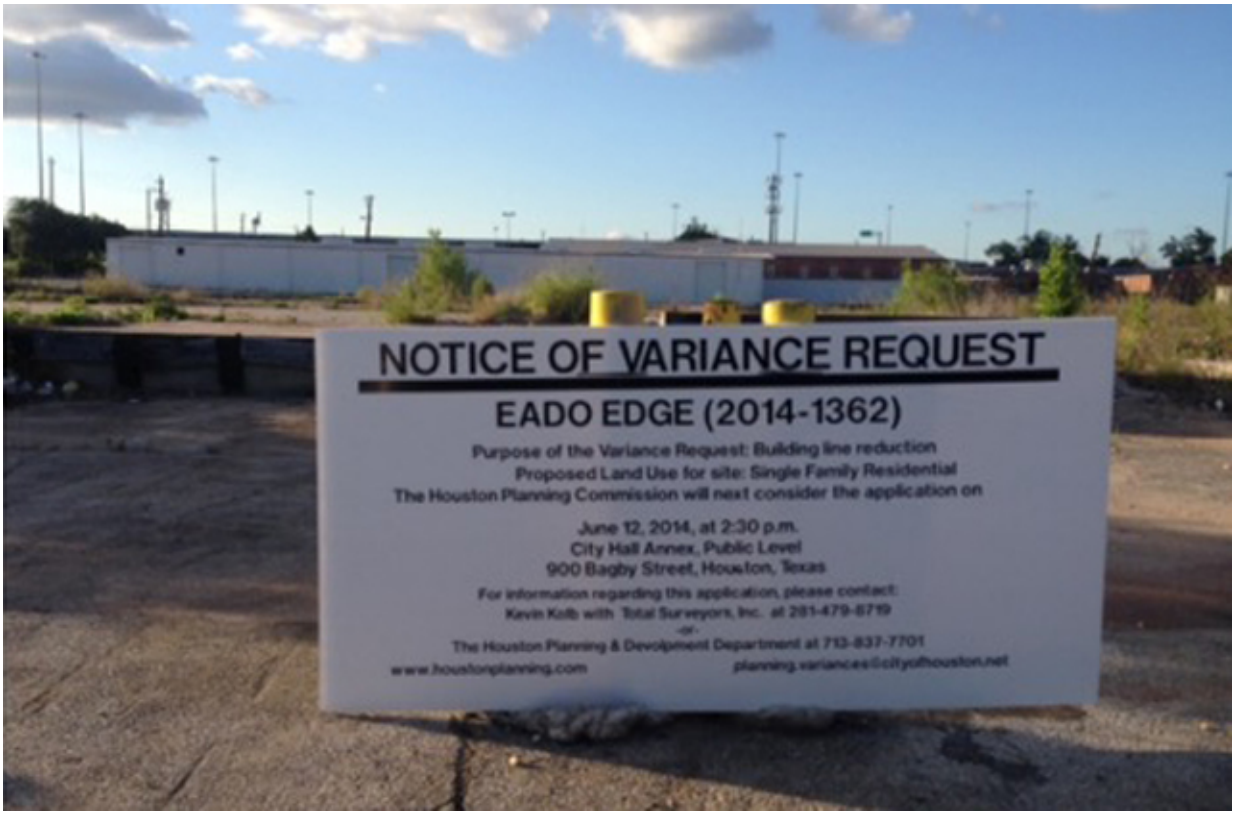
In the wake of Harvey, Houston needs to alter planning regulations

September 12 2017, by Amy Mccaig



Credit: Rice University

In the wake of Tropical Storm Harvey, it is crucial to understand Houston's land-development regulations and their limitations. To effectively respond to the storm and plan for a more resilient future, Houston may need to alter its existing land-development system,

according to experts from Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research.

Land-use policies and their consequences are discussed in a new report, "Developing Houston: Land-Use Regulation in the 'Unzoned City' and its Outcomes," which was released today by the Kinder Institute.

"This report shows that Houston already has a system of land-development regulations in place and that together they mirror most major elements of other cities' zoning codes," said Kyle Shelton, director of strategic partnerships for the Kinder Institute. "It also shows, though, that those regulations are often not flexible enough to meet the needs of different communities or to help achieve development goals of the city overall."

In the context of Hurricane Harvey recovery, Shelton said, the findings here suggest that the city will need to alter its planning regulations in ways that can help communities and the entire city become more resilient.

"A key piece to that shift will be ensuring that regulations can be adapted to meet the needs of particular neighborhoods and be accessible to all," he concluded.

More information: Land-Use Regulation in the "Unzoned City" and its Outcomes: kinder.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/ … ance/UnzonedCity.pdf

Provided by Rice University

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