

Exploring Community Conscious Planning Practices

Livable Centers 3-part mini-series

The meeting will begin shortly



Snacks, water, and coffee are on the counter by the glass doors.



Trash cans are in the brown doors by the counters.



Restrooms are past the elevators to the right.



Please sign in and grab an agenda if you didn't when you came in.

Incremental Steps Towards Transportation, Environmental, and Social Equity

H-GAC Livable Centers 2024

Land Use and Transportation Workshop

Agenda

Introduction

- H-GAC's Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program
- LINK Houston's 2024 Equity in Transit Report

Break

- LISC Houston's Holistic Community Planning

Closing Remarks

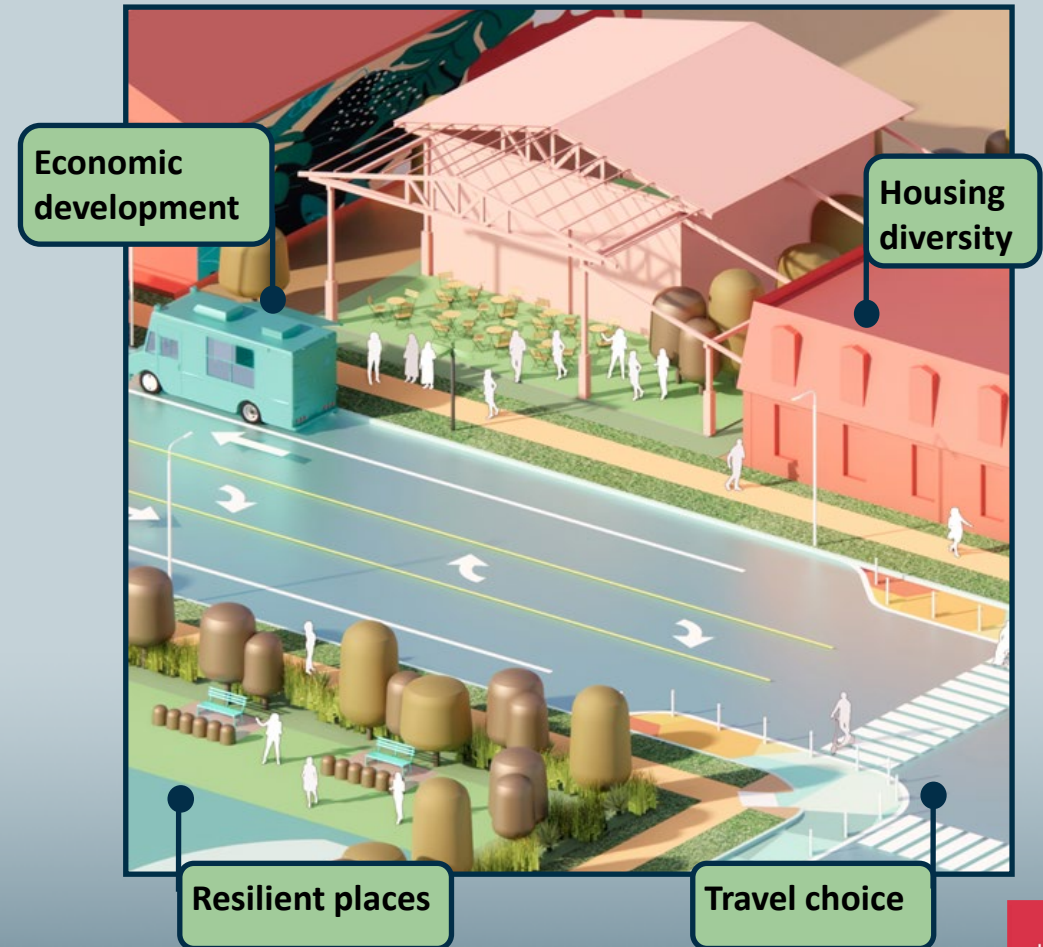
Livable Centers Program Overview

- Established in 2008
- 46 completed studies
- We work with local communities to reimagine auto-focused infrastructure, policies, and programs.
- Places where people can live, work, and play with less reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.



Livable Centers Program Goals

- Create multi-modal travel choices.
- Create resilient quality places.
- Promote safe and equitable infrastructure.
- Promote economic development and housing diversity.



What We Heard

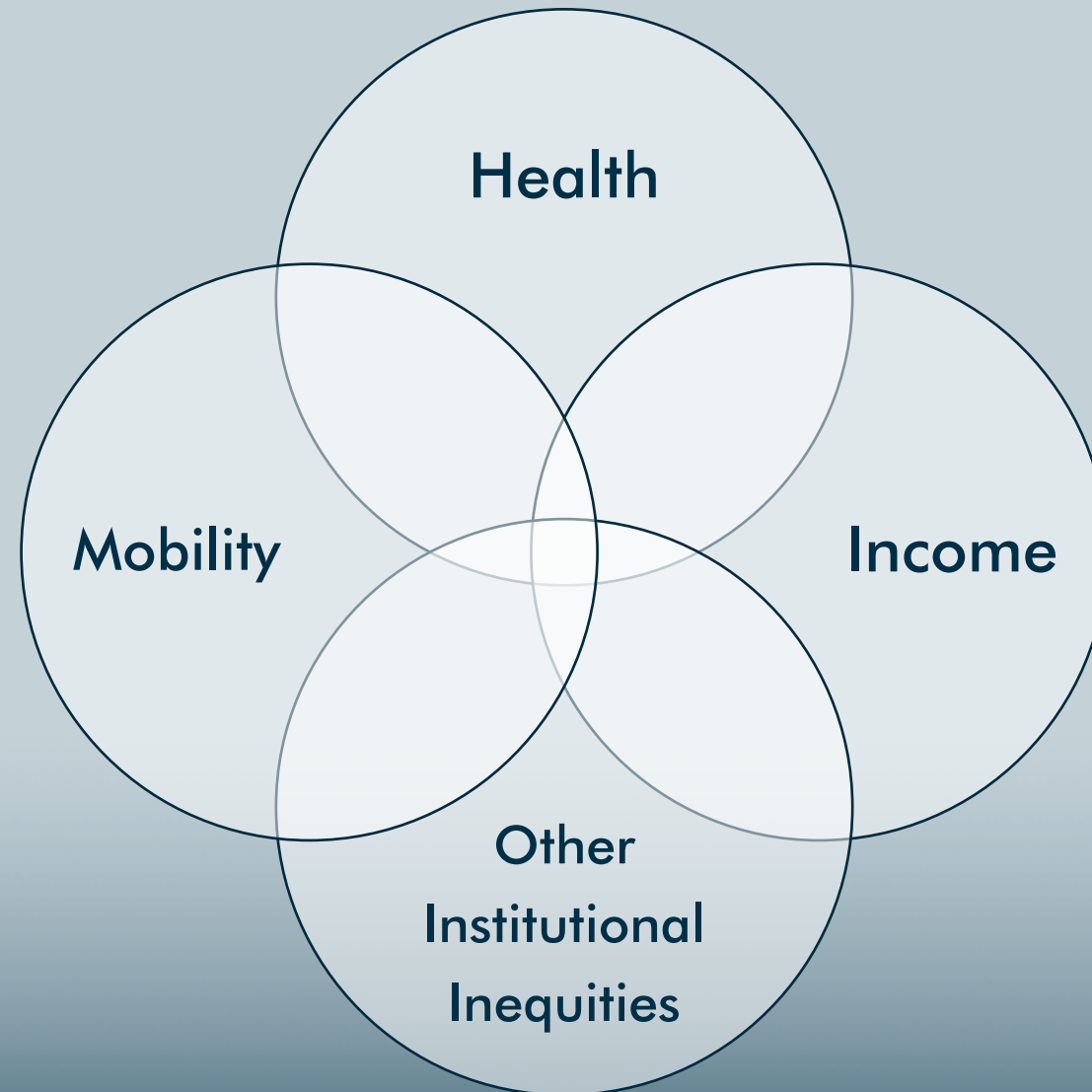
Roundtable #1- Dynamic Engagement Strategies

- Discussing and understanding the diversity in our region
- Communication through imagery
- Using community spaces to create engaging environments

Roundtable #2- Human-Centered Metrics for Success

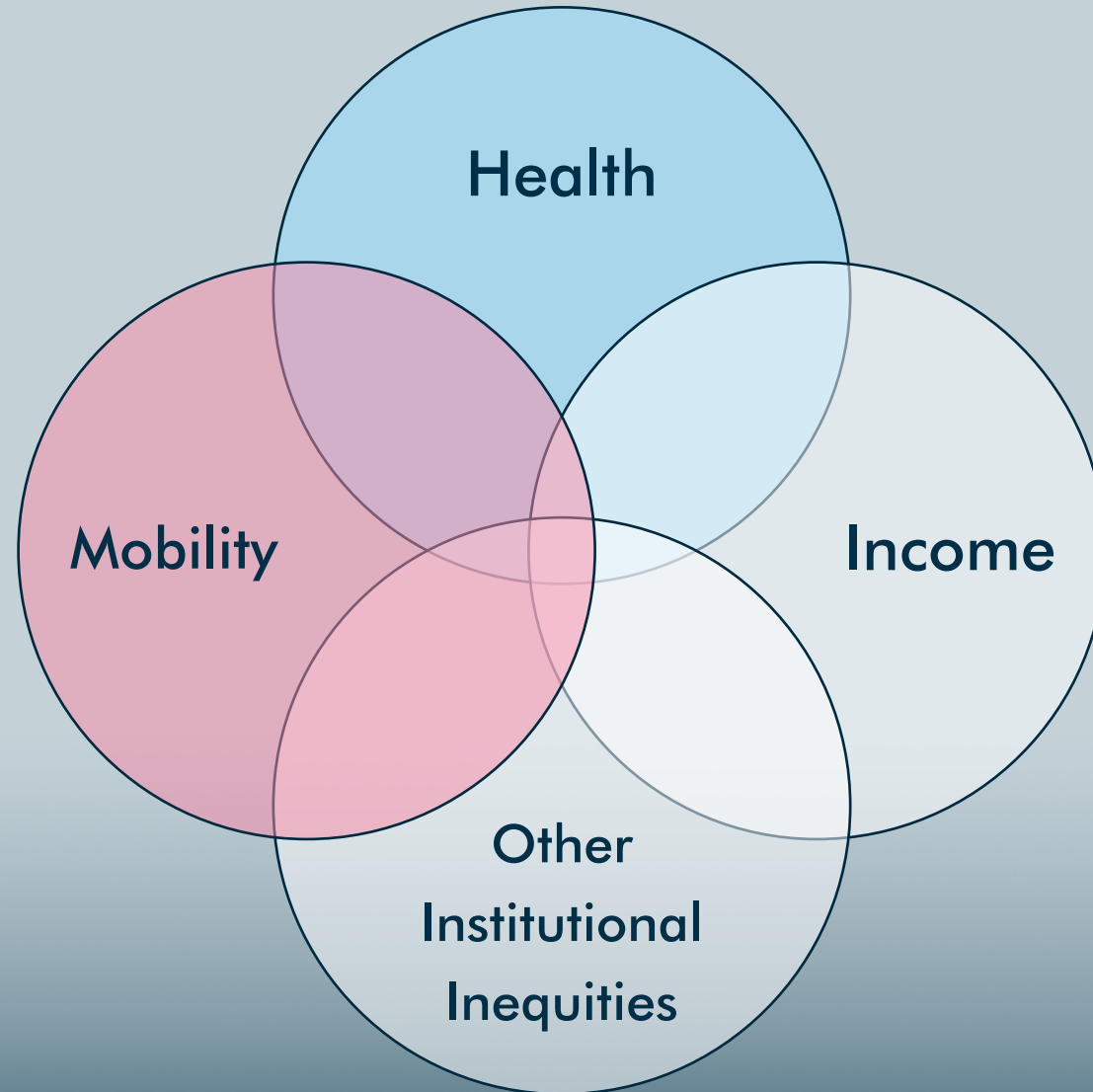
- Setting metrics to define successful public-engagement
- Balancing community-driven and data-driven decision making
- Setting metrics to define successful transportation planning

Social Equity



[Social Equity \(planning.org\)](https://planning.org)

Social Equity



[Social Equity \(planning.org\)](https://planning.org)

Learning Outcomes

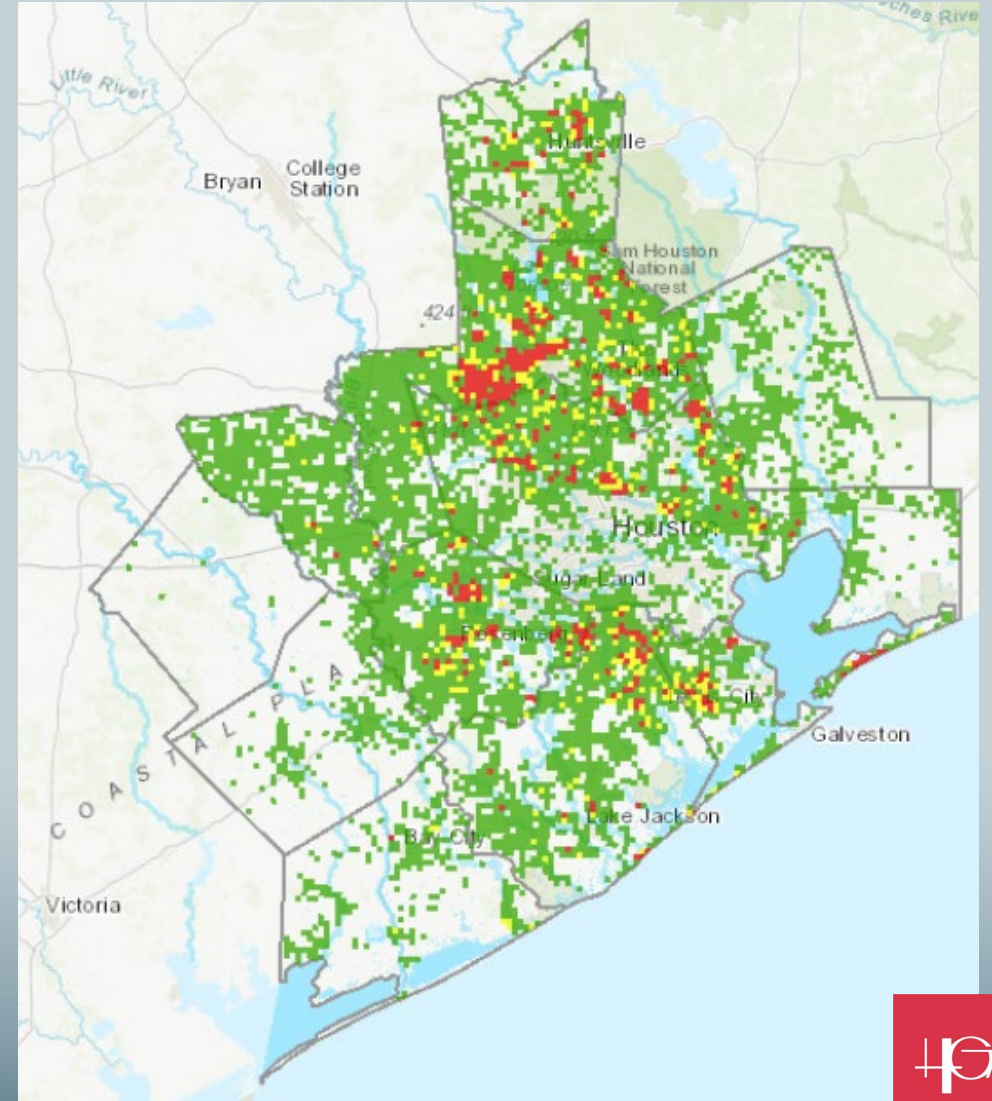
- Learn how small projects can have a big impact.
- Understand the relationship between access to multi-modal transportation and equity.
- Introduction to intersectional planning—considering transportation, social, and environmental factors—creates more inclusive, resilient, and equitable communities.

A light blue map of the Houston-Galveston Area Council service area, showing county boundaries and the Gulf of Mexico coastline. The map is centered in the background of the slide.

