

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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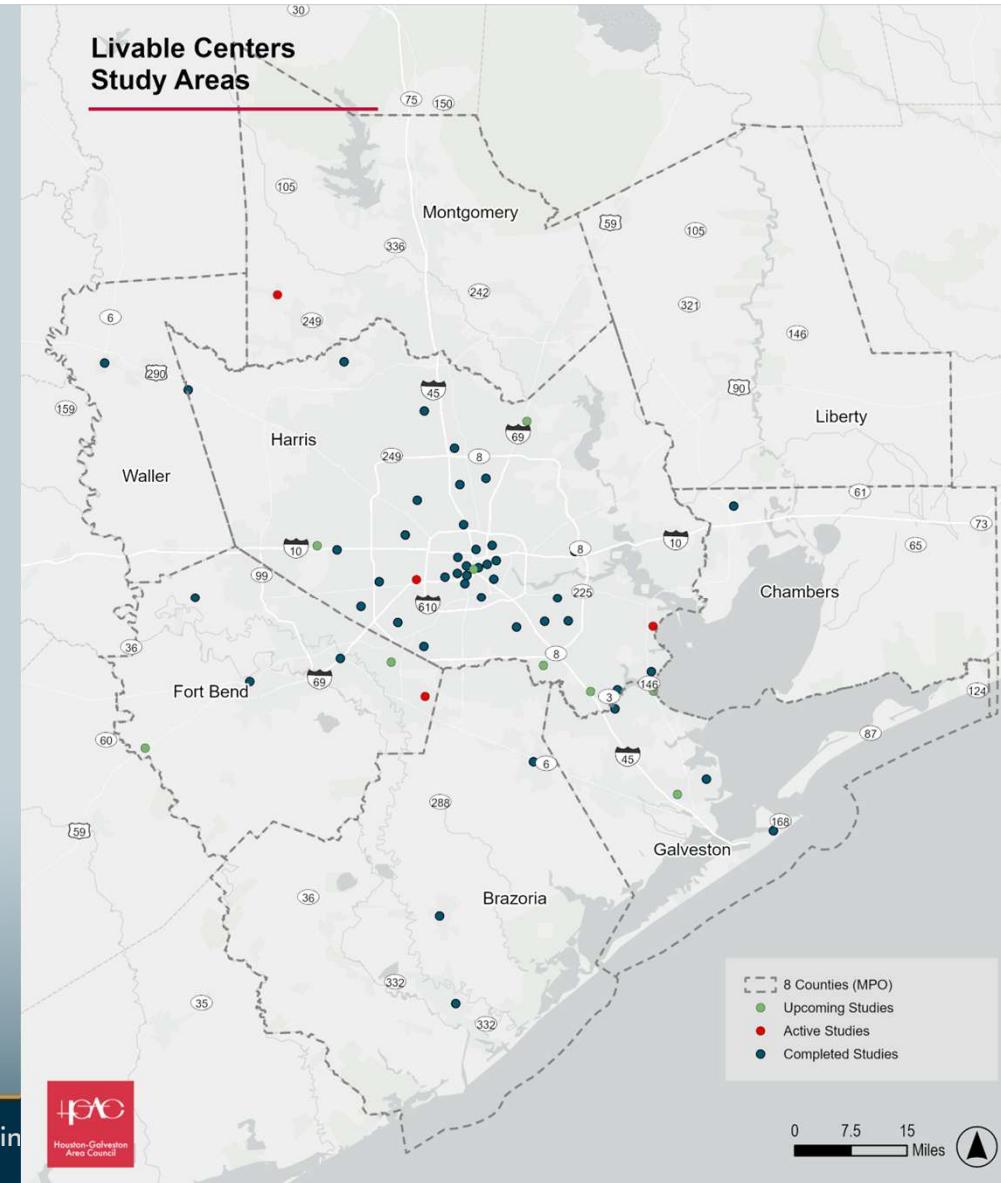
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Our Service Area

