

10C. 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 Liberty County Mobility Study has been 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. A presentation of study's recommendations was made at the Greater Magnolia Chamber luncheon on February 23, 2022. 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 is procuring six (6) subregional plans: Four (4) have recently completed procurement and are in the initial phase of contract development including FM 518 Corridor Study, Pearland Mobility Study, Washington Ave. Corridor Study, and Old 6th Ward, planning study. Two additional studies are anticipated to be procured in 2023 and include Cemetery Road Corridor study and Friendswood's Lake Boulevard Corridor study. All these projects are included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Work on these studies will begin when the Advanced Funding Agreements are approved by TxDOT.

2. Freight Planning

- The next Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting was held on February 15, 2023. Topics presented include Regional Goods in the Project Selection, an update on the Regional Goods Movement Plan, the TxDOT Freight Parking Study, and priorities for the current Texas legislative session. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2023. Date and time to be announced.
- The Regional Goods Movement Plan's (RGMP) last Steering Committee meeting was held on December 1, 2022 followed by a Stakeholder meeting January 12, 2023. From November 2022 – February 2023 12 one-on-one interviews were held with stakeholders in the region to listen to hear their concerns and feedback regarding freight. A freight-industry meeting took place on February 20, 2022 and provided a forum to learn from the commercial freight industry perspective. Next steps for plan development include recommendations for projects, policies, and programs. Ideas being discussed are centered around the study's 5 primary goals which reflect the provided goals of the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan and associated 2045 Plan Update currently in development. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) were identified as part of the Regional Goods Movement Plan. More than 140 corridors were evaluated using the Federal Highway Administration guidance for CUFC selection and the additional freight related criteria. The corridors were presented to the RGMP Steering and Stakeholder committees, the public as well as the GHFC. In

conclusion, 27 corridors were designated as Critical Urban Freight Corridors. The CUFC's received endorsement from the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and approval from the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) in August of 2022.

- The Houston Area Rail Transformation (HART) was presented to TAC and TPC in December of 2022 as a working group formed to coordinate and prioritize regional freight infrastructure to seek grant funding opportunities. The Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) formalized the working group as a GCRD committee on January 17, 2023. HART working group started meeting bi-weekly in October of 2022 and anticipated to continue this pattern in the near future. H-GAC staff continues to provide meeting support and regional coordination. The next meeting is planned for March 10th, 2023.
- The U.S. Department of Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) railroad administrator, Amit Bose, visited H-GAC offices on February 23, 2023. HART was introduced to FRA and provided a brief presentation including intent of the working group.

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- The Transportation Safety Committee met on April 25, 2023.
- Staff conducted a Tow and Go Operations meeting with the Harris County Sheriff Office (HCSO), Houston Police Department (HPD), AECOM, TxDOT, and the towing industry on May 1, 2023 at Houston TranStar.
- A Transportation Management Safety and Operations meeting was held on May 4, 2023.
- Staff conducted a Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, Harris County Sheriff Officer (HCSO), Houston Police Department (HPD), AECOM, and the Blue Ridge Transportation Group on April 13, 2023.
- Staff met with Kimley-Horn and Associates Staff to discuss the Intersection Safety Contract Task 4 activity during May to discuss future work plan.
- A Transportation Safety Public Outreach Campaign was started the first week of April and will run through the end of May promoting H-GAC's "Don't Pay the Price".
- Staff attended weekly Statewide TIM Calls during April and May.
- Tow and Go performed 2,848 "No Cost Tows" in February 2023. Average Clearance Times was 16 minutes and 22 seconds.
- In March 2023, the 8-county region experienced 62 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was a 2% decrease when compared to 2022 which recorded 63 fatalities.
- In March 2023, the 8-county region experienced 342 Serious Injuries based on data from TxDOT CRIS, which was a four percent decrease increase when compared to March 2022 which recorded 356 Serious Injuries.

4. Environmental Planning

- 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 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. For more information visit: www/h-gac.com/resiliency-planning
- Staff is starting initial preparation for the development of a Resiliency Plan, a recommendation resulting from the Resiliency & Durability Pilot project.
- Staff participated in a WTS Diversity Panel on November 17, 2022 where the Resilience and Durability Pilot and associated evaluation of critical and vulnerable transportation networks were discussed as was associated impact on vulnerable populations as associated with H-GAC Vulnerable Population Index.
- Staff continues to track the PROTECT Resiliency Grant opportunity. <https://www.h-gac.com/resiliency-planning>

