

REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

A. LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- The first steering committee meeting for the Southeast Harris County Sub-Regional Plan was held on November 4, 2020. Staff are developing a data dashboard for the plan that will be available to the public.
- The first steering committee meeting of the Liberty County Mobility Plan was held on December 2, 2020. Staff are developing a data dashboard for the plan that will be available to the public.
- Staff are preparing for the second steering committee meeting for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan and are refining a project website and data dashboard, available at <http://h-gac.com/go/mp2>.
- Staff are developing a scope of work for a Transit-Oriented Development strategy for the 8-County H-GAC region.

2. Freight Planning

- The Regional Goods Movement Plan Request for Proposals (RFP) was published by Procurement. Submittals were due December 8, 2020 and evaluations will be completed in December 2020.
- Staff held the final Greater Houston Freight Committee of 2020 on December 3, 2020. Quarterly meetings will be scheduled for 2021.

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff continued coordination with the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff Office on operations with the Tow and Go Program.
- Staff contacted county and city staff in Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty and Montgomery counties to review candidate locations for intersection safety audits.
- Staff is continuing to collaborate with TXDPS to update the Regional Evacuation Traffic Management Plan.
- Staff is continuing to work to update the Congestion Management Process plan.

4. Environmental Planning

Staff has completed the “Quick User Guide” to the Eco-Logical tool which is designed to teach a new user how the tool works in several short steps. The guide is going through the final edits before publication. Staff have also begun talks with a contact in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) to discuss the prospect of students using the Eco-Logical tool within the environmental science or social studies curriculum. The initial talks have revealed an apparent interest in introducing the tool to the classroom.

Staff is working on an update to the H-GAC Environmental Justice Report as well as the Title VI/Non-discrimination Annual Workplan and Accomplishment Report for Fiscal Year 2020.

Efforts to market the Eco-Logical Tool continue with a presentation at the Geographic Data Workgroup (GDW) meeting scheduled for February 2021.

5. Resiliency Planning

- Staff began development of a Low Impact Development study to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Houston area.
- Staff continue work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-sector specific resiliency best practices and strategies across the country. The draft report has been reviewed by FHWA and staff are addressing comments.
- Staff have developed a strategy to integrate results from the Resilience & Durability Pilot project into ongoing transportation planning and studies. Sub-regional results from the pilot project will be presented to each sub-regional project steering committee.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

A meeting of the Regional Transportation Plan Subcommittee was held on December 9, 2020. TxDOT presented information on a requested RTP amendment for Hempstead Highway. Staff provided an update of the draft process and requirements to amending the RTP. The next RTP meeting is planned for January 13, 2020 at 1:30pm.

Staff continue to coordinate planning efforts in regard to the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan. Additional meetings with TxDOT and local municipalities will continue as staff establishes the purpose/need and the financial implications.

A public meeting on the proposed 2045 RTP amendments was conducted in December 3, 2020 and the public comment period on proposed amendments to the 2045RTP concluded on January 7, 2021. There were four individuals submitted through the email. Three comments were for TxDOT to delay construction of North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) until the Hardy connector project is completed. One individual commented on having a sidewalk on all streets and having better signage for HOV and Park and Ride facilitates in Harris County.

7. Other Planning Activities

Staff continue to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes are monitored through StreetLight data, transit ridership numbers are reported monthly from transit agencies within the region, and permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on pedestrian/bicyclist 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 and a report on the [Regional Travel Impacts of COVID-19](#).

Performance Measures

H-GAC is required to set regional performance targets for four (4) public transportation safety measures: fatalities, injuries, safety events and for system reliability. Regional targets will be

based on the target data from region's public transportation agencies. In the upcoming months, H-GAC subcommittees will review the draft targets and make recommendations. In April, the draft targets will be presented for information, and in May, the draft targets will be presented for action. Information related to the Public Transportation Safety Targets can be found at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2020-04/SPTs-Guide-20200413-v1-1.pdf> .

B. SHORT RANGE PLANNING

1. Project Programming

- Staff coordinated on the amendments to the 2021-2024 TIP document.
- Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Discussions on the Transportation Development Credit (TDC) policy and possible new uses of the available credits continued at the TIP Subcommittee. Efforts made to update the current policy as staff continues to refine the policy to present recommendations to the TAC and TPC.
- Staff completed the effort to develop performance measures and targets to comply with federal requirements. A mid-point progress report was developed and is available on the H-GAC website.
- Staff completed coordination efforts on the H-GAC 10 year Plan that will be presented for action to the TPC in November and submitted to the State in December.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff updated data on H-GAC Website for Mobile Counters program.
- Staff processed multiple requests for Ped/Bike counter data.
- Staff continued coordination with Sugar Land regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA.
- Staff held status meetings with METRO regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA. Baseline data entry is in process.
- Staff worked with procurement, purchasing, and America Bicycle Education Association to complete the procurement process for the Adult Bike Safety Program. Staff scheduled a kick-off meeting for the project team.
- Staff participated in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Staff participated in TxDOT's Traffic Safety Coalition.
- Staff participated in the Texas Pedestrian Safety Coalition.
- Staff prepared an RFP for procurement of new permanent and mobile bike/ped counters.
- Staff worked on revising available bike network mapping with ped/bike counter data and results of the ped/bike counter survey sent to service partners
- Staff began coordinating with the Ped/Bike Subcommittee on the upcoming bike network GIS layer update.
- Staff continued to coordinate with and liaised between service are partners and internal H-GAC departments regarding TIP prioritization workgroup efforts.

