News Release

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Heights South, Woodland Heights and Glenbrook Valley are officially "historic"

HOUSTON, June 29, 2011 – Houston City Council designated Woodland Heights, Heights South and Glenbrook Valley as historic districts. There are now 19 designated historic districts.

The Houston Heights Historic District South is part of the original Houston Heights which was developed by the Omaha and South Texas Land Company in 1891. At that time, they established the largest, earliest planned community in Texas with 1,756 acres of land just northwest of Houston. It was named Houston Heights, due to its elevation 23 feet above that of downtown Houston. Originally its own municipality, the Heights agreed by vote to be annexed to the City of Houston in 1918. Today the area still maintains the feeling of a distinctive, self contained "small town" with its predominantly small 19th century, one-story cottages and larger, two-story Victorian-era homes, and numerous early 20th century bungalow style buildings. "Thanks to City Council's vote of approval today, Heights South Historic District will continue to maintain its historic character and small town atmosphere for future generations to come," said Joellen Snow of Heights South.

The Woodland Heights is located in the greater Heights area just two miles north of downtown Houston. It was established during the early twentieth century as a strictly residential, middle income subdivision by the William Wilson Realty Company. The new subdivision offered amenities normally out of reach for moderate income families. Wilson installed cement sidewalks, graded streets, planted hundreds of live oaks and sycamores, and installed a complete water system at a time when many Houstonians still drew water from cisterns. He required minimum front building setbacks. The houses in Woodland Heights were designed in a variety of styles including, Queen Anne, bungalow, craftsman, late Victorian cottages, American Four Square, and English cottage. Much of the architecture is transitional as it exhibits characteristics of both late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles. "City Council's approval of the Woodland Heights Historic District will preserve our historic houses, our quality of life, and our traditions for generations to come," said Vicky Bettis of Woodland Heights. We owe a debt of gratitude to our visionary civic leaders who have afforded us this protection. Many thanks for your service and efforts on behalf of our neighborhood."

The Glenbrook Valley Historic District was developed between 1953 and 1962 and is one of the best examples of a Mid-Century modern neighborhood in Houston. With Sims Bayou at the north end, the neighborhood lies west of the Gulf Freeway, east of Telephone Road and north of Hobby Airport. The neighborhood was designed for developer Fred McManus by the famous Kansas City landscape architects Hare and Hare. Built on a central part of what was once the

Lubbock and Allen ranches, Glenbrook Valley was designed as a cohesive, planned community that showcased the state-of-the-art in architecture and home innovation during this period. These innovations were displayed numerous times to the public, most notably in the 1954 and 1956 Parade of Homes tours. All of the original homes are cohesive in their architectural style, consisting primarily of American Ranch Style and Mid-Century Modern homes. Today, Glenbrook Valley sits almost untouched like a time capsule. Robert Searcy of Glenbrook Valley commented, "Houston now has the proud distinction of being home to the state's first post WWII historic district."

Houston's Historic Preservation Ordinance, adopted by City Council in 1995, recognizes and protects the city's historic sites. By preserving the city's valuable historic resources, residents and visitors are visibly reminded of our culture and heritage, boosting civic pride and economic prosperity. For more information, go to www.houstonplanning and click on Historic Preservation.

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