

Livable Centers Orientation Webinar: **Learning From Past Progress** **and Planning for What's Next**

January 22, 2026

Agenda

- **Introduction**
 - H-GAC's Livable Centers program
 - Program Goals and Process
 - Evolution and Evaluation
- **Proposal Evaluation Process**
 - What you submit
 - Examples/Feedback
- **What's Next**
 - Upcoming studies
 - Stay involved
- **Q&A**

Meet the Team!



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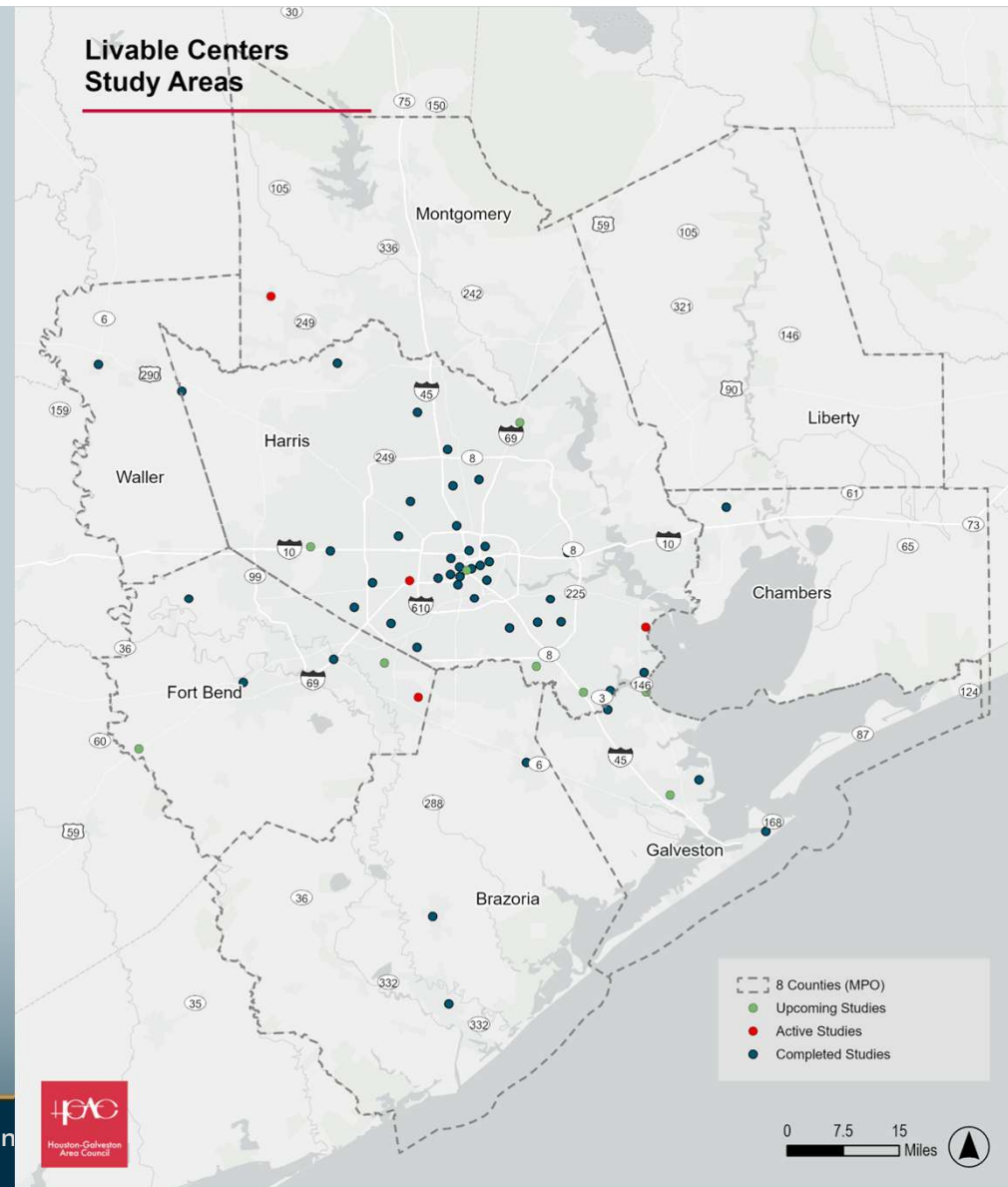
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Our Service Area

H-GAC's TMA

Transportation Management Area

- Brazoria
- Chambers
- Fort Bend
- Galveston
- Harris
- Liberty
- Montgomery
- Waller



About the Livable Centers Program

- Established in 2008
- 46 completed and 4 active studies in rural, urban, and suburban areas.
- We work with local communities to reimagine auto-focused infrastructure, policies, and programs.



