



Goals and Actions – Final Draft

Culture and Recreation

Goal: Culture

Houston supports a vital and diverse arts community with affordable and accessible arts centers and programs.

Actions

Public/Private Sectors

- *Support the arts to levels comparable to and modeled on sports programs.*
- *Create urban and suburban centers for arts.*
- *Develop a comprehensive public relations program.*
- *Publicize arts programs in neighborhoods and schools.*
- *Create an inclusive environment in the arts that welcomes participation and opens opportunities.*

City

- *Subsidize the arts with alternative tax funds.*

Goal: Recreational and Community Facilities

Houston offers libraries, parks and recreational facilities available within walking distance for every Houstonian.

Actions

City

- *Allocates more resources to upgrade and improve libraries and parks.*
- *Offers more sports and community programs.*
- *Creates and maintains after school programs.*
- *Expands uses and hours of operations of all public facilities.*
- *Re-uses and renovates outdated public facilities, where feasible.*
- *Increases public access to outdoor recreational areas including water-based activities and trails.*

Economic Development

Goal: Economic Development

Houston is a sophisticated, vibrant, information technology driven city with a highly skilled workforce, a diversified business community attractive to international interests and small businesses thriving in local neighborhoods.

Actions

Public Private Sectors

- *Bridge the digital divide providing access to high-speed fiber optic technology in every home and small business.*
- *Diversify Houston's economy by focusing on technological innovations in biotechnology, nano-technology and computer science.*

City

- *Uses tax credits and other incentives to attract businesses in neighborhoods.*

Goal: Employment and Training

Houston offers increased employment training opportunities that address a wide range of occupations and industries, offered in a culturally sensitive and language-sensitive manner, inside and outside the work place including in the public schools.

Actions

Economic development entities

- *Attract a wider range of industries, including technology industries and light manufacturing.*
- *Increase language and culturally sensitive training offered in a variety of settings including the public schools.*
- *Coordinate training with available jobs.*

City

- *Adopts economic development incentives that create jobs closer to where people live.*

Education**Goal: Education**

Houston provides high quality bilingual public education in schools that are safe and have highly trained teachers and small classes.

Actions

City and Houston Independent School District

- *Requires that all teachers be certified.*
- *Requires that teachers participate in professional development including computer literacy courses.*
- *Ensures that fifty percent of Houston's teachers are bilingual (Spanish, Vietnamese, etc.).*
- *Assesses student's development with an array of oral and verbal testing.*
- *Reduces class sizes.*
- *Provides physical education and after school programs.*
- *Makes schools safe with more police officers, metal detectors, strict visitation guidelines, and conflict resolution classes.*
- *Encourages students to look out after one another.*

Environment

Goal: A clean city

Houston is a clean and quite city that supports technologically advanced clean alternative fuels and energy efficient green buildings in sustainable developments.

Actions

City

- *Encourages the use of new sources of energy and cleaner fuels.*
- *Regulates and drastically reduces noise and visual pollution levels.*
- *Provides incentives for the development of “green” buildings.*
- *Encourages through regulations sustainable building practices.*
- *Addresses consumer and industrial wastes in ways that enhance the natural environment with County and State.*

Private Sector

- *Designs “green buildings” that integrate with and respect their surroundings.*

Goal: Air Quality

Houston improves the quality of its air and in turn improves quality of life and health of its citizens.

Actions

City

- *Establishes a minimum clean air standard for the City, County, and State agreed upon by appropriate policy-makers and business-owners.*
- *Holds owners of both stationary and mobile pollution sources responsible.*
- *Improves air quality through community outreach, regulations and incentives.*

Goal: Flood Management

Houston develops and adopts a flood management plan that encourages cooperation among City, County and developers in all aspects of flood management.

