

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

20 April 2009

MEDIA CONTACT

Kirksey
713 426 7525



6909 Portwest Drive
Houston Texas 77024
713 850 9600
kirksey.com

Kirksey's Vision – Downtown Houston Re-Imagined

April 20, 2009 – Kirksey was asked by the Houston Chronicle to provide a vision for buildings of the future. The year 2030 was selected because that is the American Institute of Architects target for buildings to be carbon neutral. Kirksey elected to address downtown Houston rather than a single building.

By 2030 buildings must be regenerative – they must collect and filter water, create electricity, clean the air, and provide the most efficient, healthy environments for the people who use them. Existing buildings will not go away, but will be re-purposed. Buildings, however, do not act alone. Cities must become systems that also are regenerative. Key concepts are illustrated as follows:

The top of buildings will become prime real estate and will function in multiple ways:

- Kinetic “blades” sway back and forth with the wind and generate electricity.
- Large roof areas will become rainwater collectors, which provide insulation and a heat exchange device for air conditioning systems.
- Vegetative roofs will cool the microclimate, detain storm water, and provide community gardens

The existing building “skins” will be altered for maximum efficiency:

- A curtain of rain water filled rods will collect rainwater and provide a cool microclimate next to the building. As wind blows through the rods it cools the air and allows natural ventilation, a strategy once impractical for Houston.
- Existing office buildings will re-purposed to include residential and retail components, sometimes altering the shape of the building.
- Vegetative walls will clad sides of buildings which can become shade canopies over the street.

The city:

- Public transportation will be ubiquitous and services will be delivered via the tunnel system allowing the streets to become linear parks.
- Shade being a premium in Houston, vegetative and energy creating shade structures cover many of the linear parks.

###

*We're Kirksey — a Houston-based architecture and interior design firm with more than 26 million sf of LEED® projects certified or underway. Our certified projects have achieved major milestones within our community, including the **1st LEED certified building** in Houston (Silver, New Construction), the **1st LEED CI** in Houston (Silver, Commercial Interiors), the **1st LEED EB** in Texas (Existing Building, our own corporate headquarters), and the **1st LEED CS** (Core and Shell), which is also the **1st Gold certified building**, in Houston. We developed a basicGREEN™ program to be employed on **EVERY** project, regardless of whether certification is achieved. www.kirksey.com*