

By 2035, the eight-county Houston-Galveston region is expected to grow by an additional 3.5 million people. The Livable Centers program is a new strategy in H-GAC's 2035 Regional Transportation Plan to address this growth. **The Houston-Galveston Area Council and the City of Houston co-sponsored this Livable Centers Study for the Ensemble/HCC light rail station area in Midtown.**

Livable Centers are safe, sustainable, mixed-use neighborhoods where people can live, work, and play with less reliance on their cars. Well connected destinations make walking, bicycling, and transit more convenient. Livable Centers create unique, identifiable places, bolster civic pride, and focus resources for economic development.

ENSEMBLE/HCC

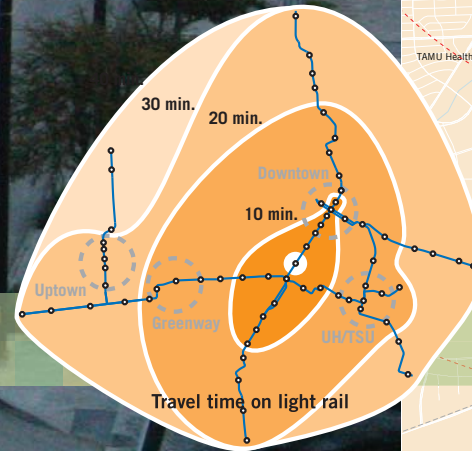
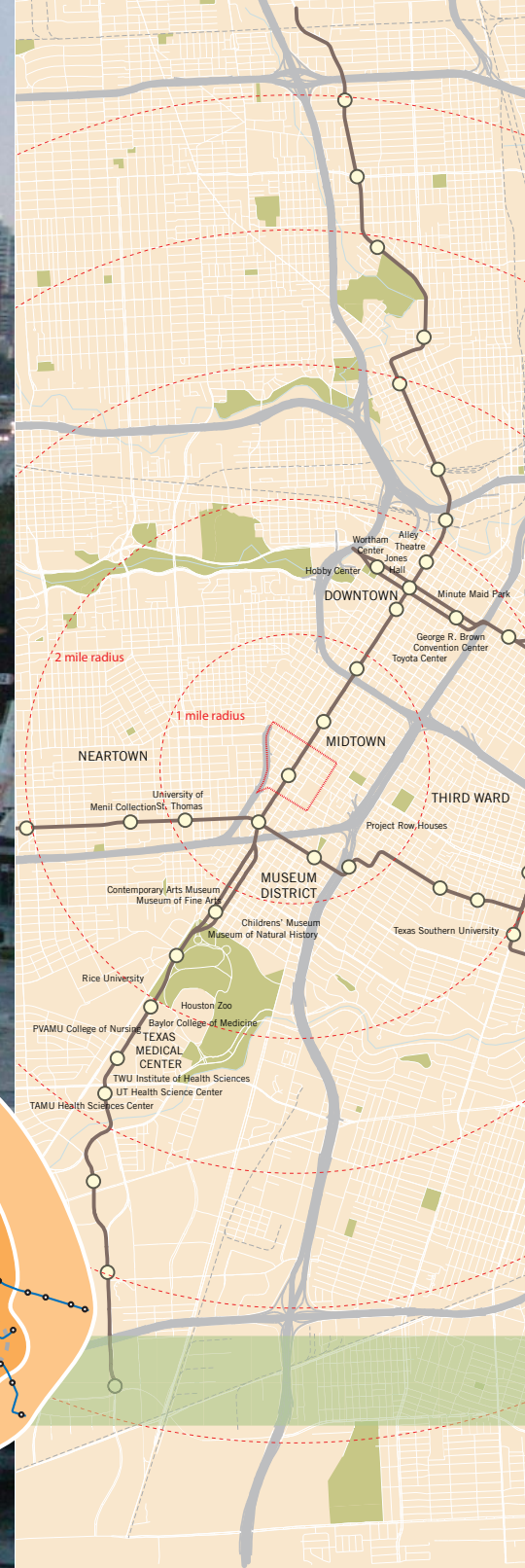
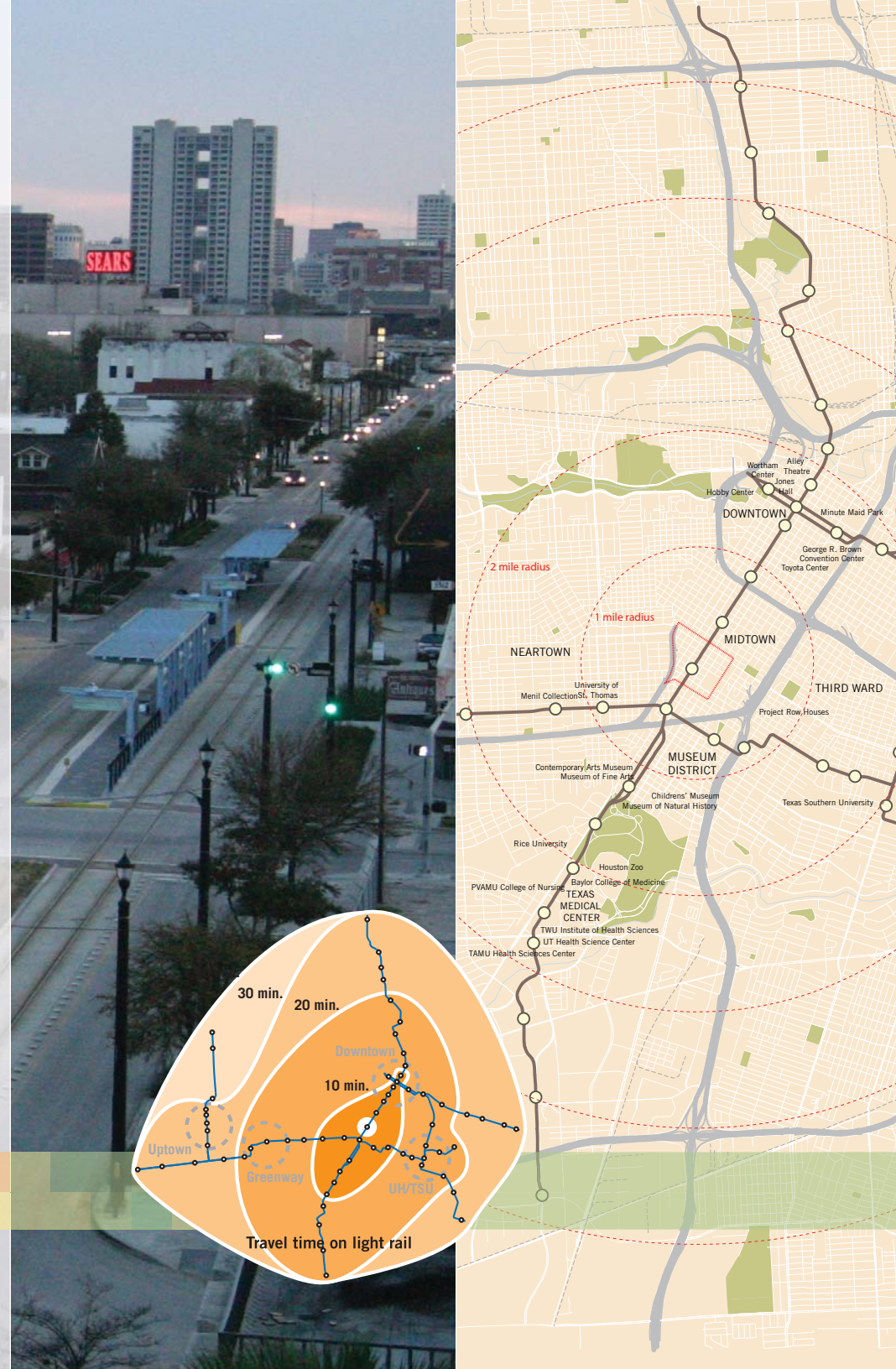
A Vision for a Livable Center



