



OUR GREAT REGION

2018 AWARDS SHOWCASE



Introduction

Six Big Ideas for Our Great Region

The Our Great Region Awards recognize outstanding projects in the Houston-Galveston Area Council's 13 county region that advance the goals and strategies outlined in the Our Great Region 2040 plan (www.ourregion.org). This plan defines measurable goals for Our Region to continue to be a great place to live, work, and succeed by the year 2040.

Strategies in the Our Great Region 2040 plan are grouped into the Six Big Ideas below. These ideas highlight areas of opportunity within Our Region:



Economic Development- To be a great region in 2040, we should strengthen our economic competitiveness through an educated and skilled workforce.



Environment- To be a great region in 2040, we should secure a clean and ample water supply.



Healthy Communities- To be a great region in 2040, we should cultivate places where people can lead active, healthy lives.



Housing- To be a great region in 2040, we should provide balanced housing choices near jobs, services, and transportation options.



Transportation- To be a great region in 2040, we should achieve a world-class transportation network.



Resiliency- To be a great region in 2040, we should increase our resiliency to disaster and a changing environment.

Awards Showcase

The projects featured are the winners of the 2018 awards. These projects offer effective solutions and new opportunities for furthering the six Big Ideas. Additionally, the awards offer an opportunity to highlight the work of these groups and recognize their accomplishments as examples for others in the region to follow.

Award Categories

2018 Award Recipients

The 2018 Our Great Region Award applicants are making progress across the six Big Ideas with projects addressing multiple objectives. As a result, the five award categories celebrate the interdisciplinary nature of this work and the qualities required for success.

The **Connection Award** honors a project that advances two or more of the Our Great Region 2040 plan's strategies through innovative partnerships and exemplifies the interdisciplinary and partnership-building work that is critical to making Our Region a more vibrant place to live, work, and succeed.

2018 Recipient | Harris County Transit-RIDES Program, The RIDES Program

The **Diligence Award** honors a project that executed a creative and persistent approach to overcome challenges to implementation and demonstrates the importance of innovation and follow-through in the pursuit of inspiring projects throughout Our Region.

2018 Recipient | West Houston Association, West Houston 2060 Plan

The **Reach Award** honors a project that demonstrates exemplary public participation and prioritizes community outreach and engagement as a core tenet of a successful project.

2018 Recipient | Complete Communities, City of Houston

The **Opportunity Award** honors a project that helps overcome disparities in access to opportunity, breaks down barriers of entry into the regional economy, and improves quality of life for all residents in Our Region.

2018 Recipient | Resiliency through Regeneration, Texas A&M University

The **Excellence Award** honors a projects addressing timely issues within the region, while helping to further the principles of the Our Great Region 2040 Plan. The project demonstrates the ingenuity and strategic focus that is required for a brighter future for Our Region.

2018 Recipient | Avenue for Opportunity, Avenue CDC

The Connection Award

RIDES Program

Harris County Transit-RIDES Program

The RIDES program demonstrates the impact of coordination in the region. RIDES works with 36 partner agencies to connect over 15,000 under-served residents (including the disabled, seniors, and youth) to transportation.

For many years, RIDES has filled the gap for unmet transit needs. RIDES has a market-based approach of increasing the coordination of existing resources, promoting consumer choice, coordinating multiple funding sources, and monitoring performance and service delivery. This approach has allowed the program to expand throughout the years serving 1,800 residents in 2005 to 15,000 today.

This innovative approach exemplifies the interdisciplinary work that is critical to making Our Region a more vibrant place to live, work, and prosper.

 **Economic Development**

 **Healthy Communities**

 **Transportation**

“Our partners have taught us the importance of implementing strategies that embrace partnership-empowerment, program sustainability, and multi-agency collaboration.”

-Harris County Transit- RIDES Program



The Diligence Award

West Houston 2060 Plan

West Houston Association

Over 100 community partners devoted thousands of hours to help create the West Houston 2060 Plan.

Before Hurricane Harvey, the draft plan's analysis identified that the Region needed approximately \$35 billion in regional flood mitigation projects. After Hurricane Harvey, this analysis helped West Houston Association (WHA) organize a broader group, the Houston Stronger Coalition, which advocated the Houston Stronger Plan. The Houston Stronger Plan was influential in securing federal funding and \$2.5 billion in Harris County bonds.

WHA's work on the 2060 Plan and the Houston Stronger Coalition provides an example of the importance of innovation and follow-through.