H-GAC's TMA Transportation Management Area

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

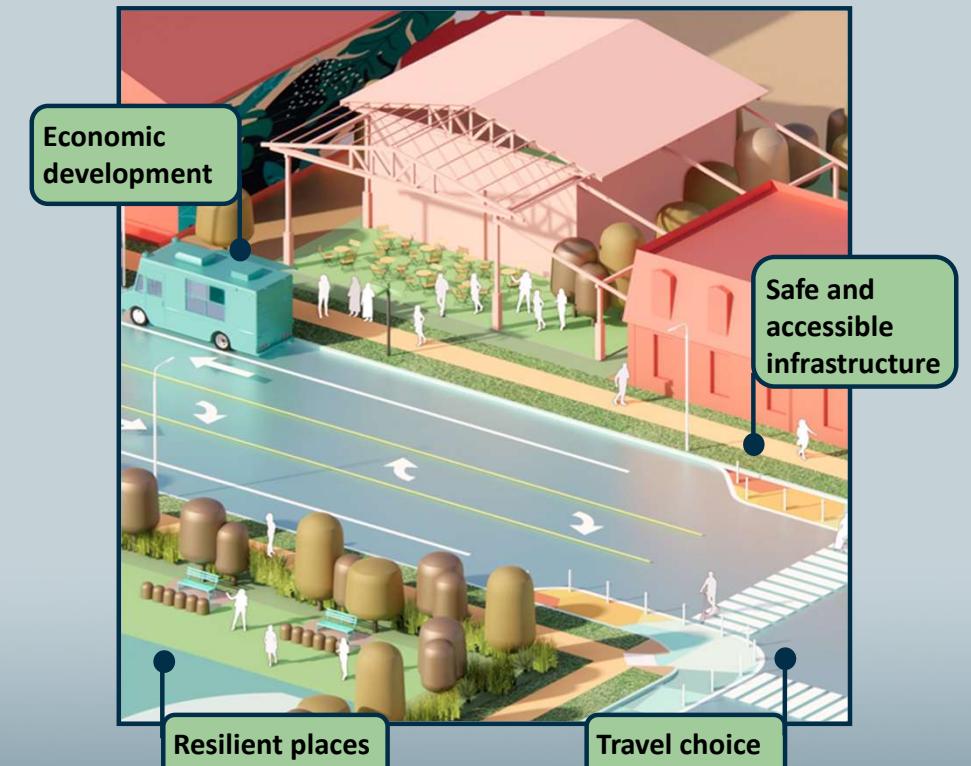
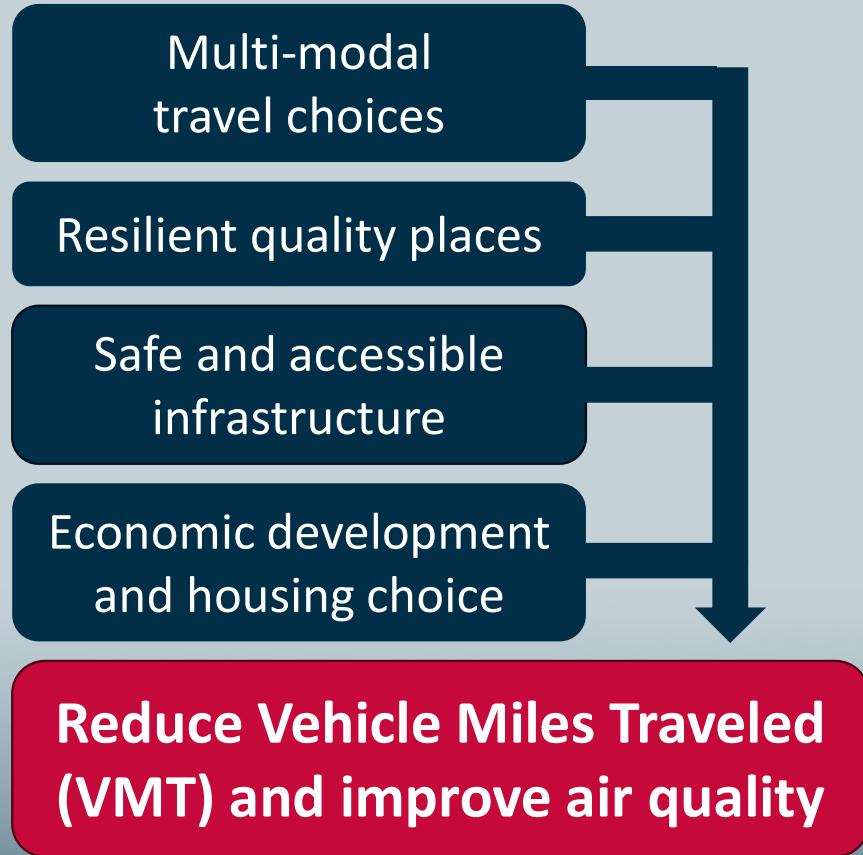


