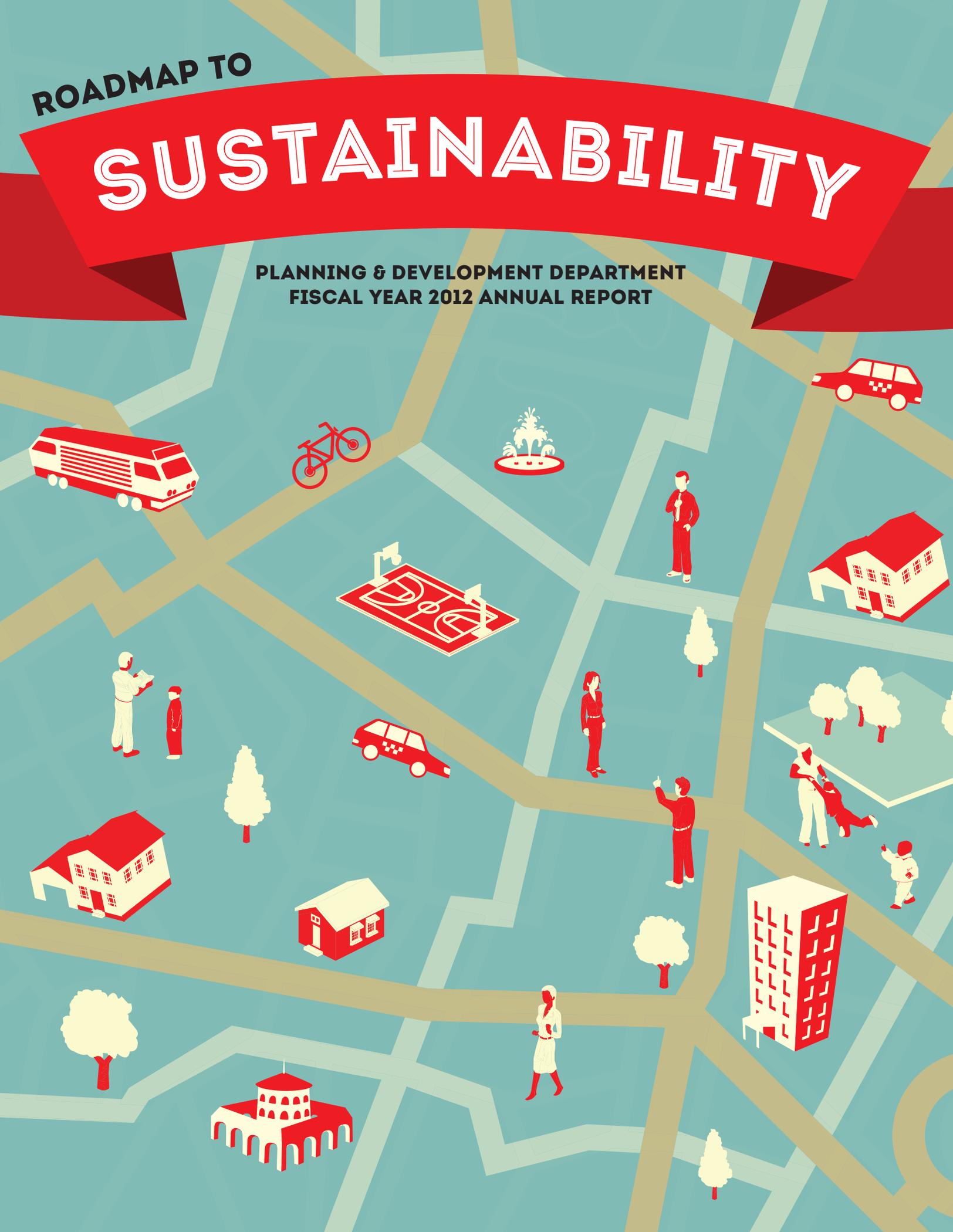


ROADMAP TO

# SUSTAINABILITY

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
FISCAL YEAR 2012 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Houstonians,

I'm pleased to share the Planning and Development Department's Fiscal Year 2012 Annual Report, "Roadmap for Sustainability." While the term "sustainability" can mean different things, to us it meant providing the tools, resources and services to ensure the continued growth of Houston while maintaining the strength of our communities.

