

## Theme – Economic Development

### Sub Theme – Business Location

#### Indicator - Jobs/ Housing Balance

Sprawl can be described as the separated spread-out development practice that has dominated suburban development over the last 60 years. The **Jobs/ Housing balance** is a focus on the supply of housing in proximity to jobs. The ideal Jobs/Housing balance is one that offers access to many and various types of housing such as single family, duplexes, and multifamily housing within walking distance to jobs. The Jobs/Housing balance alludes to the importance of mixed-use developments where pedestrian access to schools, services, entertainment, jobs and housing is made possible (Burchell, Downs, McCann, & Mukherji, 2005). For sustainable development, should local governments actively encourage companies to locate in existing business centers or should we let the market decide? In a survey of Harris County residents in 2010, 80% called for redevelopment of older urban areas for mixed use development (Klineberg, 2010). However, in a 2005 survey, Anglos preferred neighborhoods that do not have high percentages of African American or Hispanic people (Klineberg, 2005). This cultural practice, complicates the rational location choice theory of maximizing income to find housing close to jobs. It also explains why some inner city neighborhoods, such as the Houston Third Ward and parts of the Fifth Ward, have large supplies of vacant and underused property, despite their close proximity to the central business district.

**Sustainability Benefit:** Houston has a very efficient freeway system which connects most areas of the city to employment centers very efficiently.

