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For Improved Health, Climate Resilience, and Biodiversity

GREENER



#### Letter from the **Community**

Our team is excited to unveil this report heavily informed by local leadership, the Greener Gulfton Ambassadors, and the Greener Gulfton Steering Committee. Throughout the planning process, our team reflected on and prioritized inclusion, connectivity, hopefulness, and vitality. Throughout this report you will see how our collective vision came to fruition with invaluable input from community members and leaders.

Drafting this plan meant coming together with a common vision, common guiding principles, and a common understanding. Working together with passionate supporters and consultants we have crafted a nature-based solutions plan for the Gulfton community that simultaneously addresses Environmental Health, Human Health and Wellbeing, and Biodiversity Health.

Overall, while the vision and guiding principles are shared in the report, our Green Ambassadors understand how bringing life, color, smells, creativity, unity, and togetherness for all in Gulfton, including people, wildlife and plants can truly make an impact to the overall health and quality of life for our community.

We hope that this report shines light on the unique neighborhood qualities in Gulfton, how nature can enhance this community, and the strong leadership that exists in this neighborhood to ensure the success of the recommendations outlined in this report.

After all, in the words of our community leaders, "A success for this plan would be when the neighborhood has the tools, resources and know-how to drive the change."

#### With gratitude,

Green Ambassador Team for Greener Gulfton

#### **Acknowledgements**

The Greener Gulfton report represents the efforts dedicated by community members and leaders in Gulfton, and a consultant team aimed at reflecting and amplifying what we learned through the engagement process. We cannot express enough thanks to the Green Ambassadors, steering committee members, and to the neighborhood as whole for sharing and teaching us about your home. We were humbled by your openness and are grateful to have had this opportunity to meet each of you.



#### **Community Leadership**

Bahaa Abraham, Green Ambassador Julia De Leon, Green Ambassador Noellia Fadic, Green Ambassador Lenora Fields, Green Ambassador Maria Hernandez, Green Ambassador & Steering Committee Member Kristi Rangel, Steering Committee Member Parul Pillai, Steering Committee Member Sandra Rodriguez, Steering Committee Member

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# Preface & Community Summary

A Greener Gulfton

#### Introduction

What does nature do for the Gulfton Neighborhood?

How did the team work together and make decisions?

**Community Summary** 

#### Introduction

The preface section of the report introduces the importance that nature has on human health and wellbeing, environmental health, and the health of other living organisms within our communities. This section also includes the high level overview and synthesis of the project results within the Community Summary. The Community Summary also is translated into Spanish to support access to the report more broadly for the Gulfton community.

#### What does Nature Do for the Gulfton Community?

#### Nature is Essential for a Healthier Gulfton

Nature is a key element in making our neighborhoods healthier and safer. In order to truly flourish, all communities need easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables, safe and well-maintained parks and greenspaces, lush tree canopies, green schoolyards, adequate sidewalks, and safe bike lanes to access these places. Nature should never be seen as a luxury but rather as critical community health infrastructure that uplifts the mental, physical, cultural, and spiritual health and well-being of its human and nonhuman residents.

#### Nature, Human Health and Wellbeing

Abundant nature has been shown to have many positive impacts on human health and wellbeing. For instance, urban trees have been shown to reduce depressive symptoms. In one study, adults with major depressive disorder reported improvements in both mood and cognitive performance after taking weekly walks on streets with trees. Similarly, many people report feeling restored and delighted by the sound of birdsongs outside their window. Ready access to nature has also been shown to significantly reduce feelings of loneliness, which contributes to mental health challenges and can contribute to chronic conditions like heart disease. Nature can also help encourage social interactions and can connect Gulfton's residents to their cultural touchstones and ancestors – including through the planting

of gardens which produce healthy foods. Lastly, students who attend schools that are rich in nature have been shown to have higher levels of academic achievement and better focus.

Human health and wellbeing is also dependent on environmental health – the health of the soil, air, water, and climate of a place and nature plays a key role here too. Urban trees have been shown to reduce air pollution which can contribute to asthma and other respiratory ailments. Trees, shrubs, grasses, and other vegetation can also help cool hot urban environments. The 2020 Houston-Harris County Heat Watch Campaign identified Gulfton as Houston's physical hottest neighborhood – a full 17 degrees hotter than the coolest neighborhood in Harris County. It is clear that Gulfton needs a better tree canopy to become cooler as the impacts of climate change continues to worsen. Lastly, strategically emplaced nature-based solutions, like rain gardens and bioswales, can help soak up and clean stormwater.

#### Nature and Biodiversity

Gulfton is one of our nation's most ethnically diverse neighborhoods – a real strength for this community. It is also home to a diversity of indigenous and exotic plants and wildlife, as well

BIODIVERSITY is the variety and number of living things on Earth and includes all species, from the fungi living on the roots of a maple tree, to the owl that lives in its branches, to the tree itself. It includes diversity within species, between species, and among ecosystems. as domesticated animals. This diversity of nonhuman life is called biodiversity. Human health and wellbeing is highly dependent on having nature-rich parks, greenspaces, schoolyards, patios, and civic spaces. Selecting resilient, indigenous species and culturally significant plants can greatly improve Gulfton's biodiversity, while providing its people more opportunities to experience the awe of nature such as seeing a migrating monarch butterfly or a colorful songbirds.



#### **One Health**

In truth, human health and wellbeing, environmental health, and biodiversity health, are interdependent and tightly woven and is known as **One Health**. As we take actions to create a Greener Gulfton, strategies which use nature and nature-based solutions which uplift human, biodiversity, and environmental health simultaneously will maximize their positive impacts.

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#### **Community Action** Summary

#### Introduction

A Greener Gulfton for Nature, Health, and Resilience was an interdisciplinary planning effort that relied on community leaders, passionate residents, and non-profits in collaboration with a consulting team that included planning, design, environmental, health, art, and multilingual engagement expertise. The work was undergone in three main phases that include Understand, Envision, and Act, below are more details on each of these phases.



The **Understand Phase** of the report starts with a brief history of the region and existing conditions within Gulfton, including zone comparisons across four main areas within the super neighborhood. We also outline the main planning documents within the neighborhood and in the region, and provide nature and art projects that inspire us. The team hosted a kickoff event with the community in collaboration with Madres del Parque and asked participants what nature means to them.



The Envision Phase outlines a vision for Gulfton, informed by community engagement, the Guiding Principles that support our work, and the specific recommendations we are making for the neighborhood. The overall effort is to support and green the Gulfton Super neighborhood in a way that considers both people and non-human residents alike. The team hosted a walking tour with the Green Ambassadors and their family members to document what is working well in Gulfton and what aspects of the urban environment could use improvements.



The Act Phase of the report gets into the more granule details of a proposed pilot project. With feedback from the community and inspirational ideas from UP Art Studio, a Placita pilot project idea was developed and cultivated. This phase includes the details that have gone along with that process and provides visual resources for fund-raising and the next steps. The team hosted an in-person event at Burnett Bayland Park to gather feedback on the neighborhood recommendations and narrowed down pilot project ideas.



#### VALUING INDIGENOUS PRESENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

As step toward honoring the truth and achieving healing and reconciliation, we commit to acknowledging that the native Karankawa, Akokisa, and other Indigenous Peoples were heavily impacted by the legacy of forced removal from these unceded lands.

We also acknowledge that Gulfton is currently home to Indigenous Peoples from Texas, Mexico, Central America, and other parts of the world and their presence should be recognized and honored.

Gulfton residents, Greener Gulfton Ambassadors, and others preparing this plan, have strongly advised that Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) be valued for its inherent worth and integrated with western science and community knowledge to help co-create a greener, healthier, and better connected Gulfton. It is important to note that residents specifically called out a desire for Gulfton's greening efforts to be a means of recognizing their ancestors, both their genetic ancestors and the original Indigenous Peoples of this land.



Historic Indigenous Communities of Gulfton and Houston, Source: NATIVE-LAND.CA

#### **Community Action Summary**

Continued

#### **Our Process**

In the Greener Gulfton planning process, it was critical to include voices from local leadership and community members as thoroughly as possible. Gulfton has had momentum toward addressing community needs from the grass roots level to the institutional and local government level. Considering this, it was important to tap into leadership that continues to be involved in the future of Gulfton. This meant assembling a Greener Gulfton Steering Committee as well as Green Ambassadors to inform our work and recommendations as robustly as possible.

The Steering Committee provided an opportunity to guide research during the Understand Phase, draft a vision statement during the Envision Phase, and provide feedback on the Pilot Project for the Act Phase.

"Spending time in nature is an opportunity to relax and free my mind."

-Lenora Fields, Green Ambassador

As part of our efforts, it was important to include local voices and leadership through an ambassador program. Tecolotl, our sub consultant team, recruited and lead a group of five Green Gulfton Ambassadors which provided a method of enriching input and feedback from the Gulfton Community. Through monthly meeting we discussed a vision statement, strategy card recommendations, and finally pilot project opportunities.

"Our group, Madres del Parque is a group of mothers dedicated to the health and wellbeing of our community. We know spending time in nature is good for not only us as parents, but for our children as well. "

- Maria Hernandez, Steering Committee Member and Green Ambassador

TEERING COMMITTEE	GREEN AMBASSADORS
<b>Maria Hernandez</b> Madres del Parque	Brigitte Felix
Anne Whitlock	Bahaa Abraham Felix
Connect Community Kristi Rangel	Julia de Leon Fadic
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#### **PROJECT SPONSOR**



Jaime González, The Nature Conservancy Kathy Jack, Ph.D., The Nature Conservancy



Captured during a virtual combined steering committee and Green Ambassadors meeting.





#### **Community Action Summary** Continued

#### **Understand Phase**

Houston's Gulfton neighborhood is a vibrant, diverse community, with strong leadership, shared aspirations, and origins from across the planet. Gulfton's wild community is also vibrant and includes both Indigenous wildlife and plant life living alongside exotic plants prized for their cultural significance and beauty. Together, the human and non-human residents of Gulfton form a vibrant living community who need and deserve more nature for their health and wellbeing. Here are the main things we found out during our Understand Phase of the project:

"I am a garden volunteer. My children support me so that they feel happy discovering / Soy voluntaria de jardinería. Mis hijos me apoyan para que se sientan felices descubriendo"

- Greener Gulfton Resident, Public Kickoff Boards

#### **PEOPLE:**

- Gulfton is an Immigrant Hub: 58% of residents are born outside the U.S. with 75% of that born in Latin America.
- Gulfton Residents Speak Many Different Languages: 14.9% of residents speak only English, 70% speak Spanish.
- Gulfton Residents Primarily Rent and Live in Multi-Family Residential Units: Only 4.3% of residents own a home. The main housing type in Gulfton is multi-family residential with approximately 18,846 occupied housing units.
- Gulfton is Lacking Public Park Space: The 2015 Houston Parks Master Plan recommends 8 acres of park space per 1,000 people, 86 additional acres would need to be added to the Gulfton neighborhood to meet these recommendations.
- Gulfton is Culturally Rich and Reflected Through Urban Art: The Gulfton Story Trail Mural Project brings the spirit of the people living in the neighborhood to the fore, and is a creative way to provide a more welcoming space.
- Gulfton Residents Are Relatively Young and Include Children: 34% of residents are younger than 20 years old, and 37% are less than 40 years old.

#### **ECOLOGY:**

- Gulfton is in the Humid Gulf Coastal Prairie Ecoregion: Approximately 1%of the Gulf Coastal Prairie Ecoregion remains in Texas; much of this ecosystem has been converted to other landscape and land use types.
- Gulfton and the Houston Region is a Migration Route: Over the course of a season, millions of birds species pass through Texas. This winged migration also includes bats and insects of important significance.
- Gulfton is in the Brays Bayou
   Watershed and the Southeastern
   Portion of the Neighborhood is in
   the Floodplain: Brays Bayou is an
   urbanized watershed that covers 127
   square miles and severe flooding occurs
   at least once every 10 years.
- Gulfton Does Not Directly Connect to Bayou Trails: Brays Bayou and the corresponding bayou trail is approximately 1.5 miles from the southern edge of the neighborhood.
- Gulfton's Vegetative Cover and Tree Canopy is Not Evenly Distributed Throughout the Neighborhood: The densest vegetative cover is located in the Shenandoah community and associated with Burnett Bayland Park in Gulfton.

#### ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE:

- Gulfton is Highly Urbanized and Developed: The majority of the neighborhood is highly developed, urbanized, and experiences high urban heat values. Gulfton is a climate vulnerable community.
- **Gulfton Residents Do Not All Have Vehicles:** Approximately 12.7% of households do not have access to vehicles, and families rely on other means of transportation.
- Gulfton Lacks Connected Sidewalks: The sidewalk conditions in the community are of poor quality, with 41% of existing sidewalks having some kind of obstruction.
- Gulfton Needs to Improve Street Right of Way (ROW) Safety: In most cases, streets are designed to carry large amounts of vehicles with a large amount of wide traffic lanes. This places a major challenge for pedestrians crossing wide segments of road or with limited sidewalk space.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Gulfton was the hottest Harris County neighbored identified in the 2020 Houston Heat Watch Campaign - a full 17 degrees hotter than the coolest community in the county.

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#### Gulfton **Super Neighborhood**



#### **Community Action Summary** Continued

#### **Envision Phase**

As part of envisioning a Greener Gulfton, our team met with community members, steering committee members, and Gulfton Green Ambassadors to not only share the existing conditions data about the neighborhood that is available, but also to hear from them on the benefits that nature provides to their everyday lives, opportunities they imagine in their neighborhood, and ultimately the vision and guiding principles that should be reflected in a plan that hopes to make this neighborhood responsive to the needs of all residents, amidst the reality of the varied conditions. A vision statement and a series of guiding principles were developed and listed on this page.



#### **VISION:**

#### Greener Gulfton is a DIVERSE and VIBRANT community that is HEALTHY, CLIMATE PREPARED, and CONNECTED to NATURE

Gulfton más verde es una comunidad DIVERSA y VIBRANTE que está SANA, CLIMÁTICAMENTE PREPARADA, y CONECTADA a la NATURALEZA

#### **GUILDING PRINCIPLES:**

HEALTH & WELLNESS. Gulfton is a place where communities are supported in their goals toward improved health and wellness and where people and wildlife are supported to live long, happy, healthy lives

HONORING ANCESTORS. Gulfton is a place where our full selves, roots, and histories are part of solutions for healthier futures, and improved human health, ecological health, and environmental health.