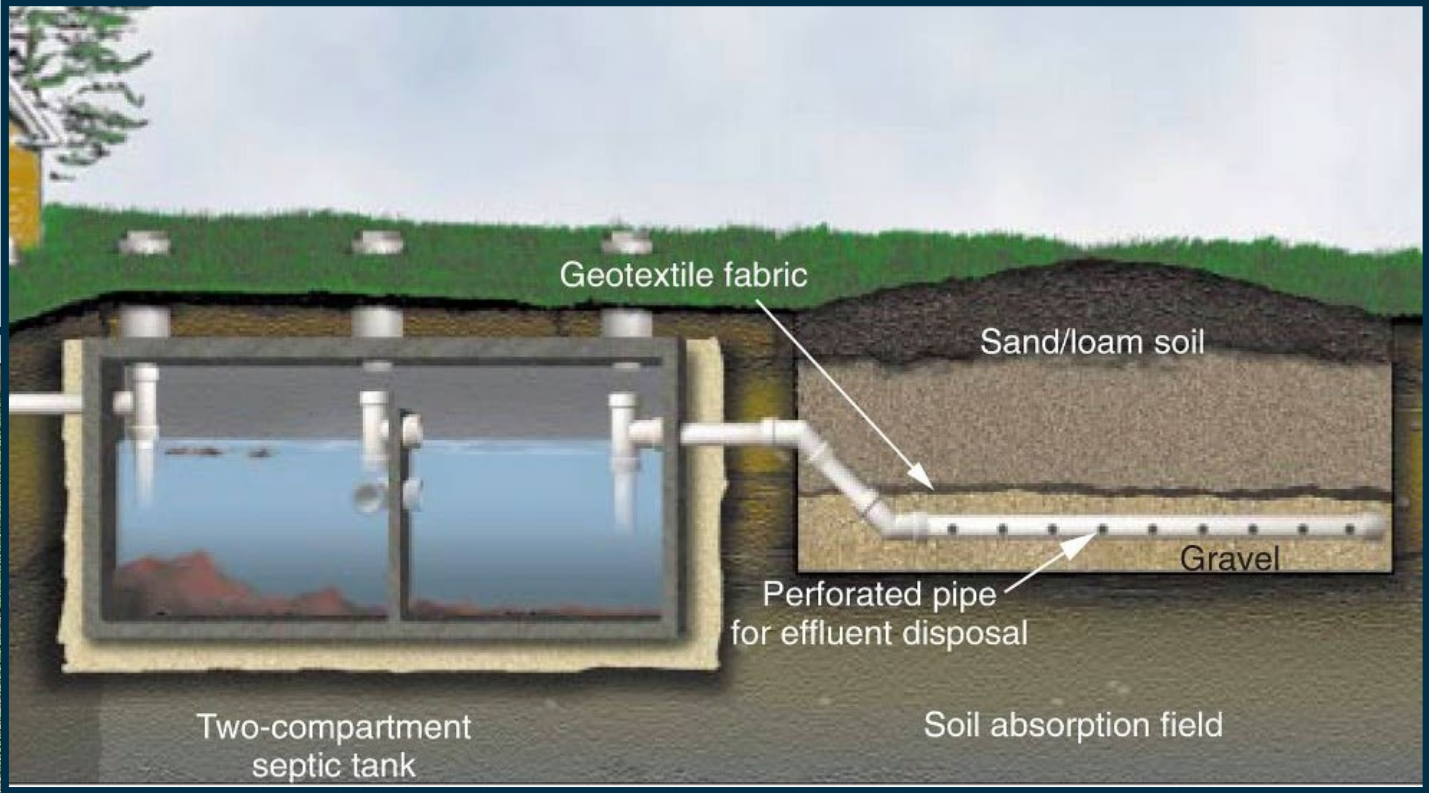
H-GAC's Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program

What is an OSSF?

- On-site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs) are used in areas where centralized residential sewer is not available
- OSSFs treat sewage and remove contaminants before they reach groundwater or surface water
- Within the 13-county Houston-Galveston AC region there are more than 375,000 OSSFs, approximately 60% of which are unpermitted.
 - 18,684 new permitted systems in 2023
 - 144,515 total permitted systems as of 2023
 - Estimated 230,000 unpermitted systems
- Website: <https://datalab.h-gac.com/ossf>



What is an OSSF?



Does it Effect the Environment?



OSSF Malfunctions and Failures

Estimated Costs

Item	Approximate Cost
OSSF Installation	\$9,000 - \$15,000
Tie-In to Existing Sewer Service Lines	\$3,000 - \$5,200
Aerator or Effluent Pump Replacement	\$500 - \$900
Pump-Out and Sludge Hauling	\$500 - \$700
2-Year Maintenance Agreement	\$300 - \$500
Other OSSF Repairs	Varies

H-GAC's Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program

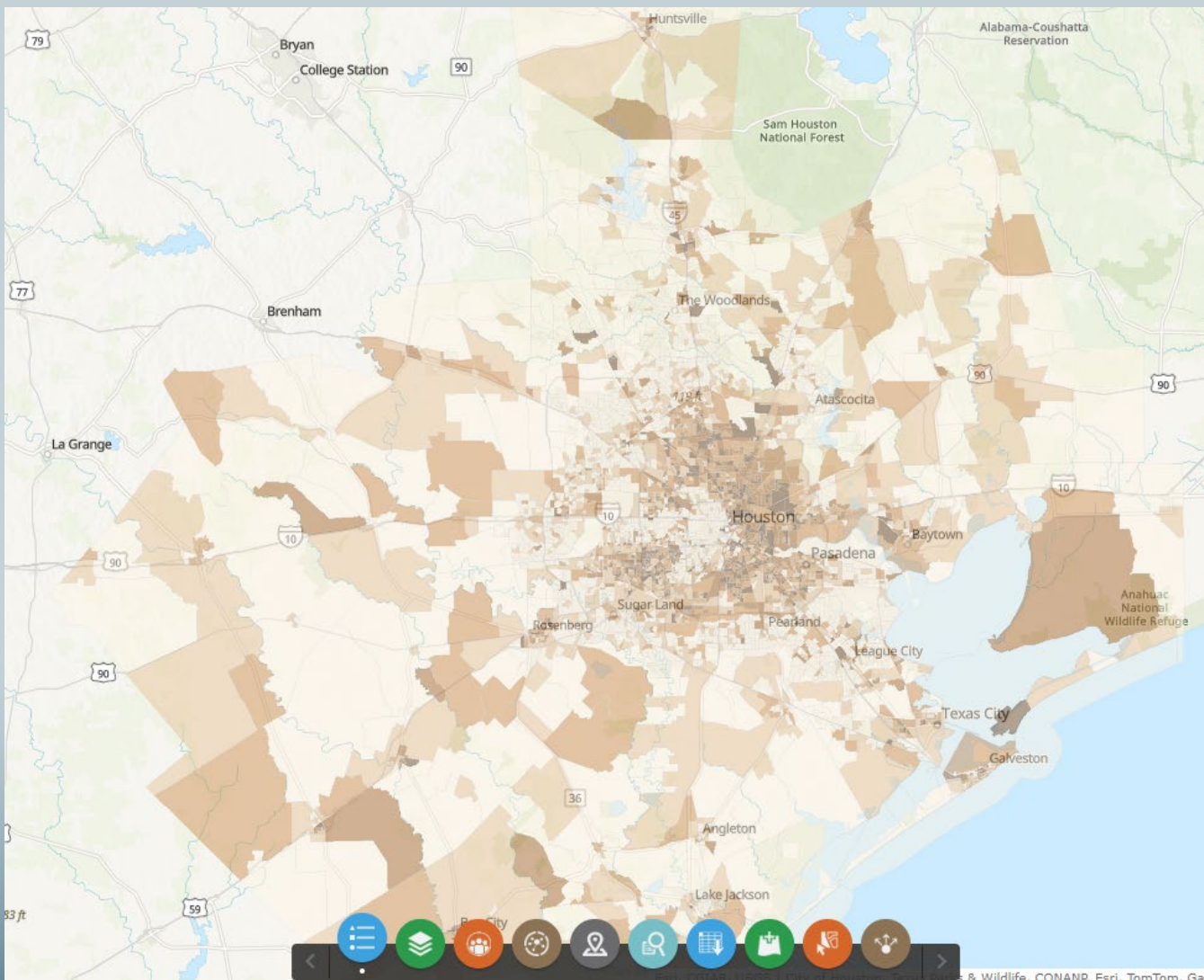
- H-GAC's Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program provides:
 - Homeowner education course provides basic understanding on basic operations and maintenance
 - Assistance to qualifying homeowners to repair or replace malfunctioning or failing on-site sewage facilities (OSSFs).
 - Funding may also be used to provide pump-outs, sludge hauling, etc.
- Eligible homeowners are not charged for any portion of the cost of the project (no homeowner cost share).
- Funds for the program come from private grants and public funding through the Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and other public sources.

Applicant Qualifications

- **Homeowner Wastewater Education Workshop:** the applicant must attend a wastewater education workshop on OSSFs.
- **Ownership & Residence:** the applicant must own and reside in the home (no rental properties, vacation homes, etc.) and must own both the home and the property
- **Eligible Counties:** the applicant must reside in Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, or Wharton County.
- **Combined Household Income:** the income of all members of the household must not exceed 80% of the median income for the county
- **Inspection:** an inspection of the OSSF must be conducted to verify failure or malfunction
- Homeowners may be eligible for funding even if under enforcement action for violation of TCEQ rules (we have multiple funding sources available).

Regional Equity Tool

<https://datalab.h-gac.com/equity/index.html?entry=6>



Vulnerable Population (2022)

Block Group Vulnerability Index (0-100)

- > 80 – 100
- > 60 – 80
- > 40 – 60
- > 20 – 40
- 0 – 20

Vulnerable Population Density

Select a county to filter data:

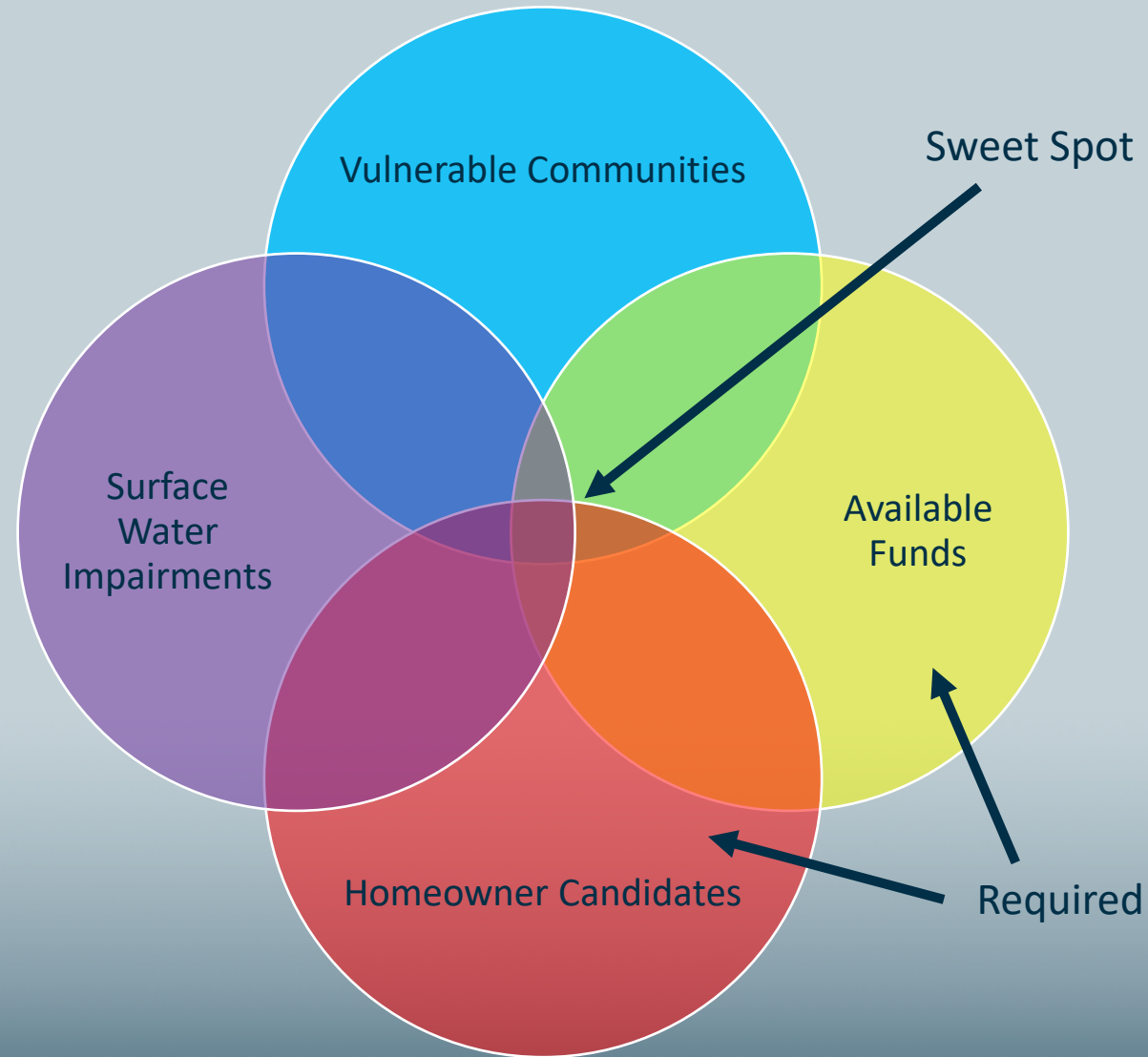
All Counties

- Population Distribution (2022)
- Trends (2012 to 2022)


- Poverty
- Non-Hispanic Non-White
- Hispanic Population
- Limited English Proficiency
- Disabled Family
- Elderly Population
- People with No Cars
- Single Female Householder with Child(ren)

The application displays vulnerable population data in 3-square-mile hexagonal grids, including population distribution for high vulnerable population concentration areas.

Assisting the Communities



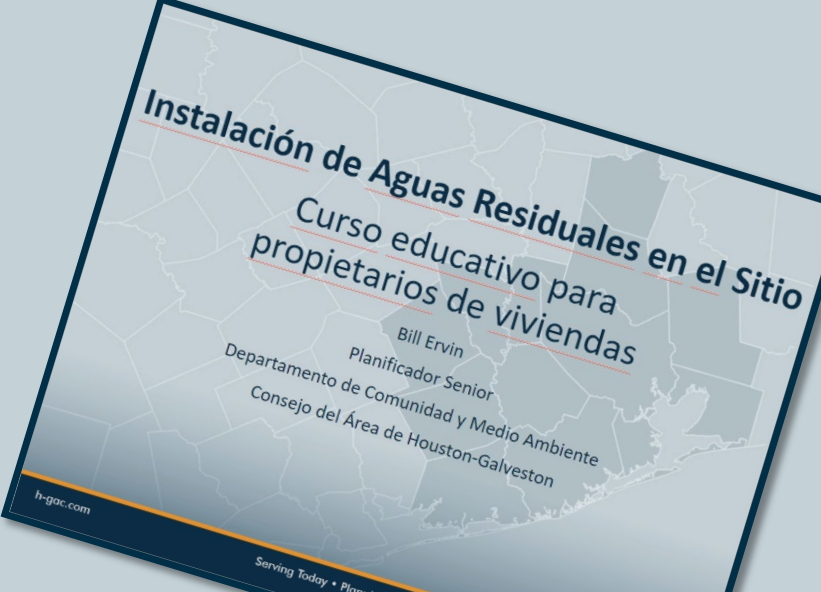
Community Outreach



Houston-Galveston Area Council
Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEP)
Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program

APPLICANTS

- ✓ Program can pay the full cost of repair or replacement of failing systems.
- ✓ No cost sharing by homeowner is required.
- ✓ Applicant must be the homeowner and reside in the home.
- ✓ Applicant must not earn more than 80 percent of the area median income or applicable federal poverty line for the area (determined by funding agency).
- ✓ Homeowners can be eligible for funding even if under enforcement action for violation of TCEQ rules (multiple funding sources are available).



Instalación de Aguas Residuales en el Sitio
Curso educativo para propietarios de viviendas

Bill Ervin
Planificador Senior
Departamento de Comunidad y Medio Ambiente
Consejo del Área de Houston-Galveston

h-gac.com
Serving Today • Planning for Tomorrow



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *Where does the program funding come from?*

A: Funding for this special project comes from a Wells Fargo Community Grant. Funding for the regular Homeowner Wastewater Assistance Program comes from enforcement cases with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Harris County District Attorney's Office.

