

# Suburban Workgroup Notes from August 5 Kick Off Event

## Suburban Sustainability

- Self Sufficiency
- Good for today and tomorrow
- Connect with other areas
- Resiliency
- Efficient resource utilization (paying the true cost for services)
- Long-term focus
- Ability to maintain infrastructure
- Access to services
  - Nearby
  - Ability for those that don't drive to get places
- More transportation choices
- Additional employment centers
- Be proactive not reactive
- Maximum utilization of renewable resources
- Mixed-use development (housing, jobs, stores)
- Encourage sustainability
  - Green areas for cooling
  - Attractive/safe for walking

## Suburban Opportunities

- Strong economy
- Cultural diversity
- Good existing suburban models (e.g. The Woodlands)
- Low level of governmental influence and the ability to act quickly and reinvent ourselves
- Highly educated professional population
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Diverse ecosystems
- Infrastructure investment/underutilized infrastructure (can be modified to meet future needs, such as changing freeways to corridors for mass transit)
- Climate (ground not frozen)
- Port of Houston
- Intermodal transportation

## Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

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- Lots of land
- Few natural barriers (e.g. no mountains)
- Geographic location
- Med center
- Multiple colleges and universities
- Numerous suburban areas

## **Suburban Challenges**

- Adequate source of drinking water
- Adequate drainage
- Air quality
- Lack of a regional long range plan
- Lack of regulation which in turn allows for bad models
- Aging infrastructure
- Sprawl – the need to retrofit communities in the future
- Crime
- Addressing social equity
- Lack of adequate healthcare
- Balance of land use and transportation choices
- Political will
- Disconnect between politicians and the public