

11C. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Southeast Harris County Subregional Study has been completed. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- The final report for the Liberty County Mobility Study is being completed. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan study team presented the final recommendations at the last Steering Committee Meeting on September 29, 2022. The final document is being drafted. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- Staff developed Advanced Funding Agreements (AFA) for regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The AFA's have been submitted to TxDOT for approval.
- Staff developed draft project scopes of work for the regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and are coordinating with local partners.

2. Freight Planning

- The next Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting is scheduled for October 18, 2022, topic is Transportation Equity.
- The last Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan was held on June 28, 2022. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with AECOM, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County Sheriff Office (HCSO), Harris County Toll Road Authority, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Houston Police Department (HPD), Houston TranStar Staff, and Tow and Go Contractors was held on September 8, 2022.
- Staff held a Tow and Go™ Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, HCSO, HPD, AECOM and Tow and Go Contractors was held on September 6, 2022.
- The contract with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) "Teens in the Driver Seat" Contract until May 31, 2023.
- Staff attend a After Action Review by the Harris County Fire Marshall Office involving an 18-wheeler rollover Crash involving Hydrogen Peroxide.
- Staff attend TxDOT Bi-Monthly Statewide Traffic Incident Management Meeting on August 17, 2022.
- Tow and Go performed 3,182 "No Cost Tows" in August. Average Clearance Times was 15 minutes and 56 seconds.
- In July 2022, the 8-county region experienced 59 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was a 23% decrease compared to July 2021 which recorded 77 fatalities.

- The number of traffic crashes recorded in CRIS in the 8 County Area was 12,714 for July 2022, a 15% decrease when compared to July 2021 which recorded 14,923 crashes.
 - The number of fatalities from January 1 to July 31st in 2022 for the 8-county region was 462. In 2021, during this same period the number of fatalities was 471. This is a 2 percent decrease this year when compared to for the same period in 2021.
4. Environmental Planning
- Staff is developing a process and worksheet to assess and document the environmental justice issues associated with proposed transportation projects and planning decisions.
 - Staff are updating the Eco-Logical tool to include links to existing environmental assessment and final environmental impact statements for roadway projects within the planning area. Staff will coordinate with TxDOT and consultants working on local Planning and Environmental Linkages studies to examine the application of Ecological tools on those studies.
 - Staff are continuing to work on an update to the regional Environmental Justice report.
5. Resiliency Planning
- Staff continues the development of a Low Impact Development tool to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area.
 - Staff completed work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-specific resiliency best practices and strategies. The draft report has been finalized and accepted by FHWA. Staff has completed an update of the Foresight Panel on Environmental Effects report with outcomes from the Pilot project.
6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- The Visioning phase of outreach was completed at the end of July 2022. The region received over 2,000 survey responses from outreach in all eight MPO counties and with various stakeholder groups.
 - Staff are now holding a second round of virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach will include sharing and requesting feedback on the Visioning outreach results along with the investment strategies to address safety, reliability, and other identified needs. More information on the upcoming meetings can be found at: <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate>
 - The final round of public outreach to review the draft 2045 RTP Update will be from February to April 2023, which will conclude with a request for the TPC to approve the 2045 RTP Update. Please see <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate> for more information.
7. Other Planning Activities
- Staff continued to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes were monitored through StreetLight data. Transit ridership numbers are now being reported on a quarterly basis from transit agencies within the region. Permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on counts along regional pedestrian/bicyclist facilities. Staff have developed an

online [COVID-19 Regional Traffic Impacts App](#) which displays vehicular, active, and transit transportation patterns during the Pandemic.

- Staff has secured additional members for the Congestion Management Process Update Workgroup and is refining the scope of work for the update and responsibilities for the workgroup.

SHORT RANGE PLANNING

1. Project Programming

- Staff coordinated on the amendments to the 2023-2026 TIP document. Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Staff met with local sponsors as part of the quarterly TIP monitoring efforts.
- Staff worked on the development of project selection criteria for the next Call for Projects and coordinated with various subcommittees.
- Staff finalized the Reliability, Congestion and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality federal performance measures reporting and targets in coordination with four H-GAC subcommittees, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Transportation Policy Council (TPC). The scorecards, [reporting](#) of past performance, and future targets can be found on the Transportation Performance Measures [webpage](#). TAC and TPC will consider approval of the reporting and targets this month.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff continues to maintain and monitor permanent pedestrian and bicycle counting equipment and data and has launched a new GIS-based way to report the data for permanent counters and is now focused on doing the same for mobile counters.
- Staff has finalized a series of Adult Bicycle Safety Education workshops through late 2022 and continue to schedule workshops through mid-2023. Marketing efforts continue to area races, challenges, and major corporations in the outlying counties. The online courses are also being offered during the same time frame. Marketing efforts are being extended to local events, major employment generators, and law enforcement agencies. In addition, one-third of staff has received certification from the League of American Bicyclists as a certified bicycle instructors that we can expand class offerings to fill additional requests by MPO members and have additional flexibility to implement the Adult Bicycle Safety Program.
- Staff continues participation in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee.
- Staff continue to advance Ped/Bike Subcommittee workgroups. The bike network GIS data update workgroup made formal recommendations to the Ped/Bike Subcommittee in July 2022 regarding immediate short-term implementation. Nomenclature is being standardized to ensure ease of automation for future updates (e.g. the same language and definitions) have been adopted by the workgroup. The goal is to have a standard format region-wide that will eventually allow for automation for easier real-time updates to the regional mapping and GIS data. The Active Transportation Travel Demand Forecasting Modeling workgroup has partnered with the Data Analytics Department as the research phase advances toward making the vision of a predictable, reliable active transportation centric model a reality.

