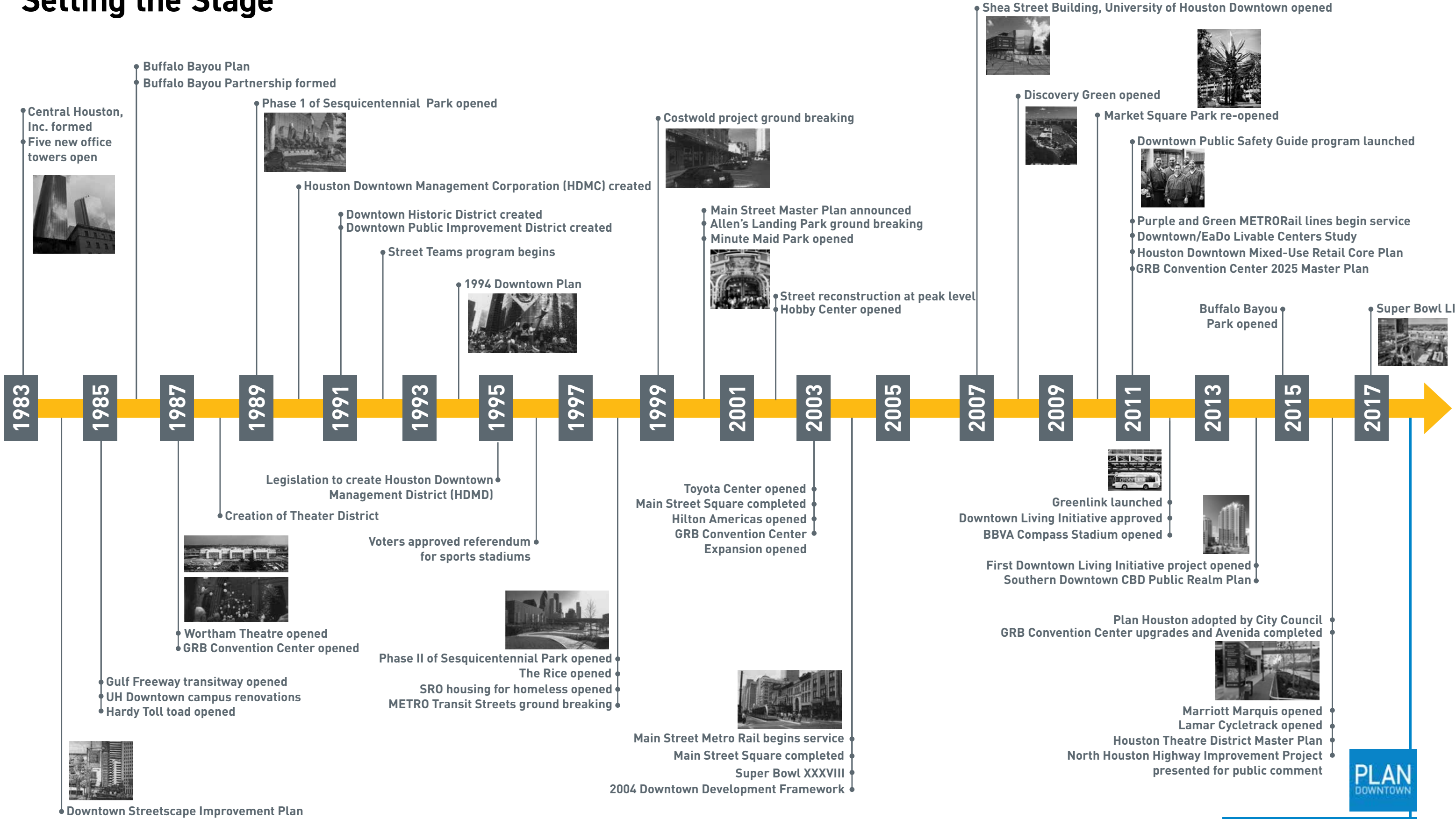


Plan Downtown

CONVERGING

Culture, Lifestyle & Commerce

Setting the Stage



Foreword

On August 30, 2036, Houstonians will celebrate the city's *Bicentennial*. A town founded on the banks of Buffalo Bayou by two young New York speculators with a vision of an idyllic new city with vast charm and economic potential. Even now as the fourth largest city in the nation, the city's foremost attributes haven't changed – Houston is grounded by a can-do spirit, led by a diverse citizenry and primed for new opportunities.

For well beyond a century since Houston's founding, Downtown was the home of all city life. In response to dramatic growth starting in the 1950s, new centers of activity blossomed across the region such that by the mid-1980s Downtown's future seemed challenged. Though it retains its role as the economic engine of the city, today, Downtown's new entertainment, dining, nightlife and outdoor options are bringing new vitality to the formerly office-centric core. As a walkable, safe and vibrant urban place, Downtown truly stands out with an exciting energy all its own.

Since Houston's *Sesquicentennial*, Downtown Houston has experienced a major resurgence and new opportunities abound. Billions have been invested in new parks and public spaces, new multi-family residential developments, new and renovated office towers and hotels, new convention, theater and sports facilities and continued investments in infrastructure and transit. This revolutionary period of growth has made Downtown an even better place to live, work and play.

But what's next? *Plan Downtown: Converging Culture, Lifestyle & Commerce* is the product of an 18-month planning process led by Downtown partner organizations and city, county and community leaders. The leadership group and steering committee, in addition to robust public input, have provided big ideas from 30,000 feet in the air to thoughtful observations from a street level point of view, culminating in both large and small projects that will continue the Downtown transformation for the next five, ten, twenty years.

So when the city celebrates its 200th birthday in 2036, imagine what Downtown will look and feel like. Downtown will be a compelling, layered, and authentic mix of activities and attractions; it will be the most livable community in the city; it will be spontaneous and fun; it will be the premier place for doing business for all industries, including an unrivaled innovation ecosystem; and Downtown will be leading the nation in the next generation of mobility and connectivity advancement. Without a doubt, Downtown will be at the forefront in advancing Houston as a great global city.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	6
DOWNTOWN IS HOUSTON'S GREATEST PLACE TO BE	
1: Enhance and expand Downtown's activities and attractions.	10
2: Create Downtown's Green Loop.	18
3: Enliven Downtown through enhanced walkability and engaging places.	28
DOWNTOWN IS THE PREMIER BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT LOCATION	
4: Support Downtown's existing businesses and promote corporate attraction.	36
5: Build Downtown's innovation ecosystem and the office of the future.	40
DOWNTOWN IS THE STANDARD FOR URBAN LIVABILITY	
6: Catalyze Downtown's emerging neighborhoods.	46
7: Support a comprehensive Central City Housing Plan.	54
DOWNTOWN IS THE INNOVATIVE LEADER IN CONNECTIVITY	
8: Capture the value of Downtown's central position.	58
9: Implement a smart network of great streets.	64
10: Be a national leader for connectivity innovation.	68
IMPLEMENTATION	76
DOWNTOWN PLANNING PROCESS	
Stakeholder Engagement	80
Partners	84
Participants	86

Partners

Downtown District
 Central Houston, Inc.
 Downtown Redevelopment Authority
 Houston First Corporation
 The City of Houston
 Harris County
 Buffalo Bayou Partnership
 Theater District Houston
 East Downtown Management District
 Greater East End Management District
 Greater Northside Management District
 Midtown Management District

Consultants

Asakura Robinson (www.asakurarobinson.com)
 HR&A Advisors
 Sasaki Associates
 Traffic Engineers, Inc.

Plan Downtown: Converging Culture, Lifestyle & Commerce
 November 2017

To download this report and for more information, visit downtowndistrict.org.





**A Vision for 2036:
Downtown is at the forefront
in advancing Houston as a
great global city.**



INTRODUCTION

Since the *Houston Downtown Development Framework* was released in October 2004, Downtown has experienced phenomenal change. Building on the momentum of the past decade and working with adjacent central city stakeholders, *Plan Downtown* sets the groundwork for urban vitality, continued growth, and enrichment of the Downtown experience for all visitors and Houstonians, today and in the future.

Downtown's Transformation

Since 2004, Downtown has experienced what is arguably the greatest resurgence in the city's history. More than \$6 billion has been invested across a broad mix of urban uses: new parks and public spaces, new and renovated hotels, new multi-family residential developments, new and renovated office towers, renovations and expansions to convention and theater facilities, and continued investments in government facilities, infrastructure, and transit. A compelling part of Downtown's story is shared with the adjacent communities where planning and economic development are generating and preserving an array of mutually supportive historic neighborhoods.

Downtown is the Center of the Changing Region

As the center of the fourth largest city in the United States, Downtown Houston is the core of a dynamic regional economy that is shaped by the convergence of geography, history, development, natural systems, and the diverse residents who call Houston home. At the heart of an eight county region, Downtown must be understood in terms of its interconnectedness with the City of Houston, Harris County and neighboring counties. It is critical to view Downtown within this broader metropolitan context as a primary driver for a larger central city economic engine, including the major employment and activity centers of Uptown, Greenway Plaza, and the Texas Medical Center (TMC). Downtown impacts the regional context, and the center city impacts Downtown across these major areas: **economy, infrastructure, transportation, education, living, cultural facilities, visitor and guest experience, parks and open space, resiliency.** Local issues often have local solutions and can be remedied with planning and design as *Plan Downtown* presents. However, for many issues, regional context and regional solutions are necessary and must be collaboratively addressed through city, county, and regional planning.

Resilient Downtown

On August 26th, 2017, during the final development of *Plan Downtown*, Hurricane Harvey made landfall southwest of Houston. The storm remained over the Houston region for several days, dropping record rainfall and causing severe flooding throughout the city, including limited areas of Downtown closest to Buffalo and White Oak Bayous. Unfortunately, Harvey was not a lone storm event. In recent years as climate changes and development patterns throughout the region have accelerated, major flood events have become more frequent.

Downtown served as a critical site during the storm and recovery through the public and private emergency response, through the role of the George R. Brown Convention Center as a refuge for the displaced, as a center for the distribution of goods, and as the location where Houston "got back to business" in the days after Harvey.

As Downtown moves into the next twenty years, it can continue to define itself as a leader in resilience for the City of Houston. Through this Plan, Downtown can support resiliency goals in numerous ways, including developing state of the art guidelines for development within the floodplain, strengthening the flood readiness of government facilities through new master plans for the City and County campuses, continued attention to "smart" technologies and improvements to vital infrastructure, and support for a city and regional resilience strategy.

Organization of this Report

Plan Downtown presents a Vision for the next twenty years. This report is structured around four topical Pillars and ten key Strategies. Within each Strategy, specific Actions and Recommendations are advanced and culminate in an Implementation Framework to guide the future development of Downtown.

SETTING A 20 YEAR VISION:

Downtown is at the forefront in advancing Houston as a great global city.

PILLARS



STRATEGIES

- 1 Enhance and expand Downtown's activities and attractions.
- 2 Create Downtown's Green Loop.
- 3 Enliven Downtown through enhanced walkability and engaging places.
- 4 Support Downtown's existing businesses and promote corporate attraction.
- 5 Build Downtown's innovation ecosystem and the office of the future.
- 6 Catalyze Downtown's emerging neighborhoods.
- 7 Support a comprehensive Central City Housing Plan.
- 8 Capture the value of Downtown's central position.
- 9 Implement a smart network of great streets.
- 10 Be a national leader for connectivity innovation.





1 DOWNTOWN IS HOUSTON'S GREATEST PLACE TO BE

1 Enhance and Expand Downtown's Activity Centers and Attractions.

Downtown will enhance existing and add new attractions to provide a compelling, layered, and authentic mix of activities that define Downtown. Visitors and residents will easily find satisfying, exciting activities to occupy their time. The evolving mix of events and attractions will create places of spontaneity which anyone can discover for an enriching experience. Building on Downtown's

growing reputation and unique assets – its stadiums, historic buildings, the George R. Brown (GRB) Convention Center, the Theater District, and more – Downtown Houston will continue to expand its tourism and visitation base, ascend as top tier global destination for conventions, and host a broader range of national and international events.

1A USE DOWNTOWN'S UNIQUE ASSETS TO GROW HOUSTON'S NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR HOSTING CONVENTIONS, MEETINGS, AND MAJOR EVENTS.

New hotels, stadiums, theater venues, parks, physical improvements to the GRB Convention Center, and the street conversion of Avenida Houston have reinforced Houston's status as a prime international event destination. Successful hosting of Super Bowl LI and the NCAA Final Four has proven Downtown's capacity to attract, entertain, and manage large-scale events and their logistics. In order to continue this momentum, Downtown needs to ensure that its existing assets and attractions remain competitive.

- Undertake capital improvements and expansions as recommended in the *GRB Convention Center 2025 Master Plan*, including the south expo hall expansion, while balancing mobility and improving connectivity to the east (see map on page 12, #8).
- Build an additional 4,000 hotel rooms in Downtown and East Downtown (EaDo) to support convention, leisure and business visitation, with the 20-year goal of 12,000 hotel rooms in Downtown, including a minimum of 8,000 rooms within a 10-minute walk of the GRB Convention Center.
- Add two large convention center hotels as recommended in the *GRB Convention Center 2025 Master Plan*, near the eastern corners of the Convention District to enhance and expand the convention markets (see map on page 12, #9).
- Introduce a dynamic, elevated pedestrian connection from the GRB Convention Center to EaDo (see map on page 12, #10).
- Enhance the environments surrounding Downtown's stadiums as amenity-rich infill neighborhoods.
- Advance projects and improvements in the *2016 Houston Theater District Master Plan* to create an immersive arts and culture environment.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycling connections to Buffalo Bayou, and continue the Bayou's park and trail enhancements eastward through Downtown (see map on page 12, #6 and page 15, #2).
- Elevate the public realm to support the diverse array of special events – parades, rallies, runs, walk, rides, festivals, marches, and ceremonies.



UNIQUE ATTRACTIONS.

Downtown's unique attractions, such as the theatre district and convention center, attract numerous visitors.



MAJOR EVENTS.

Downtown has become a major destination for events such as conventions, the Final Four and the Super Bowl.

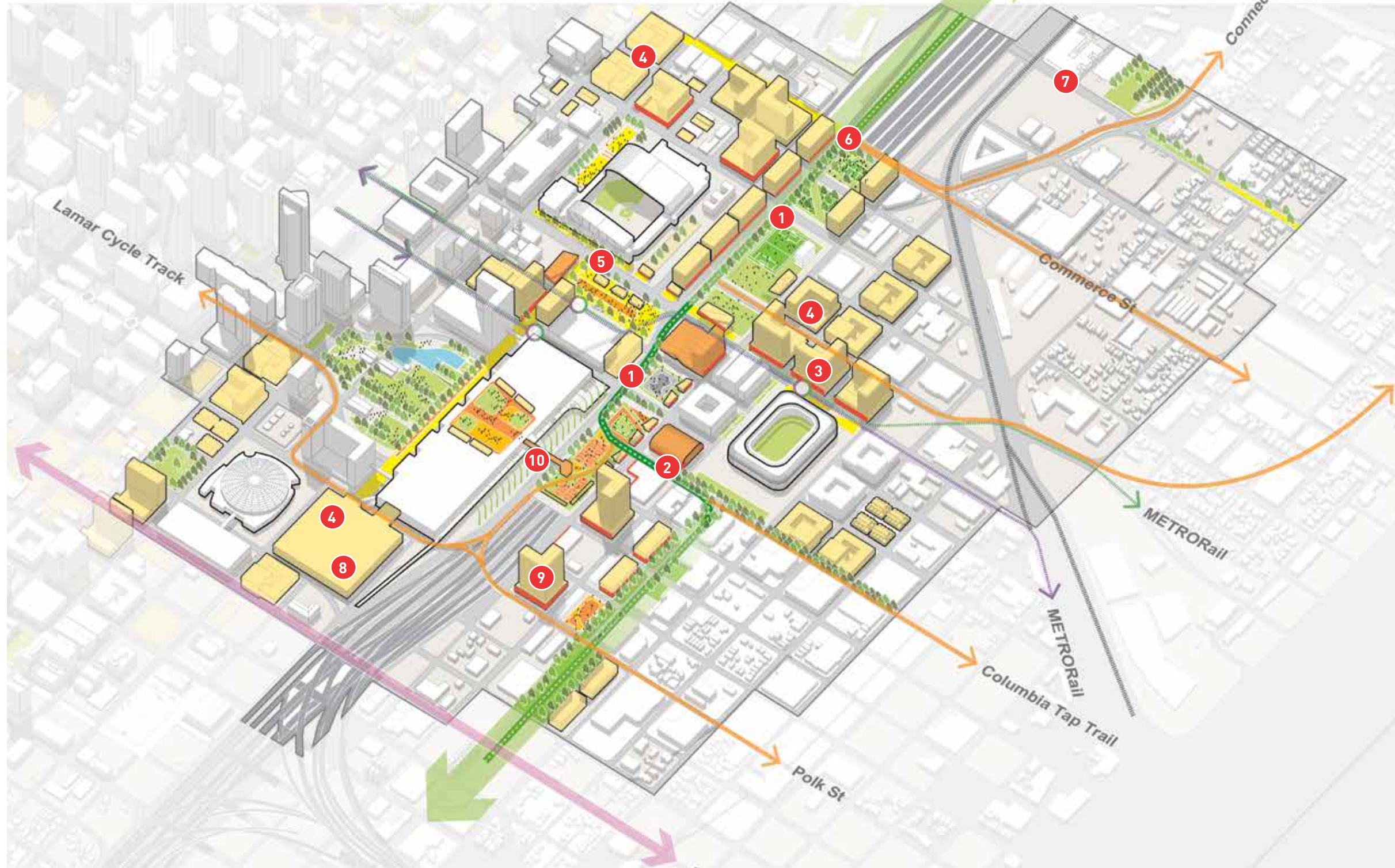


1B REIMAGINE DOWNTOWN'S EDGES.

The North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP), as described under Strategy 2, presents numerous opportunities for Downtown, prompted by the availability of new public land as a part of the highway relocation. Downtown's eastern edge can be reimagined as a major activity center drawing together the GRB Convention Center, stadiums, and major new investments in public spaces, parks and an entertainment district.

