



## The Challenge

This is a time when the face of Houston is rapidly changing at an accelerated pace. It is a time when the chasm between those who have and those who have not broadens. The YMCA remains a constant.

Despite all the growth the YMCA of Greater Houston has seen in the last decade, we know it is not enough. Children and families need YMCA programs and services. Houston needs the YMCA to influence, lead and guide its youth toward civic responsibility. Houston needs an expanding YMCA to provide the love of learning and hope.

We have been Houston's leader in the past. We face the future ready to take an even greater role.

We must provide the facilities and resources that will act as tools for impact - whether change to spirit, mind or body. What we do today provides real and practical solutions for a vastly changing region.

It is the history of the YMCA of Greater Houston to step boldly out and lead. That has always been our commitment. Our dedication.

That is why the YMCA of Greater Houston is launching the most consequential capital development initiative in its history, indeed in the history of the YMCA movement. We must.

But this is not about the YMCA. It is about the hundreds of thousands we serve. Young people, men, women, seniors, families - they all look to us.

The future never looked brighter, more exciting, more important. This capital efforts is the right thing, it is the right time.

## A Rich History and Facts

Since 1919, the South Central Family YMCA on Wheeler Street has long been a wellspring for Houston leaders and an important presence in the city and behind the scenes of the turbulent 60's, the South Central Family YMCA was a primary player in the peaceful desegregation movement. This YMCA played a prominent role in the founding of numerous organizations throughout the city including the Houston Area Urban League, the Houston Council of Human Relations, the Houston Business and Professional Men's Club and the Metropolitan Senior Citizen's Club and including the national program Black (now Minority) Achievers were all created at South Central.

As another vital step in its commitment to Houston's urban communities, the YMCA in collaboration with the Greater Third Ward community is undertaking a timely quest to renew the spirit of the South Central Family YMCA. This endeavor will provide much needed and improved health and wellness, child care, recreational youth development and enrichment opportunities for the Greater Third Ward. It is anticipated the new YMCA will have a positive impact on the job market, residential attractiveness and business economy in the area. This new vision replaces a time where the former aging facility, landlocked location and changing neighborhood demographics rendered hindrances to the YMCA effectively serving the Greater Third Ward community.

## Why the change is needed?

- The Greater Third Ward area continues to grow from 184,661 in the 2000 census to a projected 216,178 percent growth rate.
- Youth under the age of eighteen make up 28 percent of the area's growing population.
- The median household income for the area is currently \$28, 349.

## YMCA Capital Development

Board members, staff, and volunteers spent months and countless meetings examining the future needs of our YMCA. What evolved is a design and vision called *The Vision 2020 Strategic Plan*. It emphasized three overriding imperatives:

1. Transforming the lives of children and youth;
2. Inspiring healthier lifestyles; and
3. Increasing our YMCA's capacity to serve an ever growing and ever diversifying community.

The YMCA involved our staff, board members, community leaders and other local agencies in studying our changing community needs.

The needs and interests of the forty-one centers in the YMCA of Greater Houston are varied and vast. As the YMCA looks to the future, urgent priorities have been identified and studied to chart our essential plans for the next five to fifteen years.

We see YMCA centers filled to capacity as they attempt to meet the needs of growing communities. Expansion is critical.

We have areas now calling out for a YMCA to address crucial social needs. New facilities must be built.

The time is now. The YMCA must take action now. The YMCA stands ready.

Our community is counting on our success. Please join us. Give generously.

## A Bright Future with the Houston Texans

A wonderful partnership has begun between the Houston Texans, the YMCA of Greater Houston and Mr. and Mrs. McNair. The McNair's are in support of the naming rights of The Houston Texans YMCA.

The future site for the South Central Family YMCA will be on the old Palm Center tract located at 5330 Griggs Road (at Martin Luther King Blvd.) This is nearly 5 acres of vacant land to be used for new facility. This opportunity is in collaboration with Mayor Bill White and the City of Houston in support of the vitality of the Third Ward communities.

This facility will offer residents in the area many new and exciting programs: YMCA's "Membership for All", a membership program offered on an income-based rate, day camp, child care, teen clubs, youth sports, community collaborations for educational programs and health and wellness activities. The programs and services of the YMCA are tools for building the values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.

## Facility Components

- Outdoor Pool with spray park
- Gymnasium
- Health and wellness center
- Indoor/outdoor family, teen/children activities
- Recreational spaces and youth sports fields
- Multi-purpose rooms for educational and life skill training
- Locker/shower/dressing rooms
- Community meeting center

## Project Timeline and Scope

Construction of the new center is anticipated to begin in fall of 2009 and we look forward to the \$10 million dollar project being operational in 2010!