**	**Federal Tax Incentives for Community Development** In addition to local and federal grants, HCDD uses other sources of funds for community development activities. HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation.	**Raza Development Fund** RDF pre-development loans, acquisition loans for vacant land or improved lots, and construction/rehabilitation financing for multi- and single-family units. Additional info is available online. **Section 202 – HUD** Provides capital advances to finance the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition with or without rehabilitation of structures that will serve as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons, including the frail elderly, and provides rent subsidies for the projects to help make them affordable. **Section 811** Through the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program, HUD provides funding to develop and subsidize rental housing with the availability of supportive services for very low-income adults with disabilities.		Raza Development Fund HUD Enterprise Community Partners Local Initiatives Support Corporation (National Office) HCDD P&D PWE	

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16	**Developer Incentive**	**Other Federal Incentives for Community Development – US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)** In addition to local grants, HCDD uses other sources of funds for community development activities. HCDD's programs work cooperatively with other tax-related incentives that facilitate economic growth through affordable housing, business development, and job creation	**New Market Tax Credits** Provides tax incentives for businesses that make commitments to investments and job creation. New Market Tax Credits are administered by Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) or banks that have applied to administer NMTCs locally. **State of Texas Housing Tax Credit Program** The Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program was established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is the federal law that governs the HTC program. The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is the state allocating agency, receiving approximately $45 million annually for distribution among 13 service regions. For state FY 2013 (September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013) Region 6, which includes the City of Houston, will have $9,232,747 available for competitive award. HCDD does not directly participate in selection or award of the HTC awards, but does provide support through gap financing from its HOME Investment Partnerships, Community Development Block Grant, or local revenue programs, to leverage equity earned through the syndication process associated with Housing Tax Credit program. TDHCA administers the program through a competitive application cycle between January and July of each year. An application for State of Texas Housing Tax Credits does not guarantee support or award of funds by HCDD; however, proposals that meet the multifamily policy priorities may be considered and all are encouraged to submit an application. Additional information is available online: http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/multifamily/htc/description.htm **Historic Preservation Tax Credit** The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program encourages private sector investment in the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings. A 20% income tax credit is available for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings that are determined by the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, to be "certified historic structures." Additional information is available online.		Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Community Development Finance Institutions National Parks Service HCDD P&D	
17	**Developer Incentive**	**Off-Street Parking** Providing public parking in dense Urban Centers that can be shared, reducing the requirement to provide onsite parking for each project will help developers and encourage an active and transparent ground floor and mixed use development within close proximity of a public parking amenity without creating a shortage of parking that might impact neighboring properties and existing stable residential communities.	20% reduction of parking requirement (in line with the TOD reduction currently in place). If there is a SPA, that trumps this tools.	The developer provides an active and transparent ground floor. While retail is the preferred ground floor use, other acceptable uses include public building spaces such as lobbies, common building amenities, fitness facilities, open office space, live/work space, day care centers, etc.	METRO HCDD P&D PWE	COH offers a formula to present a shared parking alternative to the required parking in Chapter 26, Article VIII, Division 2, Section 26-499 but it does not include residential land uses. The COH manages shared parking garages in the Central Business District but has not yet offered such a program outside the Central Business District. Section 26-503 allows a 20% reduced parking space requirement for transit-oriented developments if in addition to minimum number of bicycle spaces required the applicant provides enough bicycle parking spaces to qualify for a five percent reduction in the number of required parking spaces. This tool will expand the number of parking benefit districts and special parking areas. **Code of Ordinances Chapter 26-503:** The total number of parking spaces required by this article for a use classification shall be reduced by 20 percent if: The building complies with the optional performance standards provided in article IV of chapter 42 of this Code; In addition to the minimum number of bicycle spaces required by section 26-496 of this Code, the applicant provides enough bicycle parking spaces to qualify for a five percent reduction in the number of required parking spaces under section 26-497 of this Code; The reduction in the number of required parking spaces is not for a class 2 use classification under section 26-492 of this Code, except for a hotel or motel; and The applicant does not receive an additional reduction in the total number of required parking spaces as provided for by section 26-497 or 26-498 of this Code

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18	**Developer Incentive**	**Pedestrian Realm Improvement** Reduced building setbacks and parking reductions for Large, Medium and Small Urban Centers in exchange for a development project providing improvements to pedestrian environments and building forms along streets that includes parking behind or screened from public view. Improving pedestrian environments helps support multimodal transportation by ensuring public safety and by increasing connectivity near street grids. Connecting properties and destinations using wide sidewalks along major thoroughfares will encourage walking as an alternative to private automobile trips. As an area grows denser and includes additional transit services, walkability becomes a critical element of pedestrian accessibility. Encouraging developers to provide parking behind the building, not between the right-of-way and front entrance to buildings will help to promote sustainable, healthy design, universal accessibility to building entrances and better construction practices.	**Large Urban Centers** • 18'-20' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Major Thoroughfare and Major Collector Streets • 12'-15' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Local and Minor Collector & Local Street • No Parking Requirements or parking managed by Special Parking Area	• 18'-20' Pedestrian Realm w/ 8' sidewalk and clear zone along Major Thoroughfares/Collector Streets • 12'-15' Pedestrian Realm w/ 6' sidewalk and clear zone along Local/Minor Collectors/Streets • Pedestrian access corridor at least every 600' • Maximum uninterrupted block face of no more than 450' • Intersecting streets are placed at intervals of 500 to 600' and no greater than 800' apart any single stretch • 70% of building frontage within 10' of pedestrian realm • Public entrance adjacent to pedestrian realm • Publicly accessible and walkable parks or plazas, when adjacent to and connected to the pedestrian realm and when not otherwise used for vehicular parking or traffic, may be considered part of the pedestrian realm for the above • Screened parking garages adjacent to the street • No on-site parking or driveways between building façade and pedestrian realm unless distance is greater than 25' • Minimum of 3' vegetative buffer between pedestrian realm and any surface parking • No doors swinging into the pedestrian realm • 30% of façade surface less than 8' above the ground be transparent • Door, window, or other opening at least every 20' where the building is within 10 feet of the pedestrian realm • Softscape planting area limited to 20% • Softscape at least 2' back from any on-street parking • Street furniture (benches, bicycle parking, etc.) • Public/Civic Art or Cultural/Heritage Attractions • Publicly accessible and walkable parks or plazas • LID or other sustainable infrastructure practices **LEED Building**	HCDD P&D PWE	The City expanded the width requirement to 5 feet within the last 5 years and afforded the implementation of 6 feet on Transit Corridor and "A" Streets. No changes in width requirements are proposed. Downtown Living Initiative Chapter 380 Program E. Ground Floor Uses • 1. A Streets. Ground floors facing A streets should contain active uses. While retail is the preferred ground floor use, other acceptable uses include public building spaces such as lobbies, common building amenities, fitness facilities, open office space, live/work space, day care centers, etc. Regardless of initial use, all ground floors facing A streets should be configured such that they may accommodate retail in the future. • 2. B Streets. While ground floors facing B streets should also contain active uses to the greatest extent possible, they may contain other uses, such as residential and office. Uses such as building services, storage, and structured parking should be avoided to the greatest extent possible along B streets. **Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares Standards:** C-5 Urban Center Zones include: ▪ 21.5' wide pedestrian realm (1.5' vegetated edge, 7' furniture/tree well zone, 10' sidewalk throughway, 3' building frontage transition zone) C-6 Urban Core Zones include: ▪ 19.5' wide pedestrian realm (1.5' vegetated edge, 6' furniture/tree well zone, 9' sidewalk throughway, 3' building frontage transition zone) **LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System (2009) Neighborhood Pattern and Design Credit 1 Walkable Streets:** New sidewalks, whether adjacent to streets or not, must be at least 10 feet wide on retail or mixed-use blocks. **Upper Kirby Livable Centers Study Final Report (2010):** Sidewalks with landscaping sufficiently wide enough (approximately 20 feet) to give it a main street feel, allowing outdoor spaces and amenities for the retail/mixed-use needs and providing a buffer from the traffic. **LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System (2009) Neighborhood Pattern and Design Credit 1 Walkable Streets:** Sidewalk Intrusions—At-grade crossings with driveways account for no more than 10% of the length of sidewalks within the project LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System (2009) Neighborhood Pattern and Design Credit 1 Walkable Streets

Universal Improvement Tools & Developer Incentives

	Universal Improvement Tool - - or - - Developer Incentive	Overview	Tools for Development Community	Expectations of Development Community	Potential Partnerships, Roles, and Responsibilities	Changes from Current Code/Policies
#	*Does the approach benefit everyone generally (regardless of development practices) or does it incent an individual to go above and beyond standard practices currently in effect today?*	*What is the reasoning behind establishing this tool for Urban Centers? Which size of activity center could benefit from this tool?*	*What are the incentives for the developer?*	*What must the developer do?*	*Are there key partnerships needed for implementation of this tool/expectation? What are their roles and responsibilities?*	*How willl this differ from current policy? What resources exist that clarify rational for starting values?*
			Medium Urban Centers			
			• 15'-20' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Major Thoroughfare and Major Collector Streets • 12'-15' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Local and Minor Collector & Local Street • Parking may be managed by a Special Parking Area (if one exists) or the total number of parking spaces required for a use shall be reduced by 20 percent if: (1) The building complies with optional performance standards provided in article IV of Chapter 42; (2) In addition to minimum number of bicycle spaces required by section 26-496 the applicant provides enough bicycle parking spaces to qualify for a 5% percent reduction in the number of required parking spaces under section 26-497; and (3) the applicant does not receive an additional reduction in the total number of required parking spaces	• 15'-20' Pedestrian Realm w/ 8' sidewalk and clear zone along Major Thoroughfares/Collector Streets • 12'-15' Pedestrian Realm w/ 6' sidewalk and clear zone along Local/Minor Collectors/Streets **** PLUS ALL REQUIREMENTS INDICATED IN ORANGE ABOVE ****		
			Small Urban Centers			
			• 15' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Major Thoroughfare and Major Collector Streets • 12' Building Setback from proposed back-of-curb along Local and Minor Collector & Local Street • Total number of parking spaces required shall be reduced by 20 percent if (1) The building complies with the optional performance standards provided in article IV of Chapter 42; (2) In addition to the minimum number of bicycle spaces required by section 26-496 the applicant provides enough bicycle parking spaces to qualify for a 5 percent reduction in the number of required parking spaces under section 26-497; (3) The reduction in the number of required parking spaces is not for a class 2 use classification under section 26-492 except for a hotel or motel; and (4) The applicant does not receive an additional reduction in the total number of required parking spaces as provided for by section 26- 497 or 26-498.	• 15' Pedestrian Realm w/ 6' sidewalk and clear zone along Major Thoroughfares/Collector Streets • 12' Pedestrian Realm w/ 6' sidewalk and clear zone along Local/ Minor Collectors/Streets **** PLUS ALL REQUIREMENTS INDICATED IN ORANGE ABOVE ****		
19	**Developer Incentive**	**Urban Trail Networks** Reduced fees may attract potential developers to areas that have a base walkability to sustain/promote urban development. This could help support multimodal transportation, and increased connectivity and walkable areas.	XX% reduction in permitting fees or impact per unit fees when developing along multi-use trail networks that allow for alternative transportation modes (bicycling and walking).	Developers must provide a 12' wide by 7.5' high well lit, visible, well signed connection to nearby trails and bicycle connections to nearby routes that is publicly accessible, not just by the residents of the development. This connection would be use-restricted but privately owned; the owner of the development would be responsible for maintaining this public connection.	PARD HCDD P&D PWE	Code of Ordinances Chapter 42 determines the amount of land required to be dedicated or fees in lieu of dedication to be paid. If the developer elects to pay a fee in lieu of dedication, the parks director calculates the fee by multiplying the number of dwelling units in the development by the then-current fee ($700 per dwelling unit). Up to a maximum of 100 percent of the total requirement credit may be given for each acre or portion of park land provided as a greenbelt along a creek bed or around the perimeter of the development generating the dedication requirement, including improvements to a hike or bike trail that meet city standards. Appropriate benchmarks have not yet been determined and may vary by Center type. • H-GAC Fourth Ward Livable Centers Study: Final Report (2010): 6' wide pervious pathway recommended for Allen Parkway Trail. • The Ensemble/HCC Livable Centers Study Final Report (2010): 10' multi-use trail recommended for Hollman Street. • American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Design Guidelines: 10' mimimum width recommended for multi-use trails; however, where heavy use is anticipated, a 12 to 14-foot width is recommended. • City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Standards: Tier 1 trails—hard primary surface with soft shoulders to accommodate all users. Tier 1 trails 12' wide hard surface with 2' - 4' soft shoulder, with landscape buffer between hard and soft trail. Tier 2 trails—12' standard, but without landscape buffer. Tier 3 trails—primarily gravel or natural surface, with a 4' - 6' trail width.

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APPENDIX F:
PILOT PROJECTS

DESIGNWORKSHOP

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Pilot Projects: Introduction

Purpose

The Pilot Project analysis was intended to test the validity of selected tools on sites of different sizes within the City and see how those tools affected the site both physically and financially. These Pilot Projects were chosen by the City Planning Department and represent sites within a potential Large, Medium and Small Center.

Due to the lack of zoning in Houston, there is little that the City can do to require certain types of development within Urban Centers, and ultimately, many things that are desirable in Urban Centers are possible under today's system. The City thus can only encourage and make desirable development easier to do. Many of the suggested tools are policies that could be done under current rules, but the purpose of the Framework is to propose ways to make it easier and encourage more dense types of development within Urban Centers. The tools are there to offset the cost of developing in a more desirable manner and have some, although not significant, impact on the pro forma.

Reduced setback and parking requirements were tested on each Pilot Project and had varying results on each. For instance, a Parking Benefits District or Special Parking Area would be beneficial in the larger Centers, but would not be appropriate for Small Centers. Reduced setbacks add value for the development; the question is if the tool is incentive enough for developers. Other tools that were not tested include 380 Agreements to offset the cost of infrastructure, park land dedication fee reduction and stormwater facilities. At the time of this Study, the City cannot guarantee that these are tools that could move forward in the future, but the analysis speaks to the potential effects if they were to be used.

The Process, Toolbox and Conclusions are explained for each Pilot Project, and a graphic representation of what could be developed today versus what a Toolbox development could look like are provided. The pro formas are also provided for more detail on the assumptions, units, etc..

Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

Introduction

The 102.2 acre grayfield in Westchase was chosen as a pilot project so as to explore the Toolbox on a larger site. It is located on the southeast corner of Beltway 8 and Westheimer in the heart of the Westchase Management District.

In its present-day condition, Seagler Road and Meadowglen Lane bisect the property, and the first phase of a multifamily apartment complex is centrally located at the intersection of the two streets. An office tower and a bank are located on the northern boundary along Westheimer Road and offices comprise the southern border off of Richmond Street. Surrounding the property are office towers, a large Marriott hotel and multifamily apartment complexes. Major transit lines are located on Westheimer Road and Richmond Street.

The challenge with this pilot project is that Westchase has many jobs but is lacking a denser residential and employment in a more pedestrian-friendly, urban form.

Process

Market-rate assumptions were determined based on reports from CobbFendley. These assumptions were vetted with the SAC. The base case was designed based on what could feasibly be built today without variances under today's market conditions.

Next, some of the tools from the Toolbox were tested to see how they affected both the financial returns of the project, as well as the physical layout. In the case of the grayfield site, the Toolbox scenario was assumed to have a significant corporate headquarters locate on the site. This theoretical situation would spur multifamily, office and retail development to occur on a much faster time frame than would normally happen. The employment and residential densities that occur in the Toolbox Scenario could potentially elevate the Westchase District area from a Medium Center to a Large Center.

CobbFendley ran pro formas on the base case and Toolbox scenario to compare how each scenario performed financially.

Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

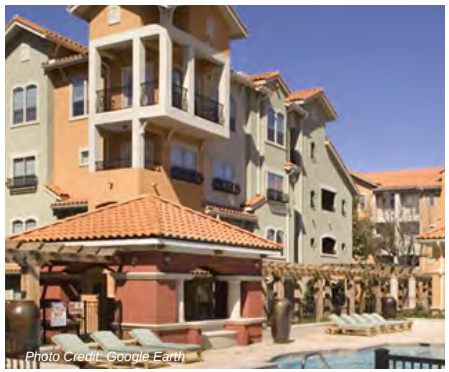
Toolbox

The tools that were applied to this pilot project include reduced setbacks in exchange for a pedestrian realm, parking reductions, which would be managed by a Special Parking Area.

The Toolbox Scenario design also reintroduced an urban street grid onto the site, in order to increase pedestrian circulation and accessibility. The street grid was then connected to the existing neighborhood fabric to the east.

Other Tools, such as the reduced park land dedication fee and stormwater treatment credits were not tested, because preliminary analysis showed that the financial gains were negligible on a site of this size. However, 380 agreements for new infrastructure may have significantly offset the cost of infrastructure by up to 90% ($18 million), but this would depend on the negotiated agreement with the City. At the time of the analysis however, it was not certain whether this would be a tool that the City would use for Urban Centers in the future.