East:

- Build out the sports and convention districts between Downtown and EaDo to further enhance the shared nightlife, stadiums, convention center, parks and plazas.
- 1 Develop the highway cap as a pedestrian first, multi-use recreational and civic assembly place. Adjacent sites in Downtown and EaDo should be coordinated in their programmatic and physical development to complement the cap for daily activities and major events.
- 2 Provide alternative mobility connections to EaDo by connecting the Green Loop with the Columbia Tap Trail (see Strategy 2). The highway cap could include a public market as proposed in the 2016 *Houston Public Market Study*.
- 3 Support pedestrian improvements and transit-oriented development (TOD) along the Green and Purple METRORail lines between the EaDo/BBVA Compass Stadium and Convention District stations.
- 4 Develop near-term, high-standard parking solutions that support game day and convention events, with respect to the needs of current and future residents and businesses in proximity of the highway cap.
- 5 Develop a new event plaza at Texas Avenue and Avenida de las Americas to connect the energy of Avenida Houston and Discovery Green with the highway cap. The envisioned space will function as the "hinge" between Downtown and EaDo during game days and large events.
- 6 Create new and strengthened connections to the Buffalo Bayou East Sector and Second Ward through Commerce Street and continuous trail improvements along both banks of Buffalo Bayou.
- 7 Restore Runnels Street to Navigation Boulevard as a grade-separated connection relative to the NHHIP, to continue existing service as the primary neighborhood access between Downtown and the Greater East End.



- 8 Expand the GRB Convention Center (See page 10).
- 9 Develop at least two convention center hotels (See page 10).
- 10 Connect the GRB Convention Center to the east (See page 10).





North:

Across the northern edge of Downtown, additional opportunities are created by Union Pacific (UP) freight rail relocation, the growth of UH-Downtown, the location of significant County assets, and the unique character of the Historic and Warehouse Districts.

- 1 Plan for UH-Downtown campus expansion including student housing.
- 2 Connect Buffalo Bayou East Sector with Allen's Landing by building trails and open spaces through City, County and CenterPoint Energy properties.
- 3 Develop a North Downtown Transit Center that serves light rail, bus, and transit investments.
- 4 Transform Commerce Street into a historically authentic "produce row" which serves as a gateway to the east and north.
- 5 Build the North Canal (White Oak Bayou bypass), as recommended in the 2002 Buffalo Bayou Master Plan, as an enriched waterfront amenity with storm water conveyance benefits. Relocate METRO's bus facility to the area vacated by the NHHIP.
- 6 Evaluate, with public input and in tandem with the NHHIP, the realignment of the UP freight and passenger rail lines with a new passenger rail station adjacent to METRO's Burnett Plaza Transit Center.
- 7 Extend Dart Street from the First Ward to Main Street, with connections to Bagby, Rothwell and Providence Streets.
- 8 Extend North San Jacinto Street to connect to Fulton Street in the Near Northside.
- 9 Preserve Nance and Sterrett Streets as the historic core of warehouse structures and existing art studios.
- 10 Explore development options for additional live/work spaces for artists to build upon the character of the Warehouse District.
- 11 Utilize public land vacated by the NHHIP to support Downtown's population growth goals and workforce housing opportunities at new development sites.
- 12 Establish enhanced storm water detention areas and natural open space amenities in the areas vacated by the NHHIP.





Southwest:

The south and southwest edges present unique opportunities for improved connections between Downtown, Midtown and the Third and Fourth Wards.

- 1 Connect Downtown's office core to housing and entertainment options in Midtown and the Fourth Ward. Reconstruct a connective promenade along Andrews Street and highlight the area's African-American history through public art, monuments and historical interpretation.
- 2 Enhance the Green Loop north/south connection between Midtown, Fourth Ward and Buffalo Bayou Park via Heiner Street, with a NHHIP-widened, heavily-landscape pedestrian/bike trail.

South:

- 3 Establish an east-west linear greenway along Pierce Street in areas vacated by the NHHIP.
- 4 Develop a signature building that spans a portion of the Pierce Elevated. This development would attract locals and visitors for shopping, and establish a centralized connector between Midtown and Downtown.
- 5 Evaluate the options to preserve a portion of the Pierce Elevated as a park that catalyzes new investment and provides opportunities for a flexible neighborhood program underneath.

West:

The west edge offers an opportunity available in no other area of Downtown: a concentration of City-owned property with more than 100 acres of prime land that fronts Buffalo Bayou.

- 8 Reposition the Civic Center as the focal point for a 21st century government complex through the restoration of City Hall and improved or new facilities for government services.
- 9 Prioritize critical functions and facilities for the Houston Police and Fire Departments, relocating ancillary services and functions to alternative sites.
- 10 Investigate methods to redevelop the City's Justice Complex as a strategic location for high-profile civic uses, governmental offices, and new housing.
- 11 Pursue opportunities for additional attractions and institutions, including a Houston history or cultural diversity museum, a new state-of-the-art library, or an outdoor music or art venue. These new attractions should focus on civic and arts-based uses that connect the Theater District, the Civic Center and Justice Complex, and the First and Sixth Wards across Buffalo Bayou.
- 12 Develop an observation deck with a full 360 view, located on Downtown's Green Loop along the west side.
- 13 Extend the Green and Purple METRORail lines to the City's Justice Complex to increase the utility of the light rail system, set the stage for future transit expansions, and strengthen the case for redevelopment.
- 14 Anchor west side redevelopment with the vacant Barbara Jordan Post Office. Equivalent to eight city blocks, the Post Office site offers key connections to Buffalo Bayou, the Theater District, the Historic District and Washington Avenue. A one-of-a-kind multi-cultural center with food, art, retail, offices, assembly, hospitality and educational facilities could serve as a Downtown destination that showcases Houston's diversity.
- 15 Redevelop west side open spaces – Jones Plaza, Hermann Square, Tranquillity Park, and Sam Houston Park – as key urban places that link the office towers, the Theater District, the Civic Center and Buffalo Bayou, which feed the Green Loop.
- 16 Rebuild Bagby Street as a welcoming gateway to Downtown from the west.
- 17 Redevelop Bayou Place in accordance with the 2016 *Houston Theater District Master Plan* to enliven the Buffalo Bayou frontage and the reimagined Jones Plaza and Bagby Street.
- 18 Realize infill opportunities and activate street frontage within the office corridors from Smith to Travis Streets, strengthening Downtown's commercial core through increased residential, civic, and retail development.
- Improve privately-owned public spaces through design guidelines, using programming and temporary activation to transform these spaces into sites for community, entertainment and commerce.



DOWNTOWN IS
HOUSTON'S
GREATEST
PLACE TO BE

2 Create Downtown's Green Loop.

The Green Loop provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rethink Downtown's edges. The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) is a 24-mile, \$7 billion, decade-long infrastructure project; it entails a full rebuild of the three highways encircling Downtown, most notably with the

realignment of IH-45 to the north and east of Downtown in shared right-of-ways with IH-10 and IH-69, respectively. As an "overlay" on the NHHIP, the 5-mile Green Loop is a neighborhood connecting transportation and recreation circuit, with public space and adjacent development on all edges of Downtown.

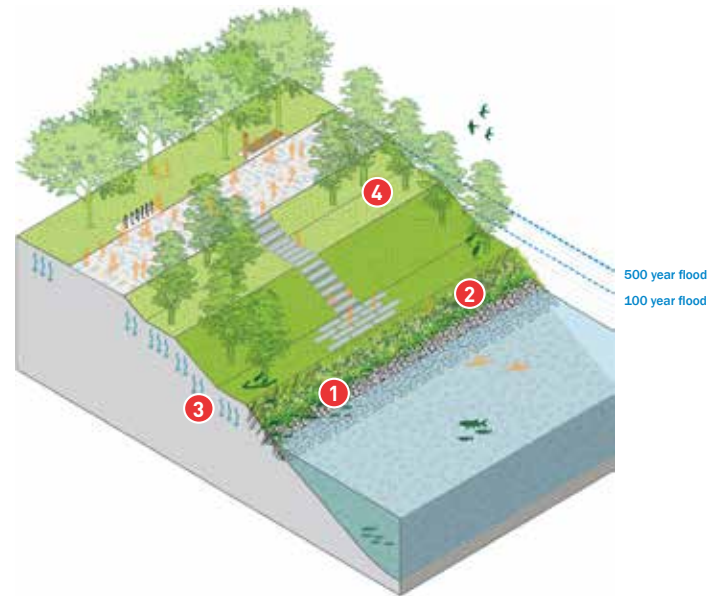
2A

CREATE DOWNTOWN'S GREEN LOOP AS A TRANSFORMATIVE TRAIL, PARK, AND PUBLIC SPACE SYSTEM THAT OFFERS CONNECTIVITY, ATTRACTIONS, AND SIGNATURE OPEN SPACES.

The NHHIP will fully remove or trench many of the elevated highways that surround Downtown. Where a gray loop of 20th century infrastructure currently defines these edges, a "green loop" comprised of green spaces and trails will stimulate development of prime opportunity sites, offer new multi-functional open spaces that manage water, and provide recreational and public assembly opportunities. The 5-mile Green Loop will present a 21st century image of Houston's core, both from the air and on the ground.

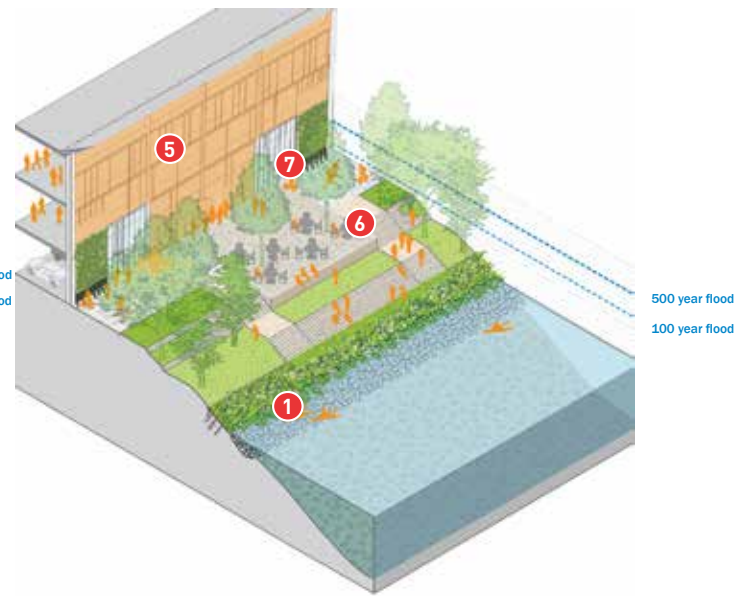
- Develop a connected system of parks, trails, and public spaces, with key connections to Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Conceive the Green Loop as the center of the Bayou Greenways, to be used as the trailhead for visitors to discover Houston's bayous and trails.
- Engage the Green Loop and Buffalo Bayou architecturally through activated ground floors and an inviting public realm while also ensuring development is resilient to flood events and supportive of the region's unique ecology.
- Develop civic spaces such as libraries, schools, and community centers that front the Green Loop in support of the central city, and to support resilience and disaster recovery goals (See diagram below).
- Restore the city's street grid and vital infrastructure around the Green Loop, strengthening connections and utility services between Downtown and central city neighborhoods.
- Design signature attractions such as bridges over Buffalo and White Oak Bayous to present new skyline panoramas of Downtown.

RESILIENT EDGE

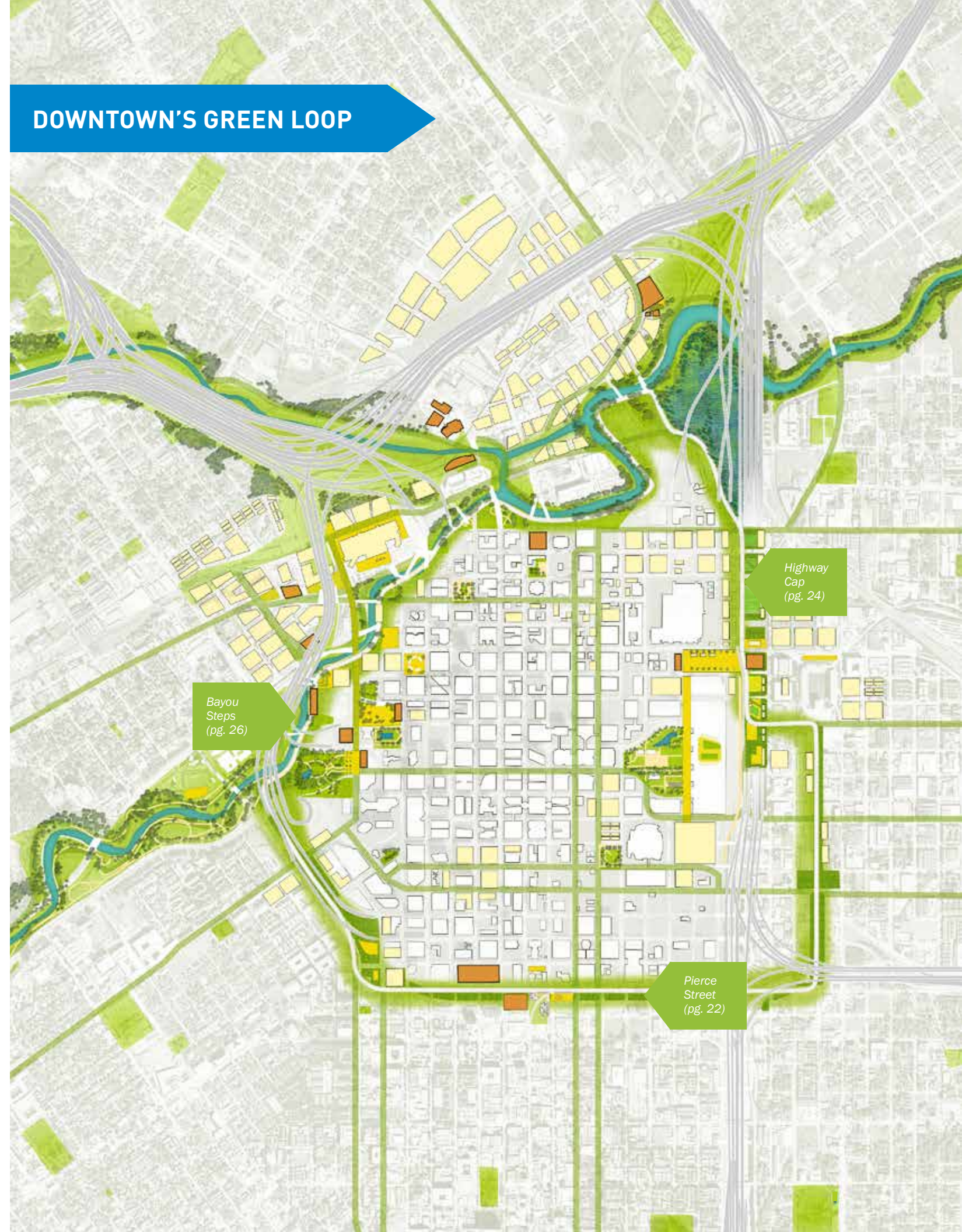


- 1 Provide active access to the Bayou with minimal impact to the ecological systems.
- 2 Control erosion to support the riparian habitat.
- 3 Absorb stormwater to reduce flooding.
- 4 Plan diverse, adaptive vegetation.
- 5 Engage the bayou architecturally.
- 6 Create waterfront gathering spaces and trail linkages.

ACTIVE EDGE



- 7 Elevate building systems to protect from flooding.





1 GREEN LOOP

Create a trail with a generous pedestrian path, an amenity zone, and a two-way bikeway. Paving, materials, and patterns should be high-quality and consistent to brand the trail.

2 ACTIVE FRONTAGE

Energize the Green Loop by lining it with active ground floor uses, cafe seating, public art, and other amenities.

3 TREE ALLÉE

Plant an allée of large canopy trees to provide shade and identity for the Green Loop

4 REPROGRAMMED INFRASTRUCTURE

Evaluate the options for preserving a portion of the Pierce Elevated, potentially incorporating retail or recreation uses above and below the decommissioned highway.

5 LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Implement state of the art water quality and detention/retention strategies to reduce the impacts of flood events.

6 SIGNATURE DESTINATIONS

Develop a signature destination, potentially reutilizing a portion of the Pierce Elevated.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



HIGHWAY CAP



1 RECREATIONAL FIELDS

Utilize the cap to provide opportunities for active recreation that are unavailable at smaller parks within the area.

3 LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT

Utilize new development, including residential and new convention hotels, to activate the cap edges.

5 GREEN LOOP AMENITIES

Provide high-quality street furniture, bus shelters, pedestrian lighting, bike racks and other amenities that create a consistent pedestrian-oriented experience.