Actions

City and County

- *Establish a plan to better manage flooding.*
- *Clean ditches and bayous.*
- *Limit development in floodplains.*
- *Develop parks along bayous for flood control and recreation.*

Private Sector

- *Mitigates detention and runoff in their projects.*
- *Builds ponds for flood and drainage.*

Goal: Preservation, Parks, and Trails

Houston adds, preserves and restores natural areas, creates more parks evenly distributed geographically and accessible to all citizens; develops linear parks along bayous; and connects neighborhoods with and hike and bike trails

Actions

City

- *Funds, develops and maintains the best urban park system in the country with help from the County, making our park space per capita level the highest in the nation.*
- *Adopts aggressive landscape and green space ordinances.*
- *Collaborates with urban reforestation and parks-related groups in pursuit of the goal.*
- *Reclaims brownfields to create more parks.*
- *Develops linear parks with hike and bike trails to connect neighborhoods.*
- *Makes new and existing parks accessible to all citizens including children, elderly and the low-income.*

Private Sector

- *Sets aside land for parks in developments.*

Goal: Steward of water resources

Houston is a steward of water resources, develops new and safe water supplies and cleans up waterways to eliminate water pollution.

Actions

City

- *Develops new water sources with other municipalities in the region.*
- *Adopts ordinances that encourage water conservation measures.*
- *Strengthens protection of existing water supply through a river authority.*

Private Sector and Citizens

- *Develop program that help minimize water pollution.*
- *Conduct clean-ups of waterways and wetland plantings with the help of City agencies.*

Infrastructure and Services**Goal: Delivery of Services**

Houston delivers public services equally to each part of the City including recycling, street cleanup, lighting, curbs and gutters, and mosquito control.

Actions

City

- *Appoints and funds an interdepartmental committee to create and publicize plans to improve service delivery efficiency.*
- *Requires public officials to hold monthly meetings in their district to address citizens concerns.*
- *Creates a media campaign to publicize availability of city services to all parts of the community.*
- *Establishes a community hotline to report waste and to provide information on actions taken.*

- *Establishes a three-month hotline for citizens to report areas where curbs and gutters need replacement and provide timely schedule of repairs.*
- *Rotates equitably the areas of the city where repairs are taking place.*
- *Hires additional city workers only when economically feasible.*
- *Sprays for mosquitoes beginning in mid- to late March to head off breeding.*

The Public Waste Department of the City of Houston

- *Forms a committee of employees, directors, and residents to develop a recycling plan with incentives for the public.*

Goal: Infrastructure Provision and Maintenance

Houston maintains and improves its infrastructure – including streets, roads, sidewalks, traffic management devices and public facilities – in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner.

Actions

City

- *Allocates resources in a fiscally responsible manner through a quality, long-range plan for infrastructure.*
- *Builds and maintains streets, sidewalks, and public facilities in neighborhoods.*
- *Is sensitive to the needs and resources of historic, cultural and expanding neighborhoods.*

Law Enforcement

Goal: Law Enforcement

Houston has secure public and private places, adequate laws for public protection that address both non-violent and violent offenses, and the public will to enforce them extensively and fairly.

Actions

City

- *Supports development of public places that facilitate visibility and that are active and populated.*
- *Enacts stricter laws regarding alcohol, sexually oriented businesses and weapons.*
- *Increases taxes to hire more and better-paid police and firefighters to ensure competitive recruiting.*
- *Develops an inventory of nuisance sites (e.g. illegal dumping) and measure annual enforcement progress.*
- *Uses PSAs to educate and remind public and law enforcement officials of key laws (e.g. DW/UI, red light running).*
- *Equips police vehicles with computerized language translators to better communicate with non-English speaking citizens.*
- *Increases the fine for non-violent offenses – link to mandatory community service.*

Public Private Sectors

- *Improve lighting and maintain property following Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.*

Leadership and Decision Making

Goal: Civic Involvement

Houston has an informed and empowered citizenry able to access information from all relevant sources and to collectively influence government decisions.

Actions

City

- *Gives residents a direct voice in affecting government's actions within or toward their communities.*
- *Gives residents a say in how land is used and where growth should occur in their communities.*
- *Supports residents' decisions.*
- *Creates transparency through extensive use of public service announcements on radio and television and through periodical emails.*

Goal: Government and Leadership

Houston restructures and reforms City government to make it more accountable, to give citizens an active voice in policy decision making, to reduce taxes, and to better collaborate and coordinate activities with other governmental entities.

