Rail~volution 2010

Ten Years of Preparing Houston for TOD

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Houston Tomorrow

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Houston Tomorrow is an independent nonprofit organization that works to improve the quality of life for all people in the Houston region through research, education, and discussion.
Houston Tomorrow’s 2036 Vision

On its 200th birthday, the Houston region is home to the healthiest, happiest, most prosperous people in the United States.
Percent Growth in Population 2000 - 2008

- Waller County
- Montgomery
- Liberty
- Harris
- Galveston
- Fort Bend
- Chambers
- Brazoria
Absolute Population and Growth 2000 - 2008

- Waller County
- Montgomery
- Liberty
- Harris
- Galveston
- Fort Bend
- Chambers
- Brazoria

Legend:
- Blue: Total Population: July 1, 2000
- Red: Pop Growth 2000 - 2008
Current and Expected Growth in Population and Jobs by Sectors

Legend
- MajorRoads
- SectorPopDataParcel
- Sum_PopJobs35
  - 300,000
- Sum_p_2005
- Sum_PGrow05_35
- Sum_j_2005
- Sum_JGrow05_35

Data: H-GAC 2035
Regional Forecasts
75% of all jobs in the 8-county region
59% of all residents live within 5 miles
Population and Jobs within 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 miles of the Top 25 Job Centers in the Houston region

Legend:
- Top 25 Job Centers
- Harris County
- Counties
- Major Roads
- Water
- 1 mile
- 5 miles
- 10 miles
- 15 miles
- 20 miles
Population and Jobs within 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 miles of the Top 25 Job Centers in the Houston region

Legend
- Top 25 Job Centers
- Harris County
- Counties
- Major Roads
- Water
- 1 mile
- 5 miles
- 10 miles
- 15 miles
- 20 miles
Population and Jobs within 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 miles of the Top 25 Job Centers in the Houston region
Figure 83. Relative distribution of population in the TUT, 1900-2000.

Source: Gavinha (2007).
4,000,000 more people coming to the region by 2040
Growing number of households without children
2005 Activity Intensity with the 2012 light rail system
2035 Activity Intensity with the 2012 light rail system
Early development was based on transit
1927

Until the 1940s, Houston was transit-oriented.
Rail-supportive areas

45,000 weekday boardings
7.5 miles long

Central Business District

Uptown/Galleria

Greenway

Gulfton

Med Center

Universities
Rail-supportive areas

Central Business District

Projected ridership: 150,000 boardings per day

Uptown/Galleria

Greenway

Universities

Gulfton

Med Center
Rail-supportive areas

Station areas could absorb 1/2 of City’s population growth
Is there another city that has so much real estate potential for transit-oriented development?

8,000 acres
Paris
Livable Centers
more choices, great places

designed to be walkable  connected & accessible  compact & mixed use
Downtown Waller now
Downtown Waller tomorrow

- Curb extensions to shorten the crossing distance
- Wide pedestrian walks
- Improved crosswalks
- Streetscape improvements
- Preserved historic structure
- On-street parking
- Buildings addressing the street frontage
Building Houston’s Competitive Edge:
Transit-Oriented Development for the Ensemble/HCC Station

U.S. EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance

With:
Charlier Associates
Strategic Economics
Van Meter Williams Pollack
HALF BLOCK INFILL PROTOTYPE
Goal: Encourage greater density at Transit Stations
Key Elements

- **Mandatory Requirements**
  Minimum 6 foot clear zone sidewalk for TCS and Type "A" streets

- **Incentive Based Elements (Opt-in provision)**
  Pedestrian access standards – 42-402
  - Pedestrian Realm – minimum 15 feet from BOC – 42-402 (a)
  - Pedestrian Realm – includes a minimum 6 foot clear zone – 42-402 (b)
NEW TERMS

Minimum 6’ Sidewalk & Clear Zone
NEW TERMS

Minimum Building Frontage

Total Frontage

Min. 50% Frontage
PUBLIC ENTRANCE / FAÇADE TRANSPARENCY / PENETRATION

Maximum 20’ interval between Transparent openings

Transparency is 30% of façade surface
Area consisting of doors and windows
Between 0’ and 8’ height
IMPLEMENTATION (NORTH CORRIDOR)
Figure 35  Land Use and Urban Form
Health Impact Assessment

- Texas Southern University, in collaboration with Houston Tomorrow and Baylor College of Medicine, will conduct an HIA to help inform Houston's Urban Corridor Planning project. The city initiative calls for transit-oriented development in 65 Houston neighborhoods through which a 30-mile, five-corridor light-rail expansion is planned. The HIA will examine potential health impacts that could result from the creation of city ordinances and incentives to promote transit-oriented development in the rail corridors. Increased access to public transportation and services, mixed land-use development and affordable housing are among the potential outcomes of transit-oriented development that could ultimately benefit health. This study will look at specific data and conditions for neighborhoods surrounding three of the planned rail stations. A multi-tiered plan for stakeholder involvement will help ensure that community and decision maker input is incorporated throughout the HIA process. Results are anticipated in late spring 2011. Decision makers will also be briefed directly on the final HIA recommendations.
Houston and the surrounding 13-county region of the Gulf Coast Planning Region of Texas are at an historic juncture. While the perception may exist that the decision-drivers for this region are solely economic, there is an emerging recognition that this region has the building blocks to be one of the most livable, equitable and sustainable places in the nation.

Consider the following:

- The region is situated in one of the richest ecosystems in North America, including nine distinct eco-regions, Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, and more than 16,000 miles of rivers, streams, bayous and shoreline.
- The region is home to more than 20 major employment centers, many of which are continually adding housing. This represents a huge opportunity to create mixed-use, walkable places and to connect people with jobs, services and amenities via transit, reducing auto-dependency.
- More transit-oriented real estate will be available around a total of 65 transit stations following the completion of a developing light rail system. The first phases of this system are already complete.
- The region is one of the most culturally diverse in the United States, and not just in the central city of Houston. In fact, recent Census figures show suburban Fort Bend County to be the most demographically diverse county in Texas and it thrives on this diversity by being one of the most economically dynamic counties in the nation.
- The region boasts some of the most affordable housing in the nation. This, coupled with a robust economy, has enabled residents of all income levels to move up the economic ladder.
- Exhibiting tremendous entrepreneurial energy, the region leads the nation’s major metro areas in its share of “proprietor” business income and is also among the leaders in minority- and women-owned businesses.
- A strong manufacturing base, not dominated by massive plants in a single industry, includes an array of small manufacturers has great potential for adaptation to a green economy.
- Residents, business owners and developers across the region have a renewed commitment to valuing and preserving natural resources and regional heritage.
- The region’s charity gained national attention as Houston and the surrounding area opened doors to neighbors from New Orleans and southeast Texas following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. And the region’s fortitude in the face of adversity and distinct ability to bounce back stronger from natural disaster of its own was seen in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike in 2008.
- Renewable energy and energy conservation are paramount to the region. Recent EPA reports ranked the City of Houston as the largest municipal purchaser of renewable energy in the nation and third in the number of Energy Star Quality Buildings.

The region has a track record of interlocal collaboration on major issues and has not devolved into the types of “City vs. Suburb” battles that have occurred in other areas. Also notable in recent years is a substantial increase in the level of citizen engagement in crafting a new vision for the future, including major initiatives like Envision Houston Region and Blueprint Houston, as well as burgeoning grass roots movements supporting sustainable transportation, local food, and affordable housing. Leaders and planners are learning new methods for
Thank you!
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