



Walkable Places

Presented by
Planning & Development Department
City of Houston

Walkable Places Subcommittee
Wednesday, April 5, 2017



Project Schedule

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV
Background Information & Best Practices	Framework/ Decision Making	Ordinance Amendment	Public Outreach & City Council Adoptions

Timeline: 2017 (Jan, Feb, Mar, **Apr**, May, Jun, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov) | 2018 (Jan, Jun)

Meeting Agenda



- I. Recap
- II. Standards to Promote Walkable Places
- III. Guest Speaker – Jeff Taebel
- IV. Next Meeting Preparation
- V. Homework
- VI. Public Comment

I. Recap:



- Other U.S. cities' practice to promote walkable places
- Approaches to decide location (Where)
 - City Initiated Approach
 - Applicant Initiated Approach
 - Standards to promote walkable places (What)
 - Building Setbacks
 - Parking Requirements
 - Building Frontage
 - Pedestrian Realm

Standards to Promote Walkable Places



- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage
- Pedestrian Realm
- Active Ground Floor

Active Ground Floor Use



- By Street Classification
 - along specific streets
 - Number of entrances
- By Designated Area
- Applicable cities:
 - Austin
 - Denver
 - Oakland
 - Portland
 - Atlanta
 - Washington D.C.
 - Charlotte
 - San Francisco



Standards to Promote Walkable Places



- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage
- Pedestrian Realm
- Active Ground Floor
- Building Façade and Design
 - Transparency
 - Minimum and Maximum Building Height
 - Minimum Ground Floor Height
 - Parking Structures

Building Façade & Design Transparency



- Minimum ground floor transparency requirements
- Applicable cities:
 - Oakland
 - Atlanta
 - Denver
 - San Francisco
 - Portland
 - Austin
 - Charlotte
 - Washington D.C.



Building Façade & Design Min and Max Building Height



- Min Height
- Max Height
 - Designated by corridor or area
- Applicable city:
 - Charlotte
 - Denver
 - Portland
 - Oakland
 - Atlanta



Building Façade & Design Building Height



Building Façade & Design Minimum Ground Floor Height



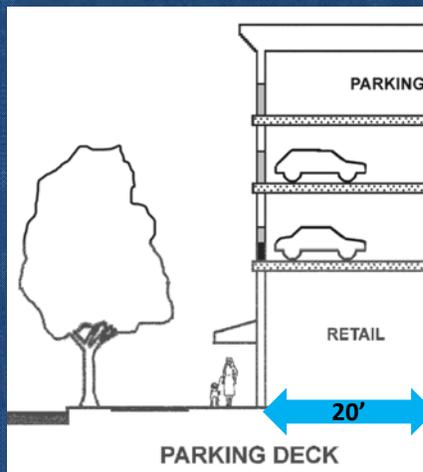
- Min Height
 - Ground Floor
 - Designated by corridor or area
- Applicable cities:
 - Charlotte
 - San Francisco
 - Austin
 - Denver
 - Portland
 - Oakland
 - Atlanta



Building Façade & Design Parking Structures



- Required
 - Active ground floor
 - Screening
 - Min Height
 - Min Depth
- Applicable cities:
 - Charlotte
 - San Francisco
 - Austin
 - Atlanta



Building Design Standards Discussion

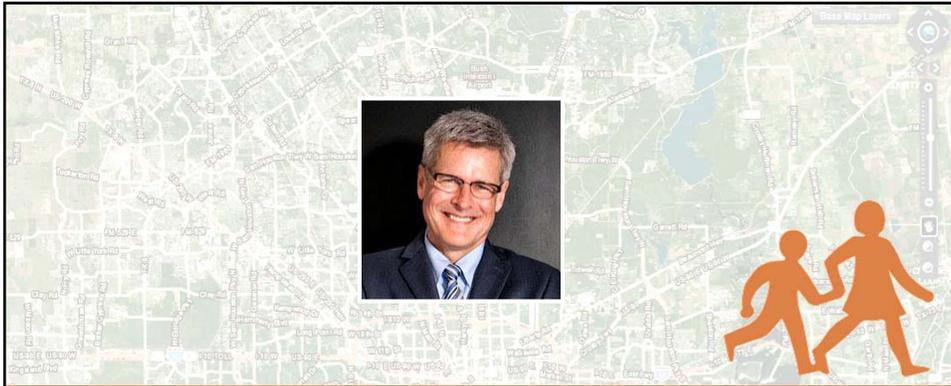


- Does building design significantly impact walkable places?
- If so, should we consider building design criteria for creating walkable places in Houston?

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A map of Houston, Texas, serves as the background. In the center, there is a portrait of Jeff Taebel, a man with glasses wearing a suit and tie. To the right of the portrait is an orange silhouette icon of a man and a woman walking together. Below the map, there is an orange banner with white text.

STEPS TOWARD A WALKABLE HOUSTON

Jeff Taebel, FAICP
Houston-Galveston Area Council



A photograph of a family of four walking on a brick-paved path. The family consists of a woman in a green shirt and grey pants, a man in a light green shirt and white shorts, and two young children. They are walking towards the camera. The background shows a building, trees, and a parking sign with a 'P' in a blue circle. At the bottom of the image, there is an orange banner with white text.

It's good for people.



It's good for the planet.

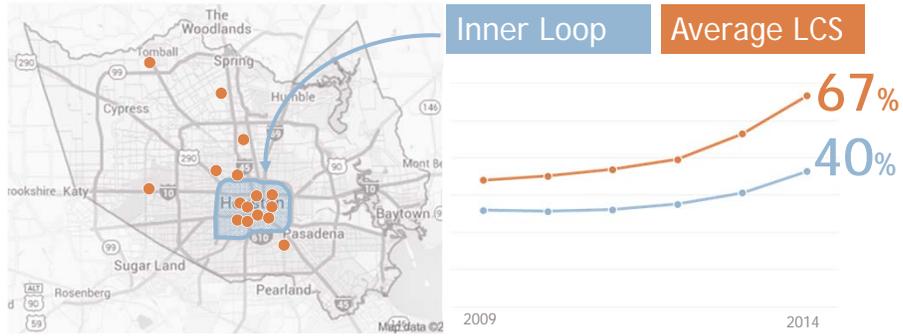


It's good for our prosperity.