2 GEORGE R BROWN CONNECTION

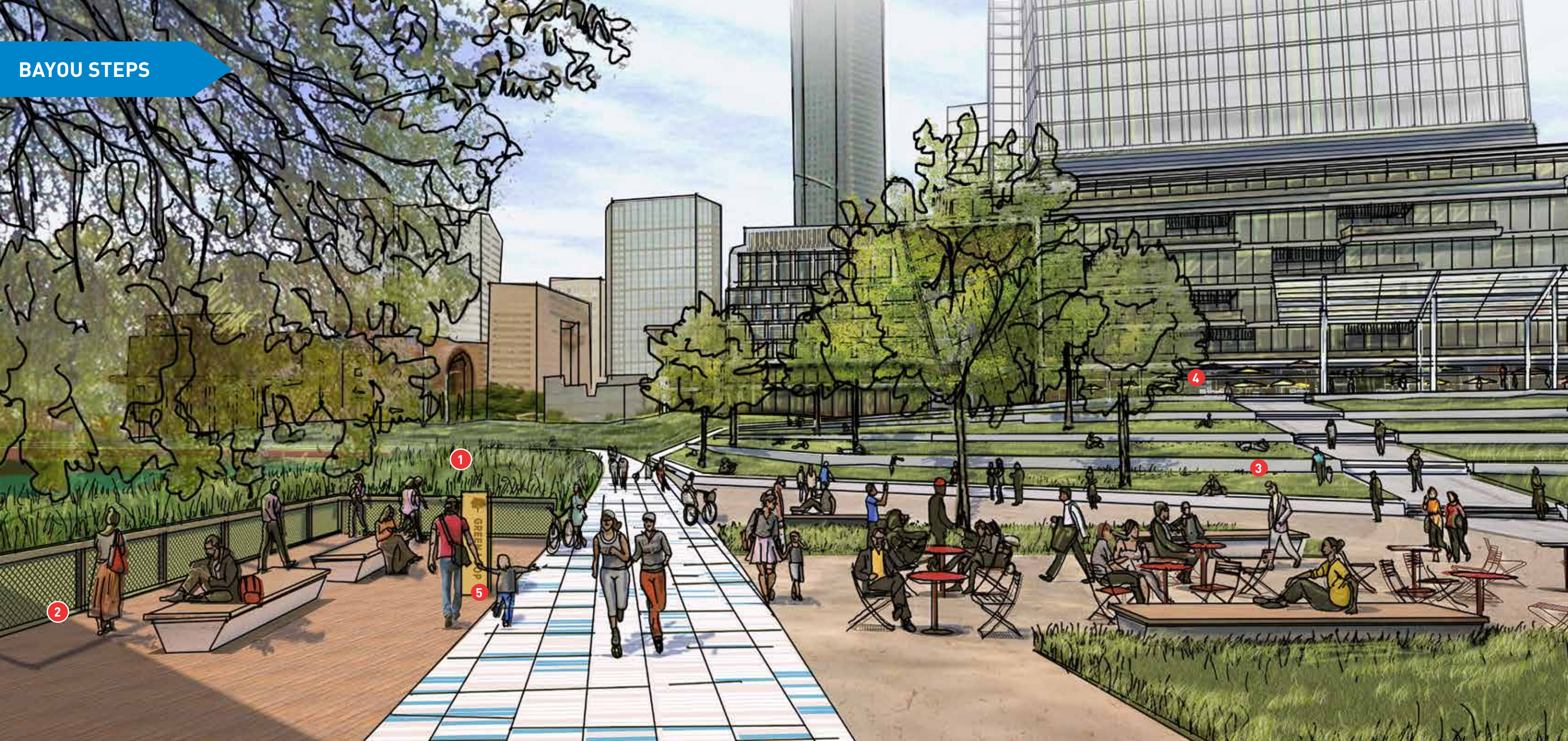
Create a direct connection to the East from the Convention Center.

4 ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES

Develop restaurant spaces and other key pavilions on the cap.

EXISTING CONDITIONS





1 RESILIENT EDGES

Utilize plant material and low impact design to create Bayou edges that are resilient to storm events.

2 ACTIVE EDGES

Provide seating and programing that engage the Bayou and bring people closer to the water.

3 GRADE CHANGES

Utilize topographic changes and encourage connections between the Bayou, Green Loop, and the Downtown street grid.

4 FOUR-SIDED ARCHITECTURE

Design new buildings to relate to both the Downtown street grid and the Bayou. Ensure buildings have active frontage along the Green Loop as a priority.

5 SIGNATURE WAYFINDING

Design a system of contemporary signage for wayfinding along the Green Loop.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



3 Enliven Downtown Through Enhanced Walkability and Engaging Places.

DOWNTOWN IS HOUSTON'S GREATEST PLACE TO BE

Built on a historic street grid, with wide sidewalks and tall buildings providing shade, Downtown is easily the most walkable neighborhood in Houston. For the past 25 years, Downtown has been Houston's leader in constructing Complete Streets, and almost 80% of Downtown's streets and sidewalks have been rebuilt, most notably the Cotswold Project, Main Street, Downtown Transit Streets, the Lamar Cycletrack, Dallas Street, and Avenida Houston. However, walkability

and placemaking involve many elements beyond these core assets: the experience of walking is defined by environmental comfort; the feeling of personal safety; a captivating, inviting public realm; parks and plazas that serve as intermediate destinations and gathering places; and most importantly – strong edges, with active ground floors that offer interest, visual engagement, and opportunities for commerce and social interactions.



3A CONCEIVE OF WALKABILITY AS A CORNERSTONE OF DOWNTOWN'S CHARACTER THROUGH DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS AND NEW DESTINATIONS THAT CONNECT AND EXPAND DOWNTOWN'S CURRENT AND FUTURE GREAT PLACES.

Downtown has a high concentration of truly amazing places: the Theater District, Historic Market Square, Buffalo Bayou, Discovery Green, and Minute Maid Park, to name only a few. However, Downtown's amazing places are often perceived as disconnected from each other, separated by gaps of uninteresting blocks, leading many users to experience their walk as longer than the actual distance.

- Prioritize public realm activation and intersection improvements in conjunction with new destinations to create vibrant, walkable environments.
- Develop Downtown Design Guidelines with developers and stakeholders including communications and utility companies. Establish these Design Guidelines as an ordinance that sets the requirements for public and private (re)development of building ground floors and public spaces and sets the standards for flood protection and resilience.
- Develop strategies for tree planting, green walls, transit shelters, or canopy shade structures. These micro-climate enhancements should include public art, water features, and street furnishings wherever possible.
- Integrate new public places and convert ground floors of existing buildings along key corridors to reduce perceived distances between destinations.
- Enhance existing open spaces and privately-owned public spaces through capital improvements and initiatives to provide programming and amenities.

CAROLINE STREET



CAROLINE STREET (EXISTING)

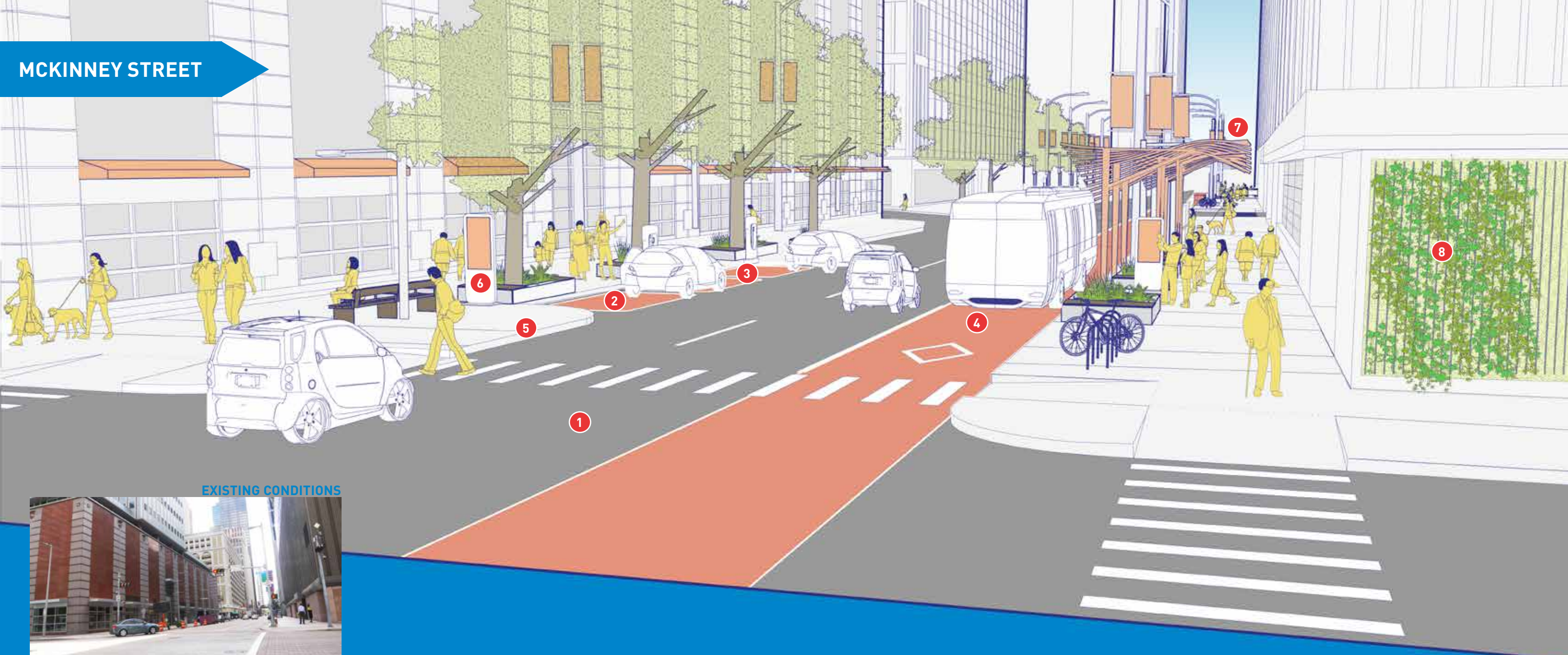


CAROLINE STREET (PROPOSED)

- 1 INFILL DEVELOPMENT**
Promote new development with active ground floors, especially uses which serve daily needs within emerging residential districts.
- 2 WIDER SIDEWALKS**
Prioritize wider sidewalks within priority walking districts and corridors.
- 3 STREET AMENITIES**
Provide street furniture, shade structures and awnings, and other amenities that create a pedestrian oriented experience.
- 4 STREET TREES**
Plant street trees wherever possible in order to provide continuous shade and ecological services.
- 5 OUTDOOR SEATING**
Encourage cafe seating and other opportunities for ground floor uses to engage the public realm.
- 6 PROTECTED BIKE LANE**
Create a protected bike lane with dedicated streetspace and clear markings.



MCKINNEY STREET



EXISTING CONDITIONS



MCKINNEY STREET (EXISTING)



MCKINNEY STREET (PROPOSED)

- 1 STREETS OF THE FUTURE**
Autonomous vehicles and technological changes will require adaptation of our street spaces. The ability of vehicles to speak with each other may limit the need for traffic signals.
- 2 AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE / SERVICE ZONES**
Streets will require pick-up and drop-off curb zones as single occupancy/driver operated vehicles become less common.
- 3 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING**
EV Charging Stations can be provided in parking areas.
- 4 DEDICATED TRANSIT LANES**
Driverless transit vehicles and dedicated street space can provide a higher quality frequent bus experience.
- 5 INTERSECTION CORNERS**
Sidewalk extensions shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians and provide a better walking experience.
- 6 SMART WAYFINDING**
Interactive video screens can provide adaptive wayfinding experiences, providing transit or shopping information, or other data or messages as necessary.
- 7 SHADE STRUCTURES**
Where underground utilities or vaults make the planting of street trees impossible, provide alternative shade structures.
- 8 GREEN WALL**
Utilize green walls or public art where active ground floor conversions are not possible.



3B

CREATE PEOPLE-FOCUSED WALKABLE DISTRICTS THAT BUILD ON DOWNTOWN'S EMERGING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES, ENLIVEN THE OFFICE CORE, AND ESTABLISH SHOPPING PLACES WITHIN DOWNTOWN.

Establish walkable, multi-block districts where key blocks and frontages create a critical mass of retail places. These areas should have identifiable public elements such as signage and wayfinding; concentrations of retail, dining, open spaces, attractions, and other ground-floor activities; places of worship and community gathering places; and a pedestrian-oriented public realm.

- Create clearly defined shopping places.
- Position Downtown for the future of retail, including a higher percentage of services, restaurant and bar establishments, luxury or bespoke goods, and “flagship stores” with a clear understanding that shopping and the delivery of goods is both a physical and digital experience. Seek a blend of local, national and international retail establishments.
- Emphasize and support ground floor activation through compelling architecture, landscape, art, signage, and sidewalk cafes as vital components of a more pleasant and engaging stroll.
- Strive to connect entrances to the tunnel and skywalk network that support the sidewalk and ground floor experience, offering pedestrians a more legible and seamless flow between indoor and outdoor walking routes.



WHAT MAKES A GREAT STREET?

- 1 HUMAN-SCALED BUILDING FACADE
- 2 OUTDOOR SEATING
- 3 FLOWERS, PLANTS, AND TREES
- 4 CONTINUITY OF DEVELOPMENT
- 5 GENEROUS PEDESTRIAN THOROUGHFARE
- 6 INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TRANSPARENCY
- 7 PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING
- 8 HIGH QUALITY MATERIALS
- 9 EYES ON THE STREET
- 10 WELL DESIGNED SIGNAGE
- 11 COLOR AND TEXTURE
- 12 UNIQUE STOREFRONTS





**DOWNTOWN IS
THE PREMIER
BUSINESS AND
GOVERNMENT
LOCATION**

4 Support Downtown's Existing Businesses and Promote Corporate Attraction.

Business is Downtown's economic engine. With over 150,000 employees and numerous Fortune 500 companies, Downtown is Houston's premier business district. Federal, State and especially County and City government all have a major presence within and adjacent to Downtown; in fact, public administration supports 26,000 jobs, the largest employment sector in Downtown. Supporting existing businesses, office property owners, and County and City government is essential to Downtown's future success.

The energy industry has been central to Downtown's growth, but diversifying into new areas of the energy ecosystem and attracting major corporations in other sectors will help provide balanced growth and economic resilience for Downtown. Ensuring that Downtown businesses have access to a connected community of corporate and civic leaders will promote long-term investment and maintain Downtown as the premier business address in Texas.

4A DOWNTOWN WILL REINFORCE ITS STATUS AS THE HEART OF THE WORLD'S ENERGY CAPITAL AND THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS BUSINESS ADDRESS IN TEXAS.

Houston is the energy capital of the world, and Downtown is central to many facets of the oil and gas industry. Embodying all aspects of energy business — exploration, production, transportation, trading, refining, petrochemicals, marketing, distribution, and transmission — Houston has ascended as the world's preeminent energy center. With continued strength of the sector and close ties to the Port of Houston, the tenth largest port in the world, Downtown is primed as the leader in energy. Global headquarters remain committed to Downtown and contribute to the dense cluster of talented workers and face-to-face encounters that support a dynamic work environment. Energy businesses support a range of complementary services and catalyze spinoff activity in other industries. Legal, accounting, technical, consulting, and commercial and investment banking services all support Downtown's energy business and foster collaboration for continued growth in professional networks across the broader Downtown business community.

- Grow the energy ecosystem while supporting the diversification of Downtown's business community with alternative energy development and other adjacencies or spin-offs from the traditional oil and gas sector.
- Invest in relationships among civic and business leaders throughout Downtown to cultivate a professional network that supports business retention over the long term.
- Reposition the industry with local innovation and targeted outreach for corporate expansion and relocation.
- Continue investments to further improve the public realm, transportation, residential, retail, and entertainment options in order to attract a talented and educated workforce.
- Support corporate expansion and/or relocations through local infrastructure investment, workforce development, marketing, and a strategic toolbox of development programs.
- Expand the workforce population by 20% over 20 years to continually grow the employee base.

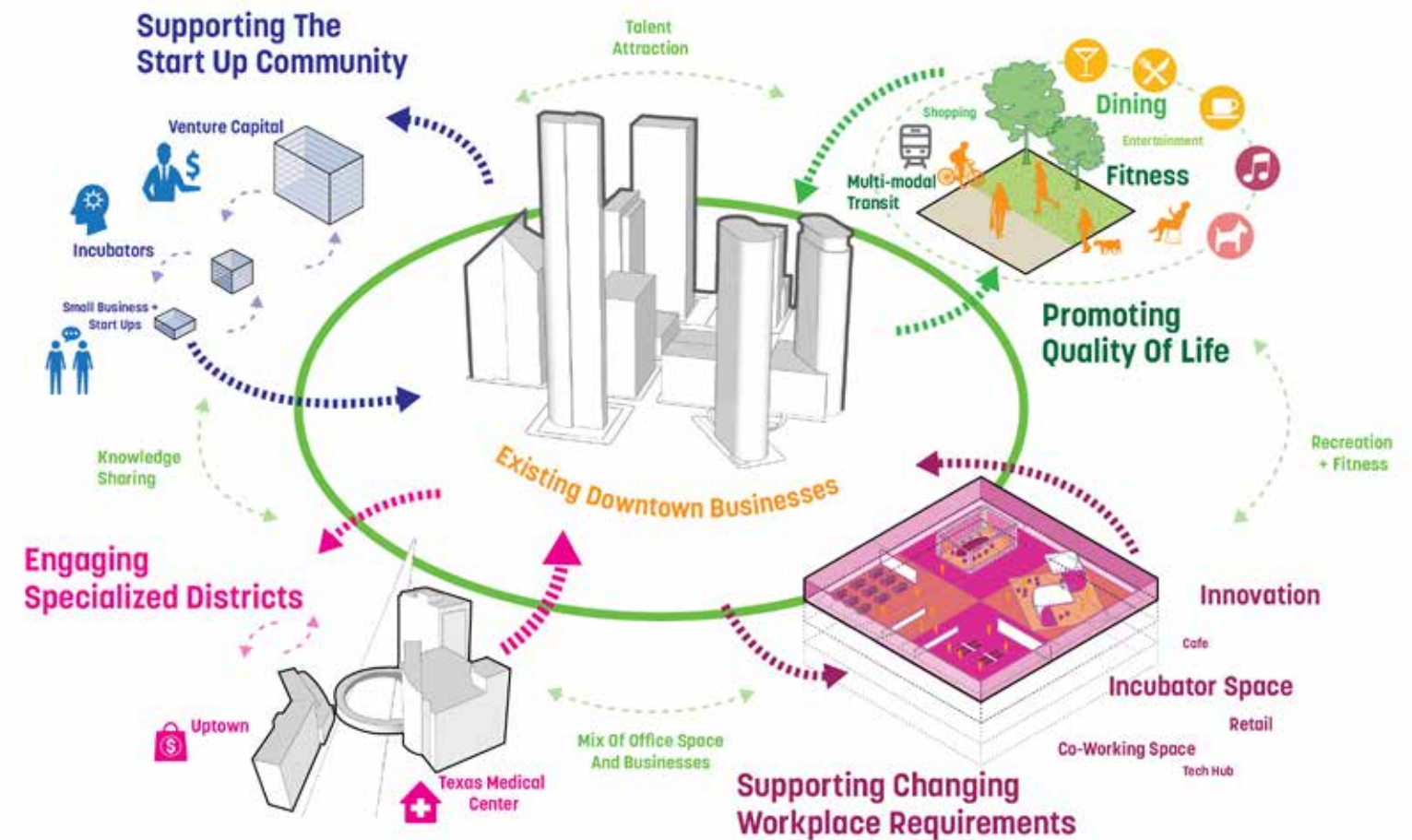
4B REIMAGINE PUBLIC ASSETS TO ENSURE THE NEXT GENERATION OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES CAN SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE COUNTY AND CITY.

