



# Cypress Creek Greenway Case Study

Presentation to Utility Districts

April 8-9, 2013



# Case Study: What and Why?

- Part of Houston-Galveston Area Council's Regional Plan for Sustainable Development
- One of six case studies
- Case Study local sponsor: Houston Parks Board
- Consultant team:
  - CDS Market Research
  - Marsh Darcy Partners

# Case Study: What and Why?

- Bayou Greenways Initiative
  - City of Houston greenways – federal grant and City resources
  - Spring Creek – adopted by Harris and Montgomery counties
  - Cypress Creek: no designated public entity or funding source



# HUD Six Livability Principles

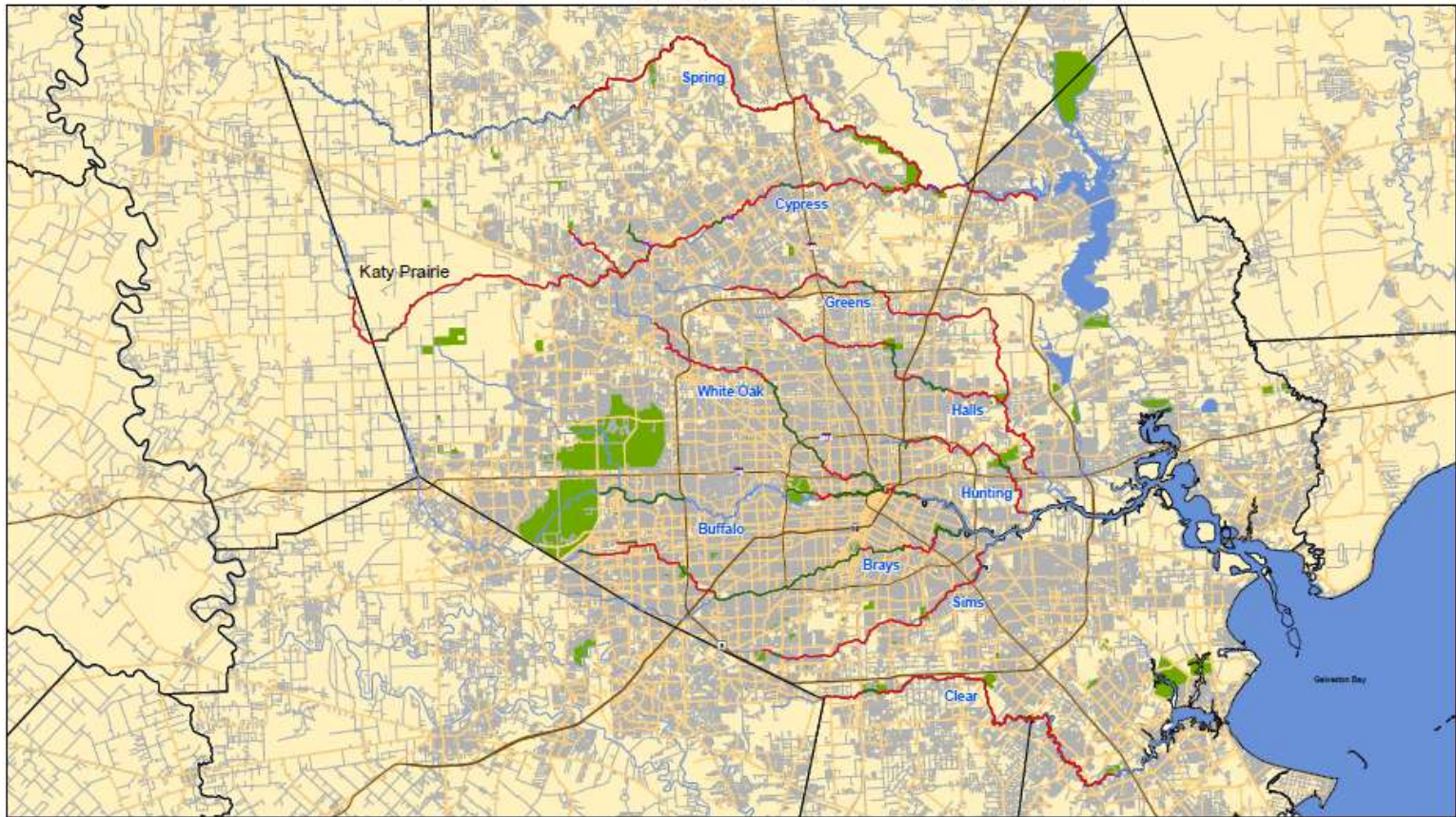
1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.