**SAFETY.** Gulfton is a place where smart urban design can create safer, healthier, and more welcoming place for all residents and visitors.

**PERSEVERANCE.** Gulfton is a place where all residents regardless of income, race, gender, or abilities are fully supported to lead and implement solutions that benefit them, their families, their neighbors, and their community and in the vision that they hold for their communities that supports improved human, ecological, and environmental health.

EQUITY. Gulfton is a place where increasing nature and access involves addressing historical injustices and improving the physical and social conditions of all residents with a vision of justice and equity for all.



actions that can be taken in the neighborhood. These categories include Mobility Actions, Stormwater Management Actions, Architectural/ Structural Actions, Nature-Based Community Capacity Actions, and Community Capacity Actions.

NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY **ACTION:** Fund and implement a Burnett Bayland Park Master Plan for improved recreational and nature experiences

and action plan, in southeast Gulfton, to reduce street-level flooding and add greenspace

NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY **ACTION:** Increase gardens, parks, and natural habitats at schools for improved health and academic achievement

**COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTION: Create** nature-rich civic spaces - including the 'Placita' Pilot Project - for cultural, physical, mental, and biodiversity health

#### **Community Action Summary**

Continued

#### **Envision Phase**

#### Strategy Actions for a Greener Gulfton

The strategy actions for a Greener Gulfton outlined different design improvements that can be taken in the Gulfton neighborhood. These strategy cards were used during meetings and inperson events to communicate with the steering committee, Green Ambassadors, neighborhood residents, and other planning participants about what they want to prioritize in Gulfton. The cards are provided in English, Spanish, and Arabic and a full copy of these can be found in the Appendix of this report. These categories for the strategies include:

- MOBILITY ACTIONS,
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ACTIONS,
- ARCHITECTURAL/STRUCTURAL ACTIONS,
- NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTIONS and,
- COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTIONS.

#### 1.0 MOBILITY ACTION



#### **MOBILITY ACTIONS - BICYCLE**

NIKE LANES ADDITION/IMPROVEMENT I COVERED/LOCKED BIKE PARKING I BIKE RACKS I SHARED USE PATH OR

ACCIONES DE MOVILIDAD - CICLISTA

ADICIÓN/MEJORA DE CICLOVÍAS I ESTACIONAMIENTO CUBIERTO/CON LLAVE PARA BICICLETAS I APARCABICICLETAS I ADICIÓN/MEJORA DE CAMINOS DE USO COMPARTIDO O SENDEROS

Any action taken to improve the bicycle environment within the public Right-of-Way. Bike lanes are portions of roadways that have been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the use of bicyclists. Adding or improving bike lanes, paths, and bicycling amenities can encourage more cycling by creating a safer and more comfortable environment.

ualquier acción realizada para mejorar el entorno de la bicicleta dentro del derecho de paso público. Las ciclovías son porciones de las carreteras que han sido designadas por medio de franjas, señalización y marcas en el pavimento para el uso de los ciclistas. Añadir o mejorar iclovías, los caminos y los servicios para ciclistas puede fomentar el uso de la bicicleta al crear un normo más seguro y cómodo.



#### 2.0 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ACTION



#### NON VEGETATED STORMWATER ACTIONS & RAINWATER HARVESTING

CISTERN I RAIN TANK I POROUS PAVEMENT I STORMWATER DRAIN MARKERS I POROUS PAVEMENT ACCIONES PLUVIALES NO VEGETADAS Y RECOLECCIÓN DE AGUAS DE LLUVIA CISTERNA I TANQUE DE LLUVIA I ALMACENAMIENTO SUBTERRÁNEO I MARCADORES DE DESAGÜE DE AGUA:

PLOVALES I PAVIMENTO POROSO These actions include stormwater management improvements that do not include vegetation. Rainwater harvestir pavement that allows water to infiltrate into the soil below. Stormwater drain markers are warning signs placed at storm drains to deter deliberate dumping of pollutants.

Acciones de aguas pluviales o de lluvia que no incluyen la vegetacion. La recolección de aguas de lluvia ason mete pasivos para recolectar el agua de lluvia, yas aeco nu ne recipiente (como una cistema o un tanque) para su uso fo o utilizando un pavimento que permita que el agua se infiltre en el suelo de abajo. Los marcadores de desagüe aguas pluviales son señales de advertencia colocadas en los desagües pluviales para disuadir del vertido deliberado de contaminantes.

#### **3.0 STRUCTURAL ACTION**



#### **VERTICAL GREEN**

GREEN COLUMNS (FREEWAYS) I GREEI PASSIVE COOLING FENCE

#### JARDINES VERTICALES

COLUMNAS VERDES (AUTOPISTAS) I FACHADAS VERDES (EDIFICIOS) I ENREJADO VERDE I MUROS VERDESI "CERCAS VERDES" I CERCA DE REFRIGERACIÓN PASIVA

V ertical green systems incorporate plants on vertical surfaces such as freeway columns, walls, and fences. These systems can include both vegetation and soils, such as green walls, or structures that hold vegetation such as green facades or green trellises.

os sistemas verdes verticales incorporan plantas en superficies verticales como columnas de autopistas, muros y cercas. Estos sistemas pueden incluir tanto la vegetación como los suelos, como los muros verdes, o las estructuras que sostienen la vegetación, como las fachadas verdes o los enrejados verdes.

#### 4.0 NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTION



#### HABITAT & WILDLIFE SUPPORT ACTIONS

TREE PLANTS (STREET TREES, PARKING LOT TREES, PARK TREES) I NATIVE VEGETATION PLANTING ACCIONES DE APOYO AL HÁBITAT Y LA VIDA SILVESTRE PLANTACIÓN DE ÁRBOLES (ÁRBOLES PARA LA CALLE, ÁRBOLES PARA EL ESTACIONAMIENTO, ÁRBOLES PARA

I PLANTACIÓN DE VEGETACIÓN NATIV

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abitat and wildlife support actions include planting trees and native vegetation to restore habitat and make more habitable spaces. This may include planting trees or installing vegetation along streets, in parking lots, around apartments and living areas, and in parks.

as acciones de apoyo al hábitat y a la vida silvestre incluyen la plantación de árboles y vegetación nativa para restaurar el hábitat y hacer más habitables los espacios. Esto puede mincluir la plantación de árboles o la instalación de vegetación a lo largo de las calles, en los acionamientos, alrededor de los apartamentos y las áreas habitables, y en los parques.

#### **5.0 COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTION**



PUBLIC ART SCULPTURE I MURAL I SPACES ARTE PÚBLICO ESCULTURA I MURAL I ESPACIOS Public art is works made through the form that is visually and physically

ublic art is works made through the use of imagination and creative skills by artists in any form that is visually and physically accessible to the general public.

creativas de los artistas en cualquier forma que sea visual y fisicamente accesible para
 el público en general.



Continued

#### **Act Phase**

#### 'La Placita' Pilot Project

Gulfton's need to increase biodiversity and open space opportunities for its residents will require developing strategies at multiple scales. As stated in previous sections, these range from large street reconstruction projects to smaller interventions.

Since many of these strategies will take a number of years to implement, it is important to develop smaller, more tactical interventions in the short term. These interventions can provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoor space while increasing social and nature access opportunities. As part of the public engagement process multiple strategies were presented from which providing social interaction opportunities was selected as one of the top priorities for a pilot project.

The pilot project developed brings the idea of a "Placita" (small plaza) that can be used by residents to socialize, enjoy nature and in some cases, promote economic development by supporting businesses such as food trucks or street vendors. The pilot project's conceptual design intends to create a semi- temporary installation that can be located at any location with a large pavement area such as a parking lot and can be moved to different locations as needed.

#### 'La Placita' Pilot Project Details

The pilot project consists of a simple modular system of planters and seating elements that can be arranged as needed to promote social gathering, planting, or even art interventions. The modular system selected is derived from the dimensions of a parking space so that it can be arranged within the limits of any surface parking area in Gulfton. The modules can be made out of wood and be movable with casters. Although location can be in any surface parking or large pavement area it is recommended to be located where there is already an established use such as a food truck or a street vendor, or even a school parking lot.

In addition to planting and seating, art is considered an important element to express the diversity of cultures in Gulfton, serve as an educational opportunity, or bring nature to the community in a more artistic way.

Other iterations of the module were done with local artists to bring dynamism to the space and additional artistic opportunities, see following pages.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Build modules in collaboration with UP Art Studio and local artists
- · Select location in Gulfton and storage partner (school as a potential)
- Identify planting with assistance of TNC, the community or Ambassadors
- Plant modules at an event with the community



#### 'La Placita' Pilot Project Process

These preliminary pilot project renderings (shown on the previous two pages) were shared with UP Art Studio and developed further. These renderings are shown here. The art in the current renderings is a placeholder for the final artwork, which will be finalized with community stakeholder input. As part of the implementation process, UP Art Studio will present two or more artwork concepts to be considered. Each of these concepts will be tailored around different themes that arose from the Greener Gulfton plan such as plants native to Houston and Gulfton, the diverse cultures of the residents of Gulfton, honoring the indigenous ancestors before us, climate impact, urban heat, etc.



Source: UP Art Studio's process rendering



Source: UP Art Studio's process rendering





Source: UP Art Studio's process renderings

# UNDERSTA Valación

or Improved Health, Climate Resilience, and Biodiversity

Gulfton: Past. Present. Future Gulfton Residents Who and What is Here? What is Here by Zone? What is Going On? What Work Inspires Us?

#### **Understanding Gulfton**

The understand section of the report starts with a brief history of the region and existing conditions within Gulfton, including zone comparisons across four key areas within the Super Neighborhood. We also outline the main planning documents within the neighborhood and in the region, and provide case studies that reflect a combination of art and nature which inspire us.

#### *Gulfton: Past. Present. Future.*

#### **Gulfton's Ancient Roots**

Gulfton is often seen as a relatively new community. It's first subdivision, Shenandoah, was not established until the 1950s and many of its largest apartment complexes, which predominate the landscape, weren't built until the 1960's and 1970s. Yet, Gulfton has been home to a variety of living communities (both human and wild) for thousands of years. These deep historical roots can serve as an inspiration and guide for how nature, and its many deep cultural, resilience, health, and artistic dimensions, can uplift the current and future living communities of Gulfton.

A traveler visiting the Gulfton area of 12,000 years ago would have seen a dramatic landscape populated by Columbian mammoths, giant ground sloths, saber-toothed cats, and even American lions. These creatures would have inhabited our region's native grasslands, forests, bayou systems, and wetlands. Living alongside these giants were some of Gulfton's most familiar wildlife species such as northern raccoons, gray squirrels, leopard frogs, opossums, blue jays, and its pollinators – they were the survivors of the Ice Age.

As importantly, humans were an essential part of this living community. Local archeological digs have revealed that Indigenous peoples first entered our area at least 13,5000 thousand years ago. These peoples had a big impact on the land through hunting and through their extensive use of fire. They were Gulfton's first environmental stewards. Over time the ancestors of these ancient peoples, and others arriving at the area, would continue to use what is now Gulfton as hunting grounds and as a transit zone in between local bayous such as Buffalo Bayou and Brays Bayou. One of those tribes was called the Karankawa, a local tribe of hunter-gatherers, who migrated between the coast and the prairies that once blanketed most of the Houston region, including Gulfton.

By the early 1800s, the Karankawa, Akokisa, and other local tribes had been decimated by diseases or pushed out of their ancestral lands by settlers, yet, there are reminders of their presence. Many of the indigenous plants still found in Gulfton today were used for food or medicine by the Karankawa and other groups a living link to Gulfton's first residents. There are also over 50,000 self-identifying Indigenous People in Houston today, including some Gulfton residents. It is important to note that community members repeatedly expressed strong support, during the Greener Gulfton planning process, for remembering and uplifting ancestral influences, their own and the neighborhoods Indigenous presence.

#### Gulfton's Agricultural Age

American and European settlers began to colonize what is now the Greater Houston Region in the 1820s, drawn by the region's rich river soils (agriculture), prairies (cattle raising), and access to the Gulf of Mexico for trading agricultural goods for other goods. At the time, Gulfton was still a wild coastal prairie dominated by indigenous grasses, like little bluestem grass and sunflowers. The area was a part of the Mexican state of Coahuila y Tejas and was part of the Austin Colony. These prairies were home to red wolves, meadowlarks and countless insects. They were also home to feral longhorn cattle and wild horses. Embedded in these prairies were small, seasonally wet "prairie potholes" - wetlands. Together, these features attracted

cattle ranchers and hunters. In the late 1800s Rice University founder William Marsh Rice established the 9,449-acre W.M. Rice Ranch and cattle production, and oil exploration were prevalent in Gulfton. In 1908, William Wright Baldwin purchased this ranch from the Rice estate and established Westmoreland Farms in what is now Gulfton and adjoining City of Bellaire. Westmoreland Farms was conceived of as a residential community surrounded by "truck farms" - small farms whose goods were trucked into adjoining towns and the city of Houston. These farms included both row crops and a prominent dairy. There was also an equestrian center located near what is now Burnett-Bayland Park. By 1944 the neighborhood was a mixture of truck farms, wild nature, and individual homes. It is important to note that residents expressed strong support for reinvigorating Gulfton with gardens and orchards – a way of connecting to their rich cultural heritages and supporting healthy lifestyles while reconnecting to Gulfton agricultural roots.

#### **Gulfton's Modern History and Future**

In the 1950s the Shenandoah subdivision become modern Gulfton's first major residential development, a community of small ranch-style homes and large trees located in the heart of the neighborhood. In the 1960s and 1970s, Houston's booming economy attracted large numbers of white, single, young energy workers. In response developers constructed, and marketed, thousands of new apartment units featuring amenities such as swimming pools, laundry rooms, and easy access to the Galleria area. Many new Gulfton residents were transplants from the mid-west and northeast. In the early 1980s Houston's oil economy slumped and many of Gulfton's residents moved out – decreasing rents and increasing vacancies. This trend lead apartment owners to rebrand their apartments to newly



Local Indigenous dart points Source: Jason Barrett, Texas Department of Transportation



State of Coahila y Tejas, including the Austin Colony (in purple) Source: Woodson Research Center, Rice University



Native coastal prairie, Gulfton's original landscape Source: Jaime González

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arriving immigrant families from Mexico, Central America, Vietnam and other locations. By 2000, the number of Gulfton residents doubled, even without the addition of housing.