Q: *What will I learn at the workshop?*

A: The workshop will cover basic components of an on-site sewage facility (conventional septic systems and aerobic systems) and proper maintenance. It does not provide for or allow homeowners to inspect their own systems in place of a maintenance contract.

Q: *Do I need a system pump out?*

A: System pump outs are recommended at regular intervals to properly maintain the system. Your system does not need to be failing to receive a pump out under this project.

Community Outreach

- H-GAC Communications
 - Homeowner Education Course: English and Spanish
 - OSSF Brochures: English, Spanish, Vietnamese (pending)
 - Frequently Asked Questions: English and Spanish
 - Website: <https://www.h-gac.com/on-site-sewage-facilities>
 - E-mail: OSSF@H-GAC.com
- Assistance from third parties:
 - Community Leaders
 - Local Community Groups
 - Regional councils and organizations (United Way, Actions Inc., Meals on Wheels, etc.)
 - Local Churches
 - County Representatives
 - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
 - Other agencies

Bringing it all Together



Resident Feedback

“There are no words to express our gratitude and appreciation for everything that was done to help us. From the beginning, at the meeting, everyone was patient in helping me understand. I got follow up phone calls, and emails keeping us updated throughout the process. The service people who came to our home were prompt, and thorough and explained every detail. This was no small task, and we recognize all of the effort and financial funding that went into this project. Kudos to you, your team! This is something we are beyond grateful for, we are blessed to have crossed paths, we can never repay the financial assistance and kindness.

Please pass along our appreciation and genuine "THANK YOU" to ALL of the people who made this possible!”

Bill Ervin

Senior Planner, Community & Environmental
Houston-Galveston Area Council

Phone: (713) 993-2438

Email: bill.ervin@h-gac.com



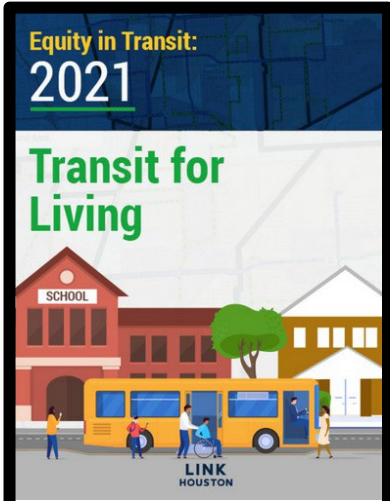
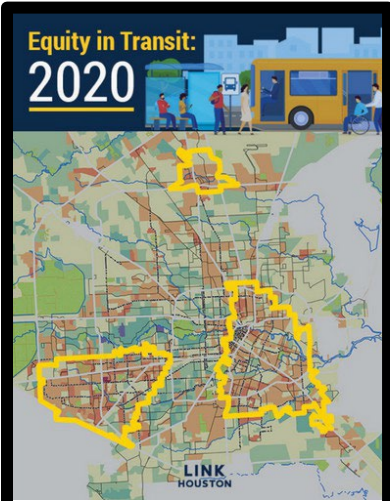
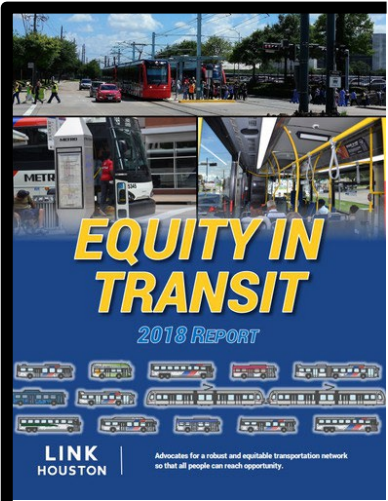
Equity in Transit:

2024

ROUTES
TO
RECOVERY

**LINK
HOUSTON**

The fifth edition of LINK Houston's signature research effort.



Equity in Transit: 2024

Routes to Recovery

Transit in Houston four years from the onset of the pandemic.



Source: TransitCenter

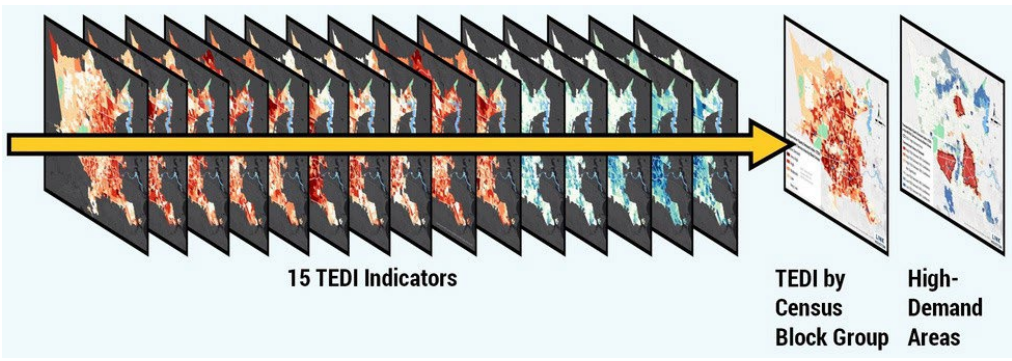


Source: TransitCenter

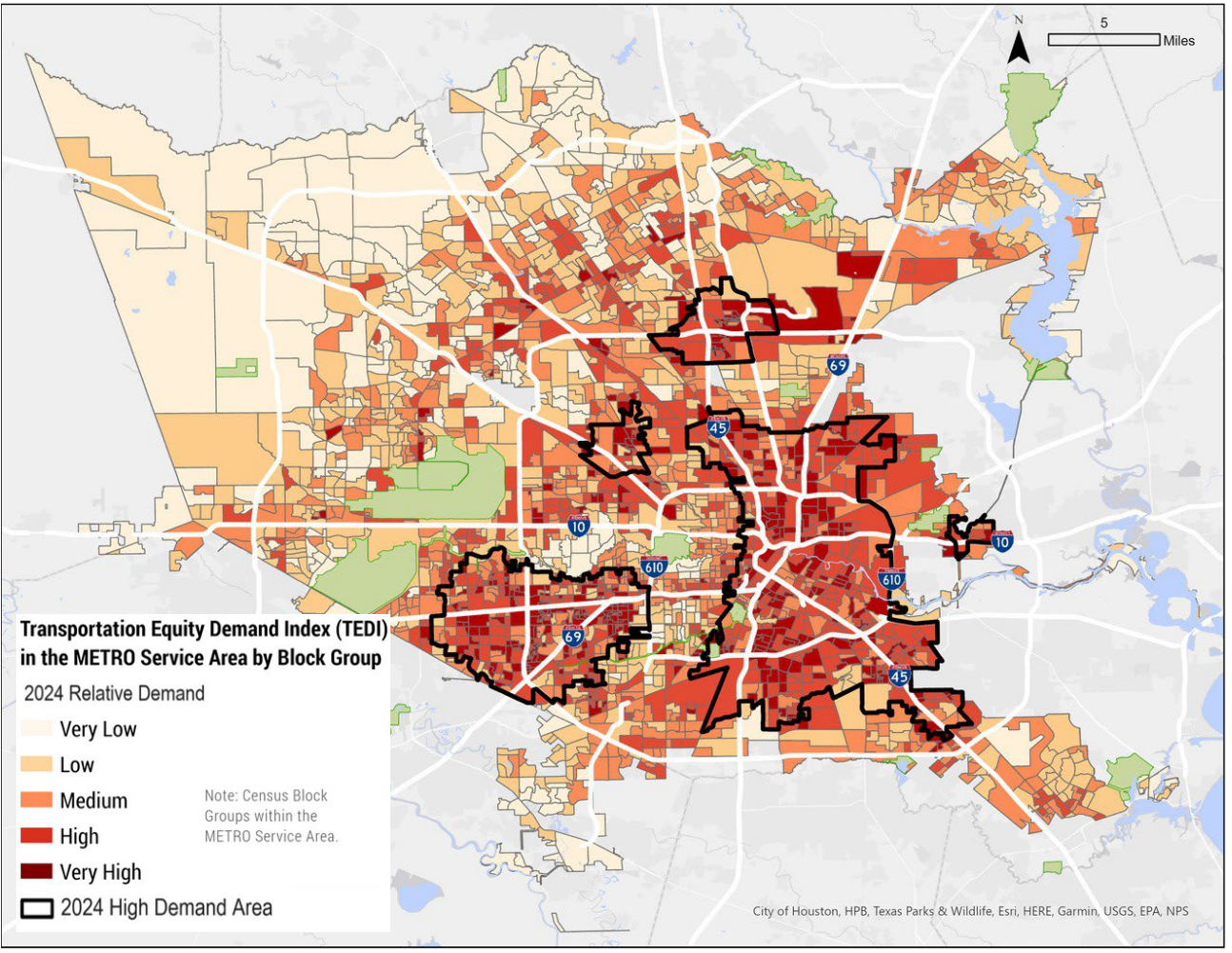


Equity in Transit is fair and just distribution of benefits and burdens of transit services and infrastructure across communities.

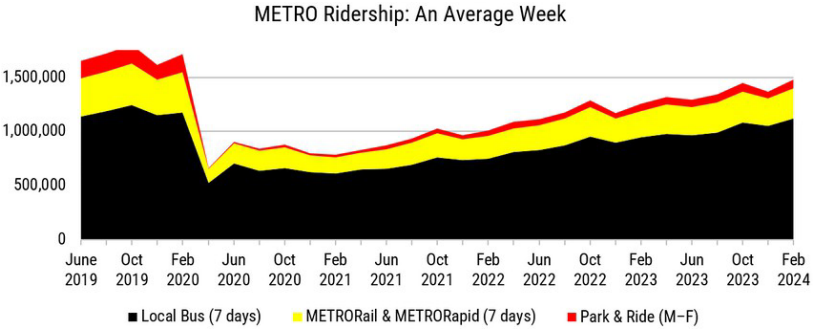
Transportation Equity Demand Index (TEDI)



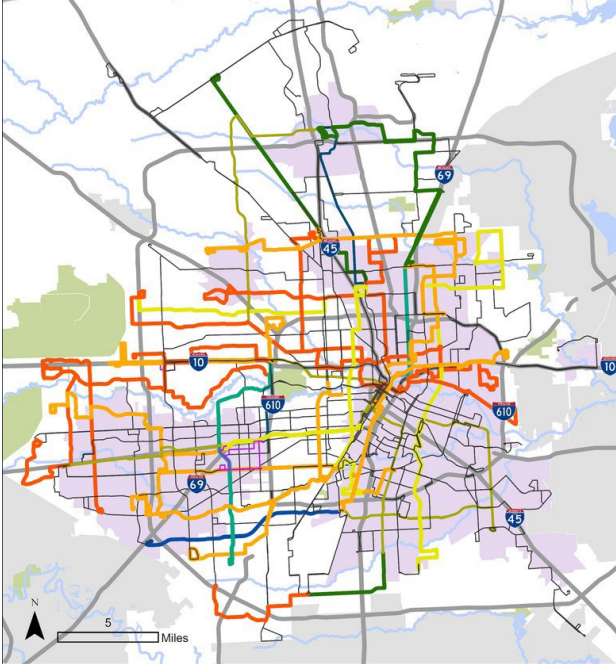
2024 High Demand Areas:
222 square miles
1.2 million people



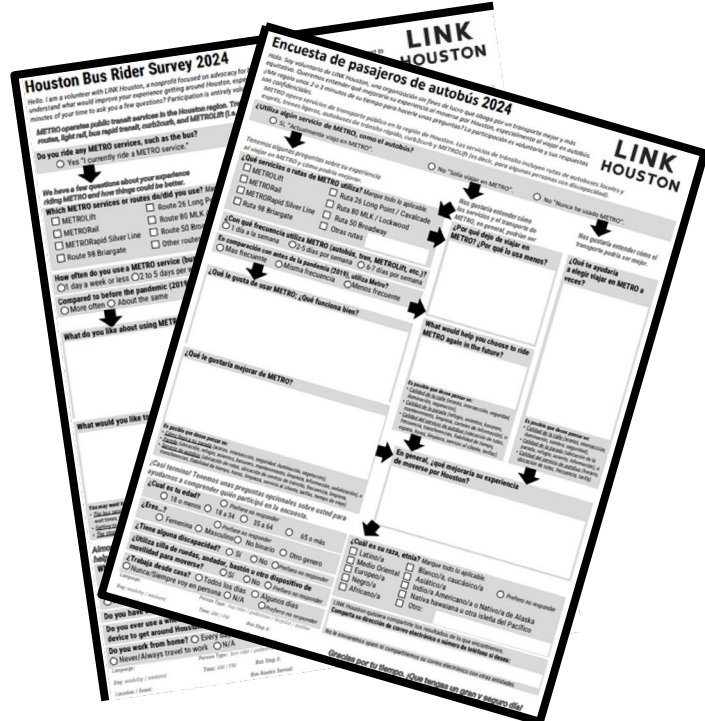
With equity at the forefront, we analyzed:



Ridership



Service

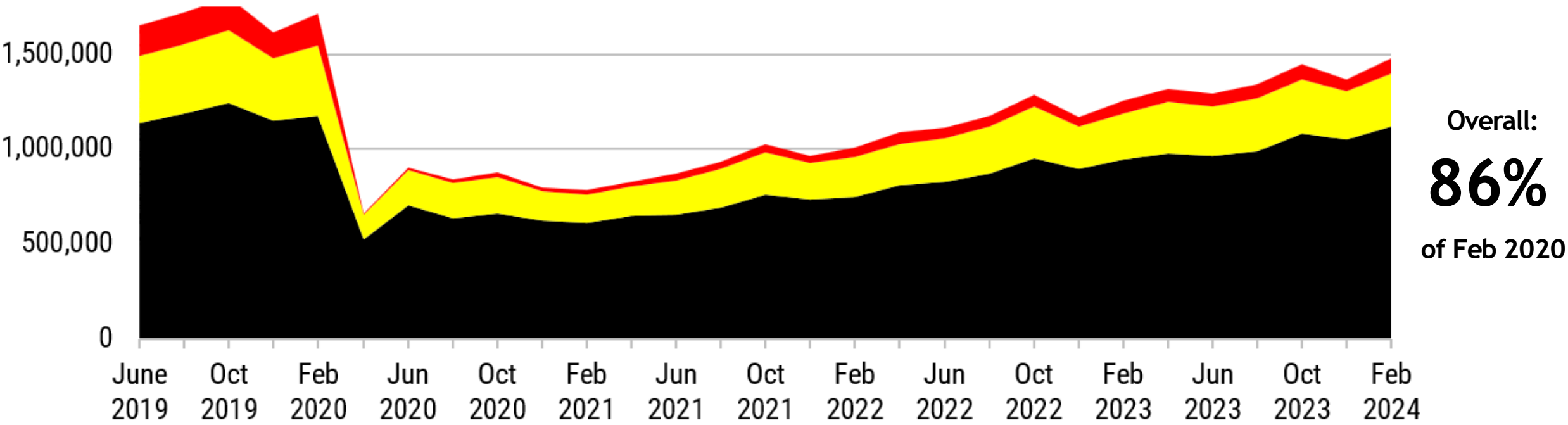


Rider Experiences

...to recommend improvements.



METRO Ridership: An Average Week



Local Bus (7 days)
 METRORail & METRORapid (7 days)
 Park & Ride (M-F)

95%
75%
50%

Houston's transit ridership is the second most recovered among the top 20 metro areas.



Many riders are waiting longer for the bus.

