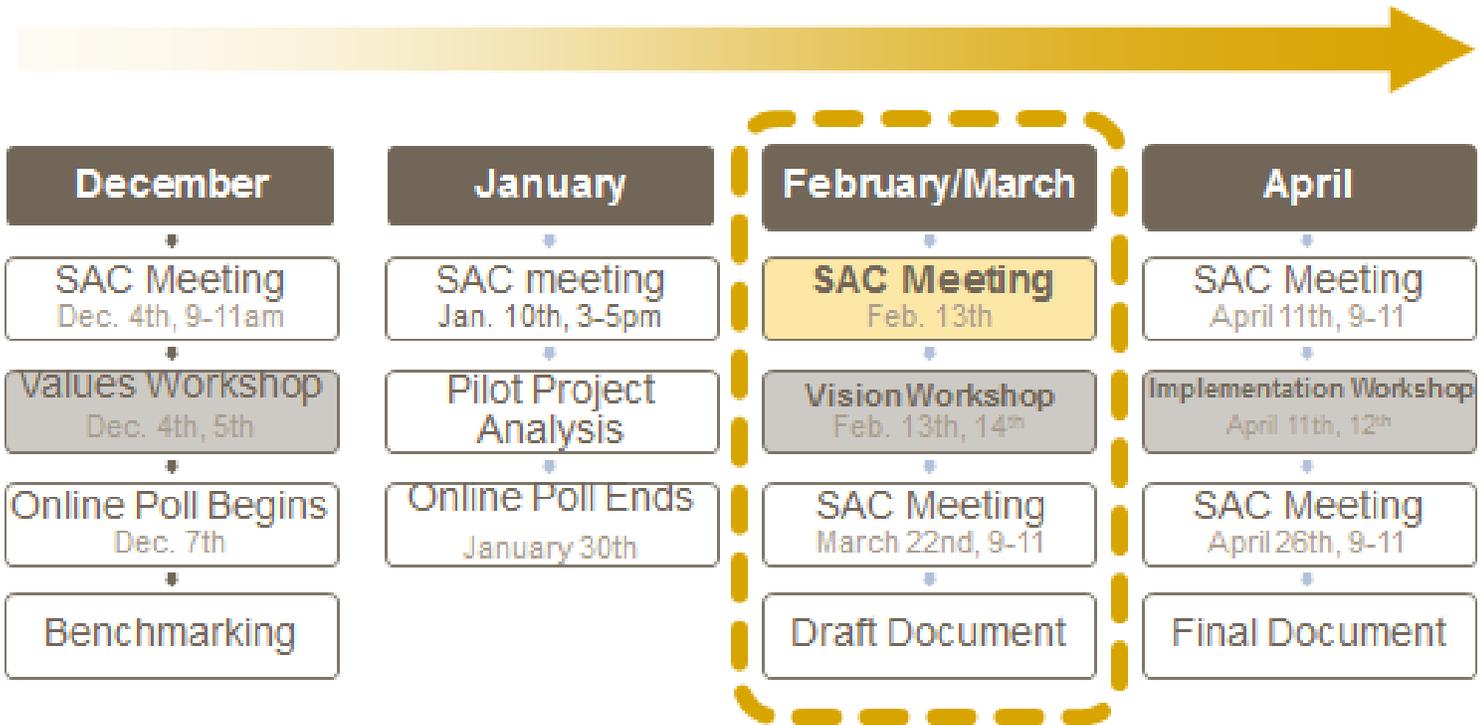


Urban Houston Framework Process Timeline



Goals

1. Advance local and regional **housing** needs.
2. Contribute to high-quality **infrastructure**.
3. Encourage **economic viability** and **diversity**.
4. Enhance **community stability, accessibility** and **equity**.
5. Promote **sustainable, healthy design**.
6. Support **multimodal transportation** and **increased connectivity**.

Urban Houston Framework

Defining the Future



Vision/Goals: Ideal results the City, Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), focus groups and citizenry desire to achieve through the establishment of well-planned, well-designed Urban Centers in Houston, Texas. These overarching, umbrella goals will guide how criteria and expectations are determined but are not size specific. Simply put, these are ideals all Urban Centers should strive for. *Example(s): Encourage economic viability and diversity. Enhance Community stability, accessibility and equity.*

Criteria: Measurements established through Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), focus group and citizenry input used to validate Large, Medium, or Small Urban Center eligibility as vetted through peer review. These may also function as a mechanism by which locations and boundaries for Urban Centers could be established. Generally, Urban Centers have higher measurements than the rest of the City on average for several categories: density, intensity of use, diversity of use and connectivity. *Example(s): jobs/housing ratio, average commercial/office floor-to-area ratio, land use diversity index and average block size.*