# Bayou Greenway Initiative

## Houston Bayou Greenway Initiative

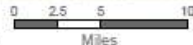
— Proposed Trails — Existing Paved Trails — Existing Other Trails



Bayou Greenway Vision Map



10-1-2010





# Cypress Creek Corridor



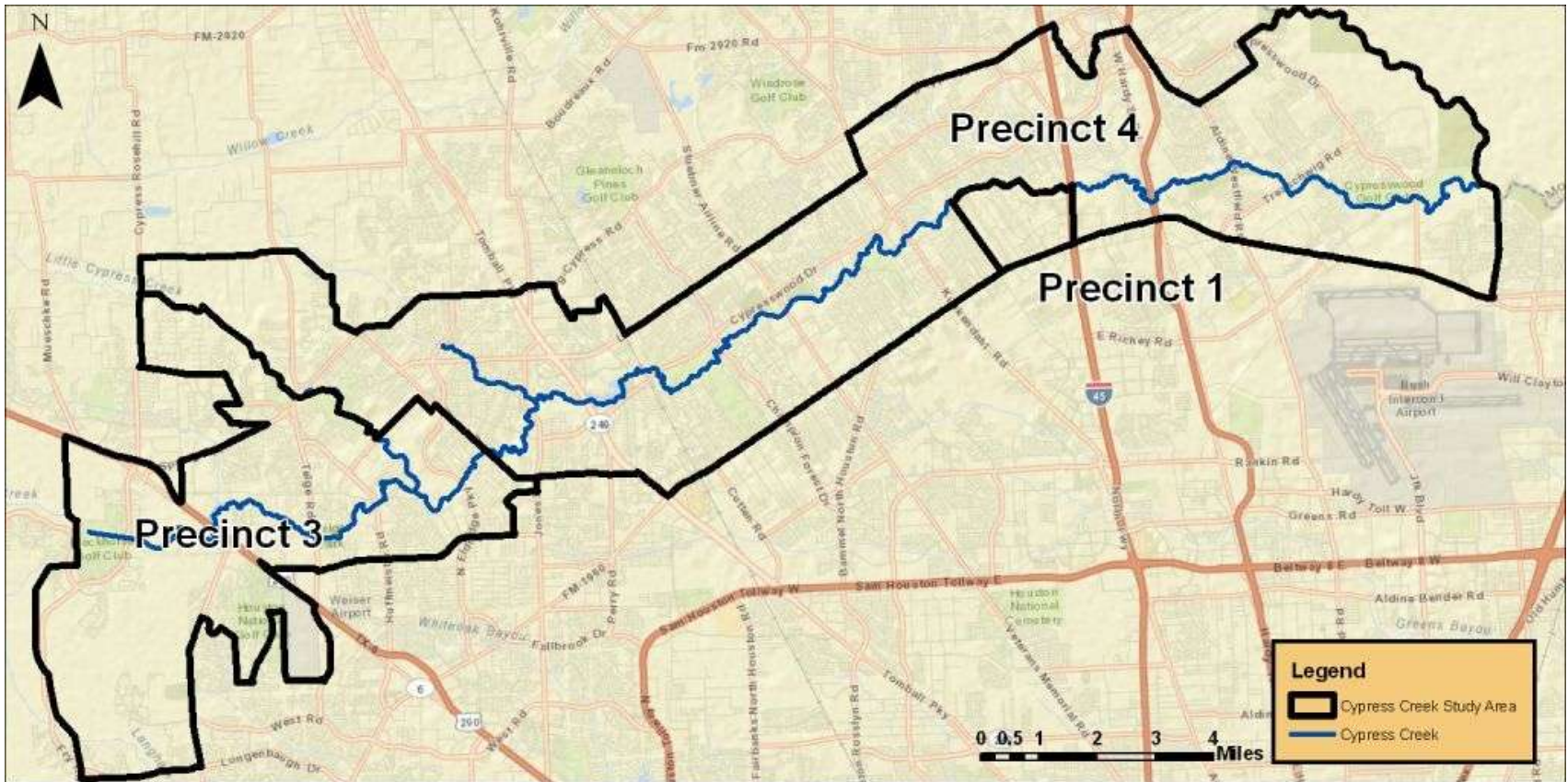
# Case Study: What and Why?