**Sustainability Issue:** Less than 25% of Houstonians live within a quarter mile of high density business centers.

#### **The following metrics were used to measure Job / Housing Balance:**

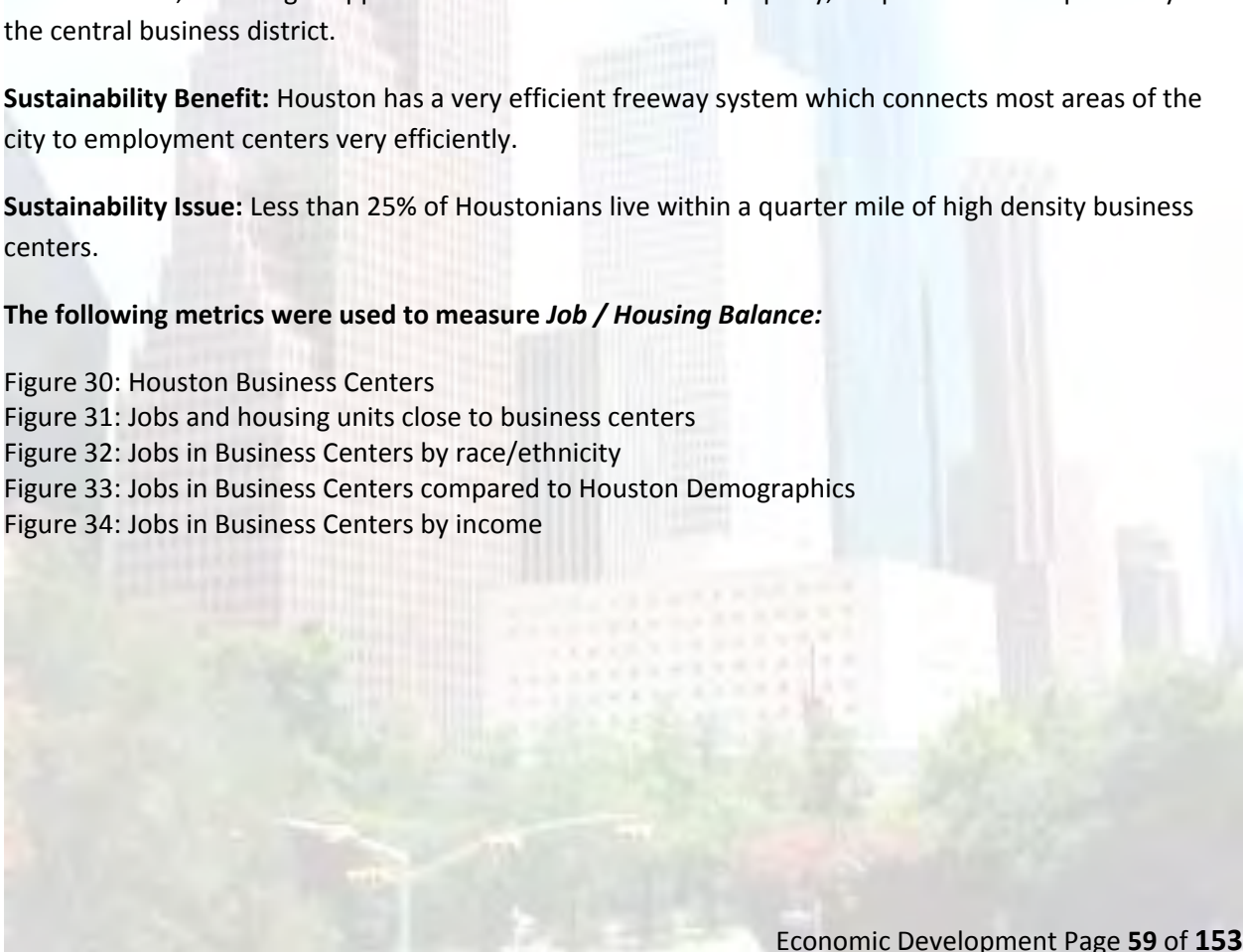
Figure 30: Houston Business Centers

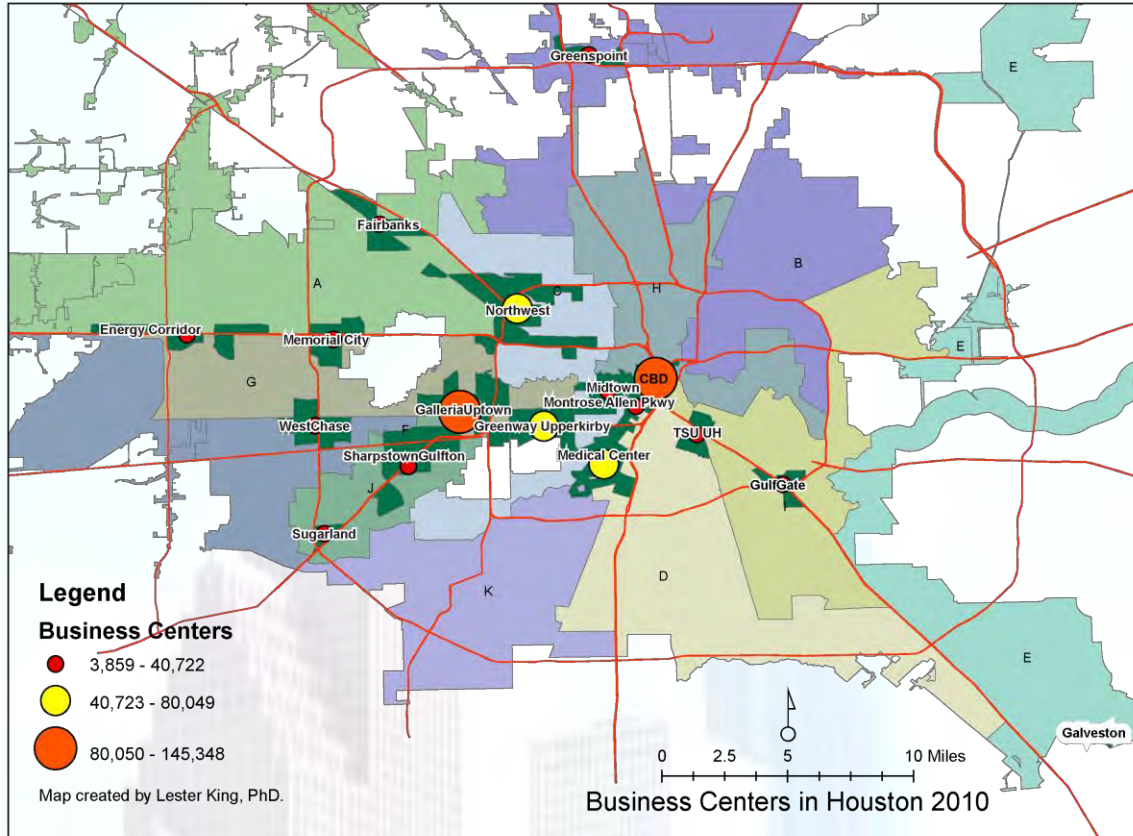
Figure 31: Jobs and housing units close to business centers

