Innovation is an invitation to build the world you want to see.
Houston is a top “City of the Future”

“...a reputable talent hub, third place (in the world) in Human Capital and Lifestyle. The city’s a hit with investors, as it recorded 53 expansion or co-location projects between May 2015 and April 2020, representing more than a quarter of its total inward FDI and the second highest out of all locations analysed.”

- Financial Times
#1 in growth prospects for the next five years
- Forbes

24 Fortune 500 companies
- Fortune

#2 in attracting tech worker relocation
- LinkedIn

#1 in America for tech workers in non-tech companies
- Cyberstates
The opportunity:
A place where ideas and capital meet.

Anchored by its flagship, The Ion, at 4201 Main Street in Midtown, the new Ion District capitalizes on the city’s entrepreneurial ethos and legacy of innovation, introducing a walkable, mixed-use community spanning 12 blocks in the heart of Houston.

most diverse city in America
- WalletHub

university-affiliated think tank
(Rice University)

city in business expansion globally
(2015–2020)
Every better way needs a place to begin.
Welcome to the Ion District.

An intentionally accessible, walkable and integrated urban community, where people, ideas, and businesses thrive. A job-generating neighborhood fueled by clean and sustainable technologies and the entrepreneurial drive to find a better way.
The 12-block district takes Houston’s talent and sprawl and connects it all, harnessing this city’s potential to fully emerge and endure as:

→ a tech hub,
→ a thought leader,
→ a cultural core,
→ and a global player in the innovation ecoscape.
The Ion District: Five Guiding Themes
01. 
CREATION

a mixed-use place where ideas and capital meet
an enduring, tangible, financial commitment by Rice University and its partners to the future
at the center of Houston’s Innovation Corridor, linking people and creating pathways for the future workforce
04. PRODUCTION

a job-generating neighborhood fueled by innovative, sustainable technologies and entrepreneurial drive
05. IMMERSION

a vibrant urban environment, engaging people with each other, the city, nature, the arts, food, science, and technology
In the heart of the innovation corridor.
At the center of Houston’s 15-minute city

The District takes our city's talent and sprawl and connects it all, with world-class institutions and amenities and a population larger than the city of Boston, Denver, or Pittsburgh—and the Ion at its epicenter.

10+ higher education institutions
Including Rice University, University of Houston, Houston Community College, Texas Southern, University of St. Thomas, and HBU.

15+ cultural & arts destinations

Working population of 350K people
And a population of 500K aged 15-65.

Science & research centers
Including MD Anderson, Methodist, and University of Texas Health Science Center.

Key public transit hubs
Including Wheeler, TMC, Downtown Transit Centers and Central Station Main.

Two of the country’s largest employment centers
The world’s largest medical center, TMC employs 106K, while Downtown employs over 168K workers.
The neighborhood

Midtown is Houston's most lively neighborhood. Increased demand for Midtown's office, retail, and residential space reflects a new generation of company and talent embracing the diversity of amenities offered by an urban walkable district.

Ion District dwellers are eager to improve their lives and the world around them. Find them attending a Greentown Labs panel or farmers market on the event lawn, or Slacking while sipping a beer at the Ion taproom. Later, they might walk over to Beats + Eats in Midtown Park or head for a jog along the Bayou before joining friends for a bite at The Lymbar.
What makes an innovation district work?

Via Rice University

An innovation district is a **platform** for all kinds of activity.

It's got a **critical mass**.

It's an **ecosystem** as much as a place.

It's got a **long-term mission**.

It's got **civic visionaries** as well as business entrepreneurs.

It's a combination of **“big moves”** and **“small wonders”**.

It’s **geographically bounded**.

It's an **anchor** for the regional and state economy.

William Fulton
Director of Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research

Mary Jo Pearce
Director of the Economic, Human Services and Workforce (EHSW) Division at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
An innovation district is a **platform** for all kinds of activity. It’s got a **critical mass**. It’s an **ecosystem** as much as a place. It’s got a **long-term mission**.

What does the Ion District offer?

It’s got **civic visionaries** as well as business entrepreneurs. It’s a combination of **“big moves”** and **“small wonders.”** It’s **geographically bounded**. It’s an **anchor** for the regional and state economy.
Where first-class meets critical mass.
Development plan

Under the leadership of Rice Management Company, the Ion District introduces a new kind of urban district to Houston, prioritizing street life and a mix of uses that embraces technology and sustainability.

Distinct open spaces and garden plazas create value and draw energy across the District, anchored around the pedestrian-only Central Laneway.

→ Walk Score 91 (Walker’s Paradise)
→ Bike Score 83 (Very Bikeable)
→ Midtown Transit Score 80 (Excellent Transit)
Walkable, bikeable, & transit-friendly

→ The Wheeler Station is front-door access to the city’s largest business, leisure, and arts hubs.
→ Caroline Street is the city’s newest Complete Streets upgrade.
→ Eagle Street is reconfigured as a walkable promenade lined with bistros and neighborhood storefronts.
walk to **19 museums**, visited by **9M+ people** annually

bike **1 mile** to **Hermann Park**

train every 6 minutes to **4 major league stadiums**, **5 theater venues**, and **54 healthcare institutions**

drive **5 minutes** to **tee time**
The Ion building: Accelerating innovation. Connecting communities.
In 1939, The Sears on Main Street was a prototype futuristic showroom, filled with modern marvels. Today, the revived iconic building is a hub of innovation, connection, sustainability, and economic resilience.
Purpose-built space for tech’s pace.

From the cold brew coffee to the grand sweep of the Forum Stairs, every element of the Ion is purpose-built for inventors and entrepreneurs.

- The Investor Studio serves up best-in-class settings for pitches and deal-making.
- Programming curators populate a robust event schedule for accelerators, incubators, upskilling, and connecting.
- Want your own podcast? We have a studio for that, too.
- A chef-driven food scene is in the mix.
- A state-of-the-art prototyping lab ready to turn ideas into products.
- Meticulously planned to Platinum WIRED Score, LEED Gold, and WELL building standards.
Backed by a century of stewardship.

Rice Management Company (RMC), sponsor and lead partner of the Ion District, is responsible for stewardship of Rice University's endowment as a perpetual source of revenue for current operations and current capital needs. Rice University serves its mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor.
“...companies are thinking about how to innovate and create. I think it represents the future of innovation in Houston. We’re not just the energy capital — we can be an innovation capital too.”

Raamel Mitchell
Microsoft, Corporate Citizenship & Market Development Director

Houston Chronicle, 2021
“We’re really excited to be a place where people meet, think, eat, and drink in The Ion, and we look forward to being a part of the heartbeat of Houston’s new innovation district.”

David Cordúa
Chef and Restaurateur
“Young engineers and recent college graduates see Miami, Houston, and Philadelphia — not San Francisco, New York, or Seattle — as the hot new places to jumpstart a technology or creative economy career.”

Axios
May 10, 2021
“We are thrilled to support The Ion to help ensure that Houston plays a leading role in the energy transition through innovation.”

Barbara Burger  
President, Chevron Technology Ventures and Vice President, Innovation
“I'm bullish on Houston leading the energy transition for many reasons, not the least of which is that Houston is home to world-leading energy organizations and incredible engineering strength, talent, and assets that can—and frankly must—be redeployed toward a decarbonized future. So when we considered where we could make the greatest impact in this decade of critical climate action, Houston, TX was our choice.”

Emily Reichert
Greentown Labs, CEO
Innovation is the act of introducing something new.

More than new, we aspire to better.
And every better way needs a place to begin.

Join us.

→ ionhouston.com
→ info@ionedistrict.com