Houston-Galveston Area Council

CLOSE TO EVERYTHING

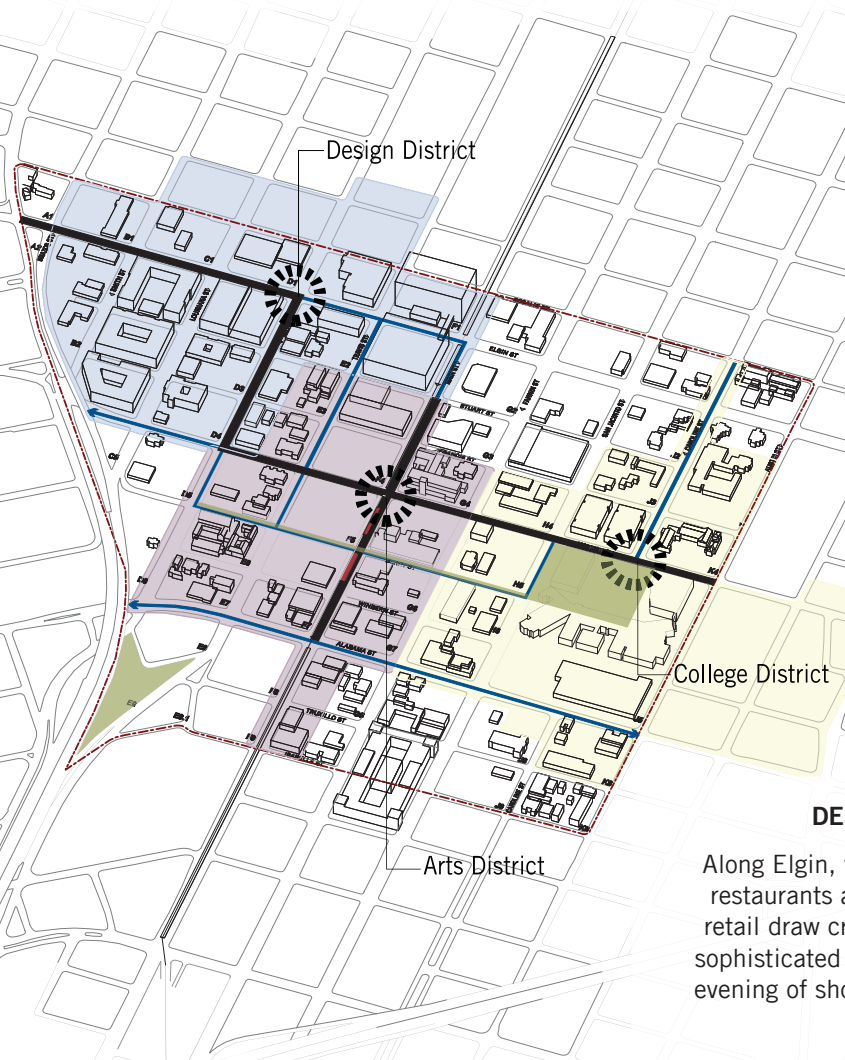
The Midtown neighborhood's Ensemble/HCC light rail station is at the heart of Houston's urban core. The neighborhood is within five miles of Houston's four major employment centers, arts, entertainment, sports and major convention facilities, five universities and half a dozen graduate institutions. The area is extremely connected with easy access to Downtown, the Texas Medical Center, the Museum District, the University of Houston, Texas Southern University, Reliant Center, Neartown, Greenway Plaza, Uptown, and The Galleria. The location will soon be even more convenient with the completion of five new light rail lines connected to the existing Main Street line.



LOCATION

THREE VIBRANT DISTRICTS

The plan creates a road map for building on Midtown's location, commercial activity, and residential popularity. Activity will increase in the Design, Arts and College districts. Catalytic projects and major street improvements will link the districts together.



