

Gulf Coast Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan Update



Appendix I

Public Outreach- Phase Two Report

Houston-Galveston Area Council

August 2017

www.ridethegulfcoast.com

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Appendix I-Public Outreach Phase Two Report

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Introduction:

During June 2017 seven public meetings were coordinated as part of the second phase of public outreach for the update to the Gulf Coast Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan (RCTP). The meetings were held during a 30-day public comment period on the draft RCTP that started June 1, 2017 and ended June 30, 2017. Seventy-six (76) people attended the RCTP meetings and submitted more than 40 public comments on the Public Meeting Comment forms, by email or directly to H-GAC staff during the public meetings.

The local transit service providers in each area were contacted in advance for suggestions on meeting locations and times. When feasible, the RCTP public meetings were planned to piggy-back with other local stakeholder meetings. Local transit service providers, other transportation stakeholders and non-profit organizations were invited to set up informational displays about their services. Local elected officials were invited to make opening remarks as they desired.

The RCTP public meetings were designed to include a viewing of the new RCTP Video, a power point presentation by H-GAC staff and time for questions and answers. Time was allotted after each meeting for an open-house format with visual displays and staff were available for more detailed discussions as needed.

Highlights of each meeting are provided in the following meeting summaries which are organized chronologically as described in the RCTP Flier on the following page. Copies of the sign-in sheets for each meeting are maintained at H-GAC in the public meeting section.



Make Your Voice Heard for the Future of Regional Transit

Draft Gulf Coast Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan Update (RCTP)

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) will be hosting public meetings throughout the region. The purpose of the RCTP is to provide more efficient and more effective public transportation services, especially for seniors (65 and older), persons with disabilities, persons with low incomes, veterans, youth, and others.

The public is encouraged to attend and provide comments to H-GAC. The public comment period runs from June 1 to June 30, 2017. Submit comments to:

Transportation Public Outreach
Houston-Galveston Area Council
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227

Comments may also be emailed to publiccomments@h-gac.com or call toll free at 1-855-363-2516.

The draft RCTP documents are available at ridethegulfcoast.com. For more information about the RCTP, email Kari Hackett at kari.hackett@h-gac.com or call 713-993-4576.



Map of Transit Service Areas

PUBLIC MEETINGS

MONDAY, JUNE 5
Houston METRO
1900 Main Street
2nd Floor, Board Room
Houston, Texas 77208
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 6
The Woodlands Township
2801 Technology Forest Blvd.
The Woodlands, Texas 77381
12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 8
Fort Bend County Transit
William B. Travis Building
301 Jackson Street
Richmond, Texas 77469
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20
Colorado Valley Transit
Brookshire, United Way
531 FM 359 Rd. S.
Brookshire, Texas 77423
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21
Harris County Transit
Baytown City Hall
2407 Market Street
Baytown, Texas 77520
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 27
City of Pearland City Hall
3519 Liberty Drive
Pearland, Texas 77581
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28
Connect Transit - League City
400 W. Walker Street
League City, Texas 77573
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.



H-GAC will provide for reasonable accommodations for persons attending H-GAC functions. Requests from persons needing special accommodations should be received by H-GAC staff 24 hours prior to a function. The public meeting will be conducted in English and requests for language interpreters or other special communication needs should be made at least two working days prior to a function. Please call 713-993-2471 for assistance.

RCTP Meeting Summary- METRO 6-5-17

Dominic Mazoch:

1. Instead of light rail expansion as a RCTP recommendation, consider a strategy that preserves the right of way in a corridor first using Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) technology. Then as the ridership in the corridor matures light rail could be introduced.
2. Consider the park and ride lots as transit centers for first and last mile connections.
3. Park and Ride buses should be bi-directional.

Phillip Salerno:

4. Work with the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) to look into heavy rail (commuter rail) into Houston. It has been done successfully in other parts of the country, particularly in the northeast. {New Jersey Transit was noted as an example}.

Daphne Scarbrough:

5. I attended the hearing Monday, June 5, 2017 at METRO's headquarters. The discussion centered upon outlying areas of Houston and it sounded as though the Bay Area, northeast side of the County was of interest. METRO needs to concentrate on getting people to work at particular destinations. They are the transit agency for Harris County & that is their job & why we are taxed to fund them. Empty buses run all over Houston because they are not looking at the work patterns of the suburbs & inner city Houston. Mass transit in Houston does not get people where they need to go.