About the Livable Centers Program



- 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



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

\$965M

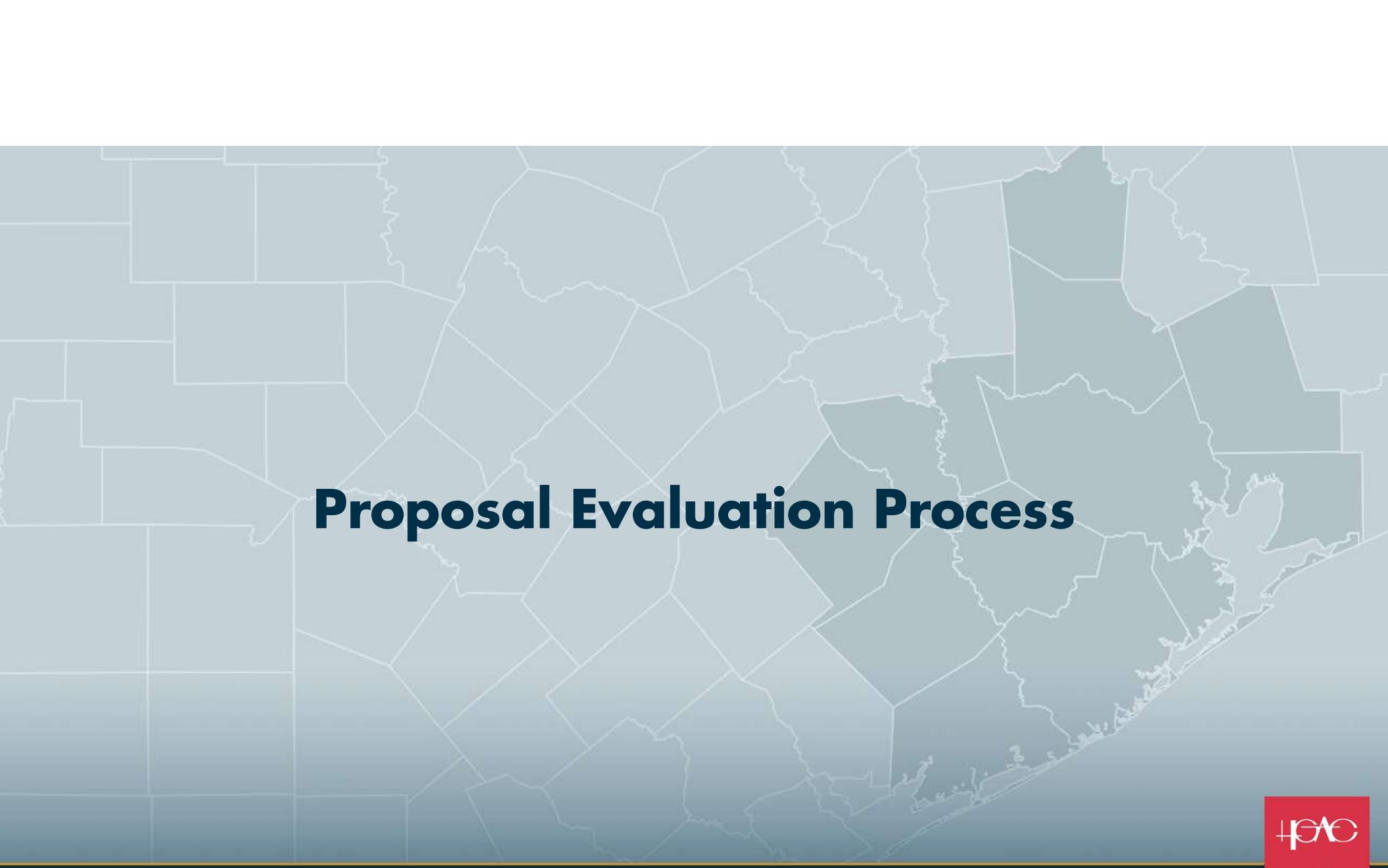
public investments built

\$68M

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

\$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**

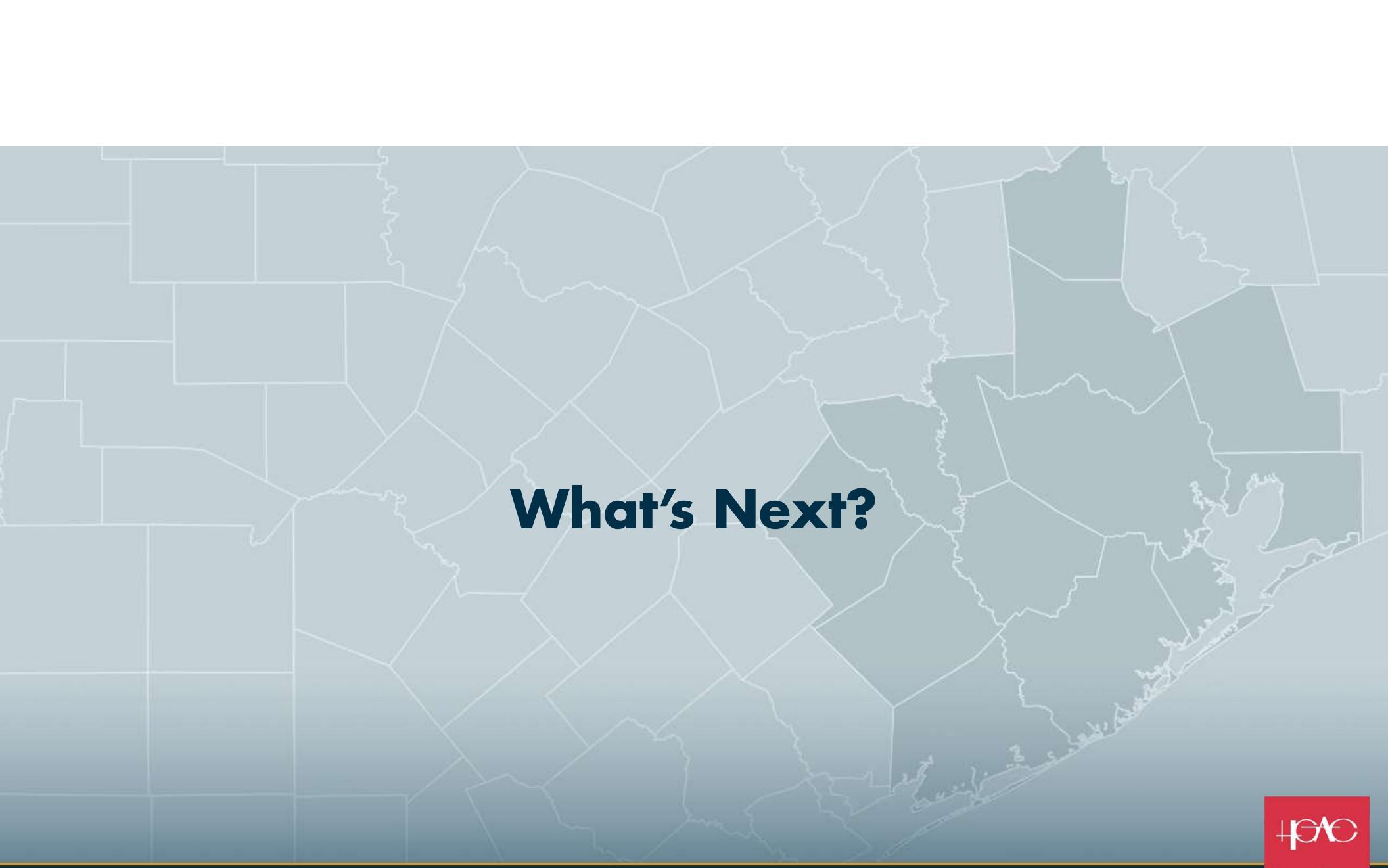