While Downtown is the center of the region's private sector, it is also home to a broad collection of public sector facilities and services. Indeed, both Harris County and the City of Houston are among Downtown's largest landholders and employers. Many Houstonians come Downtown solely to access these governmental institutions. With Downtown at the center of the third most populous county and fourth most populous city in the United States, these dual government centers can be upgraded and expanded to provide critical public services and reflect the values of twenty-first century governance.

- Refresh the *Harris County Downtown Master Plan* to ensure efficient use of public assets and to respond to increased responsibilities, land acquisitions, and evolving public needs.
- Develop a resiliency plan for both County and City campuses, and establish guidelines for new construction or remodeled facilities in or near the floodplain.
- Establish the process and create the Master Plan required for City officials and departments to evaluate all facilities and properties in and near Downtown, including the Civic Center, Justice Complex, and other Downtown buildings and public spaces.

BUILDING THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY ECONOMY.

Both existing businesses and the innovation economy are increasingly promoting quality of life and supporting changing workplace requirements.





**DOWNTOWN IS
THE PREMIER
BUSINESS AND
GOVERNMENT
LOCATION**

5 Build Downtown's Innovation Ecosystem and the Office of the Future.

Technology and innovation are powerful engines for economic growth and vitality in cities today. Growing innovation economies in American cities have generated benefits such as jobs, higher wages, and tax revenue. These economies require the presence of a talented workforce, high-quality incubator and small-business office space, and a concentration of research and development assets including research universities, business accelerators, and access to venture capital. The concept of an "innovation cluster" is essential to spurring innovative start-ups and small businesses as well as attracting investors and top talent. Opportunities for collaboration and advancement result from the numerous collisions and points

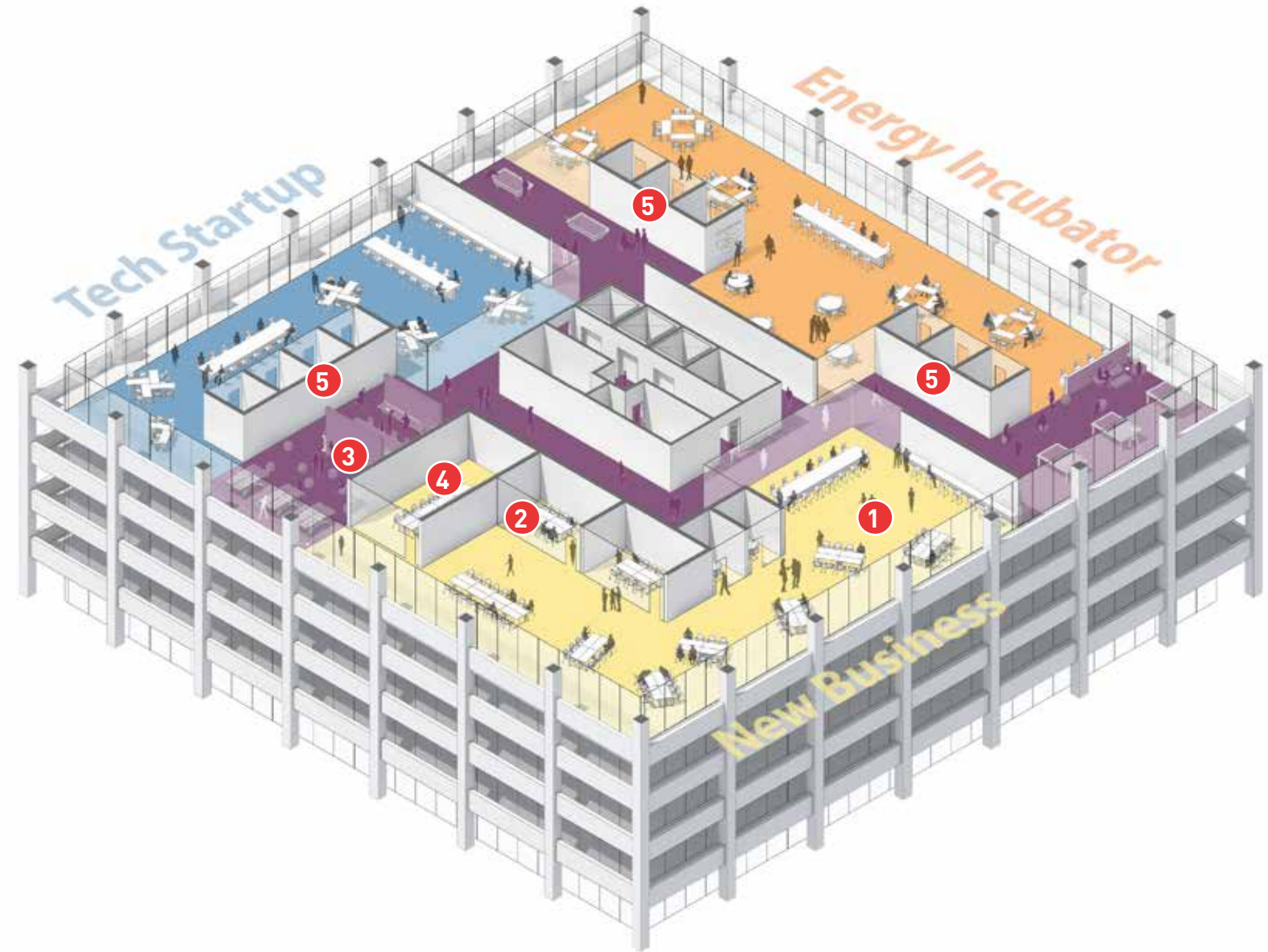
of friction that stem from having a critical mass of business start-ups and research in a single area.

Political and business leaders recognize the opportunity to grow Houston's innovation economy. Through the Mayor's Technology and Innovation Task Force and the Greater Houston Partnership's Innovation Strategy Office, a framework has been developed to enhance Houston's tech ecosystem, including the need for additional collaborative facilities to unlock the potential of this sector. Downtown's Innovation District will become the center of gravity for technology and entrepreneurship in the Houston region.

5A DOWNTOWN WILL STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN EXISTING BUSINESSES AND THE START-UP COMMUNITY, AND PROVIDE THE “OFFICE OF THE FUTURE” TO LAUNCH, GROW, AND RETAIN CUTTING-EDGE BUSINESSES.

Downtown must ensure that start-up and small businesses reach a pivotal density within Downtown, that research and business partnerships prosper, and that the necessary capital is available to keep businesses in Houston as they grow and require additional investment. Offering the correct mix of Downtown office space for start-ups and small businesses will also help attract and keep innovators and their funders within Downtown.

- Leverage Downtown’s existing sectoral strengths in the energy sector to differentiate the Innovation District.
- Partner with a national innovation leader to promote Houston’s innovation economy.
- Work with existing Downtown property owners and managers to convert 5% to 10% of Downtown properties into new office spaces with appealing design and flexible layouts for start-ups and small businesses at affordable and/or protected rents.
- Leverage workforce development based on the Mayor’s Complete Communities initiative for neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown in order to support the innovation economy.
- Obtain input from start-up and entrepreneurs to define their needs, culminating in a set of prototype office designs and leasing options for property owners to distribute across the range of needs.
- Partner with universities, community colleges, vocational schools and high schools to establish a classroom-to-career pipeline for Houston’s innovation economy. Enhance sector strengths through research collaboration, targeted training, internships, on-site job fairs, and tax incentives.
- Provide free or low-cost space for start-ups at multiple stages of growth.
- Collaborate with the Small Business Development Center, the Small Business Administration, and the University of Houston Small Business Development Center in Midtown to establish a Downtown Small Business Center, a one-stop shop or flex space that streamlines how small businesses work with the City, ensuring they are taking advantage of business incentives, accessing state and federal grants, and helping navigate permitting Downtown.
- Support programming and community events within Downtown to build momentum and strengthen connections between existing businesses, venture capitalists, angel investors, entrepreneurs, academia and the workforce.



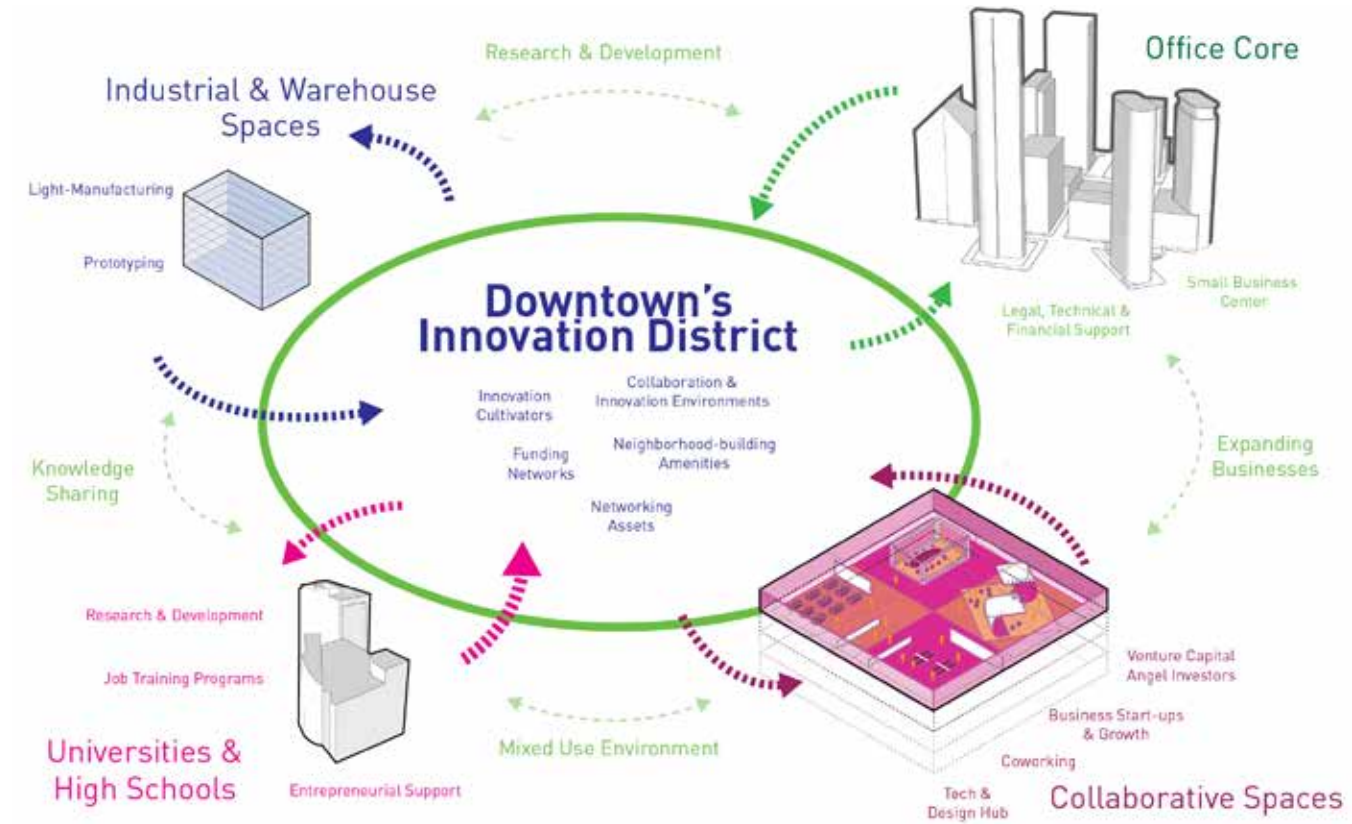
- 1 FLEXIBLE WORK SPACES**
For both co-working spaces and for many companies, open floor plans have become the norm. Increasingly, companies may provide a number of different seating experiences (standing desks, bars, couches, traditional desks) rather than having a specific desk assigned to an employee.
- 2 SMALL COMPANY OFFICES**
Small start-ups and established companies may prefer private spaces. Provide small offices for four to twenty employees.
- 3 SHARED AMENITY AREAS**
Group kitchens and recreation areas are increasingly common within offices.
- 4 SHARED CONFERENCE ROOMS**
Shared conference rooms of varying sizes are provided along with online reservation systems.
- 5 PHONE BOOTHS**
Small rooms provide privacy for phone calls or two person meetings.



5B CREATE A DOWNTOWN INNOVATION DISTRICT.

Establish and grow Downtown’s Innovation District to become the center of gravity for technology and entrepreneurship in the Houston region. Today, more than 250 early-stage software and digital technology companies are already a part of the Downtown innovation community. The collisions and culture that attract high value talent will drive billions of dollars of investment into the Innovation District. Strategically located within Houston, Downtown is uniquely positioned as the central node of a larger innovation corridor that can leverage distinct partnership advantages with UH-Downtown, Texas Southern University, University of Houston, Rice University and the Texas Medical Center in order to grow entrepreneurial activity and retain local talent. The Downtown Innovation District can also leverage Downtown’s advantage in the energy sector by encouraging incubator, accelerator, and co-working spaces targeted at energy technology, manufacturing technology, alternative energy, and energy lifecycle companies, as well as the desired urban lifestyles of employees and company founders. Healthcare, cybersecurity, enterprise software development, climate resilience and adaptation, and autonomous vehicle innovation are all strong secondary sectors with innovation potential. Promote the Downtown Innovation District as a regional innovation network that creates a physical home for the innovation economy.

- Support a “lead” organization or governance structure for the Innovation District, its associated venue(s), and member companies.
- Partner with the Innovation and Technology Task Force to identify potential funding sources for necessary capital improvements and operating programs that would strengthen the Innovation District.
- Guide access to venture capital and angel investment for innovation businesses and provide programs for information and technical assistance.
- Build momentum and relationships within the innovation ecosystem by strengthening connections between existing businesses, funders, entrepreneurs, and the innovation workforce through targeted programming.
- Pursue university satellite campuses, supported by corporate sponsorships, that are fully integrated into Downtown and the Innovation District.



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Catalyze Downtown's Emerging Neighborhoods.

The Downtown Living Initiative (DLI) has produced residential clusters around Market Square Park, Minute Maid Park, and in southern Downtown. These burgeoning neighborhoods are bringing new energy and vitality to the formerly office-centric core. Reinforcing the respective identities of Downtown's residential clusters with distinct streetscape elements, activating the streets with resident-oriented retail and open space, adding nearby schools and daycare centers, and supporting larger

units and homeownership opportunities will establish these areas as diverse, multi-generational neighborhoods. Areas comprising Downtown's edges, such as the City's Justice Complex and the Warehouse District, should be targeted for additional residential development, as should infill near Downtown's transit stations, which can become mixed-use hubs of activity. Through these efforts, Downtown will significantly grow its population, creating a sustainable community that supports 18/7 shopping, dining, and entertainment.

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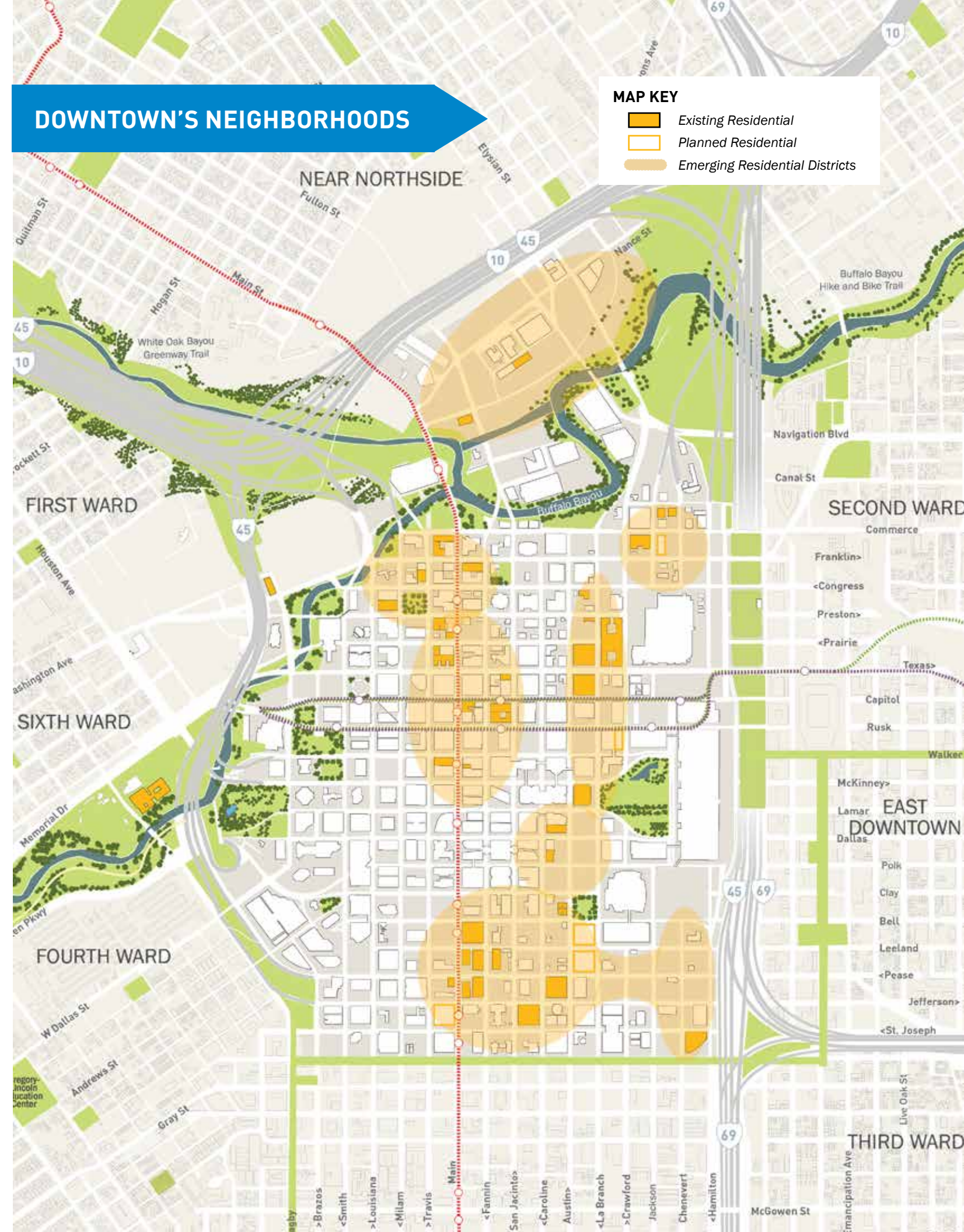
DOWNTOWN IS
THE STANDARD
FOR URBAN
LIVABILITY