The previously developed site is characterized by large open spaces and wide roads.



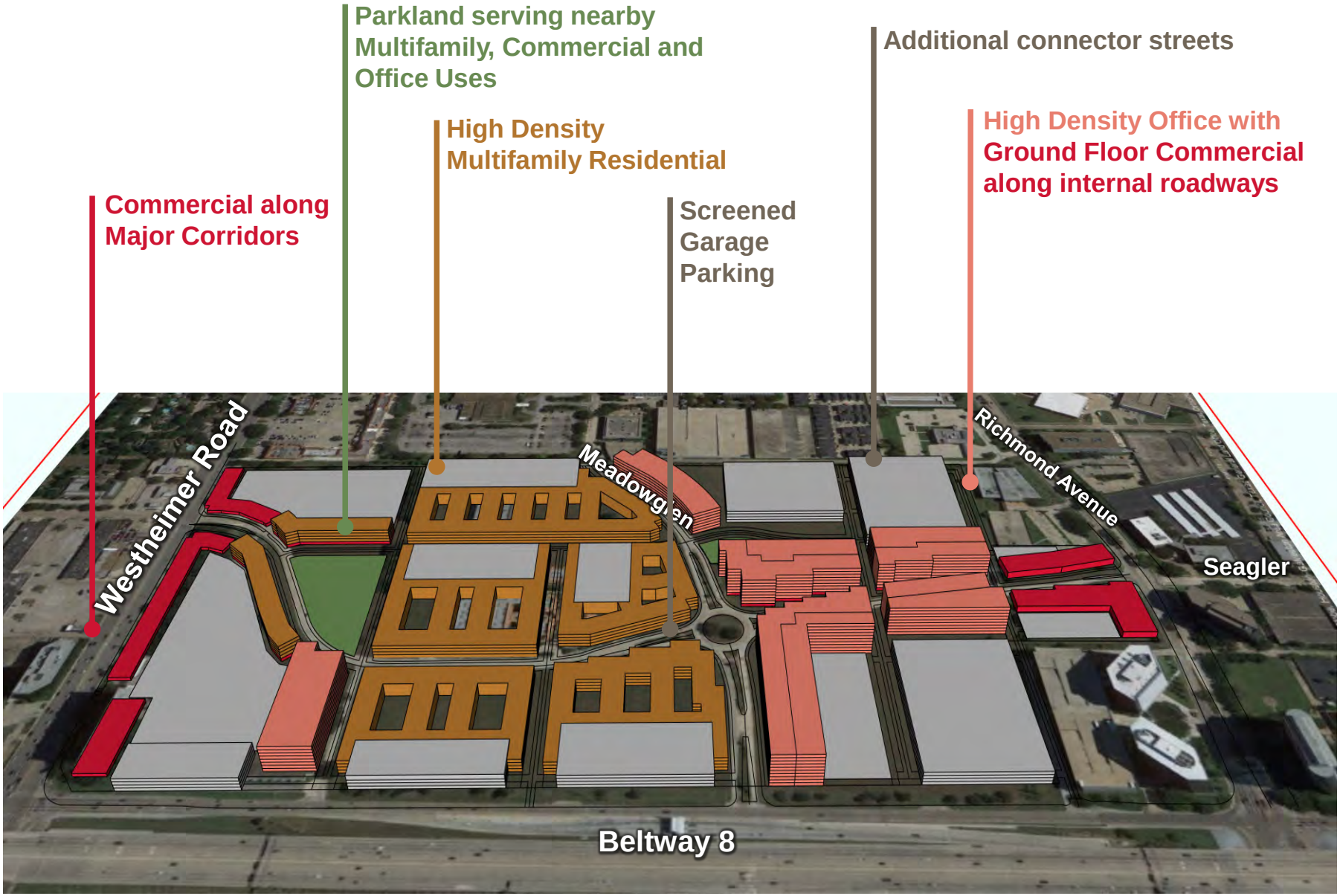
Westchase is characterized by multifamily apartment buildings.

Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

What could be developed today...

Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

What could be developed using the Toolbox...



Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

Conclusions

- Without the Toolbox, this site would likely become characterized by large surface parking lots and office towers that lack an inviting pedestrian realm.
- The Toolbox Scenario would potentially require a major corporate developer to invest in a series of development projects that would be built out over a period of 10-20 or more years. Otherwise, a development of this size and density would not be feasible in today's market.
- In order to maximize walkability and transit use on site, connectivity would need to be improved by the reintroduction of the street grid. Along with the reintroduction of a connected street grid, reduced block lengths help to ensure the success of residential, commercial and office uses on site.
- Although this did not factor into the pro forma, Universal Improvement Tools such as partnerships between METRO and the City would need to be explored so as to adjust services to accommodate the higher density residential, office and commercial uses.
- Other tools that were not tested in the pro forma, such as 380 agreements could help to offset a developer's infrastructure cost and significantly affect the bottom line.

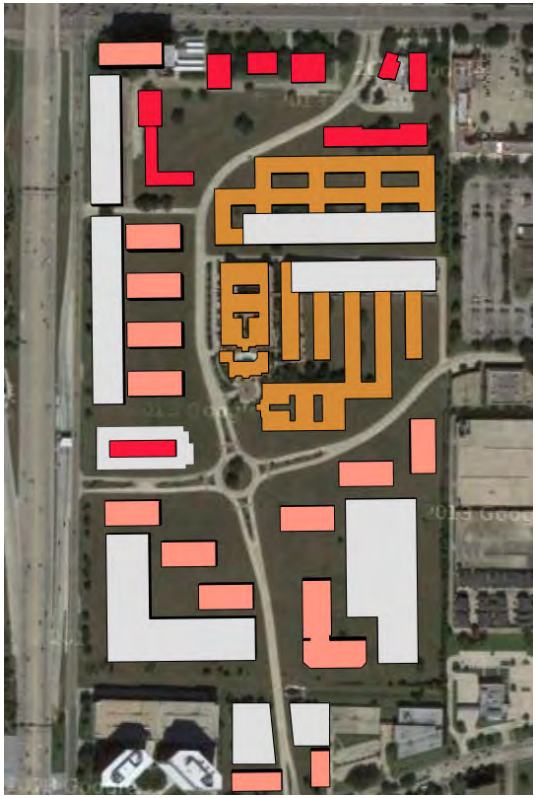


Figure 29: *Plan view: Before Case*

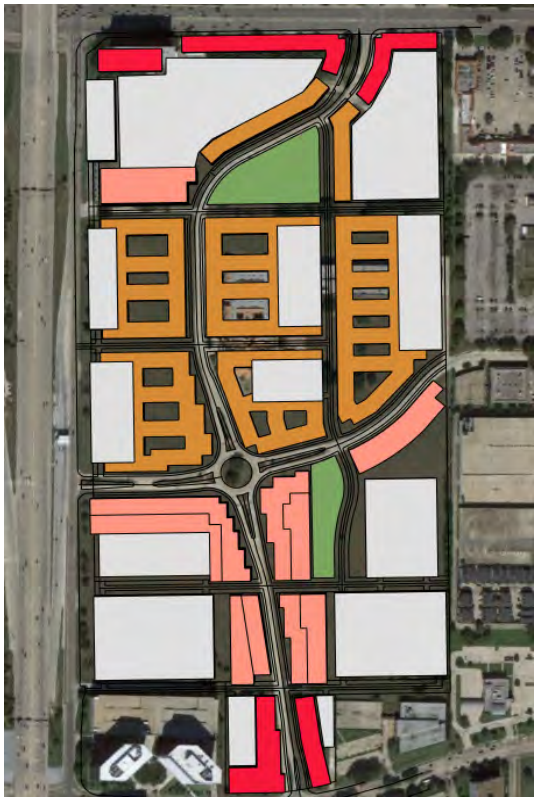


Figure 30: *Plan view: Toolbox Scenario*

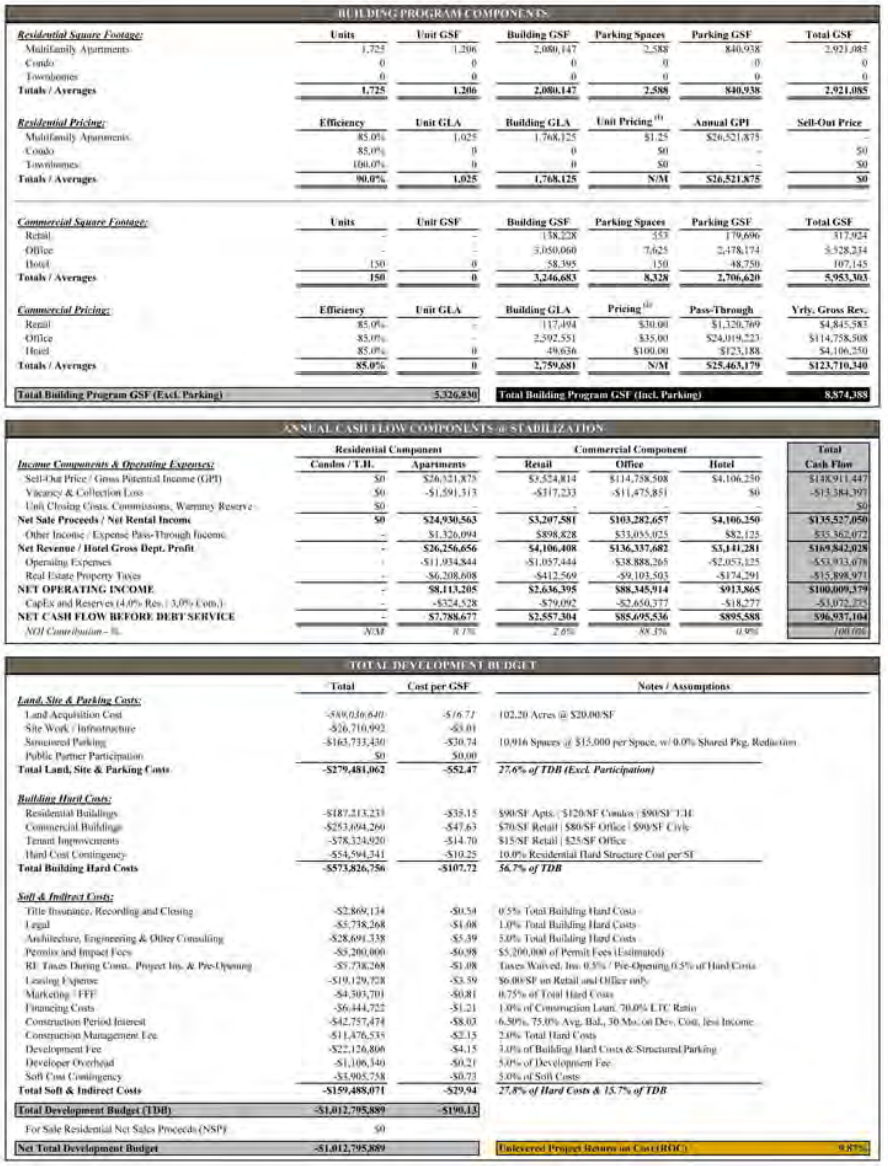
Grayfield Pilot Project Pro Forma Summary

1. **Cost to Develop**
   Base Scenario: $1.00 billion
   Toolbox Scenario: $1.02 billion
2. **Return on Cost (8% is ideal[1])**
   Base Scenario: 9.95%
   Toolbox Scenario: 10.23%
3. **Property + Sales Tax (at build out)**
   Base Scenario: $6.6 million/year
   Toolbox Scenario: $7.7 million/year

1. CobbFendley

Pilot Projects: Grayfield Site

Pro Formas: Base Case and Toolbox Scenario



BUILDING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	1,725	1,206	2,080,147	2,588	840,938	2,921,085
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**1,725**	**1,206**	**2,080,147**	**2,588**	**840,938**	**2,921,085**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	1,025	1,768,125	$1.25	$26,521,875	
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**1,025**	**1,768,125**	**N/M**	**$26,521,875**	**$0**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	138,228	353	179,696	317,924
Office	-	-	3,050,060	7,625	2,478,174	5,528,234
Hotel	150	0	58,395	150	48,750	107,145
Totals / Averages	**150**	**0**	**3,246,683**	**8,328**	**2,706,620**	**5,953,303**

Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	117,494	$30.00	$1,320,769	$4,845,583
Office	85.0%	-	2,592,551	$35.00	$24,019,223	$114,758,508
Hotel	85.0%	0	49,636	$100.00	$123,188	$4,106,250
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**2,759,681**	**N/M**	**$25,463,179**	**$123,710,340**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	**5,326,830**
Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	**8,874,388**

ANNUAL CASH FLOW COMPONENTS @ STABILIZATION

	Residential Component		Commercial Component			Total
Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Condos / T.H.	Apartments	Retail	Office	Hotel	Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$0	$26,521,875	$3,524,814	$114,758,508	$4,106,250	$148,911,447
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	-$1,591,313	-$317,233	-$11,475,851	$0	-$13,384,397
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	$0	-	-	-	-	$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$0**	**$24,930,563**	**$3,207,581**	**$103,282,657**	**$4,106,250**	**$135,527,050**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$1,326,094	$898,828	$33,055,925	$82,125	$35,362,972
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	**-**	**$26,256,656**	**$4,106,408**	**$136,337,682**	**$3,141,281**	**$169,842,028**
Operating Expenses	-	-$11,934,844	-$1,057,444	-$38,888,265	-$2,057,125	-$53,933,678
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	-$6,208,608	-$412,569	-$9,103,503	-$174,291	-$15,898,971
NET OPERATING INCOME	**-**	**$8,113,205**	**$2,636,395**	**$88,345,914**	**$913,865**	**$100,009,379**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. / 3.0% Com.)	-	-$324,528	-$79,092	-$2,650,377	-$18,277	-$3,072,275
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	**-**	**$7,788,677**	**$2,557,304**	**$85,695,536**	**$895,588**	**$96,937,104**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*8.1%*	*2.6%*	*88.4%*	*0.9%*	*100.0%*

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land, Site & Parking Costs:			
Land Acquisition Cost	-$89,036,640	-$16.71	102.20 Acres @ $20.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$26,710,992	-$5.01	
Structured Parking	-$163,733,430	-$30.74	10,916 Spaces @ $15,000 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$279,481,062**	**-$52.47**	***27.6% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	-$187,213,233	-$35.15	$90/SF Apts. / $120/SF Condos / $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$253,694,260	-$47.63	$70/SF Retail / $80/SF Office / $90/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$78,324,920	-$14.70	$15/SF Retail / $25/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$54,594,341	-$10.25	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$573,826,756**	**-$107.72**	***56.7% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$2,869,134	-$0.54	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$5,738,268	-$1.08	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$28,691,338	-$5.39	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$8,200,000	-$0.98	$5,200,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$5,738,268	-$1.08	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$19,129,728	-$3.59	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$4,303,701	-$0.81	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$6,444,722	-$1.21	1.0% of Construction Loan; 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$42,757,474	-$8.03	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$11,476,535	-$2.15	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$22,126,806	-$4.15	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$1,106,340	-$0.21	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$3,905,758	-$0.73	3.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$159,488,071**	**-$29.94**	***27.8% of Hard Costs & 15.7% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$1,012,795,889**	**-$190.13**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$0		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$1,012,795,889**		**Unlevered Project Return on Cost (ROC)** 9.57%

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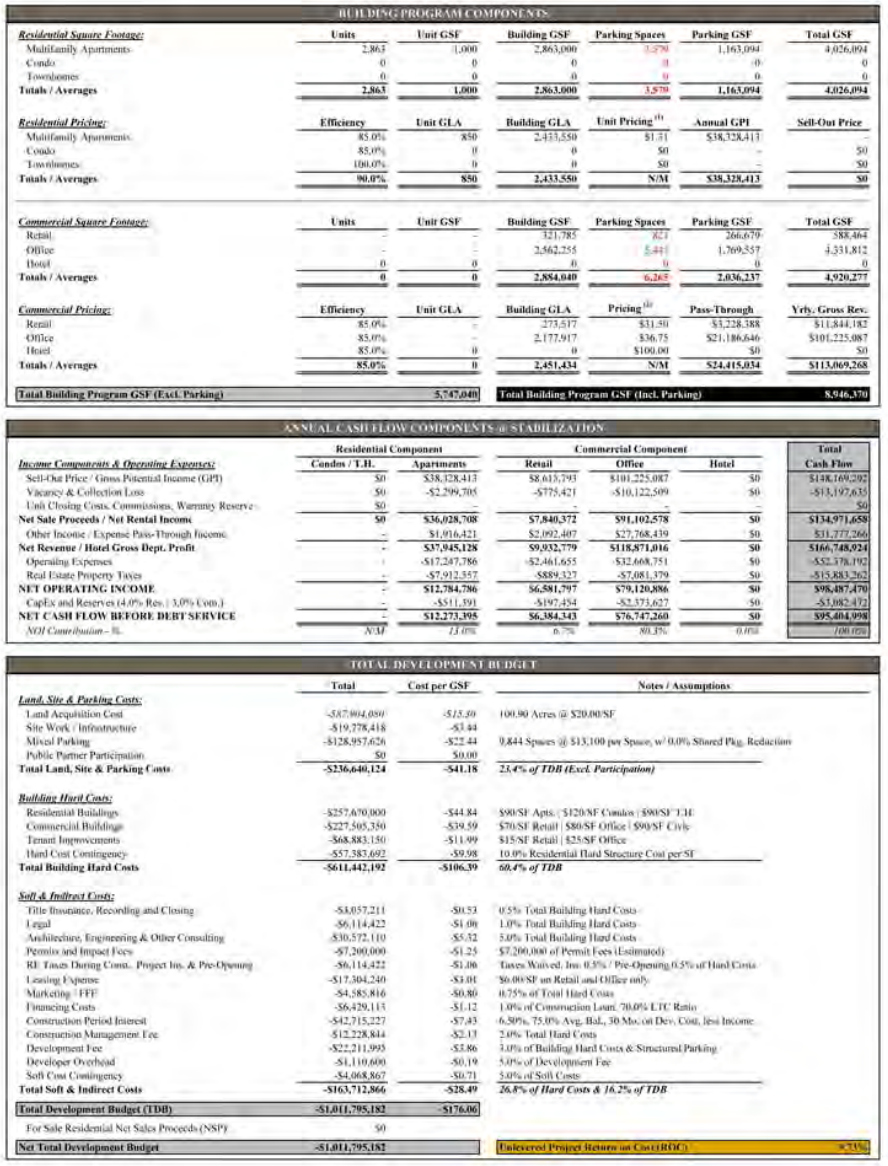