Actions

City

- *Hires a city manager and an ombudsman.*
- *Conducts annual customer relations training for city employees.*
- *Hires an independent agency to determine where to cut wasteful spending.*

Citizens

- *Elect ethical, visionary leaders in government who really listen, respect and respond to the citizens.*

Planning and managing growth

Goal: Community Appearance

Houston's neighborhoods are beautiful, well preserved, and free of visual blight supported by appropriate development standards that respect their unique identity and values.

Actions

City

- *Creates and adopts development standards (ordinances and deed restrictions) that meet community and business needs.*
- *Adopts strict regulations controlling visual blight including billboards, on-premises signage, overhead utility lines, derelict buildings, and other offensive sources of visual pollution.*
- *Respects the unique and historic character of individual neighborhoods.*

Goal: Growth Management

Houston creates a master plan for city growth that fosters dense, vibrant urban cores surrounded by affordable, accessible, diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods.

Actions

City

- *Develops a plan to manage future growth.*
- *Ensures that the City's living and working centers are within walking distance to one another include green spaces, shops, schools, services, and harbor a mix of housing types.*

Private Sector

- *Coordinates development with transportation plans and pay for infrastructure needs generated through development.*

Citizens

- *Demand a sustainable intelligent master plan from the City and County.*

Goal: Zoning

Houston's neighborhoods are protected and strengthened through sensible application of newly created zoning laws.

Actions

City

- *Establishes and enforces zoning laws based on sound planning and neighborhood aspirations.*
- *Develops regulations and incentives that favor the development of mixed-use neighborhoods.*
- *Supports the integration of uses such as parks, shops, places of employment and police services into each neighborhood to reduce dependency to automobiles.*
- *Imposes impact fees to reduce traffic, noise, light and impervious surfaces in inappropriate locations.*
- *Invests four times the current level in the Super Neighborhoods programs.*

Super Neighborhoods

- *Identify chief community concerns and assess needed modifications to programs and regulations.*
- *Conduct design workshops and visual preference surveys and develop resulting plans.*
- *Define priorities for future budget allocations.*

Redevelopment**Goal: Neighborhoods**

Houston promotes and preserves inner city and older neighborhoods, improves their infrastructure with increased public open space and encourages historic preservation resulting in diverse livable, walkable neighborhoods.

Actions

City

- *Promotes redevelopment of older neighborhoods.*
- *Provides tax incentives and mortgage assistance so that older areas can revitalize themselves.*

- *Encourages the Super Neighborhood Council to identify improvements to the public infrastructure and submit them to the City for inclusion in the C.I.P. (Capital Improvement Projects).*
- *Cleans up and utilizes abandoned homes and converts vacant lots into parks and green spaces.*
- *Enforces codes more aggressively and prosecute illegal dumpers.*

Private Sector

- *Creates and supports active, effective preservation organizations focused on preserving historic structures in older neighborhoods.*

Citizens

- *Form, strengthen and support Neighborhood Associations to give equal representation to neighborhoods in asserting and preserving their unique identity.*

Goal: Urban Cores

Houston promotes the revitalization of vibrant, walkable urban cores as entertainment, workplace, and residential destinations, preserving historic older areas and neighborhoods and promoting sensitive new development.

Actions

City

- *Adopts urban design guidelines and incentives that support the creation of vibrant walkable urban cores.*
- *Promote inner loop neighborhood preservation and conservation.*
- *Increases green spaces and parks in the inner loop area.*
- *Attracts new business, residences and entertainment facilities in Downtown while respecting its existing cultural, historic and open space amenities.*
- *Implements the Buffalo Bayou Partnership Plan with the involvement of the Partnership itself, the private sector, and County.*

Social Equity

Goal: An equitable city

Houston is a just city that views all children as “our children” and provides affordable quality day care; encourages drug counseling and other drug prevention intervention in schools; facilitates the transition process for intermediate and junior high students in poverty; assists the homeless and provides opportunities for residents to earn a living wage.

