

**General Plan
Steering Committee**

November 20, 2014

Houston General Plan:

- 4th Meeting of the HGP Steering Committee (Opening Remarks by Pat Walsh (PW));
- Work on the Vision Statement is complete until after receiving public comment;
- Today is to share the approach and process for the HGP;
- Brief description of the agenda items;
- Design Workshop Introduction

Rebecca Leonard (RL): Introduced the Team and key personnel: DW, WRT, JA, BSA

Steering Committee Introduction (each member was to discuss one area of focus they'd like to see the general plan address)

David Crossly – Houston Tomorrow, improve quality of life for all the people of Houston, walkable urbanism, walkable neighborhoods connected by transit

Mark Witte – Houston Real Estate Council – coordination mechanism between city departments and county, highway, infrastructure

Mike Kilkenny – Planning Commission – comprehensive, efficient.

Josh Sanders – Houstonians for Responsible Development – better communication between departments and understanding of the information – better coordination

Amanda Timm – Framework for equitable development including housing plan for affordable housing, etc.

Elizabeth Love – Houston Endowment – robust participation, voices for all communities

Jen Powis – HPB – better coordination, better access, better availability to get there

Guillermo Lambert – Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - continued opportunities like the gen. plan, and improved quality of life

Bob Eury – coordination, do this in a way that makes this process enduring

Ann Taylor – Director ULI, give people more insight going forward, synchronize services

Linda Toyota – Asian Chamber of Commerce people supporting what they help create. Sustainability and longevity of the plan

Guy Hagstette – unique moment in history where we have an opportunity to do things that are GREAT. This should be a tool to help Houston realize its potential

Lance Gilliam – Houston Housing Authority – Hope the execution of the plan can connect to everyone in the city regardless of income and connection to amenities in the city.

Mary Lou Henry – AICP, an effort to make sure the community becomes more attractive.

Minnette Boesel – Cultural Affairs – make the city more attractive and wonderful, precipice of greatness as a global city of arts and culture

Bob Harvey – Greater Houston partnership - a period of remarkable growth confronting the physical realities of the city who has not confronted that growth.

Catherine Mosbacher – leadership solutions, community indicator, next year civic vitality, hopeful that the plan can help inform that. Hot button: inner city density and traffic and make certain that Houston doesn't lose what it has had as an advantage – housing for all, stay equitable

Jeff Taebel – HGAC – sustainability. People will support what they help create, Public support!!!

Carol Lewis – focused on how we integrate transportation and land use. The plan can't be everything to everyone. Rallying point that says who we are and what is important to us!

Susan Alleman – Houston Planning Commission. Will be embraced by the community both public and private sector. When people take actions – how does this forward the goals and strategies in the general plan?

Antoine Bryant – Houston Planning Commission. The engagement piece is a critical component across economic and ethnic ladders. Make this well known. We have to engage all populations. Include our residents. We need to create an American implementation association. Would love to see that some of these things have critical steps to get done.

Peter Brown – can't be another false start. This should lead to better outcomes in terms of the quality and character of the built environment. Better outcomes to take advantage of the opportunities and serious challenges that we've avoided. Can't kick the can down the road anymore!

Rebecca Leonard led the discussion of process overview.

Questions on overall process? *Comments by steering committee members will be shown using first and last name initials.*

There was a comment by CL that August was too late as an end date – Pat Walsh answered that we will be to council with the general plan BY August.

Strategies: Analysis, Alignment, Diagnosis, Final Recommendations & Review

Examples: From WRT for strategies and diagnosis

Questions on Strategies? Any ideas on how to tackle these strategies?

MW: The process should bring policies together so that in some clear and concise manner you can see what infrastructure is coming to an area and what rules and regulations are in that area, so you're not having to look in 3 different areas to find information.

JS: A place to be overlays, etc. we can look to one area and know what is there...ordinances, policies, noise ordinances, chapter 42 expansion, infrastructure, traffic impact analysis, there are a lot of policies in place that people aren't as aware of as they should be.

GH: There may be areas where the city is doing something that it shouldn't. Streamlining should be looked at in addition to gaps.

PB: Policy. There really are only 4 or so....what are the fundamental policies supported by Houston???? Don't do anything to offend the development community and watch the "motherhood" language, it should be very clear. The outcomes should be clear.