BUILDING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	2,863	1,000	2,863,000	3,979	1,163,094	4,026,094
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**2,863**	**1,000**	**2,863,000**	**3,979**	**1,163,094**	**4,026,094**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	850	2,433,550	$1.31	$38,328,413	
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**850**	**2,433,550**	**N/M**	**$38,328,413**	**$0**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	321,785	827	266,679	588,464
Office	-	-	2,562,255	5,441	1,769,557	4,331,812
Hotel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**2,884,040**	**6,268**	**2,036,237**	**4,920,277**

Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	273,517	$31.50	$3,228,388	$11,844,182
Office	85.0%	-	2,177,917	$36.75	$21,186,646	$101,225,087
Hotel	85.0%	0	0	$100.00	$0	$0
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**2,451,434**	**N/M**	**$24,415,034**	**$113,069,268**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	**5,747,040**
Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	**8,946,370**

ANNUAL CASH FLOW COMPONENTS @ STABILIZATION

	Residential Component		Commercial Component			Total
Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Condos / T.H.	Apartments	Retail	Office	Hotel	Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$0	$38,328,413	$8,613,793	$101,225,087	$0	$148,169,292
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	-$2,299,705	-$775,421	-$10,122,509	$0	-$13,197,635
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	$0	-	-	-	-	$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$0**	**$36,028,708**	**$7,840,372**	**$91,102,578**	**$0**	**$134,971,658**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$1,916,421	$2,092,407	$27,768,439	$0	$31,777,266
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	**-**	**$37,945,128**	**$9,932,779**	**$118,871,016**	**$0**	**$166,748,924**
Operating Expenses	-	-$17,247,786	-$2,461,655	-$32,668,751	$0	-$52,378,192
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	-$7,912,357	-$889,327	-$7,081,379	$0	-$15,883,262
NET OPERATING INCOME	**-**	**$12,784,786**	**$6,581,797**	**$79,120,886**	**$0**	**$98,487,470**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. / 3.0% Com.)	-	-$511,391	-$197,454	-$2,373,627	$0	-$3,082,472
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	**-**	**$12,273,395**	**$6,384,343**	**$76,747,260**	**$0**	**$95,404,998**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*13.0%*	*6.7%*	*80.4%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land, Site & Parking Costs:			
Land Acquisition Cost	-$87,904,080	-$15.30	100.90 Acres @ $20.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$19,778,418	-$3.44	
Mixed Parking	-$128,957,626	-$22.44	9,844 Spaces @ $13,100 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$236,640,124**	**-$41.18**	***23.4% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	-$257,670,000	-$44.84	$90/SF Apts. / $120/SF Condos / $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$227,505,350	-$39.59	$70/SF Retail / $80/SF Office / $90/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$68,883,150	-$11.99	$15/SF Retail / $25/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$57,383,692	-$9.98	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$611,442,192**	**-$106.39**	***60.4% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$3,057,211	-$0.53	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$6,114,422	-$1.06	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$30,572,110	-$5.32	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$7,200,000	-$1.25	$7,200,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$6,114,422	-$1.06	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$17,304,240	-$3.01	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$4,585,816	-$0.80	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$6,429,113	-$1.12	1.0% of Construction Loan; 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$42,715,227	-$7.43	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$12,228,844	-$2.13	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$22,211,993	-$3.86	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$1,110,600	-$0.19	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$4,068,867	-$0.71	3.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$163,712,866**	**-$28.49**	***26.8% of Hard Costs & 16.2% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$1,011,795,182**	**-$176.06**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$0		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$1,011,795,182**		**Unlevered Project Return on Cost (ROC)** 9.73%

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Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

Introduction

The 3.7 acre redevelopment site in Montrose was chosen as a pilot project so as to explore the Toolbox in an already densely developed part of the City. It is located on the southwest corner of Montrose Boulevard and Westheimer Road in the Montrose Management District. The Montrose area could potentially be a Medium Center due to the characteristics described below.

Currently the site is home to a drive-through fast food franchise and an aging shopping center. The surrounding context is commercial, multi- and single-family residential land uses, with two major thoroughfares on the north and eastern borders. This block is within 1.5 miles of The Museum District, the University of St. Thomas, Downtown and the Texas Medical Center. There are also historic single-family homes located in the adjacent neighborhood. Less than 1.5 miles away is Buffalo Bayou Park to the north. This site is culturally rich and conveniently located next to employment centers.

This property would be located inside the larger context of a Medium Center. What makes the area a potential Urban Center are the following characteristics: access to transit, including METRO's 81 and 82 bus routes; the mix of land uses; and the proximity to employment centers.

Process

Market-rate assumptions were determined based on reports from CobbFendley. These assumptions were vetted with the SAC. The base case was designed based on what could feasibly be built today without variances under today's market conditions. The recently revised Chapter 42 parking and setback reductions were taken into consideration for the base case, allowing for reduced setbacks on Westheimer Road due to the presence of retail along that corridor.

Next, some of the tools from the Toolbox were tested to see how they affected both the financial returns of the project, as well as the physical layout. In the case of the redevelopment site, the Consultant Team assessed what could be built today given current market conditions. This created a similar physical layout to the base case. An 11-story model was tested, which is not shown in this Study. After discussions with the SAC, the model was rebuilt to be a closer comparison of what could be built today so this Study could spotlight where gaps are in the recently revised Chapter 42 ordinance.

CobbFendley ran pro formas on the base case and Toolbox scenario to compare how each scenario performed financially.

Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

Toolbox

The tools that were applied to this pilot project include reduced setbacks in exchange for a pedestrian realm, parking reductions, which would be managed by a Special Parking Area.

In the Toolbox Scenario, there are reduced setbacks on all four streets instead of only Westheimer Road. Presently reduced setbacks are allowed on Westheimer Road if there is a commercial use on the first floor. The reduction of setbacks and decreased parking requirement for retail and multi-family residential allowed for more units in a similar footprint.

Other Tools, such as the reduced park land dedication fee and stormwater treatment credits were not tested, because preliminary analysis showed that the financial gains were negligible.

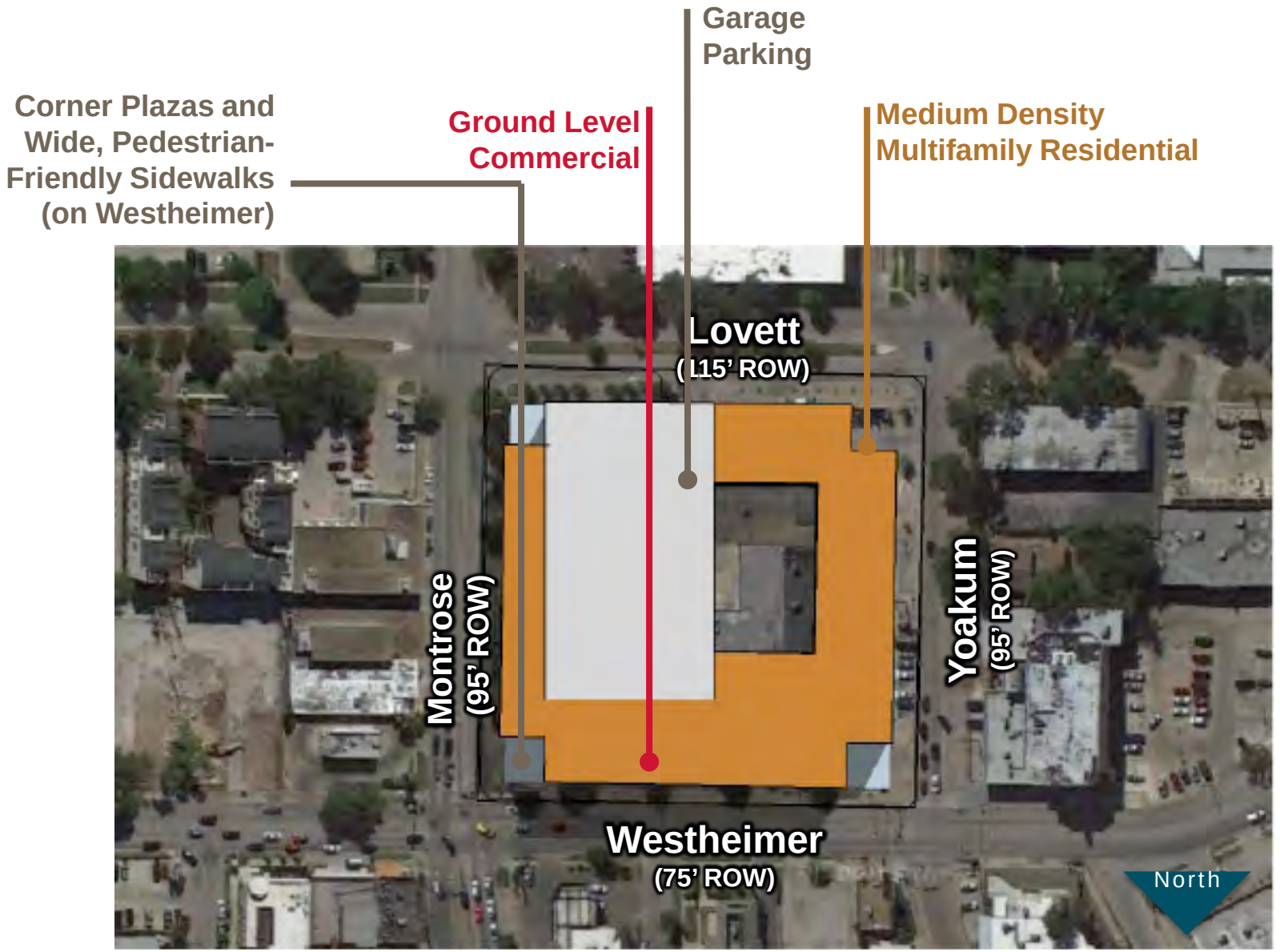
An aging shopping center and heavily-traveled thoroughfares make up the present-day character of the site.

Montrose has a distinctive character, making it a desirable place to live.

Heavy traffic travels through the Montrose area because of it's proximity to Downtown.

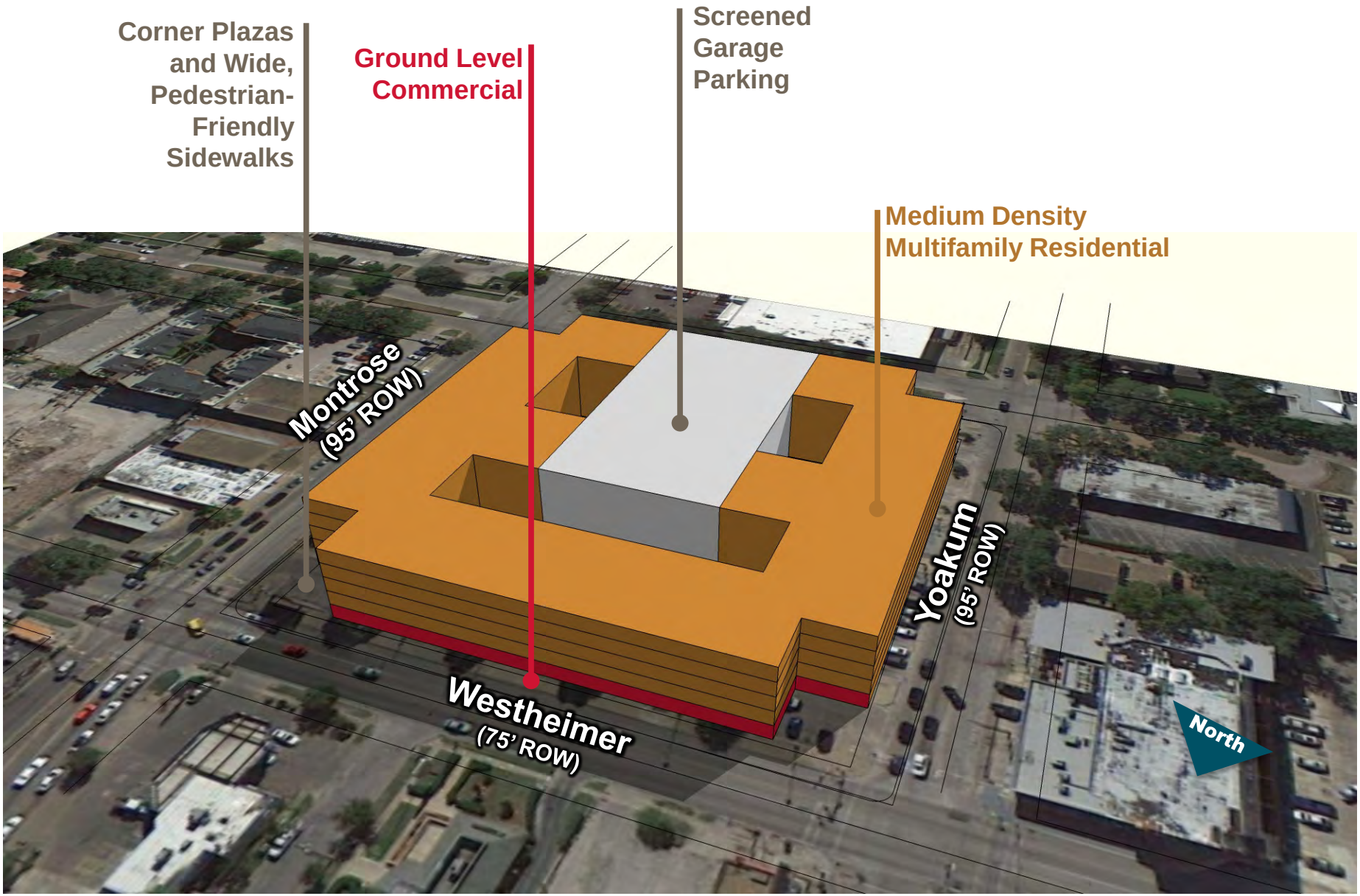
Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

What could be developed today...



Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

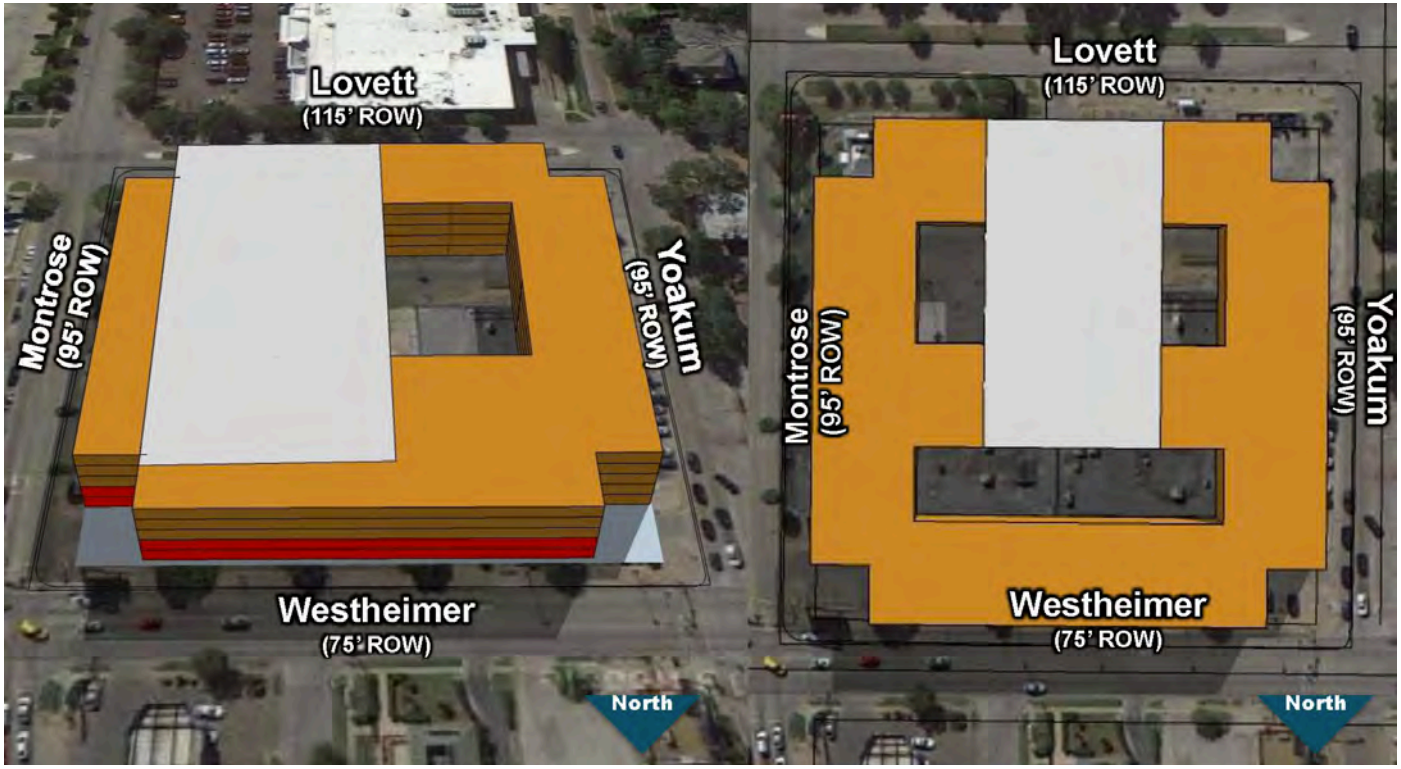
What could be developed using the Toolbox...



Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

Conclusions

- The site's close proximity to nearby employment centers offers an opportunity to maximize existing METRO transit services.
- Medium density multi-family residential with ground floor commercial could lead to increased commercial and retail services available for surrounding communities.
- Any scenario for this site should be tailored to what the market can realistically absorb.
- Without the Toolbox, something similar could be built today, but there is a denser yield with reduced setbacks on all of the streets as shown in the Toolbox Scenario. The question is whether a slightly denser yield is enough to entice a developer to build using the Toolbox. Further exploration of the best and most appropriate incentives will be required.



Plan view: Before Case

Plan view: Toolbox Scenario

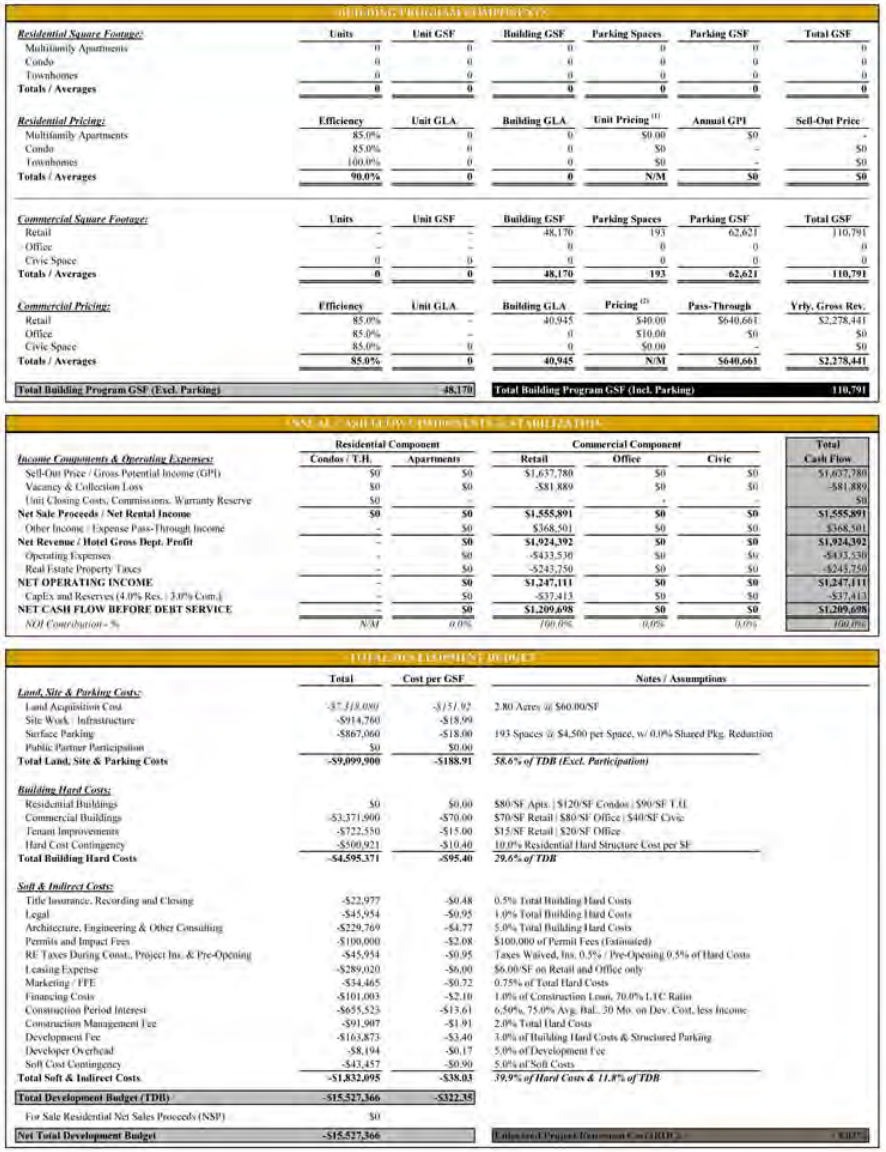
Redevelopment Pilot Project Pro Forma Summary

1. **Cost to Develop**
   Base Scenario: $39 million
   Toolbox Scenario: $59 million
2. **Return on Cost (8% is ideal[1])**
   Base Scenario: 6.84%
   Toolbox Scenario: 7.79%
3. **Property + Sales Tax (at build out)**
   Base Scenario: $279,000/year
   +++ Scenario: $474,000/year

1. CobbFendley

Pilot Projects: Redevelopment Site

Pro Formas: Base Case and Toolbox Scenario



BUILDING PROGRAM & COMPONENTS

Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	0	0	0	0	0	0
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	$0	-
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**0**	**0**	**N/M**	**$0**	**$0**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	48,170	193	62,621	110,791
Office	-	-	0	0	0	0
Civic Space	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**48,170**	**193**	**62,621**	**110,791**

Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	40,945	$40.00	$640,661	$2,278,441
Office	85.0%	-	0	$10.00	$0	$0
Civic Space	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**40,945**	**N/M**	**$640,661**	**$2,278,441**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	48,170	Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	110,791

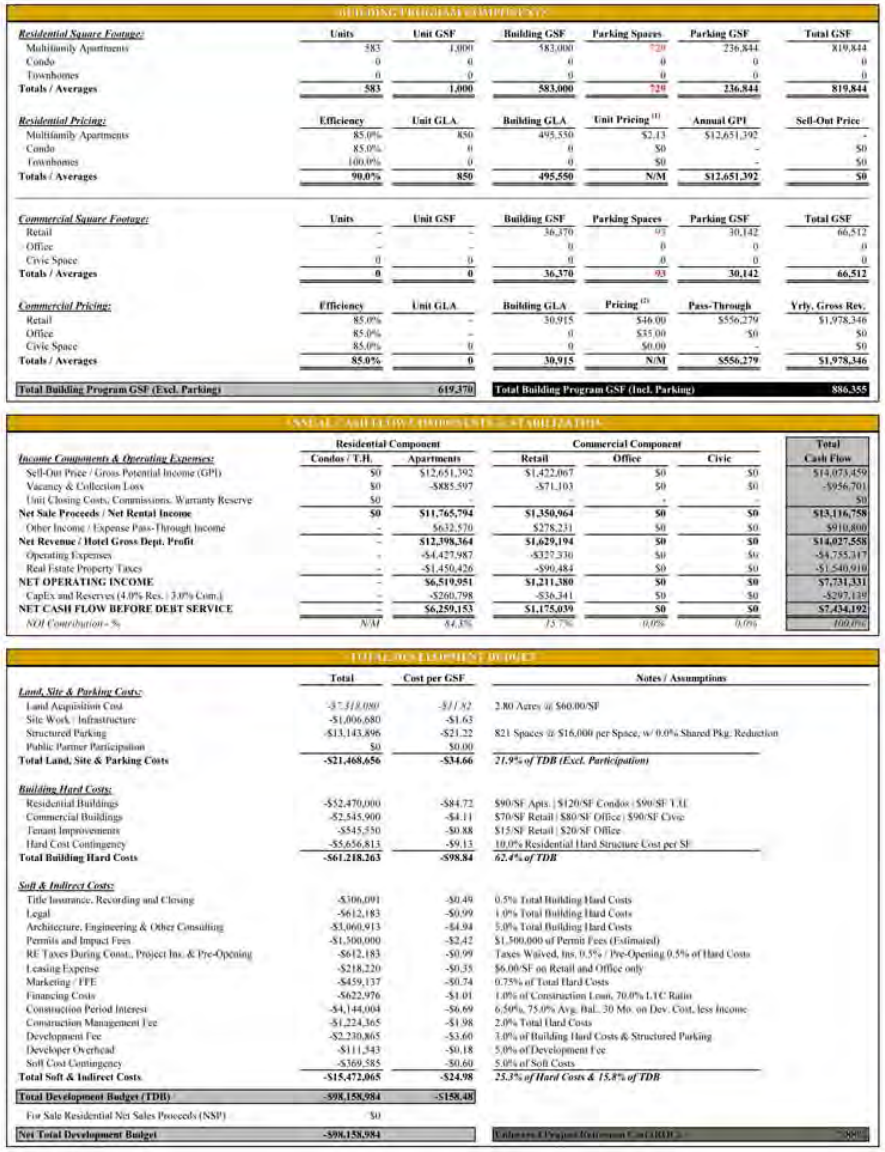
ANNUAL / CASH FLOW COMPONENTS & STABILIZATION

Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Residential Component: Condos / T.H.	Residential Component: Apartments	Commercial Component: Retail	Commercial Component: Office	Commercial Component: Civic	Total Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$0	$0	$1,637,780	$0	$0	$1,637,780
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	$0	-$81,889	$0	$0	-$81,889
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	$0	-	-	-	-	$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,555,891**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,555,891**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$0	$368,501	$0	$0	$368,501
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	-	**$0**	**$1,924,392**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,924,392**
Operating Expenses	-	$0	-$433,530	$0	$0	-$433,530
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	$0	-$243,750	$0	$0	-$243,750
NET OPERATING INCOME	-	**$0**	**$1,247,111**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,247,111**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. / 3.0% Com.)	-	$0	-$37,413	$0	$0	-$37,413
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	-	**$0**	**$1,209,698**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,209,698**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

Land, Site & Parking Costs:	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land Acquisition Cost	-$7,518,000	-$151.92	2.80 Acres @ $60.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$914,760	-$18.99	
Surface Parking	-$867,060	-$18.00	193 Spaces @ $4,500 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$9,099,900**	**-$188.91**	***58.6% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	$0	$0.00	$80/SF Apts. | $120/SF Condos | $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$3,371,900	-$70.00	$70/SF Retail | $80/SF Office | $40/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$722,550	-$15.00	$15/SF Retail | $20/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$500,921	-$10.40	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$4,595,371**	**-$95.40**	***29.6% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$22,977	-$0.48	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$45,954	-$0.95	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$229,769	-$4.77	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$100,000	-$2.08	$100,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$45,954	-$0.95	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$289,020	-$6.00	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$34,465	-$0.72	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$101,003	-$2.10	1.0% of Construction Loan, 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$655,523	-$13.61	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$91,907	-$1.91	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$163,873	-$3.40	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$8,194	-$0.17	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$43,457	-$0.90	5.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$1,832,095**	**-$38.03**	***39.9% of Hard Costs & 11.8% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$15,527,366**	**-$322.35**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$0		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$15,527,366**		

CobbFendley



BUILDING PROGRAM & COMPONENTS

Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	583	1,000	583,000	720	236,844	819,844
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**583**	**1,000**	**583,000**	**720**	**236,844**	**819,844**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	850	495,550	$2.13	$12,651,392	-
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**850**	**495,550**	**N/M**	**$12,651,392**	**$0**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	36,370	93	30,142	66,512
Office	-	-	0	0	0	0
Civic Space	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**36,370**	**93**	**30,142**	**66,512**

Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	30,915	$46.00	$556,279	$1,978,346
Office	85.0%	-	0	$35.00	$0	$0
Civic Space	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**30,915**	**N/M**	**$556,279**	**$1,978,346**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	619,370	Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	886,355

ANNUAL / CASH FLOW COMPONENTS & STABILIZATION

Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Residential Component: Condos / T.H.	Residential Component: Apartments	Commercial Component: Retail	Commercial Component: Office	Commercial Component: Civic	Total Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$0	$12,651,392	$1,422,067	$0	$0	$14,073,459
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	-$885,597	-$71,103	$0	$0	-$956,701
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	$0	-	-	-	-	$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$0**	**$11,765,794**	**$1,350,964**	**$0**	**$0**	**$13,116,758**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$632,570	$278,231	$0	$0	$910,800
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	-	**$12,398,364**	**$1,629,194**	**$0**	**$0**	**$14,027,558**
Operating Expenses	-	-$4,427,987	-$327,330	$0	$0	-$4,755,317
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	-$1,450,426	-$90,484	$0	$0	-$1,540,910
NET OPERATING INCOME	-	**$6,519,951**	**$1,211,380**	**$0**	**$0**	**$7,731,331**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. / 3.0% Com.)	-	-$260,798	-$36,341	$0	$0	-$297,139
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	-	**$6,259,153**	**$1,175,039**	**$0**	**$0**	**$7,434,192**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*84.3%*	*15.7%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

Land, Site & Parking Costs:	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land Acquisition Cost	-$7,518,000	-$11.82	2.80 Acres @ $60.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$1,006,680	-$1.63	
Structured Parking	-$13,143,896	-$21.22	821 Spaces @ $16,000 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$21,468,656**	**-$34.66**	***21.9% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	-$52,470,000	-$84.72	$90/SF Apts. | $120/SF Condos | $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$2,545,900	-$4.11	$70/SF Retail | $80/SF Office | $90/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$545,550	-$0.88	$15/SF Retail | $20/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$5,656,813	-$9.13	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$61,218,263**	**-$98.84**	***62.4% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$306,091	-$0.49	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$612,183	-$0.99	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$3,060,913	-$4.94	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$1,500,000	-$2.42	$1,500,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$612,183	-$0.99	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$218,220	-$0.35	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$459,137	-$0.74	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$622,976	-$1.01	1.0% of Construction Loan, 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$4,144,004	-$6.69	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$1,224,365	-$1.98	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$2,230,865	-$3.60	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$111,543	-$0.18	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$369,585	-$0.60	5.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$15,472,065**	**-$24.98**	***25.3% of Hard Costs & 15.8% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$98,158,984**	**-$158.48**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$0		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$98,158,984**		

CobbFendley

Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

Introduction

The 8.4 acre property is made of three smaller parcels in south Houston. It is located in the Greater Third Ward under the jurisdiction of the Greater Southeast Management District.