Today, Gulfton's dazzling tapestry of international cultures, and welcoming character, is well recognized and serves as a great source of strength, often giving rise to Gulfton's nickname – "Houston's Ellis Island". Yet, it is important to note that the style of intense urbanization used to build modern Gulfton, replaced much of Gulfton's original ecology with imperious surfaces which absorb more heat and less water than natural environments. This land use change has made Gulfton one of Houston's physically hottest neighborhoods and one where street flooding has been an issue, particularly in the southeast portion of the neighborhood.

This urbanization has also imperiled Gulfton's wild residents, providing relatively little habitat for pollinators, birds, and indigenous plants in comparison to other neighborhoods throughout the city. Residents participating in the Greener Gulfton planning process consistently expressed strong support for creating new nature-rich areas (including ponds, tree plantings, gardens, and orchards) to attract butterflies, birds, and other wildlife which adds to the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood while also uplifting mental, physical, cultural, and spiritual health of residents.



Longhorn cattle Source: Ed Schipul, Wikipedia



Article about Westmoreland Farms. Source: Woodson Research Center, Rice University



Map of Westmoreland Farms (shown in green) Source: Woodson Research Center, Rice University

#### **Gulfton Residents**



























## **58%** of Gulfton residents were born outside the U.S.

Houston's Gulfton neighborhood is a vibrant, diverse community, with strong leadership, shared aspirations, and origins from across the planet. Gulfton's wild community is also vibrant and sports both Indigenous wildlife and plant life living alongside exotic plants prized for their





## Of that 58%, **75%** were born in Latin America

cultural significance and beauty. Together, the human and non-human residents of Gulfton form a vibrant living community who need and deserve more nature for their health and wellbeing.







**209** species of plants and animals were found throughout Gulfton based on the citizen science application, iNaturalist.













The **common trees species** observed include: Elms (*Ulmus sp.*), Pines (*Pinus sp.*), Ashes (*Fraxinus sp.*), Oaks such as, Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*), Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*), Southern Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*) Chinkapin Oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*), Pecan (*Carya illinoisensis*), and Sugar Hackberry (*Celtis laeigata*).

# Who and What is Here?

#### **People of Gulfton**

Understanding the ethnic, cultural, and ages of the people in Gulfton ensures we are tailoring the planning process and product to reflect the resident's expectations, and developing engagement strategies that are accessible and available to all residents of Gulfton. In addition, it provides an opportunity to work towards long-term stewardship of this plan's greening recommendations that is responsive to all of these factors.

#### What we found:

- Gulfton is an Immigrant Hub: 58% of residents are born outside the U.S. with 75% of that born in Latin America.<sup>1</sup>
- Gulfton Residents Speak Many
- **Different Languages:** 14.9% of residents speak only English, 70% speak Spanish.2
- Gulfton Residents Are Relatively Young and Include Children: 34% of residents are younger than 20 years old, and 37% are less than 40 years old.
- Gulfton Residents Live with Less
- **Economic Resources:** 36% of residents live below the poverty line with a median household income of \$31,651 (compared to the median of Houston at \$52,450). Research and recommendations should look to support economic development for the existing residents, as well as provide opportunities to strengthen the community and support the younger generations.

Housing afford ability and ownership are issues that are only going to place Gulfton residents that are already vulnerable at higher risk of economic instability and loss of stable housing.

#### What we found:

#### • Gulfton Residents Primarily Rent and Live in Multi-Family Residential

**Units:** Only 4.3% of residents own a home, compared to 37.5% in Houston. The main housing type in Gulfton is multi-family residential with approximately 18,846 occupied housing units.

#### • Gulfton Residents Need Affordable

**Housing:** 50% of renters in Gulfton spend 30% or more of their income on rent. Planning for sustained housing afford ability must be considered as part of research and recommendations to properly address equity.<sup>3</sup>

Understanding equitable access to assets in both economic and physical proximity is important. Building from the community's strong foundation of social assets, recommendations should address issues of economic hardship and lack of green and biologically diverse open spaces, in order for the community to continue to be able to adapt and thrive as one.

#### What we found:

• Gulfton Residents Have Some Community Assets: Gulfton's assets include community centers such as Baker Ripley and Southwest service center, Burnett Bayland Park, as well as schools with Spark Parks and places of worship.

#### • Gulfton is Lacking Public Park Space:

The 2015 Houston Parks Master Plan recommends 8 acres of park space per 1,000 people, 86 additional acres would need to be added to the Gulfton neighborhood to meet these recommendations. About 40% of residents live within a 10-minute walk to a park.

#### Figure 1.0 Languages Spoken

LANGUAGE SPOKEN	GULFTON	HOUSTON	
Only English	14.9%	51.2%	
Spanish	70.0%	38.89	
Other and unspecified languages	8.2%	1.29	
Other Indo-European Languages:	3.2%	2.19	
French, Hatian, or Cajun	1.2%	0.6%	
Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese)	1.0%	1.39	
Tagalog (including Filipino)	0.4%	0.4%	
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	0.4%	0.8%	
Vietnamese	0.3%	2.29	
Arabic	0.3%	0.7%	
Russian, Polish or other Slavic language	0.1%	0.3%	
Korean	0.1%	0.2%	

Source: ACS 5-year Estimate 2015-2019

# Figure 1.1 Income across scales \$31,651 is the median household income for

Gulfton, compared to \$52,450 for Houston, and \$65,712 in



Source: ACS 5-year Estimate 2015-2019

• Gulfton is Cultural Rich and Reflected Through Urban Art: The Gulfton Story Trail Mural Project brings the spirit of the people living in the neighborhood to the fore, and is a creative way to provide a more welcoming space. The project was made possible by a partnership between Culture of Health — Advancing Together (CHAT), a Houston area nonprofit organization, along with Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) and the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.

What We Saw: Gulfton Recreates - During our site visit on November 6 2021, we observed families coming together at Burnett Bayland Park for organized recreation such as soccer and basketball, and solo recreation such as jogging and skateboarding.



Gulfton resident documenting nature and heat Source: Jaime González

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** In order to identify nature-based solutions to Climate Change, we must understand how vulnerable communities experience climate change impacts. *Frontline communities* should be part of decision making toward identifying local priorities, addressing access to natural resources, and ensuring equity in access to public services.<sup>4</sup>

# Who and What is Here?

#### **Environment & Climate**

Land cover, land use, and understanding how an urban area has developed over time helps us to interpret the environment and infrastructure of the neighborhood. The ways these urban spaces are stitched together, and what networks of mobility link areas together illuminate spatial characteristics that can be improved or expanded in Gulfton.

#### What we found:

• Gulfton is Highly Urbanized

and Developed: The majority of the neighborhood features highly developed land uses including, multifamily housing, commercial, and industrial with parking lots, streets, and buildings. Although this decreases the availability of open space in the neighborhood, it is also an asset to the community since its population density makes it an ideal place for a more walkable community.

• Gulfton Includes Mixed Land Uses in Close Proximity: Mixed land uses is not necessarily a poor indicator of the urban environment, however in the neighborhood mobility networks are often interrupted between land use types.

• Gulfton has Land Use Opportunities: The land use maps show some opportunities within the neighborhood that include: a east-west utility corridor north of Glenmont Street, Harris County owned land south of Burnett Bayland Park, and some vacant land. Gulfton is one of the most challenging and dangerous places to walk or bike in the City of Houston. Using a lens of equity and environmental justice, new transportation infrastructure can address the issues of both safety and environmental health. What we found:

• Gulfton Residents Do Not All Have Vehicles: Approximately 12.7% of households do not have access to vehicles, and families rely on other means of transportation.

• Gulfton Lacks Connected Sidewalks: The sidewalk conditions in the community

are of poor quality, with 41% of existing sidewalks having some kind of obstruction.

• Gulfton Needs to Improve Street Right of Way (ROW) Safety: In most cases, streets are designed to carry large amounts of vehicles with traffic lanes. This places a major challenge for pedestrians crossing wide segments of road or with limited sidewalk space. Pedestrian and bicycle crashes with vehicles are not uncommon in the neighborhood, with a total of 41 pedestrian and bike crashes, 6 of which resulted in a fatality from 2014–2018.

• Gulfton Vehicular ROW is Relatively Wide: Many streets are between 50'- 60' as local or collector streets, and tend to be wide, multi-lane roads that are utilized primarily by vehicles passing through the neighborhood. and/or pilot project.

High urban temperatures are caused by a density of parking lots, buildings, streets, and other impervious surfaces that reflect heat back into the atmosphere, causing urbanized areas to be warmer than surrounding, less developed neighborhoods. High temperatures and air pollution can harm health by triggering asthma and heat-related illness. What we found:

#### • Gulfton Experiences High Urban Heat:

The highly urbanized character of the neighborhood makes it vulnerable to high urban heat, especially in the northern portion of the area along Southwest Freeway, I-69 where most residents are located.

• Gulfton's Urban Heat Shifts Through the Day: Higher urban heat shifts from east to west in the neighborhood with heat lingering late into evening. The neighborhood has many paved parking lot areas which contribute to urban heat and reduce comfort for pedestrians. Areas of large open vegetated space, such as Burnett Bayland Park is cooler than the surrounding neighborhood.

#### Figure 1.2 Urban Microclimates

Parking lots and buildings absorb and hold heat, slowly releasing it back into the area. Temperatures are often unpleasant and dangerous for people, especially young children and elderly populations. HEATING EFFECT What We Saw: Gulfton's People-Centered Infrastructure Need - During our site visit on November 6, we observed neighbors with strollers and walking with young children through the area. We also biked around the neighborhood and experienced multi-roadways that felt unsafe to be on and gaps along sidewalk infrastructure. In addition, some of the less immediately apparent concerns are flooding in the south-eastern portion of the neighborhood, which is more easily noticed in the data to follow.

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** Houston will go from experiencing 10 days a year with a heat index of 105 or more during our hot summers today to 74 days a year by 2050.<sup>5</sup>

Trees and other vegetation cool the air through a process called "evapotranspirtaion."

Large street trees shade streets and sidewalks, making walking and biking safer.

COOLING EFFECT



# Who and What is Here?

#### Ecology

Understanding your local ecoregion provides an idea of what plant species and plant communities the site supported historically and what it is capable of supporting in the future. Ecoregions are areas of land or water that contain geographically distinct climates, groups of plant and animal species, and environmental conditions.<sup>6</sup> Animals that have adapted to conditions within the gulf coast region still rely on important vegetation for survival; for example, the Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) needs both Milkweed (*Asclepias sp.*) and abundant nectar sources to complete its long migration.

#### What we found:

• Gulfton is in the Humid Gulf Coastal Prairie Ecoregion: Approximately 1% of the Gulf Coastal Prairie Ecoregion remains in Texas; much of this ecosystem has been converted to out landscape and land use types.

• Gulfton and the Houston Region is a Migration Route: Over the course of a season, millions of birds species pass through Texas. This winged migration also includes bats and insects of important significance.

Bayou systems throughout Houston are key routes for urban wildlife to move safely throughout the city. The prehistoric-looking alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*) has been found in Buffalo Bayou in downtown Houston! Climate change is likely to increase the severity of rainfalls, potentially causing homes that are currently within an area of minimal flood hazard to be in a flood-prone area. Reducing impervious cover and adding green infrastructure now may have flood benefits in the future. What we found:

• Gulfton is in the Brays Bayou Watershed and the Southeastern Portion of the Neighborhood is in the Floodplain: Brays Bayou is an urbanized watershed that covers 127 square miles and severe flooding occurs at least once every 10 years.

• Gulfton Does Not Directly Connect to Bayou Trails: Brays Bayou and the corresponding bayou trail is approximately 1.5 miles from the southern edge of the neighborhood.

Measuring and understanding the vertical complexities of vegetative cover is important because this three-dimensional information can serve as indicators for the potential of green space to support biodiversity, nature-based infrastructure (stormwater management), and climate mitigation, among other ecosystem services. In addition, biodiversity richness supports mental health for people but also ensures a thriving ecosystem for nature. What we found:

#### • Gulfton's Vegetative Cover and Tree Canopy is Not Evenly Distributed Throughout the Neighborhood: The

densest vegetative cover is located in the Shenandoah community and associated with Burnett Bayland Park in Gulfton. In general streets lack trees to provide consistent shade and enhance biodiversity of species throughout the neighborhood. Some streets such as Gulfton, Alder, Renwick and Bellaire have trees sporadically along medians or along sidewalks. The species most observed are Elms, Pines and Ashes which vary in growth rates, however a more thorough tree inventory should be done to understand the health and diversity of trees in the neighborhood.

• Gulfton has Low Biodiversity Richness: The lack of natural areas and green space in Gulfton has a negative effect on biodiversity in the neighborhood. In addition, not many bird species were observed in the area.

What We Saw: Gulfton's Green Thumb - During our site visit on November 6, we observed neighbors and community groups tending to the pollinator garden at Burnett Bayland Park. We also noticed people using any free outdoor space around multifamily housing units to plant vegetation, even using 5-gallon buckets from Lowes and Home Depot for fruit trees.



Understanding the role of vegetation along ditches throughout Gulfton can help not only with controlling or reducing sediment, but also increasing tree canopy coverage; overall planting along ditches can increase biodiversity. Pictured we see bald cypresses along typical Gulfton Street.

#### BIODIVERSITY is the variety and number of living things on Earth and includes all species, from the fungi living on the roots of a maple tree, to the owl that lives in its branches, to the tree itself. It includes diversity within species, between species, and among ecosystems.



Prairies are part of the ecoregion of Houston, and understanding their plant communities can help in identifying supporting contextsensitive and locally adapted plantings responsive to these conditions throughout Gulfton.

#### What is Here by Zones?



**CLIMATE CHANGE: Gulfton** was the hottest Harris County neighbored identified in the 2020 Houston Heat Watch Campaign - a full 17 degrees hotter than the coolest community in the county.

#### **Gulfton Zones: Overview**

As part of our analysis, our team split the Gulfton neighborhood up into four zones to create distinct community profiles that help shape the themes of reccomendations by zone. Each zone has concerns of interest that helps guide the neighborhood-wide recommendations and priorities.