- Case Study purpose: *develop basis for continuing further discussion to move Cypress Creek Greenway forward*
- Dialogue with:
  - Residents
  - Commercial property / business owners
  - Government entities such as utility districts
  - Other community groups
- Produce demonstrations of commitment



# Fractured Governance

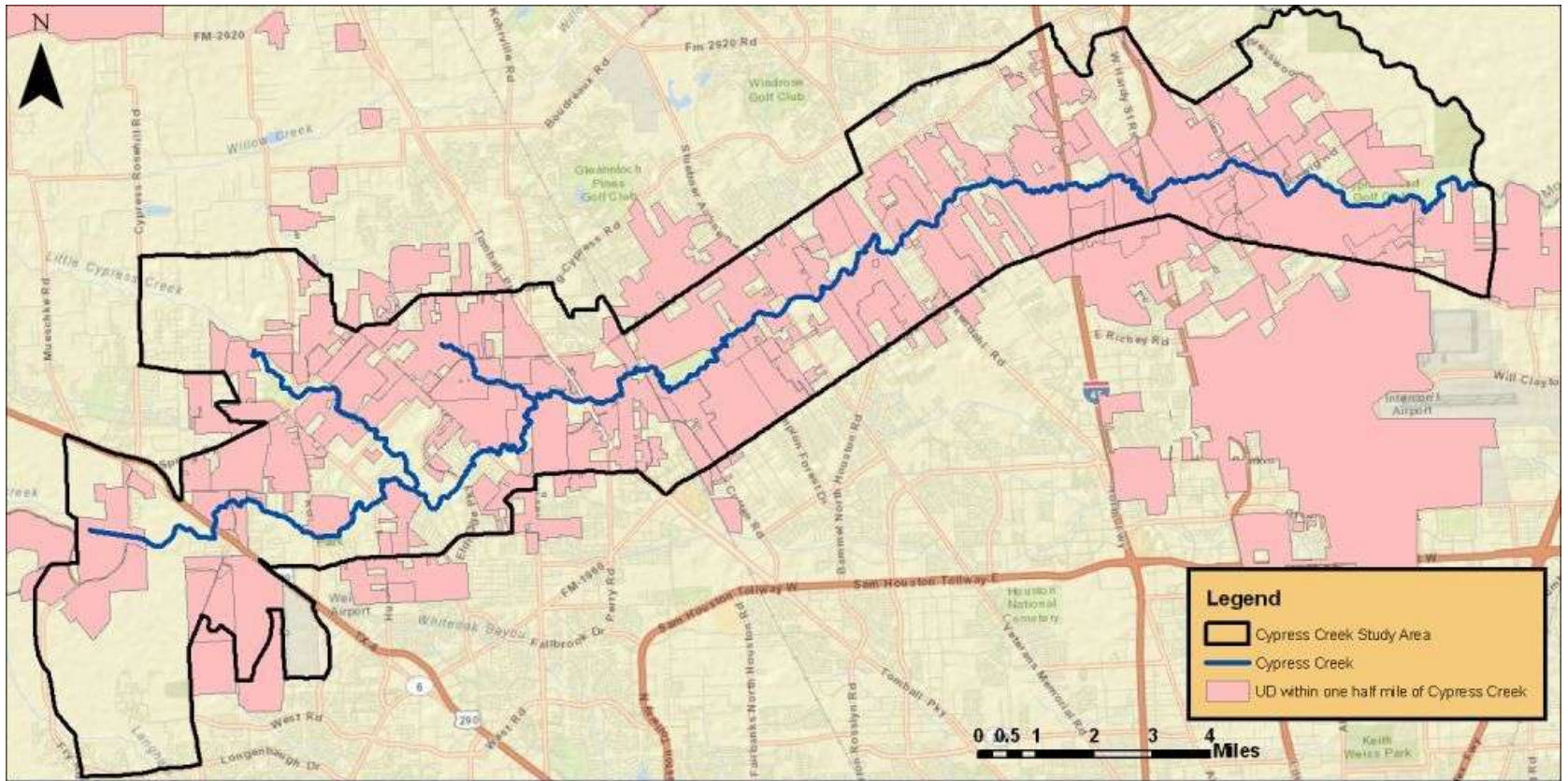
## Three County Commissioner Precincts





# Fractured Governance

68+ Utility Districts



# Governance

- Harris County
  - Three commissioner precincts
  - Flood Control District
- 68+ utility districts
  - Some have lost assessed value since 2002
  - At least 38 with Special Partnership Agreements (SPAs)
