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## Urban think tanks study suburban city challenges

By **Erin Mulvaney** Published 1:02 pm, Monday, December 7, 2015

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A rendering of Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in Sugar Land's Imperial Market. The movie theater will have nine screens.

Houston's suburbs are among the outlying areas in the country grappling with changes as they adjust to becoming more than bedroom communities for major cities.

To address some of these challenges, the Houston's branch of the Urban

Land Institute and the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University will study suburban Sun Belt communities and such consumer issues as climate and market demand. The groups, think tanks that study urban issues, will also study ways to make suburban community more sustainable, compact and walkable.

The study will draw input from public officials, real estate developers, investors and financial professionals and planning experts to address questions, including how to help the communities survive ups and downs in the economy, how to attract and retain residents of all ages and avoid becoming obsolete and how to withstand the impacts of climate change.

Groups helping the urban think tank with this project include CDS Market Research, Elmore Public Relations, Johnson Development Corp, TBG Partners, Walter P. Moore and 1216 Consulting. At the ULI-Houston Suburban Marketplace Conference on April 7, 2016, the group will present a workshop on the study. The full report will be released in fall 2016.

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