Weekday Rush Hour

31 routes running less frequently

23 in TEDI high demand areas

8 routes running more frequently

11 routes

every

30

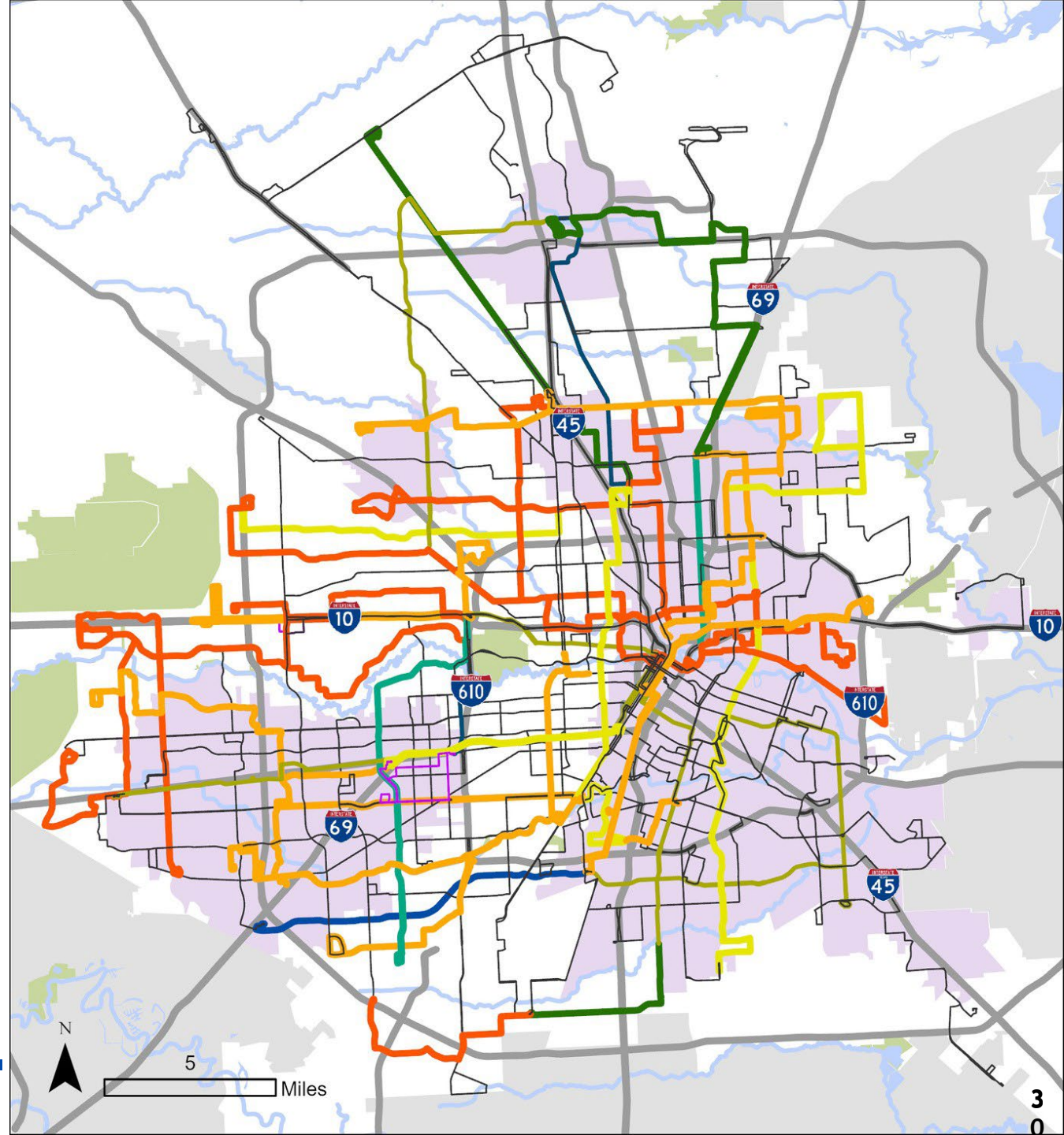
minutes

every

60

minutes

*“The 98 needs more than one bus.
I missed the first one, now I need
to wait an hour.”*



Many riders are waiting longer for the bus.

Weekends

10 routes running less frequently

9 in TEDI high demand areas

8 routes running more frequently

7 routes

every

15

minutes

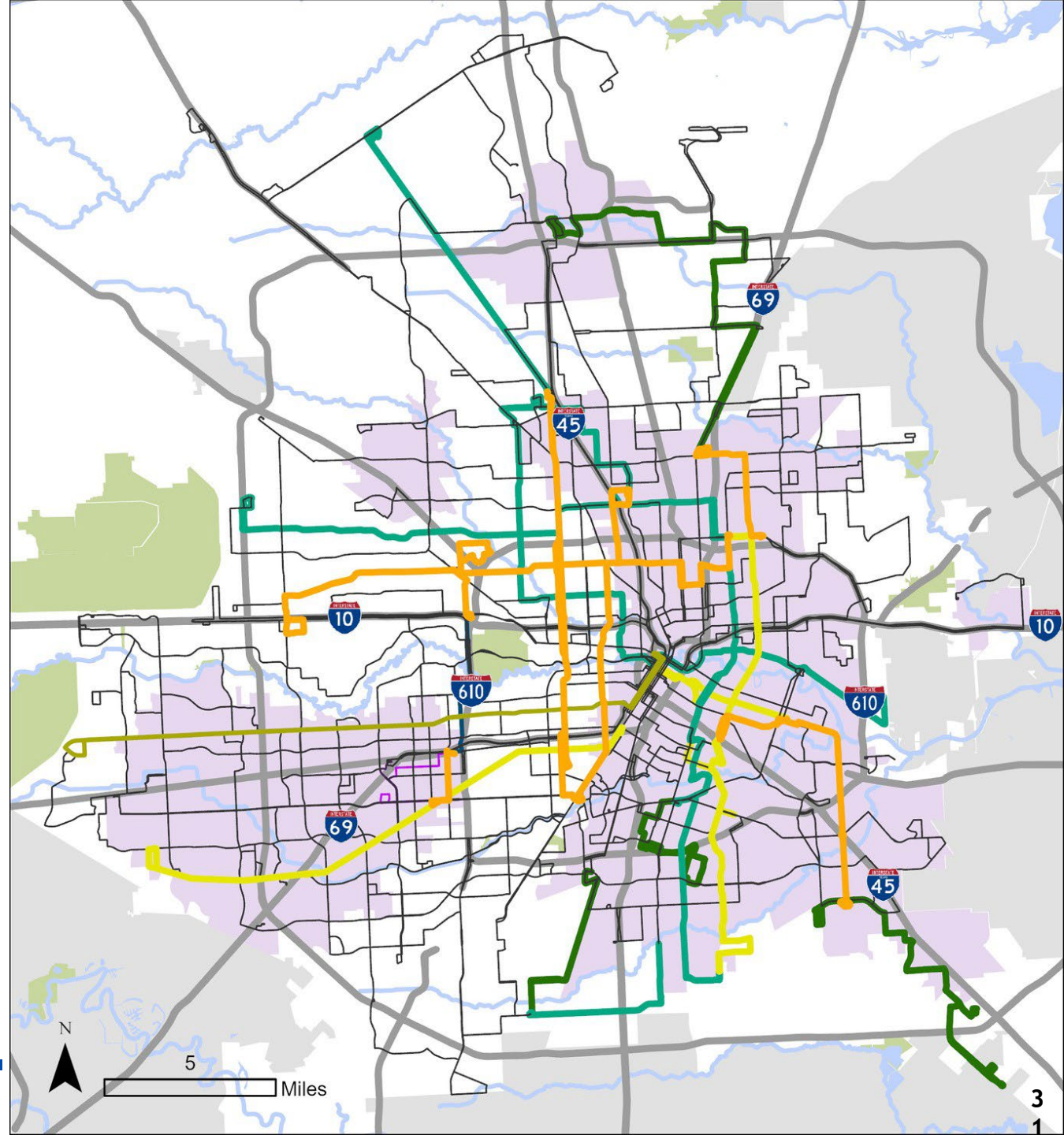
→

every

20-30

minutes

“Some routes don't come as often, especially on weekends, making it harder to plan trips with connections.”

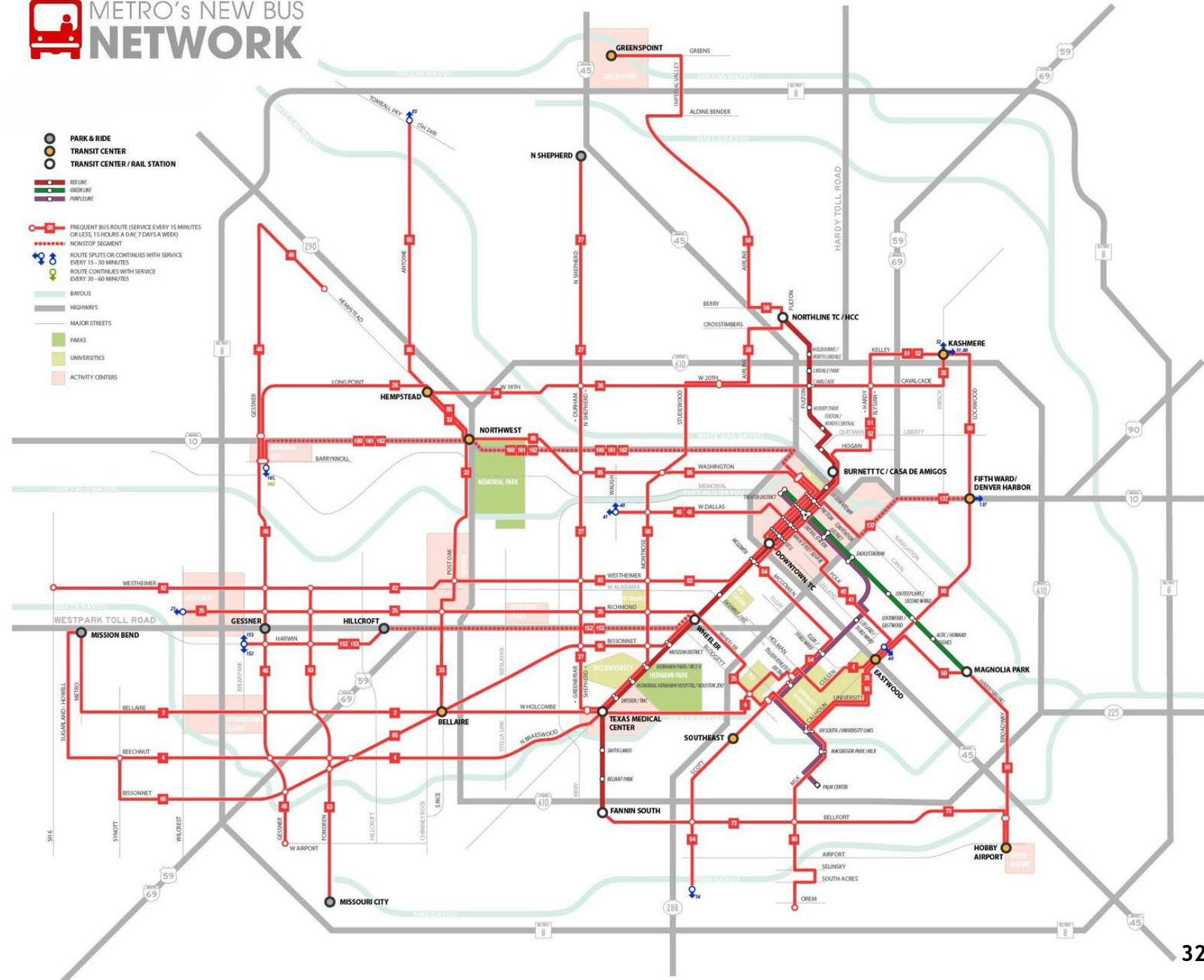


Frequent Network 2020

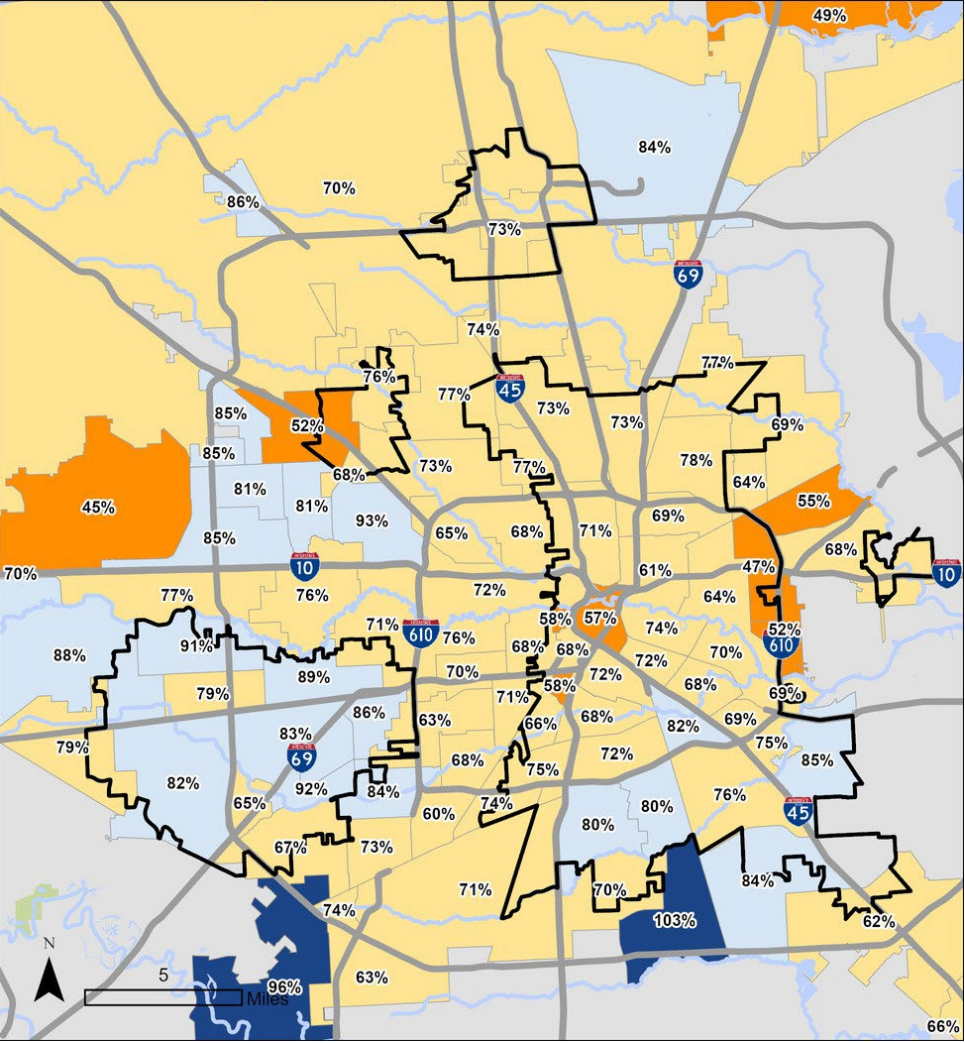
20 local bus
3 light rail



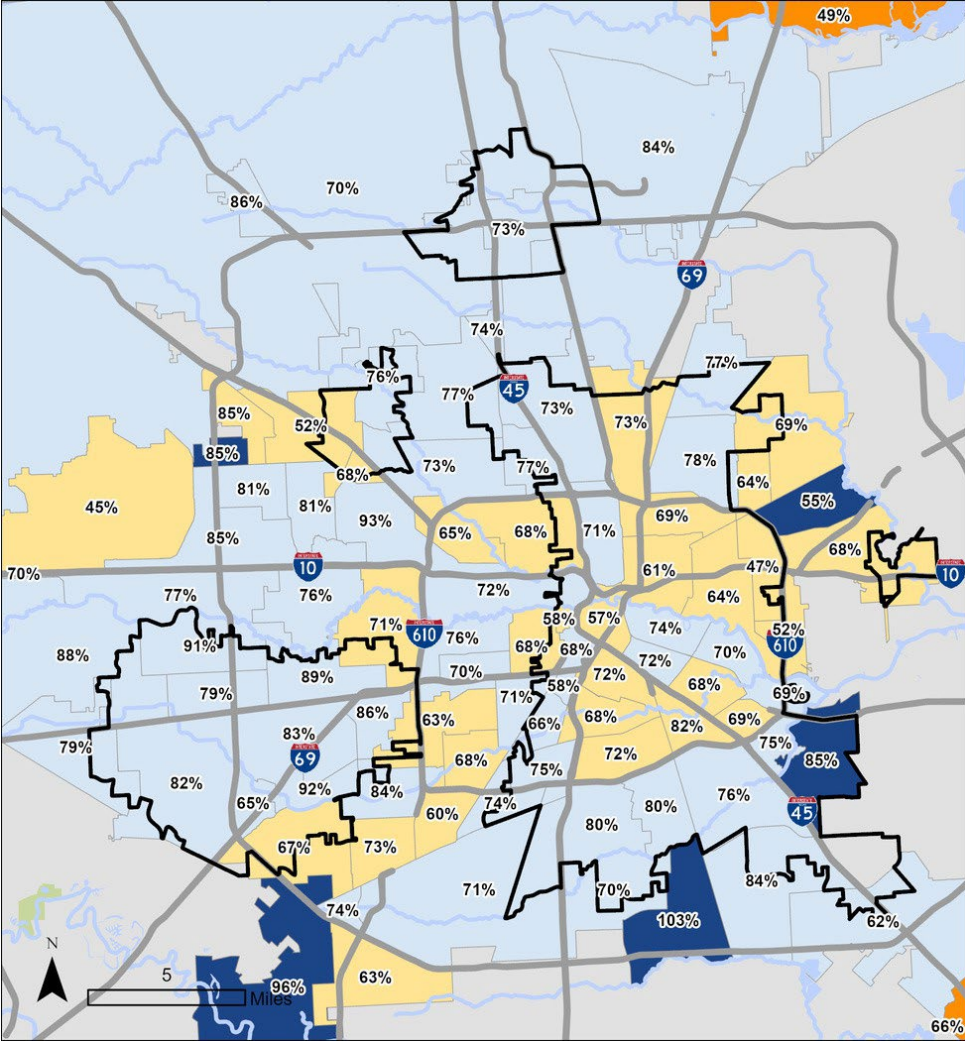
- PARK & RIDE
- TRANSIT CENTER
- TRANSIT CENTER / RAIL STATION
- RED LINE
- GREEN LINE
- PURPLE LINE
- FREQUENT BUS ROUTE (SERVICE EVERY 15 MINUTES OR LESS, 15 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK)
- NONSTOP SEGMENT
- ROUTE SPLITS OR CONTINUES WITH SERVICE EVERY 15-30 MINUTES
- ROUTE CONTINUES WITH SERVICE EVERY 30-60 MINUTES
- BAYOUS
- HIGHWAYS
- MAJOR STREETS
- PARKS
- UNIVERSITIES
- ACTIVITY CENTERS



Ridership has not recovered in all areas of high demand.