Livable Centers Program Goals

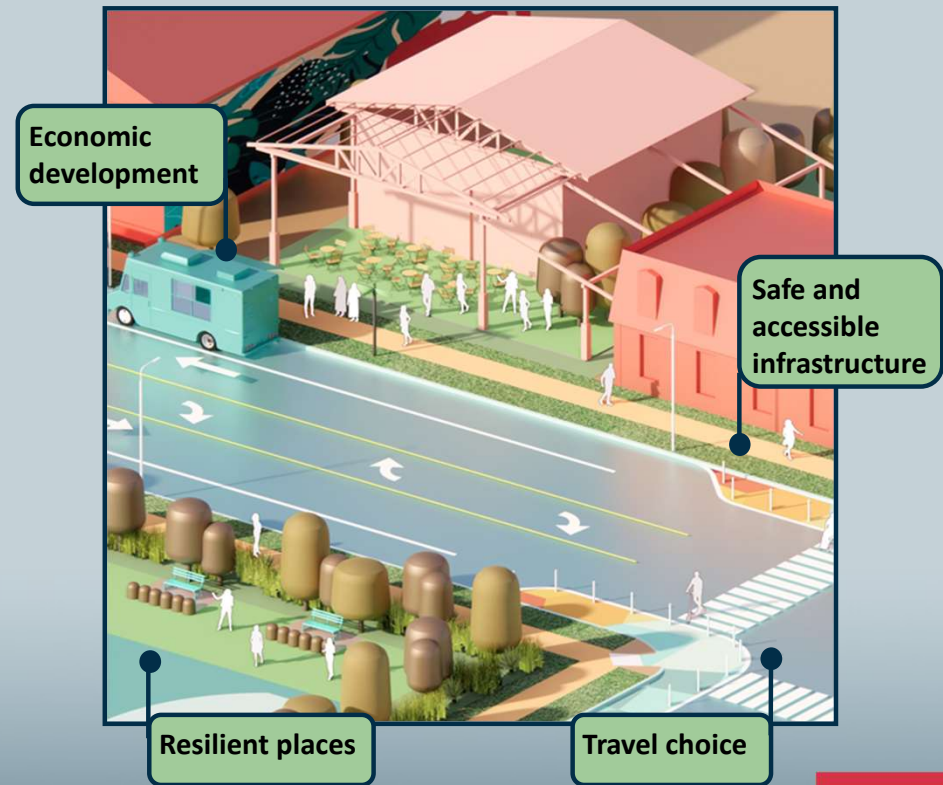
Multi-modal
travel choices

Resilient quality places

Safe and accessible
infrastructure

Economic development
and housing choice

**Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled
(VMT) and improve air quality**



Our Study Process

- Local Sponsor: member governments, special districts, and other eligible entities.
- H-GAC issues a Request For Proposals (RFP) and conducts an evaluation process
- 10-month study
- 5 Elements
 - Understand Existing Conditions
 - Develop Recommendations
 - Develop Renderings
 - Implementation Plan
 - Public Engagement



Our Study Process Cont.

- Community-driven vision
- Data-backed recommendations
- Ready for implementation



17-Year Program Evolution

- What's changed?
 - Less technical language
 - More cross-agency coordination
 - Increased implementation
- Today's focus – implementation
 - Support from implementing partners
 - Recommendations that align with funding opportunities
 - Measurable impacts

15-Year Program Evaluation

■ Evaluation Criteria

- Age of Study
- Implementation Rate
- Capacity to Implement: presence of management entity or funding entity

■ What we learned

- Public investments have increased substantially over time.
- Planned or programmed investments have demonstrated consistent growth.
- Local partners are working hard to get projects implemented.

