

GREATER HOUSTON **PARTNERSHIP.**

IMPACT REPORT

2024

MAKING HOUSTON GREATER 

Thank You *Houston Next* Investors

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Phillips 66

GOLD

Chevron NRG Shell Oil Company

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SCF Partners
St. Luke's Health
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THP&Co.
Vinson & Elkins LLP

Dear Member,

As we reflect on another strong year for Houston, we are filled with pride and gratitude for the progress we've made together. Your investment in the Greater Houston Partnership has been crucial in driving the momentum that continues to shape our region's growth and resilience.

What you'll find in this year's Impact Report is a powerful narrative of our collective efforts—from positioning Houston as a leader in the global energy transition to enhancing our competitive edge in innovation, workforce development and economic opportunity. These accomplishments are a testament to the unwavering commitment of members and investors like you, who share our vision for a stronger, more prosperous Houston.

Additionally, as the *Houston Next* campaign draws to a close at the end of this year, we celebrate the progress we've made toward making Houston a great global city. The initiatives you've supported over the course of *Houston Next* have paved the way for the growth of our region, enhancing our quality of life and driving economic prosperity across industries. Your dedication has brought us to this point, and your continued investment will ensure we meet the challenges ahead.

We are grateful for the engagement and support you've placed in the Partnership. Together, we are creating a brighter future for Houston—one defined by opportunity and shared success.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. We look forward to continuing our work with you as we build on the legacy of progress that you've helped to shape.

With gratitude,

Steve Kean

Katie Pryor



STEVE KEAN
President and CEO



KATIE PRYOR
Executive Vice President
and Chief Operating Officer



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

UpSkill Houston - 10 years of Empowering Careers

150
employers engaged



4

industry sector collaboratives focused on building talent pipelines

Developing aligned dual credit and CTE programs in 7 independent school districts along with Lee College and San Jacinto College

UpSkill Houston's mission is to cultivate one of the finest skilled workforces globally and ensure opportunities for all residents in the Houston region. Over the past decade, UpSkill Houston has established a renowned employer-led collective focused on developing skilled talent initiatives, setting a benchmark admired by major metros.

The recent UpSkill Houston summit marked a decade of success and highlighted the need to accelerate efforts in talent-driven economic development. The summit emphasized skills-first approaches to tap into hidden and diverse talent pools, aiming to mobilize the entire workforce. With a strong foundation, UpSkill Houston seeks to "Equip and Inspire" partners to enhance and scale workforce development for both current and future economic needs.

As Houston transitions from an industrial to a knowledge-based, technology-driven economy, the rapid evolution of skills is reshaping the labor market. New roles are emerging, existing ones are being modified, and some are being displaced. This transformation presents both challenges and opportunities for the region.

To maintain the region's competitive edge, UpSkill Houston is committed to addressing the skills

gap and expanding opportunities. Future actions include:

1 Developing the skilled workforce needed for the emerging hydrogen and energy industries in East Harris County. UpSkill is partnering with Accenture to engage more than 15 hydrogen and energy employers to understand the skills, needs and demands for the future, creating massive opportunity for economic mobility.

2 Enhancing data and tools to better address the region's skills challenges.

3 Utilizing the "Equip and Inspire" model to provide resources and strategies that activate partners and drive solutions.

By implementing these actions, UpSkill Houston aims to ensure that the Houston region remains a global leader in economic strength and skilled workforce development.



200,000+
students impacted

5,424
individuals referred by Houston Back on Track between April 2023 and March 2024

70+
education, community and workforce organizations committed to collaborating with employers



LINDA ALDRED

Executive Vice President
& Chief Human Resources Officer
Texas Children's Hospital

“As I think back on my eight years of being a part of UpSkill Houston, my greatest takeaways have been the power of the partnership, the collaboration that exists in the room, and the impact it achieves. It has been great to partner with colleagues in the industry to think about what the workforce of the future looks like and what we need to do to prepare Houston. UpSkill Houston has challenged all of us to shift our mindsets from working on this challenge alone to the power of a committed group collaborating to build something impactful together.”

Jobs That Mobilize - Advancing Skills First Approaches in Houston's Regional Economy

Source Job

A starting occupation a worker might be employed in.



Jobs That Mobilize

Occupations that offer the greatest opportunity for workers, are highly sought by employers, and critical to regional priorities.



Target Jobs

An occupation that a worker might end up in depending on their career path.

In 2023, The Burning Glass Institute (BGI), with financial support from Walmart.org, selected the Partnership's UpSkill Houston initiative as its partner to develop the Jobs That Mobilize (JTM) initiative. This initiative focused on deploying BGI's methodology to pinpoint jobs that offer the greatest opportunities for workers, are highly sought by employers, and are crucial for regional growth. Using its proprietary data, BGI analyzed occupational mobility in Houston by looking at job progressions and identifying overlapping and adjacent skills.

BGI's approach is based on understanding that each worker's skill set is shaped by their work and educational experiences, and their unique personal attributes. It acknowledges that no worker excels in all skills and that there is a balance between technical and work-ready skills.

Throughout 2024, BGI and UpSkill Houston engaged employers in energy, health care, and other sectors, including those with technician, business services and technology roles. The goal was to validate the skills needed for JTM roles by identifying transferable skills that are broadly applicable, as well as those specific to individual jobs. The team focused on differentiating between critical "day one" skills

and those that can be acquired through experience or training. These strategically-identified skills directly address pain points for employers and prepare talent for filling gaps in the most pertinent industries.

This effort resulted in the creation of a Work Ready Skills Matrix, which includes Proficiency Levels, and a Skills Validation Playbook. These tools are designed to help UpSkill Houston, employers, educators, and community-based training providers align on the skills required for identified Jobs That Mobilize. The Playbook aims to foster a shared understanding of necessary skills and streamline skills-first training and hiring processes.