- Staff moved forward with Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan procurement process. Staff hosted pre-proposal meeting and responded to questions regarding the RFP. The RFP was open for six weeks and closed on October 13th. Staff and the evaluation committee will review the six proposals for two weeks and submit the evaluation results on October 31st. Staff worked on the ILA for the \$50,000 local contribution with Transportation Administration. Staff created a draft Public Involvement Plan for Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan and will send it to the Communication department to review. Staff hosted monthly progress meeting with local sponsor.
- Staff worked on the Scope of Work for Memorial Drive Bike and Pedestrian Study for second round review, hosted monthly progress meeting with local sponsor. Staff consulted with Data Analytic and Research department on the past and future traffic count locations in study area. Staff scheduled meeting to review the Scope of Work with Transportation directors on October 19th.
- Staff drafted Connecting Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept Scope of Work part II, staff incorporated comments for Scope of Work part I and received internal review comments for Scope of Work part II. Staff hosted monthly progress meeting and sent the RFP to local sponsor.
- Staff hosted monthly progress meeting with local sponsor for City of Friendswood Trail Master Plan and discussed draft RFP on October 17th and will incorporate the comments.
- Staff consulted the internal bike counter loan program for potential collaboration opportunity for Local Active Transportation studies.
- Staff worked on drafting scope of work for Safe Route to School based on the outline created last month and will send scope of work to management for review.
- Staff will create a draft Active Transportation Toolkit outline for internal team input.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee held their regular quarterly meeting on October 13, 2022. A special call meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2022.
- Staff continues to refine the scope of work for High-Capacity Transit feasibility studies and prepare paperwork for Advanced Funding Agreements for the bulk of these studies. The first study is funded through the Unified Planning Work Program and will focus on the US 90A corridor, conducted in partnership with the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD).
- A Technical Memorandum for the City of Pearland Transit Study with existing conditions and peer analysis is being refined internally. Due to additional revisions, the Steering Committee and Public Meetings have been pushed back but are still anticipated to take place early in 2023.
- Staff is revising the City of Dayton Transit Study Request for Proposals, and it is expected to be released in November.
- The Woodlands CMAQ service has been adjusted to two runs in the morning and two in the evening. A contract revision has been developed to adjust to the new circumstances.
- Conroe Park and Ride has expanded from one run in the morning and evening to two runs because of more employees returning to work. Ridership growth is consistent with existing projections. The pilot transit service is scheduled to end on March 31, 2023.

- A new Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Application has been submitted. It proposes to use electric bicycles (E-bikes) as a first mile/last mile means to access transit services in Houston. Staff is reviewing the proposal.
- The action plan for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan is complete, and work has begun on the scope for a transit information study recommendation coming out of the most recent plan update. Tracking of performance metrics to evaluate progress on RCTP objectives is also underway.
- Coordination continues between H-GAC, METRO and other regional transit agencies regarding the Regional Transit Connectivity Project, including the Seamless Fare System, regional trip planner, data management system, and related efforts. Initial assessments to determine agencies' needs and capacity are underway and are scheduled to be completed this fall.
- A new Paratransit/NEMT workgroup of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee also held their first meeting in July. This workgroup will focus on closing the gaps with paratransit and non-emergency medical transportation services in the region and includes service providers and users of the services. At the group's second meeting, in September, members participated in a visioning exercise to identify opportunities for improvement in paratransit and NEMT services, and expressed strong interest in learning from regional and national peers.
- H-GAC Staff met with staff from METRO & Texas Southern University (TSU) to discuss logistics for phase II of the Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Pilot. Staff from TSU are working on the development of the scope of work now & are planning to start the pilot in mid-March 2023.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff implemented the second phase of public outreach for the RTP 2045 Update. The first public meeting occurred on Oct. 13. For more information on upcoming meetings in the region, visit www.engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate
- The September edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released on September 20. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Region-View-September-2022.html?soid=1101570321083&aid=prZD4o6bVfQ>
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
 - Pearland Transit Study
 - Bike Safety Training Courses
 - Public Participation Policy Update
 - Freight and Tech Forum
 - Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff celebrated Commute Solutions Month. Staff attending multiple outreach events with our partner agencies. This also includes two events held for H-GAC staff as well.
- A webinar, "Increase Hiring and Retention by Confronting Commuting Challenges" was conducted in partnership with Workforce solutions.
- A social media campaign was launched resulting in more than 16,000 impressions through organic and paid posts combined.

