

The following historical timeline may help in understanding the history of growth of Houston over the past 170 years. Note that once a community is placed in Houston's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, essentially no community has escaped ultimate annexation when profitable to Houston. Residents in the area to be annexed have frequently objected, to no avail. The decision to annex is by vote of a majority of a quorum of the city council. It is not up to the Mayor, alone. I believe that we can avoid annexation if we work together to utilize available options.

Note that major annexations by Houston intensified in the 1940s. Just prior to 1940, Houston was little larger than the present area of The Woodlands. The City of Houston now covers 581 square miles. Houston's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), which includes most of The Woodlands, contains about 1,900 square miles and is larger than the state of Rhode Island.

Claude Hunter

HOUSTON TIMELINE

1821 - Dr. Johnson Hunter came to Spanish Texas and settled in what is now Harris Co.

1836 - On April 21, General Sam Houston's Texas army wins independence from Mexico in the Battle of San Jacinto. That year, Houston was founded by Augustus and John K. Allen, who pay just over \$1.40 per acre for 6,642 acres of land near the headwaters of Buffalo Bayou. They name the site Houston after their friend and hero, General Sam Houston.

1837 - General Sam Houston, first president of the Republic of Texas, signs an act authorizing Houston to incorporate. Houston was capitol of the Republic from 1837 until 1839, in which the capitol was moved to Austin.

1837 - Houston incorporates and the first mayor is elected. Population: 1,000.

1839 - The city charter provides for a town of nine square miles.

1840 - Houston is divided into four wards when the city's charter was altered.

1850 - First census after Texas joins the Union counts 2,397 Houstonians.

1860 - Houston's population reaches 5,000.

1870 - Houston's population up to 9,332.

1900 - Houston's population reaches 44,600.

1921 - Oscar Holcombe is elected to the first of 11 intermittent terms as mayor. His last term ends in 1958.

1929 - City Planning Commission recommends that Houston adopt a zoning ordinance, but finds scant support.

1943 - The City changes to a city-manager form of government with a part-time mayor and eight councilmen.

1947 - Holcombe is elected mayor on a strong-mayor platform. The charter change eliminates the city manager

1948 - Houston voters reject proposed zoning ordinance.

1948 - Dec. 31 annexation expands Houston's area from 74.4 to 216 sq. mi. Voters reject zoning. Houston continues as the only unzoned major city in the U.S.

1950 - The population reaches 596,000.

1956 - The Census Bureau noted a trend in population movement toward the suburbs.

1958 - Houston is dubbed "Murder town, USA" by Time Magazine for maintaining the highest murder rate in the nation, 15 per 100,000.

1962 - Houston voters reject proposed zoning ordinance.

1963 - Flight from center city continues. In 1940, 70 percent of the doctors, 76 % of the engineers, and 30 % of the architects worked in the central business district. In 1963 the percentages were 14 % for doctors, 24 % for engineers, and 10 % for architects.

1977 - Bill passed that allowed Clear Lake to incorporate if Houston did not annex it. Houston responded immediately to annex the Clear Lake area.

1979 - U.S. attorney rules that the City's annexations have violated the Voting Rights Act by diluting minority voting strength. To meet this objection, voters approve a charter change that provides for nine City Council members elected from single-member districts, plus five elected at large.

1983 - Population reaches 1,775,000; Houston becomes the nation's fourth largest city.

1991 - The population reaches 3,338,900. Houston City Council mandates development of first zoning regulations.

1994 - Houston voters reject a zoning ordinance.

1996 - Kingwood residents strongly contest annexation by Houston, but in 1996 Houston annexed Kingwood. The hotly contested annexation of Kingwood was appealed to the Texas Supreme Court and led to the passage of Texas Senate Bill 89, which effectively adds three years between the time the city announces their plan to annex and when annexation can occur at the sole discretion of the annexing city.

1998 - Houston is the fourth largest city in the U.S. with a population of 1.6 million. The City of Houston covers 581 square miles. Houston's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) contains about 1,900 square miles, larger than the state of Rhode Island

Compiled by Claude Hunter, September 4, 2006 from the following

Sources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingwood,_Houston,_Texas>

<<http://www.houstonculture.org/resources/houstontime.html>>

<<http://houstonstrategies.blogspot.com/2006/03/woodlands-inevitable-annexation.html>>

<<http://www.houstonhistory.com/decades/history5w.htm>>