

# Exploring Community Conscious Planning Practices

H-GAC Livable Centers 2024 3-part mini-series

# The Power of Dynamic Engagement in Community Development

Roundtable #1

April 18, 2024

# Upcoming Events:

Round table discussion #2

## Exploring Human-Centered Metrics for Success

- June 20, 2024 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Annual land use and transportation workshop

## Incremental Steps Towards Transportation, Environmental, and Social Equity

- September 26, 2024 - 8:00am – 11:30am\*

# Agenda

- Introductions
- Plenary session
  - Diversity in our region
  - Communication through imagery
  - Community spaces and engaging environments
- Break
- Small-group discussions
  - Personal identity
  - Idioms, slang, and technical terms
  - Accommodations
- What we heard
- Adjourn



**LIVABLE CENTERS**  
LIVE, WORK, PLAY

# Introductions

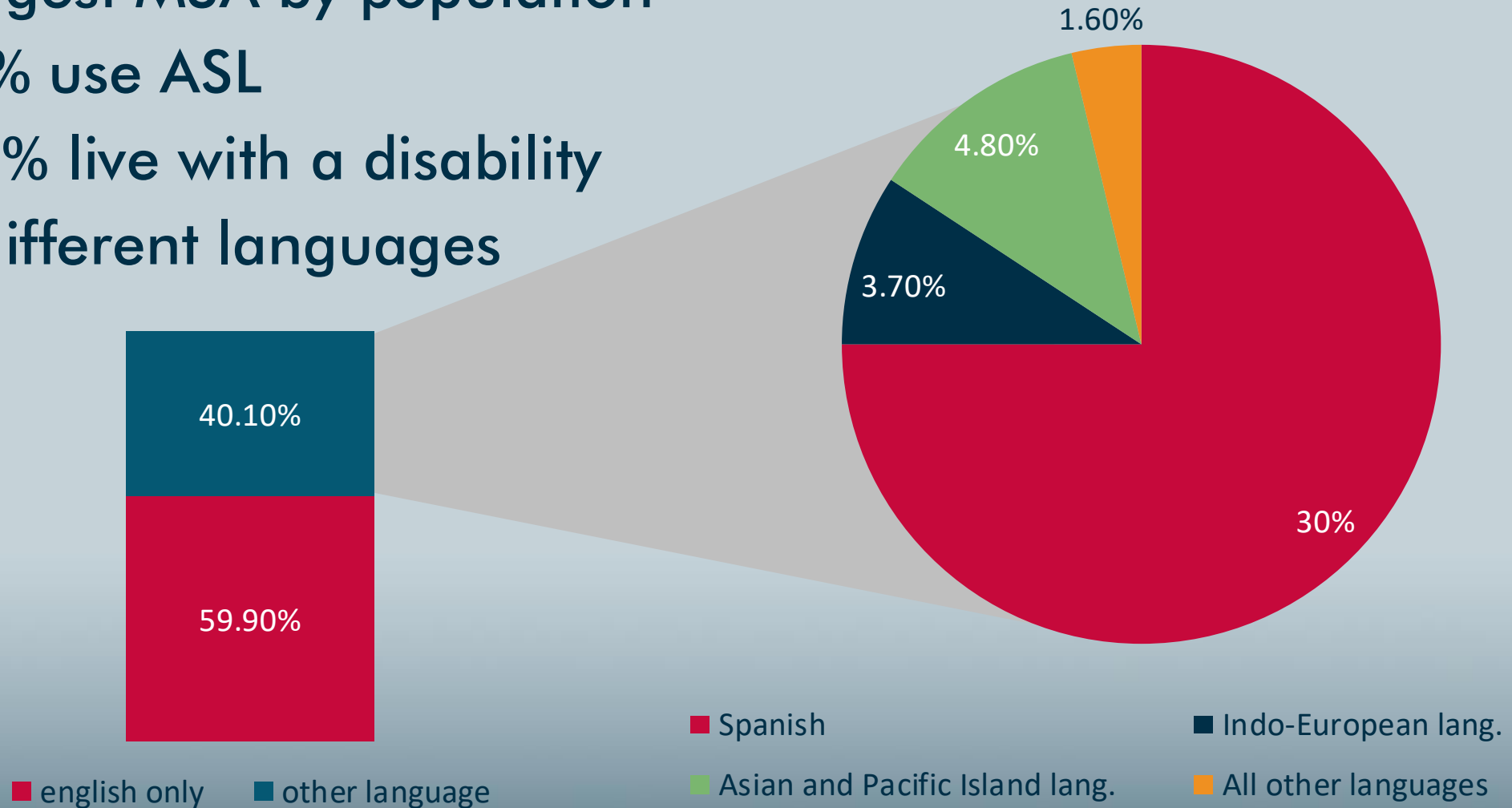
- Name
- Agency
- Why you decided to attend