  - Some have issued park bonds



# Work to Date

- Demographic and economic research
- Greenway Benefits Model
- Public outreach





# Demographic and Economic Characteristics

Area Population Growth				
Region	2000 Census	2010 Census	Difference	
	Count	Count	Change	% Change
East Region	70,240	95,621	25,381	36.1%
Central Region	70,875	83,042	12,167	17.2%
West Region	25,570	59,434	33,864	132.4%
<b>Total Area</b>	<b>166,685</b>	<b>238,097</b>	<b>71,412</b>	<b>42.8%</b>

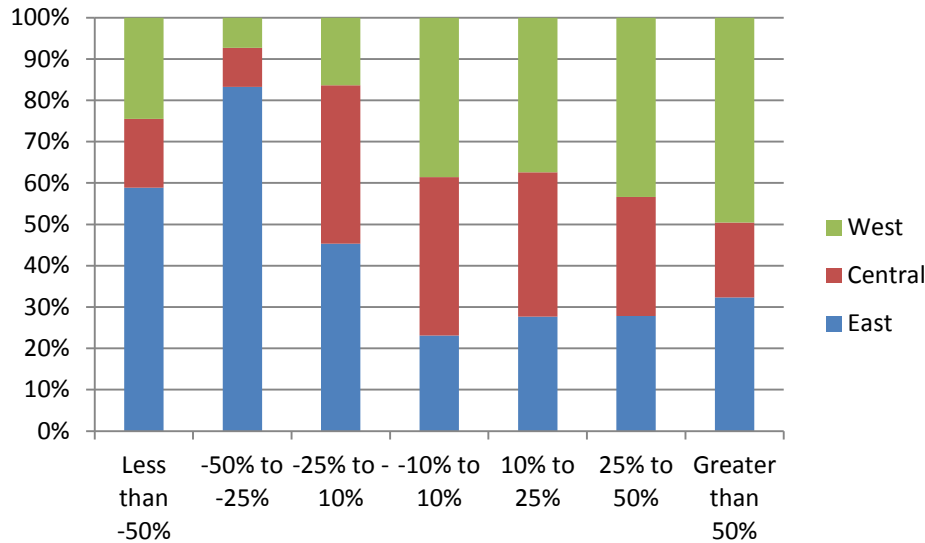


# Population Trends

- Continued population growth
- Fast-growing population of seniors
- Rapid diversification of ethnicities
- Wide range of income levels