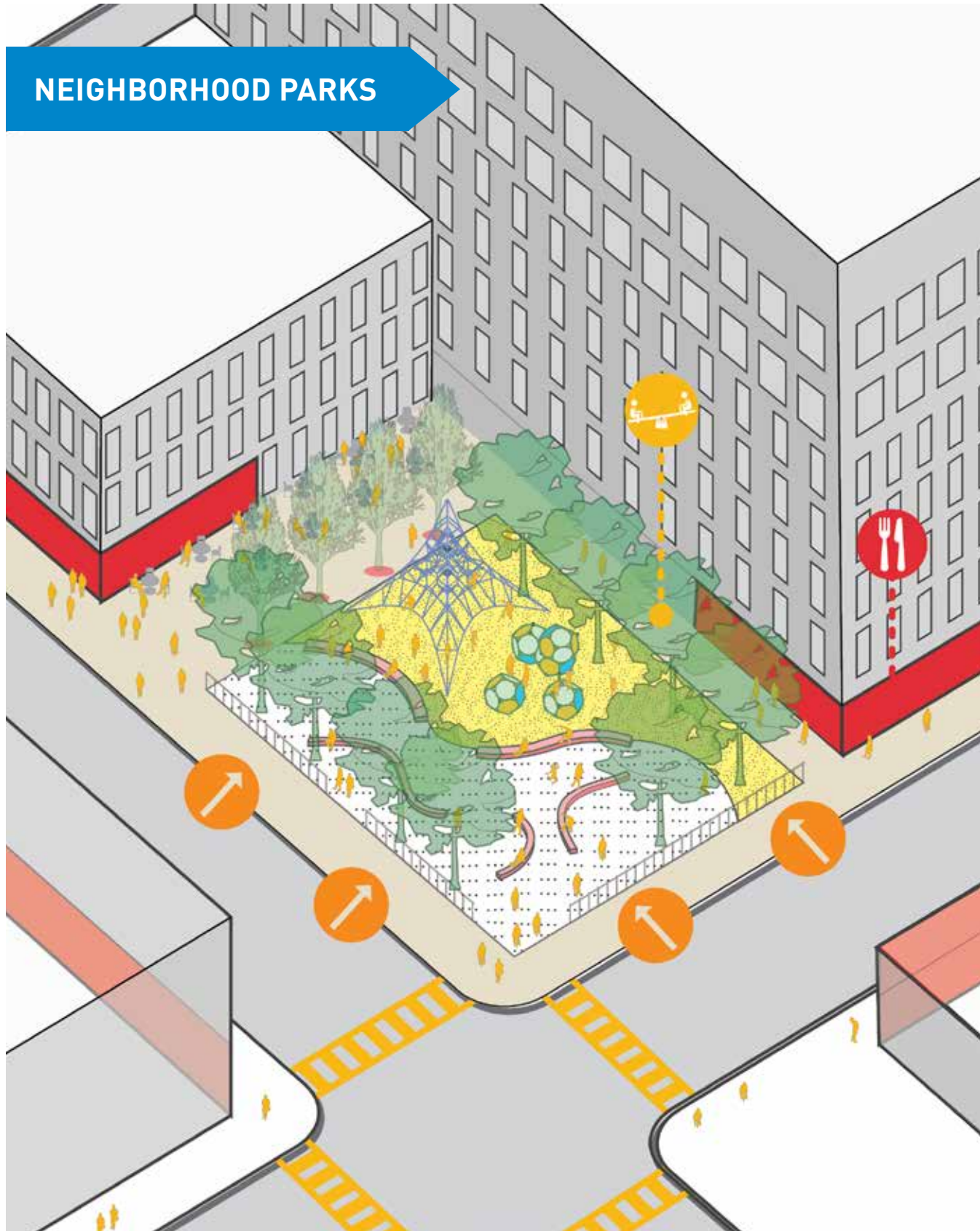
6A

BUILD ON DOWNTOWN'S EMERGING NEIGHBORHOOD CLUSTERS BY CONTINUING TO ADD NEW RESIDENTS, INCLUDING OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES, STUDENTS, AND PROSPECTIVE HOMEOWNERS.

The Downtown Living Initiative (DLI) has successfully generated a remarkable collection of mid-rise and high-rise apartment housing in Downtown, all of which include active ground floor uses and creative outdoor and indoor amenities. As DLI projects are completed, Downtown will work to retain the successes of the program, while diversifying the young, mobile population to include more families and homeowners to evolve Downtown living and establish neighborhood roots. These residential communities will provide design and financial comparables for future Downtown housing developments.

- Build 12,000 additional residential units within Downtown to support population growth from 7,500 to 30,000 over the next 20 years.
- Enhance the unique character and streetscape environment for each emerging Downtown neighborhood to establish a strong sense of place.
- Ensure Downtown's residential clusters are prioritized for ground-floor activation efforts. Maintain a high-level focus on attracting small-footprint retailers such as "corner" groceries, bakeries and coffee shops, daily convenience establishments such as drugstores and dry cleaners, and child and pet-oriented parks and care facilities.
- Create a signature open space within each residential cluster, and ensure that the collection of smaller privately- and publicly-owned open spaces provide programming and amenities for all ages and populations.
- Target the provision of larger, family-sized residential units and homeownership opportunities within Downtown.
- Provide family-oriented attractions in Downtown such as a satellite of the Children's Museum of Houston or a learning laboratory modeled on San Francisco's Exploratorium.
- Provide student housing in Downtown to serve the University of Houston, Texas Southern University, Rice University, and post baccalaureate programs in the Texas Medical Center, all accessible by METRORail.
- Build a public elementary school and a public middle school within two or more of Downtown's residential neighborhoods.
- Promote mixed-use infill development with residential options around the Downtown Transit Center.





The example above shows amenities needed in each residential cluster, to serve the local neighborhood and the greater Downtown population.



ACTIVE EDGES.

Activate edges with cafes, restaurants, neighborhood retail. Development should capitalize on views and engage the park with active and transparent ground floors.



MIXED USE.

Cultivate a mix of uses through ground floor activity, mid story office and upper story residences.



NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM ELEMENTS.

Complement park amenities with program elements supporting residential life: playgrounds, dog parks, flexible recreation fields, splash pads, and courts.



FAMILY USES.

Ensure a strong family environment for visitors and residents through programming and facilities.



ACCESS.

Create open edges for easy physical and visual access.



DAY AND NIGHT.

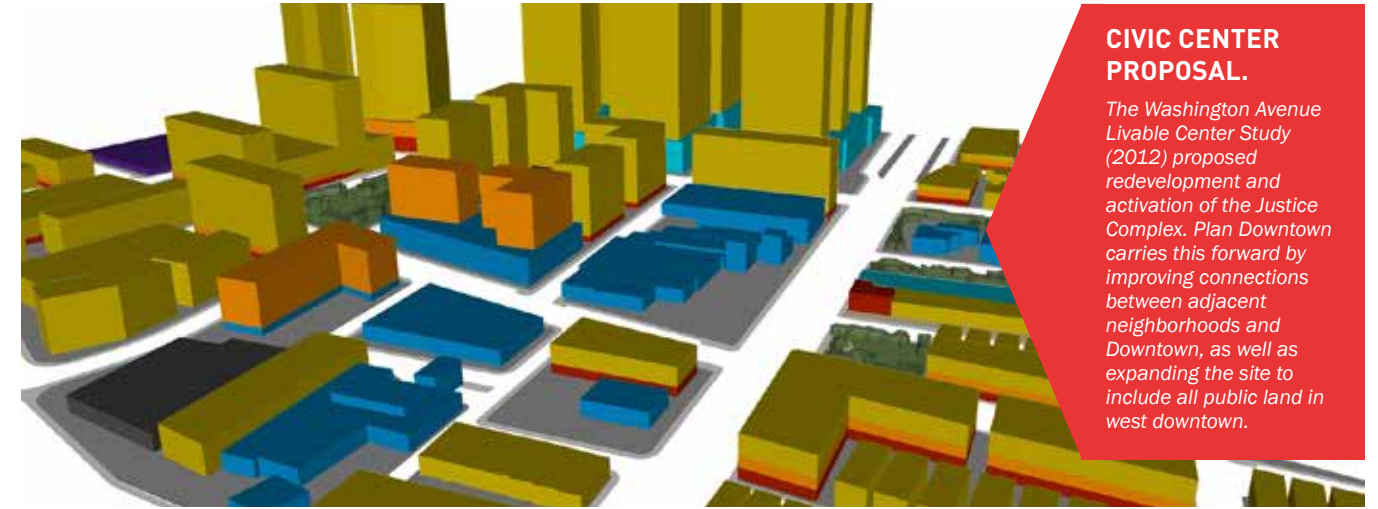
Create easily accessed amenities for use during all hours of the day and for all user groups.



6B WORK WITH ADJACENT COMMUNITIES TO CREATE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THAT LINK DOWNTOWN'S EDGES TO EXISTING OR FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS.

Downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods often have complementary land uses that are currently separated by real and perceived barriers. The NHHIP will remove or vastly alter many of these obstacles, providing a shared opportunity for central city neighborhoods to work together and jointly envision the future of these edges, allowing complementary areas of strength to amplify one another. During Neighborhood Connections Workshops held as a part of *Plan Downtown*, residents

of adjacent communities identified many opportunities to strengthen and knit together the urban fabric around these edges. Existing plans for central city neighborhoods have identified means to boost the residential population and enhance options for mobility, encouraging residents to walk or bike to jobs, and provide many of the retail, entertainment, educational, grocery, and open space amenities for local area residents, employees, and visitors.



CIVIC CENTER PROPOSAL.

The Washington Avenue Livable Center Study (2012) proposed redevelopment and activation of the Justice Complex. *Plan Downtown* carries this forward by improving connections between adjacent neighborhoods and Downtown, as well as expanding the site to include all public land in west downtown.

PLAN HOUSTON
A comprehensive plan for Houston's growth.

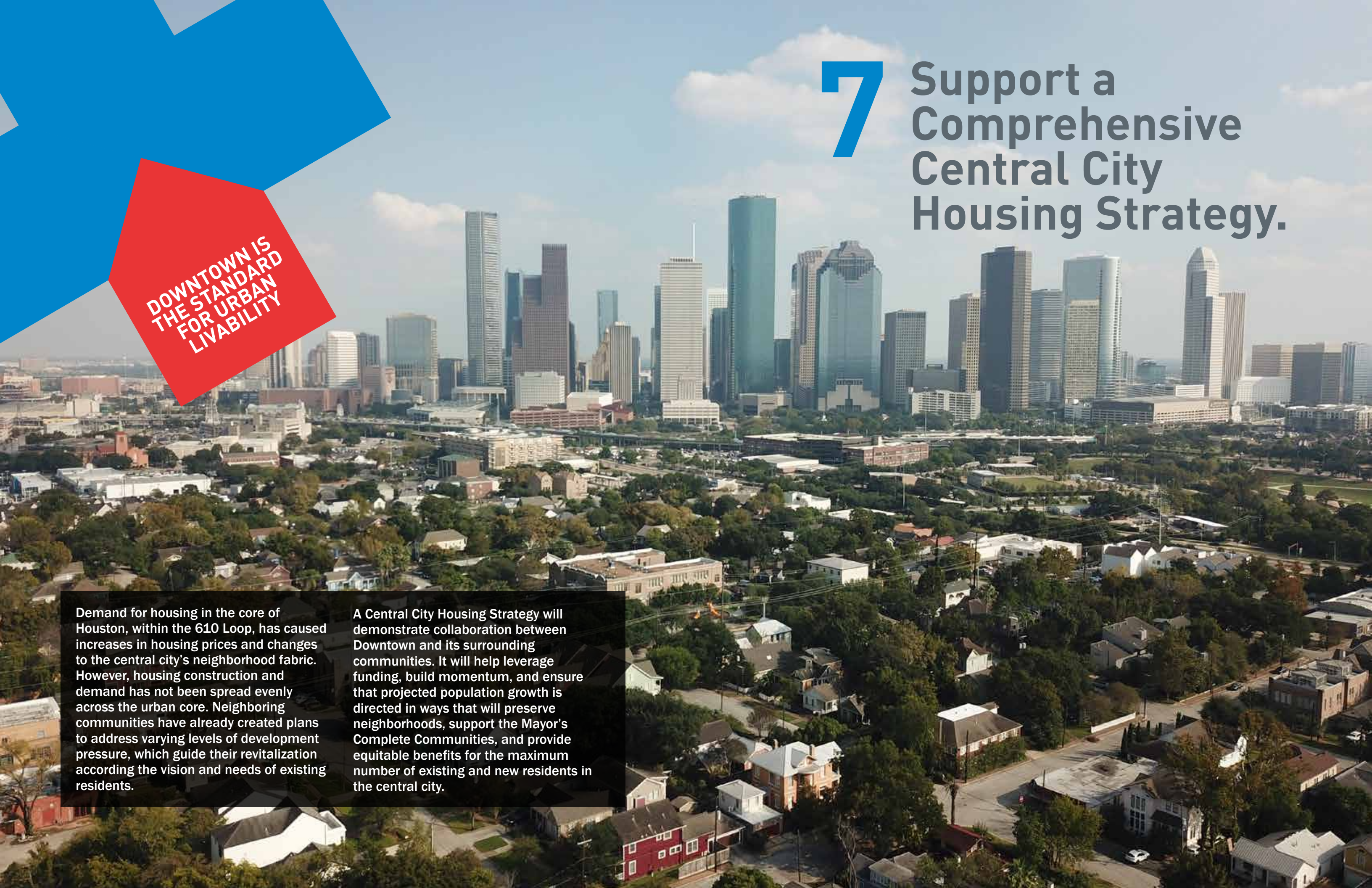
PLAN HOUSTON.
Houston's City Council took the groundbreaking step of adopting the city's first general plan, *Plan Houston* (2015). The Plan describes a vision and goals for our community and identifies twelve core strategies that represent the City's approach for achieving the vision.

VISION FOR BASTROP PROMENADE.
The Downtown/EaDo Livable Center Study (2011) envisioned a programmed green space on Bastrop Promenade in East Downtown. *Plan Downtown* highlights previous and existing efforts to program the space and develop the surrounding parcels into active mixed use and utilizes the promenade in the Green Loop.

HOUSTON BIKE PLAN.
The Houston Bike Plan (2017) seeks to improve safety, increase access, increase ridership, and develop and maintain facilities to make Houston a safer, healthier, more bike-friendly city. *Plan Downtown* moves these goals forward.

INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS.
The Fifth Ward/East End/Buffalo Bayou Livable Center Study (2015) identified four ways to increase housing options in the community and retain affordability for existing residents. *Plan Downtown* seeks to continue these goals.



An aerial photograph of Houston, Texas, showing the downtown skyline with several prominent skyscrapers in the background. The foreground and middle ground are filled with a dense residential neighborhood with smaller houses and trees. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

7 Support a Comprehensive Central City Housing Strategy.

**DOWNTOWN IS
THE STANDARD
FOR URBAN
LIVABILITY**

Demand for housing in the core of Houston, within the 610 Loop, has caused increases in housing prices and changes to the central city's neighborhood fabric. However, housing construction and demand has not been spread evenly across the urban core. Neighboring communities have already created plans to address varying levels of development pressure, which guide their revitalization according to the vision and needs of existing residents.

A Central City Housing Strategy will demonstrate collaboration between Downtown and its surrounding communities. It will help leverage funding, build momentum, and ensure that projected population growth is directed in ways that will preserve neighborhoods, support the Mayor's Complete Communities, and provide equitable benefits for the maximum number of existing and new residents in the central city.

7A COLLABORATE ON A CENTRAL CITY HOUSING STRATEGY.

The past several decades have seen an incredible amount of redevelopment within Houston’s urban core. Due to the desirability of urban living, Houston’s residential construction has been primarily market driven. While new housing has revitalized numerous areas and added to the City’s tax base, central city school attendance and delivery of public services has declined in some neighborhoods. Development has often occurred without addressing requisite infrastructure improvements or the historic and cultural fabric of the community. As the urban core continues to grow, collaborative planning for new housing should include measures that consider resident’s future needs, workforce and income diversity, and neighborhood plans that support conservation of local character.

- Support broadly inclusive, mixed-income housing in central city communities for existing and new residents and for Downtown’s workforce.
- Work with communities to ascertain the types of redevelopment most compatible and supportive of their physical, social and cultural fabric by using existing and future neighborhood plans that determine the needs of area residents using significant public engagement.
- Integrate transit corridors and pedestrian/bike trails throughout the central city to increase the number of Downtown employees and central city residents who can easily take transit, walk or bike to work, services, and entertainment.
- Foster the development of new retail, schools, and open space for the central city’s growing population based on existing and future local area plans.
- Support and expand “The Way Home,” Houston’s groundbreaking homeless housing and services model, to reduce the impacts of street homeless on Downtown and neighboring communities.

EXTENSIVE RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT.
The map to the right shows redeveloped or renovated properties within a 2-mile radius of Main Street Square. The map is an accumulation of appraised parcels from 1995 to 2016.

- Single Family
- Multi- Family Low Rise
- Multi- Family Mid Rise
- Multi- Family High Rise
- Institutional
- Parks





**DOWNTOWN IS
THE INNOVATIVE
LEADER IN
CONNECTIVITY**

8 Capture the Value of Downtown's Central Position.

One of Downtown's strongest competitive advantages is its location at the center of Houston's mobility networks. The highway, transit, bike, and greenway systems converge on Downtown's walkable street grid making it readily accessible from locations across the region. Yet for many people, Downtown driving and parking are intimidating, and public transportation and bike options are underutilized by people coming from just a few miles beyond Downtown.