**LIVABLE CENTERS**  
LIVE, WORK, PLAY

# Diversity in Our Region

- 4<sup>th</sup> largest MSA by population
- ~ 10% use ASL
- ~ 9.4% live with a disability
- 164 different languages



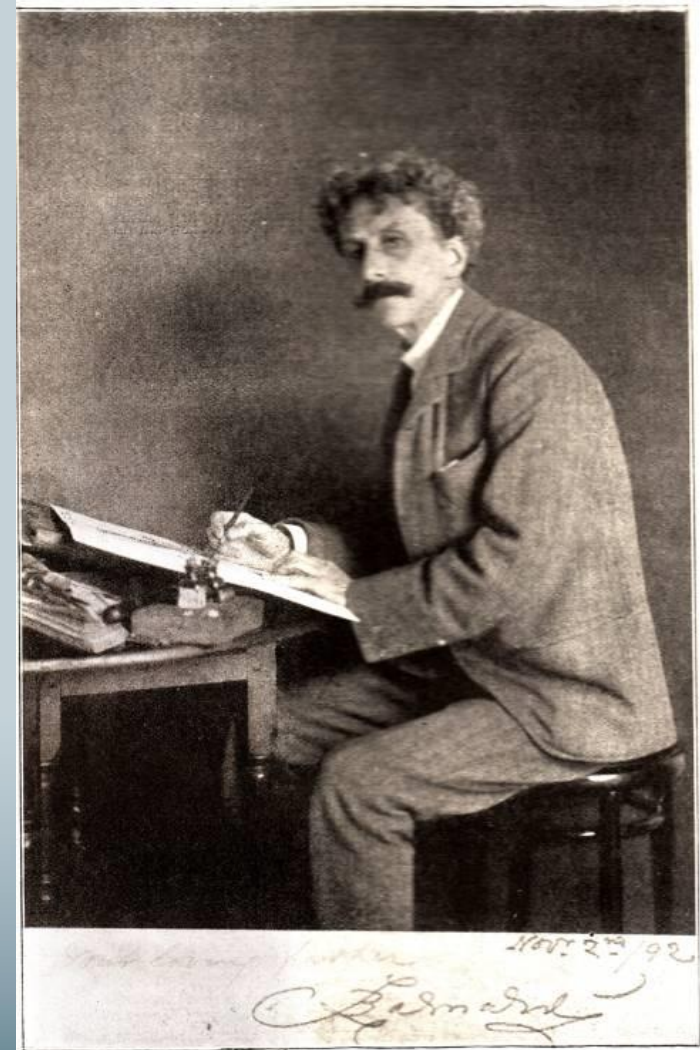
# Communication Through Imagery

“One picture is worth a thousand words.”

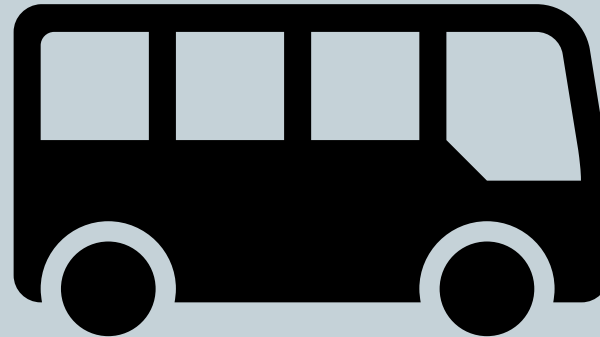
– Fred R. Barnard (1911)

Using imagery can...