+78%

increase in public
investments built
from 2021

\$68M

in transportation infrastructure
& service improvements
tied to Livable Center study
recommendations

\$965M

public investments built

\$613M

public investments planned
or programmed



Proposal Evaluation Process

Know Your Audience - Evaluators

- Local Sponsor x2
- H-GAC Community and Environmental Planning
- H-GAC Transportation
- TxDOT/Local transit agency

Phase 1 – Written Proposal

- **Online dating profile** – tell us about your team, what you know about the study area, and what makes you uniquely equipped to work on this study.

- **Evaluation Criteria**
 - Project Work Program and Schedule
 - Project Management and Organization
 - Qualifications
 - Challenge, Opportunity, and Success Statement
 - Staff Allocation and Level of Effort
 - Past Performance

Phase 2 – Interviews

- **First date** – does your team match your proposal?
- Only the top 3 scoring firms are short-listed
- Interviews
 - 10-min team introduction
 - 6 question Q&A
- Criteria
 - Team cohesion
 - Subject matter and study area knowledge

Finding a Competitive Edge

- ***Areas of expertise*** – transit, economic development, landscape/urban design, public engagement.
- ***Articulate clear differentiators*** – methods, tools, partnerships.
- ***Study area knowledge*** – you don't have to be local.

Don't Be Discouraged!

- ***Every firm has an equal opportunity***
- ***Firm size***
 - Budget
 - Staff availability
 - Specialization
- ***Local vs Out-of-town teams***
 - Fresh perspectives
 - Unbiased opinions
 - Specialization

References

- Must be work completed in the last 5 years.
 - Teams are constantly evolving
- Must be work completed by a firm on the proposing team.
 - Not a single individual
- Does not need to be H-GAC or Livable Centers specific.
- It is your responsibility to check with your references.
 - We will reach out via email

What Does a Successful Proposal Look Like? (in our opinion)

- Fit, insight, and relevance
- In-depth understanding of the study area.
- Unique skillset to deliver the desired outcomes.
 - Outreach in a specific language
 - Past project that resonates
 - Niche focus – if applicable

Successful Proposal Examples

■ **Clute**

- Blue-collar workforce.
- Spanish-speaking.
- "Protect small-town feel".

■ **Selected Team**

- Prestigious design project in DFW.
- Spanish-speaking.
- "Sell" the benefit of a dense activity center to protect the rural look and feel.

■ **South Houston**

- Spanish-speaking.
- Severe lack of pedestrian infrastructure.
- No previous planning efforts.

■ **Selected Team**

- Spanish-speaking.
- Specialized outreach efforts.
- Help residents visualize recommendations.

Successful Proposal Examples Cont.

■ **Alvin**

- Blue-collar workforce.
 - Major TxDOT and rail corridor.
 - Traffic caused by rail crossing and limited N/S connections.
- **Selected Team**
 - "Sell" the financial and safety benefits of walkability.
 - Engineer led team.
 - Alleviate traffic congestion.

