



EQUITY

Fall Planning Workshop
NOVEMBER 1, 2019





Today's presentations will be available at h-gac.com/go/fall-planning

The Houston Section of the American Planning Association (APA) listed this workshop for 4 Certification Maintenance Credits, including 1.5 ethics credits.



- 8:30 A.M. REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST**
- 9:00 A.M. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
Jeff Taebel, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- 9:10 A.M. THE STATE OF EQUITY IN OUR COMMUNITIES**
Current and projected trends for equity in planning in the H-GAC region
Dr. Sheri Smith, Texas Southern University
- 9:30 A.M. HOW DO YOU INCLUDE EQUITY IN PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT?**
Discussion taking a look at ways to involve all stakeholders/partners through the planning process, including addressing barriers
DeVon Douglass, Harris County
Marissa Aho, City of Houston
- 10:15 A.M. BREAK**
- 10:25 A.M. HOW DO YOU MEASURE EQUITY IN PLANNING?**
Discussion looking at ways to incorporate indicators throughout plans to track equity
Jonathan Brooks, LINK Houston
Aimee Schultze, Harris County Public Health
- 11:00 A.M. BREAK**
- 11:10 A.M. WHAT DOES EQUITY IN PLANNING LOOK LIKE?**
Discussion looking at case studies and success stories of equity in planning
Veronica Chapa Gorczynski, East End District
Kathy Payton, Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation
Shannon Buggs, City of Houston
Frances Valdez, Houston in Action
Dr. Bakeyah Nelson, Air Alliance Houston
- 12:25 P.M. CLOSING THOUGHTS**
Jeff Taebel, Houston-Galveston Area Council

MARISSA AHO



Marissa Aho, AICP, has served as Houston's Chief Resilience Officer since February 2019. In this role she leads the resilience-building efforts including the development of Houston's resilience strategy as part of Houston's membership in 100 Resilient Cities pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation and sponsored by Shell. She previously served as Los Angeles' first Chief Resilience Officer beginning in 2015, where she led city-wide resiliency efforts. She serves as an advisor to the Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society and as American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Commissioner for Region VI. She also developed and taught a graduate urban planning studio on resilience at University of Southern California Price School of Public Policy. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications, Legal Institutions, Economics and Government from The American University in Washington D.C. and a Master of Planning degree from the University of Southern California.

JONATHAN BROOKS



Jonathan Brooks is the Director of Policy and Planning for LINK Houston, a non-profit organization that advocates for equity in transportation. He uses his transportation expertise to lead technical aspects of the organization's programs, and he engages in coalition building around multi-modal transportation, affordable mobility, and strategic infrastructure modifications and capital projects. Mr. Brooks advocates for data-driven, people-focused innovation in equitable multi-modal, safe, and affordable transportation in the Houston region. He holds a bachelor's degree in Geography: Urban, Rural, and Environmental Planning from Brigham Young University and a Master of Urban Planning and Graduate Certificate in Transportation Planning from Texas A&M University. He co-founded the Houston Chapter of Young Professionals in Transportation and is an active volunteer with the Transportation Research Board, part of the National Academies of Science.

SHANNON BUGGS



Shannon Buggs is the first director of the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities in Houston. In this role, she develops collaborative relationships with neighborhood residents, city departments, other government agencies and officials, private donors, and non-profit organizations. The Complete Communities division ensures that projects identified through a public engagement process are implemented, funded and managed efficiently. Ms. Buggs previously worked as Director of Community and Public Relations at The Woman's Hospital of Texas, Director of Communication for the University of Houston's College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences, and Business Columnist and Reporter for the Houston Chronicle. Ms. Buggs earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and American Literature from Harvard University, a Master of Science degree in journalism from Northwestern University, and a certificate in financial planning from the University of Houston.

VERONICA CHAPA GORCZYNSKI



Veronica Chapa Gorczynski is the President of the East End District, a geographic area serving approximately 16 square miles east of downtown Houston and home to the East End Cultural District. Prior to this position she served for five years as the Deputy Director for the City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department. A respected community development professional in Houston for almost a decade, she is a senior fellow with the American Leadership Forum, a former board member of the Latin Women's Initiative, a member of Leadership Houston Class 30, and a former Commissioner of the Houston Housing Authority. She is a board member of Transportation Advisory Group – Houston Region and a Board of the Friends of Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at the University of Houston. In 2019, she was honored by Houston Woman Magazine as one of Houston's Top 50 influential women.

