



Houston-Galveston  
Area Council

# LIVABLE CENTERS

## A 10 YEAR EVALUATION AND SUMMARY



## IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE!

Ten years ago, we had a vision of a region where more people are able to live, work, and play with less reliance on their cars. From that vision, we developed the Livable Centers Program at the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) as an initiative to work with local communities to identify specific recommendations such as improved pedestrian and bicyclist connections, enhanced access to multi-modal transportation options, and increased activity-employment density in proximity to housing. Today, a decade after the first Livable Centers study was completed in 2009, 28 studies are on the path to implementation in the region's rural, suburban, and urban communities.

### PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

#### WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Livable Centers Program studies do not sit on shelves, and local partners are working tirelessly to implement study recommendations. This 10 year report celebrates local partners' successes and recognizes the time and effort it takes to plan, develop, negotiate and implement recommendations.

#### HOW ARE WE DOING THIS?

We know Livable Centers study recommendations are being implemented because we asked. In the Fall of 2018, H-GAC staff conducted interviews with project partners to identify which study recommendations have been put into place, which recommendations are underway, and which recommendations are waiting to be started. We then evaluated each study area and assigned a status to better understand local partners' successes and opportunities.

#### HOW ARE WE USING OUR FINDINGS?

After 10 years, the Livable Centers Program continues to mature with each new study, and we are encouraged by local partner responses regarding the Program's influence on multimodal infrastructure projects, local development patterns, policy changes, and influential program growth.

However, we're not done. We've listened to local partners and are using this opportunity to reflect on the Program and make it better, including using an on-line platform. We're executing changes with our newest set of studies, and taking the first step toward the next 10 years of success for the H-GAC Livable Centers Program.

### CHECK OUT OUR FINDINGS

The full Livable Centers Program 10 year report is available at [h-gac.com/livable-centers](http://h-gac.com/livable-centers). If you have any questions, recommendations, or thoughts you'd like to share, we'd love to hear them. Email the Program today: [LivableCenters@h-gac.com](mailto:LivableCenters@h-gac.com).

# 2009

H-GAC publishes first Livable Centers Study.

# 2018

28 studies are complete representing urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the region.

“Livable Centers is a unified title, and it works—it keeps the message clear regardless of agency.”

**Deyna Sims**  
Galveston Housing Authority

“...Served as a guiding document helping the community prioritize spending for major projects, establish new goals, and strategize successful implementations...”

**Anton Sinkewich**  
East Downtown Management District

## STUDY AREA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**83%** of local partners credit the program for increased awareness of live, work, and play principles

Livable Centers studies do not sit on shelves. Local partners use these Livable Centers studies to identify, negotiate, fund, and implement recommendations envisioned by the study process. Study area accomplishments include:

- **\$467 million** in locally sponsored capital improvements have been made in Livable Center areas, and an additional \$491 million are planned or programmed.
- **\$576 million** for 37 projects in the Regional Transportation Plan that includes sidewalks, bikeways, transit, and intersection/bridge/underpass treatments.
- **700,000** single occupancy vehicle trips reduced daily.