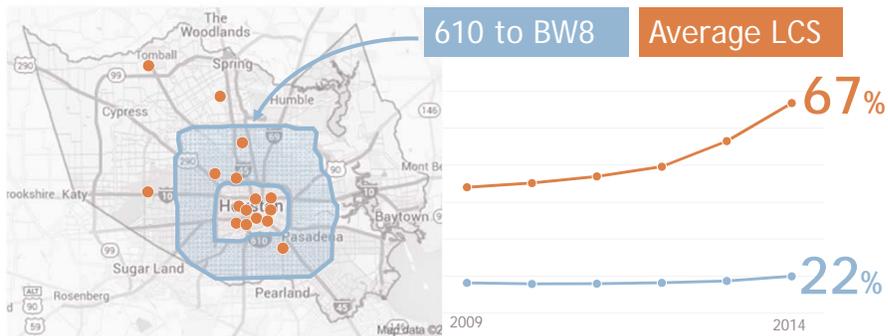
Property Value Increase

2009-2014



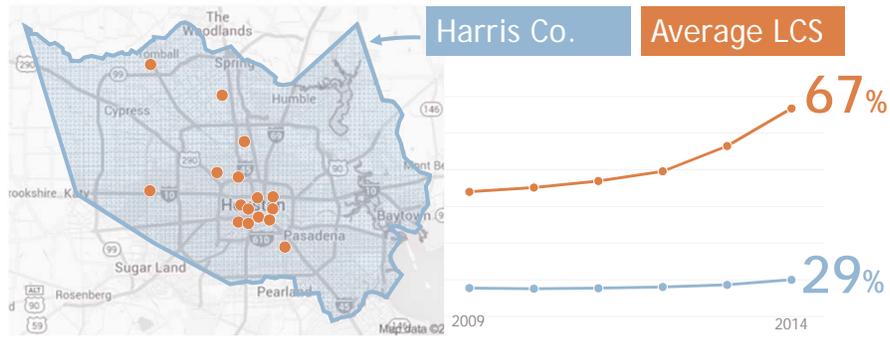
Property Value Increase

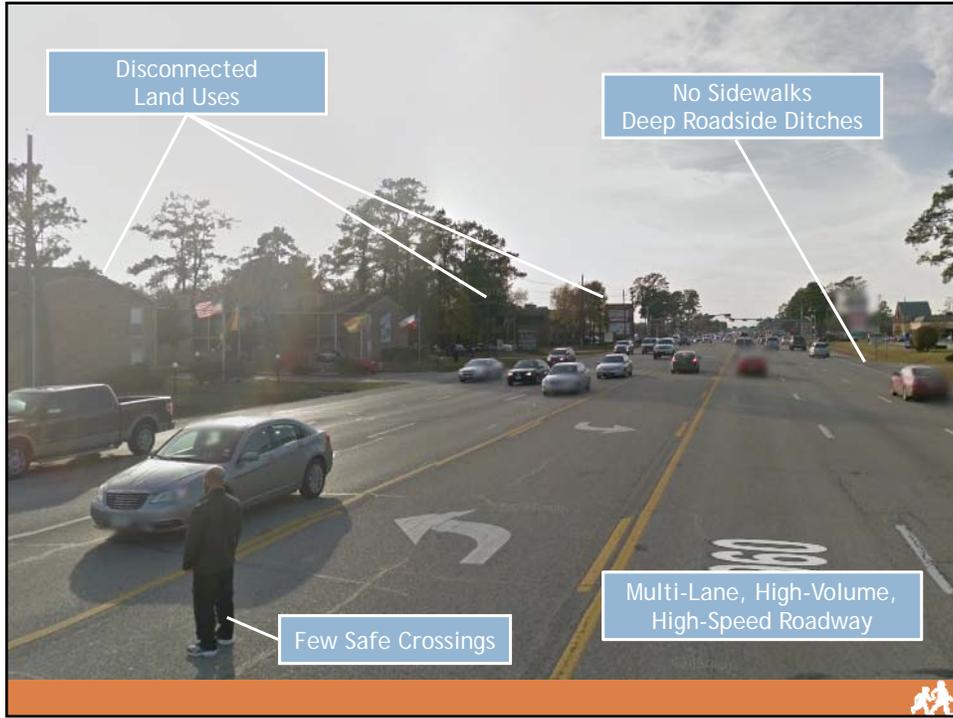
2009-2014



Property Value Increase

2009-2014





Targeted Strategies

Midtown



Airline



Goal: Activity Density

People + Jobs close together reduces trips by car

Downtown Houston*



Greenway Plaza*



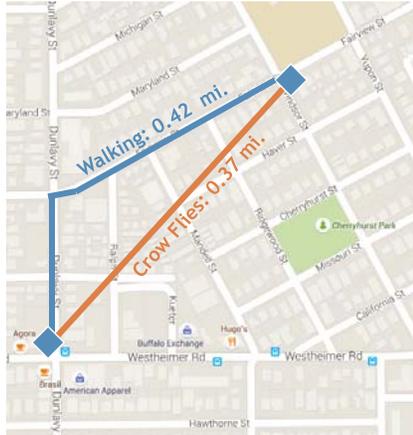
*Same scale



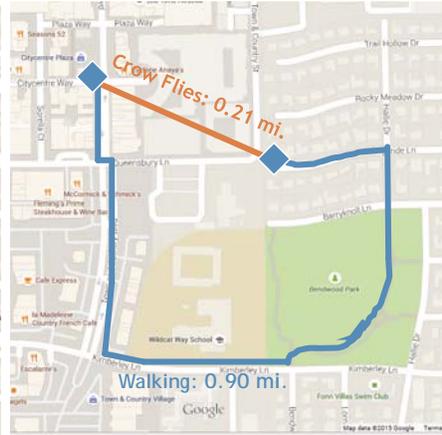
Connectivity

A TRIP TO THE COFFEE SHOP

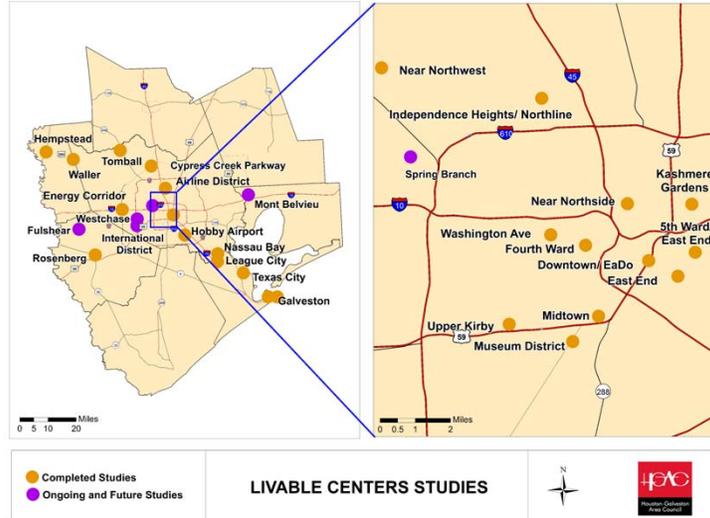
Gridded Street Network



Disconnected Street Network

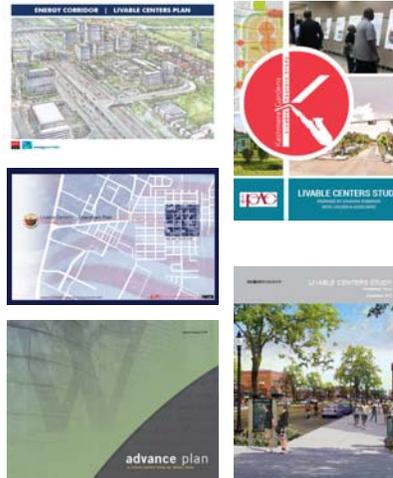


Livable Centers Studies



Livable Centers Studies

- Began in 2008
- 25 studies complete, 3 underway, 2 pending
- Selected through competitive process
- Average cost \$200,000 (80% federal, 20% local match)
- 9 month timeframe
- H-GAC is project manager



Downtown/EaDo

