

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Small Group Session- Each group answered the question "What do you want the City of Houston to be like in 20 years?" All responses were recorded.

Table 1

Recreation

- Trails and trail heads
- Bike trail fixed (concerns about this use of railroad)
- better signage for public access to lakes
- Motor and non-motorized destination
- Motor sports park
- Ice rinks, swimming pools, ski area
- Gravel on trails (four-wheeler v bike trails)
- Summer recreation programs for young people
- Multiuse
- Lake management plan and/or guidelines,
- Maintained and designated trails,
- Moose habitat (need to preserve it)

Development

- Environment/ecologically responsible development,
- Little Sue (landing) has more opportunities, is a jewel
- Ice rink
- Community center
- Bike trail
- Designation for agricultural use
- Water table analysis – Borough Build-out, danger to develop on tundra marsh,
- Concerns about tree cuts to Ring, development in some "undevelopable areas" (swamps compromise water/land stability)

Services/Business (Economic)

- Medical facilities (full lab and small surgery)

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

- Ambulance (EMS) emergency services,
- Infrastructure development such as a gas station, rail/industrial use,
- Need to address fuel stealing and drug problems

Public Safety

- Village police safety officer
- Community policing
- EMS year round
- Year round water supply for fires

Economic Development

- Need to expand tax base – sales tax vs. property tax

Education

- College/campus, schools

Energy/Utility

- electricity areas (Western Drive, Millers Reach road),
- natural gas expanded (service now is only to Hawk Lane), cable (GCI),
- alternative energies such as geothermal, wind or solar.
- More electricity – end of Wilhelm/Carr Drive (also needs road upgrades), power lines over Wilhelm – tied to Houston

Transportation

- Junk car clean-up,
- Corridor north side of railroad,
- Parks Highway Corridor- need an alternative corridor (bypass Wasilla),
- Public transit/feeder train
- Lighting to the highway
- Landscaping
- Frontage roads
- Turn lanes
- Upgrade roads/align roads
- Aesthetic management of highways (wildflowers)

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Community Facility

- Town Center created so the town feels defined
- Hawk Lane as a possible location, close to the school
- Oasis, potentially have two

Community Character

- Needs incentives to live here – worker friendly, more community effort together
- Beautiful, landscape in Houston, maintained trailheads
- More youth opportunities

Table 2

Development/Community Character

- Encourage but not enforce a Texas theme construction for residential and as a business themes, activity running with “Little Texas of Alaska”, moose long horn could be used it as a mascot for Houston

Community Services

- Library,
- medical clinic,
- Bike/ped trails,
- Public park

Development

- Remake the city,
- No zoning restrictions

Economic Development

- Tax reduction for the nicer you keep your home and property!
- Will clean up the town

Transportation

- Traffic to flow circular – Port Mackenzie – King Arthur – Selden- Bogard
- Commercial traffic along rail route

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Table 3

Education and Community Facilities and Services

- Expansion and prioritization of High school facilities and classes (use old bus depot for school building expansion).
- Road marker for fireworks Valley mover stop (it's dangerous guessing where it is at night) – maybe make more Valley mover stops in Houston, it helps many people.
- A library is always nice to have, creates community spirit through programs for children and adults.
- Hawk lane bike path! The kids coming from school or doing sports activities have to walk, bike, or run on the road.
- A medical clinic is always nice.

Economic Development

- An inn or hotel for tourists – lots of revenue there, we only have Millers for tourism in Houston.
- More restaurants – closer food venues for local business owners

Development

- Flooding is a problem here on side roads next to the Susitna- is there a way to fix this or help prevent more damage?
- A park next to Susitna River? Probably the perfect place for one, it already has a parking lot (except for the flooding thing).

Table 4

- Priority #1 Quality of Life – better street lighting, protect Little Su, parks
- Priority #2 First Class City – more control of future, more like Palmer rather than Wasilla
- Priority #3 Local Utilities – power plant, natural gas
- Priority #4 Land Use Planning – protect/expand trails, housing choices, invest in parks/open space

Development

- Not look like Wasilla
- Light Hawk lane, bike path along Hawk lane
- Subdivision connectivity – multiple access, emergency access

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

- Small businesses providing services to recreationists – ATV/snow machine, rafting, canoeing, etc.
- “Santa Claus Sweatshops”
- Areas of higher density are okay but must be done carefully- consider conveniences to protect quality of life.