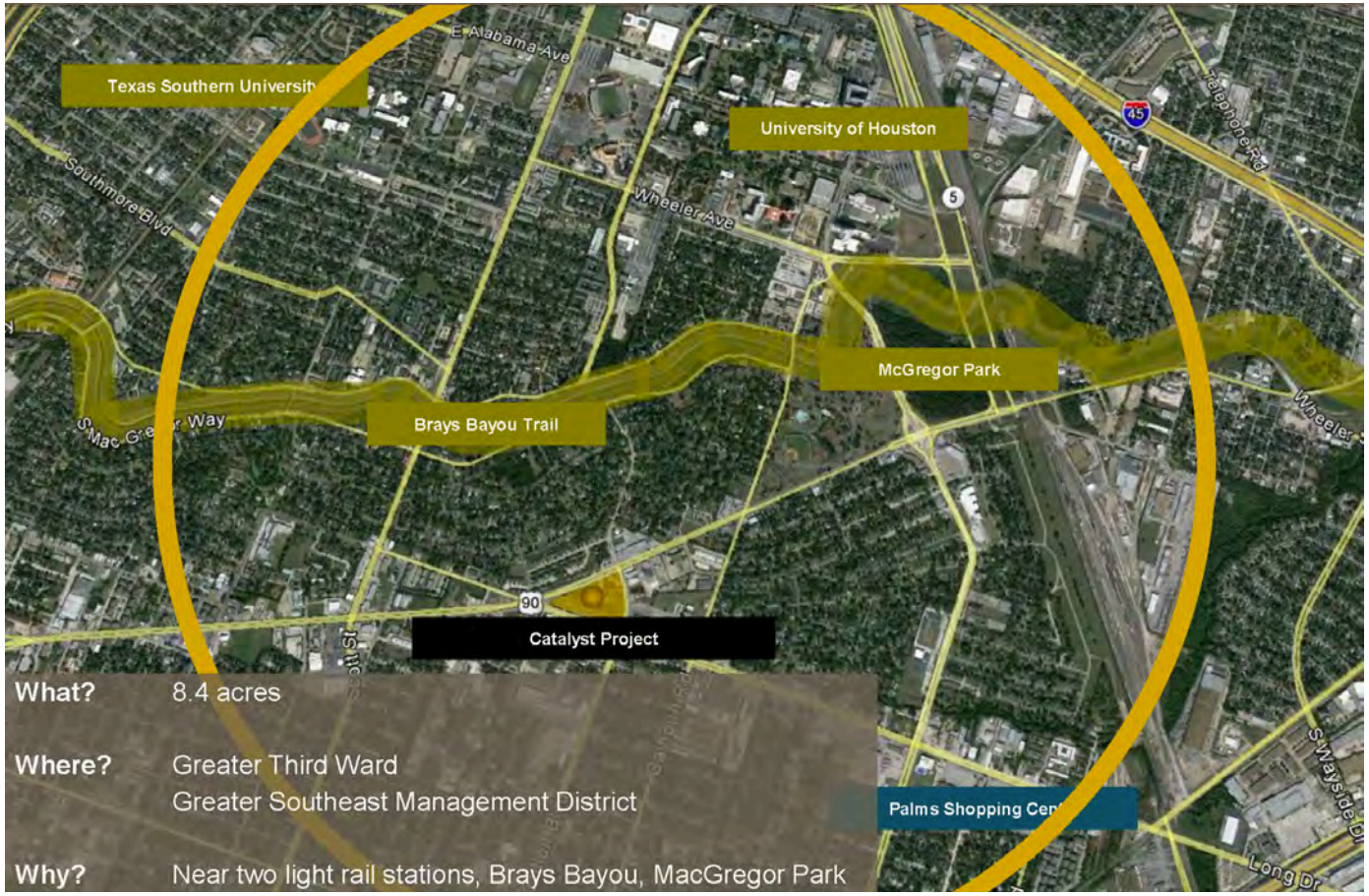
The site is home to a bank, clinic and several other aging strip center retail businesses. One-third of the site is vacant. The area has a mix of housing types, including single- and multi-family. University of Houston and Texas Southern University are approximately a mile north of the site. Nearby neighborhood-scale amenities include a library, YMCA, post office, clinics and the Palms Shopping Center. The potential for this site to become an Urban Center lies in adjacencies to neighborhood amenities, two light rail stations on Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Brays Bayou and MacGregor Park. Eventually, this site could transition into a live/work/play area for those who work at Hobby Airport, the universities and the Texas Medical Center.

Process

Market-rate assumptions were determined based on reports from CobbFendley. These assumptions were vetted with the SAC. The base case was designed based on what could feasibly be built today without variances under today's market conditions.

Next, some of the tools from the Toolbox were tested to see how they affected both the financial returns of the project, as well as the physical layout. In the case of the catalyst site, the Consultant Team assessed what could be built today given current market conditions.

CobbFendley ran pro formas on the base case and Toolbox scenario to compare how each scenario performed financially.



Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

Toolbox

The tools that were applied to this pilot project include reduced setbacks in exchange for a pedestrian realm and parking reductions due to the proximity to transit and the assumption that there would be a reduced need for parking for student housing.

Although the pro forma was run only on the triangular-shaped parcel between Cullen-Griggs and Old Spanish Trail, the physical model shows development occurring on the east side of Cullen Boulevard. Because this is a catalyst site, this kind of redevelopment will likely spark other development in nearby areas. This physical model was shown in part to illustrate the fact that a pedestrian realm should be built on both sides of the street in order to create a truly urban feel.

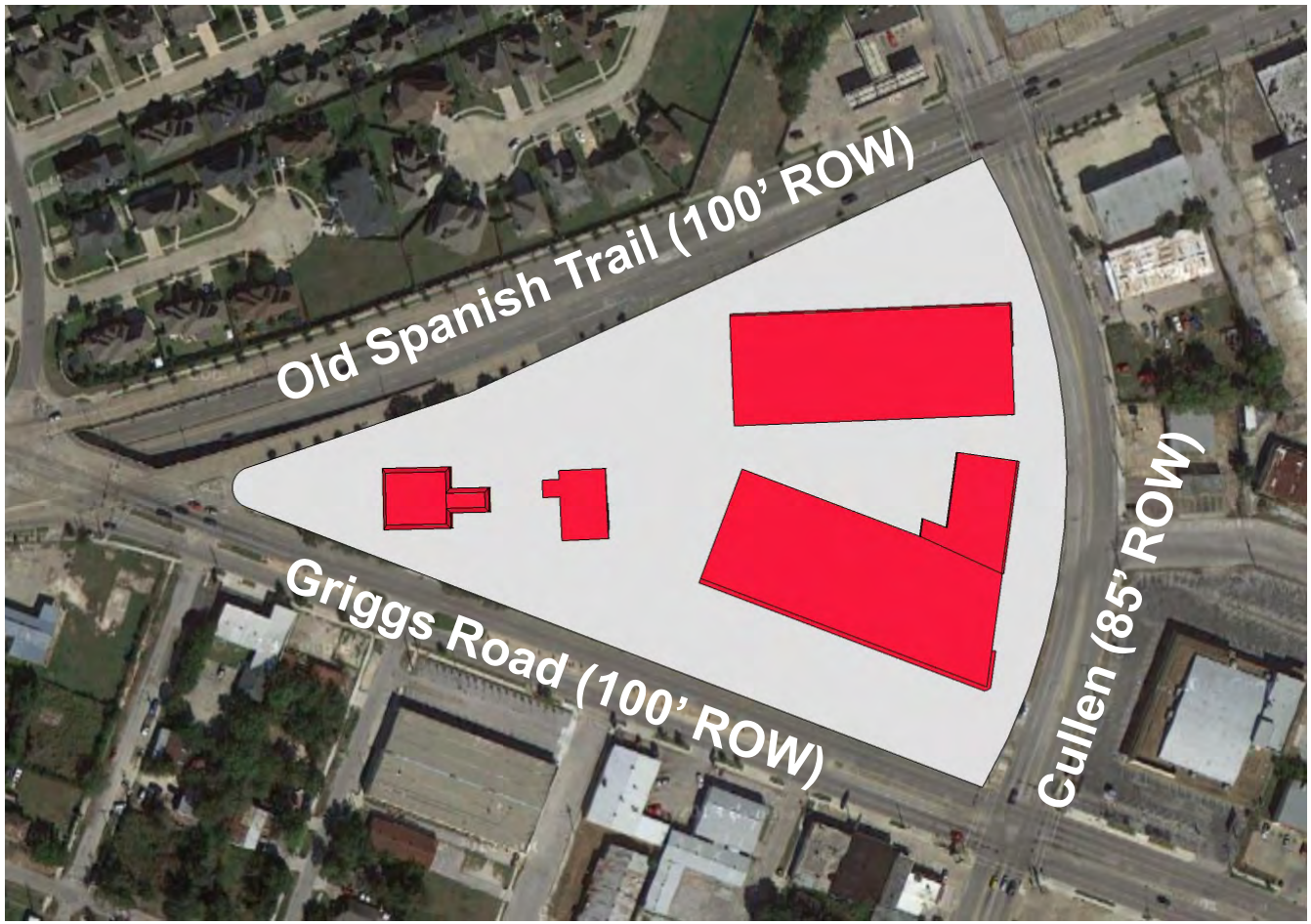
One-third of the site is vacant - the parcel along Old Spanish Trail. Single family borders the site to the north but is lacking pedestrian connectivity due to the wide thoroughfare.

Aging buildings can be found in the area.

The area has many vacant parcels waiting to be redeveloped.

Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

What could be developed today...

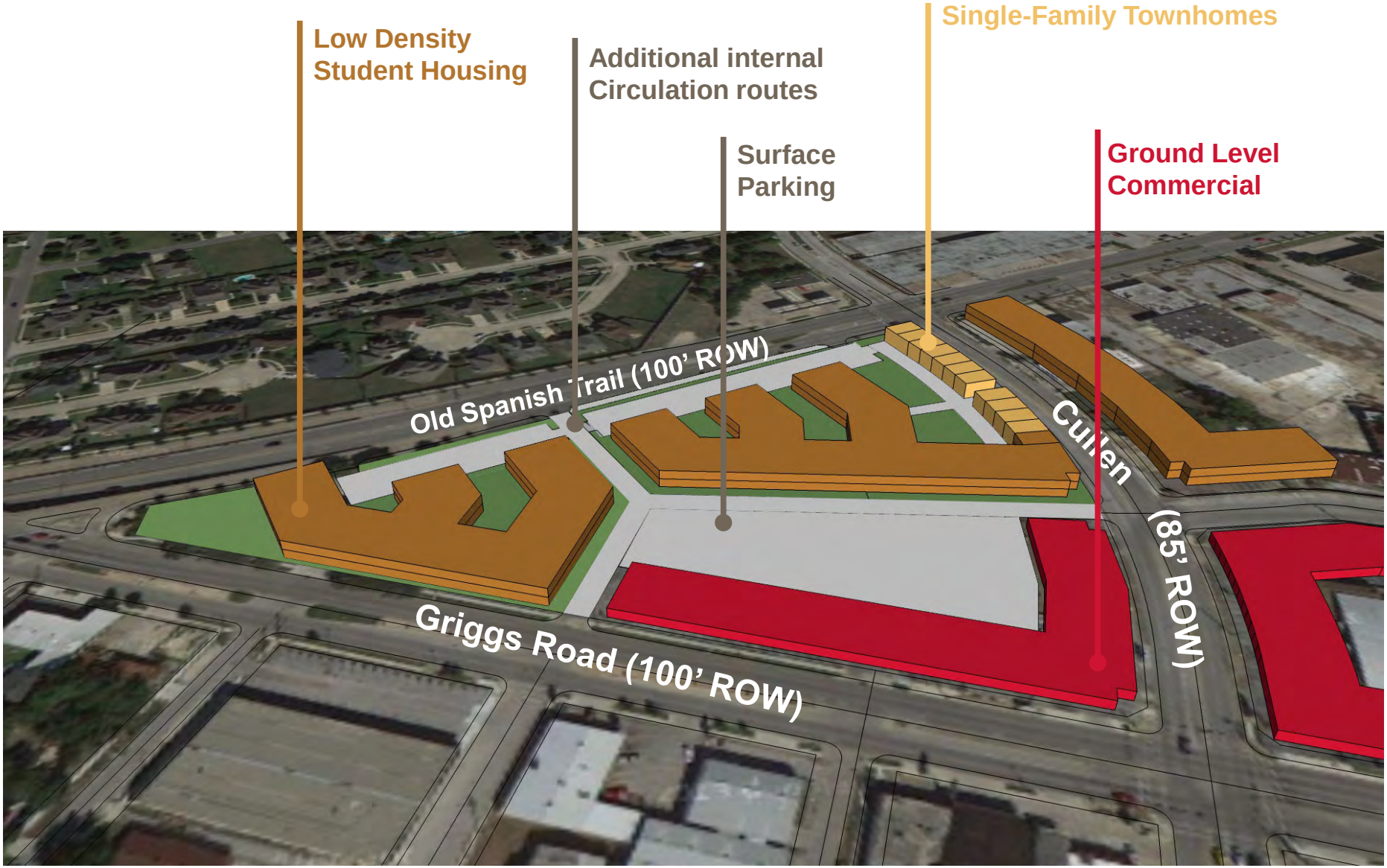


Land Use

- Commercial
- Hotel
- Multifamily
- Single-Family
- Office
- Parkland

Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

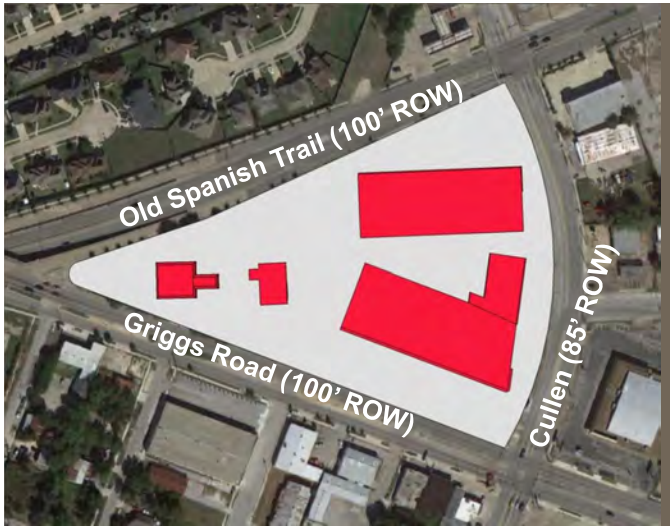
What could be developed using the Toolbox...



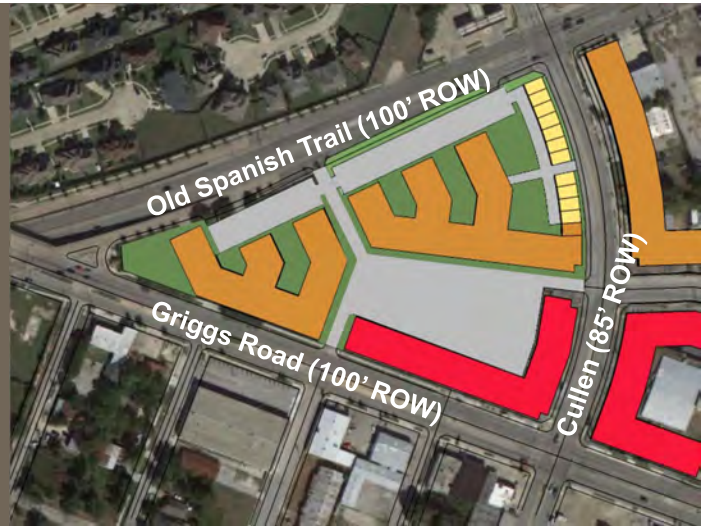
Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

Conclusions

- The Toolbox Scenario development is unlikely to occur without subsidies or some other form of funding assistance and/or public/private partnerships.
- This Catalyst project may work in conjunction with the Palm Center redevelopment to start a trend of new development in the area, as land values increase.
- Ideally each land use and architectural typology could be tailored to surrounding context and needs of nearby single- and multi-family residential communities.
- This site offers an opportunity to explore building products that contribute to creating and attracting small businesses into the area, such as incubator spaces or live-work units.
- Gentrification is a concern in smaller neighborhoods that are ripe for redevelopment. Further studies must be done to study how stable neighborhoods can be protected from the negative effects of redevelopment.
- Structured parking is a limiting factor for Small Centers. If a site's land value does not support the construction of a parking garage, then a denser development may not be possible due to parking requirements. Parking reduction tools should be flexible enough to allow for greatly reduced parking in Small Centers (less than the reduction currently allowed in Chapter 26).