BE: the initiative to do things is more widely dispersed in this city than it is in most. We are a city where many different parties are part of building the city. It's not as narrow as only "the city". These policies are just a drop in the bucket compared to those of the management districts, etc. The process of analysis really needs to start with the questions of:

1. How do we build this city.....?
2. Who are the implementers? and
3. How can we coordinate?

JT: This is akin to designing the circulation system, but no one has talked about what the animal is.....project specific metrics by default. What are the aspirations of the animal, ex. On street parking, but what are the goals of transportation!

AT: Creating a new way and practice and system for educating the public about the system. Ex. So people don't think that developers just get to do what they want. Developers are following the rules in place. So, making certain everyone can speak on these rules will clarify.

RL: Performance Indicators

Walked the Steering Committee through the City's performance Improvement Portal – what is already being tracked?

Described Ft. Collins' performance indicators and described the methodology for tracking the indicators. Encouraged the group to be realistic about number of items we can measure and prioritize those.... Any thoughts or comments?

Q: What is the population of Ft. Collins?

A: 250,000

MK: I would be nervous about a performance indicator that just says "Transportation". Does that mean we want more miles of roads? I think we need to be more specific than this.

RL: You have to be complex internally but get more simplified for the public. You have to align your P.I. with goals, you probably talked about mobility in some sense....

MW: We can talk about the right metrics and indicators that should go in to....

BE: You live in a political environment in a city with short terms and term limits, be careful in setting up with real integrity in these things..... Set up the P.I. with integrity to avoid making these roseier than they actually might be.

GH: outsource the review to other organizations to keep it outside of the politics.

JT: Identify the moose (what are those indicators....) look to DW with regard to where the moose are. Sustainable Seattle has something like 200 indicators. We need to distill this.

RL: Stakeholder Engagement

Explained the levels of engagement and talked about the specific groups relevant to Houston and where they fit on the Inform, Involve, Collaborate, Empower group.

Additions to Stakeholder Engagement (from Steering Committee Comments):

Who are we missing?

JS – state legislatures, state elected officials, commissioners, need buy in from other elected officials beside City of Houston

GH – Houston has a constellation of organizations that get things done. Special Districts, need to move across all three levels of outreach as these will be the implementers. Houston Parks Board, is just one example. The landscape of this plan will be more complex. We should really dive in to how this can work in Houston – this template should be messier than just a template used before applied to this project.

CL: Involve – we should add the 20-somethings, Young professionals' organizations, etc. It's funny how fast they grow up to be 60.

CM: the private partnerships and nonprofits, such as Buffalo Bayou Partnership, and other groups, Arts and Culture and Historic Preservation, they should be at this top level.

JS: Each group has their own discretion to send their own money..... Some groups have taxing ability and autonomy away from the city.

GH: the concern is less about engaging but more about the framework that you have in your minds for carrying it forward. It's a constellation of entities.

AT: Most things in Houston are built by private enterprise. There are literally 100's of people out there building our city that will be difficult to get involved – these are the Bankers, and they will need to get involved.

RL: We should add the detail beneath each category

MLH: Follow the money to help you drive how you would go about your stakeholder engagement process. You could do a quick analysis over the last 2 years about who is building / finding what

Educational entities – both K-12 and Higer Education

MW: Special interest groups should be expanded, NAIOP, BOMA, HAR, GHBA, etc. and what about all the people who don't fit in these groups

RL: People who have money to spend on implementation, should be in the implementation column.

AB: These private entities will do what they do, and we have to be more inclusive of them in the process, but on the other end of the spectrum, we need to diversify – our city is tri-ethnic, but this room is not.

AT: special interest groups beyond those related to “follow the money”, but identify where the equalizer is so we get the people without the money as well...

CL: A lot of the big corporations move out and expect the public money to follow. This is backwards.

Monica Danna began to talk about the inform and consult columns:

She explained that each special interest group has a person who will handle communication and will be in touch with the Black Sheep Agency.

She explained the MindMixer, Media relations, Events, Website and all methodologies.

Q: Are you including faith based organizations?

A: Yes, absolutely.

JS: Go to district council members and ask about the events going on in their districts

AT: you don't have health organizations that are not health facilities (?), take a closer look at folks doing work force outside of the community colleges, and other colleges. Are you watching the demographics mix in addition to the number metrics?

