



CHANGING LANDSCAPE



Planning and Development Department
Fiscal Year 2011 Annual Report

Dear Houstonians

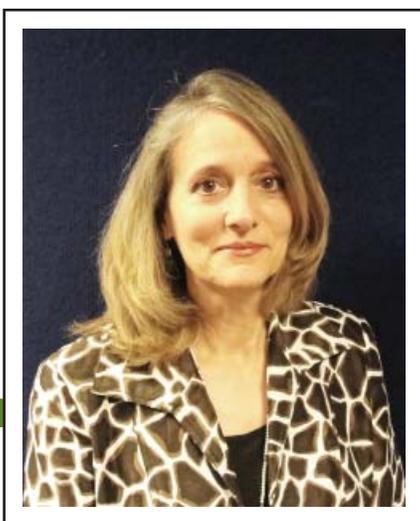
The Planning and Development Department is pleased to present its Fiscal Year 2011 Annual Report, *Changing Landscape*. It's been one of the most challenging years on record as we experienced the most significant reduction in revenue in years. It has led to the loss of twenty percent of our staff and a significant reorganization of the Department and how we work. Some programs and services were cut as a result.

However, this has also presented us with opportunities as we have learned to streamline some of our activities, use technology to increase efficiency and refocus our efforts on core services. One of the outcomes was our newly formed Community Sustainability Division that utilizes tools to protect the characteristics of communities and works to ensure the long-term sustainability of Houston through programs that address growth. One of the new functions of this group is to organize a Community U conference and subsequent workshops that will provide neighborhood leaders with information, resources and tools.

While we as a department change and adapt to new conditions, our city is changing as well. We are becoming more diverse, which means changes across Houston's landscape. These changes shape everything from small businesses to housing needs. It effects where development goes and what types of development occurs.

As a city, we are experiencing new priorities and needs. We are focusing on how to create more walkable communities, how to address mobility needs and where density should occur. The three-year Sustainable Communities grant will provide an opportunity for our region to examine some of these weighty issues and create a plan for how to move forward.

The Planning and Development Department works every day to understand the changing landscapes of our community. Despite the economic troubles we have seen at the City, our staff remains committed to excellent customer service and to provide tools, resources and guidance as we as Houstonians adapt to the *Changing Landscape*.



Sincerely,

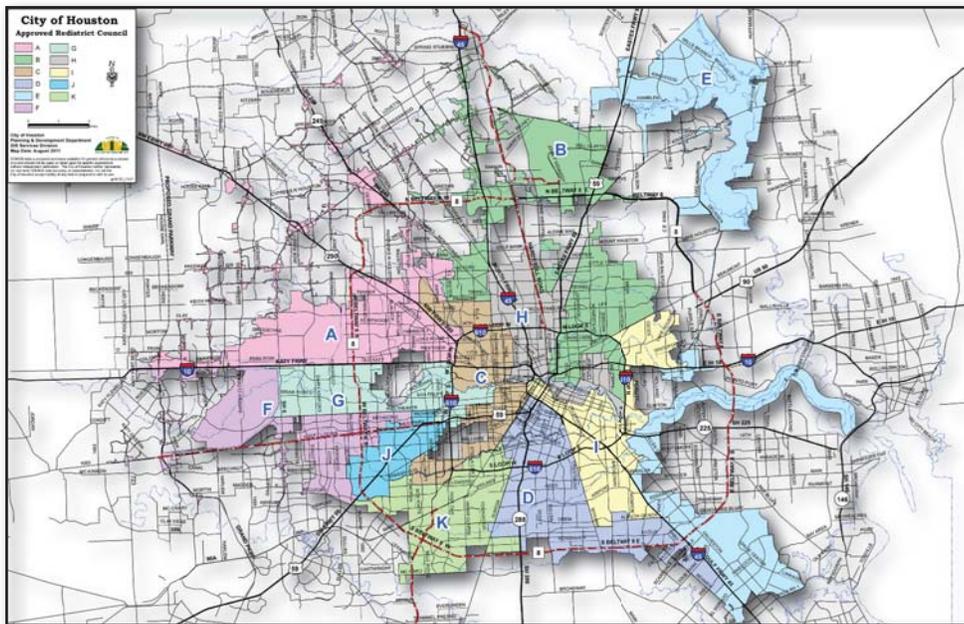
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marlene L. Gafrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marlene L. Gafrick