■ **Sugar Land**

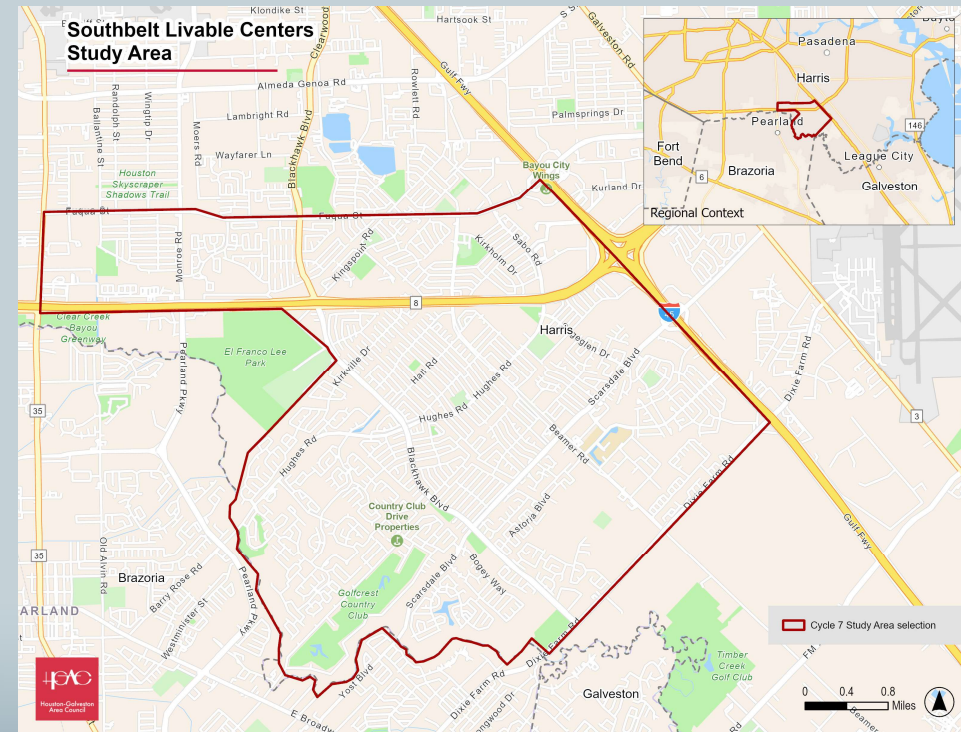
- Diverse demographics.
 - Looking for "trailblazing" solutions to traffic.
- **Selected Team**
 - Mandarin, Urdu, and Hindi engagement.
 - Previous successful projects in Fort Bend County.
 - National team that could bring "innovation".



What's Next?

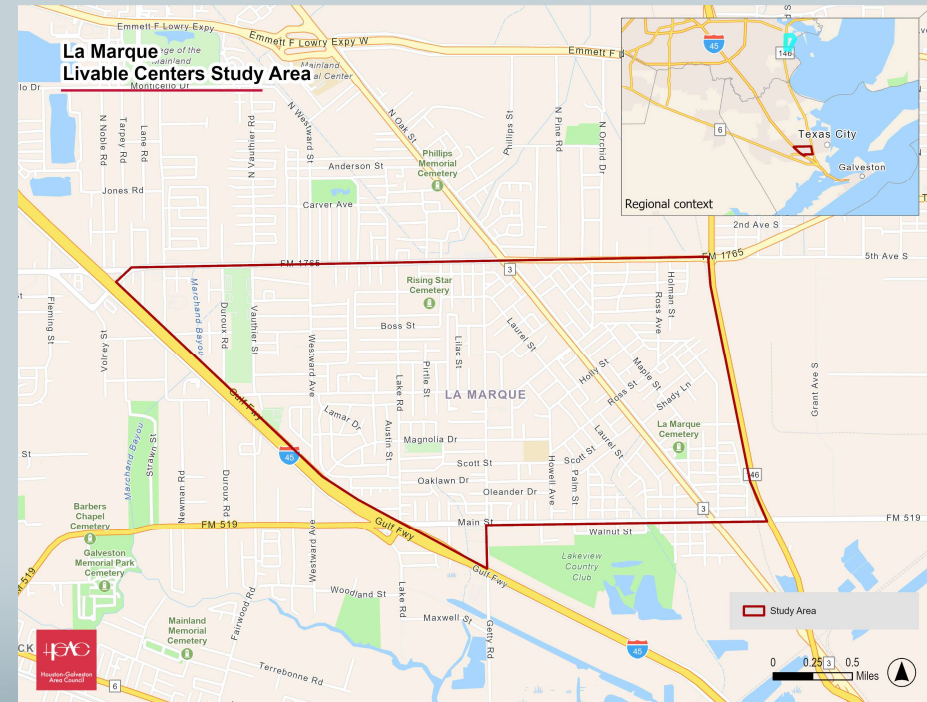
Southbelt – Harris County Pct. 2

- **Study Area:**
 - Unincorporated Harris County
 - 42 square miles
 - Predominantly Hispanic
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Improved first/last mile connections
 - Enhancing transit access and safety
 - Advanced environmental sustainability and flood-resilient infrastructure
 - Promotion of transit-oriented development and access to opportunity.
- **Budget:\$250,000**