- Improve cross-cultural communication
- Clarify words/acronyms
- Increase project clarity
- Provide examples

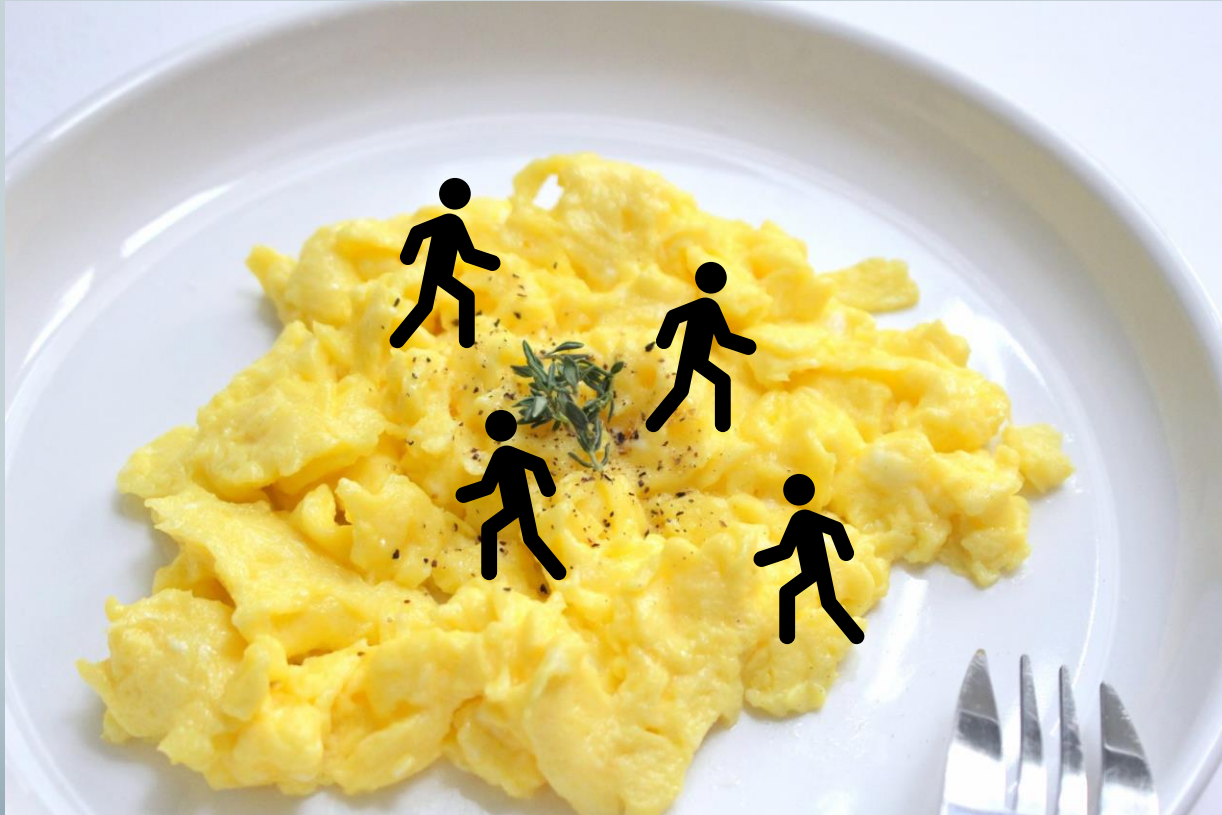


# Cross-Cultural Communication





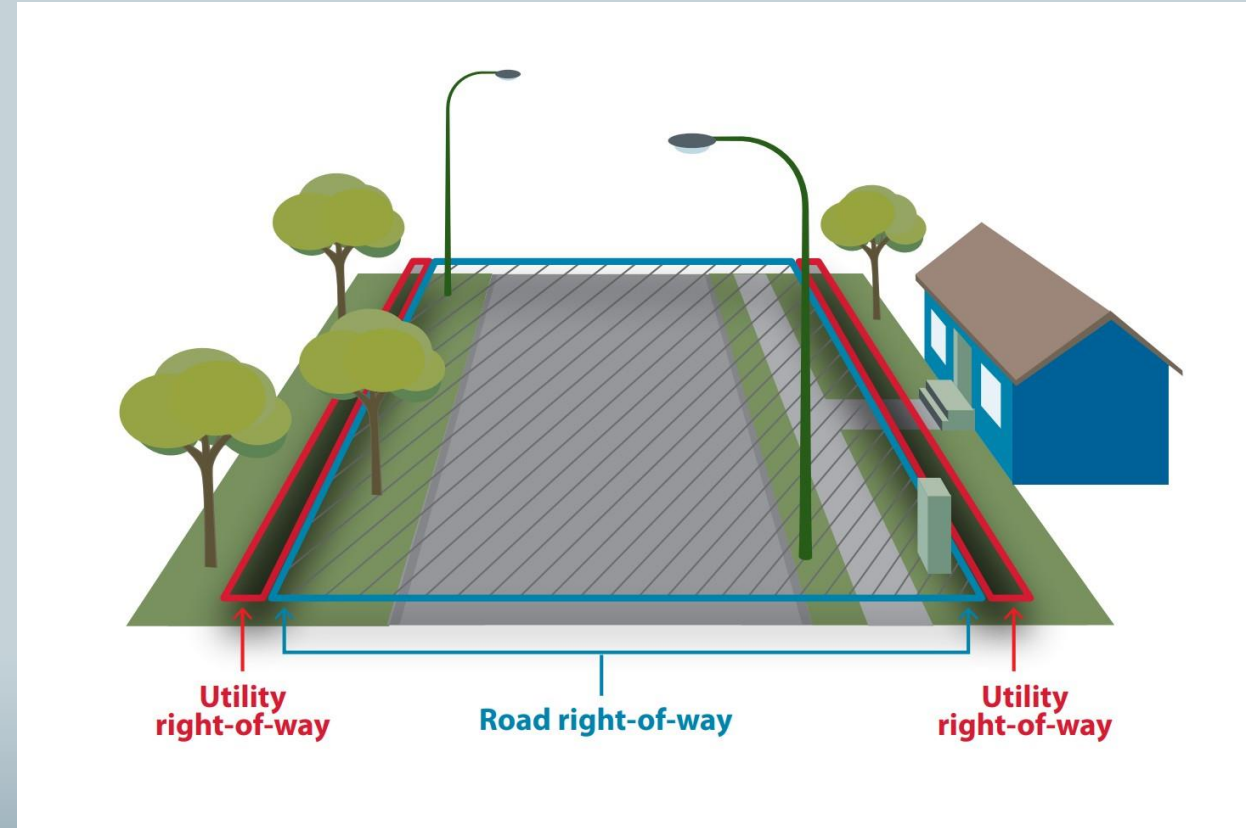
# Pedestrian Scramble



# MUD – Municipal Utilities District



# ROW – Right of Way



# Project Clarity

- Improve understanding
  - Mitigate information overload
  - Go beyond text
  - Provide examples and help visualize the end result



# Program Summary

By 2045, the eight-county Houston-Galveston region is expected to grow to an estimated 10.6 million residents. Accommodating this growth will overburden the region's transportation network unless we identify ways to reduce vehicle trips.

H-GAC's 2045 Regional Transportation Plan lays out a strategy to address this growth - Livable Centers. Livable Centers are land use and transportation studies that give local communities the tools they need to create safe, convenient, and attractive areas where people can live, work, and play with less reliance on their cars. This guide is a resource to help local governments understand and implement the essential components of Livable Centers.