Figure 32: Jobs in Business Centers by race/ethnicity

Figure 33: Jobs in Business Centers compared to Houston Demographics

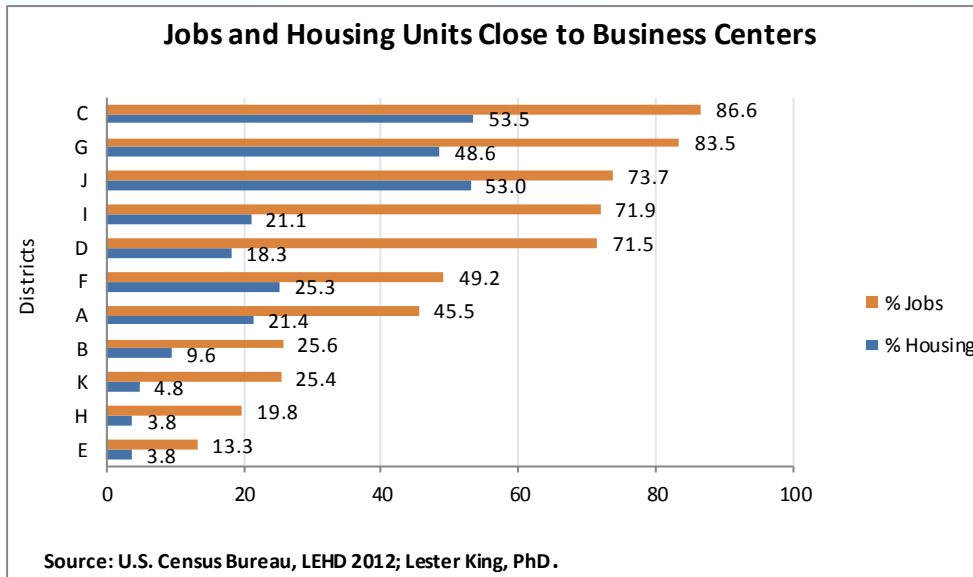
Figure 34: Jobs in Business Centers by income





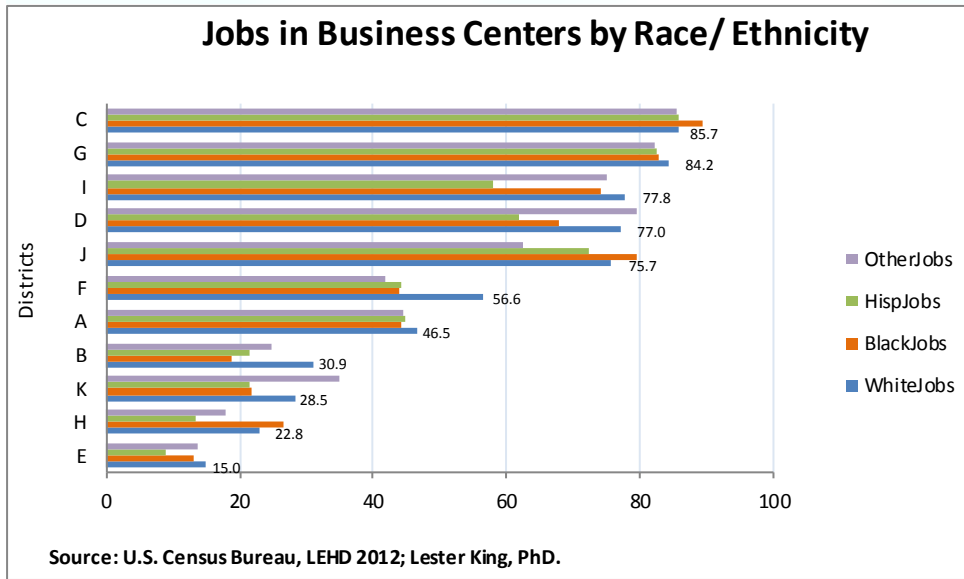
**Figure 30: Houston Business Centers**

- This map shows the location of business centers in Houston in 2010. These business centers are defined primarily as places with a high density of jobs (greater than 10 per acre within transit analysis zones or TAZs and clusters of such high density TAZs with more than 10,000 jobs).
- In 2010 there were 17 business centers in the City of Houston.
- Downtown, the Galleria, and the Medical Center show the highest concentration of jobs in the City of Houston with more than 75,000 jobs each.
- Although less than 25% of Houstonians on average live within a quarter mile of business centers, about a third of the White cohort live within a quarter mile of the business centers (31.33%). The comparable figures for other races/ ethnicities are: Black – 13%, Hispanic 20%, other races 27%. This suggests that in comparison to other races and ethnicities in Houston, the White cohort prefers and can afford to live close to business centers.



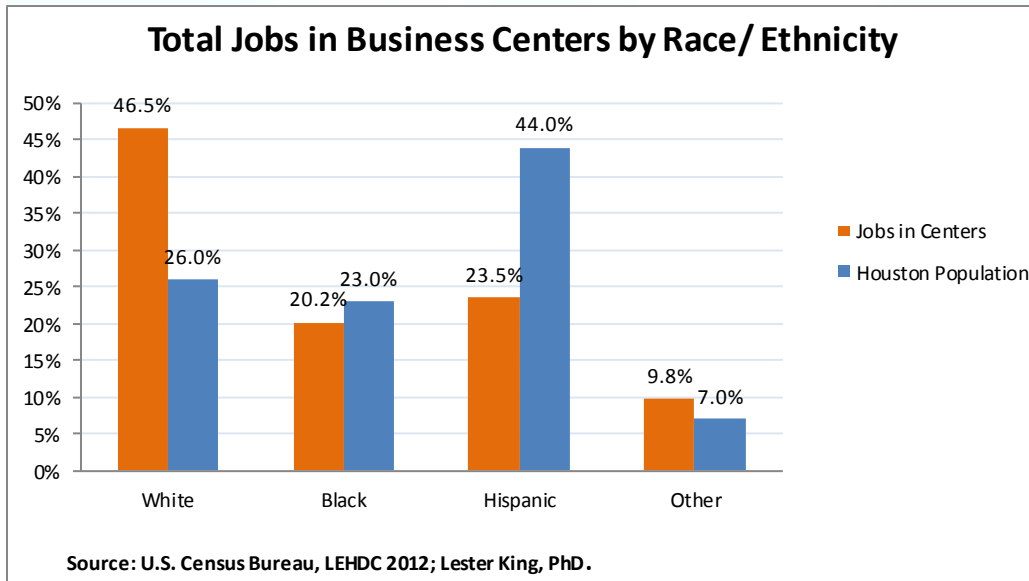
**Figure 31: Jobs and housing units close to business centers**