- Commute Solutions celebrated our partners by providing certificates of appreciation. The presentation happened on-site at our partners organization, during committee meetings, or during Board meetings. Certificates will continue to be presented throughout the end of the year.
- Staff with the assistance of the AECOM Consultant team are working together to launch a staff survey that will analyze an employer partner's telework program.
- Staff continued to make progress on telework policy development and implementation with employer partners.
- TXDOT's ConnectSmart official launch was held on September 16, 2022 at the Ion Houston. Staff continues to support ConnectSmart and share the app with commuters.

CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff continued to monitor current projects and calculate emission reductions based upon Subrecipient performances. Staff continued to monitor grant recipients' usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff continued to coordinate with Cy Fair ISD for grant funding of electric buses, and Pasadena ISD for grant funding for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses. Additionally, Staff continued to work with two SEP-funded contracts; Danbury and Lamar Consolidated ISD's.
- Staff continued to examine and develop the parameters needed to establish an electric charging infrastructure component to the Clean Vehicles Program.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings and met with other local government agencies to discuss projects utilizing Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.
- Staff continues to meet with electric charger manufacturers to verify Buy America compliance and program interest.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- CMAQ performance measures have been approved by both TAC and TPC at each group's September meeting. As a result, Air Quality staff assessment of emission reductions from CMAQ funded projects between 2018 and 2021 and estimates of emission reductions related to CMAQ funded projects upcoming between 2022 and 2025 have been submitted to TxDOT and FHWA.
- The I-45 Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Corridor Plan, a collaboration between H-GAC and NCTCOG has been completed, submitted to FHWA, and published online [here](#).
- Staff is working to update our region's annual PM_{2.5} Path Forward report. Staff has been working closely with regional stakeholders over the past several months to review and update the annual PM_{2.5} report. It is anticipated that the draft report will be brought to RAQPAC for discussion at the December meeting and for approval at the committee's January meeting. The 2021 version of this report can be found [here](#).
- H-GAC continued to work on regional efforts to support the Department of Energy sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under this program, staff worked with regional fleets to foster economic, environmental, and energy security by working to advance affordable, domestic transportation fuels, energy efficient mobility systems, and other fuel-saving technologies and practices. During the most recent month, the Coalition hosted a hybrid webinar focused on

the EPA Clean School Bus Program as well as providing assistance in planning an anticipated autumn event focusing on the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

- Staff is continuing to administer two separate Environmental Protection Agency-funded Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grants from the 2018 and 2019 Calls for Projects to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. Staff has been working with IKEA to replace two existing diesel yard tractors at their Baytown facility with all-electric models. IKEA is currently installing EV charging equipment to facilitate vehicle purchases and it is anticipated that the entire project will be completed by the end of 2022. For the 2019 DERA project, staff is continuing to prepare a call for projects to find a new partner to complete the project.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting support to various in-house planning processes that includes sub-regional and corridor studies, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- Staff continues to provide GIS technical support for the highway GIS networks development for the RTP through the TDM project database conversion into GIS layers for future scenario years planning, project mapping and review for new project call for 2045 update, review for new 2023 TIP projects, sub-regional and corridor studies.
- Staff continues on-going development and implementation of the Regional Activity Based Model (ABM), and the familiarization and documentation of the ABM forecasting tools.
- Staff continue to work on the ERG contractor's contract for the MOVES3 Spatial Emission Estimator (SEE) used for estimating regional on-road emission inventories of criteria, toxic and GHG emission for each hour of a day with highly detailed spatial resolution tools update, Participate in AMPO discussion about the draft-greenhouse gas emission performance measure rule proposed by FHWA, and the re-calculating of the greenhouse gases emission inventories for the City of Houston for the years 2014, 2019 and 2020, continues to work with conformity partners on comments for the conformity documentation and timelines for the 2045 RTP update.
- Staff continued to serve in the Steering Committees and work with the Prime Contractor for the O-D Survey data collection, the tour-based model data collection set data and through the secondary expansion of the data collected. The planning, survey awareness, survey design and pilot survey of the Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P is on-going, the 2nd attempt to procure the Prime Contractor for the Airport Ground Access Survey is on-going. This is because of the unsatisfactory Proposal response received from a sole contractor on the RFP during the 1st attempt.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project. Planning for data collection for traffic counts on non-State systems is on-going.
- Staff continues with the VE scenario planning brainstorm activity with the FHWA.