- "Sell" the financial and safety benefits of walkability.
- Engineer led team.
- Alleviate traffic congestion.

▪ **Sugar Land**

- Diverse demographics.
- Looking for "trailblazing" solutions to traffic.

• **Selected Team**

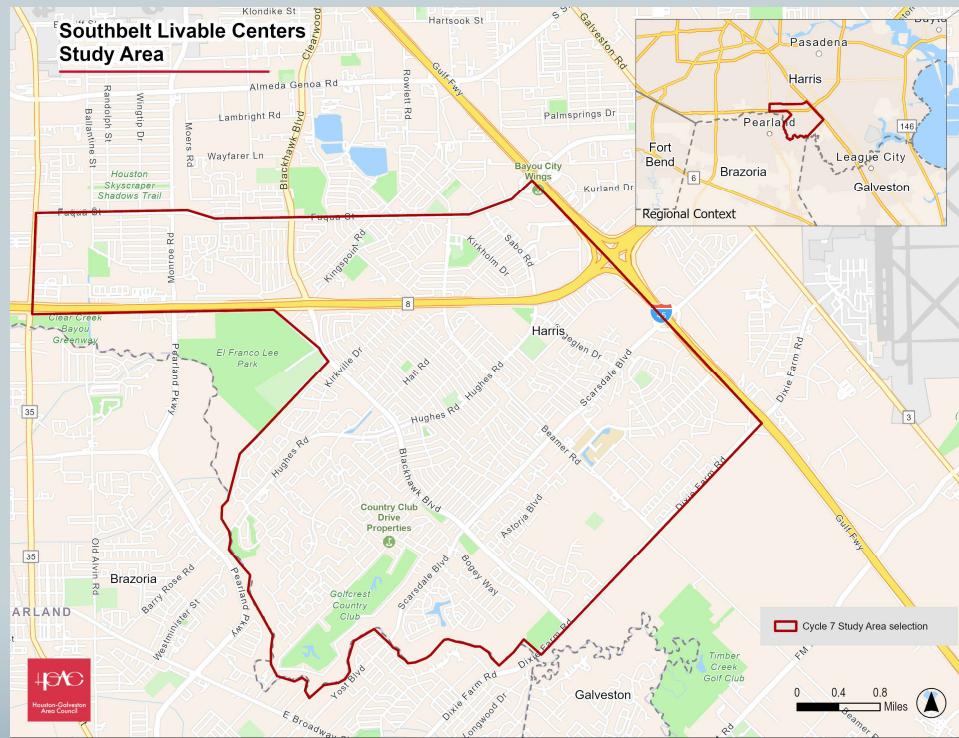
- Mandarin, Urdu, and Hindi engagement.
- Previous successful projects in Fort Bend County.
- National team that could bring "innovation".