 Economic Development

 Healthy Communities

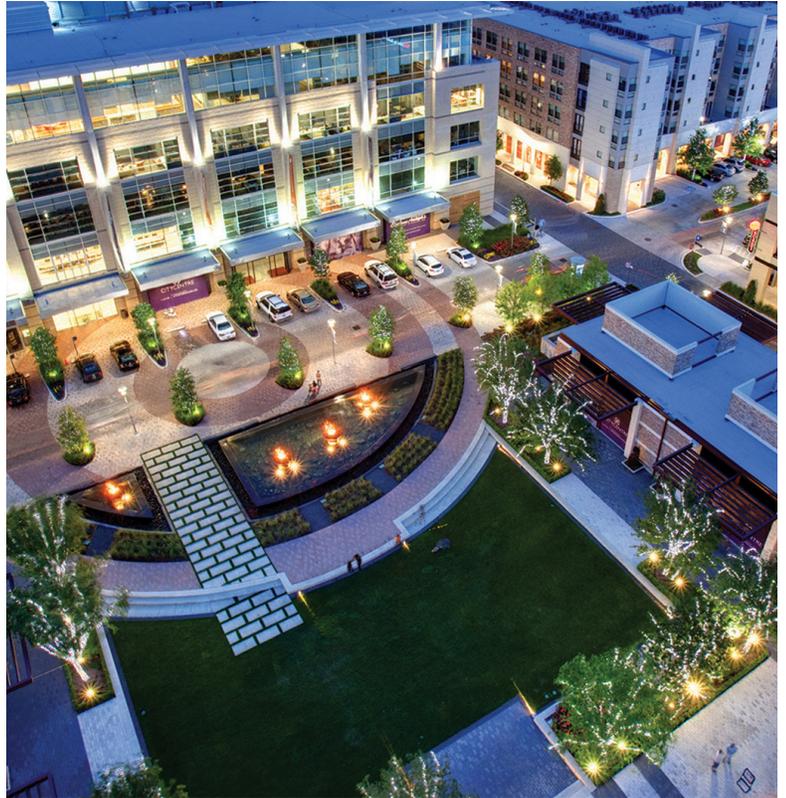
 Transportation

 Resiliency

 Housing

"We believe each resident and employee should be afforded the highest possible quality of life and work experience."

-West Houston Association



The Reach Award

Complete Communities

City of Houston

Community participation is often cited as the foundation for successful planning projects. The City of Houston demonstrates that partners can work together to provide a meaningful participation process.

The City of Houston's Complete Communities project works with five underserved Houston communities to help reach their full potential.

Through hundreds of community meetings, the Planning Department worked with these communities to develop community specific action plans.

In August 2018, these plans were approved by City Council. The City continues to work with the communities to implement these approved action plans.



 Economic Development

 Healthy Communities

 Transportation

 Housing



“During the process, the City sought to understand everyone’s vision and goals. Over 7,000 partners provided input for this program.”

-The City of Houston

The Opportunity Award

Resilience Through Regeneration

A&M Center for Housing & Urban Development

The opportunity award honors a project that helps overcome disparities in access to opportunity and breaks down barriers of entry into the regional economy.

Resiliency through Regeneration is a plan that explores social equity, flooding, economic development, affordable housing, and transportation in South Houston. The plan addresses flood vulnerability through vacant lot regeneration- offering a variety of tools and specific projects.

Through connecting these five topics, the plan offers an opportunity to explore possible long-term actions which can create an even more prosperous region.

 **Economic Development**

 **Healthy Communities**

 **Housing**

 **Resiliency**



“By 2040, 85% of the community’s vacant lots will be regenerated and 90% of its structural abandonment will be refurbished, redeveloped, or demolished.”

-Center for Housing and Urban Development, Texas A&M University

The Excellence Award

Avenue to Opportunity

Avenue CDC

Avenue to Opportunity provides an example of a development project in North Houston addressing affordable housing, transportation, and green infrastructure.

The development was in direct response to a need voiced by community residents for the elimination of industrial land use and the addition of quality affordable housing and green space.

The design team worked to build an inclusive and connected neighborhood from sustainable materials. The project represents a tangible investment in a variety of housing options, recreation and greenspace, which contributes to the health and well-being of the area's residents.



 **Economic Development**

 **Healthy Communities**

 **Housing**

“This project increases the availability of affordable housing and helps reduce poverty by adding 95 single-family homes and 192 apartments for families at a range of income levels.”

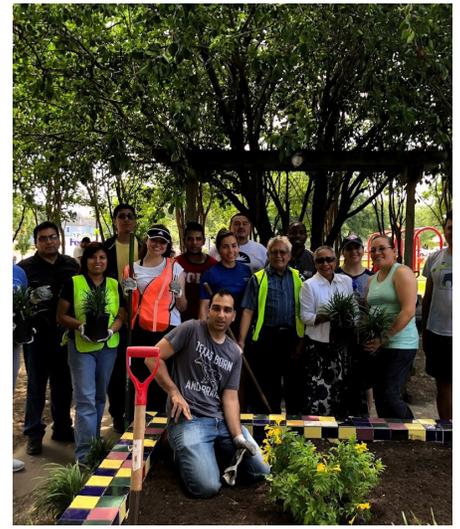
-Avenue Community
Development Corporation



Conclusion

A Great 2018 and Beyond

The Our Great Region Awards demonstrate the wealth of local work underway and completed in Our Region. At the Houston-Galveston Area Council, we applaud the work of the organizations who applied in 2018 and look forward to celebrating similar accomplishments in the years to come.

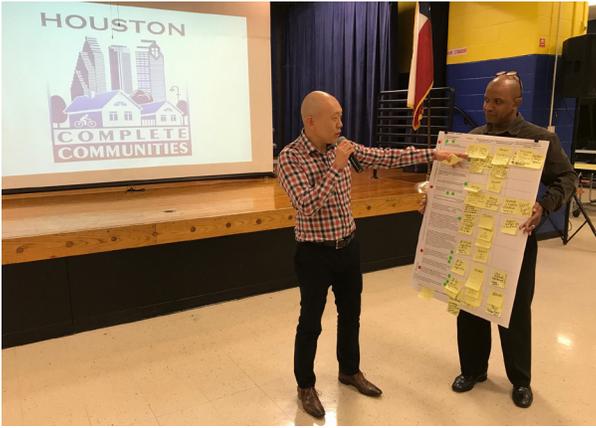


Panel of Judges

H-GAC would like to thank the expert panel of judges for evaluating the 2018 Our Great Region Awards. Their unique perspectives and meaningful insights contributed to the success of this awards program.

- Oni Blair..... LINK Houston
- Ali Fares, Ph.D.....Prairie View A&M University
- Carolyn Gibson.....City Development Corporation of El Campo, Texas
- Aimee Schultze.....Harris County Public Health

Photo montages include images from the 2018 Our Great Region Awards winners and other applicants.





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