Expectations: Opt-in requirements (or mandatory rules) an applicant proposing a development project (new construction, infill or otherwise) must meet in order to gain access to Urban Houston Framework tools or incentives. These include current City ordinances as well as any new policies and programs adopted as a result of the findings of the Urban Houston Framework study. Expectations require all applicants to adhere to various design standards, performance levels and construction best practices before receiving building permits, development or other city permits. *Example(s): No building's doors may swing into the pedestrian realm (Transit Corridor Ordinance).*

Tools: Incentives offered by the City to encourage opt-in to more sustainable development practices. Tools may vary by Urban Center, but all are intended to reduce time, financial risk, and resources expended by applicants. *Example(s): Density bonuses, decreased side building setbacks, streamlined permitting process and reduced permit processing fees.*

Process: Process is the overall methodology, eligibility criteria and regulatory tools/incentives for encouraging Urban Centers in Houston, Texas. The process determines how boundaries are established, who initiates the application and designation process, and how long Urban Center designations are valid. *Note: The preferred process identified during Urban Houston Framework meetings and workshops must gain approval by the City of Houston legal department and adhere to all existing city-wide policies to date.*

Peer Review: An evaluation of Urban Center plans, documents, policies, processes and programs created by other cities. Peer reviews focus on areas comparable to Houston, Texas in size, population and overall regional context. Findings concentrate on what other cities have done to successfully achieve Urban Centers. Peer reviews also explore what has not worked well in other cities, and examine potential criteria, expectations and tools that may be applicable to Houston. *Example(s): Miami-Dade County, Florida Standard Urban Centers District Regulations (2012) or Puget Sound Regional Council Regional Centers policy (2002).*

Pilot Projects: Three real life case studies in Houston that will be used to evaluate the preferred process, eligibility criteria and regulatory tools/incentives identified through Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and citizen input. Findings from these pilot projects will be used to guide policy revisions, decision making and implementation of Urban Centers throughout the future. *Pilot project sites selected by the City: OST/Griggs and Cullen Streets in South East Houston/Greater Third Ward; the Montrose and Westheimer area; and the Westchase District.*

Urban Houston Framework Center Functions



Large: A Large Urban Center is characterized by higher population, employment densities and human resources in comparison to areas around it. It tends to cater to regional, national and international needs and may consist of tall or large buildings and a street grid that allows for pedestrian activity, human services, retail activities and public transit access throughout. Federal, State and Local government services can be found, such as, post offices, police and fire stations. Generally, a Large Urban Center will have more cultural and recreational amenities, housing options, transportation choices and job opportunities than the rest of the City on average. A Large Urban Center supports multimodal transportation by being a place in which people arrive via train, bus, bike, car or taxi and are able to walk to destinations. There is typically a large inbound commuting population and express bus services to employment ties in this center type. Carpooling may be incentivized. Large Urban Centers enhance community stability by providing universal access to goods, services, schools and public space. They contribute to the economic vitality of the City by containing a mixture of uses and employment opportunities. Large Centers also conserve environmental resources and contribute to high-quality infrastructure and urban design.

Medium: Medium Urban Centers cater to city-wide needs and have a mix of mid to high-rise buildings, shopping centers, some human services, housing and transportation options. Generally, a Medium Urban Center will have more cultural/recreational amenities, housing options, transportation choices and employment opportunities than the rest of the City on average and support multimodal transportation by being a place in which people arrive via bus, bike, car or taxi and are able to walk to destinations. It enhances community stability by providing universal access to goods, services, schools and public space. Medium Centers contribute to the economic vitality of the City by containing a mixture of uses and employment opportunities. Medium Centers also conserve environmental resources and contribute to high-quality infrastructure and urban design.

Small: Small Urban Centers cater to community needs and may have low-rise smaller buildings and a street grid that primarily encourages personal automobile use. If transit exists, it is in the form of local routes connecting to destination routes. Small Centers provide amenities, services, opportunities and activities fitting for communities they support. Generally, a Small Urban Center will have fewer cultural and recreational amenities, housing options, transportation choices and employment opportunities than the rest of the City on average. A Small Urban Center supports multimodal transportation by being a place in which people arrive via car or bus and are able to bike or walk to destinations. It enhances community stability by providing universal access to goods, services, schools and public space. Small Centers contribute to the economic vitality of communities by attracting and retaining small businesses. Small Centers also conserve environmental resources and contribute to high-quality infrastructure and urban design.