The map displays a grid of streets with various transit lines overlaid. A legend in the bottom right corner identifies the transit recommendations: Light Rail (red line), Circulator (green line), Amtrak Local Bus (blue line), Other Local Bus (purple line), and Street Car (yellow line). The map also shows 'KING PARK' and 'EAST PARK' areas. To the right of the map are two architectural renderings: the top one shows a landscaped pedestrian plaza with trees and people, and the bottom one shows a busy street scene with pedestrians and modern buildings.

TRANSIT RECOMMENDATIONS:
LIGHT RAIL
CIRCULATOR
AMTRAK LOCAL BUS
OTHER LOCAL BUS
STREET CAR

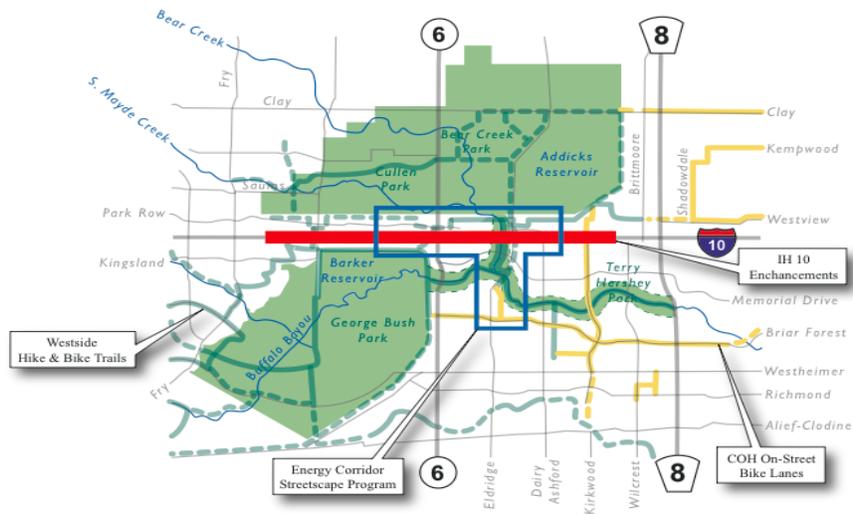
Downtown/EaDo

This collage features several architectural renderings and a site plan. The top left rendering shows a covered pedestrian walkway with people walking. The top right rendering shows a modern street scene with a building, trees, and a person walking a dog. The bottom left rendering shows a site plan with labeled areas: 'REGIONAL TOURISM CENTER', 'PARKING RETAIL', 'HOTEL/RESIDENTIAL', 'DYNAMO STADIUM', and 'GEORGE R BROWN CONVENTION CENTER'. The bottom right rendering shows a modern building facade with a large white arrow graphic and a person walking.