During the year, the Planning and Development Department evaluated what items we needed to address to keep our city sustainable and sought to tackle those needs.



As the year progressed, the Houston economy re-emerged from the downturn and led the nation in economic growth and jobs. Projects, including large redevelopments in the inner city, resurfaced. The Planning and Development Department saw an increase in plat application, up eight percent since last year. With this in mind, the Department continued its goal of designing a new robust online plat submittal system due to go live in mid FY 2013.

Houstonians will have major decisions to make in the coming years regarding transportation choices and mobility, which led us to focus on transportation planning. The Department released the Consolidated Transportation Planning site, an online site with transportation data. The Department also continued work on Phase II of the Mobility Plan and on the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant.

As Houston grows and redevelops with some areas becoming denser, the Department focused on tools that would protect the character of established neighborhoods. The Department added a new protection when Council passed the long-awaited buffering standards for high rise development on smaller residential streets.

Providing information, data and resources remained a top priority in the Department. We launched a training series, Community U, which provides neighborhood residents with helpful information on a range of topics. The Department released the My City Maps and Apps web site, the City's online mapping service directory and map request site.

In the following pages, we reflect upon our past year's work and efforts that provide a "Roadmap for Sustainability. The Planning Department works strategically to provide quality services and resources to Houstonians today and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marlene L. Gafrick".

Marlene L. Gafrick  
Director

# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

*Helping communities retain their character, sustaining the viability of the City through options for growth and providing tools and resources that help plan our future.*

## Providing tool, resources and data

Launched a training series for community residents to learn about tools and resources while networking and sharing ideas. The initial half day conference saw 300 attendees from all around Houston. This was followed by a smaller workshop focusing on deed restrictions.

Sorted, analyzed and published a myriad of information from the Census and American Community Survey data which can be found on the Department's website.



## Retaining the Core Character of the Community

- ▶ Staff and the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) reviewed 24 building applications for historic landmark status. There are a total of 231 Historic Landmarks and 96 total Protected Historic Landmarks.
- ▶ Staff and the HAHC reviewed 300 Certificates of Appropriateness for renovation, new construction or demolition of buildings in historic districts or designated historic structures.
- ▶ Staff reviewed 16 new Minimum Lot Size (MLS) applications. City Council established eight MLS areas. 274 MLS areas are designated to date.
- ▶ Staff reviewed 6 new Special Building Line (SBL) applications. City Council established 6 SBL areas. 134 SBLR areas are designated to date.
- ▶ Staff reviewed 14 new Prohibited Yard Parking (PYP) applications. City Council established 14 new PYP areas. 141 PYP areas are designated to date.

## Growing our City



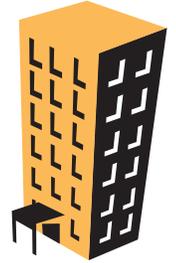
Staff processed and City Council adopted 27 strategic partnership agreements (SPAs) for limited purpose annexation and 18 amendments to existing agreements. Currently 287 SPAs with 213 utility districts exist and have generated approximately \$207 million for the city of Houston.

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Supporting Houston's growth through the review of development and facilitating our long-term mobility and transportation needs.*

## Applying consistent rules for development

- ▶ The Department staff reviewed 724 Development plats, 1,571 subdivision plats 12,660 site plans and recorded 796 plats.
- ▶ The Residential Buffering Ordinance was adopted. The new regulations provide buffering requirements when a development is proposed that is over 75 feet in height; is located along a local or collector street and abuts single family residential.
- ▶ Completed community outreach on proposed changes to the City's land development regulations that will be considered in FY 2013.
- ▶ Finalized review of and changes proposed for the City's parking ordinance that will be considered in FY 2013.