What's Next?

Southbelt - Harris County Pct. 2

- **Study Area:**
 - Unincorporated Harris County
 - 42 square miles
 - Predominantly Hispanic
- **Desired Outcomes:**
 - Improved first/last mile connection
 - 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

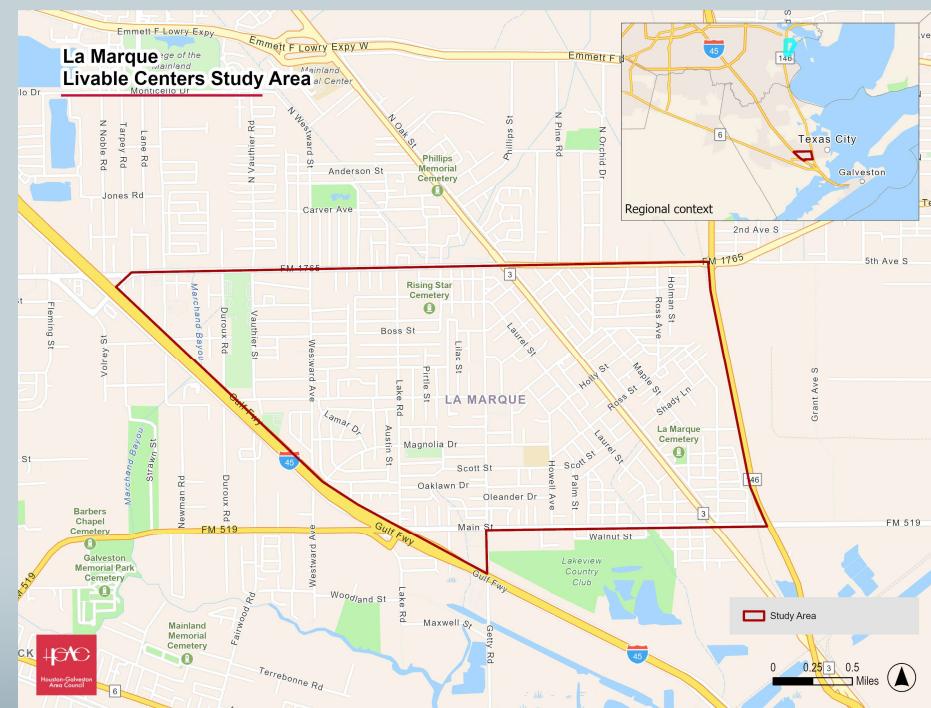
■ Study Area:

- 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.