Energy Corridor



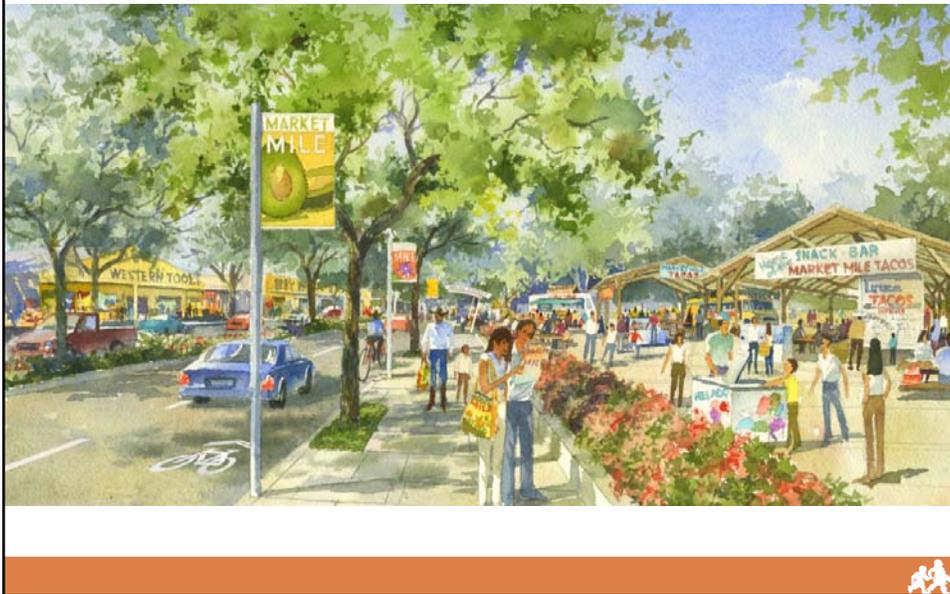
Energy Corridor

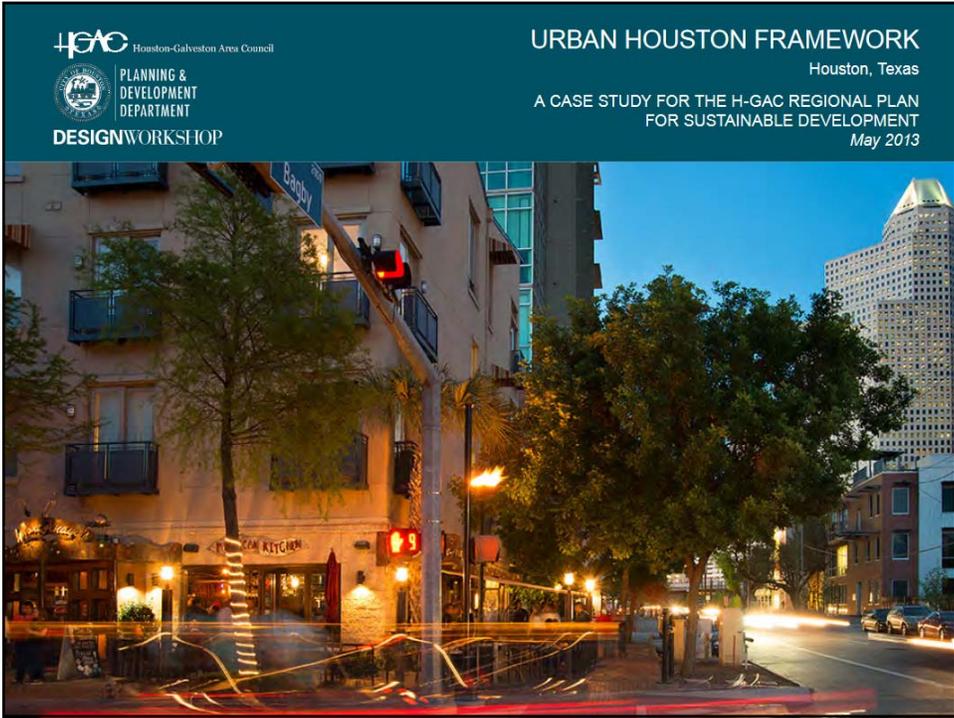


Airline Drive



Airline Drive





Defined Urban Center Types

- Downtown
Texas Medical Center
Uptown/Galleria
Midtown
Westchase
- Fourth Ward
Energy Corridor
Third Ward
Rice Village
City Centre/Memorial City
- Greater East End
Greater Greenspoint
Palm Center