## Moving our city forward through transportation planning

- ▶ Built the Consolidated Transportation Planning web application that identifies planned, proposed or ongoing projects and studies within the City of Houston with data from agencies including the City of Houston, Texas Department of Transportation, METRO, Houston-Galveston Area Council and others.
- ▶ Commenced the Washington Avenue Livable Center study to create a plan for the Washington Avenue Corridor to guide development for a mixed use and multi-modal unique community.
- ▶ Kicked off community outreach and educational efforts in support of the three-year Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant initiative.
- ▶ Worked in conjunction with Public Works and Engineering (PWE) on City Mobility Planning (CMP) Phase 2 to identify short, medium and long range projects intended to improve mobility, and to develop a multi-model street classification system. The Inner West Loop Mobility Study is the first study launched under CMP Phase 2. Additional studies are planned for next year.
- ▶ Two bicycle-pedestrian studies were completed: The Clear Lake Special District Study in conjunction with PWE and the Fifth Ward Special District Study in conjunction with the Fifth Ward Tax Increment Reinvestment.
- ▶ Staff reviewed 9 amendments to the 2011 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan.



# SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

*Providing visual data and tools in ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends.*

▶ Released My City Apps and Maps home page, a new dynamic online city service directory, portal and map request site, found online at <http://mycity.houstontx.gov/home/> and added the mobile application for My City.

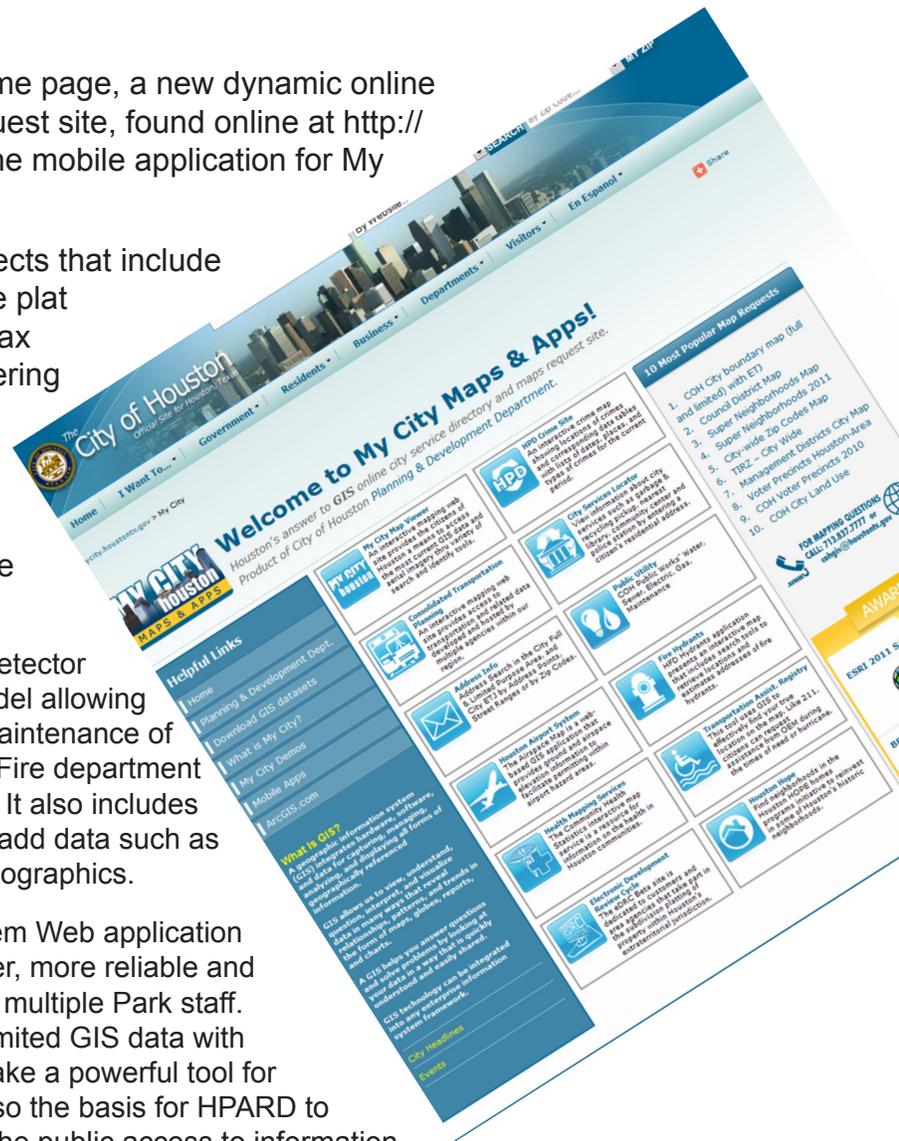
▶ The GIS team continues work on projects that include rebuilding and enhancing the City's online plat submittal system, creating a State sales tax reclamation project for all zip codes bordering City limits, enhancing the City's 3-1-1 system and helping ReBuild Houston in their ongoing analysis of data in order to make future project decisions. Key applications completed in FY 2012 include the:

- Houston Fire Department Smoke Detector website application and database model allowing for faster, more reliable and secure maintenance of smoke and carbon detectors that the Fire department install as part of their public outreach. It also includes Fire Fatalities GIS layer with plans to add data such as Fire incident response times and demographics.
- Parks Inventory Management System Web application and database model allowing for faster, more reliable and secure maintenance of Parks data by multiple Park staff. This allows HPARD to integrate the limited GIS data with the information on the database to make a powerful tool for internal analysis and planning. It is also the basis for HPARD to develop a public interface to provide the public access to information about their parks and facilities within them.

▶ Staff updated more than 25,000 addresses in the City limit and road network.

▶ The Department's certified trainer conducted 7 (over 200 hours) GIS Training sessions ranging from beginner GIS to advanced.

▶ Staff created more than 500 GIS data sets, map products and services for online and desktop mapping.



## PLANNING COMMISSION



From left to right (top row): James Jard; Brandon Dudley; Blake Tartt; Shaukat Zakaria; Richard Stolleis, P.E.; Mark Mooney, P.E.; Christopher Amandes; Antoine Bryant; Vice Chair Sonny Garza; Truman Edminster; Paul Nelson; Fernando Brave; and Keiji Asakura. (Bottom row) Algenita Seegas; Linda Porras-Pirtle; Planning Director and Commission Secretary, Marlene Gafrick; Chair, Mark Kilkeny; Susan Alleman and Lisa Clark. Not pictured: Kenneth Bohan and Eileen Subinsky.

## HOUSTON TOWER COMMISSION



Pictured left to right: Christy B. Smidt; Marlene L. Gafrick, Planning Director and Commission Secretary; Rob Todd, Chair; John Melcher; Ignacio Osorio; and Dr. Shin-Shem Steven Pei. Not pictured: Rodney Louis Jones and Antonio M. Salinas.

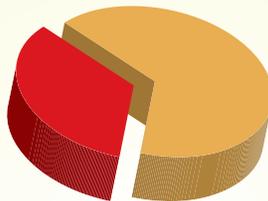
## HOUSTON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL COMMISSION



Pictured left to right (top row) Dr. William Henry Kellar; David Bucek; Rob D. Hellyer; R. Maverick Welsh III, Vice Chair; Debra Blacklock-Sloan; John Cosgrove; Venita Ray; Douglas Elliott; (bottom row) Jorge Garcia-Herreros; Planning Director and Commission secretary, Marlene Gafrick; Phoebe Tudor, Chair; Ann Collum; and Charles Stava. Not pictured: Romulo Tim Cisneros.

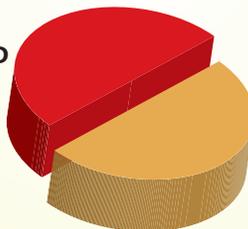
## BUDGET

**GENERAL FUND**  
**\$3.7 MILLION**  
REVENUE

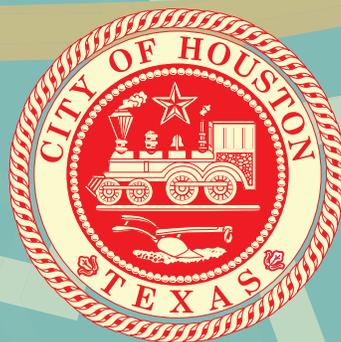


**\$7.2 MILLION**  
EXPENDITURES

**GIS REVOLVING FUND**  
**\$1.9 MILLION**  
REVENUE



**\$1.9 MILLION**  
EXPENDITURES



**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**