Betty Evans-Klappenbach (6-6-17)

6. Thank you sir for the information packed presentation which was well organized and presented in a manner that encouraged interaction and sharing. I would like to make a correction on the cab incident. That happened in Harris County not in Galveston County. When the client told the cab driver he had no tip with the voucher and the cab didn't return when called, he assumed it was due to no tip, because that driver was free to pick up other passengers who could tip. My concern and point is, once he was stuck out there was no one from Harris County Rides to call and get an alternative vehicle to aid him. He had to stay at a friend's home and then his parents picked him up the next day.
7. Galveston County does have few reliable transportation options for my disabled population. Currently we have only two buses although more are scheduled to start coming off of the Island and they stop at the Park and Ride on Delany Road and Victory Lakes. The job opportunities are on the Mainland (Sam's, Wal-Mart,I-Hop) and Tanger's, Buccee's, and Demontrond car dealership. I had one young lady who was using the bus system to get to her job in La Marque. When the service didn't run because

of a State holiday for UTMB but her employer didn't participate in that State holiday she would lose a day's pay. When the service changed she lost her job because she had no alternative way to get there from the Island. I had a gentleman lose his job with Lowe's in Texas City because Connect changed their services to 8a.m. to 5 p.m. with no weekend service. When employer's hire a New Hire they pick them up for weekends and nights (3-11). They reward their older employees with the 8 to 5 jobs M-F.

8. Mid County I have no transportation to employers for weekends or the 3-11 shift. No transportation availability rules out nursing homes, hospitals, most restaurants and stores for first time or new hires in Texas City, Dickenson, Santa Fe, Clear Creek, League City or Alvin. I get this isn't to be mean or uncaring, it is due to financial constraints. My people and kids working put tax dollars back into the system.
9. Disabled people like to go out to dinner once in a while, but the only way that can happen mid-Galveston County is a friend or family member is willing to come and pick you up and take you. That takes away independence and choice because now you are forced to go where they want to take you.
10. There is a 9- page application process to apply for Connect and Island transit services. Island Transit allows me and people with similar client service roles to complete the application on behalf of the client. Dr. offices charge a \$25.00 fee for completing forms. If I am working with a client that does not qualify for Medicaid or Medicare It can cost my agency \$105.00 to certify a disability and provide the letterhead required to complete the application process. (incomplete applications are not considered). You have to call a week in advance for every trip you want to take for Connect. There is a separate application if you want to use the cab service (it is only 2 pages),
11. I love the idea of a pilot project and by looking at my own notes here it would need to include nights and weekends. I thank you for requesting my input and considering my concerns. I look forward to attending the future meetings and seeing how we can come up with a mutually beneficial plan.

I see an interim message has come in from P. Hunter. I will follow up with him as well. Have a great Tuesday. BL

Comments were forwarded to staff with METRO, Harris County RIDES and Connect Transit.

Responses to the Comments are noted below:

From Vernon Chambers, Harris County RIDES;

I just wanted to let everyone know reading this email that we have worked with (the) contractor to implement Procedures to take care of this type of incident (Public Comment # 6). I believe I remember the incident that is mentioned in the email. It was related to a late night wheel chair pick-up and the contractor did drop the ball. However, when it was reported to us, in working with the contractor they have put additional policies in place to prevent these situations from occurring. Thanks! Vernon

See measures already implemented below;

We now have an on call list of drivers which also include wheelchair drivers who are willing to be called 24/7 in case there is a service request that we are having trouble covering.

We have informed all caller takers, dispatchers, managers in all of our call centers about this and the sensitivity. This will ensure that no client is left stranded. If there aren't drivers available, the dispatch office knows to call me or Melissa (General Manager) so we can pull additional resources. Be Safe, Lauren Smith.

From James Hollis, Connect Transit;

Perhaps a guaranteed ride home should be set up in these situations (Public Comment #6). We do this with the League City Park and Ride and it is a safety valve for passengers who miss the bus for some reason or have to go home to a sick child or other emergency situation. No one wants to be stranded. However while it is available for the P&R passengers it typically does not have to be used more than 2 times per year so the cost to us is minimal. Thanks.