#### Zone 1

The northwest section of the Gulfton Super Neighborhood is bounded to the north by I-69/ Southwest Freeway and is one of the densest zones of the neighborhood. The primary land use is multi-family residential where 60% of the residents were born outside the United States. Due to the built-out, impervious conditions, urban heat can be high and tree canopy is limited accounting for 12% of the surface area. There are opportunities to enhance nature-based strategies on private property and at local schools.





#### Zone 3

The southwest section of the Gulfton Super The southeast section of the Gulfton Super Neighborhood is bounded to the west by Hillcroft Neighborhood is bounded to the west by Alder Avenue. The land use is a mixture of industrial, Drive. The land use is a mix of industrial, commercial, multi-family, and single-family commercial, multi-family, and single-family residential where 63% of the residents were born residential where 56% of the residents were born outside the United States. Urban heat can be high outside the United States. Urban heat is lower in this zone. Tree canopy accounts for 16% of in this zone, however, the tree canopy accounts for 14% of the surface area, and much of the the surface area, and much of the vegetation is vegetation is associated with the Shenandoah associated with the Chimney Rock Center, owned neighborhood. There are opportunities to create by Harris County. Eighty-eight percent of the 'cooling corridors' from residential to more zone is within the 100-year floodplain. There are opportunities to transform the land around the commercial areas of Gulfton. Chimney Rock Center to create a community asset and effective site for stormwater capture.





#### Zone 2

The northeast section of the Gulfton Super Neighborhood is bounded to the north by I-69/ Southwest Freeway. The land use is a mixture of industrial, commercial, and multi-family residential where 48% of the residents were born outside the United States. Urban heat can be high in this zone. Tree canopy is limited, accounting for 10% of the surface area, and much of the tree cover is associated with Burnett Bayland Park. There are opportunities to enhance park space at Burnett Bayland Park and at schools within this part of Gulfton.









#### Zone 4







#### Gulfton **Super Neighborhood**













24 bus stops





within 500-yr floodplain

> outside floodplain

16% Vegetative Cover





#### What is Going On?

The following provides an overview of existing plans and initiatives that the Gulfton neighborhood and the surrounding area has undertaken, and their relevance to the development of the Greener Gulfton Plan.

#### **Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown**

The Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown was a result of the collaboration across 70 organizations, neighborhood groups, and public agencies to strategize an action plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown. This plan creates a vision that focuses on housing afford ability and quality, transportation access and safety, community health and wellness, and education and workforce development.

#### **Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan**

The Gulfton Action Plan outlines the vision, policies, goals and projects that have been identified through a community planning process to move the neighborhood towards a healthier, more prosperous, resilient, and equitable future. From the priorities identified in the Complete Communities Action plan, Greener Gulfton can focus on expanding parks and open spaces, health, civic engagement, neighborhood character and mobility and infrastructure.

#### **Houston Climate Action Plan**

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a community-wide effort that includes strategies and actions that are evidence-based, practical, and cost effective. The CAP consists of four focus areas: Transportation, Energy Transition, Building Optimization and Materials Management. The actions were prioritized based on possible emission reductions, potential to improve community equity and resilience, reduce pollution and waste, and support the local economy.

#### **Resilient Houston**

The Resilient Houston document is a companion document to the Houston Climate Action Plan. The Greener Gulfton planning process is a holistic effort that brings together expertise as it relates to neighborhood scale planning, public health, urban ecology, equity, art, and design. There are opportunities to integrate and embed particular goals set in the Resilient Houston plan in the Greener Gulfton project.

#### **Houston Bike Plan**

The Houston Bike Plan outlines a clear vision to be a Gold-level Bicycle Friendly City by 2027 and establishes a work for how to achieve that vision. For the Greener Gulfton plan, there is an opportunity to focus on off-street facilities that can be complemented with planting and landscape amenities that expand the network of ecosystems in the area.



#### Houston Vision Zero Action Plan

The Vision Zero Action Plan is a commitment to safer streets in Houston and identifies 50 actions that the City will take to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030. At the center of this plan is upholding everyone's right to safe, accessible streets and sidewalks. The Greener Gulfton Plan advocates for more connectivity that prioritizes transportation safety for the community.

#### Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment

The Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment recommendations prioritize safety on the main streets in Gulfton. These recommendations include reducing the amount of vehicular lanes, adding buffered bike lanes, installing traffic signals, optimizing accessibility, enhancing the pedestrian realm, and creating a community plaza space.

#### **Gulfton Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study**

The Special District Study was conducted using the Gulfton and Woodlake/ Briarmeadows areas to identify strategic investment areas for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The study's approach included assessing the area's issues and needs through public engagement, data collection and analysis, and identifying priority projects.

#### **Cities Connecting Children to Nature**

Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) is a nation-wide initiative promoting the equitable access to nature so that both children and nature can thrive. CCCN provides cities to with guidance for establishing these connections through training on promising practices, access to national experts, and peer learning opportunities.

#### Neighborhood Manufacturing Study

The purpose of the Neighborhood Manufacturing Study in Gulfton was to identify unique challenges and opportunities faced by small business owners, manufacturers, and makers in Gulfton. Finding new ways to help these businesses in Gulfton thrive based on precedent studies from around the country is a priority of this study.

#### Affordable Multi-Family Housing: Risks and Opportunities

This affordable housing report examines the need for affordable housing in Houston and Harris County. The risks of flooding and the accelerating loss of affordable housing in the area makes understanding the issue imperative so opportunity areas can be identified. The report answers questions such as: where is current affordable housing located, how many units are located in flood-prone areas, what are the challenges to preserving current affordable housing, and what funding strategies can be utilized.



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#### What Work Inspires Us?

#### **Greening toward Community Action!**

As part of the efforts towards looking at solutions that heavily center biodiversity, nature, history, community and art, we looked to the examples below for inspiration that help catalyze a Greener Gulfton. The examples below look at various types of installations, murals, and immersive place activations that bring people to a space, uncover data that is not as easily visible, creatively work with found materials, and look at activating often overlooked and under used spaces. More information about these individual pieces are found in the appendix.







#### **Stacy Levy, Topo Map** Fayetville, North Carolina - North America

This installation reveals the layers that are not always visible in cities and neighborhoods. Uncovering facts about a place can bring attention to important themes from this report.





#### Ciudad Emergente, Okuplaza

Santiago, Chile - South America

This installation is an effective example of activating places FOR people, and demonstrates the power of community capacity toward encouraging community uses.





**Bordallo II, Recycled Art** Various locations, Europe

Integrating waste and recycled/found material is an excellent way to think about merging ecology and environmental health in a unique way.





#### Mexico City, Via Verde

Mexico City, Mexico

This transformation of freeway structures demonstrates how to introduce nature successfully toward more people friendly places.

# ENISION: AGREENE Guifton

#### A Vision for Gulfton

Where Should These Actions Happen?

What Actions Can We Take?

How Can We Support Our Non-Human Residents?

How Do We Fund These Recommendations?

#### Introduction

This section covers content that begins to outline A Vision for Gulfton, informed by community engagement, the Guiding Principles that support our work, and the specific recommendations we are making based on ongoing conversations. In addition, this section gets closer to information toward implementation, whether it's pilot project content, or prioritization criteria. The overall effort is to support and green this neighborhood in a way that considers both people and nonhuman residents alike.

#### **A Vision for** Gulfton

#### **Overview of Process**

As part of envisioning a Greener Gulfton, our team met with community members, steering committee members, and Gulfton Ambassadors to not only share the data about the neighborhood that is available, but also to hear from them on the benefits that nature provides to their everyday lives, opportunities they imagine in their neighborhood, and ultimately the vision and guiding principles that should be reflected in a plan that hopes to make this neighborhood responsive to the needs of all residents, amidst the reality of the varied conditions found here. To

meet community members and leaders throughout Gulfton, meetings included virtual zoom conversations, a community kick-off held during a community park clean-up event, a walking tour that took place in the Gulfton neighborhood, and a park activation event that revolved around identifying existing biodiversity found in the neighborhood. All of these events provided information that informed a range of options for a concise set of vision statements and guiding principles, as well as direction to envision pilot project opportunities. By summarizing these conversations into vision statements. steering committee members and Green Ambassadors had the opportunity to vote online for their preferred options shaped by their contributions throughout the process. Ultimately, the following vision statement was selected as the top priority for A Greener Gulfton for Nature, Health, and Resilience.



#### Greener Gulfton is a DIVERSE and VIBRANT community that is HEALTHY, CLIMATE **PREPARED, and CONNECTED to NATURE**

Gulfton más verde es una comunidad DIVERSA y VIBRANTE que está SANA, CLIMÁTICAMENTE PREPARADA, y CONECTADA a la NATURALEZA

SALUD Y BIENESTAR. Gulfton es un lugar donde las comunidades son apoyadas en sus metas hacia la mejora de la salud y el bienestar y donde las personas y la vida silvestre son apoyadas para vivir vidas largas, felices y saludables

HONRAR A LOS ANCESTROS. Gulfton es un lugar en el que todo nuestro ser, nuestras raíces y nuestras historias forman parte de las soluciones para lograr un futuro más saludable y mejorar la salud humana, la salud ecológica y la salud medioambiental.

**SEGURIDAD.** Gulfton es un lugar donde un diseño urbano inteligente puede crear un lugar más seguro, saludable y acogedor para todos los residentes y visitantes.

**PERSEVERANCIA.** Gulfton es un lugar en el que todos los residentes, independientemente de sus ingresos, raza, género o capacidades, reciben todo el apoyo necesario para liderar y poner en práctica soluciones que les beneficien a ellos, a sus familias, a sus vecinos y a su comunidad, así como en la visión que tienen para sus comunidades y que apoya una mejor salud humana, ecológica y medioambiental.

**EQUIDAD.** Gulfton es un lugar donde el aumento de la naturaleza y el acceso implica abordar las injusticias históricas y mejorar las condiciones físicas y sociales de todos los residentes con una visión de justicia y equidad para todos.

HEALTH & WELLNESS. Gulfton is a place where communities are supported in their goals toward improved health and wellness and where people and wildlife are supported to live long, happy, healthy lives

HONORING ANCESTORS. Gulfton is a place where our full selves, roots, and histories are part of solutions for healthier futures, and improved human health, ecological health, and environmental health.

**SAFETY.** Gulfton is a place where smart urban design can create safer, healthier, and more welcoming place for all residents and visitors.

**PERSEVERANCE.** Gulfton is a place where all residents regardless of income, race, gender, or abilities are fully supported to lead and implement solutions that benefit them, their families, their neighbors, and their community and in the vision that they hold for their communities that supports improved human, ecological, and environmental health.

EQUITY. Gulfton is a place where increasing nature and access involves addressing historical injustices and improving the physical and social conditions of all residents with a vision of justice and equity for all.

#### Where Should **These Actions** Happen?

#### Introduction

The vision, guiding principles, and community events and meetings resulted in plan recommendations grounded in the Gulfton neighborhood's context. The recommendations for the Gulfton super neighborhood are divided into two sections. The first section focuses on the main, neighborhood-wide recommendations supported by the Green Ambassadors, Steering Committee, and residents we met at community events. The second section outlines, in broad terms different strategy actions that can be taken in the neighborhood. These categories include:

- MOBILITY ACTIONS,
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT ACTIONS,
- ARCHITECTURAL/STRUCTURAL ACTIONS,
- NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTIONS and.
- COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTIONS.

Each action within these themes corresponds with the designated colors. The strategies were translated into English, Spanish, and Arabic so that they could be used at community events to engage with residents.

#### Neighborhood-Wide Actions -Over the Next 5-10 years

#### NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY

**CAPACITY ACTION: Fund and** implement a Burnett Bayland Park Master Plan for improved recreational and nature experiences

#### Initiate and Develop a Master Plan for **Burnett Bayland Park - continued**

The Gulfton super neighborhood lacks highquality parks and open space, especially in areas along IH-69 and in Zones 1 and 3. Burnett Bayland park is already a popular destination, but parts of the park need moderate to major improvements including providing safe and accessible ways of getting to and from the space. Below are a few other key things to consider as part of the planning process.

- Consider expanding park space south into Harris County-owned property, consider a longterm plan to relocate the Correction Facilities
- Consider opportunities to expand park space to adjacent undeveloped land east of Chimney Rock Rd and north of Gulfton Street
- Consider access and safe crossings into the park space such as from SER Ninos Middle School to the north and other adjacent facilities
- Provide welcoming and accessible ways into the park by removing the fence and developing mobility systems to get to and around the park
- · Consider ways to support fruit trees and community gardens within the park boundary
- Consider improving the multipurpose fields to improve safety and promote more usage
- Evaluate under used areas in the park to propose new amenities

#### **MOBILITY ACTION:** Initiate a cool 2 corridors program to combat climate change and urban heat island impacts

The 2020 Houston-Harris County Heat Watch Campaign found Gulfton as one of the hottest neighborhoods at 17 degrees hotter than cooler neighborhoods in the county. In addition, about 13% of households do not have access to personal vehicles and rely on other transportation types. Developing a Cool Corridors program combines mobility upgrades and improvements with planting trees, and vegetation to develop more comfortable ways to navigate the neighborhood.



#### **Initiate and Start Cool Corridors Program** within Gulfton - continued

- Consider opportunities to collaborate with the Houston Parks Board to support the development of the Gulfton 'T' strategy outlined in the 2018 Beyond the Bayous Report as a Cool Corridor
- Consider opportunities to support nonvehicular strategies that connect to the CenterPoint ROW and down to the Brays Bayou trail system
- In addition to the north-south corridors, develop a strategy to support east-west Cool Corridors to create a network

Cool Corridors offer residents of all ages and abilities relief from hot weather through the provisioning of natural and engineered shade, use of green infrastructure and other features that lower daytime air temperature, availability of benches, drinking water foundations, and other features to facilitate rest and recovery. Cool Corridors could have a combination of public and private features that provide shade or reduce extreme heat such as: landscaping in the public right-ofway, landscaping in private property, public art, cool pavement, and misters. The target shade coverage for Cool Corridors is 60%.

Source: City of Phoenix Cool Corridors Program

Neighborhood-Wide Actions -Over the Next 5-10 years

**MOBILITY ACTION:** Support and implement sidewalk improvements and safe crossings to address pedestrian safety and access issues

The Gulfton super neighborhood needs investment in its pedestrian infrastructure. Researchers at the Kinder Institute found that 36% of the 486 street segments had no sidewalk, and 41% of sidewalks had some kind of obstruction such as a gap in the network. Building off this, Gulfton Complete Communities is working on a Resilient Sidewalks Study that is currently underway (2022/23). This study will provide recommendations and prioritize investment.

