

## 3. Draft Critical Questions by Theme (Edited)

Listed below are the critical questions raised by the Steering Committee during its meeting on January 23, 2003. ACP staff have edited the list to combine similar questions and clarify questions, when possible. More clarification may be necessary, particularly on those questions marked with “(NOT CLEAR).” Please refer to the verbatim version of this list for the original unedited questions raised by the Steering Committee.

### **Government and Politics**

#### ***Governance***

How can values generated during Blueprint Houston be incorporated into public policy?  
 What is the appropriate form of government for 8 million people?  
 How do we incorporate sustainability to our public policy, how do we account for externality? (NOT CLEAR)  
 What policies need to be in place to foster leadership and stewardship?

#### ***Transparency and Accountability***

How can we promote accountability among public officials?  
 How do we prevent public officials from “selling out” or changing opinions because of campaign contributions?  
 How do we lock candidates into their campaign promises?

#### ***Financial Management***

How do we prevent Houston from going into bankruptcy?  
 How do we prevent city money from going to the county?  
 How do we make public investments that provide a return on investment or otherwise benefit the city?

#### ***Local to Regional and Beyond***

What does Houston represent to the region?  
 How do we stop thinking in terms of us/them or in terms of city/state/region?  
 How can Houston grow as a region and emphasize cooperation not competition?  
 How do we become more local? (Have access to local features)? (NOT CLEAR)

### **Clean Air**

How do we get Houston to comply with Clean Air Act?

### **Culture**

Is Houston the cultural center of region?  
 How do we attract the creative class?

### **Health Communities**

How can we ensure healthy communities (environment, health, prosperity)?

### **Education**

How do we improve the quality of inner-city school districts?

### **The Economy**

#### ***Oil Industry***

Is the petro chemical industry a long-range economic base for Houston or is it holding us back?  
 Is petro-chemical industry good for Houston’s economy? Is petro-chemical industry good for Houston’s health?  
 Is it possible to have a competitive petro-chemical industry and a clean environment?

If not, how can we transition to other economic activities?

### ***The Technology Sector***

What does Houston have to attract high-tech professions?

How can Houston attract high-tech professions?

### ***International Trade***

Houston has the largest port and is centrally located so why can't we bring distributors to Houston?

How do we take advantage of our diverse population to promote international trade?

Can we be an international trade city without expanding our ports?

### ***Economic Growth***

In interest of economics are we willing to police ourselves? Are we willing to force political will to be regulated in certain areas for positive economic change? (Look at MA & CA). (NOT CLEAR)

Is current economic environment holding us back?

How do we balance impact of macro-econ swings on economy? (NOT CLEAR)

### ***Balancing Economic Interests and Opportunities***

How can we get the private sector to recognize public desires?

How do we make macro-economic activity trickle down to neighborhood level?

How do we shift paradigms to create a balance between a community minded economic model and a corporate/global model?

How do we continue economic growth/expansion without destroying our history and the cultural fabric of our community?

### **Social Equity**

Does the Houston advantage of low cost of living offer a decent standard of living for all or does low cost of living mean a lower standard of living?

### **Development**

#### ***Managing Growth***

How do we stop expansion around city – stop the flow of people going outside city? (NOT CLEAR)

How do we look at both dominant model and homegrown model? How do we balance/implement the two? (NOT CLEAR)

Will Houston have zoning?

#### ***Character***

How do we maintain current character or image with lofty goals? (NOT CLEAR)

How do we maintain characteristics unique to Houston?

How do we create a city so attractive people don't want to live elsewhere?

#### **Transportation**

Can we stop freeway/car environment to change to transit?

Can we get federal \$\$ for transit ins. of highway?

How do we make our waterway system into our transportation system?

Will we conquer our mobility issues? Creativity? Innovatively? Consider sustainability and smart growth? How will we invest in transportation? – Will we have money left to invest in schools/people?

### **Overriding Values**

#### ***Values***

What are "our desires?"

Does the broader community share our values?

How do we become a more unified society?

***How?***

Is what we do consistent with our values?

How do we control our own destiny?

How do we change viewpoints to be homegrown? (NOT CLEAR)

***Costs and Commitment***

Are we committed?

Are we willing to pay for our values?

Are we willing to pay for these goals?

Do we have discipline?

Are those of us who can, willing to pay for those who can't? Need to tap money and resources.

***Why?***

What's our reward for doing this? Need an answer. (NOT CLEAR)

**Miscellaneous or Unclear**

Need a dialogue about how to make life flow smoothly. Fast buck city.

Challenge – Mutual respect.

How do we stop being naive of intentions of people outside of the city?

How expand can industries lux and?? energy? Need new industries.