Large Centers

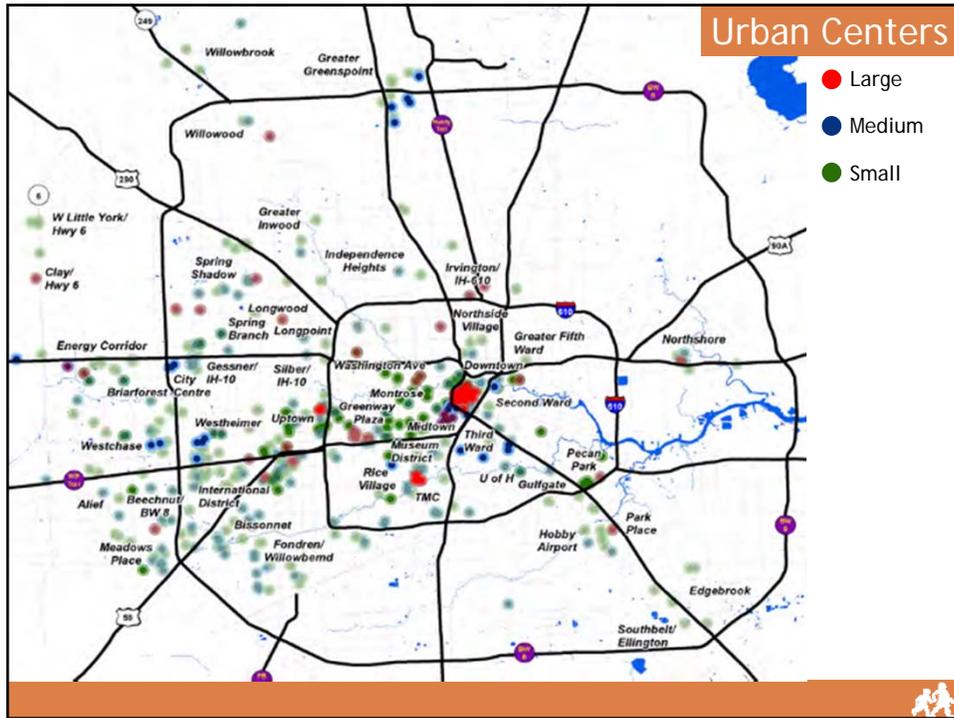


Medium Centers



Small Centers





Proposed Policy Tools

Setbacks

Parking

Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit considerations

Incentives



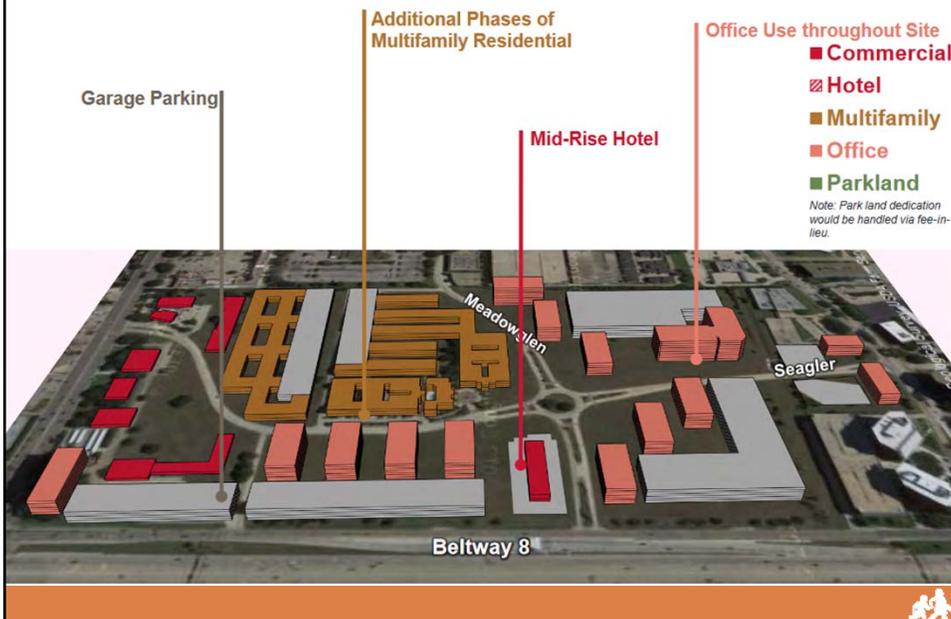
Case Study

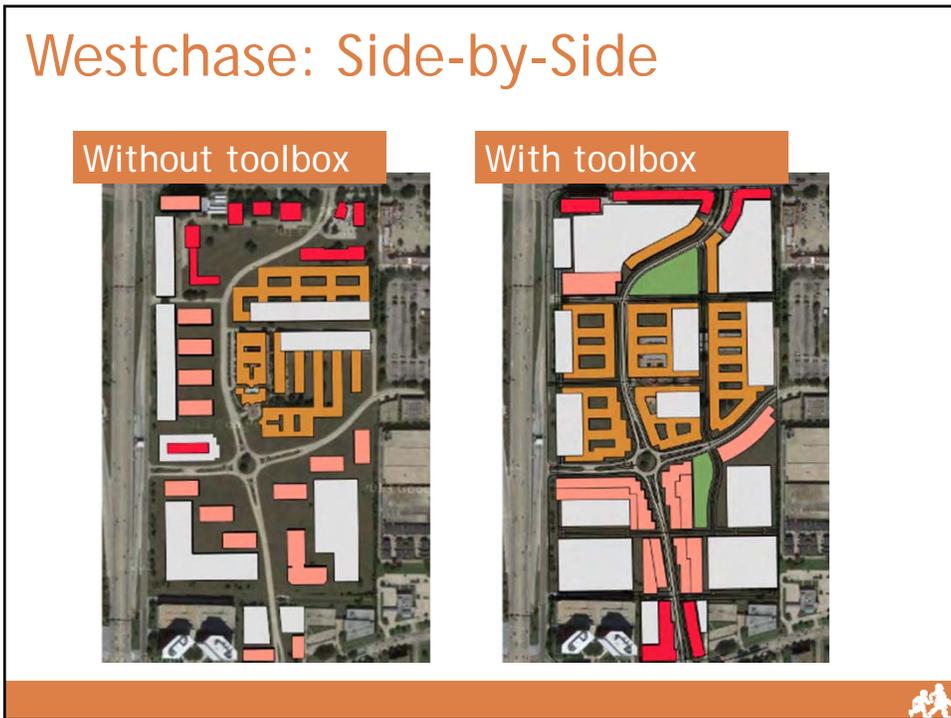
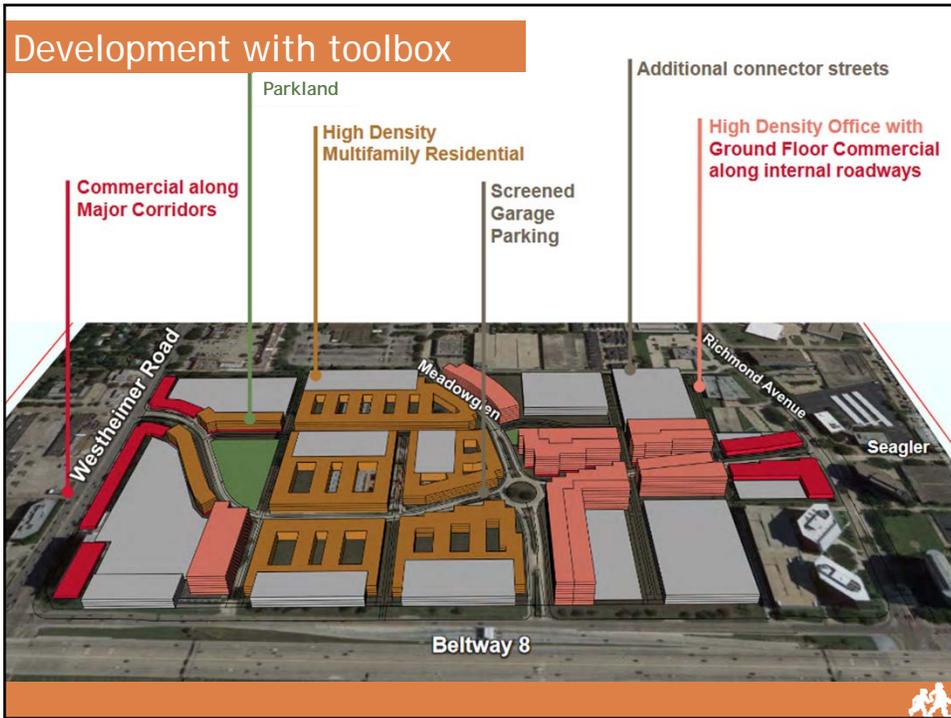


102.2 acres in Westchase



Development without toolbox



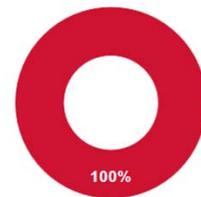
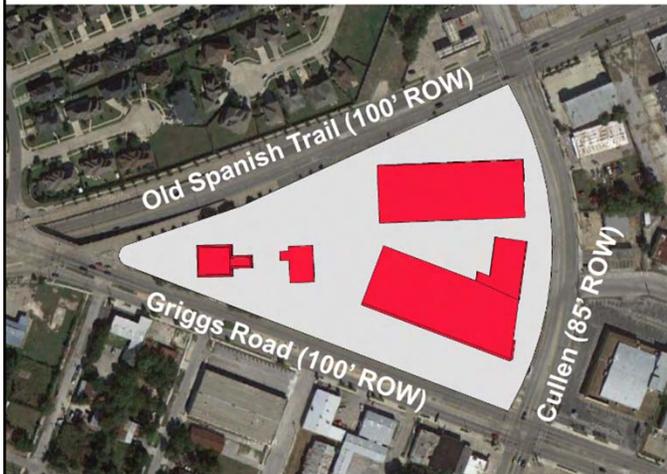