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) subcommittee provides guidance and oversees progress of the RTP. The committee must meet quorum and meetings are held every second Wednesday of the month. The next RTP subcommittee meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2023.
- The RTP consists of three (3) phases of public outreach. The visioning phase were conducted from May through July 2022 to understand the public's needs through surveying. The Prioritization Phase followed with public meetings in October through December 2022. This Phase gathered feedback on the big ideas and investment strategies to address what we heard during the Visioning Outreach. More information on the upcoming meetings can be found at: <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate>
- The third and final round of public outreach is the Public Review Phase and kicks off with a public review period from March 15th through April 17th 2023 to allow the public to review the draft document and provide comment prior to the RTP being approved by the Transportation Policy Council on April 28, 2023. Staff will present at H-GAC subcommittee, provide notification of outreach to area partners, including meeting-in-a-box materials, as well as provide presence at up to 8 festivals anticipated to take place within the region during the associated public comment period to better address equitable access to this process. 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 reported quarterly from transit agencies in 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 submitted a scope of work for updating the Congestion Management Process for internal review to help move forward that project and guide the work of the workgroup.
- Work is ongoing towards the update of the Language Access Plan (LAP). The LAP specifies the policies and strategies the agency will utilize to assist individuals who do not speak the English language proficiently to participate in agency programs and activities in their language of choice.

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 Annual Project Listing of Obligated Projects that provides project-level details on the use of federal funds for highways, pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation projects over the course of the fiscal year 2021. H-GAC staff develops 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

- Bicycle Friendly Driver classes were held in May for seven counties. These were focused on educating drivers about legal rights & responsibilities of both vehicles & bicycles on Texas roadways. Attendance was lower than expected. We will work to re-offer these classes in a different way in the next year.
- Staff are continuing to work with the Data Analytics department to update the Regional Bike Network Map. Data is being incorporated from the City of Houston to test the new attributes.
- Staff are moving forward with UPWP funded local active transportation studies.
- Staff moving forward to prepare releasing RFP for Connecting Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept, one of the three AFA projects under TXDOT review. Staff is coordinating with Procurement on preparing RFP and pre-proposal conference. Staff will move forward with the Procurement process while waiting for TXDOT approval on AFA bundles of local active transportation projects.
- The Pedestrian and Bicyclist Subcommittee's next meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2023.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee next meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2023.
- The RFP for the Dayton Transit Study will close on June 15. The first evaluation committee will be held on June 19; the RFP for the US 90A Transit Corridor Study was released in early May.

- The Pearland Transit study held three public meetings in Pearland including one online. More than 65 people attended the meeting. The study's Technical Memorandum of Existing Conditions was published on the engage.hgac.com website.
- Staff are working with Metro and regional partners to begin implementation of the Regional Transit Connectivity Project. Initial Assessments are now complete and agencies that have not already done so are moving forward to create interlocal agreements with Metro.
- Staff are working to update elements of the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan, most notably the Transit Need Index.
- Staff discussed contract closeout procedures with the City of Conroe CMAQ grant. They indicated commuter service from Conroe to Houston Downtown and the Texas Medical Center would continue after completion of the pilot program on March 31, 2023.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Outreach for the 2045 RTP Update is complete, and the report was approved by TPC on April 28, 2023. For more information, visit <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate>.
- Public meetings to share findings from the Pearland Needs Assessment study and gather community feedback will occur on May 16, 18, and 23.
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
 - Pearland Needs Assessment
 - TIRZ 13 Mobility Study – Phase II
 - Regional Goods Movement Plan Update
 - Language Assistance Plan Update
 - Hurricane Preparedness
 - Mobility Links
 - Pearland FM 518 Corridor Study
 - Chambers County Throughfare Plan Study

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Commute Solutions began meeting with participating transit agencies to review a draft budget and learn about their needs for the Ozone Action campaign.
- Commute Solutions met with the University of Houston-Downtown Student Basic Needs Initiative group to discuss transportation solutions for students ridesharing (Uber/Lyft) and students' interest in carpooling.
- Commute Solutions and Love to Ride launched the Bike Month Challenge and the Bike the Gulf campaign website
- Commute Solutions collaborated with H-GAC's Communications and Outreach Department to publish a press release to 57 outlets throughout the region, announcing the beginning of the Bike Month campaign and Bike the Gulf.
- Commute Solutions participated in the initial Commuter Fest event, in collaboration with METRO, to bring commuting options, specifically vanpool, to business centers.
- Staff began discussions with Workforce Solutions to create a more collaborative relationship and help both departments to serve employers, specifically with recruitment and retention.

- Commute Solutions team collaborated with BikeHouston, NASA, the City of Houston, TEI, and The Woodlands Township to coordinate a Commute Solutions presence at Bike Month activities

CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff started work on a project to reassess the availability of Buy America compliant vehicles suitable for inclusion as part of the Clean Vehicles Program.
- 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 continued to process closeouts for projects meeting minimum contracted requirements for all project vehicles.
- 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.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Over the last month, staff worked with project partners from City of Houston, Harris County, and Fort Bend County, along with other regional stakeholders to develop a regional application for the noncompetitive Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program. This four-year program will bring \$1 million in planning funds to our region to help develop greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans for the nine-county Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Metropolitan Statistical Area. The results of these efforts will enable our region to apply for an anticipated \$4.6075 billion in grants as part of a later stage of this program.
- Staff held a meeting of the Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee (RAQPAC) on May 25th. This month's meeting included updates on agency activities from EPA, TCEQ, and the TERP program as well as an update on regional air quality. Attendees also received a presentation on the American Lung Association's State of the Air Report for 2023, as well as an update on the 88th session of the Texas Legislature.
- 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 participated in a South-Central Region Director's Meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Additionally, staff have been working to prepare for the upcoming

redesignation process that will be administered by the Department of Energy in June. Finally, staff is preparing for future events that will occur throughout the remainder of the year.