Park Row Livable Centers Study Area

South Downtown – Downtown Houston+

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

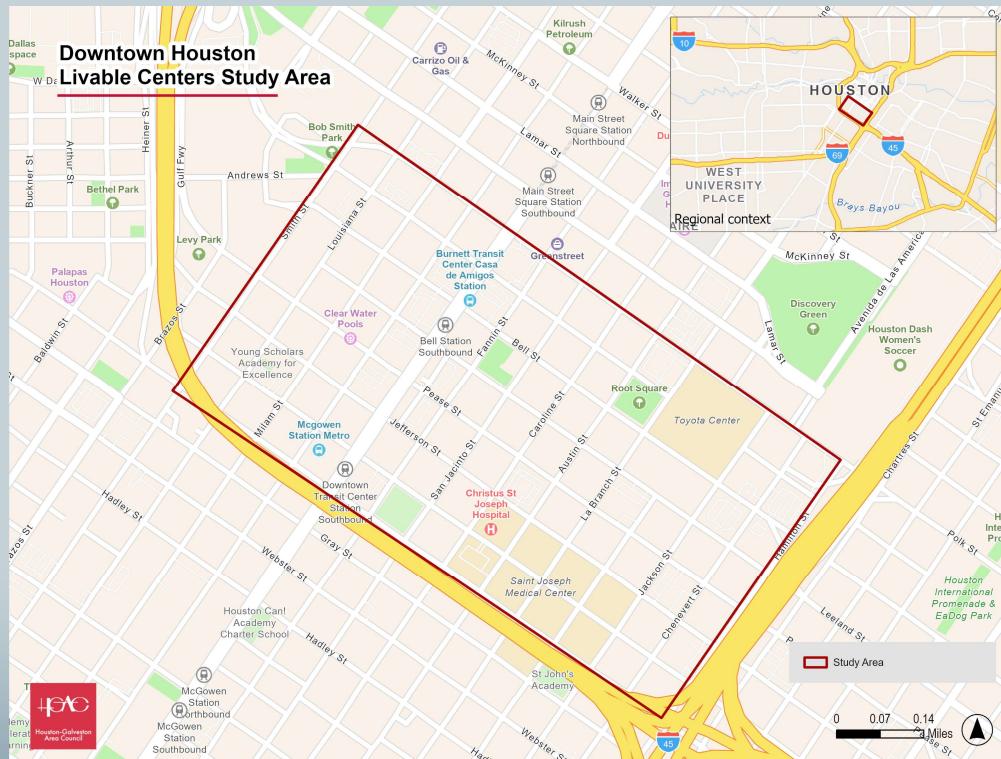
■ Study Area:

- 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

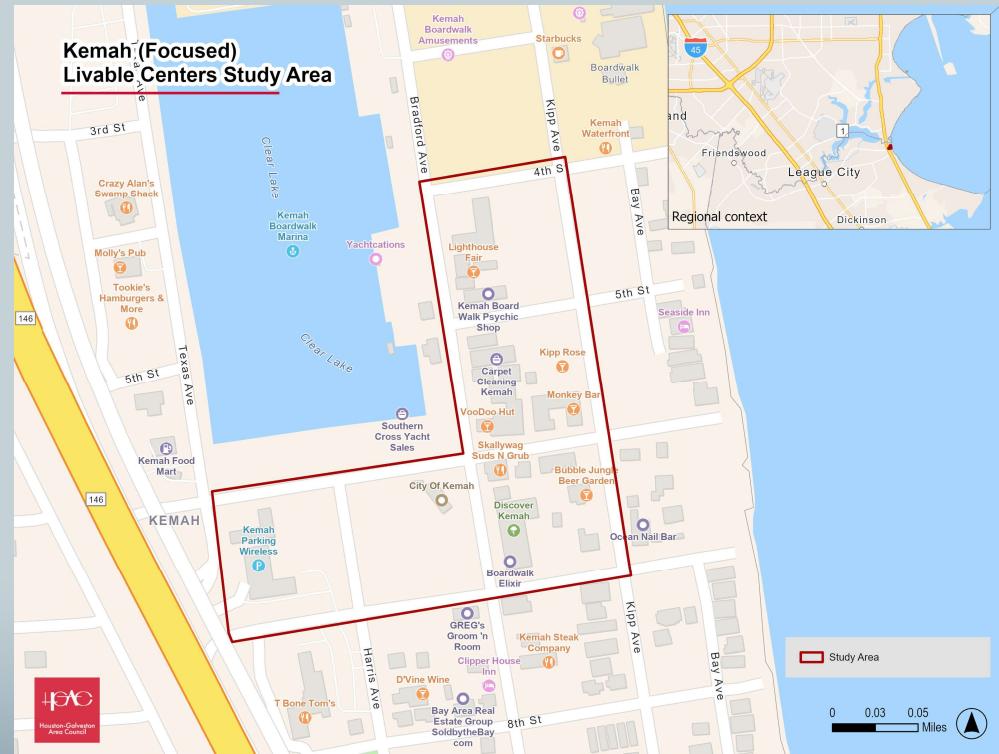
■ Study Area:

- 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

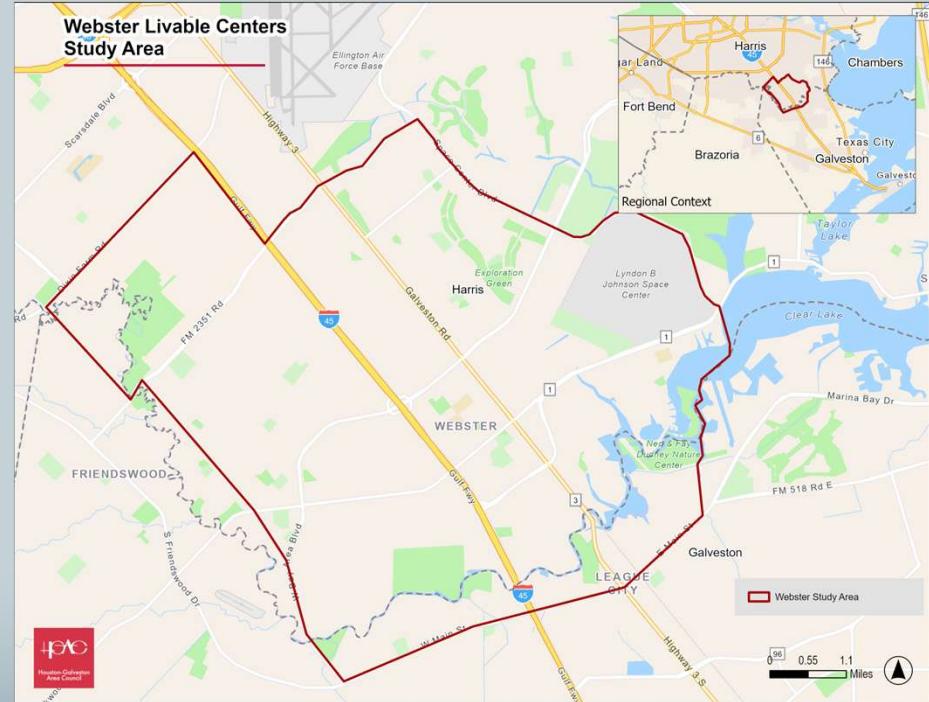
■ Study Area:

- 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

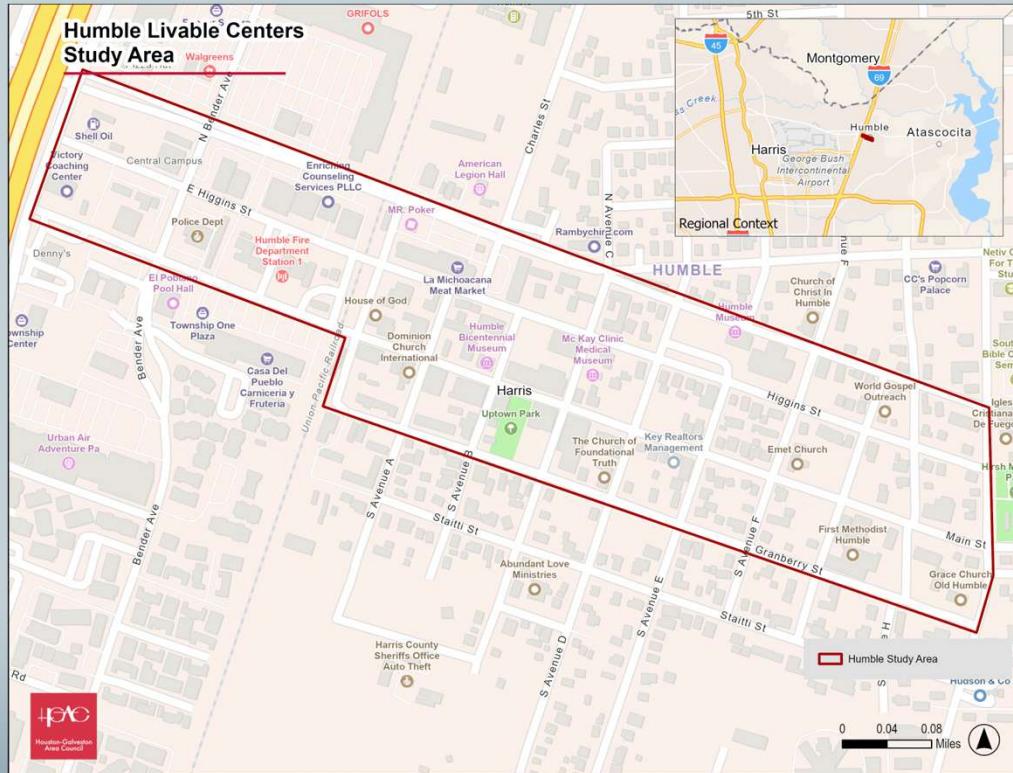
■ Study Area:

- 4 major E-W streets
- I-69 to S Houston Ave
- 0.13 sq. miles

■ Desired Outcomes:

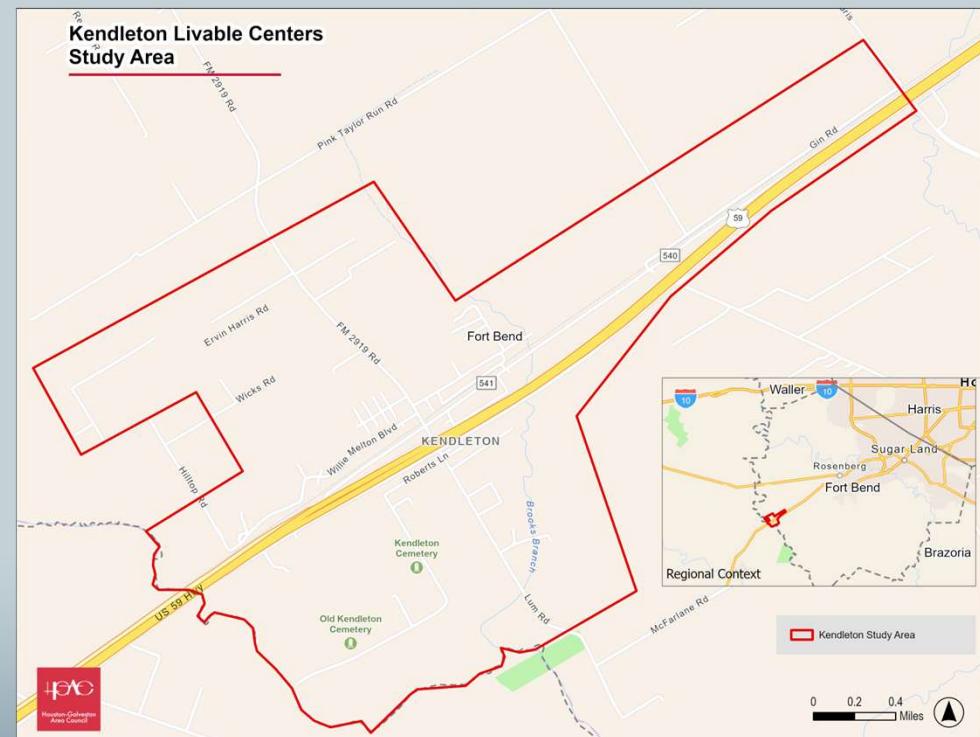
- Create a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable downtown corridor.
- Connect major thoroughfares, improve transportation options, enhance pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.
- Foster economic growth, enhance community livability, and promote environmental sustainability.

■ 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**



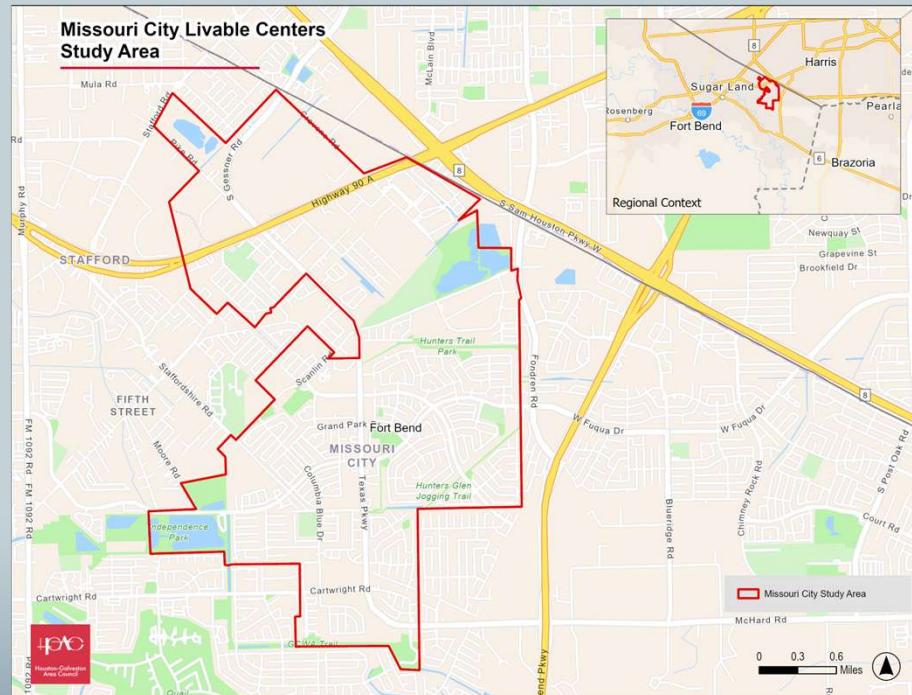
Missouri City – City of Missouri City

■ 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