MATT SIGELMAN

President
The Burning Glass Institute

“When the Burning Glass Institute sought a partner in applying our Jobs That Mobilize framework within the laboratory of a local community, working together with the Greater Houston Partnership and UpSkill Houston was a clear fit. In many ways, UpSkill Houston embodies what the framework is all about. Just as UpSkill Houston brings together industry, education & training, and policy makers toward a common goal of shared prosperity, the Jobs That Mobilize framework brings focus to the sets of jobs that represent pain points to employers, that are vital to targeted growth sectors, and that offer strong upward mobility and good wages for talent.

Alongside the Partnership and UpSkill Houston, we were able to design nontraditional pathways that will unlock opportunity for workers and give employers access to hidden talent. The Partnership and UpSkill Houston opened to us networks they have built based on the deep trust they have earned with an array of stakeholders, enabling us to validate the framework and connect with over 100 educators, employers, and community organizations. I am excited to know that they have what it takes to carry this work forward and bring the framework to life. UpSkill Houston's commitment to data-driven action and continuous improvement will certainly serve as an inspiration for other communities.”

Effort resulted in the creation of a Work Ready Skills Matrix



Houston Back on Track Proves an Effective Model to Serve Jobseekers



AMY CORRAN

President & CEO
Wesley Community Center

“At Wesley Community Center, we deeply value the dedication Houston Back on Track has shown in empowering our clients through modern resources like LinkedIn Learning and Grow With Google. Their commitment to genuinely advocating for our clients with employers is commendable. We eagerly anticipate continuing our partnership to provide impactful upskilling opportunities that leverage data and innovative tools, enhancing our collective efforts to improve the mobility and foster success of our residents.”

While the original focus of the Houston Back on Track initiative was to help put people back to work following pandemic-era job displacement, it has evolved into a collective effort to serve and support low-wage workers in Houston looking for something better. Our progress has been meteoric, morphing from a pitch deck to a recognized brand and advocate for so many workers in Houston. At the heart of our efforts is the work we do to connect jobseekers to career coaches at our community partners.

In the past 18 months alone, Houston Back on Track connected over 10,400 jobseekers to our community partners. Many of these people enrolled in programs, received coaching, improved their skills and were hired by companies representing a variety of industries. The trajectory of these people's lives improved along with the talent levels of the employers bringing them aboard. For all parties involved, this work has been win-win.

2024 saw results from the Houston Back on Track survey, asking those who signed up if they got the support they needed. The survey went out to thousands of jobseekers, in English and Spanish, offering possible incentives for their participation. These are some of our learnings:

- 84% of those who responded are still pursuing new job opportunities
- The most desired career paths are in customer service and medical fields

- Most respondents interviewed with employers that are not partners of Houston Back on Track
- Nearly all respondents recalled being contacted by a career coach
- The most popular support services were resume writing and job interview coaching

A significant component in our strategy going forward is to stay in communication with the people we've already connected with on some level, nurturing their career aspirations and providing them with the tools they need to thrive.

With continued engagement, Houston Back on Track will motivate clients, provide guidance and open educational opportunities through Grow With Google scholarships to improve jobseekers' skills.



Assisted

10,400+

job seekers in last 18 months

11

support services

23

community partners

Houston Back on Track partners with United Way of Greater Houston's THRIVE network. Between April 2023 and March 2024, Back on Track referred 5,424 individuals to 13 THRIVE community partners who worked with 23 employers and 15 education partners. 550 of those clients were actively pursuing skills development programs. 578 of those clients were interviewed for open job opportunities and 495 were hired. Houston Back on Track also supported 155 career coaches with professional development opportunities to strengthen their coaching skills.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic
Development
Team Showcases
Houston Region to
Site Consultants
on Exclusive
Familiarization Tour

7

site consultants hosted

In April 2024, the Partnership hosted seven leading site consultants for an exclusive two and a half day immersion tour into Houston's dynamic business ecosystem. The visit aimed to position Houston as a prime choice for business relocation and expansion by offering an insider's look at the region's assets.

Key highlights included VIP tours of NASA, Port Houston and the Texas Medical Center's (TMC) innovation hubs. Participants engaged in a CEO Roundtable luncheon, interactive panel discussions with Houston Regional Economic Development Alliance (HREDA) members, and networking events, including an Astros game in the CenterPoint suite and a sunset dinner cruise in Kemah.

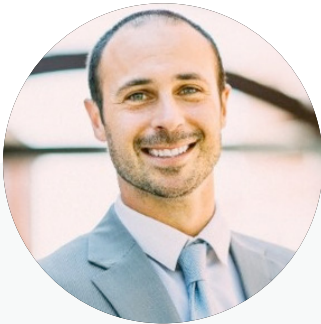
Delegation members included Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia, San Jacinto College Chancellor

Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chairman of the Port Commission of the Port of Houston Authority Ric Campo, WM CEO Jim Fish, senior TMC representatives and HREDA members, among others. Key HREDA members also sponsored tour stops.

Informal feedback from the consultants praised Houston's cultural and industrial diversity, effective regional collaboration, and the high caliber of the hosts. Their positive impressions underscore the event's success, prompting plans for hosting additional site selectors in 2025.

Tour stops:

- Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership
- NASA Johnson Space Center, including Mission Control
- Houston Spaceport
- San Jacinto Maritime Campus
- Bayport Container Terminal
- Kemah Boardwalk
- Texas Medical Center
- TMC Innovation Factory
- TMC Helix Park
- Houston Astros



NICK RIASHI
Senior Director
Consultant Connect

“In the past five years, we've collaborated with over 40 communities to host Familiarization (Fam) Tours, connecting site consultants with regional advantages. These events are essential for showcasing a community's strengths and reshaping consultants' perceptions. Our experience has shown that strong relationships with economic developers play a crucial role in decision-making.