ARTS DISTRICT

A vibrant arts and entertainment district attracts people from all over the city to restaurants, nightlife, and entertainment venues.



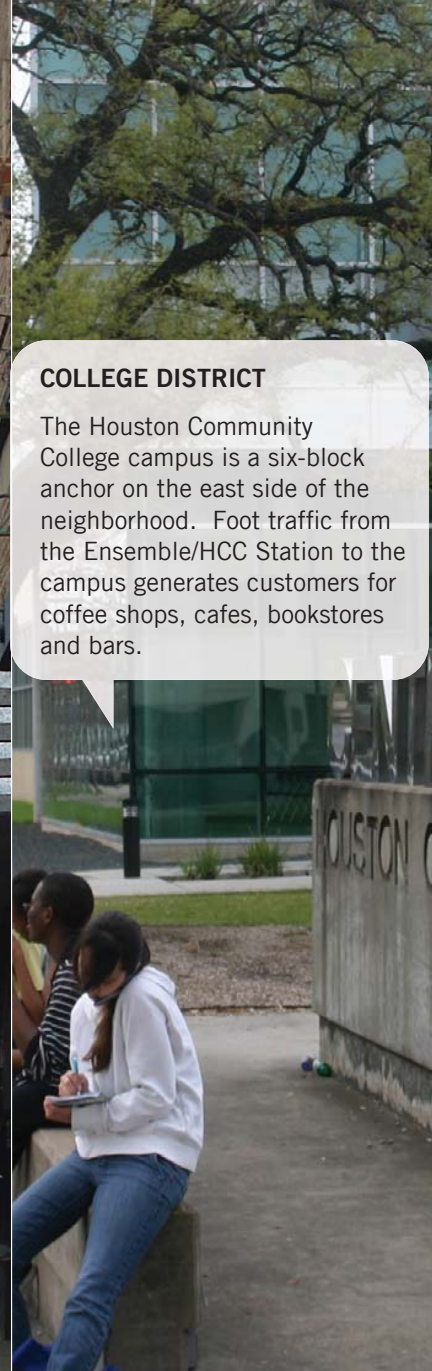
DESIGN DISTRICT

Along Elgin, white tablecloth restaurants and home goods retail draw crowds who enjoy sophisticated cuisine after an evening of shopping for home decor.



COLLEGE DISTRICT

The Houston Community College campus is a six-block anchor on the east side of the neighborhood. Foot traffic from the Ensemble/HCC Station to the campus generates customers for coffee shops, cafes, bookstores and bars.

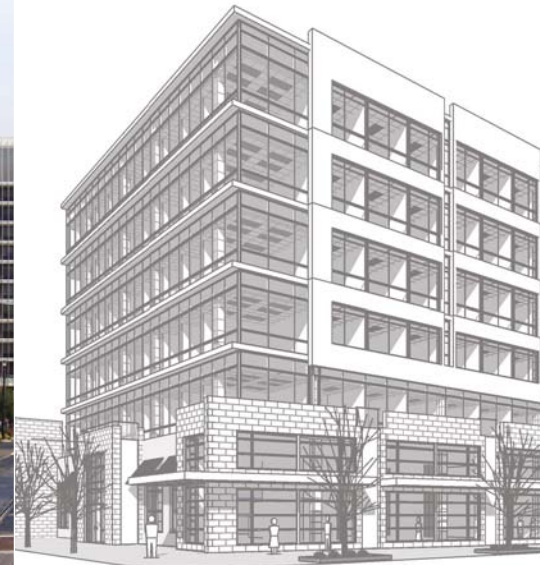


VISION



NEW DESTINATIONS

Development projects in each district would increase activity and draw visitors from all over the city. The Independent Arts Collaborative (IAC) on Main Street along the light rail line would house over ten local grassroots arts organizations and add a new population of artists to the neighborhood. A mixed-use Office Building on Elgin (below) would bring more retail and restaurant destinations to this pedestrian-oriented shopping corridor.



