

**No. 1 – Template Studies + Basic Research + Reading City of Houston**

Due September 4, 10am – Note: Preliminary progress deadlines also apply. Must be posted to student folder by deadline.

In preparation for your site visit on September 11, you will be exploring resources online to get to know the city of Houston. It is important to the work you will be doing this semester in this design studio. You will do this through a series of template studies in addition to a general presentation to the class.

Mapping the city through the development of 'template studies' which communication your understanding of the city is a way of creating a visual language about place and its form.

This semester, we are going to focus on 'water' as it relates to built form. In Houston, water is expressed naturally through a watershed including several bayou systems. In addition, there is a ship channel which provides for a major shipping port. We will spend two weeks exploring as many aspects of the impact of water on the city as we can – as resource documentation. The first week is mapping, the second, asks that you consider the impact of water and produce a presentation that presents this exploration (more details next week) We will then group in Houston for the site visit. That weekend, you are committed to the studio completely. We will meet in the studio and I'll facilitate a brain storming design session. We will identify key factors to address this problem. Ultimately, we will produce the identification of design possibilities and recommendations based on these. It will be organized and we will work both as a team and separately.

**Assignment Objective:**

- To develop a general understanding of the city through observation and representation.
- To develop a series of 'template studies' which represent the student's interpreted 'language' of the city's form.

**WHAT YOU WILL TURN IN:**

A power point presentation which has two components – Basic Research & Template Studies.

**Basic Research:**

Utilize the websites below as well as others you find on your own and library resources to explore the city of Houston. The intention is for you to get to know the city and then represent this knowledge through a short – 5-10 minute presentation.

**Templates:**

Develop a series of 'mapping templates' which best represent an overall representation of a language which you identify as *your interpretation of the city*. The language is represented graphically through a series of individual sheets which together weave the language and are displayed through a series as a power point presentation. Examples are intentionally not provided. You are establishing this 'language', so it is important for you to consider how you would analyze and understand the city, and then represent this through a series of template studies.

You are to work through

**PRELIMINARY DUE DATE: TUESDAY, September 1 at 6pm**

The preliminary deadline is intended to serve as a work in progress crit. You must have your work minimized on your screen and prepared for an electronic desk crit. You will have 10 minutes to discuss your program followed by 10 minutes of discussion, then I will move on to the next student.

**FINAL DUE DATE: FRIDAY, September 4, 10am**

The following internet sites are intended as a general resource and do not cover all areas of research. At this point, you are not able to visit the City of Houston, so you must rely on the experience of the internet and library resources to gain an understanding of the city. This will later be compared to your impressions generated after your site visit.

**NOTE: Any images not created by you must be properly cited on image page. In addition, a resource sheet must be included as your final slide listing all resources cited.**

[http://books.google.com/books?id=aldYVBPGgT4C&pg=PA30&lpg=PA30&dq=development+and+flooding+in+houston&source=bl&ots=eeN4lxJ1DI&sig=5ndapJHbUYeStU4rT7Og9W1lllk&hl=en&ei=oDyXSqT2LZDeMc mVulkD&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=8#v=onepage&q=development%20and%20flooding%20in%20houston&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=aldYVBPGgT4C&pg=PA30&lpg=PA30&dq=development+and+flooding+in+houston&source=bl&ots=eeN4lxJ1DI&sig=5ndapJHbUYeStU4rT7Og9W1lllk&hl=en&ei=oDyXSqT2LZDeMc mVulkD&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=8#v=onepage&q=development%20and%20flooding%20in%20houston&f=false)

Read this. "Cite" 2003, Rice Design Alliance.

<http://www.houstontx.gov/>

City of Houston website provides all information relating to city projects, departments, etc...

[www.urban-nature.org](http://www.urban-nature.org)

This site addresses the impact of land use on watershed health and water quality.

<http://www.bayoupreservation.org/default.aspx/MenuItemID/197/MenuGroup/About+Us.htm>

Bayou Preservation Association is a non-profit organization that promotes the protection of Houston's bayou system.

<http://www.hcfcd.org/index.asp>

Harris County Flood Control District website.