One standout partnership was with the Greater Houston Partnership (GHP), which delivered a world-class experience. Highlights included visits to NASA, Port Houston, and Helix Park, demonstrating the region's diverse industries. The GHP Team excelled in bringing together influential regional leaders for networking opportunities, enriching the consultants' understanding of the community.

While many partnerships claim a regional approach, GHP truly embodies this collaboration, uniting various stakeholders towards a common goal in business attraction. Their meticulous planning and attention to detail made the event not only impactful but also enjoyable. GHP's commitment to excellence and community engagement was evident, ensuring that every attendee felt valued and connected.”



Since 2021,
26%
of project wins have come from
site consultants — representing
\$1.4 billion in capital investment

Colliding to Innovate: The Bayou City Bio Pulse

900
person interest list

146
average attendees



ERIC JOHNSON

Executive Managing Director,
National Healthcare Advisory Services
Transwestern

“We’re really excited about what TMC is doing, what the Greater Houston Partnership’s doing and galvanizing our region to propel more life sciences growth here in Houston. The efforts of the Partnership’s life sciences committee has made visible strides to boost the cohesiveness and interaction among the many major players in our ecosystem, with opportunities for engagement like the Bayou City Bio Pulse. As we continue to build on successes, we see Houston emerging as a premier destination for life sciences and biotechnology.”

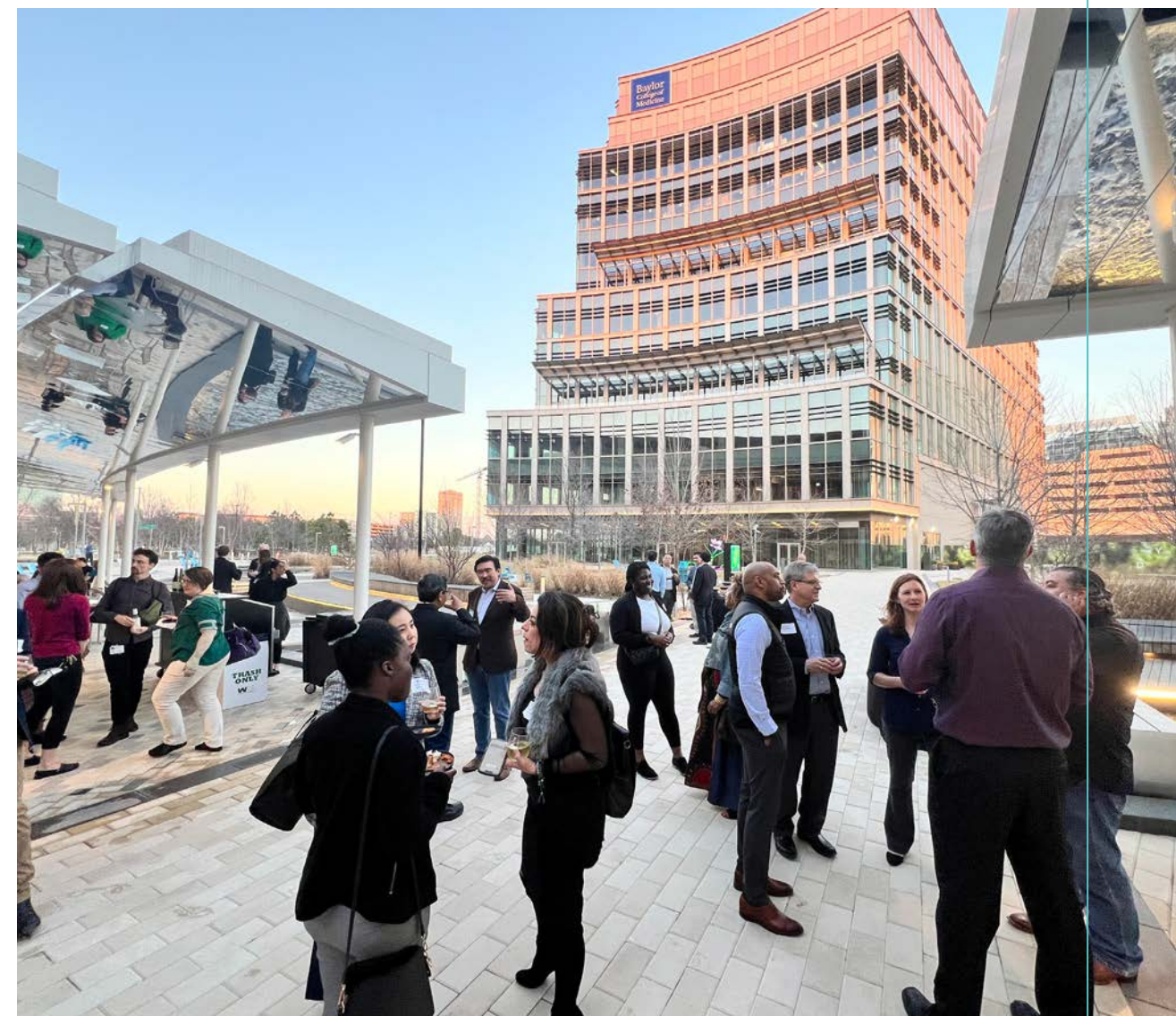
In 2022, Newmark, an economic development consulting firm, analyzed Houston’s life sciences ecosystem and identified several key strategies to enhance the region’s competitiveness. Recommendations included boosting community engagement and visibility among major stakeholders. In response, the Partnership’s Life Science Committee launched the Bayou City Bio Pulse in fall 2023, adopting the motto “Collide to Innovate.”

This bimonthly event, organized in collaboration with BioHouston and other committee members, explores life sciences hotspots across the 12-county greater Houston region, including The Woodlands, Pearland, Sugar Land and the Texas Medical Center. With over 8 million square feet dedicated to life sciences and biotechnology, these events aim to familiarize stakeholders with key locations, supporting attraction and retention efforts.