Plan view: Before Case



Plan view: Toolbox Scenario

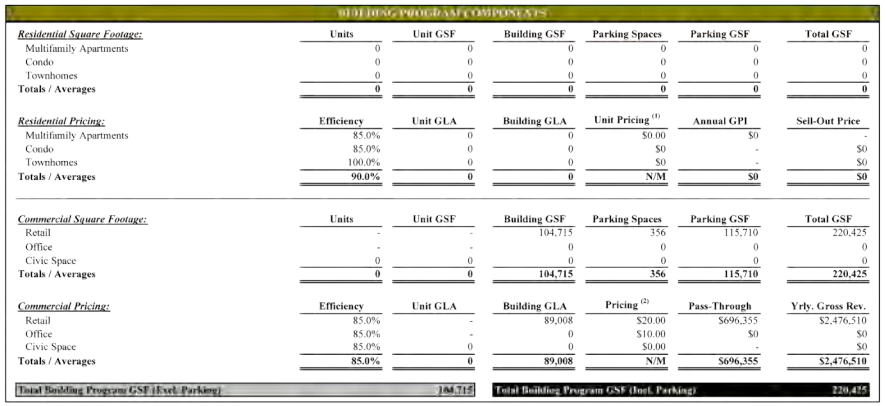
Catalyst Pilot Project Pro Forma Summary

1. **Cost to Develop**
   Base Scenario: $18 million
   Toolbox Scenario: $39 million
2. **Return on Cost (8% is ideal[1])**
   Base Scenario: 7.71%
   Toolbox Scenario: 4.03%
3. **Property + Sales Tax (at build out)**
   Base Scenario: $318,000/year
   Toolbox Scenario: $201,000/year

1. CobbFendley

Pilot Projects: Catalyst Site

Pro Formas: Base Case and Toolbox Scenario



BUILDING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

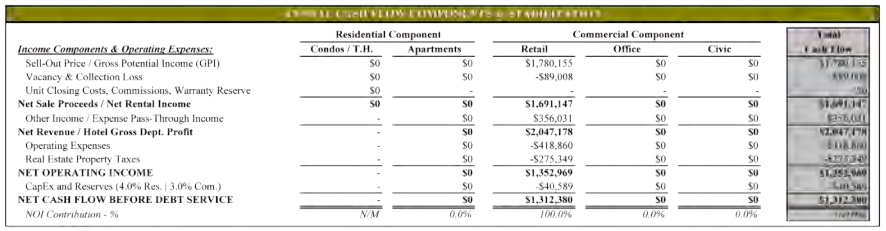
Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	0	0	0	0	0	0
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	$0	-
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**0**	**0**	**N/M**	**$0**	**$0**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	104,715	356	115,710	220,425
Office	-	-	0	0	0	0
Civic Space	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**104,715**	**356**	**115,710**	**220,425**

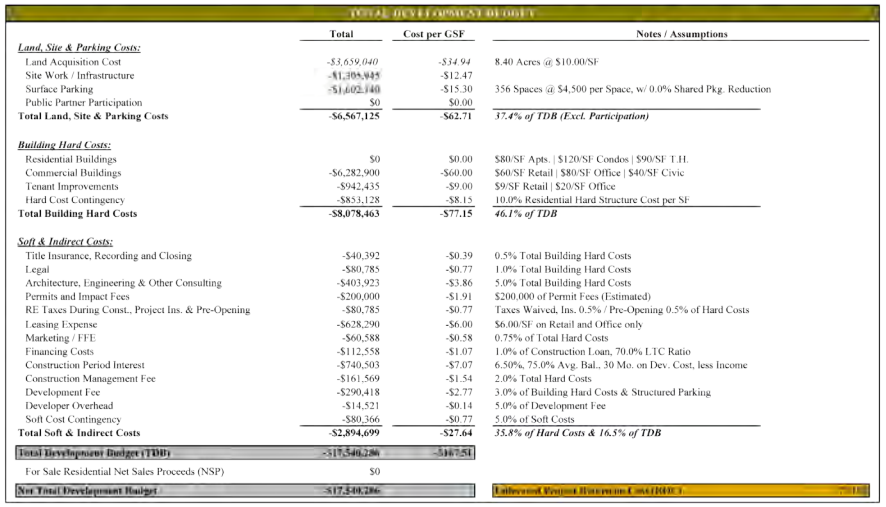
Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	89,008	$20.00	$696,355	$2,476,510
Office	85.0%	-	0	$10.00	$0	$0
Civic Space	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**89,008**	**N/M**	**$696,355**	**$2,476,510**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	104,715	Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	220,425



ANNUAL CASH FLOW COMPONENTS @ STABILIZATION

Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Residential Component: Condos / T.H.	Residential Component: Apartments	Commercial Component: Retail	Commercial Component: Office	Commercial Component: Civic	Total Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$0	$0	$1,780,155	$0	$0	$1,780,155
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	$0	-$89,008	$0	$0	-$89,008
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	$0	-	-	-	-	$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,691,147**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,691,147**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$0	$356,031	$0	$0	$356,031
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	-	**$0**	**$2,047,178**	**$0**	**$0**	**$2,047,178**
Operating Expenses	-	$0	-$418,860	$0	$0	-$418,860
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	$0	-$275,349	$0	$0	-$275,349
NET OPERATING INCOME	-	**$0**	**$1,352,969**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,352,969**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. | 3.0% Com.)	-	$0	-$40,589	$0	$0	-$40,589
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	-	**$0**	**$1,312,380**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,312,380**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*



TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land, Site & Parking Costs:			
Land Acquisition Cost	-$3,659,040	-$34.94	8.40 Acres @ $10.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$1,304,945	-$12.47	
Surface Parking	-$1,602,140	-$15.30	356 Spaces @ $4,500 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$6,567,125**	**-$62.71**	***37.4% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	$0	$0.00	$80/SF Apts. | $120/SF Condos | $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$6,282,900	-$60.00	$60/SF Retail | $80/SF Office | $40/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$942,435	-$9.00	$9/SF Retail | $20/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$853,128	-$8.15	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$8,078,463**	**-$77.15**	***46.1% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$40,392	-$0.39	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$80,785	-$0.77	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$403,923	-$3.86	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$200,000	-$1.91	$200,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$80,785	-$0.77	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$628,290	-$6.00	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$60,588	-$0.58	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$112,558	-$1.07	1.0% of Construction Loan, 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$740,503	-$7.07	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$161,569	-$1.54	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$290,418	-$2.77	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$14,521	-$0.14	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$80,366	-$0.77	5.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$2,894,699**	**-$27.64**	***35.8% of Hard Costs & 16.5% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$17,540,286**	**-$167.51**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$0		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$17,540,286**		**Unlevered Project Return on Cost (ROC)**

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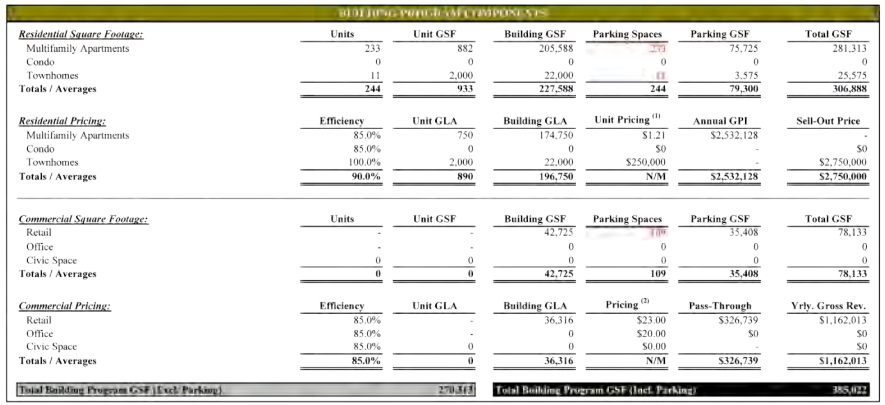


BUILDING PROGRAM COMPONENTS

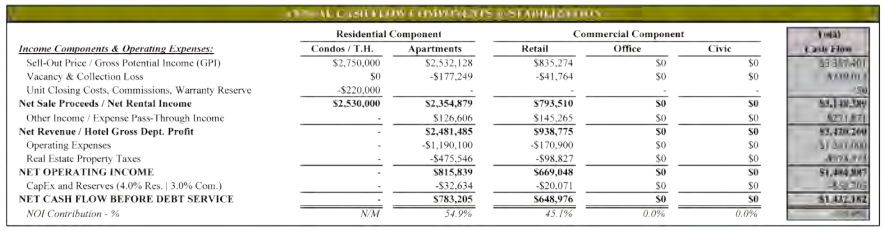
Residential Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Multifamily Apartments	233	882	205,588	271	75,725	281,313
Condo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townhomes	11	2,000	22,000	11	3,575	25,575
Totals / Averages	**244**	**933**	**227,588**	**244**	**79,300**	**306,888**

Residential Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Unit Pricing [1]	Annual GPI	Sell-Out Price
Multifamily Apartments	85.0%	750	174,750	$1.21	$2,532,128	-
Condo	85.0%	0	0	$0	-	$0
Townhomes	100.0%	2,000	22,000	$250,000	-	$2,750,000
Totals / Averages	**90.0%**	**890**	**196,750**	**N/M**	**$2,532,128**	**$2,750,000**

Commercial Square Footage:	Units	Unit GSF	Building GSF	Parking Spaces	Parking GSF	Total GSF
Retail	-	-	42,725	109	35,408	78,133
Office	-	-	0	0	0	0
Civic Space	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals / Averages	**0**	**0**	**42,725**	**109**	**35,408**	**78,133**

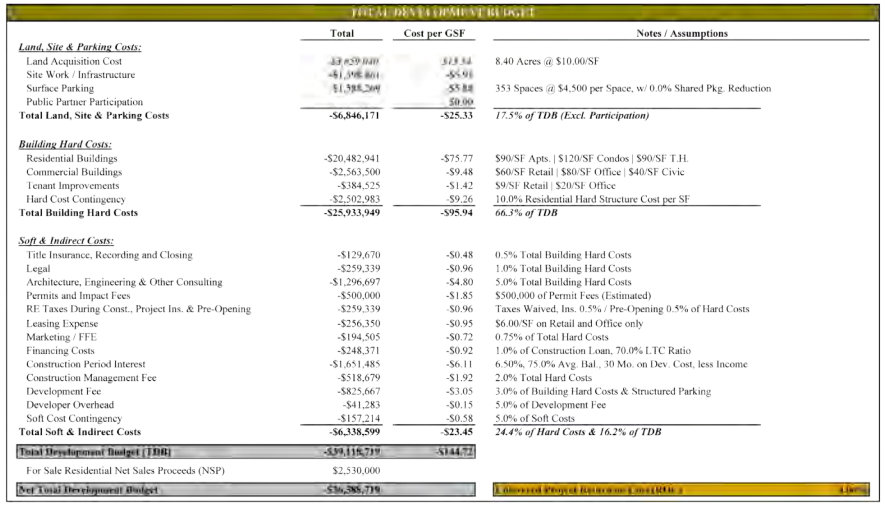
Commercial Pricing:	Efficiency	Unit GLA	Building GLA	Pricing [2]	Pass-Through	Yrly. Gross Rev.
Retail	85.0%	-	36,316	$23.00	$326,739	$1,162,013
Office	85.0%	-	0	$20.00	$0	$0
Civic Space	85.0%	0	0	$0.00	-	$0
Totals / Averages	**85.0%**	**0**	**36,316**	**N/M**	**$326,739**	**$1,162,013**

Total Building Program GSF (Excl. Parking)	270,313	Total Building Program GSF (Incl. Parking)	385,022



ANNUAL CASH FLOW COMPONENTS @ STABILIZATION

Income Components & Operating Expenses:	Residential Component: Condos / T.H.	Residential Component: Apartments	Commercial Component: Retail	Commercial Component: Office	Commercial Component: Civic	Total Cash Flow
Sell-Out Price / Gross Potential Income (GPI)	$2,750,000	$2,532,128	$835,274	$0	$0	$6,117,401
Vacancy & Collection Loss	$0	-$177,249	-$41,764	$0	$0	-$419,013
Unit Closing Costs, Commissions, Warranty Reserve	-$220,000	-	-	-	-	-$0
Net Sale Proceeds / Net Rental Income	**$2,530,000**	**$2,354,879**	**$793,510**	**$0**	**$0**	**$5,140,389**
Other Income / Expense Pass-Through Income	-	$126,606	$145,265	$0	$0	$271,871
Net Revenue / Hotel Gross Dept. Profit	-	**$2,481,485**	**$938,775**	**$0**	**$0**	**$5,420,260**
Operating Expenses	-	-$1,190,100	-$170,900	$0	$0	-$1,361,000
Real Estate Property Taxes	-	-$475,546	-$98,827	$0	$0	-$574,373
NET OPERATING INCOME	-	**$815,839**	**$669,048**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,484,887**
CapEx and Reserves (4.0% Res. | 3.0% Com.)	-	-$32,634	-$20,071	$0	$0	-$52,705
NET CASH FLOW BEFORE DEBT SERVICE	-	**$783,205**	**$648,976**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,432,182**
NOI Contribution - %	*N/M*	*54.9%*	*45.1%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*



TOTAL DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

	Total	Cost per GSF	Notes / Assumptions
Land, Site & Parking Costs:			
Land Acquisition Cost	-$3,659,040	-$13.34	8.40 Acres @ $10.00/SF
Site Work / Infrastructure	-$1,508,601	-$5.91	
Surface Parking	-$1,588,569	-$5.88	353 Spaces @ $4,500 per Space, w/ 0.0% Shared Pkg. Reduction
Public Partner Participation	$0	$0.00	
Total Land, Site & Parking Costs	**-$6,846,171**	**-$25.33**	***17.5% of TDB (Excl. Participation)***
Building Hard Costs:			
Residential Buildings	-$20,482,941	-$75.77	$90/SF Apts. | $120/SF Condos | $90/SF T.H.
Commercial Buildings	-$2,563,500	-$9.48	$60/SF Retail | $80/SF Office | $40/SF Civic
Tenant Improvements	-$384,525	-$1.42	$9/SF Retail | $20/SF Office
Hard Cost Contingency	-$2,502,983	-$9.26	10.0% Residential Hard Structure Cost per SF
Total Building Hard Costs	**-$25,933,949**	**-$95.94**	***66.3% of TDB***
Soft & Indirect Costs:			
Title Insurance, Recording and Closing	-$129,670	-$0.48	0.5% Total Building Hard Costs
Legal	-$259,339	-$0.96	1.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Architecture, Engineering & Other Consulting	-$1,296,697	-$4.80	5.0% Total Building Hard Costs
Permits and Impact Fees	-$500,000	-$1.85	$500,000 of Permit Fees (Estimated)
RE Taxes During Const., Project Ins. & Pre-Opening	-$259,339	-$0.96	Taxes Waived, Ins. 0.5% / Pre-Opening 0.5% of Hard Costs
Leasing Expense	-$256,350	-$0.95	$6.00/SF on Retail and Office only
Marketing / FFE	-$194,505	-$0.72	0.75% of Total Hard Costs
Financing Costs	-$248,371	-$0.92	1.0% of Construction Loan, 70.0% LTC Ratio
Construction Period Interest	-$1,651,485	-$6.11	6.50%, 75.0% Avg. Bal., 30 Mo. on Dev. Cost, less Income
Construction Management Fee	-$518,679	-$1.92	2.0% Total Hard Costs
Development Fee	-$825,667	-$3.05	3.0% of Building Hard Costs & Structured Parking
Developer Overhead	-$41,283	-$0.15	5.0% of Development Fee
Soft Cost Contingency	-$157,214	-$0.58	5.0% of Soft Costs
Total Soft & Indirect Costs	**-$6,338,599**	**-$23.45**	***24.4% of Hard Costs & 16.2% of TDB***
Total Development Budget (TDB)	**-$39,118,719**	**-$144.72**	
For Sale Residential Net Sales Proceeds (NSP)	$2,530,000		
Net Total Development Budget	**-$36,588,719**		**Unlevered Project Return on Cost (ROC)**

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TO: **Houston Urban Framework**
Stakeholder Advisory Committee ("SAC")

THROUGH: **Design Workshop**

FROM: **Peter Smirniotopoulos, Founder & Principal**
petersgroup consulting

DATE: **01 May 2013**

RE: **Urban Houston Framework Revised Pilot Project Financial Model**

In connection with and in preparation for the Pilot Projects Site Tour, SAC meeting, and Vision Workshop Focus Groups and public meeting held February 12th through 14th in Houston (such activities being collectively referred to as the "Vision Workshop"), petersgroup consulting (hereinafter "**petersgroup**") developed for Design Workshop (DWS), in collaboration with the Design Workshop Urban Houston Framework Team (hereinafter, the "DWS Team"), a financial analysis model to test a hypothetical development project in the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area defined below. In connection with the development of the Pilot Project Financial Model, **petersgroup** prepared a memorandum dated February, 13, 2013, to the Stakeholders' Advisory Committee (the "SAC") regarding the Urban Houston Framework ("UHF") Pilot Project Financial Model, which memorandum was distributed by DWS to the SAC members at the SAC meeting held on that date, along with Attachment I referenced therein and distributed electronically after that meeting to all SAC members (collectively, the February 13th Memo).

This memorandum constitutes an update of the February 13th Memo, based upon input received from SAC members regarding that memo and its accompanying financial analysis, following the SAC meeting held on February 13th. This input included extensive consultation with the City of Houston Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD") during the intervening period between that SAC meeting and the date of this memo. Among the substantive changes made to the Pilot Project Financial Model, examples of affordable housing projects that have been successfully financed as the result of HCD's participation as a financing partner in such projects have been added to this memo. Revisions to this memo necessary to incorporate such affordable housing project financings into this analysis have been guided substantially by HCD's experience with affordable housing projects in the City of Houston, reflecting actual examples of how affordable family housing may be integrated into the City's communities (hereinafter referred to as the "Affordable Family Housing Examples," the fact that one such example involves seniors housing notwithstanding).

The underlying purpose of the Pilot Project Financial Model described in detail below, and as further detailed in the attached, revised financial analysis provided with this memo (the "Revised Attachment I"), is to quantify the opportunity costs attendant the creation of affordable housing, either in a stand-alone development or as a component of a mixed-income development, close to the center of the Study Area. In the case of the 100% Affordable Housing Scenario described below, as well as the Affordable Family Housing Examples provided in Attachment 2, an additional goal of this analysis is to help identify and better align public, non-profit, and private

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sources of equity and debt financing with the goals of the UHF, so that such financing sources may be better utilized to provide "gap financing" to make affordable housing development in the Urban Centers financially feasible. This quantification of opportunity costs should, in turn, assist in the creation of incentives necessary to encourage the private sector to deliver affordable housing opportunities in the Urban Centers, including monetary incentives that go well beyond the scope of the UHF project.