[http://fas2.rice.edu/documents/Flood\\_History\\_Final.pdf](http://fas2.rice.edu/documents/Flood_History_Final.pdf)

Paper addressing flooding history in Houston. MUST READ.

<http://www.wxresearch.com/almanac/houflood.html>

Notes significant floods to 1837 - 2007.

[http://stoptheflood.com/thruster\\_01.html](http://stoptheflood.com/thruster_01.html)

Flood control thruster program proposal. Review this.

<http://peterbrownforhouston.com/news-center/press-releases/262-peter-brown-rolls-out-his-blueprint-to-prevent-flooding-in-houston>

[http://blogs.chron.com/houstonpolitics/2009/07/peter\\_browns\\_plan\\_for\\_flooding.html](http://blogs.chron.com/houstonpolitics/2009/07/peter_browns_plan_for_flooding.html)

Peter Brown is running for Mayor in Houston this year. He is currently on city council and is an architect.

[http://www.cleanhouston.org/living/better\\_world/houston5.htm](http://www.cleanhouston.org/living/better_world/houston5.htm)

Clean Houston educates about the need for environmental protection in Houston.

<http://www.buffalobayou.org/>

Buffalo Bayou Partnership is responsible for the coordination of all redevelopment of the Buffalo Bayou area and addresses primarily greenbelt issues.

#### **Other Watershed Projects:**

- [Los Angeles River Project](#)
- [Willamette River \(Portland, OR\) Renaissance](#)

- [Trinity River \(Dallas\) Corridor Project](#)

You may or may not find this resource in the TTU library

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/q477846uq6t37783/>

<http://www.houstontomorrow.org/livability/story/some-fear-katy-prairie-development-could-cause-worse-flooding/>

Most recent flood in Houston, April 28, 2009.

[http://soc.hfac.uh.edu/artman/publish/article\\_307.shtml](http://soc.hfac.uh.edu/artman/publish/article_307.shtml)

So, how do we correct it?

**Other informational websites on Houston**

<http://www.census.gov>

US government census agency. Search Houston, Texas to find relevant demographic information on Houston.

<http://www.centralhouston.com/Home/default.asp>

Central Houston Inc is a critical organization in the redevelopment of downtown Houston. They are the primary planning coordinators for downtown.

<http://www.houstondowntown.com/Home/Business/DoingBusiness/>

Houston Downtown Management District. This site contains a number of pdfs of maps, demographics, market studies, etc...

<http://www.mainstreetfirz.com/>

Main Street Market Square Redevelopment Authority is a Reinvestment Zone known as a TIRZ created for the redevelopment of the Main Street Market Square downtown district.

<http://www.houston.org/>

The Greater Houston Partnership promotes living and working in Houston.

<http://www.downtownhouston.org/home/default.asp>

Houston Downtown Alliance is a broad-based civic organization that promotes a vital downtown.

<http://www.houstonpavilions.com/home.php>

This is a key development project being currently under construction downtown The project architects are HOK, Inc.

<http://www.discoverygreen.com/>

Houston's new downtown park opened last spring and has received great reviews.

<http://www.bayoupreservation.org/>

Non-profit organization promoting the protection of Houston's bayou ways.

<http://www.co.harris.tx.us/>

Harris County website provides appraisal and tax information along with other relevant sources.

<http://www.heritagesociety.org/>

The Heritage Society of Houston addresses the historic context of Houston.

<http://www.ridemetro.org/>

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) is an integral transportation organization with a great deal of power within the city.

<http://www.houstontranstar.org/>

Houston's transportation and emergency management system.

<http://www.ballparks.com/baseball/national/bpklaus.htm>

Information provided on the downtown ball park.

<http://www.houstondowntown.com/Home/GeneralInfo/GettingAround/TunnelSkywalkSystem/>

brief on downtown tunnel and skywalk system

[http://www.pps.org/great\\_public\\_spaces/one?public\\_place\\_id=668](http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=668)

A listing of the tunnel system as a poor example of public place. We'll discuss this later.

<http://www.hermannpark.org/>

Hermann Park is located next to the medical center and across from Rice University.

<http://www.texmedctr.tmc.edu/root/en>

Texas Medical Center