The Bayou City Bio Pulse has significantly impacted regional cohesion, reinforcing Houston’s status as a global leader

in life sciences and biotechnology. Events feature networking opportunities and discussions on topics like funding, startups, workforce development, artificial intelligence and innovative workspaces. Site tours also offer insights into local advancements and possibilities.

Since its launch, the Bayou City Bio Pulse has hosted seven events, growing its attendance to over 800 and doubling from 2023 to 2024. Looking forward, the initiative will continue to highlight greater Houston’s advantages and foster connections within the life sciences community.



7
events
hosted since launch





Texas Lawmakers Explore the City's Key Industries and Contributions to the State

57

legislators in attendance,
including four state agencies

In early 2024, the Greater Houston Partnership inaugurated its first Houston Day event, allowing Texas lawmakers from across the state to experience Houston’s dynamic industries and witness firsthand the city’s substantial contributions to the state.

Over two days, legislators toured the city’s key sectors, gaining insight into Houston’s contributions to Texas and the impacts of their legislative work on the region. Leading up to the event, the Partnership united a diverse coalition of stakeholders dedicated to showcasing Houston’s core facets.

The event started with a welcome happy hour and an opportunity to attend a Houston Rockets game. The following day, the tour began with a visit to Port Houston, where legislators witnessed the economic significance of the Port’s operations. The tour also spotlighted essential infrastructure along the Houston Ship Channel, highlighting the evolution of Houston’s petrochemical complex, the energy transition, and the pressing need for innovative flood mitigation systems, like the Coastal Texas Program.

The tour continued by exploring Houston’s space industry through tours of the Johnson Space Center-NASA and Space Center Houston, which exemplified Houston’s

innovative spirit and recent legislative investments, including the Texas Space Commission. That evening, a private dinner at Minute Maid Park featured remarks by Mayor John Whitmire, who expressed his eagerness to collaborate with the state lawmakers during the 89th Legislative Session.

On the last day, the group enjoyed a special tour hosted by Air Liquide at its La Porte Hydrogen facility, showcasing advanced technologies and Houston’s commitment to a greener energy future. This was complemented by a visit to the Texas Medical Center Helix Park, highlighting Houston’s leadership in medical research and health care innovation. The tour concluded with a visit to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, celebrating Texas’ cultural heritage and its status as the largest rodeo in the nation.

We extend our gratitude to the following partners, who graciously hosted us during the visit:

- Hydrogen Hub Air Liquide
- The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo
- Port Houston
- Johnson Space Center –NASA, Space Center Houston
- Minute Maid Park
- The Post Oak Hotel
- TMC Helix Park (Texas Medical Center, UTHealth Houston, Texas A&M Health Science Center, and MD Anderson Cancer Center)
- Toyota Center

30
volunteers

62
partners

162
total attendees

Additionally, our five event hosts played a crucial role in the tour’s success through their support and engagement:

- Mr. Tilman Fertitta
- State Senator Carol Alvarado
- State Senator Brandon Crieghton
- State Representative Greg Bonnen
- State Representative Senfronia Thompson



CAROL ALVARADO
Texas State Senator

“I was honored to have the chance to showcase Houston’s vibrant contributions to the economy, space innovation and leadership in the medical and energy sectors to my colleagues at the Legislature. As we approach the upcoming session, I’m excited knowing that many of my colleagues now have a deeper, firsthand understanding of Houston. It’s no longer just words on a page or something discussed in a committee meeting—they’ve experienced it all.”

Over
180+
miles traveled,
covering over
\$1 trillion in
economic impact

20+
industrial and
commercial sectors

Eight stops, representing approximately
\$252.5B
in state investments



Task Force Report Guides Houston's Path to Financial Stability



JAY WARING

President
Service Corporation International
and Chair of the Partnership's
Fiscal Issues Committee

“The Partnership is committed to working alongside our City leaders, communities, and other stakeholders on complex challenges facing the city and its future. The City's persistent structural budget deficit is one of our challenges. The Partnership recognized the importance of elevating this financial issue while also highlighting opportunities for the City and business community to work together.”



15+
mentions during the mayoral
campaign season by Mayoral
and City Controller candidates

For several years, the City of Houston passed budgets reflecting year-over-year expenditures growing faster than revenues, closing the gap with one-off windfalls and deferred expenses.

In late 2023, to better understand this structural deficit and its impact on the City's financial health, the Greater Houston Partnership formed the City of Houston Budget Task Force and ultimately commissioned a report, *State of the City's Finances – A Deep Dive into the Fiscal Issues Facing the City*, that examined Houston's financial challenges and provided a potential menu of policy solutions.

The Partnership's report provided a comprehensive understanding of the City's financial liabilities and was widely circulated by local leaders, stakeholders, and interested parties. Following its release, the report continued to guide our engagement efforts with the City of Houston as it planned

to adopt the budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

In June 2024, Houston City Council adopted the finalized \$7.3 billion budget for Fiscal Year 25, with the new fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. This marked Mayor Whitmire's first budget cycle, and the Fiscal Year 2025 budget is referred to as the “pathway for building to Fiscal Year 2026.” The finalized Fiscal Year 2025 budget prioritized public safety and infrastructure but did not include any one-time land sales or payment deferrals.

Throughout budget workshops and press conferences leading up to the budget's adoption, stakeholders mentioned the Partnership's report numerous times when discussing ways to address the structural deficit.

