

Space City 2020

Opening remarks:

This workshop is designed to follow on from the discussions started at the Space Strategy Forum we held at Rice University on July 1, 2011 and at which many of you were present. We must have done something right because you came back! The basic theme is to generate ideas and partnerships among the local academic, commercial, and government entities to promote space technology and exploration. The key to success here is not to think of yourself as an audience but as active participants, each with important knowledge, expertise and ideas to contribute to what we hope is a broad ranging discussion. To facilitate this, we have broken the workshop into four working groups, each focused on its own topic but also recognizing that many of the ideas being discussed cut across all of the working groups. At the end of the day we will convene in plenary and share the discussions. This workshop owes thanks to many people but I would like to give special thanks to all of our sponsors who have contributed in many ways to making this workshop happen, our moderators who have put a lot of work in to define and guide the discussions that are central to our success today, the scribes who will be keeping you honest, Umbe Cantu who has done a fantastic job in putting the logistics of the workshop together, Greg Marshall and Cory Kennedy in Rice Public Affairs for helping to organize today's program, and Ellen Bush and Camy Noelck of the BRC, for all their work in providing the venue and tailoring it to our needs.

The workshop is called Space City 2020 as a mark of how important the space program and space-related industries are to our city and of the how important the next decade will be in rising to the challenges facing the space industry in Houston. To open the working portion of the workshop, it gives me great pleasure to introduce, Rice graduate (had to say that) and mayor of Space City USA, The Honorable Annise Parker as the advocate for our Policy and Advocacy Working Group. Mayor Parker, thank you for being here today--welcome.