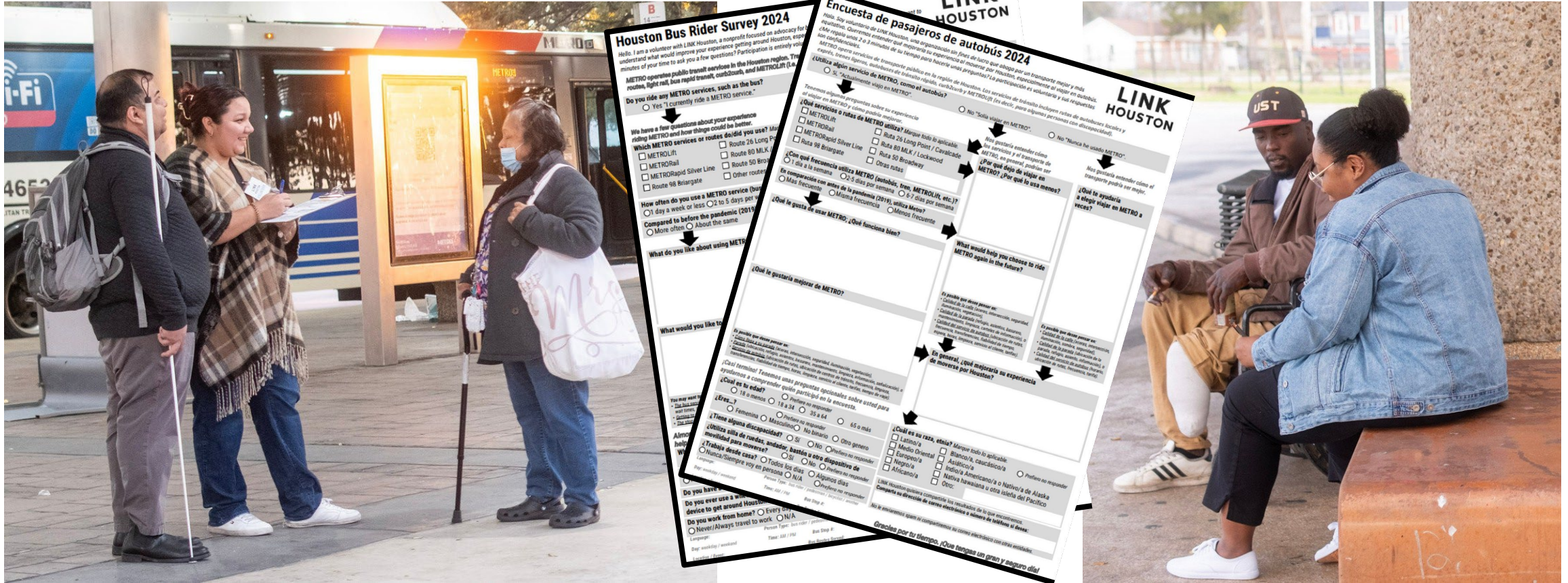
Weekdays



Weekends



What are riders saying?



We spoke with 299 of them.

Where did we survey?

Sample of routes with reduced service since 2020:

26 Long Point / Cavalcade

+15 minutes on weekends

50 Broadway

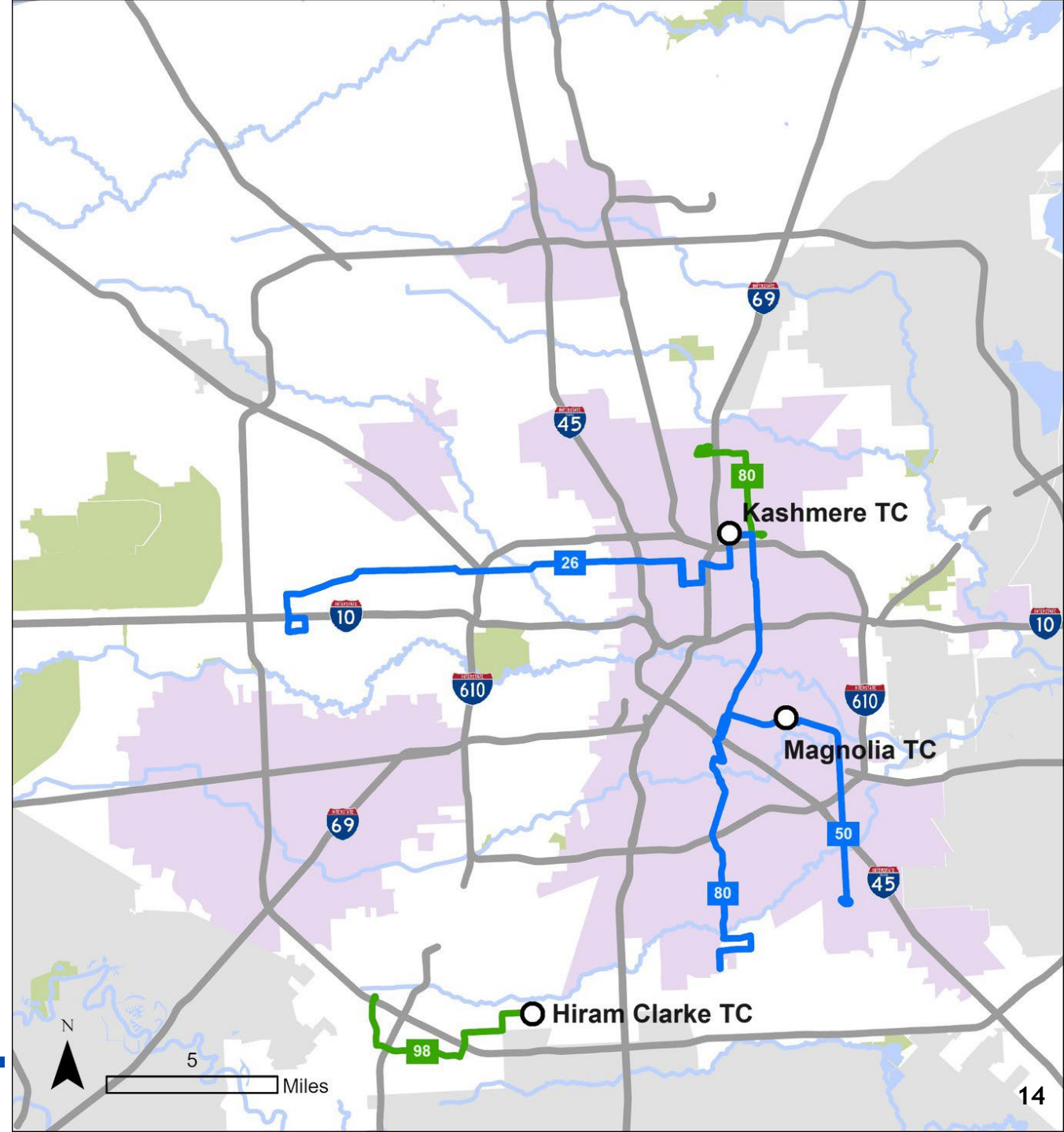
+15 minutes on weekends

80 MLK / Lockwood

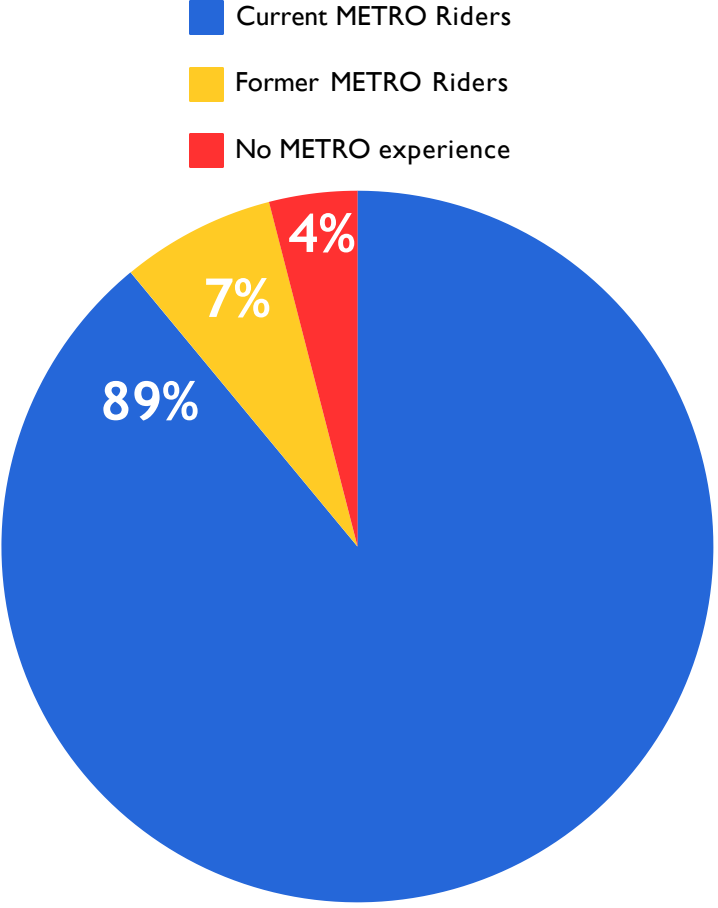
+5-10 minutes on weekdays and weekends

98 Briargate

+30 minutes at weekday rush hour



Who took the survey?



5% <18, 33% 18-34, 52% 35-64, 10% 65+

83% surveyed in English, 17% in Spanish

11% reported a disability

39% Black, 39% Latino/a, 17% White, 2% Asian, 1% 2+ race/ethnicities, <1% American Indian or Alaska Native, <1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

57% male, 42% female, <1% were nonbinary or another gender



Who took the survey?

Of current riders

49% ride METRO 6-7 times per week

37% ride 2-5 times per week

14% ride 1 day per week or less

49% are riding about as often as before the pandemic

41% are riding more often than before the pandemic

10% are riding less often than before the pandemic

Of all people surveyed

- 58% never work from home, always travel to work
- 20% retired or not currently working
- 16% work from home a few days a week
- 6% work from home almost every day

How can METRO improve? Riders share their thoughts.

Make wait times shorter (38% of responses)

"The 98 runs every hour or longer. It would be better if it was more frequent."

"The 26 is supposed to run every 15 but doesn't come that often."

"The 50 was more frequent before [COVID-19 Pandemic]."

"METRO's frequent routes are super useful. Routes running under 15 minutes allow me to get where I need to go easily, even with a transfer."

52% of those riding less often mentioned frequency as a factor.



How can METRO improve? Riders share their thoughts.



Make wait times more consistent and accurate (22%)

“The routes generally make sense, but it's hard to count on regularly spaced arrivals.”

Make transit safer and more comfortable (17%)

“I have walked 20 minutes to not have to wait for the bus alone for a long time in the transit center.”

Make it easier to access transit (15%)

“A lot of streets in the city and outskirts don't have sidewalks.”

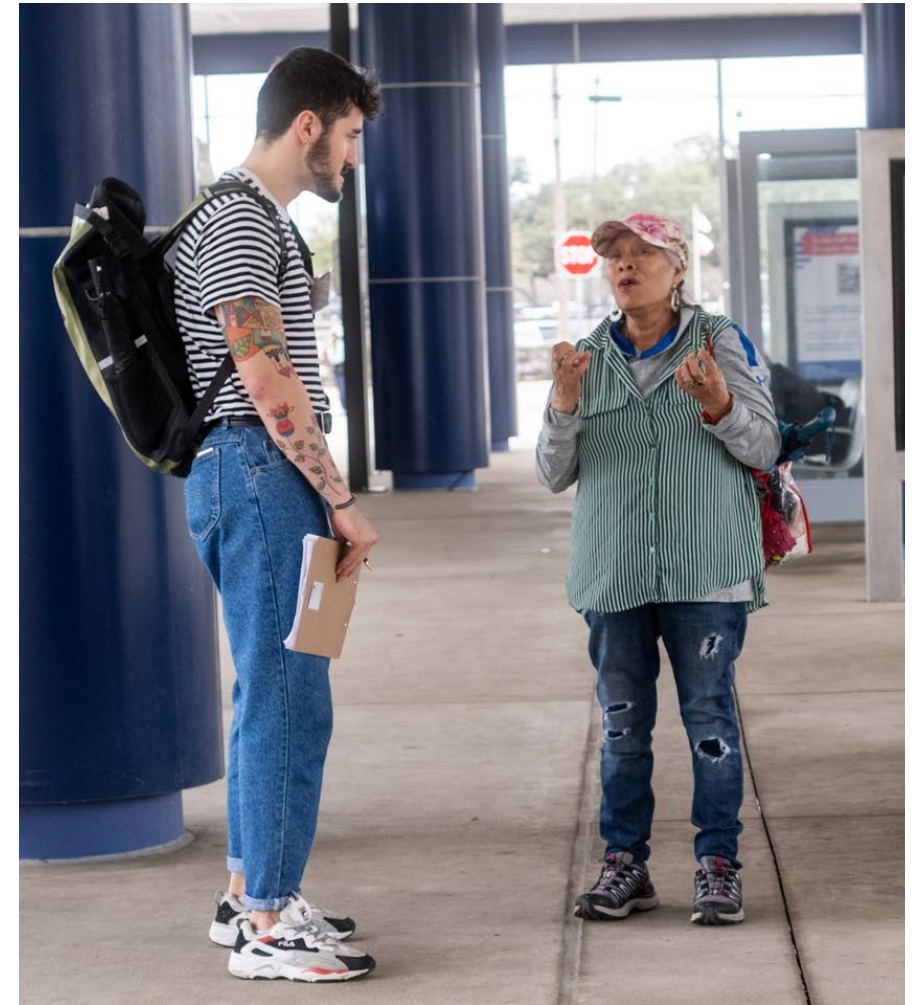
Bring high-quality service to more communities (16%)

“More trains, more bus lanes so they don't get stuck in traffic.”

Keep transit affordable (7%)

“\$1.25 there and back, can't beat that!”

EIT 2024 is only possible because of all the riders who shared their experiences with us and our volunteers who helped interview them.



