Houston’s General Plan
QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 18, 2014
2:00 p.m.
Today’s Agenda

1. Overview of the General Plan
2. Leadership Structure
3. Process and Timeline
4. Next Steps
What is a general plan?

- Broad policy document for City
- Defines long-term success and steps to accomplish
- Uses ground-up, community-driven process
- Many prior related efforts
  - None adopted by Council
- Of 24 most populous cities, 21 have a general plan or similar
Prior Work

• Mayor directed Planning & Development Department to explore concept
  – Fall 2013
• Project consultant: Peter J. Park
• Internal meetings with multiple City departments, Council Members and key City staff
• External meetings with major institutions, organizations, and focus groups
Prior Work

• April 2014 – Quality of Life Committee
• June 2014 – Memo to Mayor Parker and Council
• July 2014 – Invitation to Council to serve on Stakeholder Committee
• July 2014 – Kick off celebration for committee members
Why Plan?

- Support for a **citywide vision** and coordinated strategy
- **Strategic regional vision** necessary for Houston to fully realize global opportunity and potential
- Projected growth provides opportunities but requires **new and better approaches**
- Need for **continuity across changes** in City leadership and key staff
Benefits

- Ensure City efforts are **coordinated** – both internally and externally
- Increase **collaboration** across City departments
- Maximize **effectiveness** of City efforts by enabling a **proactive approach** to solving problems
- Accelerate **quality policymaking** at every level
- Increase **public engagement**
- Create **consistency** across changes in City leadership
Key Considerations

- Plan will rely on results of past community engagement and visioning exercises
- Plan will build on existing information in existing plans, policies, practices, and regulations
- Plan will provide guidance for future plans, policies, and regulations
Major Components

- Vision Statement
- Planning Coordination Tool
- Performance Indicators
- Neighborhood Enhancement Strategy
- Growth & Development Strategy
- Implementation Strategy
Vision Statement

• Description of preferred long-term outcomes
• Vision and goals could address:
  – Jobs and sustainable development
  – Fiscal responsibility
  – Infrastructure
  – Public safety
  – Quality of Life
• Vision statement will be presented to the public for comment and confirmation
Planning Coordination Tool

- Map showing plans across Houston
- Simple, easy to use
- Various organizations
- Updated in perpetuity
Performance Indicators

• Further define goals
• Measuring progress on implementing the vision statement
• Existing indicators available
Neighborhood Enhancement Strategy

• Document current approach
• Examples:
  – Neighborhood character preservation tools
  – Reduction of blight and substandard living conditions
  – Cleanup and beautification projects
• Identify gaps and opportunities
Growth & Development Strategy

• Document current approach

• Examples include:
  – Incentives such as 380 Agreements
  – TIRZ/Management Districts
  – Development regulations such as Transit Corridors
  – Capital projects

• Identify gaps and opportunities
Implementation Strategy

- Consensus on next steps
- Elevation of recommendations from prior studies
- High level
The General Plan

- Capital infrastructure
- Plans, Studies and Policies
- Funding and budget allocations
- Development-related regulations and standards
- City programs and services
- Vision Statement
- Interactive Website
- Defined Strategies
- Implementation Strategy

GENERAL PLAN
Leadership Structure

- Planning & Development Department
- Steering Committee
- Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Technical Working Group
  - City departments
  - Outside agencies and organizations
- Planning Commission
- City Council
Resources

• Much of project performed in-house
  – Research, public outreach, logistics

• Professional planning services needed
  – Strategy and analysis
  – Technology tools, graphics and layout

• Provide contract for Council consideration
  – Under $600K, with $200K from general fund
  – Finalizing funding partners – cover approximately 2/3 of funding needs
Timeline and Milestones

2014
Vision Statement

2014
Neighborhood Enhancement/ Growth & Development Strategies

2015
Website Launch

2015
Performance Indicators/ Strategies to Implement Plan

2015
City Council Adopts Plan

Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug
Next Steps

• Council consideration of planning services contract
  – October 2014

• Finalize vision and goals with committees

• Seek public input on vision and goals including Quality of Life Committee
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