

12C. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Strategies and recommendations have been finalized for the Southeast Harris County Subregional Study and were presented to the Steering Committee members. The final document will be completed this summer. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- Refinement to recommendations for the Liberty County Mobility Study is underway. A second round of public meetings will occur on May 12 (in Liberty) and May 18 (in Dayton), 2022. The consultant is also preparing final deliverables.
- Draft study recommendations were developed for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study. The draft recommendations will be presented to the Stakeholder members in May and June. The next public meeting is being planned for mid-summer.
- H-GAC staff are developing a scope of work for a regional Connected and Automated Vehicle Strategy.
- Staff developed draft Advanced Funding Agreements (AFA) for regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- 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 June 23, 2022.
- The next Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan will be held on June 21, 2022. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com

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 and the consultant made site visits to 11 intersections in Montgomery County to do Intersection Safety Assessments (ISA).
- A meeting was held with the Liberty County Staff to review the ISA recommendations report.
- The Public Outreach Campaign for Driver Safety known as “Pay the Price” is continuing through the August 31, 2022.
- Staff attended the City of Houston Vision Zero Implementation Group Meeting.
- An ISA Pre-Assessment Meeting with Brazoria County to schedule intersection site visits.

- H-GAC Staff met with Federal Railroad Administration to plan for the Railroad Trespass Prevention Summit in the Spring of 2023.
- Staff spoke at the Regional Joint Information Center Meeting on Hurricane Evacuation Maps Staff
- Staff attended Texas Vision Zero Summit Steering Committee Planning Meetings.
- A Transportation System Maintenance and Operations (TSMO) subcommittee meeting was held on April 7th.
- A Transportation Safety Committee was held on April 26th.
- Staff presented at the TxDOT Transportation Planning Conference.
- A Tow and Go Public Awareness Public campaign started in May.
- Staff did a KRBE Interview on H-Town about Tow and Go.
- Tow and Go celebrated its 4-year anniversary on May 1st. Over 127,000 “No Cost” tows have been done during that 4 years.

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 is 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 tool on those studies.
- Staff is continuing 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)

- Staff worked on the scope of work, outreach activities, and schedule for the development of the update of the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- The RTP Subcommittee Meeting was conducted on May 11, 2022.

- The RTP Visioning Outreach began on May 5th and will continue through the end of the month with meetings in all 8 Counties (Harris, Liberty, Chambers, Galveston, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Waller and Montgomery County). For more information on the public meetings visit: www.engage.h-gac.com

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 developed a draft timeline and task list for the update of the Congestion Management Process and invited volunteers from the TIP and RTP subcommittees to participate in a workgroup. Staff is reach out to also incorporate volunteers from outside of Harris County before the workgroup can begin.

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.
- Staff worked on the development of project selection criteria for the next Call for Projects and coordinated with various subcommittees.
- Staff finalized the Annual Project Listing of Obligated Projects that provides project-level details on the use of federal funds for highways, pedestrian and bicycle and public transportation projects. H-GAC staff developed the annual report in cooperation with TxDOT and local public transportation providers and is available on the [H-GAC website](#).

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff collected data from permanent ped/bike counters, responded to requests for data, and prepared reports for distribution and posting on H-GAC's website.
- Staff are in the process of finalizing recommendations for installation and maintenance in preparation for deployment of the new counters. Staff met with Westchase District representatives to analyze alternative placements for permanent counting equipment.
- Staff initiated a social media and digital campaign for the Adult Bicycle Safety program and particularly the “Train Your Bike” bicycle handling courses being offered in Brazoria,

Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller counties from May to June.

- Staff participated in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee and Texas Pedestrian Safety Coalition.
- Staff are revising the scope, budget, and timeline in anticipation of procuring a consultant to revise the 2045 Active Transportation Plan.
- Staff continue to advance Ped/Bike Subcommittee workgroups. One workgroup will revise the regional bike network GIS data and the other workgroup will develop an active transportation focused travel demand modeling solution.
- Staff initiated preparations for the June 2022 Special Subcommittee meeting covering the Bicycle Friendly America program.
- Staff had monthly meetings with local sponsors for the Local Active Transportation Studies. Staff discussed public engagement process and received input on other information that needed for scope of work and project budgets.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee met on April 14, 2022. The next Subcommittee meeting will occur on July 14, 2022.
- Staff continues to refine the scope of work for High-Capacity Transit feasibility studies. This effort consists of individual studies of corridors and service concepts recommended by the High-Capacity Transit Task Force Priority Network. The first such study will focus on the US 90A corridor and will be conducted in partnership with the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD), and H-GAC staff is working with GCRD staff to finalize the scope of work.
- The public engagement site for the City of Pearland Transit Feasibility Needs Assessment and Study was released in March 2022. A resident survey of transit perceptions was released concurrently as well. The survey closed in mid-April with 2,307 responses with over 900 comments. A Technical Memorandum with existing conditions and peer analysis is being refined internally and will be presented to the Steering Committee in late May. Public meetings will be conducted in June to be presented to TAC and TPC in July.
- Staff have completed a scope of work for the City of Dayton transit study and met with city staff March to review the project. A Request for Proposal is under development.
- The Woodlands – Energy Corridor contract for the first suburb to suburb commuter service in the Houston-Galveston Region was approved and executed by The Woodlands Township. Service began on January 4, 2022, with service to the Energy Corridor. Extensive marketing efforts are underway to increase the level of ridership. Ridership has not increased as anticipated, and a review of existing service is being conducted.
- Development of an Action Plan for implementing Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan recommendations is 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.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff completed outreach and promotion of public meetings for RTP 2045 Update, Air Conformity, and Liberty County Sub-Regional Study.
- Digital surveys regarding the RTP 2045 Update were sent to stakeholders in the 8 county MPO region to gain feedback. In addition, media buys with local media vendors were placed to amplify efforts to get more survey responses.
- The April edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released.
- Promotion for in-person bike safety classes awareness began in April. To take the training, residents must complete an online course first.
- By end of April, media buys were secured, and outreach campaigns started for Tow and Go and Commute Solutions.
- Planning and coordination are underway for the launch of media buys and advertising with local vendors for Hurricane Preparedness.