- The above figure shows the percentage of jobs and housing units within a quarter of a mile from the business districts in Houston.
- Districts C, G, J, I, and D each have over 70% of the jobs in those districts respectively, within a quarter of a mile to business centers. These 5 districts are also the only ones with a majority of jobs within the business centers. All other districts have a majority of the jobs within in each district respectively, outside of the business centers.
- Districts B, K, H, and E each have less than one third of the jobs in those districts respectively, within a quarter of a mile to a business center.
- Districts C, G, and J are the only ones with the majority of housing units within a quarter mile of business centers. All other districts have the majority of housing units located farther than walking distance to the business centers in Houston.
- Districts B, K, H, and E all have less than 10% of housing units within walking distance of business centers.



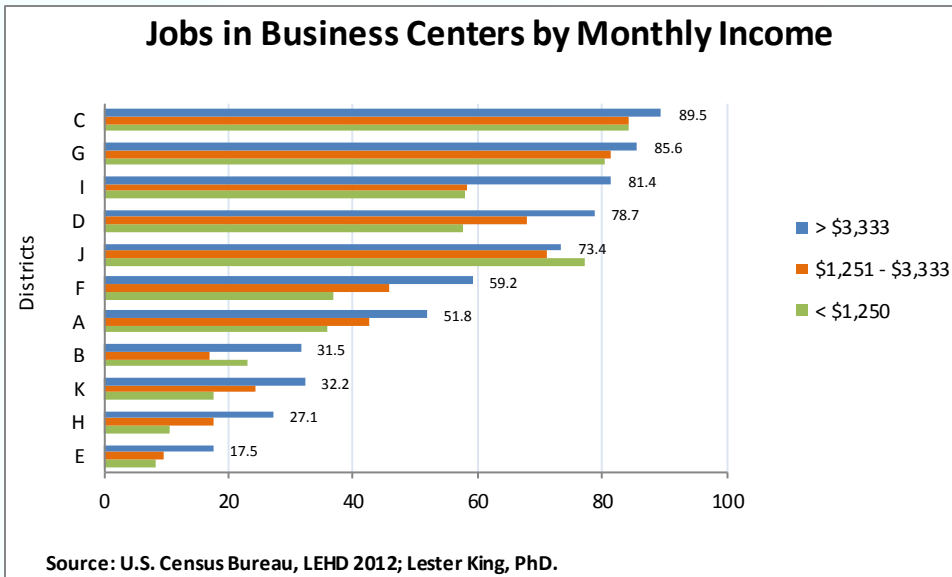
**Figure 32: Jobs in Business Centers by race/ethnicity**

- The above figure shows the percentage of jobs in each district held by the major racial and ethnic groups.
- Districts C, G, I, D, J, and F each have most of the jobs by the White cohort within a quarter of a mile to business centers. District A comes close to this group with 46.5% of the jobs close to business centers held by the White cohort.
- Most of the jobs in and within a quarter of a mile to business centers in Houston are held by the White cohort.



**Figure 33: Jobs in Business Centers compared to Houston Demographics**

- The above figure compares percentages of racial ethnic groups in Houston, in terms of holding jobs in business centers in 2012 and city wide population distribution in 2010.
- It shows that African Americans and all other racial groups hold jobs in the business centers relatively commensurate with their population distribution in the city as a whole.
- However, the White cohort is overly represented with holding almost twice as many jobs in the business center as their citywide percentage. At the same time, the Hispanic cohort is under-represented in terms of holding jobs in the business centers with almost exactly the opposite trend as the White cohort.



**Figure 34: Jobs in Business Centers by income**

- The above figure shows the distribution of jobs in business centers within each district according to 3 levels of income.
- Within Districts C, G, I, D, J, F, and A most of the Jobs earning greater than \$3,333 per month are located within a quarter of a mile to business centers.