Mentioned numerous times during council meetings, press conferences, budget workshops, and City Council's adoption of the FY 2025 City of Houston Budget

Controller Forum at the Partnership Tower, hosting the four leading candidates for City of Houston Controller

State of the City's Finances:

A Deep Dive into the Fiscal Issues
Facing the City of Houston

The Greater Houston Partnership's City of Houston Budget Task Force

John W. Diamond, Ph.D.,
Edward A. & Hermena Hancock Kelly Fellow in Public Finance



Support of HISD Reforms Fuels Academic Growth and Workforce Readiness



Recognizing the critical need to enhance student achievement, the Greater Houston Partnership has supported reforms at Houston Independent School District (HISD) to ensure that our region can provide the educational opportunities essential for developing a strong future workforce.

Throughout this period of reform, the Partnership played a critical role in supporting HISD by:

- **Organizing school visits for business leaders:** The Partnership fostered stronger engagement between schools and the business community, showcasing how the HISD's reforms improve student achievement.
- **Convening events to connect district leadership and the community:** Bridging the gap between the community and district leadership as an opportunity to share information and collect feedback about HISD's reforms and progress.
- **Advocating for state public school support:** Testified and organized advocacy on behalf of public school funding and teacher support.
- **Collaborating with member companies:** Providing high-impact literacy tutoring for second-language learners.

Now that the first year of the intervention is complete, HISD shows promising signs of transformative change. The district, once grappling with chronic academic underperformance and governing challenges, is beginning to turn the corner and deliver the positive outcomes that every student deserves.

Remarkably, HISD has transitioned from trailing behind the rest of the state in academic growth to becoming a leader in just one year. This turnaround is notable because the most substantial gains have been achieved among the historically lowest-performing schools.

This progress represents a significant narrowing of the achievement gap, offering new opportunities for all Houstonians and ensuring our city can meet the workforce needs of the future.

In one year:

The number of A- and B-rated schools increased from

93 → 170

Three of HISD's campuses went from an F to an A rating

21 26

schools went from an F to a B rating

schools went from a D to a B rating

79%

of HISD's rated schools, improved their state accountability scores

HISD far outpaced all other Houston-area school districts in grade 3-8 STAAR math and reading scores, increasing scores by three percentage points when the next closest was one percentage point and the majority showed negative growth



MIKE MILES

Superintendent
HISD

“Our schools have made remarkable strides in student achievement. With the support of our dedicated teachers, principals, and community, we're committed to sustaining this progress through high-quality instruction and continued growth.”





ONE HOUSTON TOGETHER

Minority Business
Enterprise
Accelerator
Spurs Corporate
Engagement
and Economic
Opportunity

9

participating MBEs



LYNN BUCKLEY

Supplier Diversity & Business Development Sourcing Leader
Baker Hughes

“The Greater Houston Partnership’s MBE Accelerator aligns with Baker Hughes’ commitment to fostering diverse communities where we live and work through our supplier diversity initiatives. Our participation in this pilot program was a natural extension of that commitment, as it strengthens our ability to engage with diverse suppliers and drive meaningful industry-wide change. Partnerships like these are essential to our efforts to build a more inclusive and innovative supply chain.”

MBE Participants:

- Cole Chemical
- Collaborate
- Competitive Choice
- MCA Communications
- Prime Elevator Corp.
- Sterling Staffing Solutions
- Twice Media Productions
- Vecor Pipeline Integrity
- Vizion Crane & Industrial Support

Company Participants:

- Baker Hughes
- CenterPoint
- Chevron
- Harris Health System
- JPMorgan Chase
- Shell
- Oxy

In a move to increase exposure for minority business enterprises (MBEs), the Greater Houston Partnership’s One Houston Together launched the Houston Minority Business Enterprise Accelerator. The accelerator aims to drive economic growth and corporate engagement by facilitating intentional connections between Houston-region MBEs and corporate partners. The 16-week pilot program harnesses the collective purchasing power of our region’s business community to grow spending with MBEs.

The Houston MBE Accelerator focuses on facilitating introductions to MBEs that are business-ready, have a proven track record of delivering goods and services for corporate and institutional purchasers, and are currently doing business with a Partnership member

company. These three factors differentiate the program from other accelerators. The accelerator’s focused approach has allowed the participating corporations to identify potential opportunities with MBEs that likely would not have been possible without the program.

Facilitated
32
matches for
participating MBEs

Learn more about the Accelerator MBEs or Partnership member company MBEs in the 2024 **MBE Directory**



60
decision-maker meetings/calls

9
requests for
information

4
contracts
awarded with a
value of \$1.4 million
with \$4.1 million
spend target



AUNDREA YOUNG

CEO
Competitive Choice

“As a long-standing member of the Partnership, I was intrigued but unsure of what to expect from the MBE Accelerator program. However, from the very first phone call to the conclusion of the program, I was thoroughly impressed. The key difference, I believe, lies in the active involvement of Partnership leadership and commitment of our community leaders, which created a powerful and meaningful impact. The MBE Accelerator program not only amplifies my voice as an MBE but also provides a direct platform to be seen and heard.”

Transforming Supplier Diversity Programs into Core Business Strategy

RGMA, recognized global leaders in supplier and business diversity, conducted strategic advisory webinars for Partnership companies, guiding them in aligning strategy, structure, and culture to communicate the value of supplier diversity effectively.

The three-part series aimed to help companies amplify the impact of their supply chains, tackle procurement challenges, and elevate their supplier diversity programs.

Topics included:

- Measuring economic impact and ROI of supplier diversity initiatives

- Supplier diversity process design using the RGMA 5 levels maturity model and the RGMA 10 components of world-class supplier diversity programs
- Seven ways to increase diverse spend



RALPH MOORE
Founder and President
RGMA

“RGMA’s mission is to ignite the transformation of supplier diversity from a social construct to an essential business strategy. The decision to collaborate with the Greater Houston Partnership in one of the nation’s most diverse cities and home to several key global industries was a great opportunity to share our firm’s 45 years of experience, thought leadership, and industry best practices. The outstanding interaction and positive feedback from Partnership members confirm that our unique collaboration with the Partnership has the potential to create a global template for redefining supplier diversity in the 21st century.”