Elements of Livable Centers may be found, or be appropriate, in the following areas:

- High-Density Areas
- Regional Centers
- Town Centers
- Transit Oriented Development
- Special Trip Generators
- Smart Streets

What is a Livable Center?

Compact and Mixed Use - Livable Centers concentrate housing, employment, shopping, and entertainment in areas with a higher density than surrounding areas that are easily served by transit. Compact and mixed use development in a Livable Center impact area gives people the opportunity to accomplish their daily activities without using a car. Livable Centers also include on-street parking for transit users. Careful design and planning of parking structures or lots can minimize their impact on the visual and pedestrian environment while maximizing their convenience and accessibility.

Designed to be Walkable - Livable Centers provide safe, convenient, and engaging experiences for pedestrians. A quality pedestrian environment has appropriately oriented and scaled buildings, good separation of pedestrians from foot from vehicle circulation and parking, design elements that create a sense of identity, and places to interact with others such as plazas and public spaces.

Connected and Accessible - Livable Centers make it easy to reach multiple destinations within the Center and its surrounding development by foot, bicycle, car, or transit. A well-designed street and sidewalk network provides good connectivity and increases safety for all users.

Project	Location	Cost
Sidewalk segment #1	Ave. A	\$25.6k
Sidewalk segment #2	Main Street	\$245.2k
Sidewalk segment #3	S. Main St.	\$45.6k
Sidewalk segment #4	Austin Ave	\$1.3k
Drainage improvement #1	Main Street	\$1.1m
Drainage improvement #2	Ave. A	\$800k
Drainage improvement #3	FM	\$450k
Drainage improvement #4	S. Main	\$2.6b
Park #1	Ave. B	\$27.2k
Park #2	Main Street	\$680.3k
Park #3	2nd Street	\$520k
Park #4	12th Street	\$3.1m
Policy change #1	Parking	Staff time
Policy change #2	Zoning	Staff time

## Livable Centers Program Goals

- Create multi-modal travel choices that increase connectivity between existing neighborhoods and activity centers using multiple modes of transportation.
- Create resilient, quality places that integrate enjoyment, green spaces and preserve natural resources while considering elements of hazard readiness, mitigation, and resiliency.
- Promote safe and equitable infrastructure that reduces the negative impacts of defined barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists (intersections, highways, railroads, water ways, network gaps, etc.).
- Promote economic development and housing diversity by increasing walkability near activity centers and connecting existing infrastructure to serve as a catalyst for investment/development.

## Livable Centers Study

Serve as small area plans and fulfill all four Livable Centers Program goals. Programmatic goals are evaluated on a community-wide scale as defined by study sponsors and may span a larger neighborhood or series of neighborhoods in a single service area, such as a district or other sponsor defined boundary. A study area may define multiple locations of public interest, including identified areas for future land use improvements.

## Focused Livable Centers

Serve as targeted community models that must meet two Livable Centers Program goals to create multi-modal travel choices, resilient quality places, and one additional Livable Centers goal that best fits the needs of a study sponsor.



