



## H-GAC LIVABLE CENTERS SERIES:

Exploring Community-Conscious  
Planning Practices

Annual Workshop: Incremental Steps  
Toward Transportation, Environmental  
and Social Equity

Welcome to the final part of our three-part 2024 H-GAC Livable Centers roundtable/workshop series: *Exploring Community-Conscious Planning Practices*. At roundtable one on April 18, *Exploring Dynamic Engagement Strategies*, attendees participated in both plenary and small-group discussions around their successes and challenges related to community engagement strategies. At roundtable two on June 20, *Applying Human-Centered Metrics for Successful Transportation Planning*, we were joined by three speakers who were consultants for recently completed Livable Centers studies. The speakers led discussions around metrics for successful engagement, human-centered metrics in design for transportation planning, and comparing and contrasting community-driven and data-driven decision making.

This final event is a culmination of the discussion topics from the two previous events. The previous two events created opportunities to discuss the components of equitable planning practices. This event will showcase initiatives that put equitable planning in practice.

## A G E N D A

**8:00 am** Check In, Breakfast, and Networking

### Welcome and Introduction

**8:30 am**

- Sarai Osorio, Principal Planner, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Jose Cantu, Senior Planner, Houston-Galveston Area Council

### Presentations and Discussions

**8:45 am**

- Bill Ervin, Senior Planner, Houston-Galveston Area Council  
*Improving water quality in underserved communities*
- Peter Eccles, AICP, Director of Policy and Planning, LINK Houston  
*LINK Houston's 2024 Equity in Transit report*
- Rushka Tcholakova, Director of Community Programs, LISC Houston
- Chelsea Young, AICP, Principal, TEI Planning + Design  
LISC's holistic community planning through a lens of equity

**10:55 am**

Closing Remarks



Houston-Galveston  
Area Council

## Today's Speakers



### **Bill Ervin, Senior Planner, Community and Environmental Planning Houston-Galveston Area Council**

Bill is a Senior Planner in the Community and Environmental Department at the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Since joining the department in 2023, Bill leads H-GAC's Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program, which provides funding to qualified homeowners for the repair and replacement of failing conventional septic systems or aerobic on-site sewage facilities. Bill also works with the Water Resources team to develop water quality management plans and strategies.

Before joining the Houston-Galveston Area Council, Bill accrued experience as a project manager in wastewater, groundwater, and soil geology with local municipalities and public and private companies. Bill has a Bachelor of Science in Geology from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Business Administration from Our Lady of the Lake, San Antonio.

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### **Peter Eccles, AICP, Director of Policy and Planning LINK Houston**

Peter is the Director of Policy and Planning for LINK Houston, a non-profit organization that advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network. He leads the organization's research efforts, helping community partners better understand how to shape transportation decision-making. He has over seven years of transportation planning experience across the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Peter has lived car-free in Houston since 2016 and relies on public transit, his bike, and his feet for his daily needs. He is an instructor certified by the League of American Bicyclists, has completed over 4,000 miles of cross-country touring, and spends his weekends giving historical bike tours of Downtown Houston. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies from Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York and is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners.

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## Today's Speakers



### **Rushka Tcholakova, Director of Community Programs Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Houston**

Rushka has dedicated her career to transforming systems that yield pathways for prosperity for all by leading coalitions toward collective impact and helping nonprofits and governments design ecosystems of financial inclusion and mobility. She is the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Houston Director of Community Programs, leading the agency's housing, community development, and economic development work, and is an adjunct professor at University of Houston Downtown. Before LISC, she worked at the Alliance for Innovative Regulation, modernizing the global financial regulatory system, and building operational infrastructure. Rushka worked for the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, where she was responsible for the creation and execution of the agency's housing and economic stability work and legislative affairs. She's also served in philanthropic roles overseeing millions of dollars in community investments.

Rushka is a graduate of Fordham University's Administration and Policy Social Work program with a nomination into the Phi Alpha Honor Society and Phi Kappa Phi and earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Molloy College with a Summa Cum-Laude designation.

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### **Chelsea Young, AICP, Principal TEI Planning + Design**

Chelsea is Principal and Planning Team Lead at TEI Planning + Design. She is a seasoned expert in multimodal transportation planning with 16 years of experience across both public and private sectors. Her career is distinguished by a commitment to crafting comprehensive transportation solutions that cater to all modes of travel—whether it is transit, biking, walking, or driving. Chelsea excels in developing and executing active transportation plans, and she has a keen ability to identify and leverage quick wins for project funding and implementation. Her approach is deeply collaborative; she partners closely with clients, stakeholders, and community members to create actionable plans that genuinely enhance the quality of life.

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To learn more about the Livable Centers program visit [h-gac.com/livable-centers](http://h-gac.com/livable-centers)  
This event is eligible for **2 CM** from the American Planning Association