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff attended four Earth Day events around the region. In addition, staff launched the “Earth Month Transportation Resource Fair” on the Easy Virtual platform. The fair garnered more than 1,700-page visits.
- The UHD Student Commute Survey was re-opened and responses increased from about 60 to 227.
- Staff began working on developing an online survey for Daikin. The survey will be held in three languages – English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- Staff prepared to launch Bike Month. Multiple coordination meetings were held internally and with external partners.
- Staff worked on an analysis of the Future of Work Survey. Results will be shared with TAC and TPC.
- Staff continued to make progress on telework policy development and implementation with employer partners.

CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- During last month, staff continued to work with several ISD’s in the Houston-Galveston region to replace older school buses. An application was received from Rice University for a new electric bus. Staff continued to coordinate with Cy Fair ISD for grant funding of electric buses.
- Staff continued to examine and develop the needed parameters to establish an electric charging infrastructure component to the Clean Vehicles Program. Staff worked on creating a new application specifically for electric vehicle chargers.
- Staff continued 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 and met with other local government agencies to discuss projects utilizing Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Staff met with TxDOT and discussed electric vehicles and charging stations as projects for CMAQ funding.
- Staff met with representatives from Lion Electric to discuss potential projects.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff continued to work with air quality team from the North Central Texas Council of Governments to meet with stakeholders to develop Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) corridor plan for Interstate 45 between and within the two MPO's service areas. Staff are continuing to hold discussions with stakeholders who may have an interest in either all-electric or hydrogen technology. H-GAC staff anticipate future stakeholder events upcoming in the next several months.
- 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. This month, staff is working to complete our annual survey of alternative fuel usage within the 8-county region. Additionally, staff has received an additional year of funding to continue these activities through early 2023. Currently underway is planning for this upcoming funding year which began on April 1st. It is anticipated that staff will present a series of webinars and other alternative fuel events as well as continuing our ongoing podcast series.
- 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 the 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 preparing a call for projects to find a new partner to complete the project.

TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

- Staff continued to provide travel demand modeling to support various sub-regional and corridor studies such as evaluating eight alternatives for the METRO Bus Rapid Transit and Managed Laned within the Inner Katy study areas and the Montgomery County Precinct – 2 network development and scenarios model runs. Staff provided travel demand forecasting support to for the Grand Parkway study. Staff conducted model runs for the SE Harris, Liberty Counties studies, the 2045 Regional Air Quality conformity, and other sub-area and corridors studies within the region to support H-GAC's planning processes.

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- Staff continued to provide GIS technical support for the RTP, TIP, the Regional Air Quality conformity process, to create the New-Regional Bikeway Networks Updates, and the creation of the web app for Active Transportation Viewers.
- Staff continued to enhance the capabilities of the website and dashboard to assist H-GAC's member agencies to view their various corridor and sub-area transportation planning and studies. Staff continue to work with TxDOT to utilize Streetlight data, and in the Household Survey planning process.
- Staff continued to run and enhance H-GAC's Activity-Based Model (ABM) and carry out model runs for the Regional Goods Movement Study using the ABM model, review outputs with HDR consultants.
- Staff continued to enhance the AIMSUN Meso- and Micro- modeling for the three sub-areas: Montgomery County, SE Harris and Liberty Counties studies, and continued to evaluate other modeling software.
- Staff continued to work with a Steering Committee and the Contractor (ETC Consulting) for the Transit On-board Origin-Destination (O-D) Transit Survey. The survey is on-going and about 5,000 samples have already been collected. Staff continued to support the bike/pedestrian project for the forthcoming active transportation modeling efforts and continued to work on procurement for the Airport Ground Access Survey.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project. Procurement process for the traffic data collection was completed. Data collection will commence in September 2022.
- Staff coordinated with Conformity Partners on the Air Quality Conformity process and documentation for milestone years 2020, 2030, 2040, 2045.
- Staff continued to run the H-GAC VisionEval scenarios model to support transportation planning activities.