



BLUEPRINTHOUSTON
It's about your future



ENVISION HOUSTON REGION – HOUSTON WORKSHOP

Preliminary Summary

WHAT HAPPENED?

On Saturday, September 17th, 400 Houstonians interested in planning for the City's future, convened at the University of Houston Hilton Hotel. For four hours they explored alternative growth scenarios for Houston and identified land use transportation visions of Houston in 2035 with 2 million more people.

WHO ATTENDED?

A diverse group of representatives from Super Neighborhoods, City Council, the Planning Commission, local universities, business and development groups, environmental communities, as well as planning experts from local and state agencies and citizens from over fifty zip codes within the Houston Region.

WHAT'S NEXT?

There will be four additional workshops in Conroe, West Harris County, Angleton and Baytown. The results will be compiled into four regional growth scenarios and evaluated in terms of their implications for air quality, mobility, cost and housing options. H-GAC will consider the results in development of the next Regional Transportation Plan. Other entities can use the results for their planning efforts.

WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

Citizens produced 40 maps of how the city could grow and develop. Twelve maps presented at the end of the workshop suggest four alternative growth scenarios:

- A radial pattern of development along existing freeways and rail lines with new town centers.
- A concentric pattern of development concentrating growth inside Loop 610 and in town centers alongside Beltway 8.
- A series of satellite cities connected by rail to the airport and downtown.
- A continuation of growth along the edges with a scattering of more compact development within Beltway 8.

WHAT DID THE MAPS COMMUNICATE?

A preliminary survey of the maps indicates participants value open space, respect floodplains, seek cleaner air, and see the benefit of mixed use development. The maps reflect a preference for:

- Housing options: typical suburban developments as well as concentrations of housing closer to commercial uses.
- An improvement in home- to-work travel time.
- A combination of transportation services to maintain mobility.
- More town center development.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

Groups of ten were asked to develop a growth plan for the Houston area to accommodate the 2-3 million people projected to move into the city over the next twenty years. Participants were given a map of the Houston area along with a set of chips that represent the amount of land required to support the increased number of households and jobs that follow the population forecast. Each group had the option of mapping new activity centers, town centers, and subdivisions as well as industrial and commercial areas. The chips could be traded in for different combinations of development. Cities like Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and Chicago have successfully used this exercise to create a common vision for future growth and development. John Fregonese, from Fregonese Calthorpe Associates, was the consultant.

S P O N S O R S

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