• Based on the sidewalk study and other relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the pedestrian projects for Gulfton

• Find opportunities to coordinate with the Cool Corridors program to support cooling efforts as it relates to pedestrian spaces

• Emphasize and support efforts to implement sidewalk and crossing improvements to Burnett Bayland Park and other green spaces

· Find opportunities for road diet projects to reduce traffic speed, promote safety and increase space available for pedestrian back or curb improvements that include wider sidewalks, planting areas, and when feasible, green infrastructure strategies such as rain gardens

 Delineate on street parking areas by providing bulb-outs at intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing distance, improve safety and add opportunities for planting

#### NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY **CAPACITY ACTION: Activate a** neighborhood urban forestry strategy to mitigate heat, improve air quality, and support wildlife

4

The Gulfton super neighborhood lacks a sufficient urban tree canopy, especially in areas along IH-69 in Zones 1 and 2. Tree canopy that makes up approximately 40-60% cover significantly helps to cool the ambient air temperature. Undergoing an Urban Forestry Study can help to determine where trees can be added to fill these gaps and plan for the future.

· Consider coordinating with Trees for Houston which has dedicated 100 trees for the Gulfton area as part of the study

· Coordinate between the Cool Corridors program to prioritize trees along key mobility corridors

• Trees take time and resources to reach mature heights and provide needed shade; consider other ways of creating temporary shade with structures such as green facades

#### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT 5 **ACTION:** Facilitate a green stormwater feasibility study and action plan, in southeast Gulfton, to reduce street-level flooding and add greenspace

The southeastern section of the Gulfton super neighborhood is within the 100 year FEMA Flood Zone, approximately 16% percent of the land area of Gulfton. These areas are primarily in Zones 2, 3, and 4. The area experiences more localized flooding when the stormwater infrastructure is undersized and gets overwhelmed with high-volume rain events.



#### Initiate and Undergo a Stormwater Feasibility Study within the southeast sections of Gulfton - continued

• Both grey and green stormwater management techniques will need to be considered in tandem to provide the proper stormwater storage and water quality improvements in the neighborhood

• Consider coordinating with the Master Plan effort for Burnett Bayland Park and explore opportunities of including stormwater management improvements

• Consider opportunities to expand into Harris County-owned property for stormwater management improvements

• Coordinate with the Cool Corridors program to consider stormwater management along the corridors where appropriate





Bioswales are linear stormwater management systems that infiltrate, slow, and clean water when it rains

#### Neighborhood-Wide Actions -Over the Next 5-10 years

#### NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY

**CAPACITY ACTION:** Increase gardens, parks, and natural habitats at schools for improved health and academic achievement

The Gulfton super neighborhood has multiple schools and learning institutions, especially along Gulfton Street. Students who attend schools rich in nature spaces have been shown to have higher academic achievement and better focus.

- Coordinate with the Cool Corridors program to consider non-vehicular mobility improvement along Gulfton Street
- Prioritize protected crossings to parks and open spaces from schools
- Consider making nature-based improvements to schools that could be public and provide needed park space in the neighborhood

• Consider starting improvement efforts at Benavidez Elementary School as there was once a nature garden and pond which could be considered again

#### **COMMUNITY CAPACITY ACTION** & NATURE-BASED COMMUNITY **CAPACITY ACTION:** Create naturerich civic spaces - including the 'Placita' Pilot Project - for cultural, physical, mental, and biodiversity health

• The Placita Pilot Project serves as a test case for a larger plaza within Gulfton, such as in Burnett Bayland Park as part of the Master Plan process

See ACT Section of this report for more detail.

#### **Partnerships and Community Capacity**

The ambitious recommendations presented here will rely on committed leaders and community capacity to complete projects and maintain those improvements. There may be opportunities to leverage financing for certain projects by encouraging the development of public-private partnerships that support a common goal. This organization strategy can leverage private sector investment and local philanthropy to support the project when public funding is not immediately available. This often allows projects to be completed on a faster time line without the major burdens experienced through a typical government process. That being said, a robust public outreach plan must be a critical component of any partnership strategy. Thus, even in a public-private partnership, the voices of the community will be heard and the process will be kept as transparent as possible. The Houston Parks Board (HPB), for instance, is working on their Beyond the Bayous program and there may be opportunities to leverage HPB's work in Gulfton by aligning goals and prioritizing projects.

In general, parks, trails, and green spaces are essential to health and quality of life by enhancing the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of the communities they support. With this in mind, many health care organizations and funders are supporting projects that enhance the environmental conditions within our cities. Consider developing or expanding partnerships with the local and regional hospitals, community health centers, and public health agencies, and health care funders, such as **Harris County Public Health** and/or the **City of Houston Health Department**.



#### Partnerships and Community Capacity - continued

Beyond direct financial support, partnerships can also provide programming, maintenance, stewardship efforts, and support local businesses. This can take the form of internal departmental partnerships which leverage existing programs to provide opportunities to strengthen programming for the community. In addition, partnerships can be pursued with local non profits to develop creative programming and/ or stewardship opportunities including adopt-apark efforts, park clean-up days, and restoration opportunities. **Las Madres del Parque** is an example of an organization dedicated to stewarding parks and open space in Gulfton.

s. I



Burnett Bayland Park clean up event lead by Las Madres del Parque in fall 2021

#### What Actions Can We Take?

#### Action Strategies for a **Greener Gulfton**

The following section provides the five themes from our recommendations that promote a Greener Gulfton. Please refer to the Appendix to review the strategy cards and additional information used during the community engagement phases of our effort.

APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS: As part of our recommendations, we made suggestions on the general locations that recommendations can be implemented. These are general, so that there is flexibility to where things are installed.

PLANNING DOCUMENT REFERENCE: This section demonstrates that strategies are supported and outlined in other documents, and demonstrate that recommendations here are intended to provide additional specificity to get closer to implementation.

**EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY:** These demonstrate precedents for strategy actions recommended. Photos marked with a lightning bolt have opportunities for immediate or near-term and short-term implementation.

STRATEGY TITLE: This provides the number and title recommended.

**DESCRIPTION:** This provides a general overview of the strategy presented.

**NATURE-BASED SOLUTION:** This provides research to supplement solutions that incorporate elements of nature.

**BENEFIT RATING:** This provides readers an understanding on the various benefits provided by the strategy

**STRATEGY THEME:** This demonstrates the 5 overarching themes that our recommendations and strategies are aligned to.

**RECOMMENDATIONS BY TIME:** This section provides readers a level of detail on timing to achieve implementation.

**COMPLEMENTARY STRATEGY:** This section demonstrates how recommendations can be coupled with other items outlined in our list of Strategy  $\hat{\mathbf{y}}$ Actions.





Refers to catalytic projects that can be implementable in the near term.

#### **Action Strategy Cards**

As part of the recommendations made for the Strategy Actions, our team wanted to include suggestion based on locations by strategy. Of the total 17 strategy actions used for engagement, these strategy cards included suggestions for implementation along areas such as Building Envelopes, Parks/Vacant Land, Right-of-Way, and Right-of-Way to Building Envelope. The definitions for these typologies found in Gulfton are as follows:



**PARKS / VACANT LAND**: Parks are natural or semi-natural spaces set aside for recreation and enjoyment. Vacant land has no buildings on it and is not currently being used.



**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



#### **BUILDING ENVELOPE**

**BUILDING ENVELOPE:** is the maximum space on a lot that a structure can be built as permitted by existing regulations. There are 2 variations, one with a stormwater emphasis, and another with an emphasis on roof coverage.



#### RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]

**RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]:** Right-of-Way are defined as the legal right, established by usage or grant, to pass along a specific route and can include roadways, trails, and utility easements. These spaces can be public or kept private based on use type. Public Right-of-Way are subject for existing or future streets, curbs, planting strips or street trees, utilities, infrastructure or sidewalks.



RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

**RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BUILDING ENVELOPE** is the space between a lot's buildable area and the public ROW.





#### .1 MOBILITY ACTIONS - PEDESTRIAN

PROTECTED CROSSINGS I MEDIAN ADDITION/IMPROVEMENT I SHARED USE PATH OR TRAIL ADDITION/ IMPROVEMENT I SIDEWALKS ADDITION/IMPROVEMENT

#### **Description**:

Any action taken to improve the pedestrian environment within the public Right-of-Way. Improvements made to pedestrian spaces can make them more accessible, comfortable, and safe, which encourages more of their use.

**Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Planting trees and other vegetation in coordination with any pedestrian actions, such as installing indigenous trees along new sidewalks, will provide more comfortable environments for getting around Gulfton. The shade provided by vegetation has the ability to reduce surface temperatures by 20-45  $^{\circ}$  F as compared to unshaded material surfaces.<sup>7</sup>



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



#### 3-4 years, Mid-Term:

prioritized projects, such as planting trees

- School Sidewalk Program
- Major Thoroughfare Program

#### 5+ years, Long Term:



**TO BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



LAND

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

- •Meet or exceed upgrades American Disabilities Act and tenets of Universal Design<sup>8</sup>
- •Ensure language access that promotes safety for pedestrians

- •Refer to the Resilient Sidewalks Study that is underway (2022/23) for recommendations
- •Identify key intersections or mid-block location that could benefit from protective crossing
- •Coordinate with partners to identify shared use path or trail locations within Gulfton
- •Based on the sidewalk study, prioritize the pedestrian project for Gulfton
- •Determine if their are opportunities to include nature-based solutions along with the
- •From the prioritized projects consider applying for the below City of Houston Programs: Pedestrian Accessibility Review Program
- •Initiate construction projects for pedestrian and sidewalk priority areas

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



#### **1.2 MOBILITY ACTIONS - VEHICULAR**

ROADWAY DIET OR CLOSURE I STREET INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT I BUS STOP IMPROVEMENT

#### **Description**:

Any action taken to improve the vehicular environment within the public Right-of-Way, especially improvements that support multiple mobility uses. Road diets, improvements made to street intersections and bus stops can improve safety for all users while creating a comfortable environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

#### **Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Planting trees along roads creates multiple benefits. Studies show lower stress levels of drivers that see natural or tree lined roadsides as opposed to all-built settings<sup>9</sup> and improved driving safety. Placing trees or vegetated planters in urban arterial roadsides can reduce mid-block crashes by 5%-20%.<sup>10</sup>



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish





- projects
- 5+ years, Long Term:



- 5.2 Community Services • 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Seek opportunities and projects that reduce the number of drive lanes and/or promote

•Ensure language access for roadway signage and public transportation

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the vehicular and public

•Determine if there are opportunities to include nature-based solutions along with the prioritized projects, such as planting street trees to create 'cool corridors'

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•Consider testing projects by supporting temporary road closures or pilot ideas at bus stops •From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Transportation Planning webpage to identify grant opportunities or programs

•Initiate construction projects and/or pilot roadway or public transportation interventions

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



#### **1.3 MOBILITY ACTIONS - BICYCLE**

BIKE LANES ADDITION/IMPROVEMENT I COVERED/LOCKED BIKE PARKING I BIKE RACKS I SHARED USE PATH OR TRAIL ADDITION/IMPROVEMENT

#### **Description**:

Any action taken to improve the bicycle environment within the public Right-of-Way. Bike lanes are portions of roadways that have been designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the use of bicyclists. Adding or improving bike lanes, paths, and bicycling amenities can encourage more cycling by creating a safer and more comfortable environment.



#### Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Areas of high pedestrian and bike traffic can be designed as 'cool corridors'. Cool corridors are linear green spaces such as tree-lined trails, paths, and streets that help to reduce the hot conditions present in dense urban areas. Planning and planting these corridors now will help the next generation of Gulfton residents.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:









**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



**TO BUILDING ENVELOPE** 

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Incorporate lighting for nighttime safety considerations

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the bicycle projects for

•Determine if there are opportunities to include nature-based solutions along with the prioritized projects, such as planting street trees to create 'cool corridors'

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•Consider testing projects by supporting temporary road closures or pilot ideas at bus stops •From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Transportation Planning webpage to identify grant opportunities or programs

•Initiate construction projects and/or pilot roadway or public transportation interventions

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



#### 2.1 NON VEGETATED STORMWATER ACTIONS & RAINWATER HARVESTING

CISTERN I RAIN TANK I UNDERGROUND STORAGE I STORMWATER DRAIN MARKERS I POROUS PAVEMENT

#### **Description**:

Rainwater or stormwater actions that do not include vegetation. Rainwater harvesting are passive methods of gathering rainwater either with a container (like a cistern or tank) for future use or using pavement that allows water to infiltrate into the soil below. Stormwater drain markers are warning signs placed at storm drains to deter deliberate dumping of pollutants.



#### Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Pairing the installation of rainwater harvesting systems with vegetation and/ or gardens can be an excellent way to reuse captured water. Studies have shown that if installed correctly, the water from cisterns is suitable for watering vegetation, especially roof runoff which is usually free of chemical and dissolved minerals.11



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



#### **Appropriate Locations**





RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



LAND

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Where possible hold water where it falls to reduce stress on the local stormwater

- •Capture water where possible to provide water reuse options
- •Maintenance is critical for the success of stormwater systems
- •Ensure language access for any interpretive signage related to stormwater including non-

- •Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize rainwater harvesting
- •Determine if there are opportunities to include rainwater harvesting and other stormwater

- •Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized
- •From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Incentives for Green Development, and Harris county incentives for water conservation

•Initiate water conservation projects where applicable

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



#### **2.2 LINEAR STORMWATER SYSTEMS**

VEGETATED FILTER STRIP I VEGETATED SWALE I VEGETATED BIOSWALE

#### **Description**:

Vegetated filter strips are areas of land placed between sources of pollution and bodies of water. Vegetated swales and bioswales are open, shallow channels designed to direct and infiltrate stormwater. These methods are used to capture rainwater runoff, facilitate infiltration back into the earth, and remove debris and pollution.



Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Linear stormwater systems have the potential of reducing stormwater by 20 to 85% with infiltration by soil and indigenous plant species. These systems are most effective during 80 to 95% annual storm event.12 It is best to pair this strategy with other stormwater actions to increase the quantity and quality of stormwater treated.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish

Documents that Support the Action			
Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown			
Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan			
☐ Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment			
Gulfton Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study			
Cities Connecting Children to Nature			
Houston Climate Action Plan			
☑ Resilient Houston			
Houston Bike Plan			
Houston Vision Zero Action Plan			
Final Housing Study			
Neighborhood Manufacturing Study			



Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions

#### **Appropriate Locations**





RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

#### **BUILDING ENVELOPE**



LAND

#### Pairs well with these strategies:

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Where possible hold water where it falls to reduce stress on the local stormwater

•Maintenance is critical for the success of stormwater systems, this includes the proper

- •Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize linear stormwater and
- •Creating a campaign to encourage property owners to properly maintain area ditches and

•Determine if there are opportunities to include indigenous plant species and other

- •Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized
- •From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Incentives for Green Development, and Harris county incentives for water conservation

•Initiate water conservation projects where applicable


## **2.3 BIORETENTION STORMWATER SYSTEMS**

RAIN GARDEN I STORMWATER PLANTER BOX

#### **Description**:

Bioretention systems, such as rain gardens or stormwater planter boxes are shallow, vegetated areas that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, streets, and other hard surfaces. Stormwater that enters the system either is filtered before continuing downstream or is infiltrated and held in the soil bed.



## Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Bioretention stormwater systems can also provide urban wildlife habitat. There are many indigenous plants in the region that can thrive in both wet and dry conditions and have deep fibrous roots to encourage infiltration. Indigenous plant species of the Texas Gulf Coast Prairies ecoregion can be ideal for these systems.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



## **Appropriate Locations**





**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



PARKS/VACANT LAND





**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Where possible hold water where it falls to reduce stress on the local stormwater

•Maintenance is critical for the success of stormwater systems

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the use of bioretention •Determine if there are opportunities to include indigenous plant species and other

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Incentives for Green Development, and Harris county incentives for water conservation

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **3.1 GREEN ROOF**

#### **Description**:

A green roof system is a layer of vegetation, soil media, and waterproof membrane installed on top of a flat or slightly-sloped roof. The vegetation and soil media can filter stormwater pollution, reduce runoff, and moderate the temperature of a building or home.



## Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Green roofs, if designed correctly can reduce the energy use in builds and provide needed green space in dense urban places. Views of nature or green space from hospitals, homes, or other places people are recovering from medical conditions can shorten stays, lessen pain, reduce minor complications, and improve emotional well-being.13



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:









**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 





**TO BUILDING ENVELOPE** 

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Where possible hold water where it falls to reduce stress on the local stormwater

•Green roofs are heavy and should be considered for proposed buildings, retrofits can be

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of green •Determine if there are opportunities to include indigenous plant species and if there are

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Incentives for Green Development, and Harris county incentives for water conservation

•Initiate water conservation projects where applicable

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **3.2 VERTICAL GREEN**

GREEN COLUMNS (FREEWAYS) I GREEN FACADES (BUILDINGS) I GREEN TRELLIS I GREEN WALLS I "GREEN FENCES" | PASSIVE COOLING FENCE

#### **Description**:

Vertical green systems incorporates plants on vertical surfaces such as freeway columns, walls, and fences. These systems can include both vegetation and soils, such as green walls, or structures that hold vegetation such as green facades or green trellises.



Vertical green systems can provide localized cooling of surfaces, with each species performing differently. Plant physiology and leaf area/shape should be considered when installing vertical green solutions. In addition, there are many vine species that are important host plants to butterflies in the region, such as passionflower (Passiflora sp.)



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish





## **Appropriate Locations**





RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



LAND

#### Pairs well with these strategies:

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Maintenance is critical for the success of vertical green systems

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of vertical

•Determine if there are opportunities to include indigenous plant species and if vertical green systems can be coordinated with the creation of 'cool corridors'

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, refer to the City of Houston's Incentives for Green Development, and Harris county incentives for water conservation

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **4.1 PARK**

LINEAR PARK I GREEN CORRIDOR 'COOL CORRIDOR' I SPARK PARKS I PARKLET I PLAYSCAPE I NATURE PLAY I SPORTS FIELDS

#### **Description**:

Parks are natural or semi-natural spaces set aside for recreation and enjoyment. Some parks include small areas, such as parklets, and some are narrow such as green corridors. Park design can also include space for playscapes, sports fields, walking loops, and nature areas.

Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

Increasing the amount and quality of green space in urban settings can be a lower cost, holistic wellness strategy that addresses health inequalities and improve overall health outcomes by improving the physical and mental health of residents.<sup>14</sup> New or improved park space should provide a diversity of natural and programmed area(s) for multiple generations to enjoy.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish





•Initiate parks projects where applicable

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Meet or exceed upgrades American Disabilities Act and tenets of Universal Design

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of new and

• Initiate a Master Plan process for Burnett Bayland Park • Identify school campuses or other civic area(s) that could serve as Spark Playground

• Determine if there are opportunities for linear parks, 'cool corridors' that can serve

• Identify other lands that could be utilized in future park development

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for new parks creations such as Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Parks Grant, other grant opportunities can be found on the Houston-Galveston Area Council's webpage: www.h-gac.com/parks-and-natural-



## 4.2 GARDEN

CULTURAL GARDEN (MEDICINAL/SPIRITUAL) I POLLINATOR/WILDLIFE GARDEN I CONTAINER/PATIO GARDEN

## **Description**:

Gardens are spaces set aside for the growth and cultivation of plants and/or wildlife. Garden spaces have higher maintenance needs and rely on community stewards to tend to the area throughout the seasons.

## **Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Exposure to diverse plant species and types of pollen helps children develop normal immune responses.<sup>15</sup> This can be achieved by planting a diverse mix of plant species in gardens. In addition, working in soil has been shown to boost immune function in child and adults.<sup>16</sup>



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions





**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



PARKS/VACANT LAND



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nurserv
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

- •Based on the prioritized addition of new and improved park space
  - Determine if there are opportunities to install gardens
  - Identify school campuses or other civic area(s) that could serve as garden space
  - Identify other lands that could be utilized in future garden development
  - Consider private property as areas to pilot container and patio gardens
  - Determine if reestablishing the community garden at Burnett Bayland Park is of
  - interest to the community and integrate the idea in the Master Plan process

- •Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized
- •From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for new parks creations such as Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Parks Grant, other grant opportunities can be found on the Houston-Galveston Area Council's webpage: www.h-gac.com/parks-and-natural-



## **4.3 COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE**

VEGETABLE/HERB GARDEN I COMMUNITY ORCHARD/FOOD FOREST I AQUACULTURE I BEEKEEPING I CHICKEN KEEPING

#### **Description**:

Community agriculture is small-scale farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, fiber, and other products.



Community gardens provide stimulating social connections, produce nutritious food, and create opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education, thus helping improve overall health and nutrition.<sup>17</sup>



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish

Documents that Support the Action
Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown
🗹 Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan
Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment
Gulfton Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study
Cities Connecting Children to Nature
Mouston Climate Action Plan
□ Resilient Houston
Houston Bike Plan
Houston Vision Zero Action Plan
Final Housing Study
Neighborhood Manufacturing Study





#### **Recommendations**

•Action requires partners for maintenance and stewardship of community agriculture •Opportunities for programming and education should be considered along with community

- •Based on the prioritized addition of new and improved park space
  - Determine if there are opportunities to install gardens
  - Identify school campuses or other civic area(s) that could serve as garden space
  - Identify other lands that could be utilized in future garden development
  - Consider private property as areas to pilot container and patio gardens

- •Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized
- •From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for new parks creations such as Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Parks Grant, other grant opportunities can be found on the Houston-Galveston Area Council's webpage: www.h-gac.com/parks-and-natural-

•Initiate community agriculture projects where applicable

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



# **4.4 PLANT NURSERY**

FRUIT/NUT TREES I NATIVE TREES I OTHER VEGETATION

#### **Description**:

Plant nurseries are spaces where plants are propagated and grown either outside or covered. Typically, these plants are for gardening, agriculture, forestry, or landscaping and are sold to the general public or businesses.

**Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Developing a local plant nursery can help to reduce supply issues within the nursery trade, and assure that vegetation is adapted to the local conditions. In addition, there are opportunities for training and education in the nursery practice enhancing green job development.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:







**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 





**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nurserv
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Action requires partners for maintenance and stewardship of plant nursery

•Based on the prioritized addition of new and improved park space • Determine if there are opportunities to complement efforts with a plant nursery • Identify other lands that could be utilized in future plant nursery • Consider opportunities to combine plant nurseries with markets and other

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•Initiate a search for local nurseries interested in growing within the Houston area

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **4.5 HABITAT & WILDLIFE SUPPORT ACTIONS**

TREE PLANTING | INDIGENOUS VEGETATION PLANTING

#### **Description**:

Habitat and wildlife support actions include planting trees and native vegetation to restore habitat and make more habitable spaces. This may include planting trees or installing vegetation along streets, in parking lots, around apartments and living areas, and in parks.

## Integrating a Nature-based Solution Consider this...

People in urban areas have a lower risk of psychological distress if they have more trees within a walkable distance of their homes.<sup>18</sup> The use of indigenous trees and vegetation have the added benefit of being adapted to the local conditions and providing habitat for wildlife.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish

Documents that Support the Action
Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown
Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan
Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment
🗹 Gulfton Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study
Cities Connecting Children to Nature
Houston Climate Action Plan
Resilient Houston
Mouston Bike Plan
$\square$ Houston Vision Zero Action Plan
☐ Final Housing Study
Neighborhood Manufacturing Study

#### Pairs well with these strategies:



## **Appropriate Locations**





RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

#### **BUILDING ENVELOPE**



LAND

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Establishment maintenance is critical for the success of trees and vegetation

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of trees

- Initiate an urban forestry plan to increase tree canopy in Gulfton
- Determine if there are opportunities for street trees as 'cool corridors' that can serve
- Identify other projects that could benefit from trees with the goal of planting 100 new trees by 2023 as recommended in the Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan

- •Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized
- •From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for trees and vegetation

•Initiate tree and vegetation installation where applicable

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **5.1 GATHERING SPACES**

COURTYARD I PLAZA [PLACITA] I PICNIC AREA I MAILBOX AREA

#### **Description**:

Gathering spaces are any public places where people are able to congregate and connect. These areas can be large or small, but support community cohesion which benefits mental health.

#### **Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Tree cover in gathering spaces has been shown to improve social cohesion.<sup>19</sup> Trees and urban nature, thus serve an important role in improving holistic population health in our cities.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish





Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural



**Appropriate Locations** 

#### Pairs well with these strategies:

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nurserv
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Meet or exceed upgrades American Disabilities Act and tenets of Universal Design •Maintenance is critical for the success of gathering spaces

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of new

• Initiate the next phase of the Placita pilot project • Identify other public and private lands that could be utilized in future gathering

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for the Placita pilot project including art grants that can support this effort and a preliminary build out

•Evaluate the pilot project and determine other locations for the Placita •Based on pilot project results, work with Burnett Bayland Master Plan team to identify if a

Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions





## **5.2 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER I WIFI HUB

#### **Description**:

Community services provide assets in a neighborhood that helps meet certain needs for those around them. This can include shelter, wifi, legal services, training, critical resources during disaster scenarios, and other important resources.

**Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

People in communities having strong social ties show greater resilience and ability to cope with change. Social events help prevent depression and physical social activities can support heart health.<sup>20</sup> Community services can increase the health related benefits of programs by providing green space for community members to meet.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



## **Appropriate Locations**





**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



PARKS/VACANT LAND





**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nu
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Meet or exceed upgrades American Disabilities Act and tenets of Universal Design •Consider multipurpose community assets that can shift and change to community needs

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of new or

· Consider access to the services and provided 'cooling corridors' for getting to asset • Consider adding neighborhood resilient hubs spread throughout Gulfton, and consider piloting one hub in the neighborhood

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for community services

•Initiate the installation of the pilot resilient hub and evaluate the success •Determine if additional community services areas and hubs should be implemented

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **5.3 ENTERPRISE ZONE**

ECO/BIO-INNOVATION I MAKERSPACES I PUBLIC MARKET/VENDOR SPACE, OPEN-AIR FLEA MARKET STALLS I CAREER PATHWAYS/GREEN JOB DEVELOPMENT

#### **Description**:

Enterprise zones are areas that are granted tax or regulatory incentives to encourage private economic development, job creation, and community cohesion.



## **Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Green job programs and training can provide multiple benefits to the community and the employee. Individuals participating in green jobs work in New York reported positive environmental attitudes and behaviors as a result of green job training and employment.<sup>21</sup> It is important to emphasize that these programs can be difficult to initiate and steward, but there are many precedent examples of these programs working in certain contexts.

# **Potential Community Benefits** Human Health Benefits **Biodiversity / Wildlife Benefits Environment Benefits** Art / Culture / Education Benefits Climate / Resilience

Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish

## **Documents that Support the Action** Revitalization Plan for Gulfton-Sharpstown $\mathbf{M}$ Gulfton Complete Communities Action Plan Hillcroft Avenue Safety Assessment Gulfton Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study Cities Connecting Children to Nature Houston Climate Action Plan Resilient Houston Houston Bike Plan Houston Vision Zero Action Plan **Final Housing Study** Meighborhood Manufacturing Study



## **Appropriate Locations**





RIGHT-OF-WAY [ROW]



LAND



**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

#### Pairs well with these strategies:

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nursery
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition

• Consider enterprising zones that require fewer barriers to involvement

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for enterprising

•Initiate green jobs or another enterprise opportunity in Gulfton

Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions



## **5.4 PUBLIC ART** SCULPTURE, MURALS, PLAZA SPACES

#### **Description**:

Public art is works made through the use of imagination and creative skills by artists in any form that is visually and physically accessible to the general public.

## **Integrating a Nature-based Solution** Consider this...

Combining nature and public art can spark imagination, catalyze placemaking, stimulate spatial thinking, forge new connections about urban nature, and bring people together. Art has a way of breaking down barriers and meeting people where they are in life.