La Marque – City of La Marque

- **Focused Livable Centers Study**
 - Infrastructure and resiliency focus
- **Study Area:**
 - Roadway infrastructure supports freight for surrounding industries.
 - High concentration of lower-income and minority households.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Improved accessibility, connectivity, and safety for all users.
 - Reduce the need for surface parking and enhance spaces for pedestrians.
- **Budget: \$230,000**



Park Row – Harris County Pct. 4

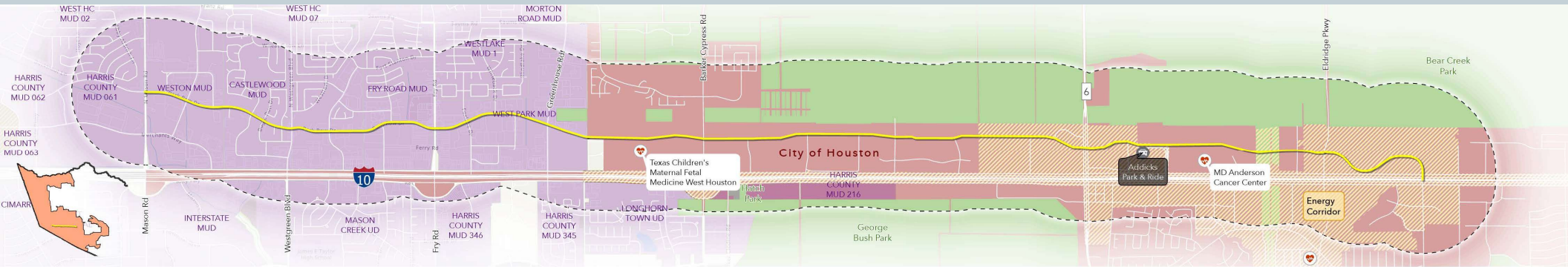
■ Study Area:

- Half mile buffer along Park Row.
- 16 different Utility Districts
- 2 regional park-and-rides
- 5 schools

■ Budget: \$260,000

■ Desired Outcomes:

- Turn Park Row into a safe and consistent multi-modal connector between Houston and Unincorporated Harris County.
- Identify opportunities for adaptive re-use and housing diversity.



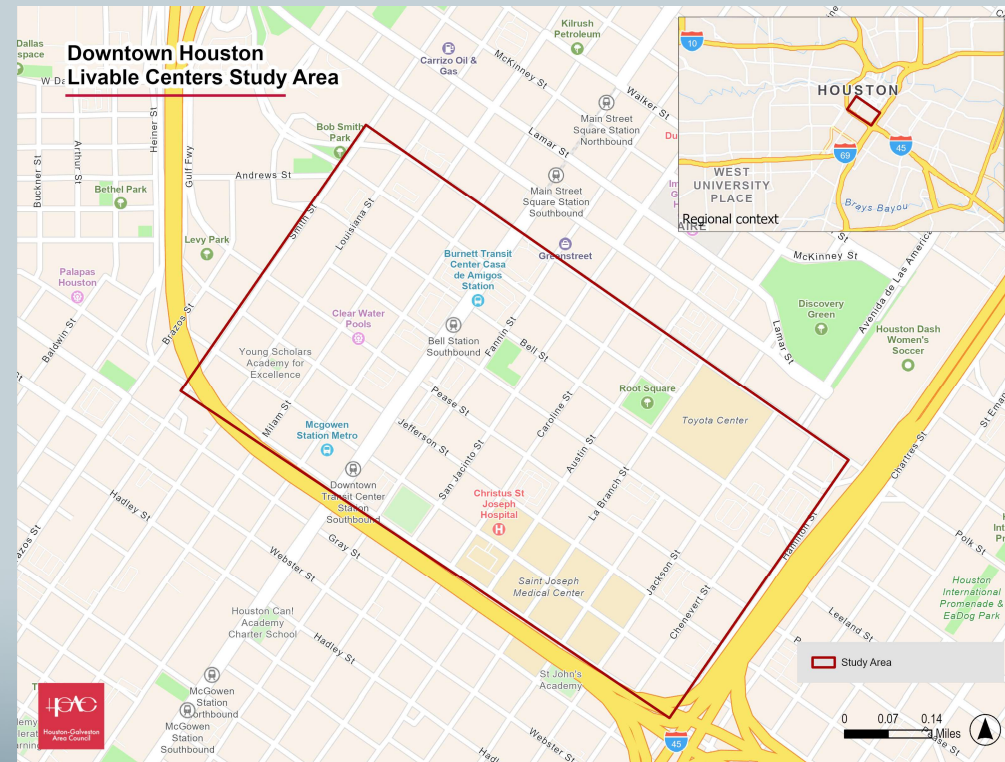
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Park Row Livable Centers Study Area



