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ROADMAP TO GET THERE

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Introduction to Action Items

By adopting this plan, City Council adopts a vision for the future of Sugar Land. Achieving this vision will require specific, coordinated actions including changes to zoning, enhancing development regulations, developing new city processes, and conducting focused studies of specific areas. This section of the Plan is a road map for the actions required to support the vision and goals.

This list of actions is prioritized in the recommended order and timeframe in which they should be initiated. Completing these actions will require staff effort, potential consultant assistance, City Council direction, and public involvement, so it is not possible to do all actions at once. While all of these items are valuable, this prioritization reflects importance of actions as viewed by the Land Use Advisory Committee and through community feedback gathered during the Plan update process. It also reflects the need to take certain actions before others because of the sequential relationship between some actions, pressing issues and other current ongoing work. Prioritization reflects current conditions; however, needs may change and it may be appropriate to change priority accordingly.

The action items are categorized as High, Moderate, and Low priority. The High priority items should be initiated in the next one to two years; the Moderate priority items should be initiated in the next three to five years; and the Low priority items should be initiated in the next six to ten plus years. Many of the High priority action items are those that are key to implementing the central elements of the Plan, such as protecting single-family neighborhoods and creating mixed use activity centers. It is important to complete these action items sooner rather than later in order to have the ability to influence development and redevelopment that occurs over the next decade. Other action items have been designated as High priority for a different reason: because they are relatively easy to complete. It is likely that the Low priority projects may not be initiated prior to the next update to the Land Use Plan, and may be reprioritized during the update.

The action items are also categorized based on the type of action as follows:

- **Study** – An effort to evaluate a current condition and conduct additional research and analysis to determine the next step, whether it be a Regulation, Program, or Partnership.
- **Regulation** – An effort to establish new or make changes to existing requirements in the Development Code used to direct growth and development in the City.
- **Program** – A plan of action, with specified procedures established in order to accomplish a particular purpose. Includes establishment of new or making changes to existing programs.
- **Partnership** – An effort to coordinate with an outside entity to accomplish the specified purpose.

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	Action	Timeframe			Relevant Goals & Policies	Action Type
		1-2	3-4	6-10+		
1	Evaluate existing single-family neighborhoods to ensure the zoning on the property is consistent with the existing development. Rezone as necessary. (i.e. Sugar Mill, Chimneystone, etc. – developed as patio homes but zoned R-1).	◆			1a	Study/ Regulation
2	Involve the community in a neighborhood planning process to evaluate Company Town neighborhoods and to gauge community interest in additional regulations that would preserve the character of the neighborhoods. Understand threats to community character and the gaps in current regulations. Evaluate options for additional regulations to close the gaps which could include modifications to existing zoning districts, creation of new standard zoning districts, or creation of new overlay districts like a neighborhood conservation district ordinance.		◆		1a, 1b, 10d	Study/ Program/ Regulation
3	Evaluate Development Code regulations to ensure effective transitions and buffering between non-residential and residential uses. For example, modify setback, screening, and massing [height, setback, bulk plane] regulations to ensure new non-residential development is compatible with adjacent single-family homes. Also evaluate regulations related to noise, glare, signs, parking areas, loading docks, and refuse collection to ensure they are compatible with adjacent single-family homes. Modify the Development Code as necessary.	◆			1a, 1d	Study/ Regulation
4	Evaluate existing zoning districts to determine if established regulations, such as setbacks, are consistent with the built environment and modify districts as necessary. (i.e. R-1R district requires 30′ rear yard setback but many homes do not meet this requirement)	◆			1a, 1d	Study/ Regulation
5	Evaluate the ability to manage the ongoing traffic impacts of development, including commercial properties, schools and religious institutions. Create process for reevaluating negative impacts after development has occurred and the development is operational.	◆			1a, 1d, 2c, 5a, 9b	Study/ Regulation
6	Evaluate the zoning map to determine where it is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Determine whether the City should proactively rezone the property to be consistent with the FLUM. Rezone properties as necessary.	◆			1a, 2a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 6b, 8a, 9a	Study/ Regulation
7	Modify the Development Code to allow small-scale commercial uses within residential zoning districts with an approved conditional use permit to ensure they do not negatively impact the surrounding residential area. (R-1, R-1E, R-1R, R-1Z).			◆	1a, 4d, 9b	Regulation
8	Evaluate the Design Standards to determine if alternative standards, such as open ditches, are appropriate for Rural & Agricultural or Estate Neighborhood areas.			◆	1a, 6b	Study/ Regulation
9	Prepare an annual Housing Report that collects data on single-family home values, rental concentration, changes in ownership, code enforcement violations, HOA activity level, and such. Periodically utilize the data to conduct a Housing Health Assessment to evaluate trends and recommend programs that the City could pursue. Implement programs to maintain home values, such as tax incentive program for rehabilitation of older homes.	◆			1b	Study/ Program
10	Update Development Code to prohibit certain exterior finish materials, such as Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS), to ensure new homes are durable.	◆			1b	Regulation

