



Housing + Transportation

# Decision-maker Scorecard

LINK Houston advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity.

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**LINK  
HOUSTON**

This scorecard is an assessment tool to ensure affordable housing exists with affordable transportation options and that both are high-quality.

All people need quality housing they can afford and the ability to access a variety of opportunities outside their home— education, employment, shopping, recreation, etc. Transportation is the connection between home and outside opportunity. Ideally, quality affordable housing will be near everything residents need and desire. Though the reality is that even the best-planned affordable housing endeavor cannot be near all opportunities.

Therefore, the availability and quality of affordable transportation, such as walking, biking, riding transit, or carpooling, must be considered when determining if housing is truly affordable.

High-quality, affordable transportation near affordable housing enables people to get to the places they need to go regardless of means, ability, or circumstances — such as when someone else needs the family car, the car breaks down or is flooded, or to save money.

Use the Housing + Transportation Decision-maker Scorecard to improve practice at your organization by:

- Selecting better sites through early consideration of the quality of affordable transportation.
- Increasing functionality of affordable housing by evaluating and implementing transportation improvements.

### Site Location

### Project Stage(s) Scored

**Site Selection**

Site visit and mapable analysis to compare potential sites

**Site Improvement & Use**

Planning and design

**Affordable transportation is high-quality for individuals when it provides geographic access to opportunities and is multimodal, timely, practical, dignified, accessible, safe and low cost.**

**Affordable transportation is high-quality for neighborhoods when it improves health, the environment, community conditions and advances equity.**



# Site Selection

## Geographic Access

**VALUES** Centrality, destinations, utility, feasibility

**GOAL** Affordable housing near opportunities to remove the need for people to travel far for all needs; freeing up time and money

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 13

/13

**1. Is the affordable housing site near the following important places?** Circle one per row

- Elementary school is less than 0.5 miles (a 10-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Middle school is less than 1 mile (a 20-minute walk)  YES  NO
- High school is less than 1.5 miles (a 30-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Park or greenspace is less than 0.25 miles (a 5-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Childcare or daycare is less than 0.5 miles (a 10-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Fresh food grocery is less than 0.5 miles (a 10-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Pharmacy is less than 1 mile (a 20-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Healthcare is less than 2 miles (a 40-minute walk)  YES  NO
- Community center/library is less than 1 mile (a 20-minute walk)  YES  NO

Note: Use an online tool, such as Google Maps, to identify the walking time between the site and each type of destination. The approximate walking times in the question above include delays at intersections and dealing with varying walking conditions. Please also note that while proximity to opportunities is important, it does not speak to a person's experience or the quality of transportation from the site to the opportunity itself. Other sections of the tool inquire about other important aspects of quality for people who are walking, biking and riding transit.

**2. What is the site's Walkscore.com result? (visit www.walkscore.com)** Circle one per row

- Walk Score is greater than 60 out of 100  YES  NO
- Transit Score is greater than 60 out of 100  YES  NO
- Bike Score is greater than 60 out of 100  YES  NO

**3. Is the site's CNT AllTransit score higher than 7 out of 10?**

(visit alltransit.cnt.org)  YES  NO

# Travel Options

**VALUES** Multimodality, flexibility, connections, freedom, true choice, customization, control

**GOAL** Support freedom of movement by prioritizing a variety of viable affordable transportation options on-site and to off-site destinations to reduce the need to own a car in order to live a full life

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 20

/20

4. Are sidewalks generally present on both sides of streets around the site?  **YES** **NO**

5. Is the nearest transit stop within a ¼ mile?  **YES** **NO**

6. What are the amenities at the transit stop? Circle one per row

- Real-time sign  **YES** **NO**
- Shelter  **YES** **NO**
- Bench  **YES** **NO**
- Trash bin  **YES** **NO**
- Concrete pad  **YES** **NO**

7. Is there a continuous, even, and accessible sidewalk from the site to the transit stop?  **YES** **NO**

8. Do most of the street intersections that must be crossed to get from the site to the transit stop have the following? Circle one per row

- Traffic signals for cars  **YES** **NO**
- Traffic signals for pedestrians  **YES** **NO**
- Marked crosswalks  **YES** **NO**
- Concrete pad  **YES** **NO**