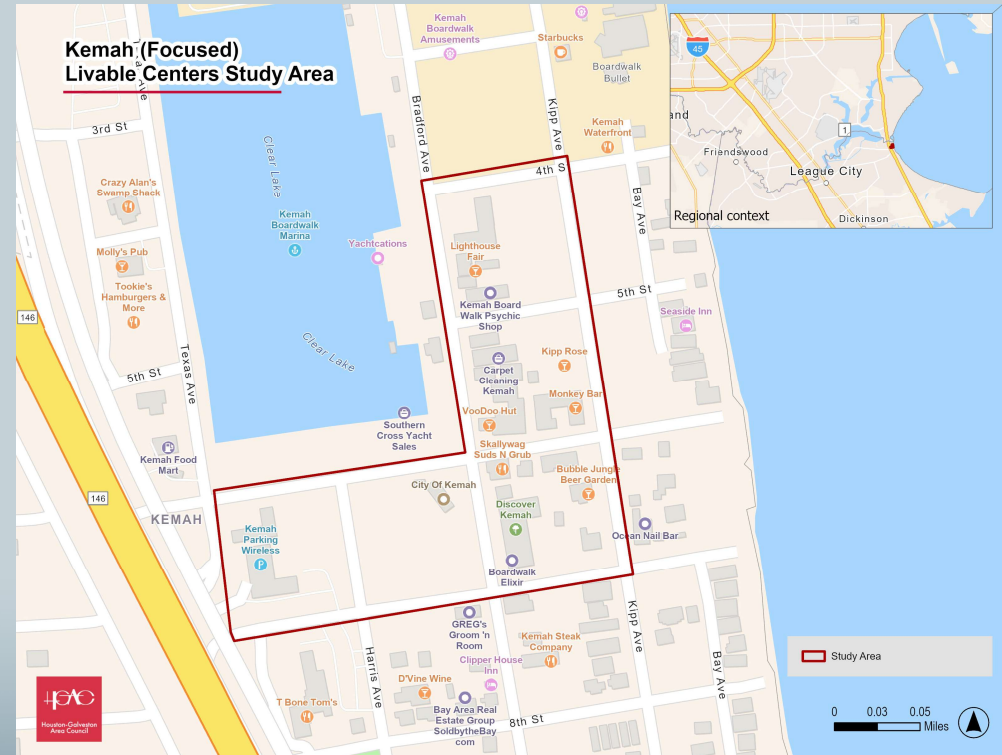
South Downtown – Downtown Houston+ (Central Houston Inc., Houston Downtown Management District, TIRZ 3#)

- **Study Area:**
 - North of the i45/i69 interchange.
 - Underutilized properties (vacant or surface parking lots).
 - Projected residential growth.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Enhance street-level vibrancy and pedestrian connectivity.
 - Propose typical cross-sections for High Injury Network streets.
 - Identify opportunities to expand mixed-use housing options.
- **Budget: \$300,000**



