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## **HOUSTON GALVESTON REGIONAL PLAN KICKS OFF**

### ***Residents Are Encouraged to Share their Ideas about what their Communities and the Region Should Look Like for Future Generations***

**HOUSTON** (January 16, 2012) – Residents, business owners, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and local government representatives have teamed up in an unprecedented effort to develop a regional plan for the 13 county area. The region includes Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Harris, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton Counties.

More than 6 million people now live in the region and as many as 4 million new people could live in the 13-county area by 2040. This two year planning project is the first step in answering questions such as “*Where will those residents live?*” “*How will they move around the region?*” and “*How will change affect quality of life?*”

Over the next two months residents will have an opportunity to give their feedback on what they think are the most pressing issues facing their communities and the region overall and share their hopes for what a better tomorrow may look like.

A very important goal of the planning process is to make sure that the plan reflects ideas from all parts of the region. Residents can share their ideas as part of upcoming public meetings to be held in each county, a survey, and on-line forum. Community visioning sessions will kick off in early February. These sessions will offer residents an opportunity to learn about issues in their community and feature interactive exercises.

Public input will help set goals and priorities for the plan. The plan will explore opportunities to improve the region’s most significant resources, including clean air and water, good jobs, safe and attractive neighborhoods, affordable housing, transportation choices, and open spaces and parks.

The first phase of the plan will focus on setting goals and a vision for the region and its communities. Later phases will look at different ways that the region can grow and develop implementation steps to encourage sustainable, economically competitive places for current and future residents. The final document will offer strategies and projects that local communities can voluntarily select. This menu will include different options appropriate for coastal, rural, suburban and urban areas.



Interested individuals and organizations can also help to get their communities connected to the planning process by being part of Community Ambassador Teams (CAT). CAT members will help residents sign up to receive emails or phone calls for important meetings, distribute information within their own area, and share information about the planning process at local events. Membership is voluntary and requires only the time a volunteer can provide. CAT volunteers will have a chance to learn planning and facilitation skills, receive training in sustainability concepts, network with other individuals and organizations in their communities, and learn how to put the plan to work.

CAT training dates scheduled for:

Tuesday  
1/24/2012  
5:30-7:30 pm  
Liberty Municipal Library  
1710 Sam Houston, Liberty, TX 77575

Wednesday  
1/25/2012  
1:00-2:30 pm  
Park Place Regional Library  
8145 Park Place Houston 77017

Thursday  
1/26/2012  
Noon  
McGovern-Stella Link Neigh. Library  
7405 Stella Link, Houston 77025

Thursday  
1/26/2012  
5:30-7:00 pm  
Shenandoah City Hall Council Chambers  
29955 I-45 North, Shenandoah 77381

Friday  
1/27/2012  
12:00-1:30 pm  
Galveston  
Rosenberg Library: Fox Room  
2310 Sealy St. Galveston 77550

For more information on the plan and upcoming meeting dates or to become a CAT volunteer, please visit <http://www.ourregion.org>. You can also email [ourregion@h-gac.com](mailto:ourregion@h-gac.com) or call 713-463-8200.

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