# Mitigate Information Overload

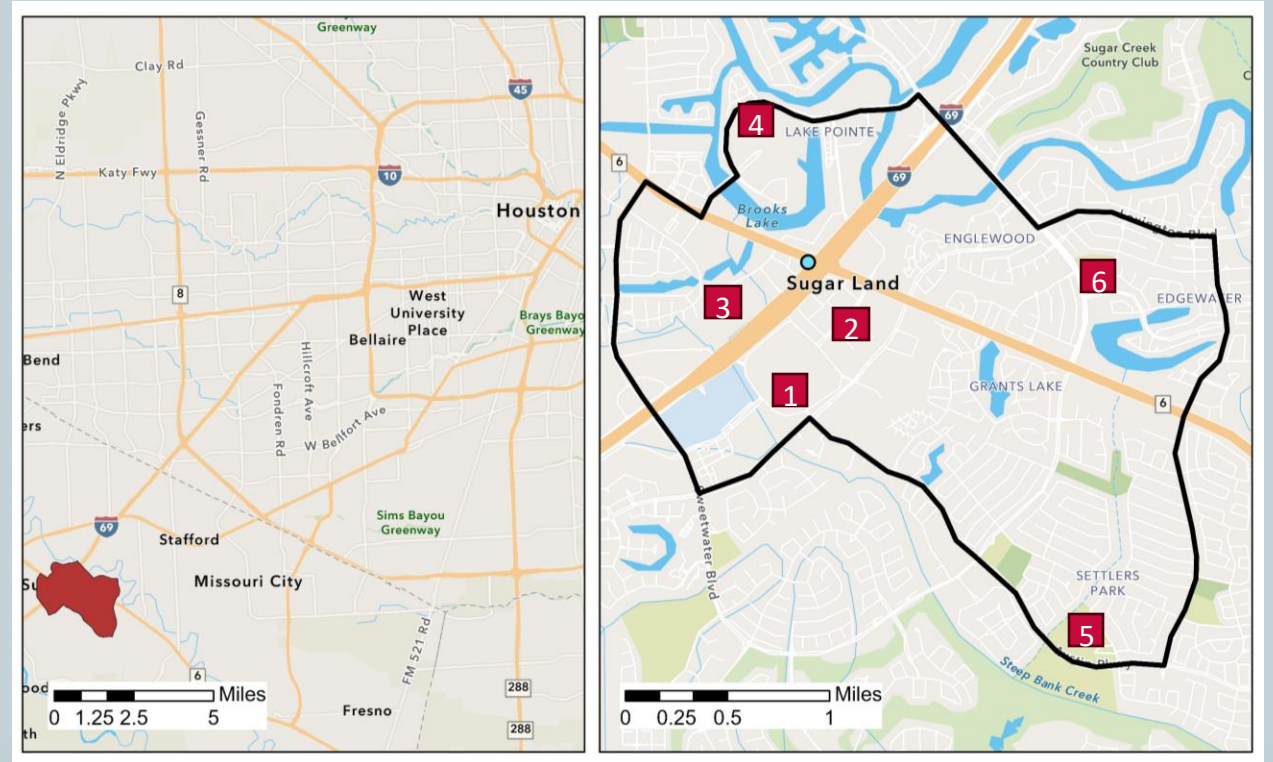
- Pictures > Paragraphs
- Let the image do the talking



# Go Beyond Text

The Central Sugar Land study area is approximately 20 miles Southwest of Downtown Houston, down i69. The study area is 3.7 square miles and is bounded by Creekbend Drive, First Colony Boulevard, Lexington Boulevard, Austin Parkway, Williams Trace Boulevard, and Settlers Way Boulevard. The area contains two Regional Activity Centers, a Neighborhood Activity Center, and one Medium Density Mixed Use area. The intersection of US 59 and SH 6 bisects the study area, which is the busiest and one of the most congested intersections in the region. This intersection is a key crossing connecting the north and south portions of the Central Sugar Land area and is one of the major barriers to connectivity between activity centers in the area.