Actions

City

- *Develops standards for and provides tax incentives to quality day care facilities.*
- *Ensures that all citizens make a living wage, or that wages are supplemented with food, medical care and clothing.*
- *Expands the multi-service center concept to include social programs or creates associations that provide center services (jobs, education, health, preventive health, daycare, food) in a central location for each community.*

- *Expands use of schools to become multi-functional hubs of activity: healthcare, after school activities, study halls after school, and clubs.*
- *Provides decent shelter for homeless and homeless mentally ill with help from not for profit organizations.*

Goal: Appreciating diversity

Houston promotes, embraces and increases appreciation of diversity especially race, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual preference, religion and socio-economic status.

Actions

City

- *Holds town hall meetings within ethnic neighborhoods and then across neighborhoods so that all ethnic groups can express their concerns and suggest possible solutions.*
- *Promotes and supports legislation to demonstrate that the rich diversity of Houston is welcomed and valued.*

Goal: Housing

Houston redevelops its subdivisions into beautiful neighborhoods with housing for all economic and age groups located in the proximity of parks, schools, shops, police services and places of work.

Actions

City

- *Develops regulations that facilitate the creation of neighborhoods with diverse housing types so that people of different income, needs and age can live together.*
- *Increases rates of homeownership and the supply of decent, affordable housing with help from the Housing and Community Development Department and other housing-related organizations.*

Public and Private Sectors

- *Assist low-income residents to purchase their homes.*

Goal: Immigration

Houston provides opportunities for immigrants to learn how our government works so they can access jobs, education opportunities and the justice system on par with non-immigrants.

Actions

Schools

- *Teach American Civics at all levels so that immigrants can more easily use the justice and other governmental systems.*
- *Promote bilingual education for better communication between immigrant and non-immigrant populations.*

Police

- *Develops outreach programs to serve the immigrant population better.*

Goal: Senior Citizen

Houston supports seniors with affordable housing, tax exemptions, access to healthcare, transportation, more park facilities and activities, environmental awareness about senior housing areas and police presence in senior communities.

Actions

Public Private Sectors

- *Develop moderately priced housing for the elderly integrated in every community.*

Goal: – Healthcare

Houston encourages healthy living and affordable quality care for all economic and age groups with adequate trauma centers and clinics.

Actions

City and Healthcare providers

- *Encourage healthy living habits at home, school and work.*
- *Provide affordable quality healthcare for all citizens with part of the cost paid for by the State.*
- *Encourage preventive care for all citizens to prevent expensive care later.*

Citizens

- *Vote for the creation of trauma centers and clinics so that adequate emergency care is available.*

Transportation**Goal: Alternative Transportation**

Houston improves and expands existing pedestrian trails and bike paths providing alternative transportation options and ensuring safety and connectivity.

Actions

City

- *Expands the current pedestrian and bike trails network.*
- *Improves existing pedestrian and bike trails making them more accessible, connected, and wider.*
- *Adopts and enforces laws that improve safety of trails and paths.*

Goal: Public Transportation

Houston develops a public transit system that reduces traffic congestion, improves air quality and provides increased density and mobility options throughout the region; and that is clean, fast, efficient, high frequency, comfortable, accessible and well routed.

Actions

City

- *Develop a comprehensive mass transit plan that addresses the issue of communities underserved by transit and that is agreed upon and supported by the private sector, elected officials, and the public.*

Houston Galveston Area Council /TPC

- *Develop and adopt a plan supported by technical analysis and computer modeling to maximize ridership within the current system.*
- *Investigate the expansion of current coverage area.*
- *Form cooperative agreements with other transit agencies to provide broader regional coverage.*

Goal: Roads and Congestion

Houston has a coordinated and accessible network of streets, roads and expressways that are well built, well maintained and integrated with other modes of transportation; that reduce congestion through traffic management, road construction, and parking; and that are aesthetically pleasing.

Actions**City**

- *Develops a multimodal regional transportation plan to manage traffic flow and reduce congestion.*
- *Develops planning, design and construction standards through the Texas Department of Transportation to insure well-coordinated, beautiful and well-built roads.*