



GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

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# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **We Did It! Houston Hits 600,000 New Jobs Milestone**

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GHP's *Opportunity Houston* campaign surpasses key employment goal

**HOUSTON (October 17, 2014)** – The Texas Workforce Commission released September employment estimates today which show the Houston region added 628,800 net new jobs since January 2005. The milestone marks the completion of the core goals the Greater Houston Partnership established for the organization's *Opportunity Houston* economic development program.

In 2005, GHP announced *Opportunity Houston*, a bold vision to help grow the Houston economy and turn the region into a business magnet and key gateway to global markets. Led by Campaign Chair Drayton McLane, Jr., and with the full support of the GHP Board of Directors, *Opportunity Houston* established a coordinated, aggressive 10-year regional economic development and marketing campaign to recruit new companies to Houston and retain and grow established area business.

By 2015, *Opportunity Houston* pledged to help the region hit three key benchmarks:

- Increase total non-farm payroll employment by 600,000
- Attract \$60 billion in capital investment and
- Increase foreign trade by \$120 billion

"This milestone is a great example of how the Partnership works for Houston," said GHP President and CEO Bob Harvey. "Together, we identified a need, developed an action plan and mobilized the community to achieve an incredible, collective result. Together, we accomplished something truly special."

"When we launched the *Opportunity Houston* campaign, a lot of people said it couldn't be done," said Drayton McLane, Jr. "But as the region has done time and time again, Houston proves its naysayers wrong and comes through in a big way."

Developed with economist Ray Perryman, the bold plan laid out an economic development and marketing blueprint to create 600,000 new jobs to Houston, focusing on key sectors such as energy, aerospace, advanced manufacturing, medical and biotechnology, information technology and other emerging technologies. Many economists predicted job growth but questioned whether creating 600,000 jobs by 2015 was attainable. When the recession hit in 2008 and 2009, skepticism grew but Houston propelled forward. Our region was the first to

recover from the economic downturn.

Job Creation since 2005 (seasonally unadjusted)				
MSA	Jan-05	Aug-14	# change	% change
Houston	2,292,900	2,896,400	603,500	26.3%
Dallas	2,687,100	3,209,000	521,900	19.4%
Atlanta	2,280,600	2,470,600	190,000	8.3%
New York	8,167,600	8,836,200	668,600	8.2%
Los Angeles	5,508,800	5,638,500	129,700	2.4%
Chicago	4,339,500	4,510,600	171,100	3.9%
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics				

More than 160 Houston-region companies invested \$32 million in the *Opportunity Houston* campaign, which helped attract 250 projects to the Houston region. To build on that foundation of success, GHP launched *Opportunity Houston 2.0* in 2012, which will build on the success of the original campaign, continuing to attract corporations to the region, enhance workforce development, enhance Houston’s image globally and boost talent attraction.

**Opportunity Houston 2.0**

<b>Economic Development</b>	Assist in the creation of 450,000 net new jobs and \$45 billion in capital
<b>Middle Skills Workforce Development</b>	Respond to employers’ needs by providing high-quality, middle-skills training for workers in the region.
<b>Enhance Houston’s Image</b>	Enhance Houston’s image by highlighting Houston’s economic and cultural vitality, diversity and limitless possibilities.
<b>Talent Attraction</b>	Attract professional talent and entrepreneurs to Houston to start careers and build businesses.

“We knew when we developed Opportunity Houston that it would be key to build and launch the program during good times,” said Chip Carlisle, GHP’s 2006 Board Chairman. “But, we certainly did not expect there would be a full-scale economic downturn in the middle of our job creation campaign. To think, we met our goal, ahead of schedule, even with the financial crisis – that speaks volumes about the strength and resilience of our great city.”

“Houston is known as a city of opportunity and upward mobility which, by definition, means it’s critical to remain a growth city,” said Dan Bellow, GHP’s Board Chairman in 2009. “To remain a global city, we must continue to invest in growth, the same as our founding fathers did over 150 years ago. We are a city of workers, and let’s not forget that attracting companies and workers from all over the world to come work here is what has put Houston on the map.”

“While we are all rightly proud of this achievement for Houston, now is not the time to rest on our laurels,” said Harvey. “We pride ourselves on being a city of opportunity. We have to continue to work hard, work together and take the next steps to move this region forward.”

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