3. Transit Planning

- The quarterly meeting of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee (RTCS) was held on Thursday, January 14, 2021.
- Work continues in collecting and analyzing the Public Transit Agency Safety Plans (PTASP). Initial safety targets will be set in early 2021. Most agencies have provided their current plans.
- Staff continues to conduct a monthly survey regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on regional transit providers. This survey will continue during the course of the pandemic.
- The Year 2 contract with the City of Conroe CMAQ Commuter Pilot Project was extended to December 31, 2021 from March 31, 2021 due to the reduced service provided and funding used as a result of the pandemic.
- Implementation of The Woodlands Township - Energy Corridor Commuter service is delayed until at least August 2021 due to COVID 19. An upcoming meeting with the principals will be held to confirm ongoing funding,
- An updated application of CMAQ Pilot service for the Fort Bed Transit -Houston Central Business District service was received in October. The staff Evaluation Committee recommended application approval and Management is currently reviewing the application. If approved, service is expected to begin in August 2021.
- Planning for the start with the City of Pearland to contact a Transit Feasibility Study oriented towards its specific suburban needs and challenges. The first meeting is scheduled for early February. A draft scope and draft Memorandum of Understanding are being completed.
- Planning and implementation for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan continues:

This includes a Transit Feasibility Review for the City of Huntsville to determine viability of enhanced public transportation in the community. The assessment is that service is viable and the meeting with Huntsville occurred on October 15, 2020. Huntsville wishes to move forward but is considering using the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) to conduct the next phase of the study.

- Coordination continues between H-GAC and METRO regarding the Regional Transit Seamless Fare System. H-GAC staff is also evaluating an inquiry from Port Arthur, Texas, regarding the feasibility of extending the Regional Fare program to service providers outside of the MPO.

4. North Houston Communities Transportation Priorities Plan

- Staff continues work on the scope of work for procuring a consultant for this project.
- Staff began work on the Public Involvement Plan.
- Staff continues work reviewing existing studies and reports related to the study area.
- Staff completed internal coordination with GIS team and regional planning to review virtual public engagement platforms.
- Development continues development of a Data Storyboard that shows demographics, travel modes, travel patterns, and other relevant data to the study area.
- Staff continues to attend public and stakeholders meetings related to TXDOT's related North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

C. TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Public Outreach staff assisted the Transportation Department in hosting a public meeting on December 3rd to review amendments to the Public Participation Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. The new Congestion Mitigation Process Plan was also presented.
- In addition, staff also worked on developing new marketing materials and an employer commute survey for the Commute Solutions program.
- The staff has continued to support the Transportation Department in the planning for upcoming studies in Montgomery, Liberty, Southeast Harris and for other large projects coming in 2021.
- Staff developed a campaign report for the 2020 Zip Zone Map/Hurricane Preparedness campaign.
- Staff began strategic planning for the phase two launch of Mobility Links.

D. COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff created Regional Employer Survey to measure COVID-19 impacts
 - Staff closed survey on January 04, 2021
 - Staff plan will collect survey data in aggregate to share with management districts
- Staff submitted monthly Insider Newsletter Article
- Staff met with CDM Smith on December 1 to discuss opportunities and benefits as a new Commute Solutions Partner
- Staff met with Agile Mile on December 2 to discuss transportation demand management software
- Staff met with AECOM on December 7 to discuss telework contract execution tactics
- Staff met with ACT (Association for Commuter Transportation) Employer Council to discuss Recruitment Chair position and council plans for 2021
- Staff met with Uptown Houston District on December 9 to discuss Regional Employer Survey and collaboration ideas for 2021
- Staff produced a monthly progress report for TXDOT.

E. CLEAN VEHICLES/HEAVY DUTY DIESEL REPLACEMENT PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1. Clean Vehicles Program

- Staff continues to work with several ISD's to replace older school buses.
- Staff is working with several grant recipients to finalize contracts and complete invoicing.
- Staff continues to respond to incoming phone calls and email requests for program information.
- Staff continues to monitor grant recipient's usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings.
- Staff assisted in the development of a Buy America certification form for Alternative Fueling Stations.

- Staff has initiated the process of applying for a new AFA for CSJ643. The Scope and budget have been developed and are awaiting internal approval.