3-part webinar series

100+

attendees representing 33 member companies in health care, energy and utility, higher education, financial institutions, arts, construction, real estate, transportation and professional services industries.



Research Team Wins 2024 Workforce and Economic Development Award for Excellence in Regional Equity and Inclusion Assessment

The Partnership's Research team received the 2024 Workforce and Economic Development Award from the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) for outstanding work on the 2023 Houston Regional Equity and Inclusion Assessment. The award highlights the Research team's invaluable contributions to supporting our mission and empowering our members to drive progress in diversity and inclusion.



HOUSTON ENERGY
TRANSITION INITIATIVE

Inaugural Houston
Energy & Climate
Startup Week
Showcases
Innovation Driving
a Sustainable
Energy Future

1,400+
attendance



CATON FENZ

CEO, Renewables North America
Repsol

The inaugural Houston Energy and Climate Startup Week 2024 brought together leading energy and climate venture capital investors, industry leaders and startups from around the world to showcase the momentum Houston is building to launch and grow innovative companies and technologies transforming the energy industry while driving a sustainable, low-carbon energy future.

Houston is a natural convening location for these groups to come together as demonstrated by the many successful events happening throughout the year. Events individually organized by flagship support organizations, incubators, startups and, investors oriented around this week-long celebration of energy transformation built by Houston's biggest champions.

Throughout the week, startups solving energy and climate challenges had the opportunity to present their technologies and solutions to top venture capital, private equity and corporate strategic investors. Speakers, panels, pitches and discussions also took place at events across Houston with several

hosted at the Ion, the heart of Houston's innovation corridor in Midtown.

This community-led effort was organized by a group of regional organizations, academic institutions, and corporations in the Houston ecosystem including:

- Rice Alliance
- Halliburton Labs
- Greentown Labs
- Activate
- Digital Wildcatters

The region continues to build momentum and is focused on attracting investment for this growing sector, seeing a 577 percent growth since 2019. Houston Energy + Climate Startup Week will continue to expand as an ongoing effort to position Houston as a hub for energy innovation.

100+
speakers

5
founding
partners

30+
events

125+
startups
participated

Partnership with Argonne National Laboratory Accelerates Houston's Role in Commercializing Breakthrough Carbon Reduction Technologies

During CERAWeek 2024, the Greater Houston Partnership, through its Houston Energy Transition Initiative, and Argonne National Laboratory signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to leverage Houston's top research institutions, energy and industrial leadership, infrastructure, and technical expertise to catalyze the development of commercial-scale solutions for the

energy transition. This partnership aims to enable greater collaboration across academia, local industry (existing and startup), private investors and government to accelerate the translation, evaluation and pre-commercialization of breakthrough carbon reduction technologies essential to achieving both climate and economic development goals.



PAUL KEARNS

Director
Argonne National Laboratory

Partnerships are essential to realizing net zero goals. We are pleased to extend DOE national laboratory expertise and work with HETI to focus the region's considerable energy and industrial assets, infrastructure, and talent on broad commercial deployment of needed technologies."



Climate Equity Report Bridges Corporate Action and Community Engagement

The mission of the Greater Houston Partnership’s Houston Energy Transition Initiative (HETI) is to drive sustainable and equitable economic growth for an energy-abundant, low-carbon future in the greater Houston region. Critical to this objective, HETI seeks to ensure that community voices help guide climate and equity solutions to strengthen decarbonization efforts.

To this end, HETI collaborated with the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC), Sallie Greenberg Consulting (SGC), energy companies with a presence in the region, and impacted community organization stakeholders and leaders to develop a baseline understanding of current corporate climate action, community needs, and preferred methods of engagement.

The Climate Equity Report, which includes the Framework for an Equitable Energy Transition and the Community Engagement Toolkit for an Equitable Energy Transition, was developed to help

foster positive, two-way communication and engagement between Houston-area energy companies and the communities they impact. The Framework and Toolkit are based on in-depth research and interviews — with the aim of bridging the gap between corporate climate action, community engagement, and the federal government’s approach to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

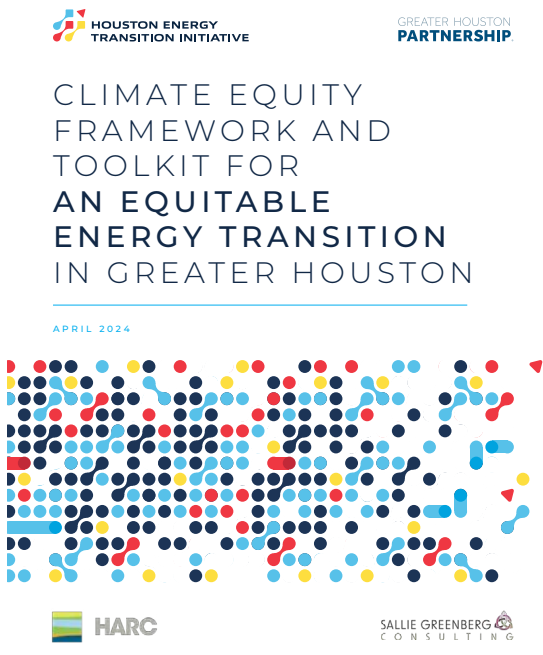


JOHN HALL
President and CEO
Houston Advanced Research Center

“ We have a unique opportunity to reassess how we address these critical issues. Community members are not just looking to engage with the industry — they want meaningful, constructive dialogue that delivers real benefits, improving both their lives and the lives of their neighbors. Our collaboration with HETI and Sallie Greenberg Consulting has fostered a framework that helps both companies and communities advance solutions for a just and equitable energy transition.”

