

IMPERIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT FAQ



WHY IS REDEVELOPING THE IMPERIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT A PRIORITY FOR THE CITY?

The Imperial Historic District is Sugar Land's namesake and a landmark that represents the city's beginnings as a company town. Revitalizing it honors that legacy while creating new opportunities for growth, reinvestment, and community pride.

WHY DID THE CITY ACQUIRE THE PROPERTY?

Public ownership removes long-standing barriers that prevented redevelopment for nearly two decades. It allows the City to protect historic assets, guide future use, and lay the groundwork for a successful public-private partnership.

WHAT IS THE CITY'S ROLE?

The City's role is **not** to develop the site, but to guide thoughtful and intentional redevelopment that reflects the community's vision and delivers long-term benefits for Sugar Land. By purchasing the property, the City can drive progress and partner with a private developer—similar to successful city-led projects like The Pearl in San Antonio, Mueller in Austin, and The Bell District in Cedar Park.

WILL THE CHAR HOUSE BE DEMOLISHED AND REPLACED WITH A REPLICA?

No. There has been no direction from City Council to demolish or replicate the Char House. Funding for this project is tied specifically to preservation. Authentic replication isn't possible and would jeopardize eligibility for historic tax credits and grants. Preserving the Char House makes the site unique and is a key factor attracting developer interest.

HOW WAS THE PURCHASE FUNDED?

City Council approved a \$50 million Certificate of Obligation (CO) to fund land acquisition, Char House preservation, and site and infrastructure improvements—\$31.5 million was used to purchase the land. The CO is contractually obligated to be repaid through the City's two voter-approved economic development corporations—Sugar Land Development Corporation and Sugar Land 4B Corporation—which dedicate a portion of local sales tax revenue to projects that strengthen the economy and enhance quality of life.

WHY INVEST IN THE CHAR HOUSE BEFORE THE FINAL PLAN IS KNOWN?

Preservation is essential to protect the structure for future use. Past studies identified repairs needed to stop deterioration. Making those improvements now ensures the Char House remains stable and ready for adaptive reuse in future redevelopment.

WHAT IS THE VISION? HOW WILL THE SITE BE REDEVELOPED?

That's to be determined. The City partnered with Town Planning & Urban Design Collaborative (TPUDC) in November 2025 to host four days of community visioning workshops. Hundreds of residents, businesses, and stakeholders shared ideas for what should be preserved, improved, and reimaged on the site. A final visioning report summarizing this feedback will be available in early 2026 and will help guide the search for a developer, who will be responsible for creating and executing the final vision.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The City plans to launch a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in early 2026 to identify a master development partner.

Updated 11/26/2025