Case Study

8.4 acres in Greater Third Ward



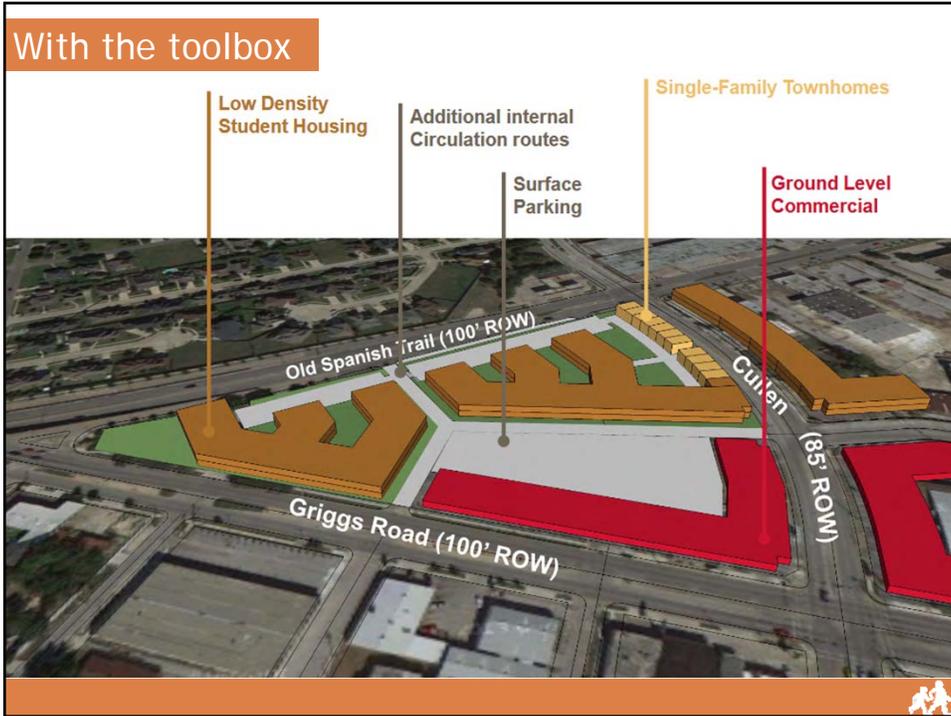
Without the toolbox



Land Use

- Commercial
- ▨ Hotel
- Multifamily
- Single-Family
- Office
- Parkland





Greater Third Ward: Side-by-Side

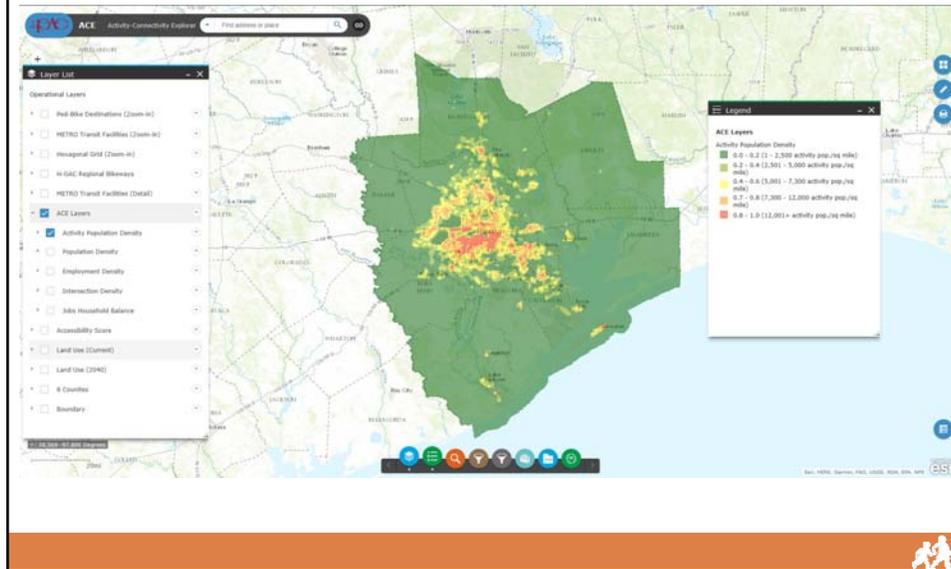
Without toolbox



With toolbox



Activity Connectivity Explorer ACE



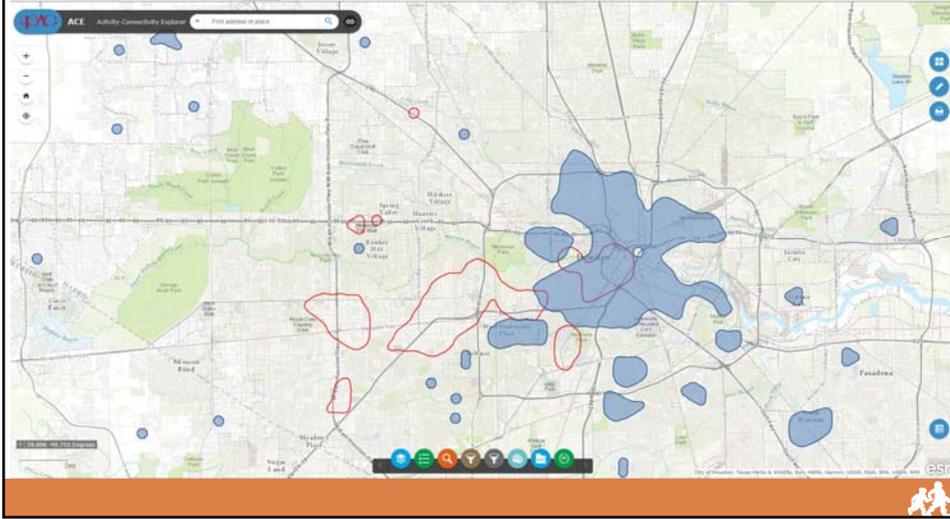
ACE Overview

- **Density Indicators**
 - Population
 - Employment
 - Activity Population (Population + Employment)
 - Jobs/Housing balance
- **Connectivity Indicators**
 - Intersections
- **Accessibility Indicators**
 - Amenities (Ped-bike destinations)

Accessibility Score =
Activity Index (40%) + Connectivity Index (20%) + Amenity Index (40%)

