

# Okay, Houston... We Have Solutions Here

For nearly two centuries, Houston has grown as a city of prosperity. However, Houston has also struggled historically with the equity and integration of its people. After the Civil War, Houston's white population did not support the newly freed black people coming to the city. Implicit segregation still impacts its minorities. As we near Houston's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, it is time to rebuild Houston as a city that cherishes equity as much as prosperity.

To its privileged community, Houston is the "Bayou City" and "Space City" with world-class museums, parks, schools, and hospitals. However, not every Houstonian gets the benefits of this grandeur. It is the 18<sup>th</sup> most racially segregated city in the nation. About 38% of children and one in every four adults live here in poverty. Many schools struggle for teachers, staff, and supplies. The city's literacy rate is only 61%, and one in every three adults in Houston does not have the skills needed for their job. In 2019, Houston had the highest number of residents without health insurance. The black and Hispanic people here suffer the most from lack of access to healthcare. In the COVID-19 pandemic, they have lost more lives than the other communities. They also get the least legal support during criminal charges. This situation is heartbreaking.

but with proper vision, plans, and actions, we can rebuild Houston as a city that champions equity in education, healthcare, and justice.

In 2036, I want every school in Houston to have the necessary resources. People will have access to the best healthcare regardless of their insurance. Nobody will be conceived as a criminal because of their race. Lastly, Houston will be a clean and green city that cares as much for its nature as its people.

I am ready to lead in rebuilding Houston. I will initiate inter-school exchange programs and city-wide literacy clubs to make the best quality education accessible to everyone. I will also educate the youth to start small businesses. I will open community health clinics and legal assistance clinics and make volunteering for these institutions part of a graduation requirement in our school system. I will utilize online platforms and virtual meetings to connect the deprived people with my initiatives. Perhaps my plans are ambitious, but I can collaborate with organizations like "One Houston Together" to leverage their infrastructure.

Houston has revived after many natural calamities. Rebuilding is in our DNA! I believe my enthusiasm, action plans, and effort will rebuild Houston by 2036 as a city of equity and prosperity.