RECOMMENDATIONS

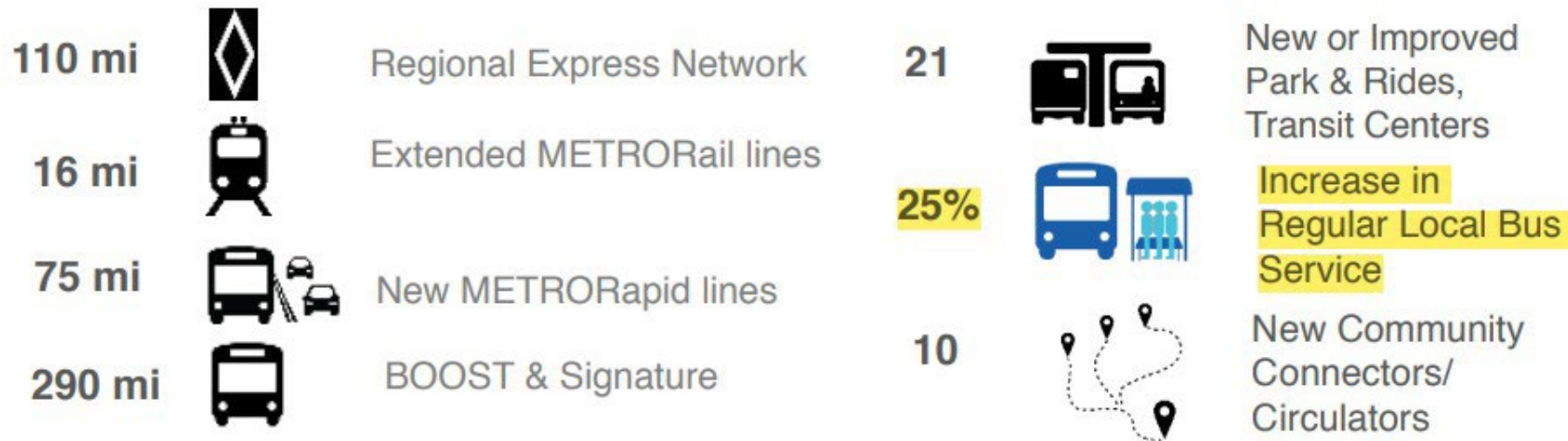
Fundamentals of Great Transit

- ✓ Frequency ✓ Reliability ✓ Span of Service ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Stops & Stations ✓ Network Coverage ✓ Customer Service & Safety

Re-affirm METRO's commitment to increase service by 25% above pre-pandemic levels.

✓ Frequency (#1 Priority) ✓ Span of Service ✓ Network Coverage

METRONEXT MOVING FORWARD PLAN INVESTMENTS



**Focus first
on weekends
and rush hour.**

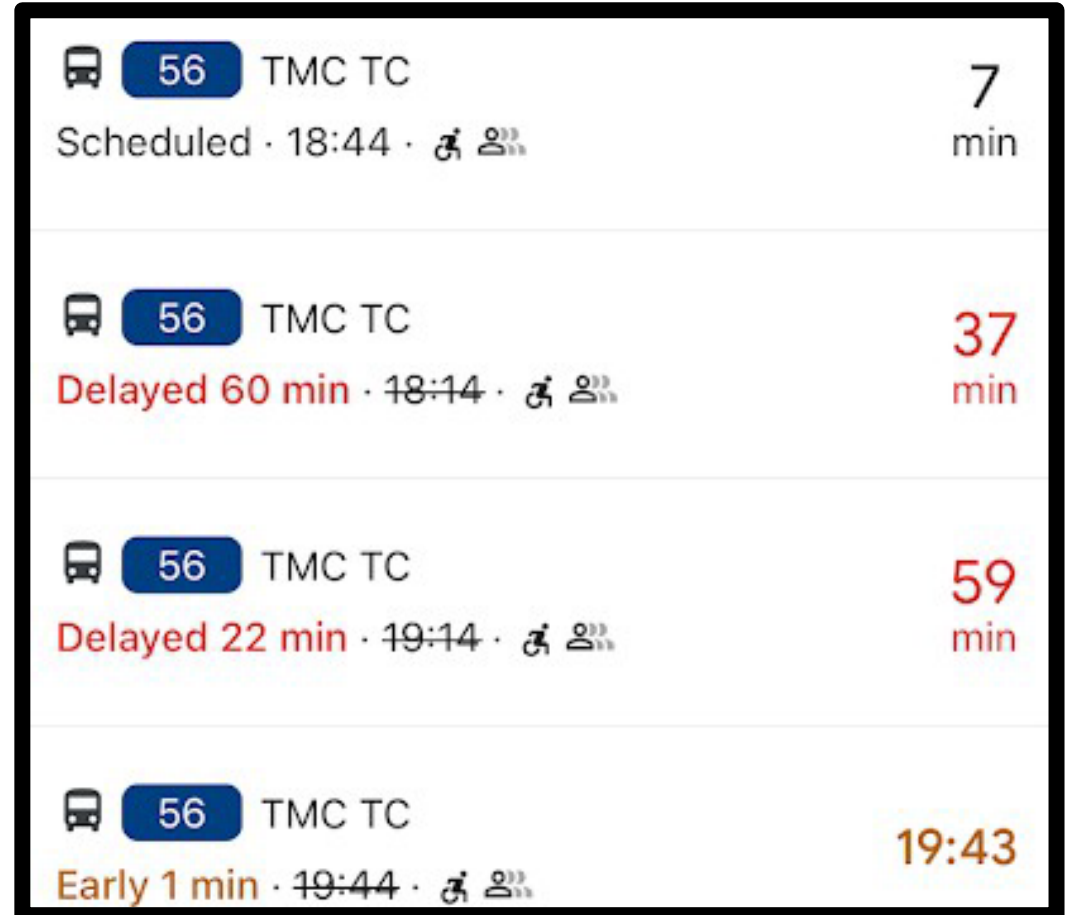
Ensure all on-time performance data is publicly available.









✓ Reliability

End “Ghost Bus” phenomenon

Establish goal for accurately tracked buses

Publish all monthly on-time performance data



 56 TMC TC	7 min
Scheduled · 18:44 · 	
 56 TMC TC	37 min
Delayed 60 min · 18:14 · 	
 56 TMC TC	59 min
Delayed 22 min · 19:14 · 	
 56 TMC TC	19:43
Early 1 min · 19:44 · 	

Take a comprehensive approach towards rider safety.

✓ Customer Service & Safety

Consider augmenting METRO PD with customer service and safety staff

Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design methods

Meaningfully engage riders on solutions



LA Metro Ambassadors

Work with partners to improve stops, sidewalks, and crosswalks.

✓ Accessibility ✓ Stops & Stations

City of Houston

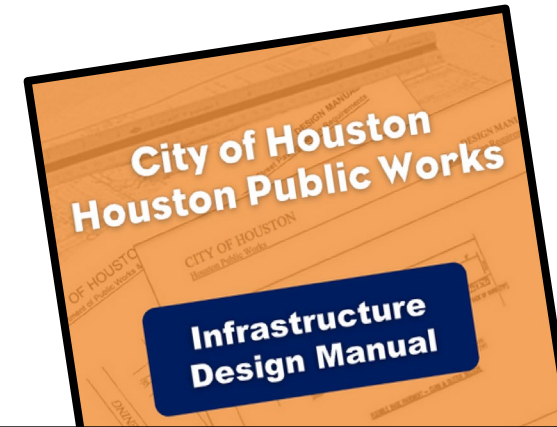
Harris County

Texas Department of Transportation

Management Districts and TIRZs

Private Development

...all have a role to play.

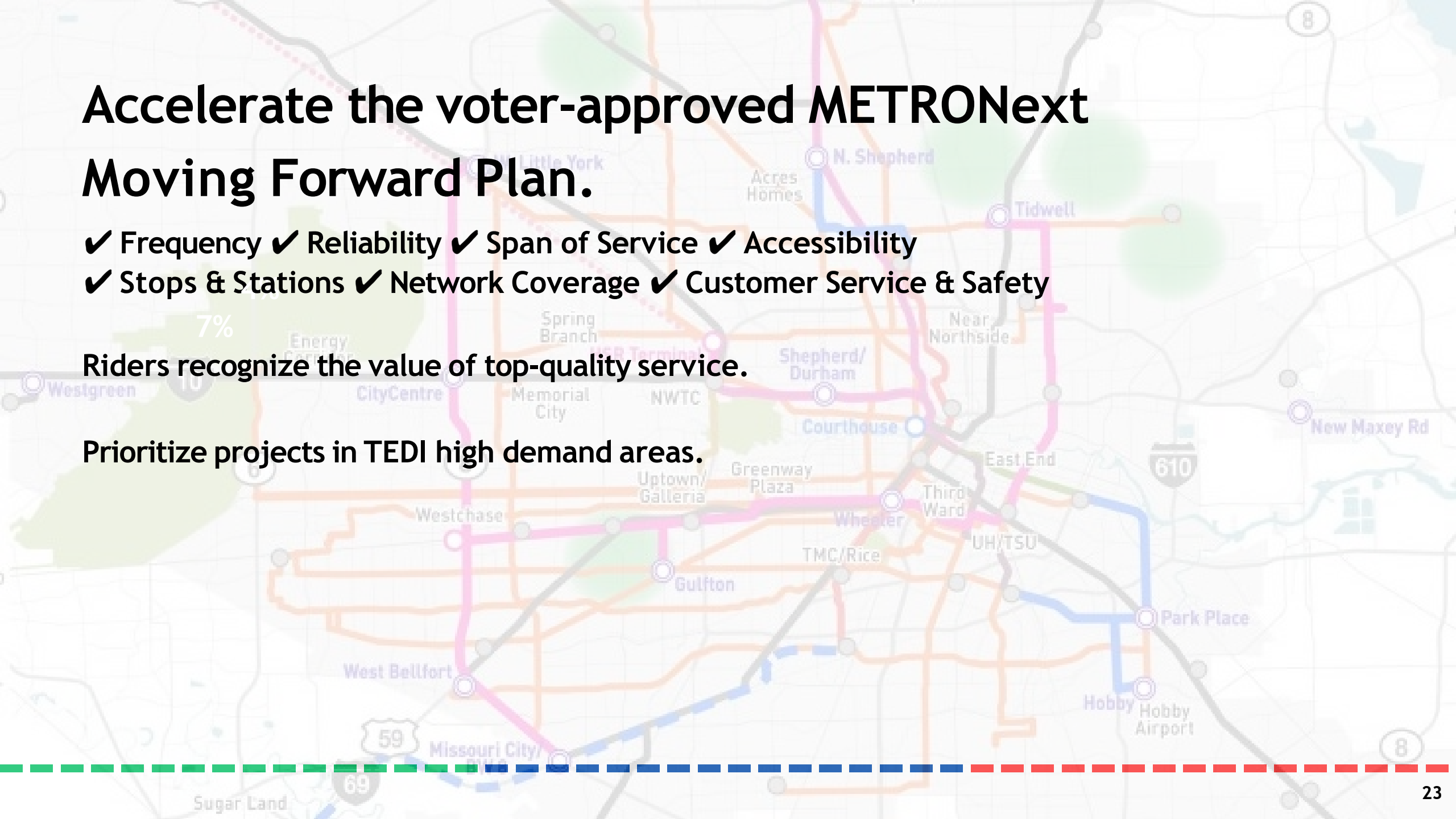


Accelerate the voter-approved METRONext Moving Forward Plan.

- ✓ Frequency
- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Span of Service
- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Stops & Stations
- ✓ Network Coverage
- ✓ Customer Service & Safety

Riders recognize the value of top-quality service.

Prioritize projects in TEDI high demand areas.



Lessons Learned!

Meet riders where they are.

Couple data with real-life experiences.

Turn best practices into specific recommendations.



THANK YOU!

from all of us at
LINK Houston
info@linkhouston.org

Q&A



The Next Generation of Planning & Place-Based Community Development

September 19, 2024



LSC HOUSTON

tei
Planning + Design

Speakers



Rushka Tcholakova

Director, Community Programs

LSC HOUSTON



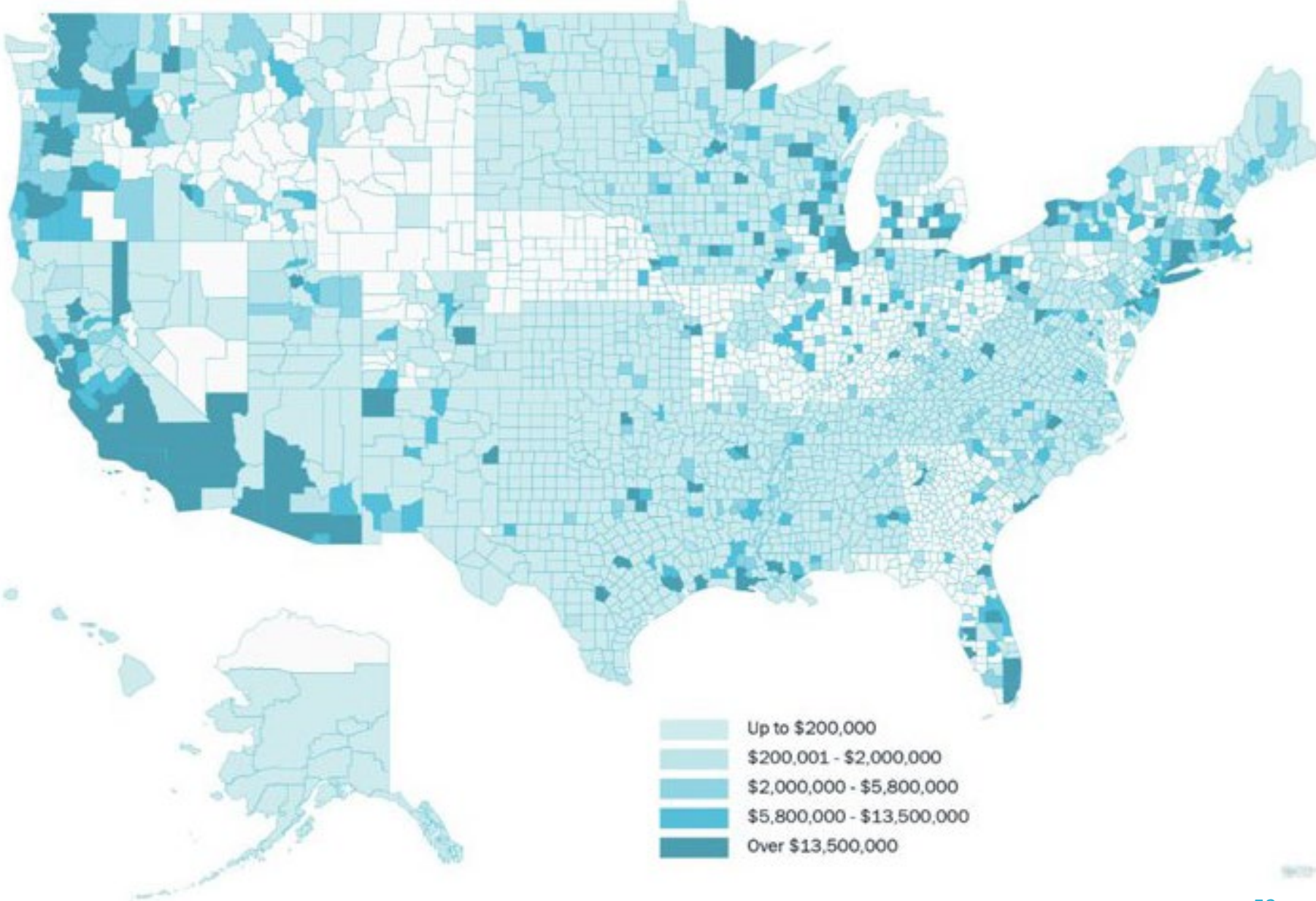
Chelsea Young

Principal



ONE LISC

We serve as an intermediary and build bridges between the community and our partner organizations, funders, local offices & government entities.



Houston LISC: Since 1989

\$592million invested



\$1.5 billion leveraged



More than 11,000 homes

Affordable homes built and/or preserved including:

- Multifamily rental
- Supportive housing for special populations such as chronically homeless, LGBTQ, seniors and veterans
- Affordable homeownership

We also emphasize sustainability through green, healthy housing and transit oriented development.