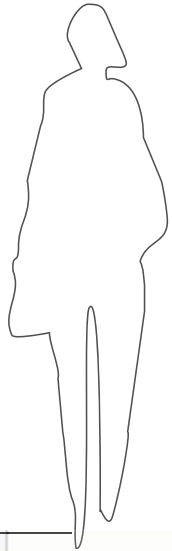
CATALYSTS

Projects that can make the vision a reality

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

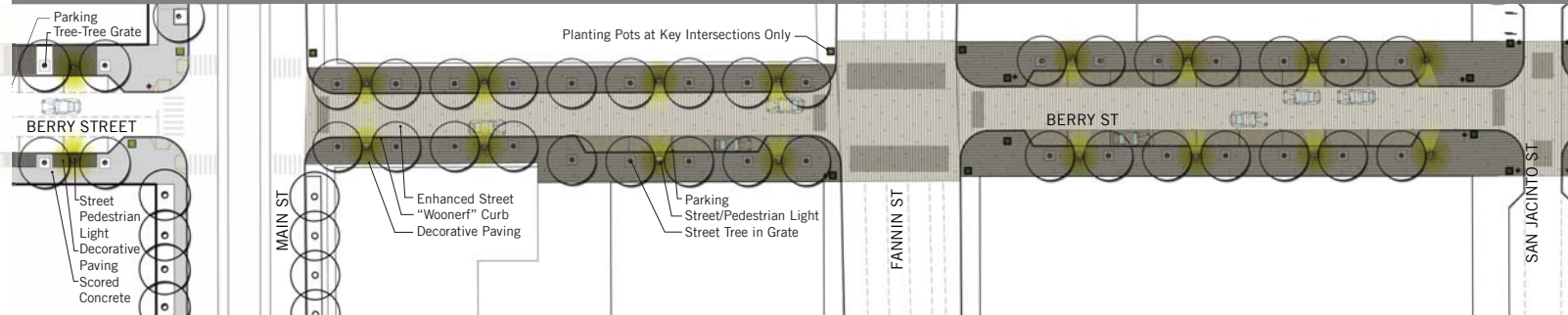
The plan calls for significant investment in a renewed public realm. Streets will be improved to provide wider sidewalks, more shade, and better lighting and signage. All this adds up to a stronger sense of place, a more comfortable pedestrian experience, and enhanced security.

-  HCC Campus
-  Montrose
-  Ensemble/HCC Station
-  Main Street
-  midtown



GREAT STREETS

Great streets bring people to the neighborhood



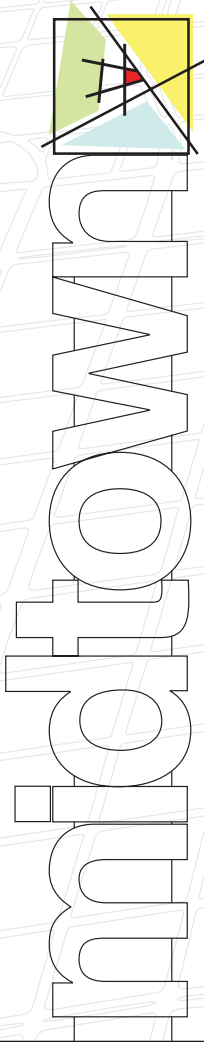
PRIVATE INVESTMENT

The plan calls for adjusting regulations to make it easier for landowners to build the projects that will bring life to the area. For example, a proposed mixed-use Student Housing complex could add a critical mass of students to the College District. Proposed changes to parking and setback regulations would facilitate more affordable housing types. By counting on-street and shared garage parking spaces, developers can build more units by offering fewer parking spaces on site. Relief from development regulations makes it easier to build more units on small lots while keeping rents low.



DEVELOPMENT

Making development happen



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Economic Analysis

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Local Market Research

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