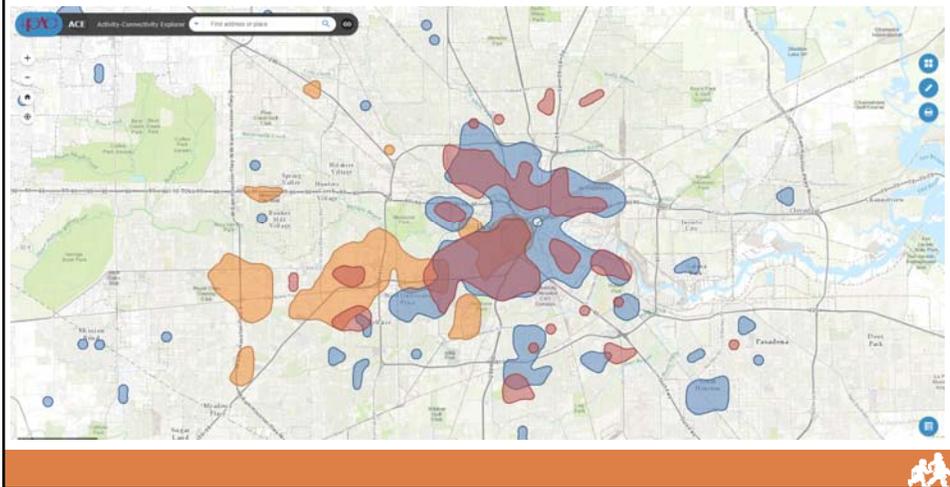
Activity and Connectivity

- Top 10% Intersection Density
- Top 10% Activity Population



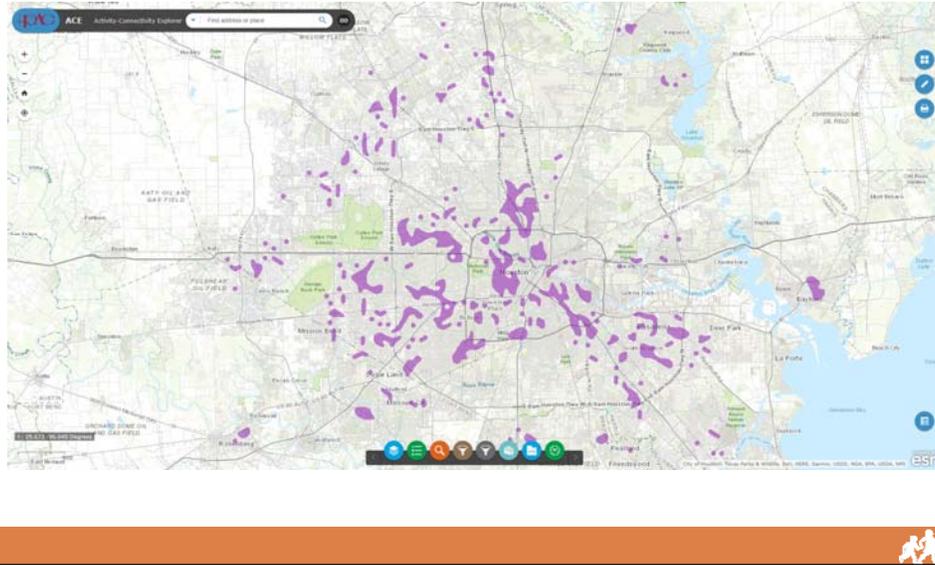
Activity, Connectivity, Amenities

- Top 10% Connectivity
- Top 10% Amenity Concentration
- Top 10% Activity



Mixed Use Neighborhoods

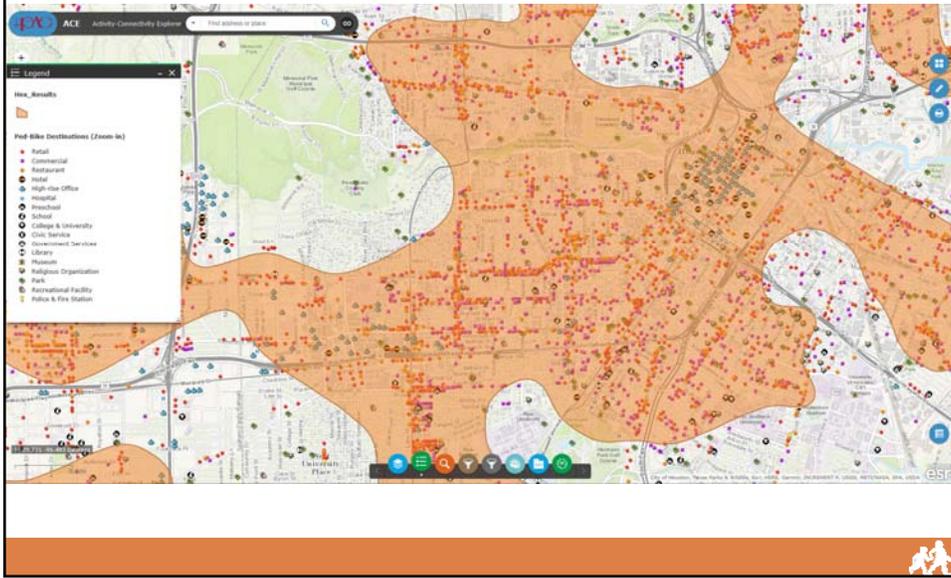
Jobs to Households ratio between 0.76 and 1.5



Type of Ped-Bike Destinations and Weights

Category	Type	No.	Weight
Total		51,542	1
Commercial & Retail (CNR)		34,528	0.1
	Hotel	148	
	Retail	17,116	
	Commercial	12,891	
	Restaurant	4,373	
Office (OFF)		490	0.1
	High-rise Office	490	
Educational (EDU)		1,547	0.2
	Preschool	722	
	School (K-12)	783	
	College & University	42	
Public & Institutional (PNI)		3,096	0.2
	Hospital	524	
	Civic Service	20	
	Library	105	
	Museum	50	
	Police/Fire Station	112	
	Religious Organizations	2,285	
Parks, Recreational & Natural Area (PRN)		2,856	0.2
	Parks, Recreation, & Natural Areas	2,564	
	Recreational Facility	292	
METRO Facilities (MET)		9,025	0.2
	LRT Station, Transit Center, and Park & Ride	93	0.6
	Bus Stop	8,932	0.4

In Top 10% of Accessibility Index



THANK YOU

Jeff Taebel, FAICP

Director of Community and Environmental Planning
Houston-Galveston Area Council
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Links

- h-gac.com/livablecenters
- ourregion.org/casestudies.html
- h-gac.com/livablecenters/tools.aspx

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Key Criteria to Identify Walkable Places



- Activity Population Density
- Land Use Diversity
- Infill/ Redevelopment Potential
- Area Connectivity
- Accessibility to Transit
- Accessibility to Bikeways
- Accessibility to Amenities
- Area Connectivity

Next Meeting Preparation



- Four Charrette Case Studies

- Promoting Walkable Places along Corridors
 - Westheimer Rd between Dunlavy St & Montrose Blvd
 - North Main St between Quitman St & Hogan St
- Promoting Walkable Places in Geographic Areas
 - Midtown Area
 - (East Downtown Area) EADO Area

Walkable Place Charrette Corridor: Westheimer Rd between Dunlavy St & Montrose Blvd