Major capital projects and changing development patterns are creating

opportunities for Downtown to more fully realize the value of its location. The NHHIP creates a transformative moment for Downtown and surrounding communities for mobility, connectivity, open space, and economic development. Increased density in the central city requires new mobility options to meet the demands for connection to jobs and entertainment in Downtown. The next generation of transit must connect people quickly and efficiently to Downtown from other neighborhoods and major activity centers.

8A CAPTURE THE FULL OPPORTUNITIES OF THE NHHIP THROUGH CONNECTIVITY, DEVELOPMENT AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS.

The NHHIP transforms the highway system surrounding Downtown, fundamentally changing the primary infrastructure used to define Downtown. This change will create numerous opportunities in and around Downtown. The NHHIP will also be realized over a decade or more, meaning construction impacts require ongoing management.

- Advocate for key multimodal connectivity projects, open space, street and utility improvements, and Downtown transportation goals related to the NHHIP. Connectivity projects should take advantage of the removal and realignment of the highway barriers to provide convenient walking, biking, transit, driving, and parking options.
- Improve connections from White Oak and Buffalo Bayou Greenway trails and major bicycle corridors into Downtown.
- Define and prioritize critical open space and urban development opportunities created by the NHHIP, including possible funding approaches, mobility, and economic benefits.
- Establish regular coordination between Downtown, TxDOT, the City of Houston, METRO, Harris County, other agencies, and community stakeholders to address issues of design and construction. Proactively manage the construction process to ensure street and highway access and mobility are continuously maintained and messaged to the public.



EXISTING HIGHWAYS



FUTURE NHHIP HIGHWAY REALIGNMENT



EXISTING ACCESS



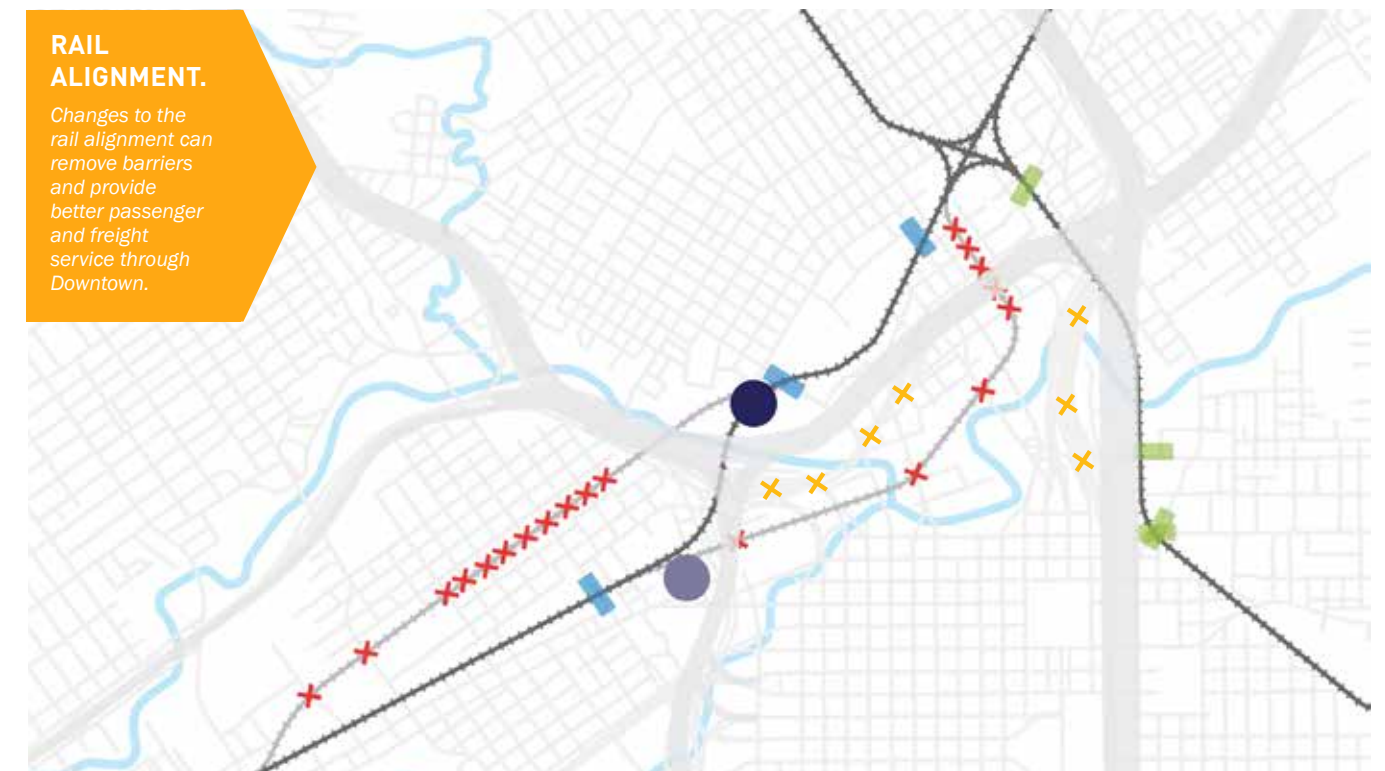
FUTURE ACCESS



8B COORDINATE TO IMPROVE FREIGHT RAIL OPERATIONS AND REDUCE IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES.

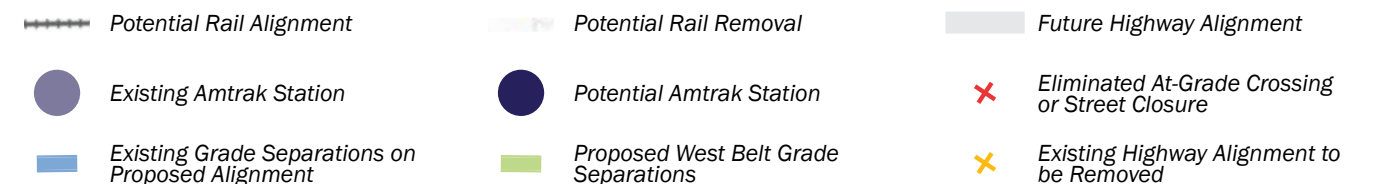
Major freight rail lines run adjacent to or through Downtown on the east and north sides. These freight lines typically cross the local street network at grade, impacting traffic, transit mobility, and raising noise levels. The West Belt project to minimize at-grade rail crossings east of Downtown and the potential to realign the UP Railroad Terminal Sub Freight and Passenger mains in northern Downtown represent transformative opportunities to rethink how freight rail can be improved not only for freight movement, but also to minimize impacts on roadways and adjacent development. Downtown can be an advocate to guide these projects in a way that improves connectivity, minimizes negative impacts on access and noise, and supports efficient freight movements through the area with enhanced safety for other modes.

- Advocate for consolidation of the UP Railroad Terminal Sub Freight and Passenger mains to eliminate numerous at grade crossings in Downtown, the Near Northside, and along Winter Street in the First Ward, while also improving freight operations. Coordinate with TxDOT, METRO, UH-Downtown, the Near Northside and First Ward communities, and other affected stakeholders on public engagement process.
- Coordinate the relocation of the Amtrak Station to the Burnett Transit Center area along the realigned passenger rail line.
- Coordinate with the City of Houston, TxDOT, the Gulf Coast Rail District, Harris County, and adjacent communities on the development of the West Belt grade separation projects to maintain maximum connectivity and integration with the NHHIP. This is especially critical at the proposed grade separation at the Franklin/Commerce intersection just east of Downtown, a critical connection to the Second Ward and the Greater East End.



RAIL ALIGNMENT.

Changes to the rail alignment can remove barriers and provide better passenger and freight service through Downtown.



8C

DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION OF DOWNTOWN TRANSIT.

One in six transit trips in the Houston region start in Downtown, and transit is the primary transportation mode for many commuters who travel longer distances to Downtown employment. This is due to the forward-thinking investments made in the Park & Ride and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/High Occupancy Transit (HOT) systems, METRORail transit lines, bus service, and transit lanes to and within Downtown. Opportunities exist for more people to use the transit system, particularly for shorter trips within 1-5 miles of Downtown, while also improving connections to other major activity centers in the region. Doing so will necessitate developing the next generation of transit to meet the demands of potential customers. This will require a coordinated effort including METRO and other regional providers such as The Woodlands Transit and Fort Bend County Transit. It will also require smart, bold thinking about what transit investments and services will best serve the future of Downtown, in both the short and long terms.

- Redefine the Downtown transit system to expand accessibility and improve reliability and travel times from, to and within Downtown.
- Implement the Max Lines Express Bus Network efficiently providing “commuter rail” service levels that build on the existing Park & Ride and HOV/HOT lane system. The Express Bus Network would provide fast all-day connections between major activity centers. This Network should utilize and expand the high occupancy lane system, including two-way service along all highway corridors, new transit centers in key locations, and improved connections to transit center stations.
- Expanding frequent bus service on local routes, and increase bus speed and reliability through Downtown. Improve real time information technology.
- Strengthen the high capacity, rapid transit network by building on the existing light rail transit (LRT) and/or advance bus rapid transit (BRT) investments.
- Extending high capacity east/west LRT or advance BRT between Downtown and Uptown, including serving the Northwest Transit Center.
- Implement the University Line connecting a fully restructured Wheeler Transit Center, connecting Downtown and TMC with Greenway Plaza and Uptown.
- Explore infill station opportunities along existing transit lines.
- Develop walkability, placemaking, and transit-oriented development policies for areas near light rail stations and transit centers.
- Strengthen rapid, convenient transit connections to Hobby and Intercontinental airports and the future High-speed Rail Terminal near the Northwest Mall (near IH-610, US-290 and IH-10 interchange) to allow visitors and conventioners easy access to Downtown destinations.
- Expand commuter transit incentives and education programs for Downtown employees.
- Develop a North Downtown Transit Center as a new transit hub to serve civic and court uses, expand redevelopment opportunities, and provide METRO a permanent bus layover location in northern Downtown.
- Explore tunnel and subway options for high-speed rail, commuter rail, light rail or bus routes to efficiently cross Downtown separated from street traffic. Identify opportunities to connect with the existing tunnel network and street level transit stations (see map on page 67 for potential alignment).

MAX LINES.

Improving the Max system routes will make transit a feasible option for more people and connect major business districts. All Day Routes arrive every 30 minutes or better (60 minutes in late evenings and weekend) serving Downtown from 5 am-10 pm. Peak Express service is warranted by demand. Developed by the Central Houston Transportation Committee as a potential input into METRO’s Long Range Plan METRONext.



9 Implement a Smart Network of Great Streets.

Within Downtown, the street grid is perhaps the most important public asset. The grid efficiently distributes trips across multiple routes and provides resilience during incidents and construction projects. The short blocks support walking and biking. With few exceptions, Downtown's streets have historically been designed to facilitate rapid commutes into and out of Downtown with limited consideration of

the ever-changing development context and multiple travel modes. Regardless of right-of-way street widths, traffic volumes are most closely linked to those streets with direct connections to highway ramps. Where streets have been rethought and rebuilt – Main Street, the Cotswold Project, or Avenida Houston – they have attracted ground floor retail and activated street life.

DOWNTOWN IS THE INNOVATIVE LEADER IN CONNECTIVITY

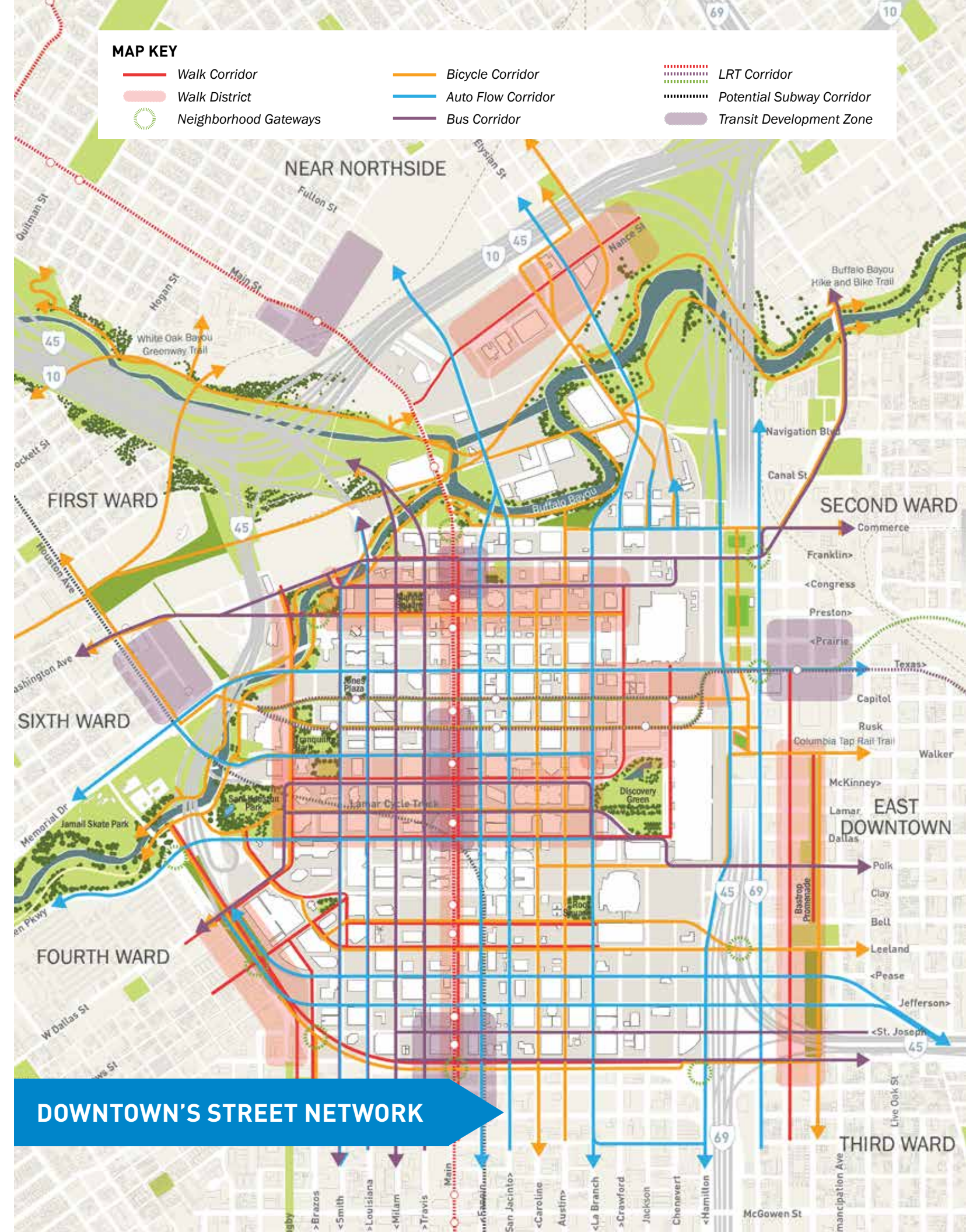
9A

RETHINK THE STREET NETWORK TO SUPPORT EXPANDED MOBILITY CHOICES AND IMPROVED OPERATIONS.

Expansion and improvement of the regional transit, bike, and trail networks in recent years has created significant opportunities to connect and improve travel choices through Downtown. Creating specific networks for all modes of transportation – by providing prioritized mobility choices for transit, biking, and walking within Downtown while meeting the needs of commuters – will balance the Downtown street network and support development goals. Each mode of transportation should be developed as a complete network that allows for full mobility throughout Downtown with strong connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Priorities should be determined for each street based on its role in the larger mobility network and the development context along the respective corridor.

- Develop prioritized, integrated mobility networks throughout Downtown linked to regional and neighborhood connectivity, traffic demand, development context, transit and active transportation priorities and safety goals.
- Develop a Great Streets Program to specifically redesign, retrofit and reconstruct streets as enhanced multimodal corridors aligned with mobility priorities.
- Implement a well-connected, protected bikeway and trail network of 3 to 4 east/west and 3 to 4 north/south corridors.
- Partner with METRO to enhance prioritized transit streets through speed and reliability improvements, improved passenger amenities, and information systems.
- As streets are reconstructed, utilize low impact development and design standards that integrate storm water management and landscape best practices for enhanced water quality, drainage, and aesthetics.
- Lead the region with a Vision Zero policy, the elimination of traffic fatalities and severe injuries, to improve safety based on detailed study of safety data.
- Expand wayfinding systems and prioritize gateway connections to adjacent neighborhoods and new destinations as prompted by the NHHIP and related developments.
- Review mobility lanes and on-street parking strategies, including pricing and time periods, to simplify street operations. Provide continuous parking adjacent to active street fronts such as those in the Historic District.
- Study and implement two-way conversions on lower volume streets to support connectivity and redevelopment strategies.
- Pilot projects and technologies to improve signal timings and achieve more balanced synchronization for north/south and east/west movements.

BAGBY STREET





DOWNTOWN IS
THE INNOVATIVE
LEADER IN
CONNECTIVITY

10 Be a National Leader for Connectivity Innovation.

Just one decade ago, the idea that major changes to our transportation and communication systems would be prompted by the invention of smart phones and the life changing tools they have enabled was unthinkable for most. The current period of rapid technological innovation presents significant challenges and disruptions for city leaders and established districts. At the same time, downtown areas throughout the world

have proven to be remarkably resilient in capitalizing on technology changes. In fact, urban centers are well positioned to capture these opportunities due to their high density of activities, street grid infrastructure, and installed communication systems. Through the coming decades, Downtown must prepare to maximize the benefits of changing technologies.

10A

ADAPT TO AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE TECHNOLOGIES BY MANAGING DOWNTOWN PARKING WITH FUTURE DECREASES IN DEMAND WHILE ADAPTING TO NEW STREET, GARAGE, AND CURB SPACE USES.

The emergence of autonomous vehicles (AVs) presents clear opportunities and uncertain futures for high density urban areas. While AVs may increase the capacity of roadways, AVs may also create increased demands that can overwhelm street operations. Downtown should be a leader in adapting to emerging trends and work with the City, County, TxDOT, METRO, and the development community to actively manage policies that support positive outcomes. What is certain is that the demand for parking, especially in areas with high land values, is likely to reduce in the future. Downtown should strive to actively manage and limit new parking within Downtown, seeking to ensure that new parking is structured to allow for conversion (for example, higher clearance, flat floor plates), and begin examining existing parking structures that may be converted to other uses. Out-dated parking structures should be identified in the near term in order to plan for future development.