(response from Betty); Thank you for letting me know about the response. The information needs to be shared with clients as well, not just dispatchers, as clients need to be assured they will not be left. I also believe this serves as a wake-up call when we are setting up similar services in other counties or cities, we need backups to backups. Thank you again for an active ear.

(additional responses from H-GAC staff);

Thanks for that suggestion James. The guaranteed ride home (GRH) option is also available for METRO Park and Ride users, for routes that do not have midday bus services available or for emergencies and later than routine work hours needs. I believe that the regional vanpool program also has a similar GRH option available (Veronica please confirm).

Since that GRH option is now available to a number of transit users in the region, it should be relatively easy (compared to starting from scratch) to plan for expansion to include others.

One complicating factor is that the GRH program in Houston, was set up for people who can drive themselves in a rental car. The disabled person might need a paratransit (ADA) cab service.

Yes, METRO transit has a guaranteed ride home (GRH) program for bus riders only in their service area, and METRO STAR has a GRH program for vanpoolers in the 8 county region. Both GRH programs can be used 3 times a year per rider. Contact David McMaster {METRO staff} for more information. TREK TMO has a guaranteed ride home program for bus and vanpool riders whose employer is a TREK member and located in Galleria and Greenway Plaza areas. The service is available for 5 uses per year per rider. Contact Donna Alexander {TREK} for more information. There are many employers in the region who offer a GRH program to their employees who are bus and vanpool riders.



RCTP Meeting Summary-The Woodlands Township 6-6-17

Chris LaRue:

12. They recently improved the trolley services and as a result the ridership has increased about 40% since last year. The hours of service were extended.
13. A challenge is related to the first/last mile connectivity between the business district and the Research Forest Park and Ride lot.
14. I have a comment for the plan: please update the Regional Transit Providers Map to include The Woodlands Township. Thanks! Also, if you need a map of the Conroe-The Woodlands UZA, I have attached one for reference. If you need a larger version, please let me know. (Unfortunately, I do not have a shapefile for this map).

Lyndsey Cecka Smith:

15. Ridership using the ADA Paratransit Services has increased. They are working on a third local route. Service planning is underway for the Conroe Park and Ride route which has an estimated service start date of Fall 2017.

Jo Penn:

16. Brazos Transit District- recent budget cuts have impacted rural DNR services.

Response to comments:

(Public Comment #13) Improvements to the first and last mile connectivity challenge are related to opportunities to work closer with private sector service providers in a Public Private Partnership noted as one strategy to mitigate service gaps (RCTP -Gap Analysis page 38).

(Public Comment #14) The Regional Transit Service Providers map was updated to include the Woodlands Township service area.

RCTP Meeting Summary- Richmond, 6-8-17

Public Comment Cards:

Carol Racz;

17. Not enough availability for demand to meet needs of disabled, consumers have to wait too long, problems with scheduling to accommodate jobs, not enough spaces for subscription, may get pick(ed) up but no ride home.

Shaunetel Kitchen;

18. I suggest that they put a bus stop at George Memorial Library for the Blue Line. I can walk to the library and catch the bus to Target and Wal-Mart without having to make a reservation. I would like that and I think would benefit a lot of people.
19. Also take in consideration that people such as myself, sometimes don't feel well and I might cancel the day of the trip and it should not count against us. Suspension for a whole month is a bit harsh for someone who doesn't have transportation.

Irv Smith;

20. Concerns about 90-A Commuter Rail, need feeder buses from neighborhoods, funding mechanism for towns west of Missouri City not in METRO tax area, Is old EIS stale by now ? Extending Red line gives one ride to Med. Center & north (transfer needed if use heavy rail DMU's), Need to cater to reverse commuters from Houston and into Fort Bend County.

Annette S. Olsen;

21. Submit legislation draft for next Texas Legislature Session (2019) to increase the cap on sales tax (for only those counties whose voters approve the sales tax increase) for transit infrastructure and other critical needs.
22. Allow FBC Transit to implement a volunteer phone crew (paid for by Experience Works of other charitable or governmental entity).
23. Take FBC transit into the electronic world of making reservations, contacting riders affected by weather, equipment breakdowns, etc. If the schools can do it, so can FBC Transit.