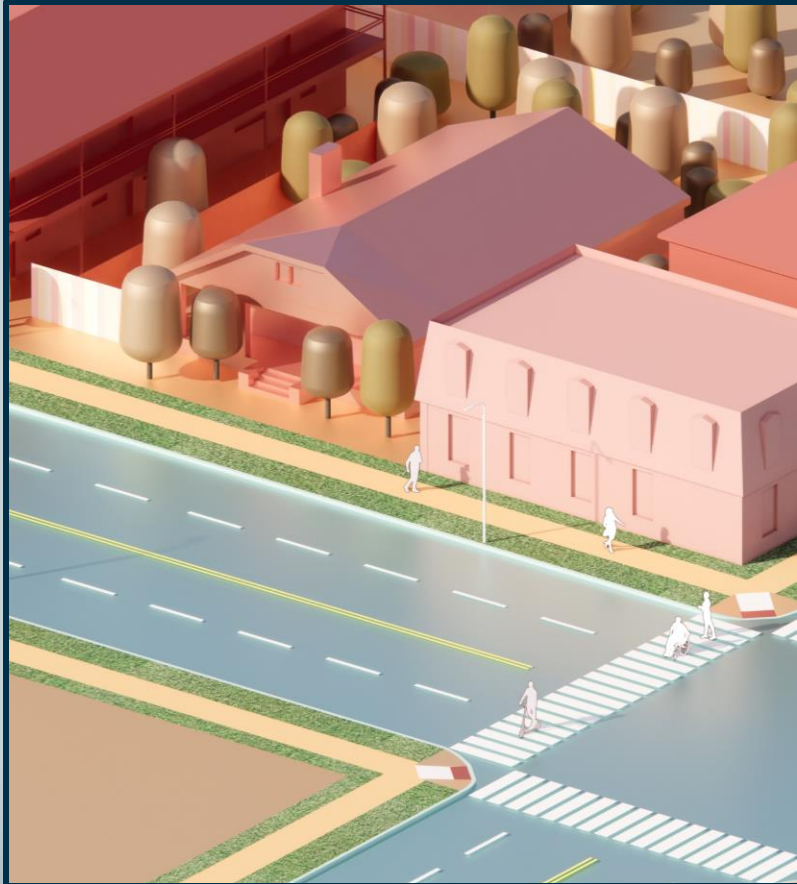
- Pictures > Paragraphs
- Let the map do the talking
  - Street names and landmarks



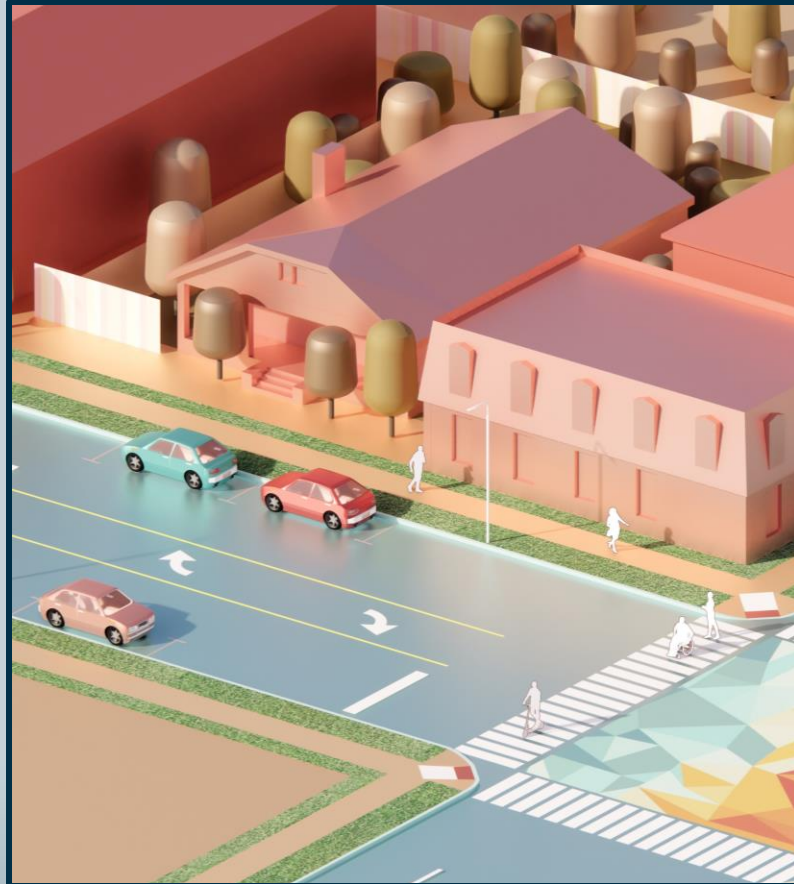
- 1 First Colony Mall
- 2 Town Square
- 3 Target