2 million square feet

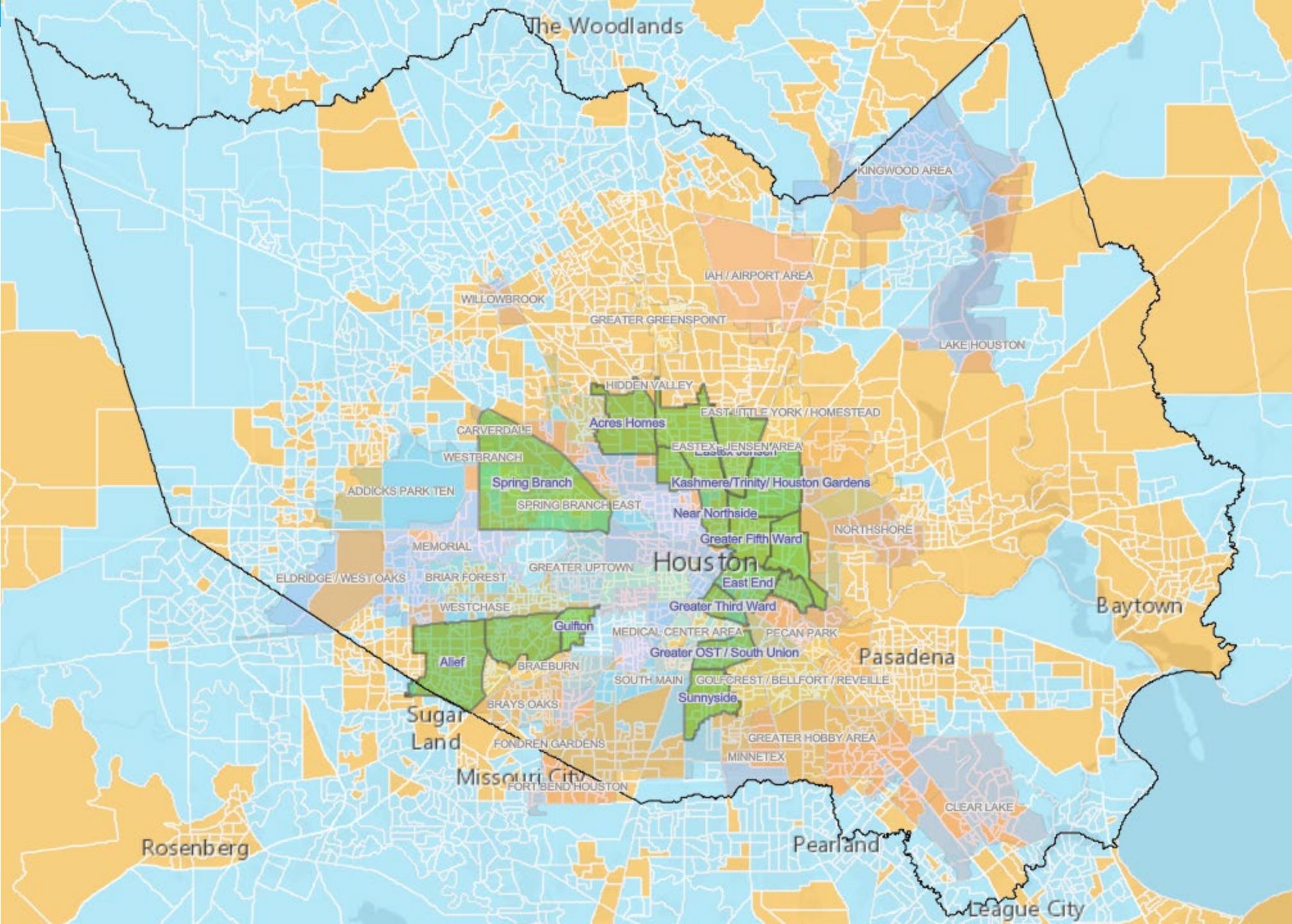
Square feet of commercial, retail and community space, including:

- Early childhood centers
- Schools
- Fields/recreational spaces
- Healthcare centers
- Food Bank
- Financial Opportunity Centers

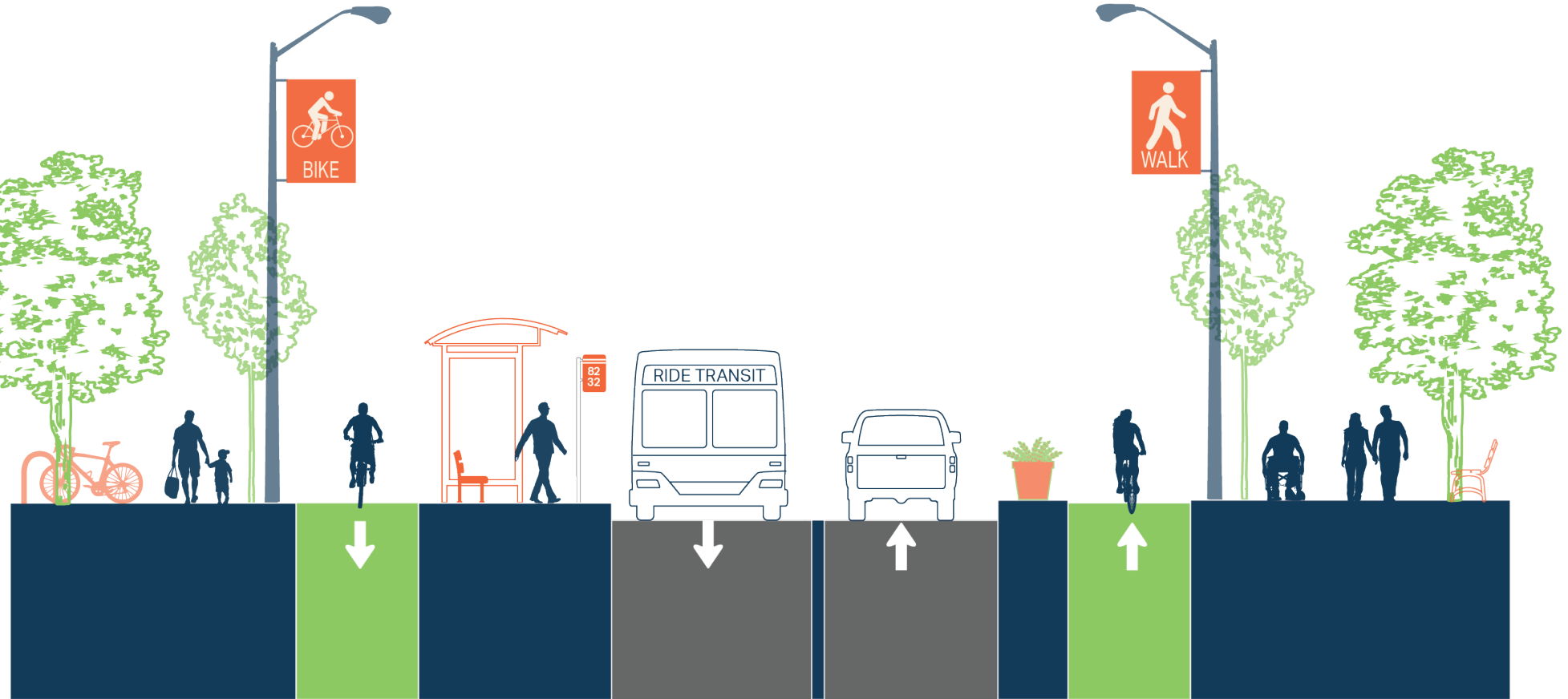
OUR WORK



OUR FOOTPRINT



TEI Planning + Design – Houston, TX



Ice Breaker



At your table, come to a consensus on

What's the biggest urban planning challenge we'll face in the next 10 years?



Report Out



When Planning Doesn't Go as Planned...

What could have been done differently?



Ashby High-Rise (Boulevard Oaks)



1-45 Expansion



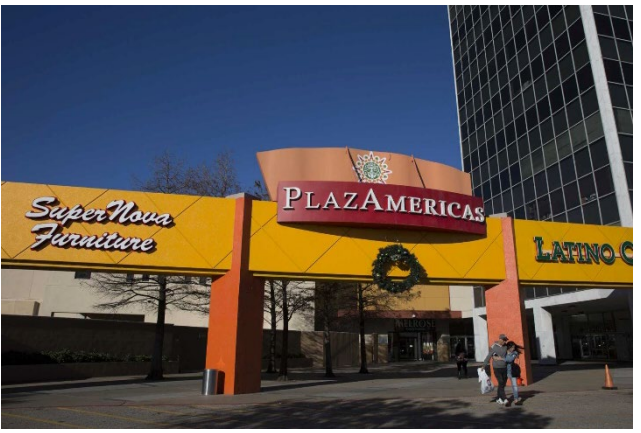
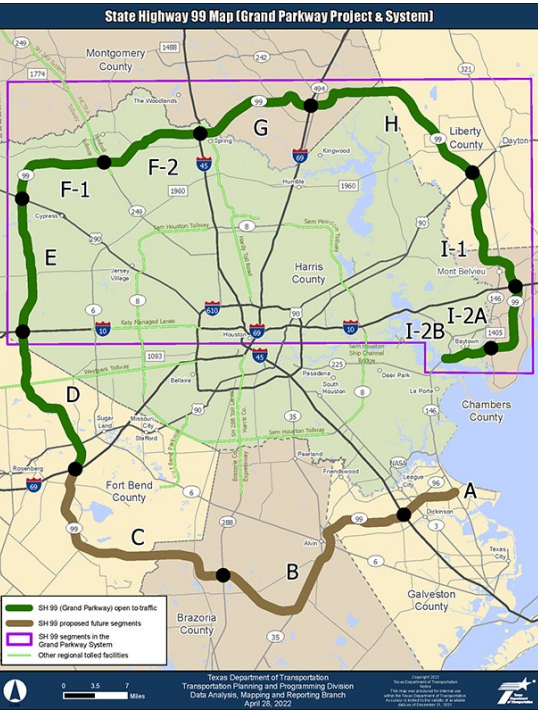
Hardy Yards Redevelopment



Buffalo Bayou Park Development



The Aftermath...



Katy Freeway Expansion (I-10)

The Astrodome

The Grand Parkway (SH-99)

Sharpstown Mall

CAR
DEPENDENCY

LONG TERM
PLANNING

URBAN SPRAWL

ADAPTABILITY

Common Themes

- Community Engagement
- Community Ownership
- Community Buy - In



Decisions are Made in Industry Silos

Decisions Don't Address Surrounding Community Needs and Social Equity



Lack Long Term Considerations

Lack Consumer Behavior



Consequences

Missed Holistic Economic Development Opportunity



Gentrification & Displacement



Loss of Culture & History



Over or Under Development



So, What's the Solution?



Build bigger, cross-industry roundtables

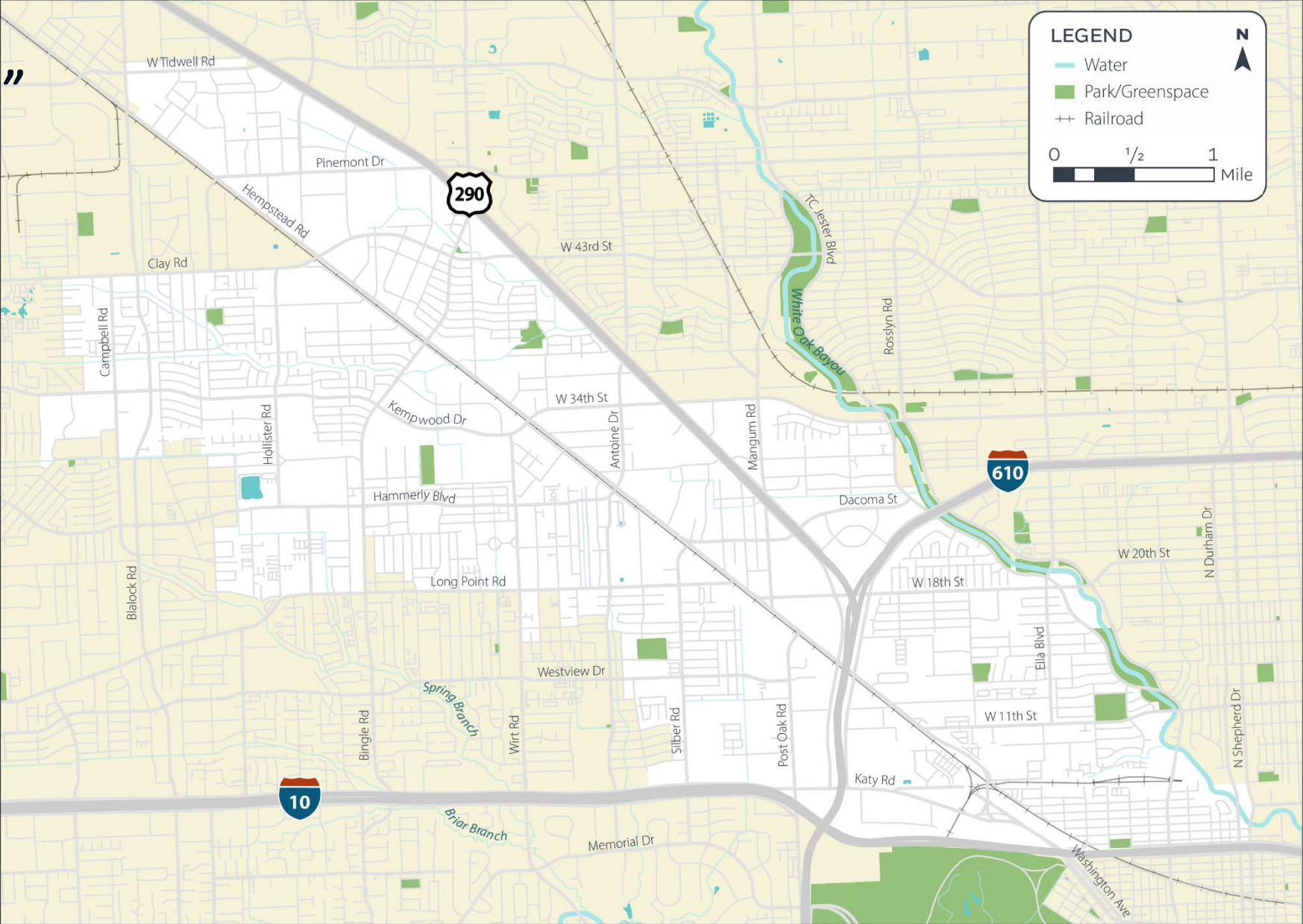
Engage community for long-term community ownership not just feedback/opinion