Additional H-GAC Staff Notes:

Before the meeting started some attendees (Alfredo de la Cruz, Verdie White) discussed some of the transportation related challenges they faced getting to work in Harris County from Fort Bend County (FBC).

Bus riders described the difficulty in making connections from one route to another in FBC because the routes do not meet at one location, but are separated by a long walk described as ½ mile. The FBC transit routes connect to METRO routes by transfer. One elderly bus rider noted that she takes 5 buses to get to work from Rosenberg to N. Shepherd at 43rd Street.

Some of the related comments are noted below:

- Passenger shelters at the park and ride lots in Fort Bend County are not adequate (such as the AMC Theatre shelter and the Fairgrounds Park and Ride lot,
- The GPS system needs to be upgraded,
- Passenger updates are needed when bus schedules change,
- On-time performance bus tracking system is needed.

The comments were forwarded to Fort Bend County Transit staff.



RCTP Meeting Summary- Brookshire, 6-20-17

Subsequent to the meeting, Kathie Gerritzen provided a detailed email message relative to her comments which is copied below:

24. Transportation in the Katy area continues to be a big challenge. I appreciate all you do to try to help. Harris RIDES has been challenging for us, but I also believe Vernon tries. I believe they have good service within the Houston city limits (east of Hwy 6, anyway) but struggle to keep transportation providers out here. As I shared with you last night, about every July or early August, I get a notice that the provider will no longer be working with RIDES in the Katy area and KARS is in limbo until January when new providers are approved. Lone Star tried very hard to provide taxi service during those times, but last October 12, Vernon called me to say effective Oct 14, Lone Star would no longer serve the Katy area. She was able to get them to come here until Oct 28 and then we had to switch to Yellow Cab. They have been hit or miss, more miss. Beginning mid-January, Starlight starting serving the Katy area through RIDES and they have been good so far. Have had a couple of glitches but Starlight worked to fix those issues – temporary license plates, no AC in vehicle, driver late to pick up, etc.
25. KARS is continuing to provide service and recruiting volunteer drivers. Those drivers are primarily used for Fort Bend County residents. We refer Waller residents to Colorado Valley Transit. With no publicity to date, we still have 389 requests for service in our service area and 135 that we can help with transportation. Additionally, we have about 37 requests for service for residents in Fort Bend county who live just south of FM 1093 and that is not in our service area. And, there are close to 50 who live north of Clay that we have referred to RIDES because that is not part of the area we serve.
Hope this information is helpful to you.
26. Mary Martin (RSVP Volunteers) commented that transit is needed for medical trips as well as trips to the grocery store in the four counties (Austin, Colorado, Waller, Washington) that her organization (RSVP Volunteers) serves.
27. Claudia Wicks (Colorado Valley Transit) highlighted that access to medical services is a priority, especially for dialysis patients in Waller County because there are no medical facilities within the county.
28. When Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) were discussed as an option for new funding Claudia clarified that those TDCs are only (currently) available for capital projects, not for operations costs.

29. Claudia noted that two of the CVTD vehicles are used in the Prairie View community for public transportation with drivers provided by PVAMU.

30. Franklin Nwocha introduced himself as the founder of a new private transportation service venture in the Fort Bend County and Katy areas called On Point Transport. His independent research showed transportation related gaps in Fort Bend County, specifically for intra-county trips. He is seeking opportunities to expand his business venture that might include coordination in a public private partnership.

Response to comments from Harris County RIDES, Vernon Chambers;

Thanks for sharing these comments (Public Comment # 24) from Kathie Gerritzen at KARS – one of our Partner Agencies. We pulled data for 2016 that reflect trips that RIDES has provided for all of the zip codes in the Katy Area. The breakdown includes # clients served, number of trips by each Agency, and Rides non-agency sponsored trips. Last year RIDES provided 8,559 trips in Katy. KARS does not serve zip codes 77493 and 77494, they only serve codes within Katy ISD. It is my understanding that KARS currently uses volunteer drivers to meet requests in the Fort Bend County area of Katy. Attached is the trip data from 2016 that is referenced. If the comments are published in the Study, I would like these numbers to also be reflected somewhere in the Study (copied below). Please let me know if you have any questions. Best, Vernon