9. Are there stops for two or more transit routes/lines within a ½ mile?  **YES** **NO**

Note: Multiple transit services mean greater access to opportunity in several directions

10. Is the site near the following transportation options? Circle one per row

- Bus stop is less than 0.25 miles (a 5-minute walk)  **YES** **NO**
- Rapid transit (light rail or rapid bus) is less than 0.5 miles (a 10-minute walk)  **YES** **NO**
- Transit center or park-and-ride is less than 1 mile (a 20-minute walk)  **YES** **NO**
- High-comfort bikeway or off-street trail is less than 0.5 miles (a 5-minute ride)  **YES** **NO**
- Bike service station (i.e., pump, tools) is less than 0.25 miles (a 3-minute ride)  **YES** **NO**
- Bikeshare (i.e., BCycle) is less than 0.5 miles (a 10-minute walk)  **YES** **NO**
- Carshare service (i.e., Zipcar) is on-site or immediately adjacent  **YES** **NO**
- Ridesharing/taxi pick-up, drop-off point on-site or immediately adjacent  **YES** **NO**

Note: Use an online tool, such as Google Maps, to identify the walking time between the site and each type of transportation

# Time

**VALUES** Efficiency, speed, persistence, punctuality, reliability, timeliness, frequency, coordination

**GOAL** Affordable transportation that is timely, speedy and reliable (on-time) so people can plan activities with their time and maximize their time as they choose

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 8

/8

11. Is transit service frequent at the nearest stop or station on weekdays? Circle one per row

- The stop has peak-hour service at 7 a.m. that comes every 15 minutes or faster  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has midday service at noon  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has off-peak service at 7 p.m. that comes every 30 minutes or faster  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has evening service after 9 p.m.  **YES** **NO**

12. Does transit service at the nearest stop or station operate on WEEKENDS and HOLIDAYS? Circle one per row

- The stop has peak-hour service at 7 a.m. that comes every 15 minutes or faster  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has midday service at noon  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has off-peak service at 7 p.m. that comes every 30 minutes or faster  **YES** **NO**
- The stop has evening service after 9 p.m.  **YES** **NO**

Note: Transit frequency varies by time of day and between weekdays and weekends

# Site Improvement + Use

## Dignity & Practicality



Potential Partnership

**VALUES** Infrastructure, budget priority, customer service, care, compassion, respect, simplicity, ease, organization, convenience, technology, ability to multitask, sensible, awareness


**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 14

**GOAL** Experience dignity through an improved built environment and affordable transportation options that are well-organized, easily understood and use technology strategically

/14

13. Are walking and biking connections to public streets, trails and bikeways prominent and clear?  **YES** **NO**

14. Did you explore options to provide additional pathways for walking or biking on-site and nearby?  YES  NO

 Note: Such as paths on drainage or utility easements

15. Are multiple access points to the site provided specifically for people walking or rolling?  YES  NO

Note: Multiple access points provide people the option to avoid driveways or going far out of their way

16. Are walk, bike or roll access points located to provide logical, shortest-distance access to public sidewalks and transit stops?  YES  NO

17. Are walk, bike or roll access points to the site functional for both entering and exiting the site?  YES  NO

18. Are on-site walk, bike, or roll routes intuitive and never blocked by vehicles?  YES  NO

19. Is the main entrance to buildings also the clearly marked, best entrance for people who walk or bike?  YES  NO

20. Is there a bike rack that is secure and has lighting?  YES  NO

21. Is the bike rack clearly visible or have wayfinding signage to its location?  YES  NO

22. Is storage space available to residents that can accommodate a bike?  YES  NO

23. Do residents receive information about transportation options in their welcome packet?  YES  NO


24. Are informational resources about transportation available on-site?

Circle one per row

Printed schedules, map, and/or how-to-ride guide  YES  NO

Digital kiosk/screen  YES  NO

25. Will there be co-sponsored events and challenges offered for residents to simplify the experience of using affordable transportation and increase comfort in trying new ways of getting around?  YES  NO

 Note: Such as an information session held in partnership with transportation providers explaining available transportation options