## Property Valuation Trends – All Property Types



Source: HCAD

Assessed Value Change 2008-2012	Count (by Parcel)			
	Whole Area	East	Central	West
Less than -50%	1,571	925	261	385
-50% to -25%	10,201	8,489	969	743
-25% to -10%	25,430	<b>11,520</b>	9,748	4,162
-10% to 10%	<b>41,326</b>	9,568	<b>15,801</b>	<b>15,957</b>
10% to 25%	1,699	470	593	636
25% to 50%	964	268	278	418
Greater than 50%	4,421	1,430	800	2,191

Assessed Value Change 2008-2012	Share			
	Whole Area	East	Central	West
Less than -50%	1.8%	2.8%	0.9%	1.6%
-50% to -25%	11.9%	26.0%	3.4%	3.0%
-25% to -10%	29.7%	<b>35.3%</b>	34.3%	17.0%
-10% to 10%	<b>48.3%</b>	29.3%	<b>55.5%</b>	<b>65.2%</b>
10% to 25%	2.0%	1.4%	2.1%	2.6%
25% to 50%	1.1%	0.8%	1.0%	1.7%
Greater than 50%	5.2%	4.4%	2.8%	8.9%





# Valuing of Parks and Linear Greenspace

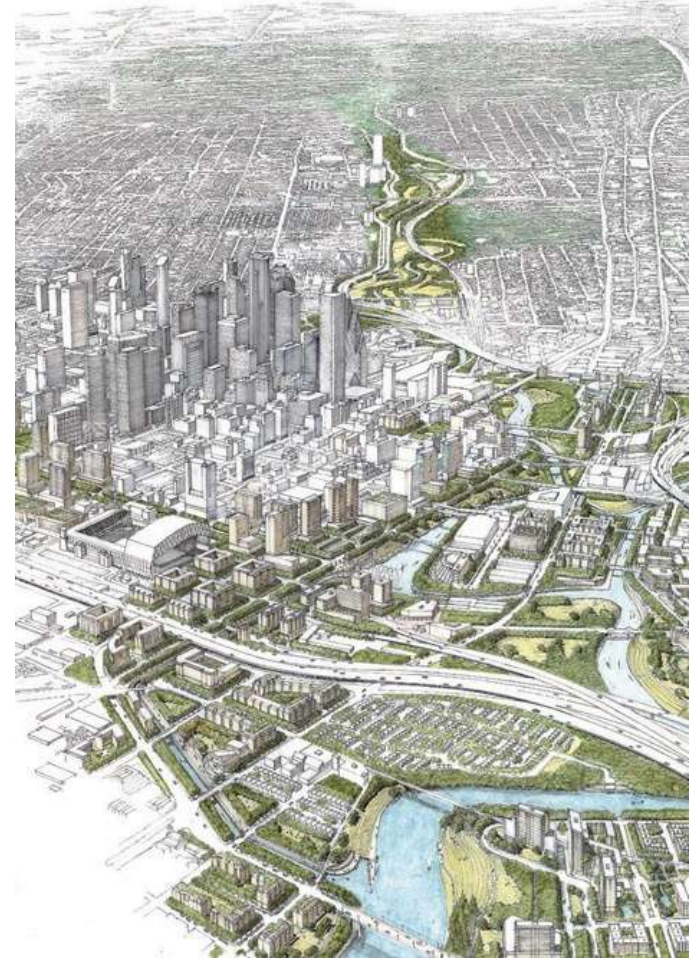


# Linear Parks and Trails are Cool But Do They have an ROI?

So if a community invests in the design and construction of new trails and acres of parkland what will they get in return?