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	Action	Timeframe			Relevant Goals & Policies	Action Type
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11	Evaluate landscaping regulations and tree preservation requirements to ensure landscaping is meeting established community expectations for aesthetics, character, tree protection, and buffering between residential and non-residential. (Planned Development vs. Non-planned Development requirements). Implement recommended changes to landscaping regulations, as needed.		◆		1c	Study/ Regulation
12	Evaluate the City's Streetscape Policy to ensure landscaping is achieving desired outcome. Implement recommended changes to Streetscape Policy, as needed.	◆			1c	Study
13	Explore and pursue opportunities for increasing coordination between the City, school district and the development community on future residential development.	◆			1d, 2c, 3c	Partnership
14	Adjust regulatory parking minimums to reflect the reduced parking demand created by shared parking and minimize the cost of providing parking.		◆		2a	Regulation
15	Evaluate the best way to implement the Regional and Neighborhood Activity Centers and Medium Density Mixed Use categories. This could be accomplished through creating new standard zoning districts, eliminating existing zoning districts (i.e. R-4), establishing overlay districts, or continuing the use of Planned Development Districts. Implement changes to the Development Code as necessary to ensure the following components are considered: enhanced pedestrian experience; mix of uses; multi-family design; enhanced connections to surrounding area; appropriate transitions to single-family residential; parking design; maximum distance to public spaces; architectural design/ building finishes and other guidance provided in this Plan.	◆			2a, 2b, 3a, 3c, 4a, 4b, 4d, 7a, 8a, 9a	Study/ Regulation
16	Revise Design Standards to establish standards for streets within mixed use centers that prioritize pedestrian safety and experience over vehicular movement and serve to calm traffic. Standards would include cross-sections, speed limits, context sensitive design for intersections including intersection spacing, pedestrian crossings, corner radii, paving, and traffic control. Work with fire department to make sure street standards accommodate fire vehicles without compromising pedestrian scale.		◆		2a, 2f	Regulation
17	Establish acceptable levels of service for all modes of transportation for mixed use centers and associated criteria for a multi-modal transportation analysis.		◆		2c	Study/ Regulation
18	Update Development Code to require public spaces in mixed use centers to be operated or managed by a perpetual entity such as a management district.		◆		2e	Regulation
19	Evaluate the best way to implement the Medium Density Single-family Residential land use category. Determine whether standard zoning districts should be created and/or existing R-3 district modified or if the PD process should continue to be utilized. Modify the Development Code as necessary.		◆		3a	Study/ Regulation
20	Evaluate regulations to ensure adequate parameters provide for a variety of family needs and customs of living while also maintaining the character of single-family neighborhoods. For example, define parameters for the allowance of multiple kitchens.		◆		3b	Regulation
21	Through a Redevelopment Study, determine whether new zoning should be placed on property proactively or in response to redevelopment proposals.		◆		3c, 9a	Study
22	Establish a program to evaluate key infrastructure, such as high-speed internet, regularly to ensure it is up-to-date throughout the city.	◆			4a	Study/ Program