20+
corporate & community
interviews conducted

HETI continues to share the framework and toolkit with interested companies and communities, including the Port of Houston, East Harris County Manufacturers Association, the Economic Alliance Houston Port Region, and Houston Port Bureau to reach key operators and communities along the Houston Ship Channel.



100+
companies attendance
at publication event

Framework and Toolkit Key Findings:

- Existing Priorities — STEM education and workforce development have been prioritized by companies in engagement activities.
- Shift to equity — Equity considerations have been increasingly important for companies to address in recent years. Communities are looking for authentic processes that include community input and benefits.
- Two-Way Engagement — Companies and communities recognize two-way engagement as a best practice that could be implemented further.
- Meeting Community Needs — Companies want to meet community expectations and avoid underservice, but highlighted the following challenges:
 - Concern that the benefits they can provide, which may not include direct or immediate changes, may be perceived as underservice.
 - Difficulty in navigation of processes within novel programs such as Justice40.
- Transparency — Communities want transparency in the community engagement process and solutions that are tailored to each community.

Future of Global Energy Conference Highlights Emerging Talent

~200
young energy
leader participants

8
poster competition
competitors

900+
conference
attendees



Chase Sellers

Fourth-year Ph.D. candidate in Chemical Engineering at Rice University, leveraging computational modeling, catalysis, and data science to enhance sustainable energy solutions was the winner of the first Future of Global Energy Poster Competition. Sellers poster was focused on the electrolysis processes, and specialized in the development and optimization of decarbonization technologies aimed at significantly reducing carbon emissions and improving energy systems.

Thank you HETI Steering Committee members

Baker Hughes	LyondellBassell
Bechtel	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
bp	NRG Energy
Calpine	Oxy
CenterPoint Energy	Plains All American Pipeline
Chevron	SABIC
ConocoPhillips	SLB
Dow	Shell
ExxonMobil	Sunnova
Hess	TC Energy
HIF Global	wood
Intel	Woodside Energy

The fourth annual Future of Global Energy Conference, Presented by Shell USA, Inc., turned its focus on the critical role Houston plays in producing, developing, and deploying the energy, technologies, and capital needed to meet that dual challenge. With global energy and power demand expected to continue increasing over the next decade, the need to solve the dual challenge of more energy with significantly lower emissions has never been more critical.

The fourth annual Future of Global Energy Conference, Presented by Shell USA, Inc., turned its focus on the critical role Houston plays in producing, developing, and deploying the energy, technologies, and capital needed to meet that dual challenge. With global energy and power demand expected to continue increasing over the next decade, the need to solve the dual challenge of more energy with significantly lower emissions has never been more critical.

In addition to meeting this challenge, we also recognize the success of Houston's energy industry relies on our collective ability to recruit and retain great talent who understand the complexities of the dual challenge and the world's transition to an affordable, abundant and lower-carbon energy future.

In an effort to expand access to emerging talent and thanks to the support of Chevron, nearly one quarter of this year's conference attendees represented Houston's emerging energy talent, including students, recent graduates and early career professionals who represent the future of our energy industry with the objective bridging the generational divide on the challenges and opportunities created by the dual challenge.

To further highlight emerging talent TEX-E organized judged poster competition featuring TEX-E fellows and local college and university students at the conference. During the conference 8 participants had the opportunity to showcase and pitch their ideas on how the dual challenge can be addressed to conference attendees and a panel of judges.

The focus on emerging talent at this year's conference is a step in influencing and inspiring the future talent that will build upon Houston's energy leadership.



BRUCE L. NIEMEYER

President, Americas Exploration and Production
Chevron

“These young leaders represent the future of our energy industry, and Chevron was proud to enable students, recent graduates and early career professionals to attend the conference and learn from the leading minds in Houston's energy ecosystem. These opportunities support our collective ability to recruit and retain great talent that helps us to deliver affordable, reliable, and ever-cleaner energy.”

100+
students representing
8 of Houston's
community colleges
and universities



Houston Next:
Leading the Way for
Regional Transformation



Advancing Houston as a Great Global City

Launched in 2018, the *Houston Next* campaign has been pivotal in enhancing the greater Houston region's status as a global economic leader. Through strategic advocacy and a business-led approach, the campaign advanced three central pillars: building a strong and diverse economy, enhancing quality of life, and ensuring opportunities for all Houstonians.

Thanks to the dedicated support and contributions from our members, we have made remarkable strides since the launch of *Houston Next*, which was launched as a seven-year strategic vision. Over the past six years, significant progress has been made toward these ambitious goals—a testament to the Partnership's role in driving regional progress.



Driving a Strong, Diverse Economy

Houston's economy has thrived thanks in part to the Partnership's leadership in attracting strategic investments across key sectors such as energy, life sciences, digital technology, aerospace, and advanced manufacturing.

Houston's GDP has steadily held the #7 position in the U.S. Since the launch of *Houston Next*, our GDP trajectory reflects an increase of \$125.7 billion (nominal dollars), representing a 5.7 percent growth rate. In order to hit the campaign metric of moving to #4 in GDP rankings, Houston must overtake San Francisco, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Washington, D.C. Houston is on pace to move past Washington, D.C. in GDP rankings as our economy is growing at a faster rate than the nation's capital.

From 2018 to 2024, the campaign supported work that led to 176 economic development project wins, generating over \$10.7 billion in capital investment and 22,225 new jobs. Projections for 2024 include 3,935 jobs from 22 economic development projects.

The region's overall job growth was strong since the start of *Houston Next*, even despite the COVID 19 pandemic, with 448,900 jobs created since 2018. One key campaign metric was adding 80,000 jobs net per year, which the Houston area met or exceeded in all years since the launch of *Houston Next* except for in 2019 and 2020.