ZIPCODE	RIDES KARS	KATYVA	RIDES NON-	TOTAL
	AGENCY	TRIPS	AGENCY	RIDES
	TRIPS	RIDES	TRIPS	TRIPS
77493	707	16	51	774
77494	653	51	475	1179
77449	335	46	845	1226
77450	1720	218	604	2542
77084	76	40	1278	1394
77095	0	14	1226	1240
77094	47	5	152	204
TOTAL	3538	390	4631	8559
	# OF	# OF	# OF	TOTAL
	CLIENTS	CLIENTS	CLIENTS	CLIENTS
	96	48	102	246

Additional H-GAC Staff Notes:

- KARS is an independent non-profit that has been challenged with sustaining their transportation services. They recently switched to using volunteer drivers,
- County-line boundary issues are challenging because neighboring service providers cannot cross the county lines,
- The counties need more funding before they can provide the local match for needed transportation services,
- HC RIDES service providers are limited for the Katy area,
- Grant funding is not reliable,
- They were impacted by the 2010 Census Changes which resulted in parts of Fort Bend County changing from rural to urbanized area status which changed the availability of vehicles,
- Local politics are challenging because their service area borders three counties; Harris, Waller and Fort Bend,
- Kathie has been getting requests from areas that are difficult to serve such as Cane Island and Willow Farm.
- Harris County RIDES doesn't always have a service provider in the area,
- Red Cross transportation services are not currently provided in the Katy area,
- There is no doctor within the city of Katy, no funding is available from the City of Katy for medical transportation.
- There is a 15% surcharge for non-Harris County residents to use the HC RIDES services.

H-GAC Response to comments:

One of the RCTP Financial Plan strategies recommends the use of Transportation Development Credits (TDCs) as one source for a local match development fund (page 15). In addition, based on comments received (Public Comment # 28), the following ideas should also be considered;

- Development of incentives for cross-jurisdictional coordination (between counties),
- A feasibility assessment of using TDCs for operations funding.

Gail Nelson;

31. Good Afternoon, My name is Gail Nelson, and I currently live in Chambers County and work for Chambers County Public Hospital District. I am the Associate Director of Chambers Community Health Centers; there are two health centers, one in Anahuac and one in Mont Belvieu. In consideration of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's time, my Public Comments will take approximately 3 minutes. I would like to first express my thanks to the members of the Houston Galveston Area Council for volunteering their time and talent to promote the orderly development within the planning region, promote economic growth, and enhance the quality of citizens. I would also like to express my appreciation to all who have work so diligently on the *Draft* Gulf Coast Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan Update. And a personal shout-out to Steve Atchison, Managing Director, Transportation Services, American Red Cross, for all of his efforts related to transportation for the under-served who need healthcare services most notably either in Baytown or Mont Belvieu, which is the western portion of the County.

As the *Draft* reveals, there are many unmet transportation needs within the 13 counties that comprise the Gulf Coast Planning Region. The fact that there are unmet public transportation needs within primarily Eastern Chambers County is made more challenging because, as you already know, we are the only County out of the 13 counties in the planning region that does not currently have a designated public transportation service provider.

I agree with the Recommendation to provide a general demand response countywide system that links communities within Chambers County. This would best serve families with children and young adults, since they are an identified need factor by FTA and TxDOT as higher than average, as well as the over 65 population which is higher than the rural average. The very young as well as the elderly are a unique set of challenges related to transportation, and the Recommendation would serve their needs well.

I would like to take this opportunity to propose that the recommended demand response {and Park and Ride} system **also link Chambers County residents to urban medical facilities and specialists within Harris County.** Two recently conducted needs assessments, one for the Hospital District and one for the Community Health Centers, both identified that access to transportation to medical facilities outside of Chambers County is an important, unmet need for those most at risk if they do not have access to high(er) levels of medical services.

This concludes my comments and the additional component to add to Recommendation #8. Thank you for your attention, and I hope you have a wonderful afternoon.