DEVON DOUGLASS



DeVon Douglass is the Director of Community Engagement for Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Sociology at Missouri State University and continued her education at the University of Tulsa College of Law. Passionate about service, DeVon subsequently served as an AmeriCorps VISTA at the New Jersey Attorney General's Office. Following her VISTA service DeVon sought to continue impactful, state-level change. She began work as a policy analyst for Oklahoma Policy Institute, a non-partisan, budget and tax policy think tank. While there, she galvanized Oklahomans around issues of economic opportunity and racial justice. Her community engagement work there led to her appointment as the Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Tulsa. As Chief Resilience Officer she developed a strategy to improve the health, economic, and social outcomes for all Tulsans. The constellation of her experiences is a natural gateway to her work in Harris County.

BAKEYAH NELSON



Bakeyah Nelson, Ph.D., has served as the Executive Director of Air Alliance Houston since March 2017. Prior to working as Executive Director, she worked for Harris County Public Health where she was responsible for leading community health initiatives to reduce environmental inequities where people live, work, learn, and play. She is the co-founder and co-chair of the Coalition for Environment, Equity, and Resilience, a coalition of 25 organizations focused on raising awareness between people, place, pollution, and public health. Dr. Nelson is a Senior Fellow of Class XLVI of the American Leadership Forum and was a recipient of the National Association of County and City Health Officials Model Practice Award for exemplary leadership to advance environmental justice and public health. Dr. Nelson's doctorate in public policy, master's in applied sociology and bachelor's degree in psychology are from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

KATHY PAYTON



Kathy Payton is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, where she oversees the implementation of the comprehensive community revitalization of Houston’s historic Fifth Ward. She incorporates the vision of a diverse 15-member Board of Directors and acts as a catalyst in fostering the collaborative efforts of an array of community service providers with a primary goal of improving the quality of life in a traditionally underserved community. Ms. Payton accomplishes these goals through the organization’s major lines of business: real estate development, including residential and commercial rehabilitation and construction; property management; financing; relocation; sales; and marketing. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Texas–Austin and a graduate certificate from the Leadership Institute for Non-Profit Executives at Rice University.

AIMEE SCHULTZE



Aimee Schultze, MPS, CHES, is the Community Health and Design Coordinator in the Built Environment Unit at Harris County Public Health. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Science with a Minor in Psychology from Texas A&M University and a Master in Public Health in Behavioral Science and Health Education from Emory University. She is also a Certified Health Education Specialist. Ms. Schultze has experience in community engagement, public health research, program development, and evaluation.

SHERI SMITH



Sheri L. Smith, AICP, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Interim Department Chair for Urban Planning and Environmental Policy at Texas Southern University (TSU). The Urban Planning Department at TSU emphasizes the applied aspects of the profession; its faculty and students are engaged with the community on issues that include environmental justice, gentrification, disaster recovery and regional transportation. She works with a southeast community establishing bike trails and park restoration. She is a contributor to a network of community gardens and serves as a member of the Texas Center for Local Food. Prior to coming to Houston, Dr. Smith worked as a Regional Planner, providing planning services for smaller communities in northeast Oklahoma. She also served as a Neighborhood Planner in Chicago’s westside. Dr. Smith received her Doctorate from Texas A&M University and a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois.

JEFF TABEL



Jeff Taebel, FAICP, is Director of Community and Environmental Planning at H-GAC, where he oversees the agency's community enhancement, environmental planning, disaster recovery, economic development, socioeconomic modeling, and sustainable development initiatives. He has 36 years of experience in urban and regional planning, including 32 in his current position. Actively involved in community service, professional development and planning education, Mr. Taebel is a former President of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association and in 2008 was inducted as a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Mr. Taebel received a Master of Urban Planning from Texas A&M University and a Bachelor of Science in Life Sciences from the University of Nebraska.

FRANCES VALDEZ



Frances Valdez is the Executive Director of Houston in Action. Ms. Valdez received her Bachelor of Liberal Arts Degree in Latin American Studies and Mexican American Studies. She received her Law Degree from the University of Texas School of Law and practiced immigration law for 13 years. She began her legal career as a Clinical Fellow at the UT Immigration Clinic. Ms. Valdez formed her private law practice in Houston in 2009. While in private practice she supported non-profit efforts by working interchangeably through the disciplines of law, policy, advocacy, fundraising, civic engagement and organizing. Ms. Valdez worked at Baker Ripley to improve access to legal services for low income immigrants. She was a founding member of the Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative and Latino Giving Houston. She serves on the board of the ACLU of Texas, Hollyfield Foundation, and the Harris County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.



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