We fell short in meeting our goal in advancing Houston's ranking in CompTIA's State of the Tech Workforce report overall. CompTIA ranked Houston #5 in net tech employment jobs added (2,932) and #10 in percent change (2.0 percent) for tech jobs added in '23. While not the progress we hoped for, we continue to work with industry and academia to build programs to grow our region's tech workforce.

Houston has also grown tremendously as a headquarters capital. Today, it is home to 24 Fortune 500 company headquarters, the third highest concentration in the U.S. behind only New York and Chicago. When Chevron completes their relocation by the end of 2025, Houston will be home to 25 Fortune 500 headquarters, meeting a significant campaign goal. The Fortune 500 list is one barometer of a region's business activity and overall economic health. Since the launch of *Houston Next*, the region added four Fortune 500 headquarters, illustrating Houston's economic development story is strong.

Enhancing Quality of Life

The campaign has also addressed critical infrastructure needs, advocating for essential projects like the Coastal Spine and North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

The Partnership's strategic collaboration with city leaders facilitated over \$610 million in local drainage investments, complemented by Harris County's \$2.5 billion bond program for enhanced flood mitigation as well as state and federal funds. We also successfully advocated for the creation of the Texas Flood Infrastructure Fund and the Texas Gulf Coast Protection District in the 2019 and 2021 legislative sessions. In total, between federal, state, and local funds, Houston has invested \$10.2 billion in flood resilience projects since 2018.

Despite these advancements, we fell short in advancing Houston's position in The Economist magazine's global livability survey rankings. The Partnership is committed to driving further improvements by supporting investments in infrastructure and effective governance to bolster Houston's future rankings.



176

economic development
projects supported
2018 - 2024



\$10.7B+

in capital investment



22,225

new jobs

Tech Workforce:

- **#15** in CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce report

Fortune 500 Headquarters:

- **24** Fortune 500 headquarters

GDP Growth:

- Houston's GDP increased from **\$507.5B** (2018) to **\$633.2B** (2022)
- **7th** in U.S GDP

Job Creation:

- **448,900** jobs added in Metro Houston since January 2018
- **102,900** jobs created in 2023 alone

Major HQ Relocation Announcements:

- Chevron
- ExxonMobil
- Hewlett Packard Enterprise
- NRG Energy, Inc.

\$10.2B

invested in flood resilience

Flood Mitigation Investments:

- **\$10.2 billion** invested in flood resilience since 2018
- Including the **\$2.5 billion** bond program by Harris County Flood Control District
- Supported creation of the Texas Flood Infrastructure Fund and the Texas Gulf Coast Protection District

Ensuring Opportunity for All

A vital focus of *Houston Next* has been to ensure equitable opportunities for all residents. Over a decade, the UpSkill Houston initiative has engaged over 150 employers and 70+ educational organizations, impacting over 200,000 students since 2014.

Houston Next funding has also allowed the Partnership to stand up new initiatives in response to regional needs. One example of this was the launch of Houston Back on Track in 2021, which was established to address specific short- and mid-term workforce gaps by preparing workers displaced by the COVID-19 pandemic for re-entry into the workforce. Today, the initiative connects Houstonians to good local jobs while providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities to foster long-term career growth and success. It also addresses the worker shortage that many of Houston's employers face. The Houston Back on Track initiative helped more than 10,000 job seekers recover from pandemic-related job losses.

Our initial educational attainment goal related to public education was to increase the number of students attending A&B rated schools by 6,000 students, however, due to ongoing litigation, the Texas Education Agency has not issued statewide accountability ratings. The state did, however, give school districts the data and methodology that is used to calculate ratings and letter grades for campuses which was used to determine HISD's campus ratings reported here.

As part of the Partnership's commitment and influence on educational quality, we have been strong advocates for education reforms, particularly within the Houston Independent School District (HISD). This work led to an increase in A and B rated HISD schools from 93 campuses in 2022 to 170 in 2023. The Partnership also champions early childhood education and has secured billions in additional funding for public schools.

Advancing Inclusive Leadership

The *Houston Next* campaign also enabled the launch of One Houston Together (OHT) in 2020 to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Engaging over 120 companies, it provides insights and best practices for an equitable business environment. One of the major undertakings of the initiative is the biennial Houston Regional Equity & Inclusion Assessment, conducted in 2021 and 2023. Since its inception, the assessment has shown a 15% increase in Hispanic workforce representation and MBE spend rising to 5.4%, above the national average of 3.6%.

Key initiatives like the Houston Buyer Cohort, Supplier Diversity and Talent OHT Roundtables, and Chief Purchasing Officer Convening increased the percentage of companies setting Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) spend targets from 9% in 2021 to 25% in 2023. Houston companies now average 66 MBE vendors, compared to the national average of 10.6, highlighting the Partnership's influence in driving supplier diversity.

Growth in MBE Vendors and Spending:

- Increase in commitment to supplier diversity **9%** (2021) → **25%** (2023) percentage of companies setting Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) spend targets
- **66** MBE vendors (Houston company average, well above the national average of **10.6**)
- Notable progress in DEI initiatives, with **5.4%** MBE spend among Houston organizations, exceeding the national average of **3.6%**



45.5%

of the population aged
25 – 34 hold a certificate
or degree
up from 41.7% in 2018

Education Improvements and Attainment:

- HISD increased the number of A and B-rated schools from **93** (2022) → **170** (2023) in a single school year

Workforce Development:

- UpSkill Houston has engaged over **150** employers, impacting over **200,000** students since 2014

120+

member companies
engaged to advance
DEI across the region



As the *Houston Next* campaign concludes, the Greater Houston Partnership's efforts have enhanced Houston's competitiveness and diversified its economy. These initiatives reflect the collaborative spirit of the Partnership, its investors, and the broader community. Continued commitment to these efforts will ensure that Houston remains a beacon of innovation, economic strength, and opportunity for all.

Thank You *Houston Next* Investors

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CenterPoint Energy

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