- Staff continues 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 have been working with IKEA to replace two existing diesel yard tractors at their Baytown facility with all-electric models. Supply chain issues have resulted in IKEA reaching out to a new vehicle manufacturer, it is hoped that despite this change, the vehicles will still be delivered in 2023. For the 2019 DERA project, staff are continuing to prepare a Request for Applicants to find at least one new partner to complete the project. It is anticipated that the Request will be published sometime during the current quarter.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting support to various in-house and outside H-GAC planning processes that includes sub-regional and corridor studies, Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Programs, Air Quality and Conformity determination, and other traffic and travel related data developments and modeling supports.
- Staff continues to provide support to: verified projects included in the 2023 Air Quality conformity analysis, responses to conformity comments, calculations of Emission Factors for idling trucks for the Port of Houston for various scenario years, calculations of Emission Factors for passenger cars for year 2023 for TIP projects, etc.
- Staff continues to provide on-going travel demand and forecasting modeling support to various corridor and sub-area studies and planning such as the: Fort Bend Tollway Extension to Spur 10, Chambers County Thoroughfare Plan Study, Pearland FM 518 Corridor Study, developing estimation for alternatives for the Pearland Transit Needs Assessment study, the fixed routes alternatives and ridership for on-demand transit in the study area, SH 99 (Grand Parkway), etc.
- Staff continues to provide modeling support to the H-GAC Transportation Department on the Ozone Action Month Campaign by evaluating what will happen if regional transit provider routes are updated to determine what would happen with ridership if each transit provider had either fare free Mondays or Fridays during the campaign.
- Staff continues working with Bentley Company (Cube Voyager new Owner) in the transition and update of the Cube Voyager to the 23 version, continues with the Activity-Based-Model (ABM) model testing and development and the traditional 4-step model sensitivity testing that examines and compares the model results from the trip-based and tour-based models to help determine where further development of the ABM is needed.
- Staff concluding the Origin-Destination Survey by reviewing the final deliverables of the project.
- Staff continues to follow-up with the Project Manager for the on-going Household Survey with Texas Department of Transportation – Austin District in the H-GAC Metropolitan Planning Organization region, continues to coordinate with the H-GAC Internal Audit Team for the Airport Survey contracting process, developing and reviewing the plans and scope of work to further refine a draft scope of work for the upcoming Bicycle and Pedestrian and other Active Transportation Survey.

- Staff continued to coordinate with Prime contractor (C.J Hench) for H-GAC traffic count project on off-State system; continues to help to sort April C.J Hench count list so that April invoice can be processed, processed video count and radar count data and uploaded to ms2 hosting site, track total amount spent up to date, postpone further traffic count collection until Fall 2023 to avoid bias of Summer data collection, coordinate with TxDOT to better understand the big data (Replica, Wejo, and Inrix) data purchased for Texas, working to collect data for the development of the Volpe RDR resiliency tool. Some of the data needed for this tool comes from ABM.
- coordinated H-GAC members Inter-agency coordination meeting with regional partners to share information about projects related to data analysis, planning, modeling, and GIS. This meeting provided H-GAC with a better understanding of what our partners are currently engaged in as well as future projects that may need collaboration from H-GAC for data needs.
- Staff continues updating Vision Eval Tract level model, resumed bi-weekly meeting with FHWA Volpe Center, updated base model two input files, "azone_gq_pop_by_age" and "bzone_dwelling_unit" that helps group quarter population at azone and bzone to matches 2020 census group quarter population (non-institutional group quarter population only)
- completed assisting Transportation Department staff in the Performance Measures (PM2) review process, helped calculate HGAC regionwide National Highway System (NHS) roadway pavement condition rating according to Federal standard by creating rating summary tables by Interstate Highway (IH) and by Non-Interstate Highway (NonIH), calculating 4-year and 6-year target setting data point to help planner to set future target, applied the same target setting method to bridge condition future target years and updated the bridge condition rating chart to future years (2026).
- Staff coordinating with the METRO Transit Authority on Inter-agency Agreement for the H-GAC regional Model User and Transfer for METRO's project planning and evaluation, Inter-agency Local Agreement with the City of Houston (HAS) for scope of responsibilities for the Airport Ground Access traffic data collection in the Houston Airport System (HAS) facilities.