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## **OPPORTUNITY HOUSTON<sup>SM</sup> TO EXPAND HOUSTON REGION'S GLOBAL PETROCHEMICAL FOOTPRINT**

### ***International Initiatives, Technology and More will Strengthen Economic Development in Petrochemical Industry Sector***

**HOUSTON (Oct. 30, 2006)** -- The Greater Houston Partnership unveiled a historic fundraising effort aimed in part at building upon the region's already strong presence in the U.S. petrochemical industry.

*Opportunity Houston<sup>SM</sup>*, chaired by Houston Astros' owner Drayton McLane, is designed to expand the region's global reach through enhanced international initiatives and leveraging technology to target foreign and domestic companies for relocation and expansion in the 10-county region.

McLane said that Houston's capacity, production capabilities, and workforce make the sector a natural target for the outreach campaign. The region is home to more than 400 chemical manufacturing establishments, with employment that exceeds 35,000, and has 40 percent of the nation's base petrochemical manufacturing capacity.

Additionally, the \$15 billion petrochemical complex at the Houston Ship Channel is the largest in America, and the Texas Gulf Coast as a whole has a crude operable capacity of 3.9 million barrels of refined petroleum per day – 22.8 percent of the U.S. total.

"The companies operating here look like a 'who's who' of the petrochemical industry," McLane continued, "and for good reason: We have a world-class infrastructure to support the sector, a world-class port system, and a world-class labor force that doesn't need any on-the-job training."

"Simply stated, that means there is no reason for petrochemical companies to go anywhere else in the nation, or the world, to get what they need to efficiently access raw materials and produce and transport their products."

*Opportunity Houston<sup>SM</sup>* is a \$40 million aggressive marketing campaign that will support the Partnership's strategic plan to help create 600,000 new jobs, attract \$60 billion in capital investment, and generate \$225 billion in foreign trade.

Included among the possible programs *Opportunity Houston<sup>SM</sup>* would fund are:

- Development of a Geographic Information System (GIS), an advanced technology that can capture data according to location and link prospects with specific sites throughout the 10-county region that best meet their requirements.

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- Lead-generation methodology that will enable the Partnership to identify and aggressively pursue the strongest potential prospects in key growth sectors.
- Enhanced international outreach that includes trade missions similar to those taken earlier this year to India and China.
- Marketing efforts and public relations designed to impact domestic and international perceptions of the Houston region.

Taken together, McLane said, these and other activities will enable the region to make a powerful case for growth and development – not just in the petrochemical industry but in other sectors as well.

“We have what companies need: a low cost of doing business, a strong pro-business environment, a great partnership with local governments, a skilled workforce – pretty much anything anyone could ask for,” he continued.

“All we have to do is get the word out, and that is exactly what *Opportunity Houston*<sup>SM</sup> is designed to do.”

The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of the Houston business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, and Waller.

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