- Position Downtown to benefit from the adoption of AVs for transit, deliveries and commuters. Develop an AV policy framework and a transportation technology working committee.
- Identify partners to pilot AV programs beneficial to Downtown such as transit or commuter shared services.
- Conduct a detailed parking study to understand future parking demand, and promote resources to better utilize and clarify existing parking options.
- Introduce Maximum Parking requirements within Downtown, and develop design prototypes for parking garage conversions to other uses.
- Define pick-up and drop-off curb zones for transportation network companies, carpoolers, freight, and AVs.



PARKING INFRASTRUCTURE.

Parking garages and parking spaces must be adapted to new uses as technology changes.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES.

Self driving vehicles and other technological advances will change the way automobile transportation effects downtown.



10B ENSURE THAT COMMUNICATION, ELECTRONIC, AND ELECTRICAL NETWORKS SUPPORT EVER-CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES AND TRENDS.

One of the advantages of Downtown as the center for business and a growing nexus for urban living is the presence of existing infrastructure that supports new developments. The perpetual investments in streets, drainage, transit, and communications all strengthen Downtown as a technological platform for new development. In turn, new development allows more efficient use of those infrastructure networks. But trends in mobility and working are changing the demands on infrastructure that will require Downtown to adapt. Vehicle power systems are already transitioning to more electric engines, creating the need for more charging stations. AVs may require new communications systems to reach their full potential. Work patterns will continue to evolve with continued growth in working at home or in flexible work spaces that require premium communications networks.

- Work with the City, developers, and power providers to implement an Electric Vehicle strategy that deploys charging stations and utilizes renewable power generation including integrated solar generation.
- Provide expanded WiFi access in Downtown parks and public spaces. Expand access to high speed internet in Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods to support innovation, entertainment, flexible work, and education demands.
- Ensure the integrity of Downtown’s power and communications grid, including the conversion of overhead to underground electrical distribution in Downtown’s southeast quadrant.
- Implement smart street light systems across Downtown in order to collect beneficial city data – including traffic, air quality, noise, and weather information – to compliment the existing TranStar and Homeland Security technologies in and surrounding Downtown.



VEHICLE CHARGING.
Charging stations, usually electric, are the most recent development in a future that should consider technological advances in transit.



SMART CONTROLS.
Remote monitoring can respond to on the ground conditions.



SMART INFORMATION.
Downtown can be equipped with data collection and remote control traffic and technology devices to ensure proper monitoring and responses.



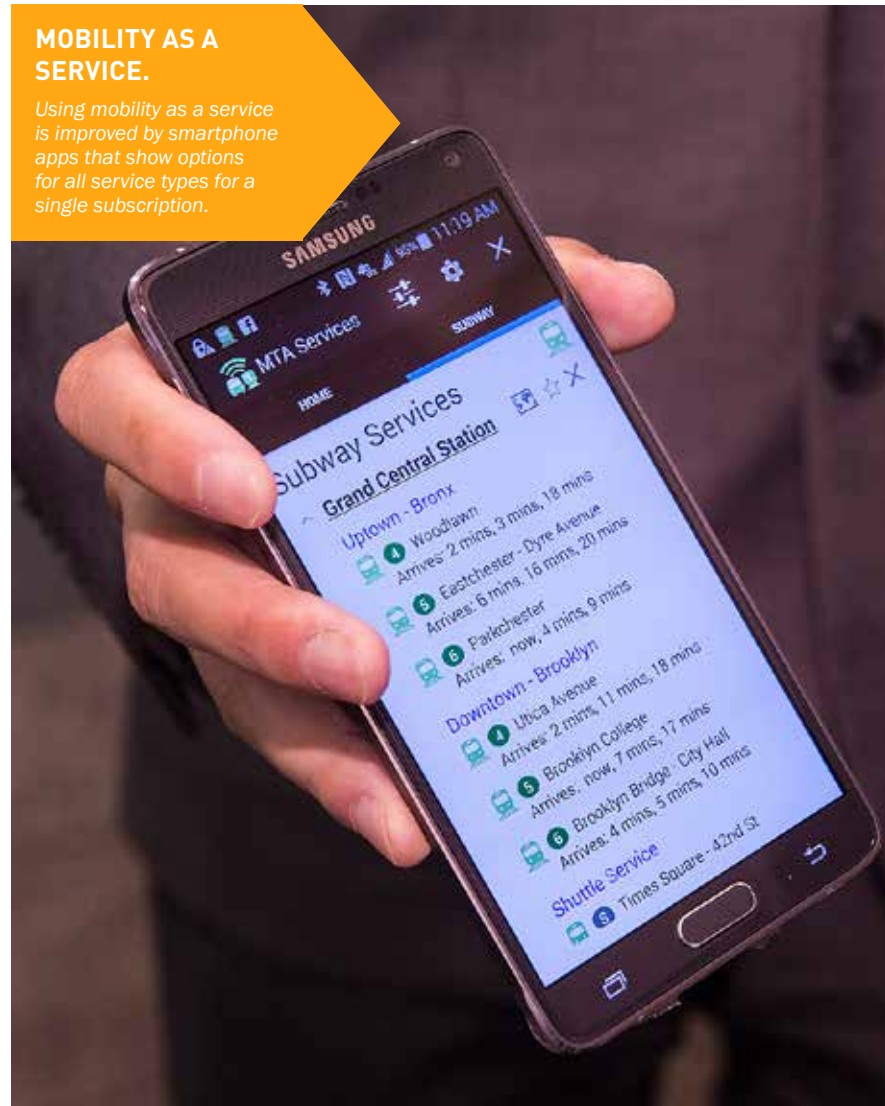
SMART INFRASTRUCTURE.
Evolving technologies will allow utility and communication systems to provide critical urban data and services.

10C

EXPAND SHARED MOBILITY AND “MOBILITY AS A SERVICE” OPTIONS WITHIN DOWNTOWN, INCLUDING CAR SHARE, BIKE SHARE, RIDESHARE, AND TRANSIT ACCESS.

An increasingly likely transportation future already implemented in cities like Singapore is the concept of “mobility as a service.” This model of mobility allows a user subscription to a single card or smart phone application that offers car and bike rental, transit trips, or ride hailing services all for one price or through a single payment platform – giving the user the option to select whichever mode makes the most sense for the particular trip. Within the Houston region, Downtown has the best opportunity to implement this concept and provide mobility as a service for Downtown employees, residents, and visitors.

- Develop key mobility hubs within Downtown linked to employment centers and residential development.
- Expand the bike share and strengthen car share within Downtown. Bike share expansion should be linked to improved bikeway infrastructure and connections to transit.
- Develop educational programs and materials to encourage potential users to understand and sample the shared mobility system.
- Partner with providers to offer mobility as service subscription options for workers and residents in Downtown.



IMPLEMENTATION

This implementation framework identifies tasks and implementation partners to realize the Strategies and Actions proposed in *Plan Downtown*. Guiding public and private investment toward the highest potential economic and community benefit will create momentum for the full delivery of this Vision, but full implementation of this Plan would exceed the resources available to any individual agency or organization. The potential order of magnitude costs and benefits of each Strategy has been assessed to understand order of magnitude return on investment. Potential benefits may include economic and community impacts to Downtown and its residents, employees, and visitors, and the city as a whole. Additionally, it is necessary that actions promoted within each Strategy be achieved in ways which integrate the Pillars and Strategies. Using this approach, the Strategies in *Plan Downtown* are consolidated into implementation tasks and prioritized in two timeframes to maximize return on investment:

- Near-Term Priorities could require less capital investment and/or implementation complexity, yet provide significant economic and community return. These returns can be leveraged to fund additional Downtown investments over time and support the full implementation of the Plan.

- Long-Term Priorities provide significant and transformative benefits to Downtown, but require a more significant expenditure of resources, additional planning or design, a longer development or construction timeline, and/or complicated coordination between the public and private sectors. A process to develop actionable plans, secure financial resources, and implement each of these priorities needs to be advanced.

Phasing & Implementation Recommendations

For each Strategy, two factors support implementation. These include:

- Tasks – Each Strategy will require thoughtful planning and coordination among public and private entities. To ensure successful implementation, the first step for project leaders is outlined below.
- Implementation Partners – In order to advance implementation, each Strategy identifies potential funding sources available. Existing public resources can fund certain Strategies, while other Strategies will require additional funding.

TASK	DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIES REFERENCED	IMPLEMENTATION Partners
Near-Term Priorities			
Establish the design standards to maximize the future TxDOT highway investments associated with the construction of the NHHIP.	Collaborate with TxDOT and participating agencies to define the urban design aesthetic within the TxDOT right-of-way and project limits. Prepare and document design guidelines and prescriptive specifications to assist TxDOT throughout the procurement, design and construction phases.	1, 2, 8, 9, 10	TxDOT COH Mayor's Office COH Public Works Department COH Planning & Development Department Central Houston, Inc. Downtown District Houston First Corporation Management Districts & TIRZs
Develop Downtown Design Guidelines to support an activated, pedestrian-oriented experience.	Develop and release Guidelines. Work with the City of Houston to enact guidelines by ordinance.	1, 3, 6, 9, 10	Downtown District Downtown Redevelopment Authority City of Houston (COH)
Redevelop the Civic Center and Justice Complex as part of a municipal government center master plan.	Conduct space utilization, needs and resiliency studies for the City Departments based Downtown, and develop a master plan for the redevelopment of the Civic Center and Justice Complex.	1, 2	COH Mayor's Office COH General Services Department COH Planning & Development Department
Undertake Convention Center improvements and expansion, and develop additional Downtown Hotels.	Continue the expansion of the Convention Center based on the GRB Master Plan, develop new strategies to connect to the East, and support hospitality growth.	1, 2	Houston First Corporation COH Mayor's Office of Economic Development
Update the Harris County Downtown Campus Master Plan.	Conduct space utilization, needs and resiliency studies for County facilities in Downtown.	1, 2	Harris County
Target outreach for corporate relocations to Downtown.	Continue existing outreach efforts and ensure investments within Downtown to increase business attractiveness.	4, 5	Greater Houston Partnership COH Mayor's Office of Economic Development Central Houston, Inc.

TASK	DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIES REFERENCED	IMPLEMENTATION Partners
Foster a greater sense of community and knowledge-sharing network within the Downtown business community.	Continue and expand existing business outreach programs.	4, 5	Central Houston, Inc. Greater Houston Partnership Houston First Corporation Professional Associations
Grow start-up community through programing, partnerships and incentives. Partner with academic institutions to advance research and entrepreneurial collaboration.	Formalize collaboration of public, non-profit, educational, and private entrepreneurial entities to launch Downtown Innovation District.	5	Greater Houston Partnership COH Mayor's Office of Economic Development Central Houston, Inc. Local or State Universities Private entrepreneurs and funders
Facilitate start-ups and other non-traditional office users through the conversion of floorplates to meet needs of entrepreneurs.	Convene Downtown office property owners, entrepreneurs, and lenders to understand current office space vacancies and projected future demand.	5	Central Houston, Inc. Commercial Property Owners
Support the City of Houston in the development of a Central City Housing Plan.	Partner with the City and central city communities to develop an integrated, equitable, and comprehensive Central City Housing Plan that includes strategies for transit oriented development and affordability.	3, 6, 7	COH Office of the Mayor COH Housing & Community Development Community Development Corporations Community Housing Development Organizations Management Districts & TIRZ
Determine the future needs of Downtown parking and mobility, relative to autonomous vehicles and a sharing economy.	Conduct a Downtown parking study to understand future parking and mobility needs within Downtown.	8, 9, 10	Downtown District COH Public Works Department COH Administrative & Regulatory Affairs Department
Support and promote Downtown Transit Projects within the METRO Long Range Plan.	Support and promote transit connections to regional activity centers and airports with maximized utilization on expanded HOV/HOT lanes, local bus improvements and rail expansion.	1, 8, 9	METRO TxDOT Houston Airport System Central Houston, Inc. Houston First

Long-Term Priorities

Develop signature attractions Downtown.	Based on results of current study, advance recommendations.	1, 2	Houston First Corporation COH Downtown District
Develop the Green Loop and guide development to adjacent sites.	City leadership to determine sites and develop investment framework, in concert with TxDOT development and construction schedule.	1, 2, 3, 6, 9	TxDOT COH Office of the Mayor Central Houston, Inc. Harris County Flood Control District Harris County Sports Authority Management Districts & TIRZs Non-profit civic entities Philanthropy
Expand strategies for corporate relocation.	Research financial incentives in other markets that have been successful in attracting new corporate tenants.	4, 5	COH Office of Economic Development Greater Houston Partnership Central Houston, Inc.
Build an additional 12,000 residential units Downtown.	Work with the private sector to promote residential development Downtown, utilize public land and TIRZ funding to accomplish affordability goals.	3, 6, 7	Private Development COH Office of the Mayor COH Housing & Community Development Downtown District Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Build new North Downtown Transit Center.	Coordinate with METRO to develop plan for integrated transit center.	3, 8, 10	USDOT METRO Harris County
Incorporate new and emerging technology/data collection in new infrastructure and public improvements.	Develop guidelines for the incorporation of new technology in public and civic projects.	5, 10	COH General Services Department COH Public Works Department Downtown District
Continue the redesign and rebuilding of Downtown streets to provide greater multi-modal access and support character and development goals.	Implement a full bike network within Downtown in coordination with Green Loop improvements. Refresh, update and create new pedestrian priority corridors, in coordination with ground floor activation. Pursue potential two way conversions and improve commuter corridors with smart technology and signals.	3, 6, 9	Downtown District Downtown Redevelopment Authority COH Planning Department COH Public Works Department METRO



**DOWNTOWN
PLANNING
PROCESS**



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Plan Downtown included a stakeholder engagement process intended to solicit broad input from Downtown residents, business leaders and employees, visitors, government officials, non-governmental organizations, community members from the adjacent neighborhoods and city-wide stakeholders. Early in the process, a 19-member Leadership Group was formed to guide the total effort, from project definition, to consultant procurement, to monthly progress meetings. Within this Leadership Group and somewhat unique for a Downtown plan, Board members and staff from the neighboring management districts were at the table from the outset as planning partners. The Leadership Group also served on a 166-member Steering Committee which met at three project milestones: vision development, concept design, and review of the draft plan.

For public engagement, a variety of strategies were utilized over an eight month period. Six large format public workshops were held in Downtown during vision and conceptual framework stages. Special gatherings for members of Central Houston, Inc. included a breakfast meeting presentation and a happy hour with Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise (CHIME). Project team members promoted the plan throughout Downtown, including the Urban Land Institute's Urban Marketplace, the Farmer's Market at City Hall, events at Market Square Park and Discovery Green, and presentations to business groups such as the Greater Houston Partnership and CenterPoint Energy. During the process, the partnering organization's Boards of Directors were engaged through presentations and workshops. Due

to the opportunities and challenges associated with the NHHIP – and acknowledging the need to include the adjacent communities in the planning process to foster better social, economic and physical connections between Downtown and its neighbors – four connections workshops were held in the adjacent neighborhoods specifically for those stakeholders to participate.

The *Plan Downtown* process began with a deep dive into Downtown's current conditions. This research framed a visioning process that prompted stakeholders to ask the big questions about Downtown's future. The following five questions emerged as the key elements in developing the Plan's Vision statement and the four Pillars of this report:

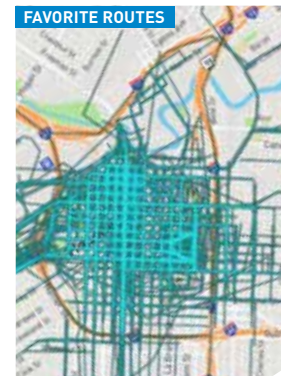
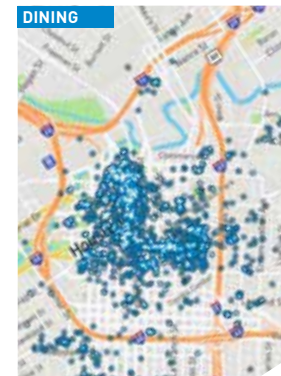
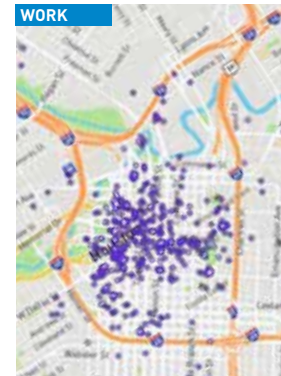
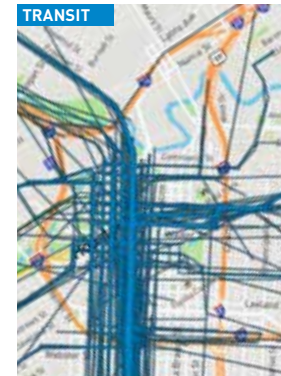
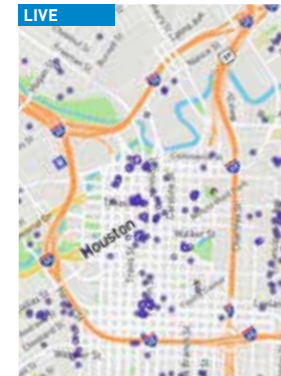
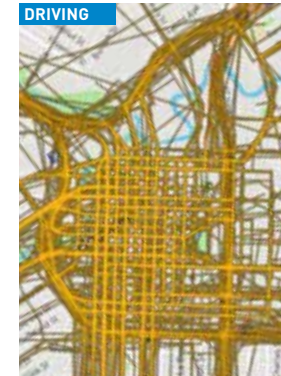
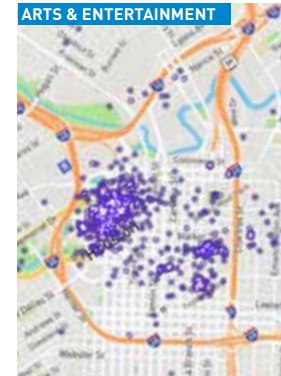
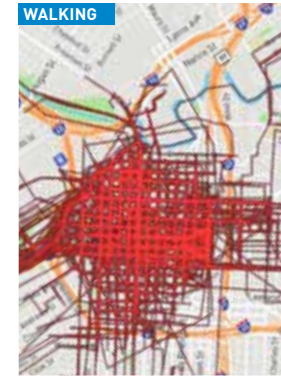
- What are the competitive advantages of Downtown, and how do we build on those in the future?
- How can Downtown better connect to adjacent neighborhoods?
- How do we make a Downtown walk a more pleasant, safe and engaging experience?
- How does Downtown attract the future workforce?
- What are the future housing needs in Downtown and the adjacent neighborhoods?