Benefits reviewed with Harris County Public Health Refer to Appendix for Strategy Cards in Arabic, and Spanish



#### Pairs well with these strategies:



Transportation Management | Mobility Actions • Rainwater | Storm-water Management Actions • Architectural | Structural

## **Appropriate Locations**





**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 



LAND





**RIGHT-OF-WAY** TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

- 4.2 Garden
- 4.3 Community Agriculture
- 4.4 Plant Nurserv
- 4.5 Habitat & Wildlife Support Actions
- 5.1 Gathering Spaces
- 5.2 Community Services
- 5.3 Enterprise Zone
- 5.4 Public Art

#### **Recommendations**

•Based on the above relevant Gulfton planning documents, prioritize the addition of new

• Initiate the next phase of the Placita pilot project • Identify other public and private lands that could be utilized in future public art

•Work with Gulfton area community-based organizations and leaders to support prioritized

•From the prioritized projects, determine funding sources available for the Placita pilot

•Evaluate the pilot project and determine other locations for the Placita •Based on pilot project results, work to add other public art into the Gulfton Neighborhood

Actions • Nature-based Community Capacity Actions • Community Capacity Actions

# How Can We Support Our Non-Human **Neighbors?**

## A More Wildlife-friendly Gulfton

Wildlife in urban areas face tremendous stress as we chop down trees, plant yards with exotic species, drain wetlands, install stormwater systems, erect buildings, and pave roads. However, against these major odds, non-human living organisms still persist in our cities. For long-term stability in the face of environmental fluctuations, broad-scale resistance to pests and pathogens, and the ability to continue to evolve, diversity in plant and animal populations is essential.<sup>22</sup> This biodiversity creates a system that can actively adapt to changing climatic conditions, and has the ability to rebound after stress. Biodiversity is the variety and number of living things on Earth and includes all **species**, from the fungi living on the roots of a maple tree, to the owl that lives in its branches, to the tree itself. It includes diversity within species, between species, and among ecosystems. Just as species rely on each other for food and shelter, so do people rely on biodiversity for food, building materials, medicine, protection from the weather, and much more.

The Gulfton Super Neighborhood is situated in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Level IV Northern Humid Gulf Coastal Prairie Ecoregion.<sup>23</sup> This gently sloping coastal plain historically was mostly grassland with a few clusters of oaks and other woodland communities associated with waterways. In addition, the Houston region is also the focal point of one of the great bird migrations in North America, the Central Flyway, and a key corridor for the culturally-important monarch butterfly (Danaus plexippus). This migration route includes not only shorebirds, which can be observed in the hundreds of thousands at the Bolivar Flats, but birds of prey, songbirds, and hummingbirds. Also butterflies, moths, and bats rely on Texas as a key migration route. Natural areas provide important refuge, and replenishing areas for migratory species. Recognizing the important role Houston plays in these natural cycles, the city was recognized as a **Bird City by** the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the city leadership signed the Mayors' Monarch Pledge with the National Wildlife Federation.

**BIODIVERSITY:** Naturebased projects incorporating Indigenous plant species bolster neighborhood beauty, provide a sense of place, and are more climate-resilient while supporting local wildlife. Vegetation that is adapted to site conditions, and climate, and chosen based on the design intent needs fewer resources and less maintenance to thrive. Selecting regionally appropriate vegetation can reduce mowing, conserve water, reduce soil erosion. reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides, and ultimately save money allocated for landscape maintenance.

## **Data** | **Trends**

- iNaturalist, a citizen science platform for collecting information about plant and animal species, was used to record different species in Gulfton. 852 observations were taken.
- There are not many 'natural areas' within Gulfton and thus vegetation observed is primarily street or yard trees, and yard or landscape understory and ground cover.
- In addition to vegetation, insects such as bees, butterflies, moths, slugs, and other invertebrates, different types of fungus, and a handful of birds were observed.
- Historically the coastal prairie covered 6.5 million acres in Texas, now less than one percent of these systems remain.<sup>24</sup>
- Prairies may appear to be an endless monoculture of mid-to-tall grasses, but healthy prairie systems are biologically diverse and include a complicated web of organisms, from seasonal wildflowers, insects, birds, and small mammals.
- There are approximately 615 documented bird species in Texas and about half migrate, and through the course of a season millions of birds pass through the state.<sup>25</sup>
- Migration for some species is a huge effort; the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Archilochus colubris) flies nonstop over the Gulf of Mexico, about 600 miles of open water.<sup>26</sup>
- The Monarch Butterfly (Danaus plexippus) migration occurs in fall and spring when thousands of butterflies travel from the mountains of Mexico to their breeding grounds north of Texas.

## **Recommendations**

• Vegetation is the easiest way to start increasing diversity in an area that can then support other organisms. There is a great opportunity to add to the plant diversity in this neighborhood. Refer to the table following this section for species recommendations for the neighborhood.

• Vegetation can be added to the area to increase green cover, even in dense urban environments. Vertical greening strategies could be considered in areas with limited spaces through green walls or green facades.

• Some migratory animal species do not need large expanses of natural areas to provide refuge and resources. For example, patches of flowering plants can provide nectar to butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds that may stop in for a recharge. Indigenous species can be selected to increase the habitat values and sense of place in Gulfton.

• Gulfton leaders and residents can design and develop natural habitat areas in the neighborhood by working to get certified with the National Wildlife Federation on an individual yard habitat and/or a community wildlife habitat.

• Gulfton residents can be involved in helping to keep water cleaner by taking action at their homes and around the neighborhood. The Bayou Preservation Association has ways to take action in your particular watershed.



















BIODIVERSITY: Houston, Texas is part of the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) Community Wildlife Habitat<sup>™</sup> Program. The NWF Community Wildlife Habitat<sup>™</sup> program partners with cities, towns, counties, neighborhoods, and communities of all kinds to become healthier, greener, and more wildlife-friendly. Community Wildlife Habitats garden and landscaping with wildlife in mind, promoting the use of indigenous trees and plants, work to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides and chemicals, and integrate wildlife-friendly practices into sustainability plans and park master plans.







## **A Planting Palette for a Greener Gulfton**

\*Key-- IS: Indigenous species ES: Edible species CS: Cultural species HN: Hardy natural

HABIT	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	HEIGHT	TYPE*	SOIL MOISTURE	LIGHT	WATER USE
	Anethum gravelones	Dill	3-5 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Capsicum annuum	Chili pepper	1-4 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Monarda citriodora	Lemon beebalm	1-3 ft	IS	DRY		
	Ocimum	Basils	1-3 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Oenothera speciosa	Pinkladies	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Phyla nodiflora	Frogfruits	0-1 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	$\bullet \bullet \circ$	
	Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed susan	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Rudbeckia texana	Texas coneflower	3-6 ft	IS	MOIST	•	
	Salvia coccinea	Tropical sage	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST		
	Centaurea americana	American basket-flower	3-6 ft	IS	DRY		
	Eryngium yuccifolium	Rattlesnake master	3-6 ft	IS	MOIST	•	
	Chamaecrista fasciculata	Patridge pea	0-1 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST		
	Ratibida column	Prairie coneflower	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Helianthus angustifolius	Swamp sunflower	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST		
	Capsicum annuum	Texas chili pequin	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST		
	Lycopersicon esculentum	Patio tomatoes	2-3 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•	
	Silphium gracile	Slender rosinweed	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST		
	Iris virginica	Southern blue flag iris	3-6 ft	IS	MOIST	•	
	Liatris acidota	Sharp gayfeather	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST	•	
	Saururus cemuus	Lizard's tail	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST		
	Hymenocallis liriosme	Spring spider lily	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST	00	
	Origanum	Oregano	.575 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•	
~	Pontederia cordata	Pickerel plant	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST		
ERB	Sagittaria platyphylla	Delta arrowhead	1-3 ft	IS	MOIST		
I	Canna	Canna lilies	6-8 ft	CS	DRY - MOIST		
S	Agave americana	American century plant	6-12 ft	IS	DRY	•	
<b>E</b>	Hesperaloe parviflora	Red yucca	1-3 ft	HN	DRY	•	
GRASS CACTUS	Opuntia	Pricklypears	.5-1 ft	CS	DRY	•	
	Asclepias curassavica	Tropical milkweed	3-4 ft	CS	MOIST	•	
	Bothriochloa laguroides	Silver bluestem	1-3 ft	IS	DRY	•	
	Schoenoplectus pungens	Three square rush	2-4 ft	IS	MOIST	•	
	Muhlenbergia capillaris	Gulf coast muhly	1-3 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•	
6 E	Schizachyrium scoparium	Little bluestem	3-6 ft	IS	DRY		

## \*Key-- IS: Indigenous species ES: Edible species CS: Cultural species HN: Hardy natural

ABIT	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	HEIGHT	TYPE*	SOIL MOISTURE	LIGHT	WATER USE	
	Musa	Bananas	12-20 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•		
	Callicarpa americana	American beauty berry	3-6 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Ilex vomitoria	Yaupon holly	12-25 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Carica papaya	Papaya	6-20 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•		
	Carya ilinoinensis	Pecan	70-100 ft	IS	MOIST	•		
	Cercis canadensis	Eastern redbud	12-36 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Eriobotrya japonica	Loquat	10 <b>-</b> 25 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST			
	Ficus carica	Common fig	10 <b>-</b> 20 ft	ES	MOIST			
	Fraxinus pennsylvanica	Green ash	36-72 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Juniperus virginiana	Eastern redcedar	36-72 ft	IS	DRY			
	Magnolia grandiflora	Southern magnolia	50-75 ft	IS	DRY			
	Pinus taeda	Loblolly pine	72-100 ft	IS	DRY			
	Populus deltoides	Eastern cottonwood	12-36 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Psidium guajava	Common guava	4-20 ft	ES	DRY - MOIST	•		
	Quercus falcata	Southern red oak	100-150 ft	IS	DRY			
	Quercus nigra	Water oak	72-100 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Quercus virginiana	Southern live oak	36-72 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Ulmus crassifolia	Cedar elm	36-72 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Celtis laevigata	Sugar hackberry	36-72 ft	IS	DRY			
	Platanus occidentalis	Sycamore	36-72 ft	IS	MOIST			
	Cinnamomum camphora	Camphor tree	20-65 ft	HN	MOIST	•		
	Citrus x meyeri	Meyer lemon	6-10 ft	ES	DRY			
TREE	Citrus x sinensis	Navel orange	5-25 ft	ES	MOIST	•		
H	Citrus x paradisi 'Rio Red'	Red Rio grapefruit	10-15 ft	ES	MOIST			
	Campsis radicans	American trumpet vine	25-35 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•		
	Cissus trifoliata	Sorrelvine	12-36 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Passiflora incamata	Passionflower vine	12-36 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Bignonia capreolata	Crossvine	36-72 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST			
	Ipomoea cordatotriloba	Tievine	3-15 ft	IS	DRY - MOIST	•		
	Asclepias curassavica	Tropical milkweed	3-4 ft	CS	MOIST	•		
VINE	Bothriochloa laguroides	Silver bluestem	1-3 ft	IS	DRY	•		
1	Schoenoplectus pungens	Three square rush	2-4 ft	IS	MOIST	•		

# How Do We Fund These Recommendations?

Many different approaches and financing types are available depending on the projects Gulfton organizations and citizens prioritize. Some of the more conventional financing strategies include options such as leveraging sales tax, developing a municipal management district, creating tax increment reinvestment zones (TIRZ), and utilizing grants such as the City of Houston's School Sidewalk Program and the SPARK Schoolyard Park Program. Some of the stronger park financing options for the Super neighborhood are outlined below in more detail and include these main categories:	ion,	iture mprovement	Stormwater Management
Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Nature Funding	ecreation,	oro	Z
Mobility Improvement Funding	ecr		Iter
Stormwater Management Funding	Ř Z	it s	- Mu
Civic Space and Art in Public Place Funding	arks	Mobility	orn
This is not an exhaustive list and programs may be subject to change depending on the current financial climate.	Ë F	- ≥	St
Local Park Grant Program: Urban Recreation (population >500,000)			•••••••
Offered By: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)		•	
<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Local governments, river authorities, municipal utility districts (MUDs), other special districts		)	•
Total Program Funding: \$4,000,000			

#### Community Outdoor Outreach Program (Co-Op)

**Offered By:** Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

**Eligible Entities:** Non-traditional constituents to TPWD related outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental education programs; local governments; tax exempt organizations

Total Program Funding: \$1,500,000

#### **Recreational Trails Fund**

Offered By: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

**Eligible Entities:** Local governments, river authorities, municipal utility districts (MUDs), other special districts, federal land managers, nonprofits

Total Program Funding: \$3,900,000

#### Stronger Region

Civic Space and Art in Public Place

. . . . . . . .

**Offered By:** Houston Endowment

**Eligible Entities:** Harris County and its contig Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Mont nonprofits

**Total Program Funding:** N/A

#### National Urban and Community Forestry Ch

Offered By: USDA Forest Service

**Eligible Entities:** Public schools, nonprofits, sta higher education institutes

**Total Program Funding:** \$1,000,000

#### Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Gra

Offered By: National Fish and Wildlife Foundat

**Eligible Entities:** Non-profit 501(c) organization agencies, local governments, municipal governments organizations and educational institutions.

Total Program Funding: \$2,600,000

#### SPARK School Park Program

Offered By: SPARK School Park Program

Eligible Entities: Schools

**Total Program Funding:** N/A

#### Shade Structure Grant Program

Offered By: American Academy of Dermatolog

Eligible Entities: Public schools, nonprofits

**Total Program Funding:** N/A

#### Kaboom! Grants Program

Offered By: Kaboom!