In order to provide as close to an apples-to-apples comparison as is possible of residential developments affordable to divergent income strata, the methodology of the Pilot Project Financial Model dictated that a standardized, multi-family model be developed and utilized to quantify the impact that different rent structures have on the three housing scenarios described in Section 1., below. Accordingly, the decision was made that a hypothetical site would be applied to the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area, inasmuch as it places the Hypothetical Project much closer to some of the densest employment centers, and at a much greater distance from various suburban locations where housing and other property sectors are growing rapidly in response to the employment growth enjoyed by the greater Houston area.

However, in deciding to include the Affordable Family Housing Examples into this memo, there has been a recognition among the DWS Team, and City of Houston Planning Department and HCD staff (collectively, "City Staff"), that the types of housing being delivered by the market in locations such as the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area will serve only one segment of existing and future lower and moderate-income households in the City, primarily single and dual wage-earner couples heading households with a maximum size of four (i.e. HH = 4), recognizing there are substantial restrictions on households of four that may legally occupy a two-bedroom unit.

Highly amenitized multifamily rental and condominium buildings comprised substantially or exclusively of one-bedroom (1BR) and two-bedroom (2BR) dwelling units (DUs)—which is the predominant housing typology being delivered by the private sector in areas identified as Urban Centers— do **not** serve the needs of lower and moderate-income households with more than three members (i.e. HH = >3). Accordingly, while the Pilot Project Financial Model Mixed-Income and 100% Affordable Housing Scenarios, described in greater detail below, may serve lower and moderate-wage workers employed in the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area (particularly those who are severely transportation-burdened), these scenarios will not serve HH >3, for whom HCD has determined there to be an acute need within the City of Houston.

This Pilot Project Financial Model is described in greater detail in the following sections:

1. **Pilot Project Financial Model. petersgroup** has revised somewhat its original financial analysis model, which new financial analysis is provided as an Excel file in .pdf format for ease of distribution (Revised Attachment I to this memo), establishing a Baseline Development Budget and Cash-Flow Analysis for the hypothetical, multifamily rental project described in **Section 2.**, below (hereinafter respectively referred to as the "Base

Case Scenario" and the "Hypothetical Project"). However, such revisions have not impacted materially the conclusions initially reached in the February 13th Memo.

The Hypothetical Project is on a hypothetical site (the "Subject Site") in the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area, which is one of three Pilot Project Areas described in **Section 3**, below, as designated by the government of the City of Houston (hereinafter respectively referred to as the "Pilot Project Areas" and the "City"). The Pilot Project Model is based on a set of assumptions developed by **petersgroup** in collaboration with the DWS Team. These assumptions are provided in detail in the "Assumptions" tab of Revised Attachment I, and described in **Section 4.**, below, (and are hereinafter referred to as the "Financial Assumptions").

In addition to the Base Case Scenario, the Pilot Project Model also includes a "100% Affordable Housing Scenario," a "Mixed-Income Housing Scenario," and a "Suburban, Market-Rate Scenario," to which the Base Case Scenario is compared (see the "Summary" section of Revised Attachment I) for purposes of highlighting the potential economic impacts of affordable housing delivery in the Urban Houston Framework Study Area (hereinafter, the "Study Area"), and which additional scenarios are described more-fully in **Sections 5.**, **6.**, and **7.**, respectively, below.

2. **Hypothetical Project.** The "Hypothetical Project" is a 200 unit multifamily complex, the specific housing typology and building composition of which are described in the "Assumptions" section of Revised Attachment I. The Unit Sizes and Unit Configuration of the Hypothetical Project are as follows:

    a. 1 BR, 650 sq.ft., 120 DUs (60% of the project total)
    b. 2 BR, 950 sq.ft., 80 DUs (40% of the project total)

3. **Subject Site.** The "Subject Site" is a hypothetical site in the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area, which area was selected from the three Pilot Project areas designated by the City as part of DWS's Houston Urban Framework undertaking:

    a. OST/Griggs Street and Cullen Street
    b. Montrose and Westheimer
    c. West Chase District

    The size of the Hypothetical Site was determined based on the Financial Assumptions underpinning the Pilot Project Model and does not necessarily reflect any particular site in the Pilot Project Area.

    It should be noted that the actual Pilot Project Site in the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area was rejected for the Pilot Project Financing Model because the existing site is too small to test a 200-unit apartment project. Even at the density of development used in the Assumptions, the Hypothetical Site is three acres (3.0 ac.). Although the West Chase Pilot Project Site could easily accommodate the Hypothetical Project, its location provides less of a contrast with a suburban location, for purposes of developing and testing a Suburban, Market-Rate Scenario. However, as explained in "**Section 8. Affordable Family Housing Examples**," below, the West Chase District Pilot Project could afford an opportunity in the future for City Staff, in applying the recommendations

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of the UHF Final Report, to explore either a theoretical or an actual family affordable housing rental project in the West Chase Pilot Project Area, which has considerable, existing resources as well as a significant component of mature, market-rate family housing at a broad range of densities (from single-family detached homes to various grades of multi-family rental housing).

As mentioned above, in order to provide as close to an apples-to-apples comparison as is possible of residential developments that are affordable to divergent income strata, the methodology of the Pilot Project Financial Model dictated that a standardized, multi-family model be developed and utilized to quantify the impact that different rent structures have on the three housing scenarios described in Section 1., above. Accordingly, the decision was made that a hypothetical site would be applied to the Montrose and Westheimer Pilot Project Area, inasmuch as it places the Hypothetical Project much closer to some of highest employment densities within the Study Area, and at a much greater distance from various suburban locations where housing and other property sectors have been growing rapidly in response to the employment growth enjoyed by the greater Houston area.

4. **Financial Assumptions.** **petersgroup** has collaborated with DWS Team members CobbFendley and Walter P. Moore—which have the necessary local knowledge, experience, and access to relevant and current data and data bases—in populating the Financial Assumptions, described below, with the most-currently available, relevant data.

    The Financial Assumptions upon which the Pilot Project Model was built include but are not limited to the following:

    a. Land Purchase/Acquisition Costs for two sites (Subject Site and Suburban Site)
    b. Land Yield, on a DU/acre basis
    c. Subject Site Land area based on assumption b., above, and other assumptions
    d. Housing typology/construction type
    e. Parking requirements by unit type (i.e. number of bedrooms, aka "BRs")
    f. Project composition by unit type/size (provided, above, in **Section 2.**)
    g. Estimates for essential components of Total Development Cost, including
        i. civil engineering, horizontal development, and off-site costs
        ii. soft costs, including permitting and other fees
        iii. Hard Construction Costs ("HCC")
    h. Projected market rents for the Subject Site and Suburban sub-markets
    i. Definitions of non-market households by income strata or percentage of AMI
    j. An Estimated Operating Expense amount by DU/month

5. **100% Affordable Housing Scenario.** Except where the Financial Assumptions, such as assumption g.iii. in Section 4., above, warranted modification to the Project Program for the Base Case Scenario, the Project Program for the 100% Affordable Housing Scenario is the same as for the Base Case Scenario. This is not the case, however, for the Affordable Family Housing Examples described in Section 8., below, and in Attachment 2, where the Project Program mirrors more closelythe unit compositions and sizes with which HCD has experience in working with affordable housing and market-rate developers in other Houston communities, and which unit compositions and sizes are a better fit for meeting housing needs in the City identified by HCD as determined by HCD

Staff. In the 100% Affordable Housing Scenario in the Pilot Project Financial Model (Revised Attachment 1), all of the rents are based on the Fair Market Rents (FMRs) paid to landlords that accept Tenant-Based Rental Vouchers ("rental vouchers") issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") to income-eligible households through the Houston Housing Authority. Households issued rental vouchers pay 30% of their household income in monthly rent, which should include an allowance for utilities, irrespective of the amount of the FMR for the unit that HUD pays the landlord. To account for the allowance for utilities, FMRs are calculated at only twenty-five percent (25%) of household income, allowing the additional five percent (5%) of the allowable housing cost to be applied to monthly utilities expenses.

It should be noted that, in order to respect the methodological integrity of the Pilot Project Financial Model, the 100% Affordable Housing Scenario does not take into account a variety of additional City of Houston, State of Texas, and federal funding sources commonly used to provide "gap financing" to make affordable housing finanically feasible. This intentional omission is due, in large measure, to the fact that such sources are limited in availability and amount on an annual basis.

Financing for successful affordable housing projects is, by its very nature, idiosyncratic, relying upon multiple sources beyond primary sources of equity and debt financing. In other words, **every** proposed affordable housing project is financially unfeasible unless and until that last source of financing is secured that makes it financially feasible. However, to demonstrate how such sources may be used to create a "financing stack" to provide gap financing in the successful development of affordable housing in the City, the Affordable Family Housing Examples provided by HCD Staff demonstrate the variety of financing sources utilized on projects with which HCD has been involved in other geographic communities in the City.

One of the benefits of the 100% Affordable Housing Scenario, when viewed in combination with the Affordable Family Housing Examples, is to identify the potential financing gaps in hopes that the City of Houston, the State of Texas, and other potential sources—public, non-profit, and private, respectively—might become **better aligned** with the goals of the Urban Houston Framework. In this regard, below is a listing provided by HCD Staff, by way of example only, of potential sources of primary and gap financing for affordable housing in the City of Houston,:

1. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
2. HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program
3. Houston Housing Authority (HHA) programs (primarily through HUD)
4. Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) programs (also through HUD)
5. City of Houston Tax Abatement Ordinance
6. Chapter 380 of the State of Texas Local Government Code
7. City of Houston Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) and the TIRZ Affordable Housing Set-Aside
8. Houston Housing Finance Corporation's Private Activity Bonds and Mortgage Revenue Bond Program
9. City of Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering Developer Participation Contracts (70-30 DPCs)

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10. City of Houston Department of Housing and Community Development reimbursements for storm sewer infrastructure improvement related to affordable housing development
11. Federal New Markets Tax Credits ("NMTCs"), administered by the U.S. Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (the "CDFI Fund")
12. Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits ("LIHTC"), administered in Texas by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) as the state's Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program
13. Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits ("FHPCs"), administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, through the National Parks Service ("NPS")
14. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") 202 Program, providing federal subsidies for qualifying seniors' supportive housing projects
15. HUD 811 Program, providing federal subsidies for qualifying supportive housing projects for disabled persons
16. Federal Private Activity Bonds (Sec. 142 of the Internal Revenue Code), administered in Texas by TDHCA as the Texas Private Activity Bond program
17. Tax Exempt Bonds under Section 501(c)(3) and Sec. 141 of the Internal Revenue Code, administered by the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC) as the Texas Tax-Exempt Bond Program

These potential sources of primary or gap financing for affordable housing development are described in greater detail in the City of Houston Toolbox for Housing and Community Development prepared by HCD Staff (hereinafter the "HCD Toolbox") and will be incorporated into the Urban Houston Framework Final Report being prepared by the DWS Team. In addition to the foregoing sources, there are myriad governmental, institutional, non-profit, and foundation sources that may **also** be available to financially support specific types of affordable housing projects, some of which are also identified in the HCD Toolbox.

6. **Mixed-Income Housing Scenario.** The Mixed-Income Housing Scenario is a 60/40 mix of market-rate and affordable units, comprised as follows:

   a. 60% of the total units (i.e. 120 DUs) is priced at market for that sub-market; and
   b. the remaining 40% of the total (i.e. 80 DUs) are assumed to be developed using an allocation of federal low-income housing tax credits to the project by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) under the state's Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program, and are affordable to households earning 50% of area gross median income or "AMI" in accordance with sub-subsection (c)(1)(A)(i) of Sec. 11.9. **Competitive HTC Selection Criteria**, of the State of Texas 2013 Final Qualified Allocation Plan). Applicability of the relevant provisions of the TDHCA's 2013 Final Qualified Allocation Plan (the "Final QAP") used in the Pilot Project Financing Model have been assumed without regard to the de-concentration rules set forth in Sec. 11.3 thereof; without regard to the Applicant and Development request and award limitations set forth in Sec. 11.4 thereof; and without regard to the various set-aside provisions in the Final QAP.

The Mixed-Income Scenario has been designed primarily to demonstrate how LIHTC equity can be leveraged to provide some of the support subsidy necessary to incorporate income-eligible units into what would otherwise be a market-rate project.

The above breakdown of units is evenly allocated across the two unit types (i.e. 1BR and 2BR, units, respectively). It should be noted that due to requiring that 40% of the units in the Mixed-Income Scenario be affordable to households earning 50% of Area Median Income, there is an almost $810,000 difference between the projected gross rents in the Base Case Scenario and the Mixed-Income Scenario, which differential is only partially off-set by the application of LIHTC equity in the Development Budget for the latter project.

7. **Suburban, Market-Rate Scenario.** The Suburban, Market-Rate Scenario is identical to the Base Case Scenario, only it is applied to a theoretical site in an outlying, suburban jurisdiction (in this case, The Woodlands), where development pressures have not escalated land acquisition costs to make them comparable to the Pilot Project Area, and where new development is generally much quicker and substantially easier to be approved and permitted. The Assumptions for the Suburban, Market-Rate Scenario are modified accordingly, including a lower density of development and the use of surface parking instead of the more-expensive structured parking commonly used on in-fill sites in competitive residential sub-markets inside the inner-ring beltway (I-610).

8. **Affordable Family Housing Examples.** In addition to endeavoring to quantify the costs for incentivizes to encourage the private sector to deliver housing affordable to income-eligible households of primarily one to three persons (and, in limited circumstances, four-person households comprised of two adults and two very young children allowed to share a bedroom under HUD occupancy standards), HCD Staff felt strongly that this memo should also reflect existing opportunities to incentivize the private sector to produce more affordable family housing in those Urban Centers where such housing is more market-appropriate. In deference to HCD's expertise in the development and financing of affordable family housing in the City of Houston, a list of Affordable Family Housing financing structures have been provided in Attachment 2. Additionally, for the purpose of laying the groundwork now for City Staff to apply some of the relevant affordable housing recommendations of the UHF Final Report to a hypothetical or actual affordable family housing project, the following project parameters were devised by the DWS Team, in collaboration with HCD and Planning Department Staff.
   a. **Hypothetical Location for an Affordable Family Housing Model.** An Affordable Family Housing Model could be proposed as a modification to the West Chase District Pilot Project analysis already completed by the DWS Team in connection with the completion of the UHF Final Report. That Pilot Project contemplates a substantial component of multifamily rental housing, and the West Chase area has been identified as providing substantial, existing amenities supporting family housing.
   b. **Proposed Affordable Family Housing Model Programs.** Continuing the Hypothetical Project program described in Section 2., above, an Affordable Family Housing Model could be structured as a mixed-income, market-driven project of 200 total dwelling units ("DUs"), of which 170 DUs (85%) are market-rate and 30 DUs

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(15%) are income-eligible (hereinafter referred to as "ADUs" or "affordable dwelling units"). Based upon its assessment of housing needs in the City of Houston, HCD Staff has proposed the following composition and unit sizes for the Affordable Family Housing Model, although these unit sizes may need to be refined at a later date, based upon a more fine-grained analysis of market data for this sub-market, inasmuch as 85% of these units will need to be marketed to and absorbed by market-rate tenants, whose market and cost preference will drive unit sizes and amenities:

   i. 1 BR, 720 sq.ft., 80 DUs (40% of the project total); 12 ADUs
   ii. 2 BR, 1,020 sq.ft., 80 DUs (40% of the project total); 12 ADUs
   iii. 3 BR, 1,200 sq. ft., 40 DUs (20% of the project total); 6 ADUs

   c. **Financing Sources and Amounts Supporting the Alternative Affordable Housing Model**. Attachment 2 provides four (4) separate examples of financing structures in which the City and HCD have played an integral role in the production of affordable housing opportunities.