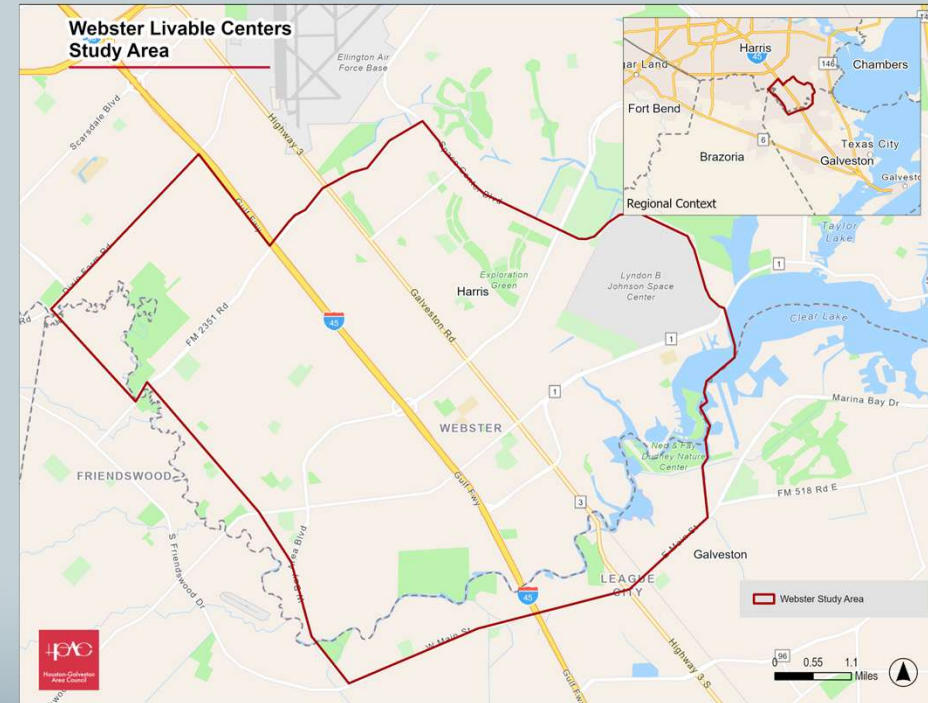
Kemah – Kemah CDC

- **Focused Livable Centers Study**
 - Economic Development Focus
- **Study Area:**
 - Only 16 acres (0.02 sq. mi.)
 - Adjacent to Kemah Boardwalk and Lighthouse District.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Enhance pedestrian connectivity.
 - Strengthening economic foundation through broadening local employment opportunities and expanding housing choices.
- **Budget: \$200,000**