**Eligible Entities:** City and county government nonprofits, particularly in the Houston area

Total Program Funding: N/A

guous counties (Brazoria, tgomery, and Waller counties),	Parks, Recreation, Trails, Nature	Mobility Improvement	Stormwater Management	Civic Space and Art in Public Place	
allenge Cost Share Program					
ate and county governments,					
<b>ant Program</b> ation ons, state government nents, Tribal Governments and	•				
gу	•				
ts, schools, child serving					

Nonpoint Source Grant Program Offered By: Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Eligible Entities: Nonprofits, state agencies, cities, counties, school districts, state universities, and special districts. Total Program Funding: N/A	Parks, Recreation, Trails. Nature	Mobility Improvement	Stormwater Management	Civic Space and Art in Public Place	<b>Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discret</b> <b>Offered By:</b> Department of Transportation <b>Eligible Entities:</b> State, unit of local governmen government, Metropolitan Planning Organization <b>Total Program Funding:</b> \$195,000,000
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program		·•• · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		Our Town
Offered By: Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM)			•		Offered By: National Endowment for the Arts
<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Local governments and communities, state agencies, and private non profits may act as sub applicants.	• • • • •		igodol		<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Partnership between a nonprof government entity, with one of the partners being
Total Program Funding: \$1,500,000					<b>Total Program Funding:</b> N/A
Clean Water State Revolving Fund		•			Open Spaces Program
Offered By: Texas Water Development Board					<b>Offered By:</b> Kenneth Rainin Foundation
<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Cities, counties, districts, river authorities, designated management agencies, authorized Indian tribal organizations, and public and private entities proposing poppoint sources or extremy monogement projects.		•			<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Nonprofits collaborating with a <b>Total Program Funding:</b> $N/A$
private entities proposing nonpoint source or estuary management projects. <b>Total Program Funding:</b> \$250,000,000					<b>Total Program Funding:</b> N/A
<b>10tul 110g1ull 1 ullullig.</b> \$200,000					Cultural District Grant
Pedestrian Accessibility Review Program			•		Offered By: Texas Commission on the Arts
Offered By: Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD)			•		Eligible Entities: Cities, counties.
Eligible Entities: Citizen with a disability or mobility impairment					<b>Total Program Funding:</b> N/A
Total Program Funding: N/A		•			City's Initiative Grant Program
					<b>Offered By:</b> Houston Arts Alliance
Major Thoroughfare Program					Eligible Entities: City of Houston residents
Offered By: Houston Public Works			•		<b>Total Program Funding:</b> N/A
Eligible Entities: City of Houston residents					Festival Program
Total Program Funding: N/A			•		<b>Offered By:</b> Houston Arts Alliance
Sidewalk Program					<b>Eligible Entities:</b> Have a physical address in the DataArt profile, must be tax-exempt under IRS Se
Offered By: Houston Public Works					Total Program Funding: up to \$10,000
Eligible Entities: City of Houston residents			•		<b>Source(s):</b> https://www.houstonartsalliance.com/
Total Program Funding: N/A	÷	:	:	:	opportunities

<b>Discretionary Grant Program</b> nment, Federally recognized Tribal zation, non-profit organization.	Parks, Recreation, Trails, Nature	Mobility Improvement	Stormwater Management	Civic Space and Art in Public Place	
rts					
nprofit organization and a local being a cultural organization.				ightarrow	
with artists				ightarrow	
				ightarrow	
3				ightarrow	
n the city of Houston limits, SMU RS Section $501(c)(3)$				ightarrow	
.com/funding-and-services/grant-					



A Greener Gulfton for Improved Health, Climate Resilience, and Biodiversity

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can help shape and support recommendations throughout this report. Identifying partners for the previous list of grant funding can help drive the that is well-resourced.



# ACT: Moving toward Action!

SSENTIAL

A Greener Gulfton for Improved Health, Climate Resilience, and Biodycrsity

## What can we do now? 'La Placita' Pilot Project

## Introduction

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The Green Ambassador Team and community members repeatedly expressed the desireto create nature-rich gathering spaces that are artful, biodiverse, and culturally-rich. These spaces should also help mitigate the accelerating impacts of urban heat and climate change. The 'La Placita' Pilot Project is a tangible demonstration of this intersected community vision.

## What Can We Do Now?

## 'La Placita' Pilot Project

Gulfton's need to increase biodiversity and open space opportunities for its residents will require developing strategies at multiple scales. As stated in previous sections, these range from large street reconstruction projects to smaller interventions.

Since many of these strategies will take a number of years to implement, it is important to develop smaller, more tactical interventions in the short term. These interventions can provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoor space while increasing social and nature access opportunities. As part of the public engagement process multiple strategies were presented from which providing social interaction opportunities was selected as one of the top priorities for a pilot project.

The pilot project developed brings the idea of a "Placita" (small plaza) that can be used by residents to socialize, enjoy nature and in some cases, promote economic development by supporting businesses such as food trucks or street vendors. The pilot project's conceptual design intends to create a semi- temporary installation that can be located at any location with a large pavement area such as a parking lot and can be moved to different locations as needed.

The Green Ambassador team was instrumental in identifying these locations for the pilot project, as well as suggesting areas of interest. The chosen locations below are split up into two categories, and can shift in their goals based on where they are installed.

If installed at any of the four locations they will support:

#### 4.5 HABITAT & WILDLIFE SUPPORT ACTIONS

The placita will create an opportunity to learn about and host flora and fauna that can thrive in Gulfton.



The placita will be an important gathering space and meeting point for the community.







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# What Can We Do Now?

## 'La Placita' Pilot Project Details

The pilot project consists of a simple modular system of planters and seating elements that can be arranged as needed to promote social gathering, planting, or even art interventions. The modular system selected is derived from the dimensions of a parking space so that it can be arranged within the limits of any surface parking area in Gulfton. The modules can be made out of wood and be movable with casters. Although location can be in any surface parking or large pavement area it is recommended to be located where there is already an established use such as a food truck or a street vendor, or even a school parking lot.

In addition to planting and seating, art is considered an important element to express the diversity of cultures in Gulfton, serve as an educational opportunity, or bring nature to the community in a more artistic way.

Other iterations of the module were done with local artists to bring dynamism to the space and additional artistic opportunities, see following pages.

## **Implementation Steps**

- Build modules in collaboration with UP Art Studio and local artists
- Select location in Gulfton and storage partner (school as a potential)
- Identify planting with assistance of TNC, the community or Ambassadors
- Plant modules at an event with the community



**Shade Block** 



**Planter Block** 



**Planter Block-large** 



**Planter Block Section** 



#### 'La Placita' Pilot Project Process

These preliminary pilot project renderings (shown on the previous two pages) were shared with UP Art Studio and developed further. These renderings are shown here. The art in the current renderings is a placeholder for the final artwork, which will be finalized with community stakeholder input. As part of the implementation process, UP Art Studio will present two or more artwork concepts to be considered. Each of these concepts will be tailored around different themes that arose from the Greener Gulfton plan such as plants native to Houston and Gulfton, the diverse cultures of the residents of Gulfton, honoring the indigenous ancestors before us, climate impact, urban heat, etc.



Source: UP Art Studio's process rendering

**Seating block** has a trapezoidal shape and a sitting height. It could incorporate a simple bluetooth speaker system, to play relaxing natural sounds, a narrative, or just music depending on the pop ups event.

**Planter block**, like the seating block it has a trapezoidal shape and the same height.

**Tower planter** is square and taller (43in). It is fitted with a pipe in its center to allows the insertion of a pole or an umbrella.

**Recycle planter** combines a recycle trash and a planter on top. It has the same dimensions as the tower planter

**Panels** can display information or artwork. Their placement impacts the flow of visitors, their safety (separation with the road) as well as the shade they provide to sitting block on its other side or at proximity.



Source: UP Art Studio's process rendering



Source: UP Art Studio's process rendering

**Poles** are necessary to have a shading structure covering the whole booth. Without the main shading structure, they could be fitted with flags to attract attention, banners or lights between poles, or they could be replaced by umbrellas.

**Shading structure (tarp)** creates maximum shade over the booth. It would be decorated with artwork and hanging off 3 or 4 poles. For added practicality and flexibility it would be best two have identical triangular tarp to cover a rectangular area, instead of a single twice larger and twice heavier rectangular tarp.



**Vegetation** suggested for the pilot project is a reflection of the ecoregion including indigenous species that support and host pollinators that either live in the area permanently or migrate through.







Source: UP Art Studio's process renderings





Source: UP Art Studio's process renderings

#### Endnotes

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ACS 5-year Estimate 2015-2019 2

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UP Art Studio Case Studies Boards Used for Engagement Action Strategy Cards

-English, Spanish & Arabic

# A 2 UP ARTS Studio Case Studies

#### A-2

## **Greener Gulfton** Art & Nature: Case Studies and Visual Idea Book









## "Conservation Conversation Corners"

#### DESCRIPTION

Greenpop—a social and environmental NGO working across sub-Saharan Africa—was recently funded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization-International Fund for the Promotion of Culture (UNESCO-IFPC) to undertake their dream of an art and environment project aptly coined, "Conservation Conversation Corners". Here, disused public corners in two African cities—Livingstone, Zambia and Johannesburg, South Africa—were transformed using public participation, mural art, public seating, sculpture and indigenous plants—into spaces of connection and of conversation around the incredible biodiversity that makes each city so unique and special.

## SOURCE

The Nature of Public Art: Connecting People to People and People to Nature Source: <u>https://www.thenatureofcities.com/2018/03/08/nature-public-art-connecting-people-people-people-people-nature/</u>



The final Livingstone Trees for Bees mural and up-cycled tree sculpture



Mural closeup



Child creating a heron between the graffiti.



Tree Sculpture from recycled materials

## "Торо Мар"

#### DESCRIPTION

Topo Map tells an ecological story directly on the pavement of Fayetteville's busy School Avenue. Rendered in vivid blue and orange lines, this life-size topographical map runs across the avenue and highlights the often-overlooked presence of urban nature.

The long, steep climb between two of Fayetteville's most important cultural institutions, the awardwinning Fayetteville Public Library and the Walton Arts Center, is enlivened by a three-block-long lesson in ecological literacy.

#### SOURCE

Stacy Levy Source: <u>https://www.stacylevy.com/projects/topo-map</u>



## "Passage of Rain"

## DESCRIPTION

Passage of Rain traces a path of rain and runoff along a half mile stretch from the street down in the storm drains to the final destination of Irwin Creek. This project creates a full scale planting plan for the buffer zone along a daylighted portion of the creek. Each stake is color coded to correspond to different native plants, which will prevent the stream banks from erosion. After the initial installation, the stakes were replaced with native shrubs, planted according to their respective color. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services did the planting as part of their stream buffer initiative.

## SOURCE

Okuplaza – Pavement to Plaza in Santiago Source: <u>https://www.stacylevy.com/projects/passage-of-rain</u>



## "Pavement to Plaza"

#### DESCRIPTION

The first "pavement to plaza" project in Santiago turned an informal parking lot to a people-friendly plaza. The idea for the pop-up plaza was inspired by the closure of San Diego Street (a major arterial road that crosses the city) due to the development of new subway lines into the downtown core. Once the road was closed this past summer, people started using the vacant space as a parking lot. This prompted a collaboration between many stakeholders to reclaim the space for people in the area to sit, stay and enjoy. The result was Okuplaza, born from a mix of upcycled materials, a few coats of paint and a lot of elbow grease. The plaza was completed in a 12 hour period with the help of 300+ students from Universidad del Desarrollo School of Architecture.

#### SOURCE

Okuplaza – Pavement to Plaza in Santiago Source: <u>https://www.morethangreen.es/en/pavement-to-plaza-in-chile/</u>



## "Big Trash Animals"

## DESCRIPTION

Artur Bordalo, known as Bordallo II (Segundo), was born in 1987 in Lisbon. He paints his own interpretations of city landscapes in a fresh, lively, and movement-filled take. Strongly connected with the idea of ecology and recycling. He creates, processes, collects, and develops ideas which make use of materials the life cycle of which has ended, trash and other recyclable products, at the same time trying to increase social awareness and leave the ecological balance undisturbed. The artistic use of trash is also a type of criticism of the world which we have come to live in, as the artist is making a world in which things once precious and important quickly turn into rubbish. Bordalo II never buys materials for his projects but obtains them by looking though junkyards and garbage dumps. The international project "Big Trash Animals" is a collection of installations placed, among others, on the walls of Lisbon, Barcelona, Dresden, Hamburg and Tallinn, presenting enormous images of animals created from waste, which is supposed to turn the viewer's attention towards the issue of waste and contamination of the environment.

The mural in Łódź, "The Swift"/Apus Apus, came into being at the turn of August and September 2015 during the City Energy Festival (which was a continuation of the Urban Forms Gallery Festival). It is the first installation in the series called "Big Trash Animals" in Eastern and Central Europe.

#### SOURCE

#### BORDALO II Source: <u>https://www.urbanforms.org/foundation/artists/bordalo-ii-en-gb/</u>







# Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature



## Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature NATURE THEME MURALS





## Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature TREES AS "NATURAL HAIR"












### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature DRAIN ART





#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature CROSSWALKS / STREETS



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature TACTICAL URBANISM



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature TACTICAL URBANISM











#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature RAIN ACTIVATED ART



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature REVERSE GRAFFITI



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature ENVIRONMENTAL ART







#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature FRAMES















#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature FRAMES





# Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature LARGE SCULPTURES



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature LIGHTING









#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature PORTALS



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature ART WITH FLOWERS



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature NATURAL MATERIALS



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature NATURAL MATERIALS FLOATING



# Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature MIRRORS



# Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature SHADOWS



# Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature SEATING



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature PLAY WITH TREES



#### Visual Idea Book: Art and Nature REFLECTIONS





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# Boards w 1578-55-58

#### A-3





iv A Greener Gulfton for Nature, Health, and Resilience



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# **Opportunities for Action Oportunidades para Acción**

# 

#### A-4





















الموقع/المواقع المناسبة

infiltration back into the earth, and remove debris and pollution. and infiltrate stormwater. These methods are used to capture rainwater runoff, facilitate egetated filter strips are areas of land placed between sources of pollution and bodies of water. Vegetated swales and bioswales are open, shallow channels designed to direct

شرائح الترشيح النباتية عبارة عن مناطق من الأرض موضوعة بين مصادر التلوث والمسطحات المائية. المستنقعات النباتية والأحواض الحيوية هي عبارة عن قنوات ضحلة مفتوحة ومصممة لتوجيه مياه العواصف وتسللها. تُستخدم هذه الطرق لالتقاط جريان مياه الأمطار وتسهيل .التسلل مرة أخرى إلى الأرض وإزالة التلوث و الرواس

CLIMATE / RESILIENCE POTENTIAL



غلاف المبنى



حق الطريق للغلاف الواقي للمبنى

RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BUILDING ENVELOPE

**BUILDING ENVELOPE** 

ROBINSO






























estacionamientos, alrededor de los apartamentos y las áreas habitables, y en los parques. ■incluir la plantación de árboles o la instalación de vegetación a lo largo de las calles, en los vegetación nativa para restaurar el hábitat y hacer más habitables los espacios. Esto puede as acciones de apoyo al hábitat y a la vida silvestre incluyen la plantación de árboles y

**BUILDING ENVELOPE** CERRAMIENTO EXTERIOR



PARKS/VACANT LAND PARQUES / TERRENOS BALDÍOS

ROBINS

DERECHO DE PASO A CERRAMIENTO EXTERIOR RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BUILDING ENVELOPE





LANDSCAPE TYPES

Ubicacion(es) apropiada(s)



