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Summary Sheet

petersgroup consulting Pilot Project Financial Model

Revised Attachment 1 to Memorandum to the UHF Stakeholders Advisory Committee dated 01 May 2013

Financial Scenarios	Mkt-Rate	TDC	Ann. Gross Rents	Ann. NOI	NOI after Debt Srvc.	NOI after ROE	Income > DSCR	Valuation	Value Loss	% Value Loss
Base Case Scenario	100%	$ 32,895,776	$ 3,264,000	$ 2,070,240	$ 336,925	$ 7,967	$ 6,374	**$ 29,574,857**	**N/A**	**N/A**
Mixed-Income Scenario	60%		$ 2,455,680	$ 1,285,555	**$ (476,020)**	**$ (476,020)**	**$ (916,414)**	$ 18,365,074	**$ 11,209,783**	**37.90%**
100% Affordable Scenario	0%	$ 26,536,465	$ 2,008,800	$ 1,047,480	**$ (685,835)**	**$ (951,200)**	**$ (1,119,164)**	$ 14,964,000	**$ 14,610,857**	**49.40%**
Suburban Scenario	100%	$ 25,153,621	$ 2,450,400	$ 1,580,856	$ 255,484	$ 3,947	$ 3,158	$ 22,583,657	**$ 6,991,200**	**23.64%**

Financial Scenarios	Mkt-Rate	Valuation	Value Loss	% Value Loss
Base Case Scenario	100%	**$ 29,574,857**	**N/A**	**N/A**
Mixed-Income Scenario	60%	$ 18,365,074	**$ 11,209,783**	**37.90%**
100% Affordable Scenario	0%	$ 14,964,000	**$ 14,610,857**	**49.40%**
Suburban Scenario	100%	$ 22,583,657	**$ 6,991,200**	**23.64%**

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Assumptions Sheet 1/4

		Base Case	Suburban Scenario	
Land Purchase Price/sq. ft.		$ 40.00	$ 5.00	
Land Yield (DU/acre)		80	32	See Box, right
Factor for O/S & Circulation		1.200	1.750	
Required Land Area (acres)		3.0	10.9	
Required Land Area (sq. ft.)		130,680	476,438	
Housing Typology		4-story, elev.	3-story garden	
Construction Type		Wood frame	Wood frame	
Parking Requirements				
1BR	159.6	1.33	1.25	125
2BR	133	1.66	1.75	157.5
3BR	0	2	2.25	22.5
	292			305
Cost/Parking Stall/Space		$ 11,500	$ 4,500	

Project Configuration				
1BR	60%	120	100	50%
2BR	40%	80	90	45%
3BR	0%	0	10	5%
	100%	200	200	100%
Unit Configurations				
1BR		650	700	
2BR		950	950	
3BR		1,450	1,200	
Average Unit Size		TBP	TBP	
Weighted-Average Unit Size		TBP	TBP	
NRSF by Unit Type				
1BR		78,000	70,000	
2BR		76,000	85,500	
3BR		0	12,000	
TOTAL NRSF		**154,000**	**167,500**	

Core Factor	1.25	1.25	
Building Gross Square Feet	192,500	209,375	
HCC per Sq. Ft.	$ 85.00	$ 67.50	
Civil-Utilities-Infrastructure/acre	$ 100,000	$ 115,000	

Line Items	Assumptions	Base Case	uburban Scenario	Cost Differential
Land		$ 5,227,200	$ 2,382,188	$ 2,845,013
Soft Costs	20%	$ 3,945,020	$ 3,101,063	$ 843,958
Horizontal Costs		$ 300,000	$ 1,257,813	$ (957,813)
Parking (Garage or Surface)		$ 3,362,600	$ 1,372,500	$ 1,990,100
Vertical Const. Costs		$ 16,362,500	$ 14,132,813	$ 2,229,688
HCC before Cap i		$ 19,725,100	$ 15,505,313	$ 4,219,788
Cap. Int.	7.50%	$ 739,691	$ 581,449	$ 158,242
Dev. Fee	15%	$ 2,958,765	$ 2,325,797	$ 632,968
Total Development Costs (TDC)		**$ 32,895,776**	**$ 25,153,621**	**$ 7,109,187**

Financing Costs	% of TDC	Base Case	Suburban
1st DOT	75%	$ 24,671,832	$ 18,865,216
Investor Eq.	20%	$ 6,579,155	$ 5,030,724
Dev. Equity	5%	$ 1,644,789	$ 1,257,681
		$ 32,895,776	**$ 25,153,621**

Assumptions Sheet 2/4

Annual Debt Service Cost	Assumptions	Mo'ly/Ann. P + i	Mo'ly/Ann. P + i	Assumptions
i (mo'ly int. rate)	0.5417%	($144,442.92)	($110,447.69)	0.5417%
40-yr amortization	480	$ (1,733,315)	$ (1,325,372)	480
P (principal loan amt)	$ 24,671,832			$ 18,865,216

Projected Market Rents	Price/sq.ft.	Mathematical Rents	Mathematical Ren	Price/sq.ft.
1BR	$ 1.60	$ 1,040.00	$ 840.00	$ 1.20
2BR	$ 1.48	$ 1,406.00	$ 1,092.50	$ 1.15
3BR	$ 1.25	$ 1,812.50	$ 1,260.00	$ 1.05

Average Rent

Weighted-Average Rent

Affordable Rents

50% AMI			Nominal Rents
1BR	$ 26,500	$ 552.08	$ 550.00
2BR	$ 29,800	$ 620.83	$ 620.00
3BR	$ 33,100	$ 689.58	$ 690.00

80% AMI			Nominal Rents
1BR	$ 42,800	$ 891.67	$ 890.00
2BR	$ 48,150	$ 1,003.13	$ 1,000.00
3BR	$ 53,500	$ 1,114.58	$ 1,115.00

120% AMI			Nominal Rents
1BR	$ 51,360	$ 1,070.00	$ 1,050.00
2BR	$ 57,780	$ 1,203.75	$ 1,200.00
3BR	$ 64,200	$ 1,337.50	$ 1,335.00

2013 FMRs			
1BR		$ 765.00	
2BR		$ 945.00	
3BR		$ 1,290.00	

LIHTC Rents (50% of AMI/TDHCA 2013 QAP)			Nominal Rents
1BR	$ 26,500	$ 552.08	$ 550.00
2BR	$ 29,800	$ 620.83	$ 620.00
3BR	$ 33,100	$ 689.58	$ 690.00

Estimated Op. Expenses/DU			Total Dus
DU/mo	$ 400.00	$	80,000.00
Mo/ann	12	$	960,000.00

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Assumptions Sheet 3/4

Yield and Open Space Calculations		
	Base Case	**Suburban**
Yield Reqts.	2.5	6.3
% for O/S+C	0.200	0.75
O/S+Circ (ac.)	0.5	4.69

Yeild Comparability Analysis			
Camden Travis St. Site Area Calculation			
Boundary	NIC in parcel		
245	125		
645	125		
158,025	15,625		
43,560	43,560	Site Area	
3.627754821	0.358700643	3.269054178	
TTL DUs	**Site (ac.)**	**Yield (DU/ac.)**	
253	**3.27**	**77.39241573**	

Calculation of Annual Return on Equity		
Base Case Total Dev. Costs	$ 32,895,776	$ 18,865,216
Equity as % of TDC	20.0000%	$ 5,030,724
Equity Calculation	$ 6,579,155	$ 5,030,724
Annual Return on Equity	5.0000%	5.0000%

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Ann. Equity Return Calc.	$ 328,958	$ 251,536

Assumptions Sheet 4/4

1st DOT Interest Calcuation	
Principal Amt	$ 24,671,832
Interst only	6.5000%
Ann. Int.	$ 1,603,669
Mo'ly Int.	$ 133,639

HUD Metro2013 FMRs Houston-Baytow_Sugar Land, TX

Eff.	1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR
$ 636	$ 765	$ 945	$ 1,290	$ 1,595

Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, TX HUD Metro FMR Area						
Inc. Limit	1-person	2-person	3-person	4-person	5-person	6-person
FY2013	$46,400	$53,000	$59,600	$66,200	$71,500	$76,800
60%	$27,840	$31,800	$35,760	$39,720	$42,900	$46,080
50%	$23,200	$26,500	$29,800	$33,100	$35,750	$38,400

Base Case:
Cash-Flow Analysis

Unit Type	Mo'ly Rent	Annual Rent	Total Dus	Gross Ann Rent
1BR	$ 1,100.00	$13,200	120	$ 1,584,000
2BR	$ 1,750.00	$21,000	80	$ 1,680,000
3BR	$ 2,100.00	$25,200	0	$ -
TOTAL			200	$ 3,264,000

Gross Rents			**$3,264,000**
Vacancy Factor			4.00%
Gross Rents Less Vacancy Factor			$3,133,440
Adjusted Gross Rents			**$3,133,440**
LESS: Op. Reserves		**5%**	**$163,200**
Adj. Gross Rents Less Reserves			**$2,970,240**
NON-RENT INCOME:		$25/DU/mo	**$60,000**
Adj. Rent & Non-Rent Income			**$3,030,240**
LESS: Operating Expenses			
DU/ann	$4,800	0	$960,000
Net Operating Income (before debt srvc)			**$2,070,240**
LESS: Debt Service on 1st DoT			-$1,733,315
Rate	Principal Amt.		
6.5000%	$ 24,671,832		
NOI after Debt Service			**$336,925**
LESS: Return on Equity			$328,958
Rate	Investor Equity		
5.00%	6,579,155		
Amt. Remaining for Distribution			**$7,967**
1.25:1 DSCR Amt.			**$6,374**

Cap Rate	Valuation
7.00%	**$ 29,574,857**

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Suburban Scenario: Cash-Flow Analysis

Unit Type	Mo'ly Rent	Annual Rent	Total Dus	Gross Ann Rent
1BR	$ 875.00	$10,500	100	$ 1,050,000
2BR	$ 1,130.00	$13,560	90	$ 1,220,400
3BR	$ 1,500.00	$18,000	10	$ 180,000
TOTAL			200	$ 2,450,400

Gross Rents			**$2,450,400**		
Vacancy Factor			6.00%		
Gross Rents Less Vacancy Factor			$2,303,376		
Adjusted Gross Rents			**$2,303,376**		
LESS: Op. Reserves		**5%**	**$122,520**		
Adj. Gross Rents Less Reserves			**$2,180,856**		
NON-RENT INCOME:		$50/DU/mo	**$120,000**		
Adj. Rent & Non-Rent Income			**$2,300,856**		
LESS: Operating Expenses					
DU/ann	$3,600	200	$720,000	**Cap Rate**	**Valuation**
Net Operating Income (before debt srvc)			**$1,580,856**	**7.00%**	**$ 22,583,657**
LESS: Debt Service on 1st DoT			-$1,325,372		
Rate	Principal Amt.				
6.5000%	$ 18,865,216				
NOI after Debt Service			$255,484		
LESS: Return on Equity			$251,536		
Rate	Investor Equity				
5.00%	5,030,724				
Amt. Remaining for Distribution			**$3,947**		
1.25:1 DSCR Amt.			**$3,158**		

100% Affordable Scenario: Cash-Flow Analysis 1/2

Unit Type	HUD Tenant-Based Rental Certificate	Annual Rent	Total Dus	Gross Ann Rent	
1BR	$ 765.00	$9,180	120	$ 1,101,600	
2BR	$ 945.00	$11,340	80	$ 907,200	
3BR	$ 1,290.00	$15,480	0	$ -	**Base Case diff.**
TOTAL			200	$ 2,008,800	**$ 1,255,200**

Gross Rents			**$2,008,800**	720000	
Vacancy Factor			10.00%		
Gross Rents Less Vacancy Factor			$1,807,920		
Adjusted Gross Rents			**$1,807,920**		
LESS: Op. Reserves		**5%**	**$100,440**		
Adj. Gross Rents Less Reserves			**$1,707,480**		
NON-RENT INCOME (Laundry)		$25/DU/mo	**$60,000**		
Adj. Rent & Non-Rent Income			**$1,767,480**		
LESS: Operating Expenses					
DU/ann	$3,600		$720,000	**Cap Rate**	**Valuation**
Net Operating Income (before debt srvc)			**$1,047,480**	**7.00%**	**$ 14,964,000**
LESS: Debt Service on 1st DoT			-$1,733,315		
Rate	Principal Amt.				
6.5000%	$ 24,671,832				
NOI before Return on Equity			**-$685,835**		
LESS: Return on Equity			**$265,365**		
Rate	Investor Equity				
5.00%	6,579,155				
Amt. Remaining for Distribution			**-$951,200**	DSCR 1.25:1	
1.25:1 DSCR Amt.			**-$1,119,164**	$ (2,166,644)	

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

100% Affordable Scenario:
Cash-Flow Analysis 2/2

Building Gross Square Feet		192,500	209,375
HCC per Sq. Ft.	$	67.50	$ 67.50
Civil-Utilities-Infrastructure/acre	$	100,000.00	$ 115,000.00

Line Items	Assumptions	Base Case	Suburban Scenario	Cost Differential
Land		$ 5,227,200	$ 2,382,188	$ 2,845,013
Soft Costs	20%	$ 3,945,020	$ 3,101,063	$ 843,958
Horizontal Costs		$ 300,000	$ 1,257,813	$ (957,813)
Parking (Garage or Surface)		$ 3,362,600	$ 1,372,500	$ 1,990,100
Vertical Const. Costs		$ 12,993,750	$ 14,132,813	$ (1,139,063)
HCC before Cap i		$ 16,656,350	$ 15,505,313	$ 1,151,038
Cap. Int.	8.50%	$ 707,895	$ 581,449	$ 126,446
Dev. Fee	18%	$ 2,998,143	$ 2,325,797	$ 672,346
Total Dev. Costs (TDC)		**$ 26,536,465**	**$ 25,153,621**	**$ 4,008,641**

Financing Costs	% of TDC	Base Case	Suburban Scenario
1st DOT	75%	$ 19,902,349	$ 18,865,216
Investor Eq.	20%	$ 5,307,293	$ 5,030,724
Dev. Equity	5%	$ 1,326,823	$ 1,257,681
		$ 26,536,465	**$ 25,153,621**

Mixed-Income Scenario:
Cash-Flow Analysis 1/2

Unit Types	Mo'ly Rent	Annual Rent	Total Dus	Gross Ann Rent
Mkt-Rate				
1BR	$ 1,100.00	$13,200	72	$ 950,400
2BR	$ 1,650.00	$19,800	48	$ 950,400
3BR	$ 1,800.00	$21,600	0	$ -
SUBTOTAL			120	$ 1,900,800
LIHTC				
1BR	$ 550.00	$6,600	48	$ 316,800
2BR	$ 620.00	$7,440	32	$ 238,080
3BR	$ 690.00	$8,280	0	$ -
SUBTOTAL			80	$ 554,880
TOTAL			**200**	**$ 2,455,680**

Gross Rents			**$2,455,680**		
Vacancy Factor			6.00%		
Gross Rents Less Vacancy Factor			$2,308,339		
Adjusted Gross Rents			**$2,308,339**		
LESS: Op. Reserves		**5%**	**$122,784**		
Adj. Gross Rents Less Reserves			**$2,185,555**		
NON-RENT INCOME:		$25/DU/mo	**$60,000**		
Adj. Rent & Non-Rent Income			**$2,245,555**		
LESS: Operating Expenses					
DU/ann	$4,800	0	$960,000	**Cap Rate**	**Valuation**
Net Operating Income (before debt srvc)			**$1,285,555**	**7.00%**	**$ 18,365,074**
LESS: Debt Service on 1st DoT			-$1,761,575		
Rate	Principal Amt.				
6.5000%	$ 24,671,832				
NOI after Debt Service			**-$476,020**		
LESS: Return on LIHTC Equity			$0		
Rate	Investor Equity				
0.00%	5,035,681				
Amt. Remaining for Distribution			**-$476,020**	DSCR 1.25:1	
1.25:1 DSCR Amt.			**-$916,414**	**-$2,201,969**	

Base Case diff.
$ 808,320

Pilot Projects: Affordable Housing Analysis

Mixed-Income Scenario:
Cash-Flow Analysis **2/2**

Building Gross Square Feet	192,500	209,375
HCC per Sq. Ft.	$ 85.00	$ 67.50
Civil-Utilities-Infrastructure/acre	$ 100,000.00	$ 115,000.00

Line Items	Assumptions	Base Case	Suburban Scenario	Cost Differential
Land		$ 5,227,200	$ 2,382,188	$ 2,845,013
Soft Costs	20%	$ 3,945,020	$ 3,101,063	$ 843,958
Horizontal Costs		$ 300,000	$ 1,257,813	$ (957,813)
Parking (Garage or Surface)		$ 3,362,600	$ 1,372,500	$ 1,990,100
Vertical Const. Costs		$ 16,362,500	$ 14,132,813	$ 2,229,688
HCC before Cap i		$ 19,725,100	$ 15,505,313	$ 4,219,788
Cap. Int.	7.50%	$ 739,691	$ 581,449	$ 158,242
Dev. Fee	15%	$ 2,958,765	$ 2,325,797	$ 632,968
Total Dev. Costs (TDC)		**$ 32,895,776**	**$ 25,153,621**	**$ 7,109,187**

Financing Costs	% of TDC	Base Case	Suburban Scenario
1st DOT	76.22%	$ 25,074,086	$ 19,172,797
LIHTC Equity	15.31%	$5,035,681	$ -
Investor Eq.	0.00%	$ -	$ -
Dev. Equity	8.47%	$ 2,786,010	$ 2,130,311
	100.00%	**$ 32,895,776**	**$ 21,303,108**

Project TDC			**$32,895,776**
LIHTC Equity Calculation			
	Project TDC LESS: Land Cost	$27,668,576	
	DUs (% Inc-Eligible)	40%	
	LIHTC Basis	$11,067,431	
	9% PV	70%	
	LIHTC Amt.	$7,747,201	
	LIHTC Pricing	$0.65	
	LIHTC Equity		**$5,035,681**
Remaining Balance to be financed			**$27,860,095**

Annual Debt Service Cost	Assumptions	Mo'ly/Ann. P + i
i (mo'ly int. rate)	0.5417%	($146,797.94)
40-yr amortization	480	$ (1,761,575)
P (principal loan amt)	$ 25,074,086	

Houston-Galveston Area Council

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