Using the four Pillars as a starting place, specific Strategies and Actions to address these and other questions were developed in cooperation with the Leadership Group, Steering Committee and the public throughout the planning process.





EXTENSIVE ENGAGEMENT.
 Outreach efforts were broad and included (clockwise from top left) public workshops, tabling at Downtown events, online interviews, neighborhood connections meetings, Leadership Group meetings, and implementation workshops.



MY DOWNTOWN.
 This online map tool was used to gather information about participants' experiences in Downtown.

Online and Text Survey

In addition to the physical outreach process, online and text survey tools were used. As part of the project's website, an online survey, My Downtown, was developed to capture "sentimental" data regarding the ways in which stakeholders use and view Downtown. Over 1,300 respondents submitted almost 30,000 personal points on the online maps, data which was invaluable to the planning process. Additionally, a text based survey tool, Textizen, was used to capture responses from those around Downtown who may not have online access. Large format graphics installed in storefront windows asked key questions at six locations around Downtown. Aspects of Downtown from "What is the heart of Downtown?" to "What are your favorite streets, restaurants, and meeting places?" to "What areas do you avoid and why?" are a few of the queries addressed by the surveys.



TEXTIZEN.
 This cell phone based tool was used to capture responses to questions.



PARTNERS

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

The Houston Downtown Management District (Downtown District) was formed by an act of the Texas Legislature in 1995 and has been in operation since 1996. During this time, Downtown has experienced an exciting renaissance and a remarkable economic rebound. The Downtown District is bounded largely by Interstate 10, Highway 59 and Interstate 45. The District is operated under the direction of a 30-member board of directors whose primary focus is to leverage public funds with private resources to improve facilities and services, as well as accelerate area improvements with widespread benefit above and beyond the level presently provided by local government or voluntary effort.



HOUSTON FIRST CORPORATION

Houston First Corporation is leading the effort to promote Houston as one of the great cities of the world. They operate the city's finest convention, arts and entertainment venues. A local government corporation formed in 2011, Houston First manages more than 10 city-owned buildings and properties and parking for nearly 7,000 vehicles. These facilities include the Hilton Americas-Houston hotel, George R. Brown Convention Center, Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, Wortham Theater Center, Talento Bilingue de Houston, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Houston First Outdoors (which includes Jones Plaza and other venues) and Theater District Parking. Houston First is responsible for the maintenance, licensing and operation of these properties for conventions, trade shows and performances that enrich the lives of Houstonians.



BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP

Buffalo Bayou Partnership is the non-profit organization revitalizing and transforming Buffalo Bayou, Houston's most significant natural resource. Founded in 1986, Buffalo Bayou Partnership's (BBP) geographic focus is the 10-mile stretch of Buffalo Bayou from Shepherd Drive to the Port of Houston Turning Basin. Thanks to the generous support of foundations, corporations, individuals and government agencies, BBP has raised and leveraged more than \$150 million for the redevelopment and stewardship of the waterfront – spearheading award-winning projects such as Sabine Promenade and Sesquicentennial Park, protecting land for future parks, constructing hike and bike trails, and operating comprehensive clean-up and maintenance programs.



GREATER EAST END MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The Greater East End Management District provides services and conducts capital improvements throughout the 16 square miles of the District. The services, funded by assessments paid by commercial property interests throughout the District, include public safety programs, an award winning graffiti abatement program, maintenance of major thoroughfares, and disposal of illegally dumped trash. The District's grant-funded capital program focuses on connecting neighborhoods and business to transit, and will result in \$31 million in improvements through 2017.



CENTRAL HOUSTON, INC.

Since 1983, Central Houston has been the steward of Houston's vision for the redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown. Central Houston has contributed to the momentum by enhancing collaboration among public officials, developers and businesses. Central Houston has facilitated many of the public and private projects that have transformed Downtown over the past 34 years. Central Houston's leadership and oversight continue to play a critical role in Downtown. A catalyst for collaboration and coordination, Central Houston responds to the business community's needs as issues and solutions evolve over time.



THE CITY OF HOUSTON

Founded in 1836, the City of Houston charter states that the City shall "... enact and enforce all ordinances necessary to protect life, health and property; to prevent and summarily abate and remove nuisances; to preserve and promote good government, order, security, amusement, peace, quiet, education, prosperity and the general welfare of said City and its inhabitants..." Through the Mayor's Office, Planning and Development, Public Works and Engineering, General Services, Housing and Community Development, and Parks and Recreation Departments, the City has a strong ability to implement projects, policies and programs and to leverage funding through taxes, fees, assessments, fines, grants and bonds.



THEATER DISTRICT HOUSTON

The Houston Theater District plays an important role as the focus of arts, entertainment, cultural life and local identity for the City of Houston. The Theater District seeks to offer an immersive arts and culture environment where the vitality of the performing arts spills into the streets, sidewalks and public spaces.



GREATER NORTHSIDE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The Greater Northside Management District was formed to promote economic development, improve the quality of life for commercial property owners, and create opportunities for new development and began providing services in August of 2006. Services are funded by an assessment on commercial property owners within district boundaries. The District provides a security patrol, graffiti abatement program, and maintenance/litter abatement program among other services. The District's Mission is to establish and implement projects and programs with widespread benefits that are beyond the ability of individual property owners to provide. The Mission Statement has been adopted by the Board to guide efforts as they develop, implement, and refine specific projects.



DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) facilitates positive development of the area within the Tax Increment Zone #3 (TIRZ #3) boundaries. Tax increment dollars collected within the boundaries of the Zone are reinvested back into the Zone by providing financial incentives through public/private sector partnerships designed to make Downtown Houston a place where Houstonians and visitors want to live, work and play. Created in 1995, the Zone originally consisted of nine city blocks located in the northwest quadrant of the Central Business District, but has expanded to include more than 80 blocks of Downtown. The Zone is scheduled to end on December 31, 2043.



HARRIS COUNTY

With approximately 4,700,000 residents living in Harris County, it is the third most populous county in the United States. It is estimated that the County's population will increase to 5,600,000 by 2025. Covering 1,777 square miles, Harris County provides a broad range of civic services that primarily include its Judicial System (Sheriff, Courts, and Jails), Hospital District, Flood Control District, Toll Road Authority and Sports Authority. Houston is the seat of Harris County, and Downtown is home to a broad base of County Departments. Harris County is governed by a County Judge and four County Commissioners. Downtown is located primarily with Harris County Precinct 1, with some areas of the Warehouse District in northern Downtown falling within Precinct 2.



EAST DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The East Downtown Management District is an organization focused on creative community building, quality of life related development, design, marketing, and maintenance in the EaDo (East Downtown) District of Houston, TX. The District's Services include Public Safety and Security, District Field Operations, Planning and Advocacy, Business Development and Media Relations, District Beautification, and District Administration. The 10 year Service Plan (2016-2026) is funded by special assessments paid by commercial property interests in the EaDo District.



MIDTOWN MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

The Midtown Management District (MMD) was created in 1999. The land included within the District was a mixed-use urban area in need of revitalization and redevelopment. The mission of the District is to provide an economically vibrant urban destination where arts and culture thrive alongside businesses and residents in a safe, active, diverse neighborhood. The main function of the MMD is to create a safer environment by providing additional contracted law enforcement; serve as an advocate for constituents to ensure their concerns are made known and addressed; develop community based events and projects to assist in attracting more residents, businesses, and investments; and work diligently to encourage interaction between residents and businesses to continuously enhance Midtown Houston.



PARTICIPANTS

Sylvester Turner – Mayor of Houston

Ed Emmett – Harris County Judge

Leadership Group

Jonathan Brinsden – Midway Companies | Buffalo Bayou Partnership Board and Central Houston, Inc. Board

Jeremy Brown – Office of Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 1 | Downtown District Board

Mark Cover – Hines | Central Houston, Inc. Board

James Harrison – Harrison Kornberg Architects | Downtown Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.3)

Don Henderson – DJH Consulting | Downtown District Board

Andy Icken – City of Houston, Mayor’s Office

Perryn Leech – Houston Grand Opera | Theater District Houston Board and Central Houston, Inc. Board

David Minchberg – Flagship Properties Corporation | Houston First Corporation Board

Amar Mohite – Office of Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 1 | Midtown Management District Board

Shahin Naghavi – Riverside Real Estate | East Downtown Management District Board

Xavier Pena – Houston Endowment, Inc. | Downtown Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.3)

Stephen Quezada – Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, PC | Greater East End Management District Board

Jeanette Rash – Fast Tow | Greater Northside Management District Board

Marchis Robinson – Office of Texas State Senator, District 13

Ileana Rodriguez – HKS Architects | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

David Turkel – Harris County, Community Services Department (TIRZ No.24)

Barron Wallace – Bracewell, LLP | Downtown District, Legal Counsel

Patrick Walsh – City of Houston, Planning & Development Department

Valerie Williams – Ernst & Young (retired) | Downtown District Board

Steering Committee

Art Acevedo – City of Houston, Police Department

Tolu Akindele – HFF Houston | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Quincy Allen – Texas Department of Transportation

Scott Allen – Kinder High School for the Performing & Visual Arts

Carol Alvarado – Texas State Representative, District 145

Claude Anello – Hughes Water Askanaase | Old Sixth Ward Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.13)

John Avlon – Mail Bell Realty Company

Tom Bacon – Lionstone Investments | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Bo Beaudry – St. Joseph’s Medical Center

Lauren Beck – Incarnate Word Academy

Emily Blount – Alpheus Communications

John Blount – Harris County, County Engineer

Jacqueline Bostic – Fourth Ward Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.14)

Dwight Boykins – City of Houston, Council Member, District D

Marcel Braithwaite – Houston Astros, Minute Maid Park

Chris Brown – City of Houston, Controller

Marilyn Brown – Coalition for the Homeless

Tad Brown – Houston Rockets, Toyota Center | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Janis Burke – Harris County Houston Sports Authority

Barry Caldwell – Waste Management

Dougal Cameron – Cameron Management | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Chris Canetti – Houston Dynamo, BBVA Compass Stadium | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Jim Casey – Trammell Crow

Thomas Cheng – The Abercrombie Company | Downtown District Board

June Christensen – Society for the Performing Arts

Susan Christian – City of Houston, Mayor’s Office of Special Events

Karla Cisneros – City of Houston, Council Member, District H

Alan Clark – Houston-Galveston Area Council

Ellen Cohen – City of Houston, Council Member, District C

Garnet Coleman – Texas State Representative, District 147

Alice Collette – The Heritage Society (retired)

Steve Costello – City of Houston, Mayor’s Office

Thao Costis – SEARCH

Maureen Crocker – Gulf Coast Rail District

Matt Damborsky – Skanska USA

Jerry Davis – City of Houston, Council Member, District B

Terry Demchak – Resident, Hermann Lofts Homeowners Association

Tammy Dowe – Spot on Public Relations

Amanda Edwards – City of Houston, Council Member, At-Large #4

Rodney Ellis – Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 1

Diane Englet – CenterPoint Energy | Downtown District Board

Jessica Farrar – Texas State Representative, District 148

Tilman Fertitta – Landry’s, Inc. | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Maya Ford – FordMomentum!

Paul Frazier – Central Houston, Inc. Board

Jacob Frazelle – Harris County, Engineering Department

Elvira Fuentes – First American Title, NCS Houston | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Bill Fulton – Kinder Institute for Urban Research

Robert Gallegos – City of Houston Council Member, District I

Irma Galvan – Irma’s Restaurant | Downtown District Board

Sylvia Garcia – Texas State Senator, District 6

Dean Gladden – Alley Theatre | Theater District Houston Board and Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau Board

Ingrid Gomez – Hilton Americas | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Ed Gonzalez – Harris County, Sherriff

Paul Goydan – The Boston Consulting Group, Inc.

Ashlea Graves – Houston Independent School District

Jay Guerrero – Office of Senator John Cornyn

Don Guter – Resident, South Texas College of Law

Guy Hagstette – The Kinder Foundation

Mark Hanson – Houston Symphony

Jessica Hart – Office of Senator Ted Cruz

Bob Harvey – Greater Houston Partnership

Sheila Jackson Lee – United States Congresswoman, District 18

Nathan Johnson – Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

Jennifer Ju – Cardno Haynes Whaley | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Sean Jump – Resident, Bayou Lofts Homeowners Association

Yoon-Joo Jung – Mayer Brown | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Doug Kelly – Hilcorp

Deborah Keyser – Resident, Stafford Keyser Bromberg

Grace Kim – SP+ | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Barbara Koslov – Office of Harris County Judge Ed Emmett

Tom Lambert – Metropolitan Transit Authority

Rhea Brown Lawson – City of Houston, Library Department

Eugene Lee – Essex Commercial Properties

Carol Lewis – Texas Southern University

Frank Liu – Lovett Homes

Jemina MacHarry – Houston Rockets, Toyota Center | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

James Edward Maloney – Resident, James Edward Maloney, PLLC

Barry Mandel – Resident, Discovery Green Conservancy | Downtown Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.3)

Nataly Marks – JP Morgan Chase

Nick Massad, Jr. – American Liberty Hospitality | Greater Houston Convention & Visitors Bureau Board

Tom McCasland – City of Houston, Housing & Community Development Department

Deborah McNulty – City of Houston, Mayor’s Office

C.J. Messiah – City of Houston, General Services Department

Dan Meyer – MC Management & Development

Borris Miles – Texas State Senator, District 13

Darryl Montgomery – Wells Fargo | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Chuck Moore – CBRE, Houston Center | Downtown District Board

Jack Morman – Harris County Commissioner, Precinct 2

Mason Mote – Haynes and Boone | Central Houston Inc. Millennial Enterprise

Karen Mulville – Resident, Midway Companies | Downtown District Board

Laura Murillo – Houston Hispanic Chamber

Hina Musa – Greater Southeast Management District

Thomas Nauls – The Tipping Point | Downtown District Board

James Nelson – Houston Ballet

Tom Netting – Hyatt

Hong Ogle – Bank of America | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Larry Oliver – Chevron | Central Houston, Inc. Board

Kathy Payton – Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation



Samuel Pena – City of Houston, Fire Department
Theola Petteway – OST/ Almeda Corridors
 Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ No.7)
Jessica Phifer – Resident, Christie’s
Russ Poppe – Harris County Flood Control District
Joe Probst – Hess
Gordon Quan – Quan Law Group | East Downtown
 Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.15)
Rudy Rasmus – St. John’s United Methodist Church
Scott Repass – Organized Kollaboration on Restaurant
 Affairs, Little Dipper | Downtown District Board
Ed Reyes – Hardy/Near Northside Redevelopment
 Authority Board (TIRZ No.21)
Ricardo Rivas – Allied Orion Group
Abbey Roberson – Texas Medical Center
David Robinson – City of Houston, Council Member,
 At-Large #2 | Houston First Corporation Board
Judson Robinson – Houston Area Urban League, Inc.
Robert Rodriguez – Resident, Kirby Lofts
 Homeowners Association
Courtney Johnson Rose – Greater Houston Black
 Chamber
Vanessa Sampson – Fourth Ward Redevelopment
 Authority (TIRZ No.14)
Kimberly Schlanger – Baker Botts | Central Houston Inc.
 Millennial Enterprise
Tom Segesta – Four Seasons
Robert Sellingsloh – Wulfe & Co. | Midtown
 Redevelopment Authority Board (TIRZ No.2)
Mandy Chapman Semple – Houston Endowment, Inc.
Bill Sengelmann – Camden Development, Inc.
Bishop George Sheltz – Archdiocese of
 Galveston- Houston
Nicholas Shum – Vinson & Elkins | Central Houston Inc.
 Millennial Enterprise
Christof Spieler – Resident, Huitt-Zollars, Inc.
Frank Staats – REIS Associates, LLC | Downtown
 District Board
Jennifer Stephens – Tellepsen Family Downtown YMCA
Carter Stern – Houston Bike Share
Katy Stewart – Stream Realty | Central Houston Inc.
 Millennial Enterprise
Juliet Stipeche – City of Houston, Mayor’s Office
Hillary Swallen – KPMG | Central Houston Inc.
 Millennial Enterprise
Vern Swisher – Career and Recovery Resources
Anne Taylor – Deloitte | Central Houston, Inc. Board
Barkley Thompson – Christ Church Cathedral
Vi Tran – Gardere | Central Houston Inc.
 Millennial Enterprise

Alex Triantaphyllis – Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
Gary Trietsch – Harris County Toll Road Authority
Liz Unger – Resident, Beaconsfield Homeowners
 Association | Downtown District Board
Brock Wagner – Saint Arnold Brewing Company
Dave Walden – Office of Harris County Commissioner,
 Precinct 2
Mike Waterman – Greater Houston Convention &
 Visitors Bureau
Jeff Weatherford – City of Houston, Public Works &
 Engineering Department
Jane Cahill West – Super Neighborhood Alliance
Beth White – Houston Parks Board
Donna Sims Wilson – Smith Graham &
 Company Investment
Johanna Wolfe – University of Houston Downtown
Terry Woolfe – Kinder Morgan
Steve Wright – City of Houston, Parks &
 Recreation Department
Richard Zientiek – Union Pacific Railroad

Partner Organizations Staff

Michelle Ashton – Midtown Management District
Angie Bertinot – Downtown District
Veronica Chapa Gorczyński – Greater East End
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Algenita Davis – Central Houston, Inc.
Robert M. Eury – Central Houston, Inc.
Lonnie Hoogeboom – Downtown District
Ryan Leach – Downtown Redevelopment Authority
 (TIRZ No.3)
Jacqueline Longoria – Downtown District
Robert Lung – Central Houston, Inc.
Kathryn McNiel – Theater District Houston
Peter McStravick – Houston First Corporation
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