- 4 Fluor
- 5 First Colony Middle
- 6 Highlands Elementary

# Provide Examples



Existing



Quick Win

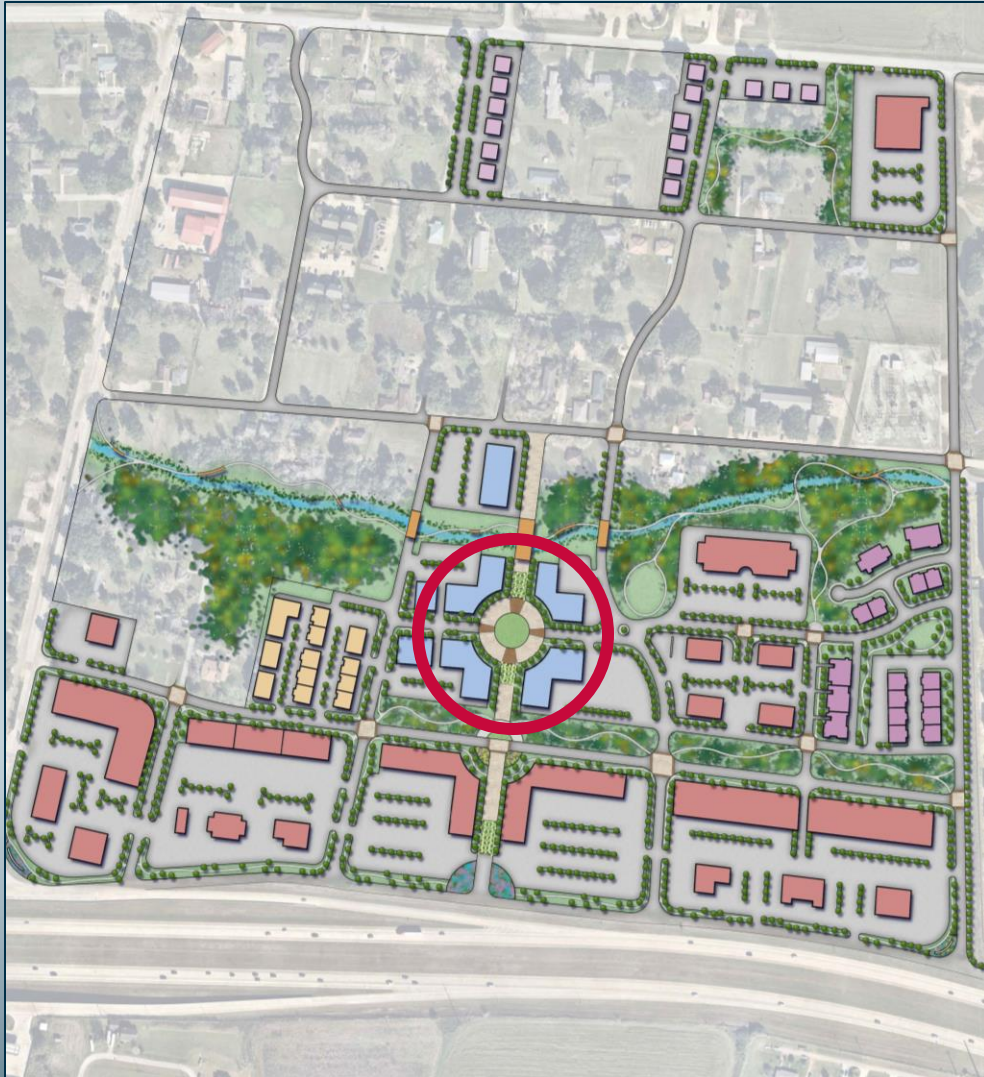


Best Practices

## Traffic Calming Measures



# Visualize the End Result



# Community Spaces and Engaging Environments

- Context sensitive
  - Venue
  - Attire
  - Activities



A light blue map of the Houston-Galveston Area Council region, showing county boundaries. The map is centered on the text.

# Break

upon return – we will break into small groups

# Small Group Discussions

Personal Identity  
Idioms, slang, and technical terms  
Accommodations

A light blue map of the Houston-Galveston Area Council region, showing county boundaries. The map is centered on the Gulf of Mexico coast.

# What We Heard

# Upcoming Events:

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