Additional H-GAC Staff Notes:

- Challenge= How to increase access to health care services,
- 40% of commuters from Baytown travel to Houston (to work),
- Extended hours are needed for transit services
- A potential pilot project would connect between Baytown and the Chambers Clinic.
- Other options for local match include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) in low-income designated areas and 4B Sales Tax revenues.
- Commenter from Chambers County noted that recent needs assessments have identified transportation as a key need
- Demand Response is required for Chambers County; it is understood that the densities are not yet there to support fixed route service
- Mont Belvieu Park and Ride is perceived as a need
- Expansion of regional vanpool programs should be a focus
- Red Cross is taking people from Baytown to Chambers Clinic
- Extending span of service on existing Harris County services is desirable, but it needs to be cost-effective (Ken can't add hours of service to routes if only a few people use it)
- "Pester your elected officials if you want better transit"



RCTP Meeting Summary- Pearland, 6-27-17

Kathy Phillips:

32. Park and Ride on East side of Pearland is needed.
33. Park and Ride on 288@518 area is needed.
34. Need 1 card to work on all transit systems to simplify rider usage.

Additional H-GAC Staff Notes:

For the City of Alvin and the general area, seniors and veterans need transportation to the Texas Medical Center (TMC).

Due to heavy traffic on major roads in the area such as SH 288, SH 35 and IH 45, relief is needed for better efficiency. Park and Ride to the medical center and VA hospital is needed.

The Veterans Clinic in Texas City is more accessible today.

Consider a circulator route in partnership with Alvin Community College.

A seamless transit fare card is needed regionwide. Consider the Texas Toll Tag as a model of statewide coordination because the same toll tag can be used in multiple cities. A similar approach should be considered in conjunction with the expansion of SH 288.

In May 2017 METRO's policy changed to favor more regional coordination which may be advantageous for Pearland's efforts to start a park and ride service to TMC. Options for a service provider and a location are being considered.

A transit feasibility study may be needed to analyze alternate routes.

After the public meeting a suggestion was offered regarding a strategy to minimize the impacts of buses traveling along congested roadways. Seattle, Washington was noted as an example where bus pullout and acceleration/merge lanes were added at bus stops along major corridors, instead of widening the road, to improve the flow of traffic.



RCTP Meeting Summary- League City, 6-28-17

One of the meeting attendees, Eva Cavazos, a social worker with UTMB, described the transportation related challenges that some of her consumers in the City of Galveston face in accessing jobs and medical services on the mainland of Galveston County. She described a series of barriers related to jurisdictional boundaries and fragmented transit services which are summarized below:

35. From UTMB in Galveston (outpatients) often need to get to the UTMB clinic in League City however there is no door-to-door service currently available for non-medicaid recipients. Medicaid eligible consumers can use the Medical Transportation Program {that is coordinated through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission}. There is a concern about patients with limited mobility (such as those who use a walker) who can ride the park-and-ride bus from Galveston to League City however the drop-off location is not convenient. There is a long walk from the bus stop to the clinic because the buses are not permitted to enter the parking lot at the UTMB clinic to drop off customers at the door. The property manager has indicated a concern about the larger buses damaging the pavement of the parking lot. Smaller vehicles (vans) may be needed for closer access for persons with disabilities and seniors.
36. The complimentary ADA paratransit service is confined to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of fixed routes which leaves some gaps in geographic coverage areas particularly for the last-mile connectivity to jobs and medical facilities.
37. There are limited options for seniors and persons with disabilities who live in Galveston and need to travel to the mainland for jobs.
38. There is a need to coordinate medical appointments with transit schedules to improve access to healthcare for those who don't drive.

One potential solution was noted that would require door-to-door type services similar to the demand response services that operated in Galveston and Brazoria counties before the 2010 Census impacts.

Response to Comments (Public Comments # 35-38). The Director of Transportation for Connect Transit (J. Hollis) informed the participants that a result of the 2010 Census was that the Houston Urbanized Area boundaries were extended further south into northern Galveston and Brazoria counties. Those census impacts resulted in elimination of the federal funding available to Connect Transit for demand response services in those areas. A new strategy is needed to access those federal funds through coordination with Houston METRO, the designated recipient of those funds from the Federal Transit Administration for the Houston Urbanized Area. Mr. Hollis recommended that Ms. Cavazos work with the Connect Transit Dispatch office to resolve some of the transportation related challenges she described.

Additional H-GAC staff notes: Jurisdictional boundaries between cities within Galveston County and at the Harris County line were noted as barriers to coordinated transportation services. The Food Bank provides cab vouchers for some travel. Clarification is needed on dial-a-ride services. Criteria for services should include seniors and persons with disabilities. Hitchcock and Santa Fe were mentioned as very small cities that are not connected to the public transit system in Galveston County.