Recreation

- Improve access to Little Su – 4 to 6 hours to/from Houston, outside city limits
- Trails – that are maintained, motorized first, Zero Lake trails/improved/protected, trail to school

Energy and Utility

- Heavy Industrial
- Power plant within City of Houston
- Affordable natural gas from big pipeline takeoff

Planning

- City of Houston as a Home Rule city – more like the city of Palmer

Community Facilities and Services

- Cemetery

Transportation

- Road to Port next to the Rail Road
- Protect landscaping/trees/view sites along the main roads, especially the Parks highway

Table 5

Community Facilities and Services

- Community center
- Parks –RV/swings and playground
- Need medical facilities
- Baseball fields/parks
- School expansion – not Meadow lakes
- Maintain and enhance trails (ATV/snow machine)

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

- Veterinary services
- Public safety –EMS, fire, law enforcement

Economic development:

- Money
- Bed and breakfasts
- Themed hotels and motels
- Commercial development – tourism. Hatcher pass. Hunting and fishing, hiking, biking, camping, cross country skiing, dogs and horses, etc.
- No heavy industry – sewage, coal dumps, refineries, or power plants

Development

- King Arthur intersection, put something there

Energy/Utility

- Power – needed and preferably underground

Community Character

- Culture of community – keep it dark and quiet – object to noise and light pollution
- Maintain rural community feel
- Connectivity within the community
- Rural v Anchorage – no Muldoon/ Mountain View

Planning

- Manage development for the best interest of the community
- Annexation – by either Big Lake or Houston
- *Maintain residential/agricultural land use*
- Responsible zoning – PLI
- Building codes and zoning- higher end residential
- Visual/aesthetically responsible design

Transportation

- Light rail
- Road improvements – utility expansion, alternative energy

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Table 6

Community Facilities and Services

- Town square – landscaped with park, pleasant atmosphere, pedestrian friendly/ park and walk, mixed use restaurant, post office, shops, relaxed atmosphere
 - Located near river, boardwalk/river walk, shops and restaurants along river
 - Town center near existing park and river, possibly between Parks Highway and AK Rail road
 - If business district is planned and landscaped correctly, it should be like walking into a park - city center building code
- Medical – clinic that can expand to hospital, doctor and dentist offices, need to provide care for an aging population

Economic Development

- Most important: local jobs
- Should be industrial development along the rail corridor (economic development)
- Specific industries – manufacturing, warehousing and distribution centers
- More lodging especially if river walk is developed – river walk itself is economic development

Transportation

- Circular flow: Anchorage- Port Mac. – King Arthur – Selden – Bogard, smooth flow along major highways, design road from Port Mac. To facilitate commercial traffic flow
 - Plan for secondary road system – early ROW acquisition
 - Future Parks Hwy expansion/upgrades
 - Controlled access – service roads, preservation of bike paths and designated ATV trails
 - Landscaping/vegetation buffers – increase current buffers along Parks, adjacent to residential uses
- Need Parks Highway bypass along rail road, tied to Pork Mac./Anchorage –Knik Highway like is on the 1979 Map!

Planning

- PL&I – need cemetery, schools (elementary- Kenlan/Birch station 92), community center, swimming pool

City of Houston Future's Workshop 9/18/14

Mind Maps Summary

Housing

- Restrict trailer parks
- More senior housing
- Encourage development of subdivisions with restrictive covenants, so people can build nice homes in nice neighborhoods- stricter code compliance
- Plan for some amount of multi-family housing
- Need affordable housing – particularly for young couples

Kid's Table:

Recreation and facilities

- Swimming pool, gymnastics park with a coach or teacher, ice skating rink, shooting ring/range
- More four-wheeler trails, skate park, dirt bike track

Community Facilities and Services

- Houston school
- College
- Daycare
- A grocery store
- Better Three Bears type store
- "Mythbusters" factory

Community Character

- Become a big city like Wasilla
- Better people