## Accessibility



**VALUES** Reachable, self-sufficiency, comfort, independence

**GOAL** Comfortably accessible to all people in all geographies, regardless of ability

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 11

/11

26. Are all sidewalks on-site and immediately adjacent to the site accessible (i.e., ADA compliant)?  YES  NO

27. Is the likely, most direct walk/roll path to the nearest transit stop accessible (i.e., ADA compliant)?  YES  NO



28. Is street storm drainage adequate to prevent standing water and collection of mud and sharp debris at curb ramps?  YES  NO



Note: Sharp objects and mud are a real safety concern for people rolling, in any weather condition

29. Does the nearest transit stop have a shelter, seating and concrete pad for boarding and alighting transit?  YES  NO



30. Does the nearest transit stop have a shelter, seating and concrete pad for boarding and alighting transit?  YES  NO



31. Does the nearest transit stop have audible or visual real-time information?  YES  NO



32. Is there an accessible ridesharing/taxi pick-up/drop-off point on-site?  YES  NO

33. Are there entrance(s) for accessible vehicles (e.g., METROLift, accessible vans) to drop off customers in front of buildings?  YES  NO

34. Is the main entrance to buildings also the clear, best entrance for a person rolling?  YES  NO

35. Does on-site signage and wayfinding help all residents and visitors understand walk, bike and roll access is a priority and respected?  YES  NO

36. Are the substantive elements of any outstanding Pedestrian Accessibility Reviews (PARs) and 3-1-1 requests addressed, whether by the local government alone or through partnership?  YES  NO



### Safety



Potential Partnership

**VALUES** Respect, responsibility, cautious, person-focused, protection

**GOAL** Street infrastructure that encourages safety and mitigates issues for all people using the road, including those relying on affordable transportation options

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 14

/14

37. What is the nature and condition of crosswalks around the site? Circle one per row

Crosswalks have a highly visible design  YES  NO

Crosswalk markings are well-maintained  YES  NO

Streetlights illuminate the whole crosswalk  YES  NO

Pedestrian signal provides adequate crossing time  YES  NO

A leading pedestrian interval gets pedestrians crossing first  YES  NO

Note: A leading pedestrian interval means people walking get a signal first and start crossing before cars

38. Do streetlights illuminate public sidewalks while leaving no significant shadows?  YES  NO



39. Does on-site lighting illuminate walk/bike/roll entrances and connecting paths?  YES  NO

40. Does transit service at the nearest stop or station operate on WEEKENDS and HOLIDAYS? Circle one per row

Street designs calm traffic to naturally reduce travel speed  YES  NO

Streets with medians provide a refuge in the middle  YES  NO

Bikeways are clearly marked and physically protected  YES  NO

41. Has a study of motor vehicle crashes around the site been completed and have the identified enhancements been incorporated into the project?  YES  NO



42. Are policies and laws consistently enforced (e.g., school zones, parking, drivers yielding to people walking or rolling)?  YES  NO



43. Does the ground-floor facade of multi-story buildings have a high percentage of transparency (aka fenestration)?  YES  NO

44. Do people maintain control of their pets and are stray dogs managed?  YES  NO

### User Cost



Potential Partnership

**VALUES** Affordability, budget-conscious, realistic

**GOAL** Transportation that is budget-friendly while providing people with needed access to opportunities

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 4

/4

45. Will residents have the option for any of the following cost-reducing incentives? Circle one per row

Transit incentive (i.e., fare card, discounted passes, etc)  YES  NO

Note: Such as residents receiving a METRO Q-card with a starting value or reload value each month

Bikeshare incentive  YES  NO

Note: Such as a BCycle membership for residents and on-site or nearby station or bikes available to sign out

Carshare incentive  YES  NO

Note: Such as hourly/daily carshare available on-site and discounted for low-income residents

Parking cost decoupled from housing cost  YES  NO

Note: Decoupling parking can lower cost for tenants that do not need parking

### Health & Environment



Potential Partnership

**VALUES** Quality of life, wellbeing, physical activity, rejuvenating, healthcare, climate, sustainability, functional, duty, joy, public art, beauty, accomplishment, enlightenment, shelter, cleanliness

**GOAL** Affordable transportation options that promote healthy, active living and improve on-site and neighborhood environments

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 4

/8

46. Are buildings LEED® certified and/or is site infrastructure Envision® certified?  YES  NO

47. Is information provided to tenants/owners about developer values regarding healthy living and how the site prioritizes active/affordable transportation?  YES  NO