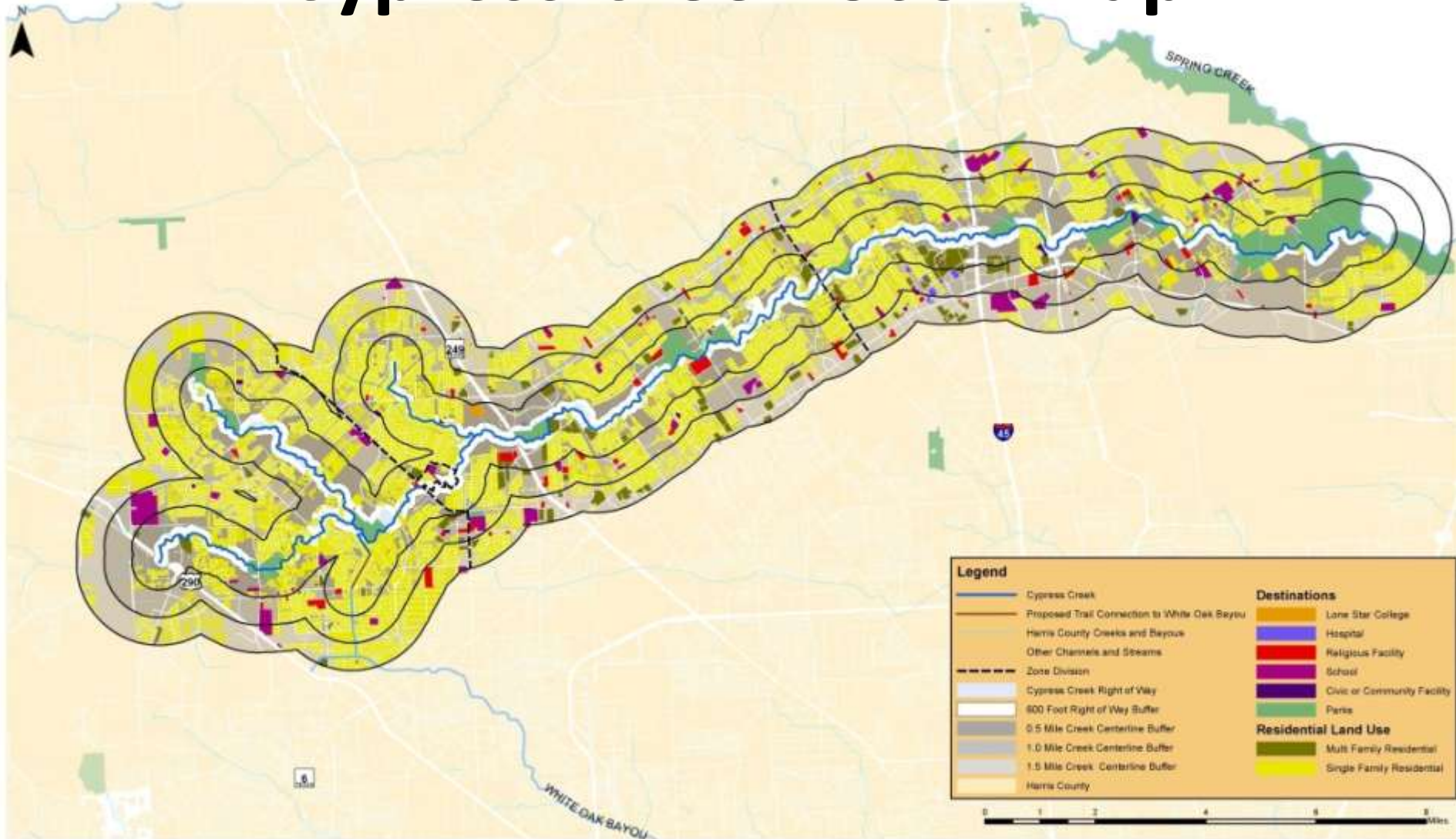
Or said another way... “What is the ROI of that cool Green Infrastructure?”