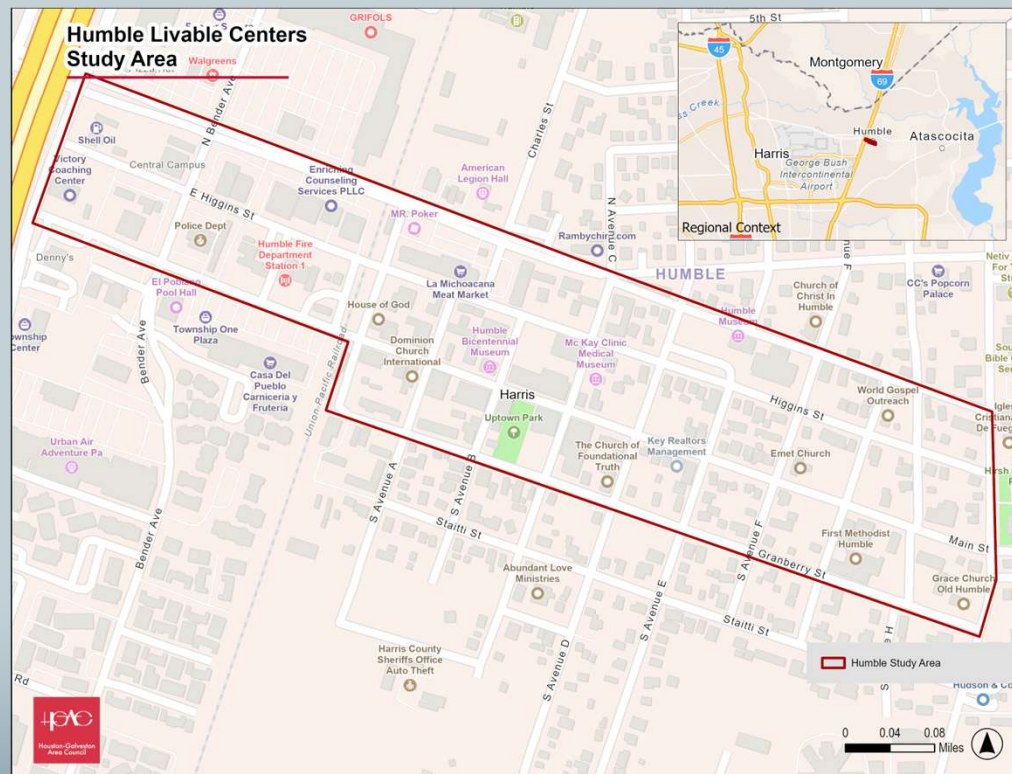
Webster – Harris County Pct. 2

- **Study Area:**
 - Southeastern edge of Harris County boundary.
 - Vibrant hub of retail, dining, entertainment, medical, and aerospace.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Improve connectivity, stimulate economic development, and create a better quality of life.
 - Design public spaces that serve multiple purposes.
 - Improve the area's existing aging housing conditions by identifying infill development opportunities.
- **Budget: \$250,000**



Humble – City of Humble

- **Study Area:**
 - 4 major E-W streets
 - i69 to S Houston Ave
 - 0.13 sq. miles
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Create a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable downtown corridor.
 - Connect major thoroughfares, improve transportation options, enhance pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.
 - Foster economic growth, enhance community livability, and promote environmental sustainability.
- **Budget: \$250,000**



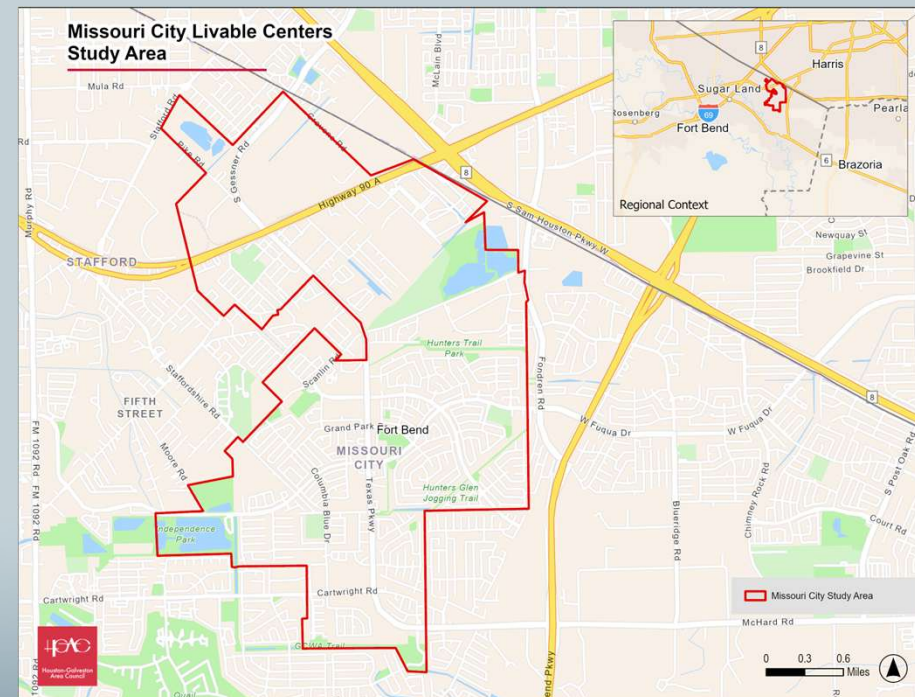
Kendleton – Fort Bend County Pct. 4

- **Focused Livable Centers Study**
 - Economic Development Focused
- **Study Area:**
 - City is revered as "the cradle of African American history".
 - Includes entire city limits
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Preserve historical significance while embracing and planning for smart growth.
 - Create multimodal transportation opportunities, resilient spaces, and promote economic development.
- **Budget: \$230,000**



Missouri City – City of Missouri City

- **Study Area:**
 - Texas Parkway (FM 2234) Corridor.
 - Diverse mix of public and private land uses.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Improve connectivity among existing neighborhoods.
 - Identify key locations for integrating green spaces, placemaking, and public activation areas.
 - Identify strategies for development of new housing types and preserve affordable workforce housing.
 - Budget: \$250,000



Stay Involved

- h-gac.com/livable-centers/rfp-notification
- h-gac.com/livable-centers/events
- Email us: LivableCenters@h-gac.com