Director

Major Projects

- ❖ Successfully collaborated with the Houston-Galveston Area Council and awarded a \$3.75 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant to fund a three-year planning effort to create a regional sustainable plan.
- ❖ Revamped the Historic Preservation Ordinance providing some of the most sweeping changes of the year. The significant change offers permanent protection to historic structures in historic districts; saving them from demolition and inappropriate alteration.
- ❖ Provided analysis, mapping and support to the successful redistricting process that led to the adoption of a redistricting plan for City Council based on the outcome of the 2010 Census. The Plan added two seats going from nine single-member districts to 11.



New Council Districts

- ❖ A Houston team led by Mayor Annise Parker was awarded one of four fellowships to discuss land use challenges by The Urban Land Institute (ULI) Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use through 2011. The Houston team worked with the other selected mayors and with leading experts in the real estate development, finance and land use fields with the intention of tackling complex land use issues facing each community. Experts reviewed two transitional areas of Houston, discussed how to overcome barriers and what could lead to positive redevelopment in the area. Staff provided support to the entire effort.
- ❖ Teamed up with the Houston Police Department to create a Jail Public Information Inquiry Website where a person with Internet access could obtain information on a prisoner incarcerated in one of the Department's jails without having to call the jail information line or physically go to a jail bonding office saving the city countless hours and money and providing residents with quick access to important information.

Core Operations

Development Review

Reviewed 1,276 subdivision plats and 106 subdivision plat variances.

Recorded 807 subdivision plats.

Reviewed 762 development plats and 31 development plat variances.

Reviewed 12 cellular tower applications.

Reviewed 1 hotel/motel applications.

Reviewed 8 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan amendments and 11 Special Major Thoroughfare requests related to Fort Bend County.

Annexation/Limited Purpose Annexations and Strategic Partnership Agreements

- Reviewed and recommended 29 Strategic Partnership Agreements (15 new and 14 amendments) for Limited Purposes Annexation. Currently there are 241 Strategic Partnership Agreements that have generated a ten-year total of nearly \$165 million in revenue for the City.
- Reviewed and recommended to City Council consent to create three management districts and one management district expansion and authorize one management district's bond issue.

Historic Preservation

- Added three historic districts; Glenbrook Valley, Woodland Heights and Heights South, for a total of 19 historic districts in Houston.
- Reviewed 249 Certificates of Appropriateness, of which three were withdrawn, 13 were denied by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and rest approved.
- Reviewed 24 properties for Landmark/Protected Landmark status of which all were approved by the HAHC (12 are Protected Landmarks and 12 are Landmarks). Council designated seven Landmarks and nine Protected Landmarks with the remainder pending at the close of the fiscal year. There are currently 216 landmarks and 95 protected landmarks designated by the City.