Buffalo Bayou  
Partnership Buffalo and  
Beyond Master Plan,  
2002, prepared by  
Thompson Design Group





# Cypress Creek User Map





# Estimated Benefits

The following projections are preliminary and will be refined in response to comments from Stakeholders and project participants.

Recreation Benefits	\$ 7,978,137
Health Benefits	\$ 2,053,961
Vehicle Operating Cost Savings / Congestion Relief	\$ 561,061
Crash Reduction	\$ 38,254
Air Quality: VOC, NOx, CO <sub>2</sub>	\$ 19,198
Carbon Sequestration	\$ 114
EcoSystem Services	\$ 2,717,223
Property Value	\$ 2,966,092
<b>Estimated Annual Total (Moderate)</b>	<b>\$ 16,334,041</b>
<b>Total Number of Individuals Living Within 1.5 Mile Buffers:</b>	<b>208,913</b>

# The Greenways' Bottom Line



# Public Outreach

- Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Small-group meetings
- Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/CypressCreekGreenwayCaseStudy>

- Email

[CypressCreek@marshdarcypartners.com](mailto:CypressCreek@marshdarcypartners.com)

- Online survey
- Public open houses



# Small Group Stakeholder Meetings

- Active Users
  - March 5
- Health / Medical
  - March 8
- Education
  - March 19
- Real Estate
  - March 20
- Business
  - March 21 & 22



# Small Group Stakeholder Meetings

- Broad and enthusiastic support the Cypress Creek Greenway concept
- Varying priorities (health, strengthening community, economic competitiveness, revitalization) but widely viewed as a key asset
- Comments that benefits analysis too conservative
- Encourage pursuit of diverse array of funding sources
- County viewed as key player; existing entities working in partnership

# Open House Meetings

- **March 19 – West**  
Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church; 7 attendees
- **March 21 – Central**  
Cypress Creek Christian Church; 31 attendees
- **March 26 – East**  
Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens; 42 attendees





# Questions for the Community

- Do you support the Cypress Creek Greenway concept? Why or why not?
- What key features and amenities need to be part of the Greenway?
- What are the high-priority and high-opportunity locations along Cypress Creek to focus efforts in the near term?
- What are acceptable ways to fund the Greenway project?
- Who should eventually manage the project?

# Interim Survey Results 4/4/13

- Over 400 completed surveys
- Average benefits ratings (-2 to +2):
  - Health 1.64
  - Economic 1.21
  - Recreation 1.71
  - Transportation 1.12
  - Flooding / erosion 1.41
  - Environment / open space 1.57



# Interim Survey Results 4/4/13

- Concern ratings (-2 to +2):
  - Maintenance 0.23
  - Security 0.39
  - Funding 0.67
  - Organization / oversight 0.64
- Activities:
  - Biking, walking
  - Other: running, off-road biking, disc golf, kayaking



# Interim Survey Results 4/4/13

- Strongly agree:
  - The Greenway would benefit residents and businesses in Northwest Harris County. – **76.6%**
  - Implementing the Greenway should be a high priority. – **68.2%**
  - I would want the Greenway to connect to my neighborhood. – **70.0%**



# Interim Survey Results 4/4/13

- Most desired features:
  - Trash cans 59.3%
  - Restrooms 56.3%
  - Directional signs / maps 47.9%
  - Connections to neighborhoods 44.4%
  - User parking 40.9%
- **74.1% very supportive** of continuing discussions
- **61.6% willing** to get involved

# Utility District Outreach

- Group meetings April 8 and 9, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.
- Over 56 districts contacted
- Seeking approval from boards of directors
  - Sample resolution drafted
  - *Ideal result: secure commitment to move Greenway segments and connections forward*





# Questions and Discussion

- Willingness to support concept
- Willingness to work with adjacent districts / property owners
- Willingness to contribute funding
- Board action?





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