

11B. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- **LONG RANGE PLANNING**

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Strategies and recommendations are under development for the Southeast Harris County Subregional Study. The Steering Committee provided input on the initial round of recommendations at the January 25 and 26, 2022 meetings. A series of Stakeholder meetings were completed the week of February 14, 2022. Input from these meetings will be used in the final recommendations.
- Analysis and refinement of initial recommendations for the Liberty County Mobility Study are underway. The next Steering Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for March, and a second round of public involvement to present these recommendations to the public will occur in early 2022.
- Draft study recommendations were developed for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study. The next Steering Committee will be held in March with Stakeholder meetings to follow.
- Staff are developing methodology for a Transit-Oriented Development analysis of the 8-County H-GAC region.
- H-GAC staff are developing a scope of work for a regional Connected and Automated Vehicle Strategy.

2. Freight Planning

- The Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting was conducted on January 13, 2022. The committee's next meeting will be on March 3, 2022.
- The second Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan update is scheduled for February 24, 2022. The first public meeting is scheduled for the end of March.

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 intersections in Harris County to do Intersection Safety Assessments (ISA). The Consultant finalized for Fort Bend and Waller Counties. Staff and the consultant also met with Chambers county staff to review the Draft ISA report. Meetings were held with Liberty County and the City of Galveston to prepare for ISA site visits in February for Liberty County and March for the City of Galveston. The ISA project is on schedule to wrap up in the summer of 2022.
- The Public Outreach Campaign for Driver Safety known as "Pay the Price" is continuing through the August 31, 2022.

- Agreements were approved between H-GAC and Harris County to continue to fund the Tow and Go Program in Harris County in January and February.
- Two SHRP2 Traffic Incident Management Trainings for first Responders are scheduled for January 24, 2022.
- Staff conducted a Transportation Systems Maintenance and Operations Committee meeting on February 3, 2022.

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. The worksheet is part of the initiative to integrate Title VI and environmental justice requirements in the planning process and will ensure that non-discrimination and equity issues are examined and understood prior to TAC and TPC consideration.
- 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 next RTP Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2022.
- Staff are developing an initial poll to kick-start public involvement and outreach for the next RTP update.

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 reported monthly 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.

- **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 updated data on H-GAC website for Mobile Counters program. Staff processed requests for Ped/Bike counter data. Staff reviewed data analysis and associated reports for distribution of count information.
- Staff successfully completed the procurement process and placed an order for new permanent and mobile bike/pedestrian counters. Staff revised installation plan and recommendations in preparation for the expansion of the counter program.
- Staff performed troubleshooting on two permanent bicycle/pedestrian counters.
- Staff continued to work with the America Bicycle Education Association to track the online safety course called CyclingSavvy. Staff completed a marketing plan for the online course. Staff successfully identified potential locations in-person bike handling courses. The bicycle friendly driver course is being revised.
- Staff participated in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee and Texas Pedestrian Safety Coalition.
- Staff continues the process to procure a consultant to revise the 2045 Active Transportation Plan.
- Staff held kick-off meetings in January for Ped/Bike Subcommittee workgroups to revise the regional bike network GIS data and to develop an active transportation focused travel demand modeling solution. Staff are performing research of best practices for the travel

demand modeling and bike network update workgroups. Staff continues to adjust and revise the SharePoint sites for the subcommittee workgroups to enhance engagement.

- Staff continued to collaborate with project sponsors to draft Advanced Funding Agreements (AFAs) for four of the UPWP approved active transportation projects.
- Staff has coordinated with multiple service area partners (e.g. bicycle advocacy groups, bike share, etc.) to help new personnel at each organization understand H-GAC active transportation functions, services, funding opportunities, etc.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee held their regular meeting on January 13, 2022. A special call meeting was held on February 10, 2022, where endorsements were given to the Transportation Asset Management (TAM) performance targets and the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan (RTCP) 2022 Update.
- Staff continued to refine the scope of work for the feasibility studies of the High-Capacity Transit Plan. This effort is envisioned to consist of individual studies of corridors and service concepts recommended by the High-Capacity Transit Task Force Priority Network.
- The City of Pearland Transit Feasibility Needs Assessment and Study public engagement site is being developed for release on March 9, 2022. A resident survey of transit perceptions will be released concurrently with the public engagement site. A Technical Memorandum with existing conditions and peer analysis will be prepared for distribution in April 2022.
- Staff is working on a scope of work for the City of Dayton transit study which will be developed to examine commuter and local transit services.
- 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.
- A draft of the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan 2022 update has been completed, and a 30-day public comment period concluded on February 4. Final approvals are requested in February for the update from RTCS, TAC, TPC, and the Board of Directors.
- 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' need and capacity are underway.