Woodland Heights Historic District Supporters

Super Neighborhoods

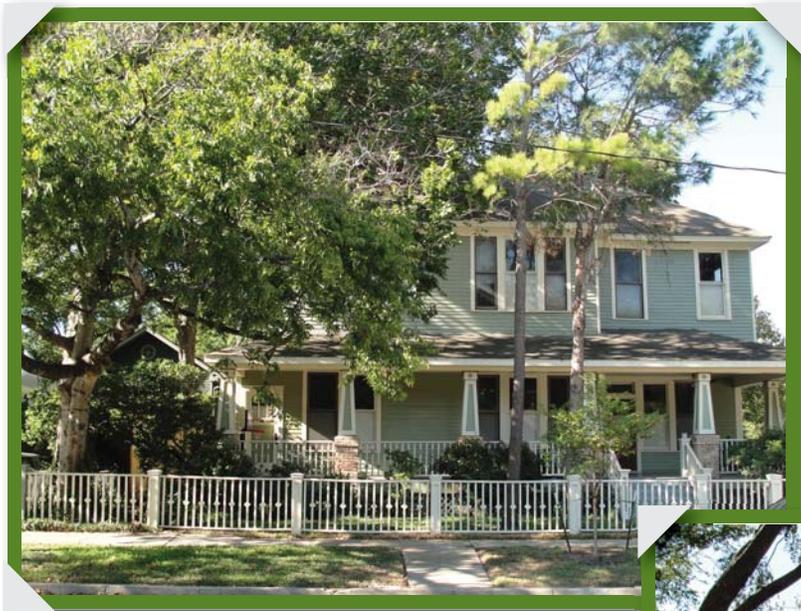
- Recognized five new Super Neighborhoods Councils: Clear Lake, Westchase, Central Northwest, Sharpstown and Downtown. There are 56 recognized councils Planning will continue to work with communities that want to start a council, once recognized the newly established Department of Neighborhoods will assist the council with their operations.

Special Building Line and Minimum Lot Size Program

- Reviewed 12 special building line applications and 15 minimum lot size applications. These tools are used to prevent a block from becoming more dense and changing the character of the block.

Prohibited Yard Parking program

- Reviewed 15 Prohibited Yard Parking neighborhood applications. These are areas where cars are not allowed to be parked in unimproved side and front yards.



Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- Developed Situational Awareness Viewers for both Public Works and the Office of Emergency Management, enabling the simultaneous monitoring of several service sectors and/or conditions and to support the public in times of need, such as post and pre hurricanes.
- Created an Address Validation Service, which enables geocoding/mapping of individual addresses enabling the City to recover substantial sales tax revenue, by determining which business addresses are actually within the City. The program is used by the City Finance Department, as well as the State Comptroller’s Office.
- Created the Super Neighborhood Activity Response Tracking as a tool for the public to track the status of Super Neighborhood Activity Requests.
- Provided support to Rebuild Houston by creating a drainage impervious cover database, which matched addresses for utility accounts to property tax parcels. GIS staff will support the My Drainage and CIP viewer GIS layers servicing the website.

My City Family of Mapping Applications



Budget Numbers

General Fund	FY 2011	FY 2012
	Estimate	Budget
Expenditures	\$8,075,775	\$7,272,316
Revenues	\$2,665,779	\$3,871,561

GIS Revolving Fund	FY 2011	FY 2012
	Estimate	Budget
Expenditures	\$1,711,582	\$2,122,923
Revenues	\$1,711,582	\$2,122,923

Houston Planning Commission



2010-2011

Standing left to right:

The Honorable Grady Prestage
Jim Jard
Keiji Asakura
David Robinson
Paul Nelson
Jackie Freeman
Sonny Garza, *Vice Chair*
Jeff Ross
Rick Rice
Shaukat Zakaria
Blake Tartt, III
Christopher Amandes

Seated left to right:

Susan Alleman
Beth Wolff
Mark A. Kilkenny, *Chair*
Linda Porrás-Pirtle
Algenita Seegars

Not shown:

Robin Reed
Talmadge Sharp, Sr.
Mark J. Mooney
Marlene L. Gafrick, *Secretary*

2010-2011

Back row:

Phoebe Tudor, *Vice Chair*
Douglas Elliott
Fernando L. Brave
Charles Stava
Rob D. Hellyer
R. Maverick Welsh, III

Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission

Front row:

Faye B. Bryant
Paul Fruge, Jr.
Betty Trapp Chapman, *Chair*
Marlene L. Gafrick, *Secretary*
Sharie Beale

Not pictured:

Dr. Roger G. Moore
Debra Blacklock-Sloan
Venita Ray



Houston Tower Commission



2010-2011

From left to right:

- Christie B. Smidt
- Antonio M. Salinas
- Marlene Gafrick, *Secretary*
- Rob Todd, *Chair*
- John R. Melcher
- Ignacio Osorio
- Dr. Shin-Shem Steven Pei

Not pictured:

- Rodney Louis Jones



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