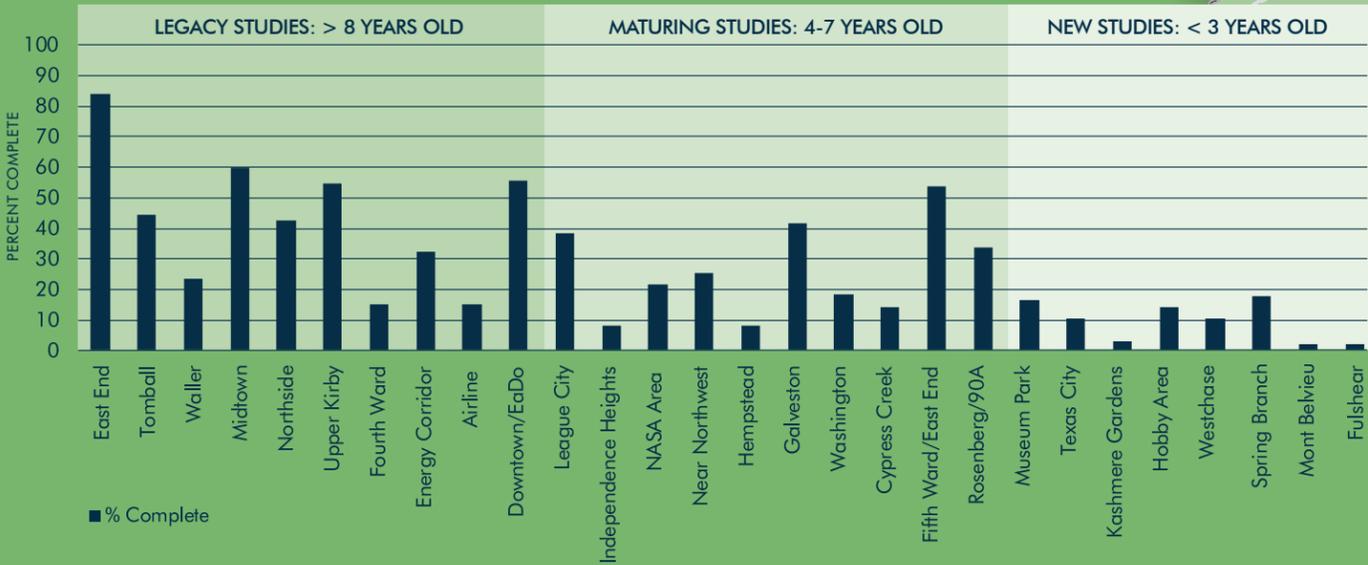
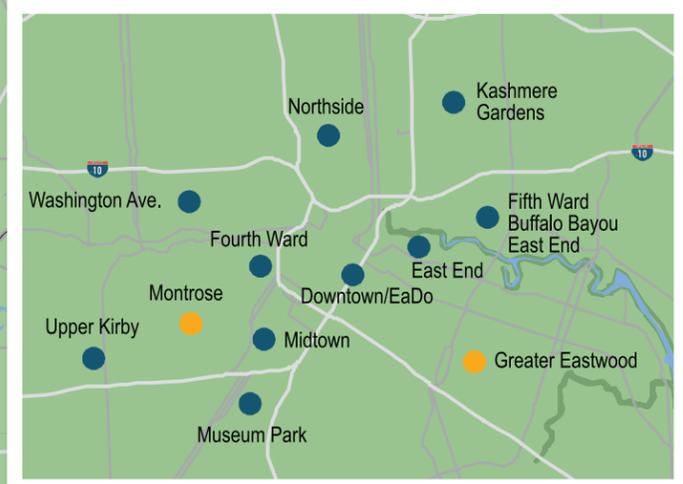
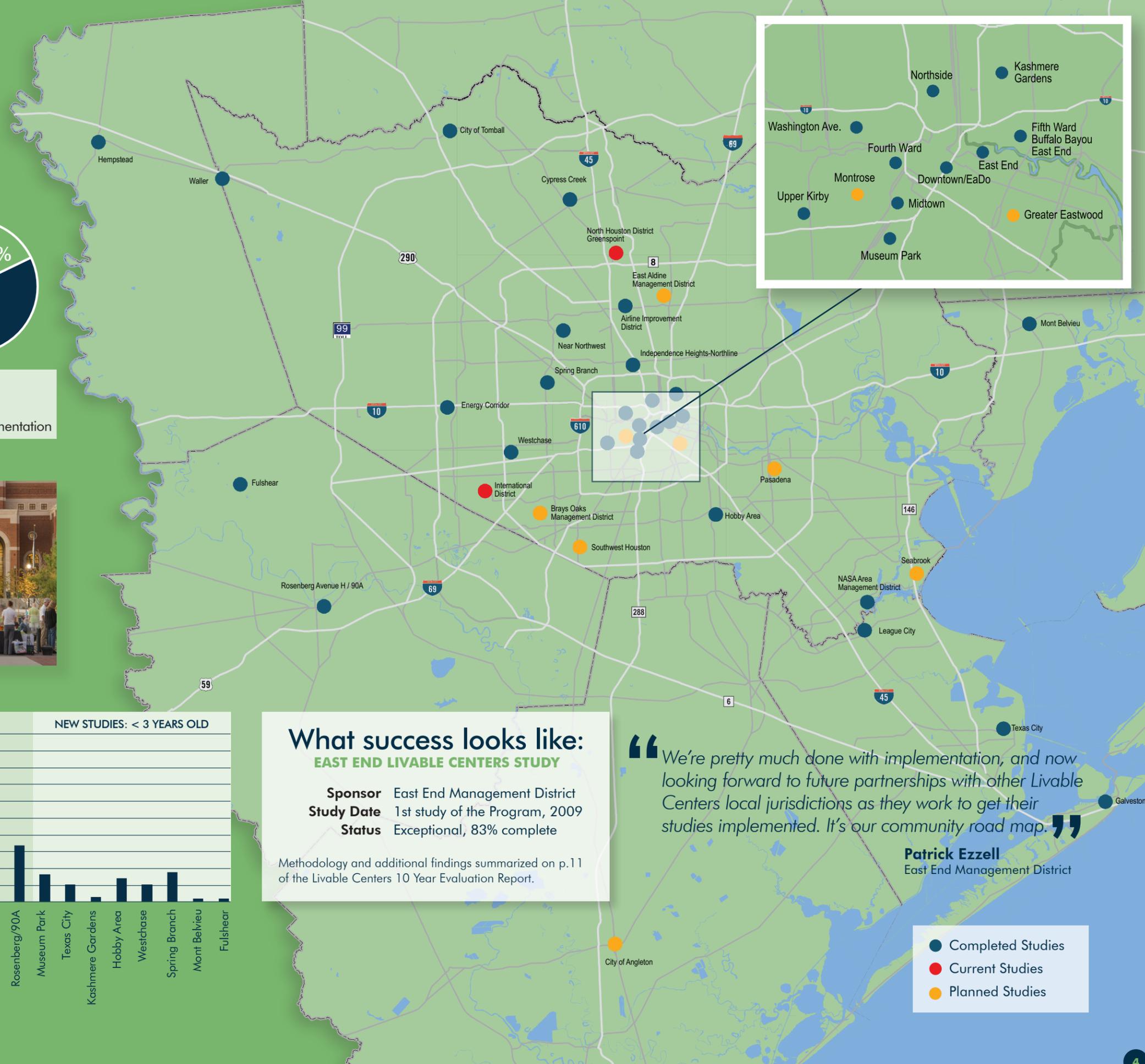
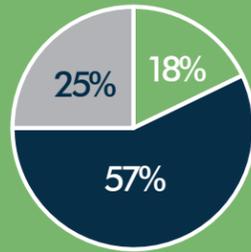
Study	Completion Date	Policy	Partnership & Programs	Constructed Catalyst	Constructed Transportation
East End	2009	●	●	●	●
Tomball	2009	●	●	●	●
Waller	2009	●			
Midtown	2010	●	●	●	●
Northside	2010	●	●		●
Upper Kirby	2010	●	●	●	●
Fourth Ward	2010	●			●
Energy Corridor	2011	●	●		●
Airline	2011				●
Downtown/EaDo	2011	●	●	●	●
League City	2012	●	●	●	●
Independence Heights	2012		●		
NASA	2012	●	●		●
Near Northwest	2012	●	●		●
Hempstead	2012	●	●		●
Galveston	2012	●		●	●
Washington	2013	●			
Cypress Creek	2014	●			
Fifth Ward / East End	2015	●	●		●
Rosenberg/ 90A	2015	●	●		
Museum Park	2016		●		
Texas City	2016	●	●		●
Kashmere Gardens	2016		●		●
Hobby Area	2016		●		
Westchase	2018		●		
Spring Branch	2018	●	●		
Mont Belvieu	2018				
Fulshear	2019				