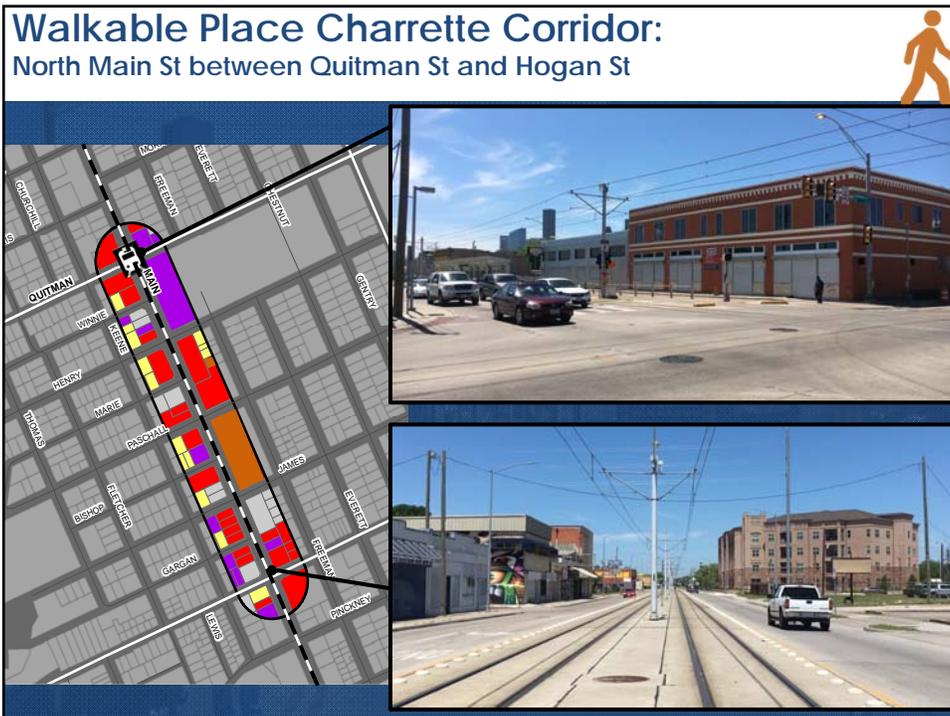
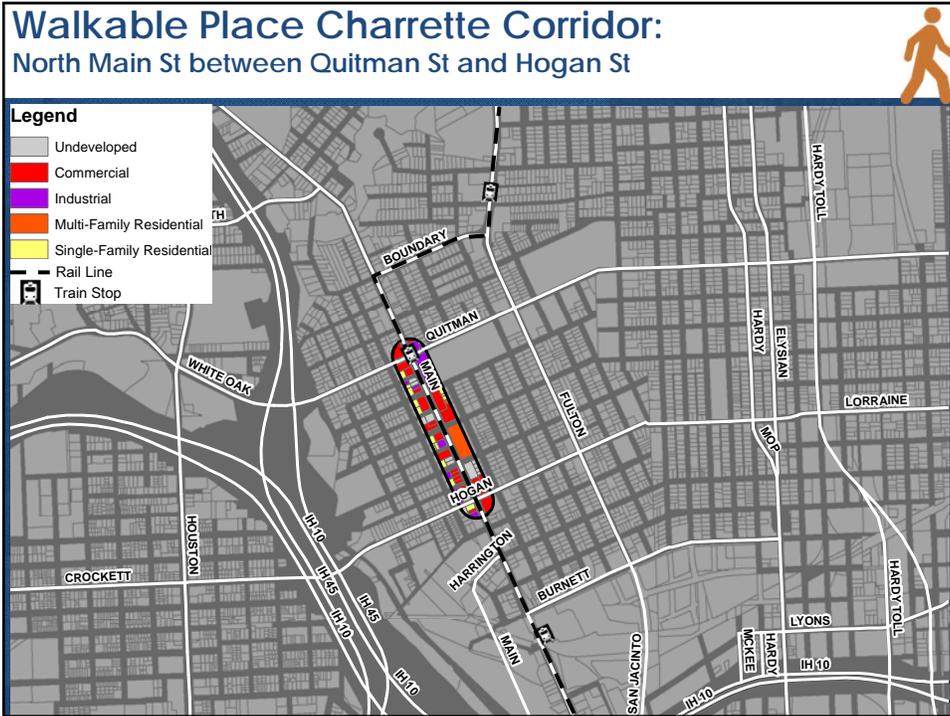


Walkable Place Charrette Corridor: Westheimer Rd between Dunlavy St & Montrose Blvd



Walkable Place Charrette Corridor: Westheimer Rd between Dunlavy St & Montrose Blvd





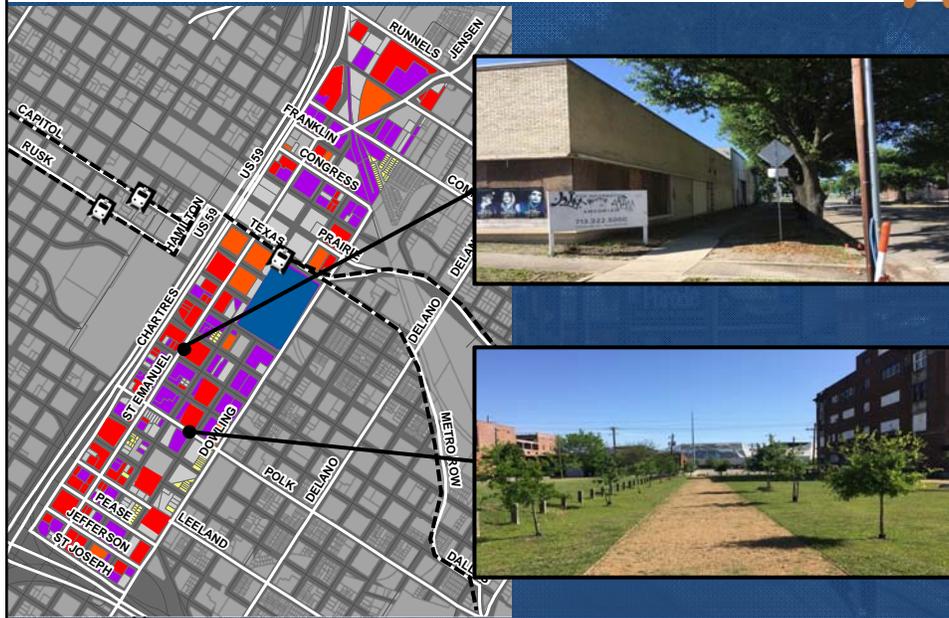
Walkable Place Charrette Area: Midtown Area



Walkable Place Charrette Area: Midtown Area



Walkable Place Charrette Area: East Downtown Area-EADO Area



Homework



- 4 Charrette Groups:
May 17, 2017: Julia Ideson Library-Auditorium
 - Email preference to Muxian
 - Friday, April 7, 2017, noon
Muxian.fang@houstontx.gov
 - Visit and experience assigned area

V. Public Comment