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	Action	Timeframe			Relevant Goals & Policies	Action Type
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23	Evaluate the Business Office and Light Industrial districts to ensure desired target industries and related support services are accommodated in appropriate districts. Modify zoning districts as necessary.		◆		4a, 4b	Study/ Regulation
24	Pursue a public/private partnership to develop a new industrial/business park west of the airport.	◆			4b	Partnership
25	Evaluate airport zoning (height, land use) to ensure compatibility between the airport and neighboring properties.			◆	4c	Study/ Regulation
26	Evaluate establishing or working with other entities to establish a business incubator organization with space and support services.			◆	4d	Program/ Partnership
27	Establish standard public engagement process to receive input on proposed location, site design, and compatibility during the planning phases for new City-owned destination venues.	◆			5a, 10b	Program
28	Modify the Development Code to create a new Municipal Parks zoning district.	◆			6, 6a	Regulation
29	Update the Development Code to require development and redevelopment to provide connections (trails or sidewalks) to existing and proposed parks and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.		◆		6a	Regulation
30	Ensure parkland dedication requirements adequately address the addition of residential units through redevelopment.		◆		6a	Study/ Regulation
31	Partner with the University of Houston to create a pedestrian/bike corridor, consisting of generous streetscapes, parks, and connecting trails, that links the plaza in front of the Smart Financial Centre, the heart of the UH campus, and the Brazos River greenbelt.		◆		6b	Study/ Partnership
32	Evaluate the best way to implement the Rural & Agricultural land use category. Examine the Brazos River Conservation District and determine whether new uses should be added and it should be applied to all properties in the Brazos River floodway, or if a new district should be created for the privately owned floodway properties.			◆	6b	Study/ Regulation
33	Based on the Non-MUD Annexation Review Program, create an action plan for annexation of properties in the Brazos River floodway.			◆	6b	Program
34	Review existing zoning district regulations to establish smaller building setbacks and larger parking lot setbacks.		◆		7a	Study/ Regulation
35	Explore incentive programs for encouraging retrofitting existing sites with improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.		◆		7b	Program
36	Evaluate development applications for potential City participation in oversized pedestrian & bicycle facility costs.	◆			7b	Program
37	Evaluate codes to ensure proper maintenance funds are established at the time of subdivision development for ongoing maintenance of common facilities such as walls, detention ponds, parks, etc.		◆		8c	Regulation

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38	Update Development Code to promote the use of low-water usage plants on non-residential properties.		◆		8d	Regulation
39	Ensure updates to the City's Master Plans consider the policy guidance established in this Plan.	◆			8d	Program
40	Conduct corridor studies near redevelopment areas to help identify revitalization corridors for capital improvements. Evaluate rights-of-way adjacent to commercial areas to determine whether enhancements could encourage redevelopment. The study could include recommendations to improve pedestrian-friendliness, mobility, beautification, neighborhood identity, and such.		◆		8e, 9a	Study
41	Evaluate Capital Improvement Program process to include proximity to Regional Activity Centers and Neighborhood Activity Centers (where redevelopment is desired) as a factor when prioritizing projects.		◆		8e, 9a	Program
42	Pursue development (delayed annexation) agreements for agriculturally exempt land in the ETJ.	◆			8f	Program/ Partnership
43	Update Non-MUD Annexation Policy and Review Program to include intangible costs/ factors/ impacts of non-annexation of blighted/ distressed areas that are not located in Municipal Utility Districts.	◆			8f	Program
44	Pursue Strategic Partnership Agreements with developed Municipal Utility Districts in the ETJ.	◆			8f	Partnership
45	Coordinate with adjacent cities to establish logical boundaries.		◆		8g	Partnership
46	Pursue ETJ boundary adjustments with adjacent cities through agreements, ordinances, and other appropriate means.		◆		8g	Partnership
47	Conduct Redevelopment Study to evaluate incentive programs and public private partnerships to encourage redevelopment or rehabilitation of Redevelopment Areas identified in this Plan. Evaluate zoning districts, parking requirements, and other site development regulations to determine whether current regulations are sufficient to encourage redevelopment or if current regulations are encouraging disinvestment/decline. Evaluate when rehabilitation is appropriate vs. full scale redevelopment.		◆		9a	Study/ Program/ Partnership/ Regulation
48	Establish annual program to monitor health of retail areas, with special attention to areas adjacent to residential.	◆			9a	Program
49	Identify key historical buildings. Enter into agreements to ensure the preservation of historic buildings.			◆	10a	Program/ Partnership
50	Establish design guidelines for public spaces in Regional Activity Centers so they can be used for civic events.			◆	10b	Regulation

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