- **TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH**

- Staff is preparing for public meetings and public comment periods for the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update and TIP 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Update in March.
- The February edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released.
- Planning for the launch of media buys and advertising with local vendors for Hurricane Preparedness, Tow and Go, and Commute Solutions.
- A bike safety class awareness plan was developed in February and will be implemented in March with the goal of increasing attendance at in-person and virtual classes.
- Staff completed facilitating public meetings and gathering feedback on the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan (RCTP). The final plan will be prepared for final consumption in the coming weeks.
- Planning for an Environmental Justice awareness campaign to occur during summer of 2022 is being discussed.

- **COMMUTE SOLUTIONS**

- Staff held monthly coordination meeting with TxDOT's ConnectSmart team.
- Staff continued to meet with the consultant for telework planning coordination with area companies and local governments.
- Staff met with NASA Space Center and ConnectSmart to move forward with next steps in promoting the ConnectSmart App at the NASA campus.
- Staff is coordinating with H-GAC internal GIS team, AECOM & Urban Trans (contractors) for the creation and implementation of an 8-county region employer survey to launch in February 2022.
- Staff met with University of Houston transportation manager to discuss commuter program plans for students and staff in 2022.
- Staff solidified a new Commute Solutions Partnership with Greater Northside Management District.

- **CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

- During last month, staff continues 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 continues 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.

Agenda Item 11B
TPC Meeting Packet – 2/25/22

- 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 hear about their new buses and discuss working together on 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 meetings with stakeholders who may have an interest in either all-electric or hydrogen technology.
 - 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. In addition to the usual efforts to develop educational programs related to alternative fuel topics.
 - 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 working with new project partner, Hirschbach Motor Lines. Staff is continuing to develop contracting materials to support this project. The project is anticipated to begin in Spring 2022.
 - Staff is working with representatives from the South-Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource to develop a workshop for local governments to discuss transportation and energy resiliency in our region. This workshop will focus on vehicle electrification and issues related to equity of the upcoming transition as well as how vehicle electrification can help improve energy efficiency. Anticipated speakers at this roundtable include Dr. Bruce Race from University of Houston and Chris George from EVolve Houston. This workshop will be held on April 14, 2022. Further details will be available in future updates.

- **TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING**

- Staff continued to provide travel demand modeling to support various sub-regional and corridor studies such as the Inner Katy study, the Montgomery County, SE Harris, Liberty Counties studies, and other H-GAC's planning studies.
- Staff continued to provide GIS technical support for the RTP, TIP, the Regional Air Quality conformity process.
- Staff continued to enhance the capabilities of the website for RTP Viewing that assists 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.
- Staff continued to enhance H-GAC's Activity-Based Model (ABM) and the truck models to a newer base year with updated data and use the ABM to support the Regional Goods Movement Study.
- Staff continued to develop 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 for the Transit On-board Origin-Destination (O-D) Transit Survey. The survey began February 2022 and scheduled to last till December 2022. Staff continue to support the bike/pedestrian project for the forthcoming active transportation modeling efforts.
- Staff working with the City of Houston (Airport staff) for the joint effort of the regional commercial airports (IAH & Hobby) ground access count to the airport. The survey data collection is scheduled for Fall of 2022.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project.
- Staff and H-GAC Procurement team released Request for Proposals for the Regional Economic Model (REMI) software update.
- Staff continued to develop emission factors and coordinated with Conformity Partners on the Air Quality Conformity Process.