New Approach - “All in 4 Inner Northwest” A Precinct 4 Community Plan



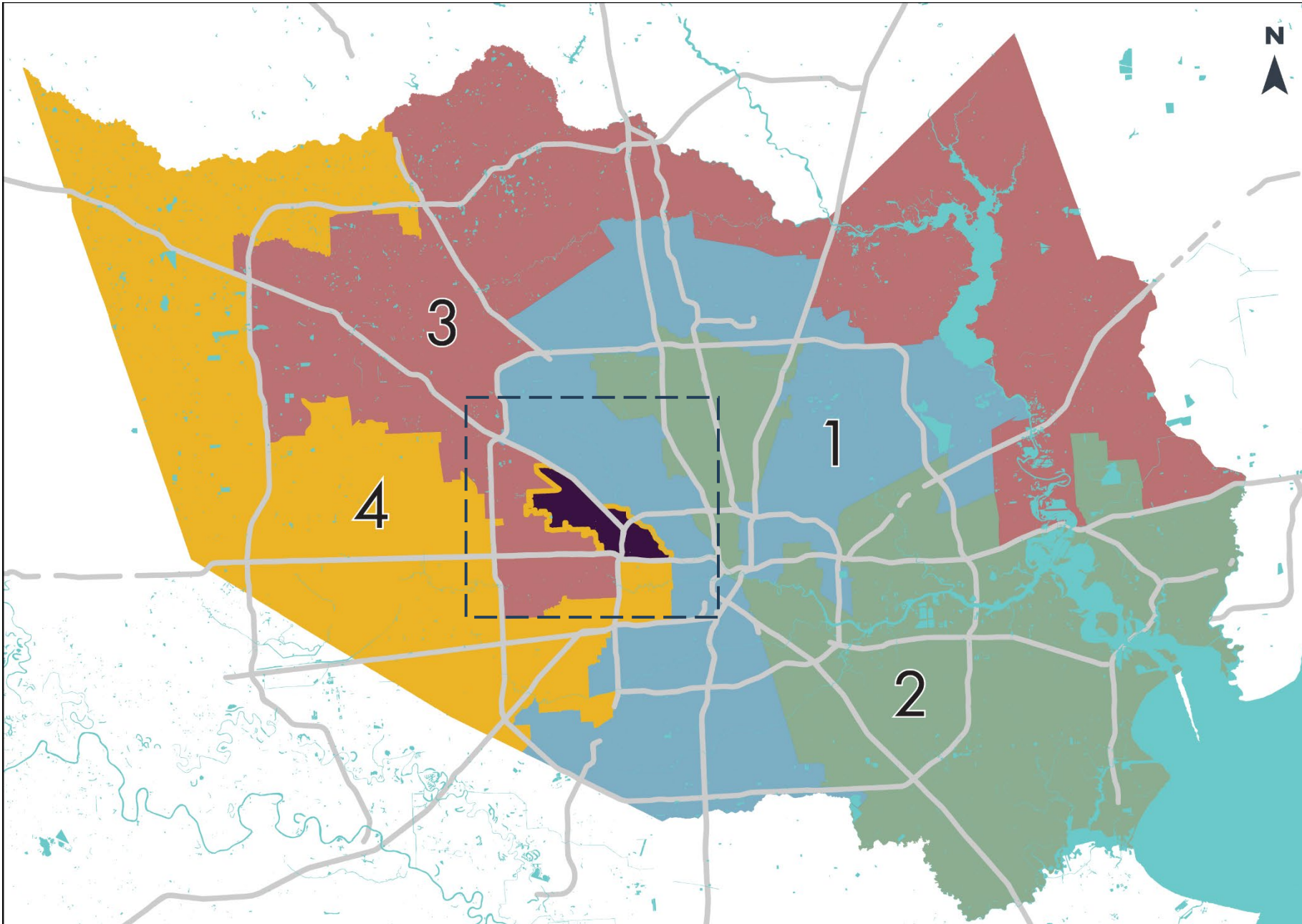
HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 4
**COMMISSIONER
LESLEY BRIONES**

**Government
Planning & Engineering
Community Development**



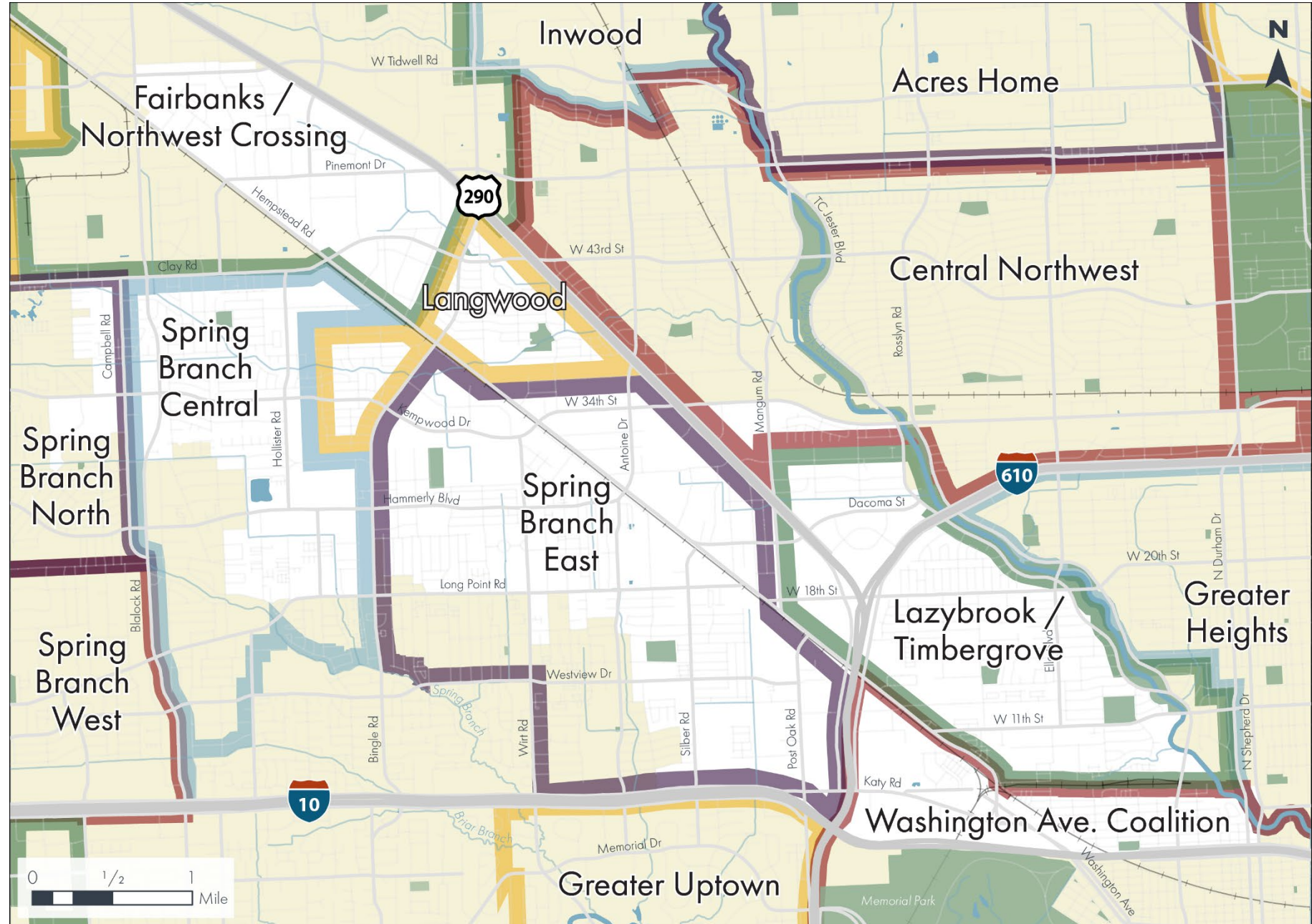
Context

Harris County, TX 4 Precincts



Context

- Multiple Zip Codes
- Multiple Super Neighborhoods
- Two City Council Districts
- Two Management Districts
- Three TIRZs

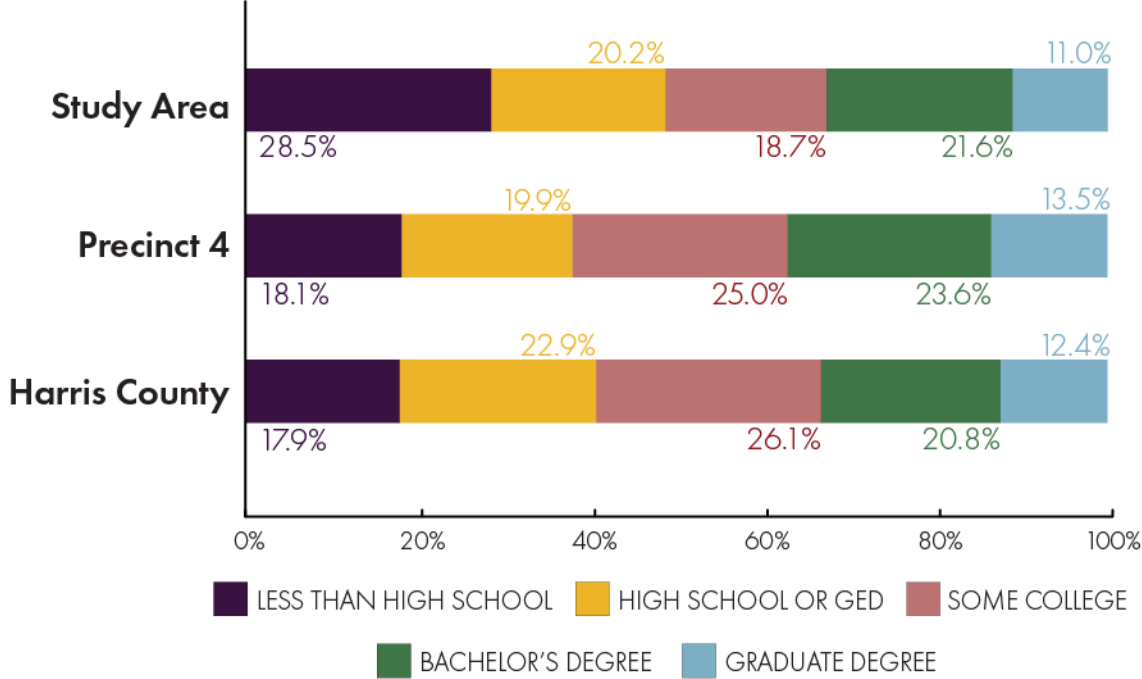


Context

Population and Households

	TOTAL POPULATION	TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLDS	HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY
Study Area	79,032	29,863	78,618	18.6%
Precinct 4	1,178,500	437,075	1,173,913	14.9%
Harris County	4,726,177	1,692,896	4,681,090	14.4%

Education



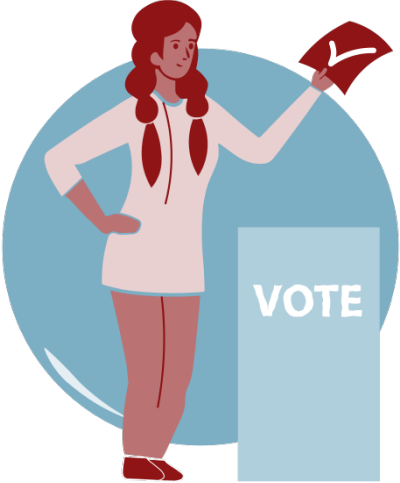
P4 Policy Priority Areas



Infrastructure & Sustainability



Health



Good Government



Education & Economic Opportunity



Justice & Safety



Hopeful Outcomes

All in 4 Inner Northwest Community Plan

Actionable

- **Projects**
- **Policies**
- **Programs**

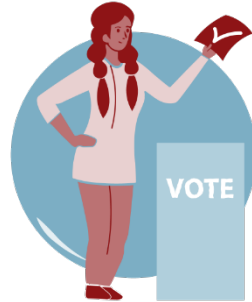
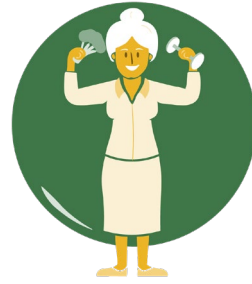
Within 1-3 years

Up to 5 years

Up to 10 years

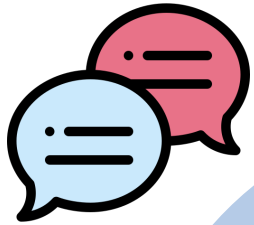


HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 4
COMMISSIONER
LESLEY BRIONES



LISC's Role

Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Community Development

Developing the Capacity of Local Community Groups

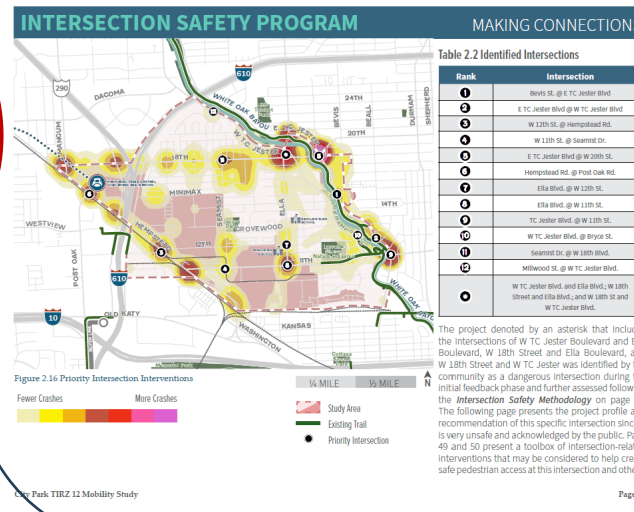
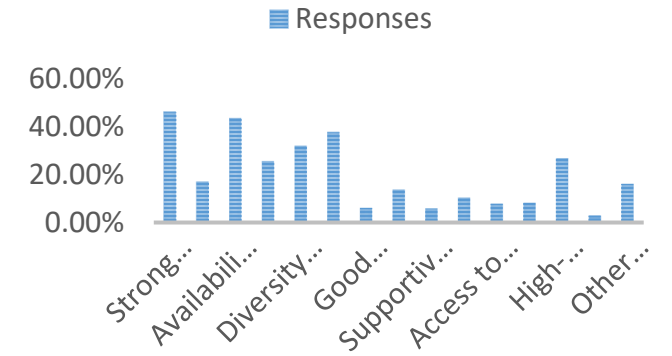
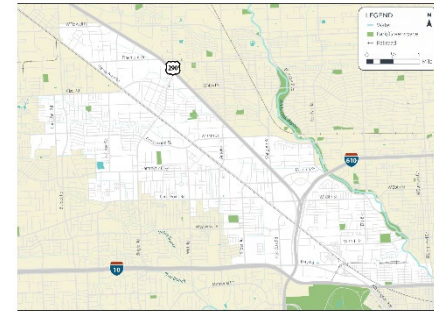
Supporting the Development of Healthy, Safe, and Sustainable Communities



Empowering Groups and Individuals



TEI's Role

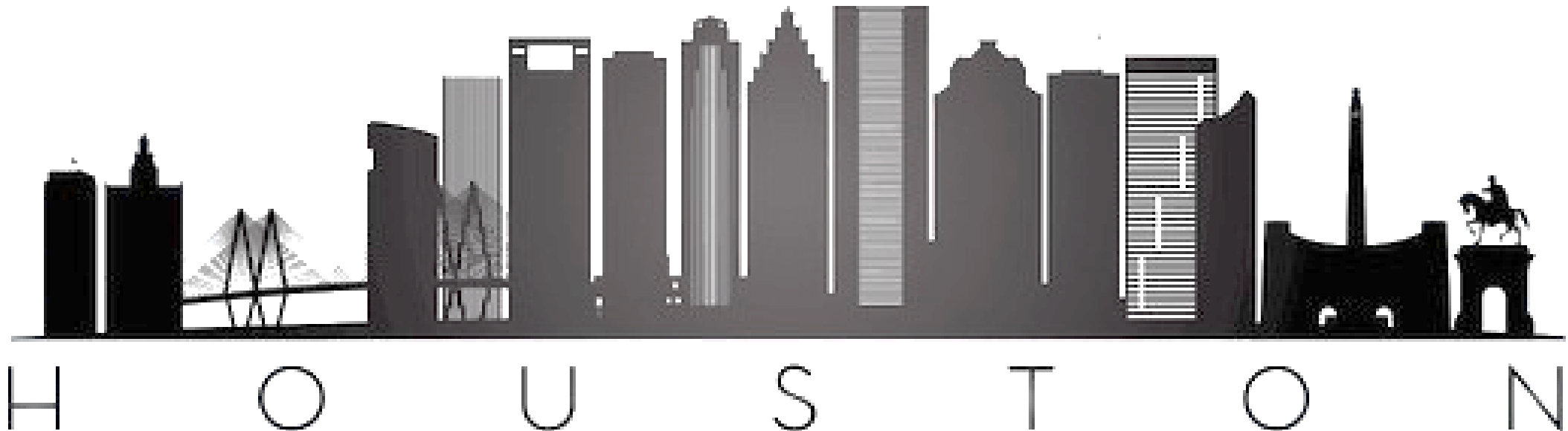


LSC HOUSTON



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Principal
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October Bringing Back Mainstreet

Next month, H-GAC will publish an on-demand recorded conversation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in place of our October Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable or Rural and Small Town Downtown Revitalization Summit.

The conversation will focus on ways downtowns can work with TxDOT on revitalization projects, such sidewalks, road closures, funding mechanisms, special requests, and safety considerations.

Email : Andrea.Tantillo@h-gac.com

Closing Remarks

- Please take the post-event survey
- 2 CM credits available - **#9297637**
- APATX, Thursday, October 17, 10:30 am.
“It’s Just Another Public Meeting”
- Fall Planning Workshop – Virtual
December 6th

