

CITY OF HOUSTON - CITY COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 9/22/2015

ALL

Item Creation Date: 9/17/2015

PLN-Adoption of Plan Houston, City's General Plan

Agenda Item#: 42.

Summary:

Motion to adopt Plan Houston

Background:

For over a decade, the Houston community has advocated for the City of Houston to adopt a general plan. In acknowledgment of this community interest, in August 2014 the City began facilitating a community-led process to develop such a plan. In 2015, the City amended Chapter 33 of the City's Code of Ordinances, establishing that the City shall adopt a general plan and requiring departments to coordinate towards its implementation.

The Planning and Development Department (P&D) recommends that Council adopt Plan Houston as Houston's general plan. Plan Houston is a framework for sound planning and policymaking.

Plan Houston includes two primary components. The first is a statement of community vision and goals that describes Houston's preferred future. The second is Core Strategies with associated Actions for achieving the community goals.

Plan Houston's 12 Core Strategies and their associated Actions provide a comprehensive description of City strategies for helping achieve community goals. These strategies are the outcome of an extensive gap analysis of the City's existing policy and planning framework. The Core Strategies represent a comprehensive policy and planning framework that, upon implementation, will fill significant gaps in the City's existing plans and policies.

Plan Houston also includes supporting information in the form of performance indicators and a planning coordination tool. This information is available at www.planhouston.org.

The Plan Houston project utilized extensive public engagement to ensure the plan reflects community interests. This engagement included online tools, attendance at 65 community events, more than 100 interviews, and numerous public meetings. A Steering Committee, Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and Technical Advisory Committee helped guide the project.

P&D has facilitated Plan Houston through an adoption process, following Chapter 33's requirements. P&D published the draft Plan Houston in June 2015 and invited public comment. The Houston Planning Commission hosted four public meetings in June and July in various locations around the City. P&D presented the draft plan to the City Council Quality of Life Committee on July 29, 2015.

P&D developed a revised draft plan based on the input received. The Houston Planning Commission held a public hearing on the revised draft on August 20, 2015. Following public comment, the Commission unanimously voted to recommend that City Council adopt the Plan. City Council conducted a public hearing on Plan Houston on September 16, 2015.

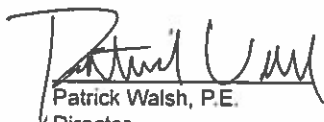
Adoption of Plan Houston is a first step that enables implementation. After adoption, the City will need to institutionalize an ongoing implementation process.

P&D recommends use of an annual work plan for this process. The proposed annual work plan would be a list of high-priority policy and planning projects targeted for implementation in upcoming fiscal years. The Plan Houston framework would help guide development of the work plan. The framework also offers City leaders the flexibility necessary to annually identify high priorities requiring near-term action.

Using an annual approach to develop a plan of work is similar to the City's current approach for developing the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Departments, City Council, the Mayor and the public would provide input on the draft work plan. Once developed, the draft annual work plan would be considered via the annual budget process. An annual work plan process offers all parties greater engagement on planning and policy efforts.

When implemented, Plan Houston will provide the following benefits:

- encourage coordination and collaboration among city departments and other agencies,
- improve effectiveness by enabling a proactive approach to solving problems,
- accelerate quality policy making,
- enhance transparency and citizen engagement, and
- foster consistency across changes in city leadership.



Patrick Walsh, P.E.

Director

Planning and Development Department

Prior Council Action:

06/10/2015, Ord. No. 2015-559

Amount of Funding:

NA

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