

Our Great Region

Connection ★ Diligence ★ Reach ★ Opportunity ★ Excellence

AWARDS APPLICATION GUIDE 2019



Shining star organizations are working to make our region an even better place to live, work, and prosper.

The Our Great Region Awards recognize only the best and brightest projects. Submitted projects must advance one or more of the Our Great Region 2040 plan's Big Ideas.

Apply at www.ourregion.org.



WHY APPLY? Applying for the Our Great Region Award creates a record of an organization's achievements. Winning the Our Great Region Award allows an organization's project to serve as a model for other projects in the region. Winning the Our Great Region Award earns an organization positive recognition and prestige.

2019 TIMELINE

- JUNE 1 ● Application Open
- JULY 31 ● Application Deadline
- OCTOBER 15 ● Award Notification
- NOVEMBER 1 ● Award Ceremony

OUR GREAT REGION 2040 BIG IDEAS

Submitted projects must advance one or more of the Our Great Region 2040 plan's Big Ideas.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Projects strengthening our economic competitiveness through an educated and skilled workforce

- **ENVIRONMENT**

Projects securing a clean and ample water supply

- **HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

Projects cultivating places where people can lead active, healthy lives

- **HOUSING**

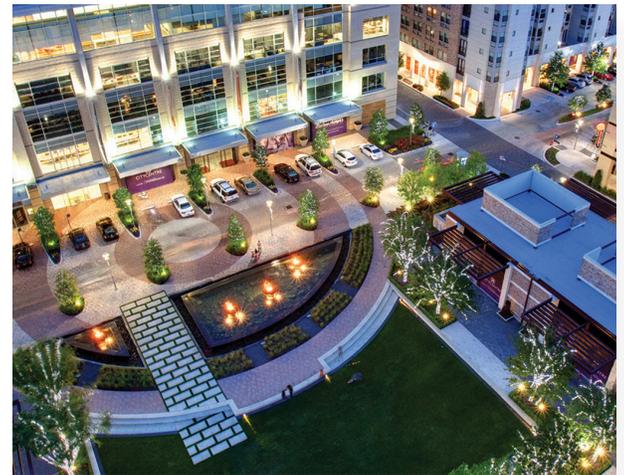
Projects providing balanced housing choices near jobs, services, and transportation options

- **TRANSPORTATION**

Projects working toward achieving a world-class transportation network

- **RESILIENCY**

Projects increasing our resiliency to disaster and a changing environment



WHAT IS OUR GREAT REGION 2040?

Completed in 2014, the Our Great Region 2040 plan is a high-level plan providing strategies to make the 13-county region an even better place to live, work, and prosper by the year 2040. Find the plan at www.ourregion.org.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

Plans, programs, projects, or policies within the 13-county region in the past 3 years are eligible for submission. The 13 counties in the region are Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Harris, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton counties.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Any organization may apply for the awards. Organizations may include cities, counties, other units of local governments, nonprofits, educational institutions, private businesses, and community groups. Organizations who have submitted or won an award in the past may apply this year.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

I. CHOOSE AN AWARD CATEGORY

Awards are self-nominating. If you have an eligible project, look through the list of award categories below to determine in which category or categories your project best fits. If your project fits well in more than one category, you may complete application questions for each category, including the Excellence Category. While organizations can submit in multiple categories, each project can only win one award per year.

- **THE CONNECTION CATEGORY**

Honors a project that uses innovative partnerships to achieve the project's goals

- **THE DILIGENCE CATEGORY**

Honors a completed project that used a creative and tenacious approach to overcome challenges to implementation

- **THE REACH CATEGORY**

Honors a project that demonstrates exemplary public participation

- **THE OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY**

Honors a project that helps overcome disparities in access to opportunity

- **THE EXCELLENCE CATEGORY**

The highest honor bestowed in the Our Great Region Awards, recognizes a project that best advances the vision of the Our Great Region 2040 plan

II. SUBMIT AN APPLICATION ONLINE

Once you choose an award category, you can fill out an online application; the application includes two parts—a project narrative and category-specific short answer questions.

I. PROJECT NARRATIVE

A short description of the project including what the project entailed, who was involved in the project, and how the project advances one or more of the Big Ideas and the vision of the Our Great Region 2040 plan. Responses can be up to 500 words. Please submit 3 to 5 pictures of your project in jpg format along with your narrative.

II. CATEGORY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

In addition to the project narrative, each award category has 2 to 3 category-specific, short answer questions. (Up to 150 words per question). These questions provide the judges an opportunity to see how the project meets the requirements for the category.

WHERE CAN I APPLY?

Only online submissions will be accepted. All materials must be submitted through: www.ourregion.org. Submissions by any other means will not be considered.

HOW WILL PROJECTS BE EVALUATED?

Eligible award applications will be evaluated by a panel of experts representing the diverse subject areas and geographies covered by the Our Great Region 2040 plan. The evaluation panel will use criteria based on the project narrative and the short answer responses. H-GAC reserves the right to change the category award selection.

SHORT ANSWER CATEGORY QUESTIONS

Below are the short answer questions for each of the categories. You will answer the questions for the category that you have chosen. Answer each question in 150 words or less.

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY

1. Describe the socio-economic characteristics of the community served by the project and the barriers to opportunity in the community.
2. Describe how the project has helped to overcome disparities in access to opportunity. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Diversifying housing stock
 - Increasing availability of affordable housing
 - Increasing the mix of incomes within an area
 - Reducing poverty rates
3. Describe how the project has the capacity to further the region's dialogue regarding equity and access to opportunity.

REACH CATEGORY

1. Describe how the project incorporated meaningful public involvement.
2. Describe how the engagement process shaped the outcomes of the project.
3. Describe how the process built capacity in the community, catered to specific needs, and built partnerships.

DILIGENCE CATEGORY

1. Describe how the project used a creative and tenacious approach to overcome challenges to implementation.
2. Describe significant lessons learned during the implementation process.
3. Describe how the project benefits the wider community.

CONNECTION CATEGORY

1. Describe how the project's partnership was unique and/or innovative.
2. Describe how the partnership helped achieve the project's goals.
3. Describe how the partnership benefits the wider community.

EXCELLENCE CATEGORY

1. Explain why this project deserves the Excellence Award.
2. Please choose 2 out of the 4 above categories. (You will need to answer the category specific questions of the award categories you choose.)

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Visit www.ourregion.org or contact Andrea Tantillo at andrea.tantillo@h-gac.com with any questions about the application process.