\*Please see p.19 of the Livable Centers 10 Year Evaluation Report to learn more about study area accomplishments as reported by local project partners at [h-gac.com/livable-centers](http://h-gac.com/livable-centers).

# LIVABLE CENTERS IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

**75%** of all study areas are *On-Track* or *Exceptional*

- Exceptional** - Studies that exceed project expectations for implementation to date
- On Track** - Studies that meet project expectations for implementation to date
- Pending Implementation** - Studies that do not meet project expectations for implementation to date and require time or assistance for future project maturation



### What success looks like: EAST END LIVABLE CENTERS STUDY

**Sponsor** East End Management District  
**Study Date** 1st study of the Program, 2009  
**Status** Exceptional, 83% complete

Methodology and additional findings summarized on p.11 of the Livable Centers 10 Year Evaluation Report.

“We’re pretty much done with implementation, and now looking forward to future partnerships with other Livable Centers local jurisdictions as they work to get their studies implemented. It’s our community road map.”

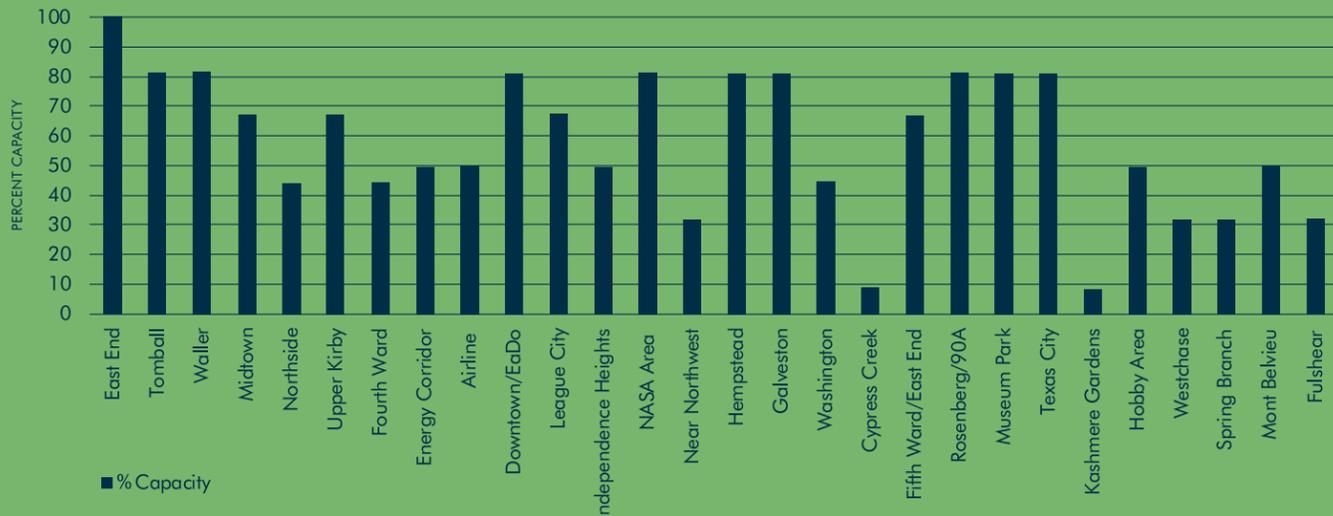
**Patrick Ezzell**  
East End Management District



\*Study success is the barometer used to measure other Livable Centers and adjusted publication year.

# INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT

Available funding and a designated managing authority drive local sponsors' capacity to implement Livable Centers project recommendations. More capacity means more opportunities for implementation.



Methodology and additional findings summarized on p.38 of the Livable Centers 10 Year Evaluation Report.



LEGACY > 8

### CITY OF WALLER LIVABLE CENTERS STUDY - 2009

Sponsor: Waller Economic Development Corporation

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding of \$1.6 million was awarded for this project, and 5-, 8-, and 10-foot sidewalks are slated for 2019 implementation. Voters passed a \$6.6 million bond for design of a new City Hall and mixed-use pedestrian plaza. Current capacity to implement is high, and the project is anticipated to be reclassified as On Track post implementation.



MATURING 4-7

### CYPRESS CREEK PARKWAY LIVABLE CENTERS STUDY - 2014

Sponsor: Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce

In 2018, this project was selected for \$6.6 million to include sidewalk improvements. Safe Routes to School funding may also be allocated for this project. Current capacity to implement is low; however, a partnership with TxDOT may help project partners leverage additional funding. Local partners continue to seek a managing authority. This project is anticipated to be reclassified as On Track post implementation.



NEW < 3

### TEXAS CITY LIVABLE CENTERS STUDY - 2016

Sponsor: City of Texas City

All projects are 100% financed by Texas City and current capacity to implement is high. This project is anticipated to remain On Track or be reclassified as Exceptional post implementation.

# PROGRAM REPORT CARD

## We're on the right track.

Our local partners are working hard to get projects implemented. The table below provides a summary of where project partners stand today, as well H-GAC's understanding of future capacity for implementation.

“Partnering with the residents and businesses in the Main Street/Park Avenue area has allowed the City to move forward with ordinance updates and infrastructure projects that will improve the overall mobility and desirability of the neighborhood, while keeping the unique sense of place that it has developed over the years.”