48. Is the transition from housing/site to the public street seamless and inviting?  YES  NO

49. Are there shorter blocks and a grid network (streets & paths) to encourage walking?  YES  NO



50. Is on-site vegetation used to reduce noise, improve air quality and provide shade to people and buildings along walking and biking paths?  YES  NO



51. Is vegetation maintained so as not to impede walking/rolling access?  YES  NO



52. Is there access to green space (on-site or nearby) that allows programming (children, intergenerational, celebrations)?  YES  NO



53. Does public space with community character, art and/or water features exist?  YES  NO



## Community & Equity

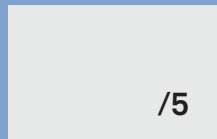


Potential Partnership

**VALUES** Support, engagement, people, family, connecting with people, integration, balance, equitable, equality, fairness, justice

**GOAL** Improve how people connect to places, provide opportunities to engage with other people and prioritize people using affordable transportation options, resulting in a redistribution of benefits traditionally provided to car-reliant households

**SCORE:**  
NUMBER OF YESES  
OUT OF 5



54. Does community space for meeting or gathering exist on-site?  YES  NO

55. Have you consulted with community members and residents about the potential housing development?  YES  NO

56. Does the mix of businesses nearby create the opportunity for people to connect and have nearby opportunities?  YES  NO

57. Can people walking, biking or rolling enter and exit the site at locations of likely travel paths to nearby businesses?  YES  NO

58. Will the development improve an existing challenge identified in a community plan?  NOT APPLICABLE  YES  NO

Note: Many types of community plans exist that describe challenges and community-desired improvements, such as the City of Houston's Complete Communities or Houston-Galveston Area Council's Livable Centers plans. Two examples of existing challenges that affordable housing and affordable transportation may address: (1) spurring permanent improvements to transit-service frequency in a traditionally disinvested area to connect to a fresh grocer or community college or (2) bringing opportunity to where legacy residents are now, instead of forcing them to find affordable housing in a different high-opportunity area.

# Score Summary

(sum of value "yes" totals)

Geographic Access  /13

Travel Options  /20

Time  /8

Site Location Score  /41

Dignity & Practicality  /14

Accessibility  /11

Safety  /14

User Cost  /4

Health & Environment  /9

Community & Equity  /4

Site Improvement and Use Score  /56

**TOTAL SCORE**  /97

## Acknowledgments

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BikeHouston	Mardie Paige
Change Happens! CDC	New Hope Housing
Chinese Community Center	Nour Maher Ghadanfar
Covenant Community Capital	On The Road Lending
Credit Coalition	The Rev. Linda Davis
Debra Walker	Rowhouse CDC
Fifth Ward CRC	Sandra Rodriguez
Greater Houston Fair Housing Center	Sarah Shams
Greater Houston Partnership	SEIU Texas
Greater Northside Management District	SERjobs
Harris County Housing & Community Development Department	Sophie Elsner
Harris County Transit	St. Paul's United Methodist Church
HOME Coalition	Tanya Debose
Houston Area Urban League	Tejano Center
Houston Bike Share	Texas A&M Transportation Institute
Houston Habitat for Humanity	Texas Children's Pediatrics
Houston Housing Authority	Texas Housers
Houston Housing Finance Corporation	Texas Organizing Project
Houston ISD	The Houston Community Land Trust
Houston LISC	Trevor Reichman
Houston Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	Wells Fargo
Houston METRO	West Houston Association
	Westchase District

### LINK Houston

LINK Houston is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that advocates for a robust and equitable transportation network so that all people can reach opportunity. We envision a world in which all people in Houston can easily access not only jobs, but also educational experiences, medical appointments, grocery stores, greenspace, and other important destinations, regardless of their mode of transportation. To make that vision a reality, we support transformative and inclusive policies, systems, initiatives, and infrastructure development that connect people to opportunity by transit, walking, and biking. We move ideas into action through community engagement, research, and shaping public policy.

### Use of Terms

The scorecard avoids the use of technical terminology as much as possible and is intentionally phrased in present tense, in most cases. Please direct any questions to LINK Houston by visiting [www.linkhouston.org](http://www.linkhouston.org) or emailing [info@linkhouston.org](mailto:info@linkhouston.org).