MD: yes, we are all data centric, so we understand the importance of collecting information

Q: Is it possible to get a copy of the entire presentation?

A: Yes. DW to send out. DW to also send out the stakeholder engagement list.

CL: Zip codes – please capture the zip code data.

(?) As far as public entities, can you put up kiosks at metro, or airports, or other areas in the city..... Do you have others to help you with the outreach? I'm worried about the outreach effort.

MD answered with description of the ambassadors, training ambassadors, and the creation of meetings in the box containing data collection sheets, descriptions of the projects, and additional questions / talking points. .

The website naming and marketing discussion (Monica Danna):

Monica explained the importance of branding the engagement strategy. People should know when they see a tent at a festival or event that the graphics, logo, etc. are part of the general plan effort.

Feedback.houstontx.gov – mindmixer site

Questions:

MK: will this be multilingual? What about Vietnamese, Manderin, in addition to Spanish?

LT: City of Houston has four languages on voting ballots.

MD: We will adapt our efforts at the point at which we talk to leaders of specific communities to translate to their native language?

JS: Are we going to be incorporating our vision statement and goals?

MD:

Yes, great transition for next steps.

PW wrapped up meeting with Next Steps: Move vision and goals to January.

Flexibility today on the January 22 date.

Questions / further input on today:

CL: How will you begin the conversation b/c the majority of Houstonians don't have a clue what a general plan actually is. It's a really short time frame for people to not know what this is about in the beginning. PW – utilize the experts in our community. We have to be very careful about who we talk to.

JT: General comment, concerned about the level of resources available for public engagement seeing how much we've added to the task. Triage will be important. Online survey – responses correlated heavily with wealth, education, race, and age. Resources should be spent in the categories less likely to be on mindmixer.

Resources should be spent earlier on to the IMPLEMENTERS.

JS: We need to be willing to split responsibilities among this group to get out there....people will get offended if they're not involved in the discussion.

GH: Use us!!!

AB: Great job. Time frame: there are lots of big GROUP events with the holidays. Get people started during the holidays.

DC: a little concerned about the time frame. The vision is still in the mayor's office – how long will that take.

Pat: the vision is in the mayor's office - now and we'll

DC: the mayor may spit this out and it might come back to us differently....

RL: We can start now. We can begin with simple concepts now and begin to suck information from people now.

JS: what would be helpful was. When we all introduced ourselves we can create very simple talking points... while we're out and about.

GH: the worst thing that could happen would be to stumble out of the gate. Josh's idea is a good one. The team needs time.

RL: We can make a push piece to give out during the holidays.

Aimee Woodall: once we have-buy in on the naming, we can begin to brand the entire effort.

1. ForwardHouston: ForHouByYou – The campaign would be forward Houston –

Thoughts:

GH: the term “Hou” has become such a way to talk about Houston, it should be involved.

2. HoustoNext Moving Houston Forward:

3. Plan Houston:

Aimee: the most important thing is that everyone feels included while this process moves forward....

AT: I understand the value of piggybacking, but I worry about the imbalance of input you might get by doing too much of that. Be cautious. What do you do when you try to explain in another language?

Ann Taylor – the thing about PLAN Houston is that its straight forward and everyone knows what it is. Let’s not confuse people about what it is we’re doing. I don’t like the confusion of HoustoNext. I don’t like the made up words

I want to support you on the Plan –

JS: Planning in Houston is completely different than planning in other cities. I don’t want to give people the false understanding that they can make a difference in planning or can battle development in some way.

CL: I would vote for the forward Houston. I hear the comments on the plan, and I’m a planner (the word plan insinuates that something is sitting on a shelf). Image. Don’t show transportation congestion images. We don’t want to imply that we can fix **all** efforts.

Forward Dallas was their plan name.....

DC: A small majority of Houstonians don’t like the word plan. The idea that we don’t plan is kind of what this plan is about. Let’s not be afraid of that word....

ACTION: DW to send a survey monkey for people to vote on this. DW to do Doodle Poll for new January meeting date.

Catherine: You can take the word for ForHOuForYOU....and then have a planning effort....

Susan: I have two thoughts - there was a campaign on a billboard.....”so sick of sitting in traffic”. Very effective – b/c it didn’t say who was behind the messaging. People had to look to see what the billboard was all about. Also, for stakeholder engagement, make use of the libraries – train library staff as ambassadors to poll people and help with the effort.