Kris Carpenter  
City of League City

	Study	Study Cost (000s)	Implemented (000s)	Planned or Programmed (000s)	TIP	Percent Complete	Capacity	Report Card Status
LEGACY > 8	East End	\$144	\$28,791	\$20,000	●	83%	100%	Exceptional
	Tomball	\$133	\$1,784	\$25,000	●	44%	83%	On Track
	Waller	\$120		\$1,600	●	23%	83%	Pending Implementation
	Midtown	\$552	\$23,397	\$32,000	○	59%	67%	On Track
	Northside	\$175	\$7,709	\$7,756	●	42%	42%	On Track
	Upper Kirby	\$192	\$58,872	\$4,924	○	54%	67%	On Track
	Fourth Ward	\$360	\$8,935			15%	42%	Pending Implementation
	Energy Corridor	\$124	\$55,300	\$35,896		32%	50%	Pending Implementation
	Airline	\$174	\$4,329	\$24,803	●	15%	50%	Pending Implementation
MATURING 4-7	Downtown/EaDo	\$221	\$214,000	\$225,000	○	55%	83%	Exceptional
	League City	\$175	\$2,600	\$10,400		38%	67%	Exceptional
	Independence Heights	\$147		\$1,520	○	8%	50%	Pending Implementation
	NASA	\$147	\$150	\$400		21%	83%	On Track
	Near Northwest	\$124	\$33	\$17,750	○	25%	33%	On Track
	Hempstead	\$138		\$2,500		8%	83%	Pending Implementation
	Galveston	\$219	\$37,000	\$20,364		41%	83%	Exceptional
	Washington	\$350	\$934	\$21,912		18%	42%	On Track
	Cypress Creek	\$105	\$8	\$90	●	14%	8%	Pending Implementation
NEW < 3	Fifth Ward/East End	\$288	\$18,070	\$27,930		53%	67%	Exceptional
	Rosenberg/90A	\$213	\$545	\$800		33%	83%	On Track
	Museum Park	\$250	\$5	\$275	○	16%	83%	On Track
	Texas City	\$269	\$233	\$450		10%	83%	On Track
	Kashmere Gardens	\$213	\$3,381	\$949		3%	8%	Pending Implementation
	Hobby	\$269	\$525	\$2,500		14%	50%	On Track
	Westchase	\$281	\$261	\$2,061	●	17%	33%	On Track
	Spring Branch	\$241		\$3,660	○	18%	33%	On Track
	Mont Belvieu	\$141		NA	○	NA	50%	On Track
Fulshear	\$186		NA		NA	33%	On Track	

● TIP  
○ 2018 Applicant  
● 2018 Selected

\*Evaluation findings, Case Studies, and additional Snapshot examples are available in the Livable Centers 10 Year Evaluation Report at h-gac.com/livable-centers

WE'RE GROWING!

**78%** of all study areas have a management entity and 52% reported a continued funding source

### A Note of Thanks

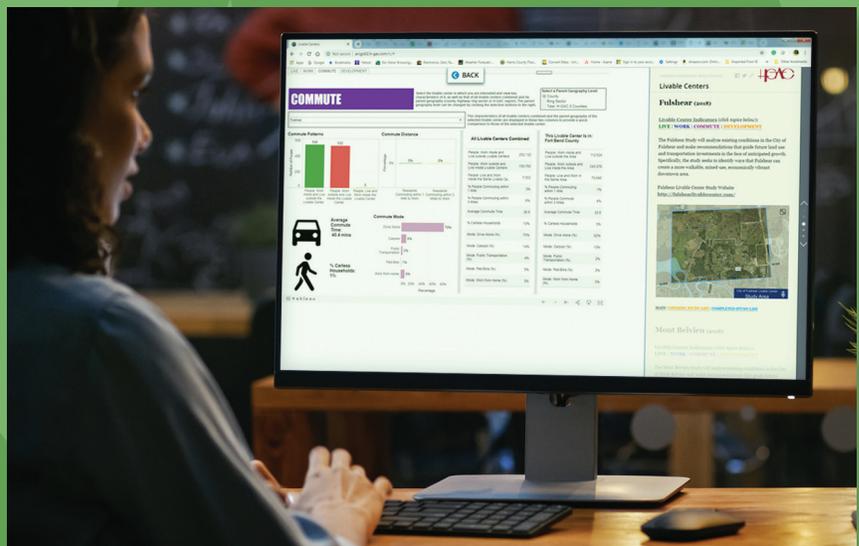
H-GAC Livable Centers Program would like to extend our appreciation to each and every local partner who made this 10 year report possible. It is through your perseverance and continued commitment that the H-GAC Livable Centers Program has become, and will remain, a driving force for multimodal improvement throughout the region. On behalf of H-GAC and the Program, thank you.

### Interactive Planning Tool

This tool will map all study recommendations in an interactive, searchable format with a goal of connecting public and private investments to specific projects. The tool will be updated as new study recommendations are added and as projects are completed.

### Program Tracker

This tool was created in 2018 as a direct result of this evaluation. We heard the program needs to better track the success of its studies and resulting project implementation. We're doing it.



For more information visit <http://arcgis02.h-gac.com/lc>.

“Goals and actions from several area plans ... served as the base for the Complete Communities engagement. Now that the action plan is complete, the newly created Mayor’s Office of Complete Communities will assist with project implementation.”

**Margaret H. Wallace Brown**  
City of Houston

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