2. Heavy Duty Diesel Replacement Program

- Staff continues to work with grant recipients to finalize contracts and complete invoicing
- Staff continues to respond to incoming phone calls and email requests for program information
- Staff continues to monitor grant recipient's usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff continues to follow-up with grant recipients who are not achieving their emission/mileage commitments.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings.

F. GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff continues work to develop an inventory of buses of all types that operate within the H-GAC region. Project efforts are underway and staff are working to refine and expand contact lists for the survey in both the public and private sectors. Staff plans to administering the inventory survey on 1 March through 31 April and anticipates completion of data analysis and the final report during Q3. It is anticipated the results will help staff better understand how bus operations contribute to regional air quality as well as to help inform future emission reduction efforts undertaken by the MPO.
- Staff continues to work with stakeholders from other MPOs as well as state agencies to develop an Electric School Bus demonstration project as part of a statewide working group. This group is working with OEMs to vet suitable project vehicles, formulating funding opportunities for the proposed project. Staff is currently participating in an ongoing series of webinars to generate interest and feedback from ISDs within Texas.
- Staff continues to work with air quality staff from NCTCOG to meet with stakeholders to develop zero emission vehicle (ZEV) corridor plan for Interstate 45 between and within the two MPO's service areas. Presently members from both staffs are holding meetings with ZEV stakeholders as well as reaching out directly to non-ZEV stakeholders who may have an interest in such technology. This effort is ongoing.
- H-GAC continues to assist with regional efforts to support the Department of Energy (DOE) sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under the auspices of this program, staff works 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. January is the last month of the
- Staff is continuing to work to administer two separate EPA-funded DERA grants to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. With a completed contract in place for the IKEA project, IKEA has placed orders for project vehicles with final delivery and

deployment anticipated in the first half of 2021. Due to funding restraints on the project partner side, the DERA project with H-E-B is continuing, but the bulk of the work has been delayed until late 2021 or early 2022.

G. TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand modeling and GIS technical supports and assistances to support H-GAC's Regional Transportation Planning (RTP), Transportation Improvement Planning (TIP), the 2020 Regional Air Quality conformity process, other H-GAC's internal planning work and to H-GAC's member agencies such as TXDOT and METRO, for their various corridor and sub-areas transportation planning and studies. Status - Ongoing
- Staff setup and continues to review H-GAC 2018-2019 traffic count subset to submit for TxDOT 2021 saturation count, finished customizing REMI new model v.4.5. with HGAC 2018Q4 for regional social economic data forecast, started to research and collect industry profiles data for Regional Goods Movement study. Status - Ongoing
- Staff continues to develop highway networks as input for the AIMSUN Meso and Micro modeling for Montgomery County Precinct – 2 subarea study and for SE Harris County sub-area studies. Staff also continues to provide GIS technical Supports to these regional corridor studies. Status - Ongoing
- Staff continues to participate and assist the Cambridge Systematic (CS) in validation and calibration of the Activity Based Model (ABM) model – Status Ongoing
- Staff successfully completed the model runs and the Trans-VMT runs and calculations for the 2020, 2030, 2040, 2045 conformity Air Quality Analysis and findings using the Cube Voyager platform. Status – Achieved
- Staff continues to work with the Steering Committee of the Origin-Destination On-board Transit Survey to monitor transit ridership in the region, developed the Request for Information for potential contractors, and working with the H-GAC Procurement Group for the release and the release of the Request for Proposal (RFP) scheduled for February 2021. Steering Committee continues to meet to evaluation options to achieve better survey results. Status - ongoing
- Staff continues to work with City of Houston Aviation department to develop a MOU/Inter-Local Government Agreement (ILA), setup steering committee to review and develop scope of services, sample size, and timeline for regional commercial airport (IAH & Hobby) ground access count travel survey. Staff working with H-GAC Procurement Group to develop the ILA. Status – Ongoing
- Staff continues to work on creating websites and data dashboards for Montgomery county (Pct-2), Southeast Harris and Liberty counties. Status - ongoing
- Staff continues to assist with the North Houston Communities Transportation Priorities Plan-helping with task 2 data collection, mapping existing recommended projects (RTP,TIP, Livable Centers, etc.), transit routes and stops, bike lanes, sidewalks, Bi-cycle locations, staff continuing work with the GTFS Feed; creating GTFS feed for local transit agencies, continuing with the Montgomery County PCT 2 mobility plan, creating online interactive

maps and apps to support the FHWA MMNCP joint pilot study with METRO for Ped/Bike studies and to revamp ped/bike regional bikeways online map on H-GAC website, update the Houston Railroad Network update, and the Regional significant network (CMP) update. Ongoing

- Staff continues to participate in the conformity conference calls and the Texas Technical Working Group Advisory Committee meetings, developed both TAC and TPC background papers and presentations, ERG contract scope of work, TTI contract justification, conformity timeline, and inputs for conformity calculations. Status - Ongoing