

## 5B. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

### LONG RANGE PLANNING

#### 1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Old Sixth Ward/TIRZ 13 Mobility Plan: A draft report has been reviewed by the project team and is currently under review by the City of Houston. Substantial completion of this project is anticipated in January 2025.
- Pearland FM 518 Corridor Study: Public meetings were held – one for the Old Townsite area and one open to the public on November 20 and December 3, respectively. Draft alternatives for the corridor were presented at both meetings to gather community input. Substantial completion of this project is anticipated in February 2025.
- Pearland Mobility Plan: A Stakeholder meeting was held on November 7<sup>th</sup> to present preliminary recommendations for feedback. The project team is in the process of developing project prioritization criteria to be included in the Plan. A meeting is scheduled with the City of Pearland on December 12 to discuss the project prioritization criteria.
- Washington Ave Corridor Study: A Focus Group meeting with Super Neighborhood 22 was held on November 14 to develop potential cross sections along the corridor. The project team is developing draft cross sections based on input from the Focus Group meeting. The project team plans to meet with Councilmember Castillo and Councilmember Kamin on December 11 and December 17, respectively, to provide an update on the project.
- Cemetery Road Corridor Study: Draft alternatives for the corridor are being developed by the project team. A Steering Committee meeting is planned for January 15 to present the alternatives and gather feedback from the committee.
- Friendswood Parkway (Friendswood Lake) Corridor Study: The project team is preparing for the first Steering Committee meeting to discuss and gather feedback about existing conditions in the study area. The project team is planning a meeting for January 2025.
- Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept: The project team is preparing for the first Steering Committee meeting to discuss and gather feedback about existing conditions in the study area. The project team is planning a meeting for January 2025.

#### 2. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- The 2045 RTP Project List Amendment is undergoing the financial analysis and will be finalized shortly.
- The 2050 RTP scope is being prepared and will be sent to Procurement to ultimately select a consultant for development.
- Staff will send a survey to our local partners inquiring about the RTP Project Development Process. Staff will use the results to amend the RTP PDP for future iterations. Survey is early in development.

#### 3. Freight Planning

- Staff has been preparing an action plan to address recommendations from the Regional Goods Movement Plan and follow up workshop.
- Staff have been preparing for the Greater Houston Freight Committee on January 16, 2024
- Staff has been meeting with GCRD and preparing for Jan 24, 2024

4. Intelligent Transportation Systems and TSMO Planning
  - The ITS Architecture and Website Update project development is continuing. Staff and the Consultant hosted two workshops on the update: an in-person workshop on Thursday, December 5, and a virtual workshop on Tuesday, December 10.
5. Resiliency Planning
  - Staff are working on finalizing the PROTECT grant agreement.
6. Other Planning Activities
  - The SS4A contract will start in February 2025. The Consultant has been notified of their award and staff will meet with them to discuss the scope and pre-award paperwork in December.
  - Staff are revising the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and anticipate having it under internal review in December.

## SHORT RANGE PLANNING

1. Project Programming
  - Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local government on the proposed amendments to the 2025-2028 TIP and 2045 RTP documents.
  - Staff published revised draft project ranking list for the projects submitted for consideration in 5 Categories (Major Projects, High Growth Area Needs, Operational Improvements and Congestion Management, Resiliency and State of Good Repair, and Transit).
  - Staff is continuing to consult with top scoring project sponsors and review project readiness.
2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning
  - Staff have been preparing for the upcoming Pedestrian/Bicycle Subcommittee meeting in January 2025.
  - Staff have been preparing a scope of work for the Pedestrian/Bicycle Counter program and installation of permanent counters with the assistance of the Texas Transportation Institute.
  - Staff collaborated with Livable Centers staff to deploy mobile pedestrian/bicycle counters at four sites within the City of Houston to follow-up on previous study areas.
  - Staff are working with the Energy Corridor Management District on the Memorial Drive Bicycle Study and identification of steering committee members.
  - Staff have been preparing a scope of work and supporting documentation for the Adult Bicycle Safety program AFA.
3. Transit Planning
  - The next meeting of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee is scheduled for Thursday, January 9, 2025.
  - Evaluation of alignment alternatives for the US 90A Transit Corridor Study continues. A public meeting is anticipated for early 2025.
  - A supplemental TxDOT grant expanding the Regional Bus Study to the five non-MPO counties in the H-GAC service area has been accepted and executed. The consultant procurement process for this study will begin in early 2025.

- The Pearland Transit Study Final Report was completed and submitted to the City of Pearland. Report presentations to Pearland City Council, TAC, and TPC are planned for early 2025.
- The Dayton Transit Study has started, with a kickoff meeting in November with the Benesch Company. Initial study activities are underway.
- Awaiting execution of Transit Information Study contract which will assess, identify, and evaluate existing and best practices for the dissemination of transit information.
- Completion of the three-year The Woodlands – Energy Corridor CMAQ Commuter Pilot service at the end of the calendar year. Service will continue in 2025 funded by The Woodlands Township, the Energy Corridor District, federal transit formula funds and passenger fares.
- The Fort Bend Transit to downtown Houston CMAQ Pilot service has a daily ridership level that is 40% higher than expected, and it continues to trend upward.
- The City of Sugar Land CMAQ funded citywide microtransit pilot is ramping up for an early 2025 start.

#### 4. Tracking and Monitoring

- Conduct quarterly meetings with over 40 local government sponsors to ensure projects included in the 4-year TIP window (including \$1B of carryover spend down projects with let dates of FY 2025 and 2026) let on time

### TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

Planning and implementation of communications and outreach for the following projects is currently underway or were completed recently:

- RTP 2050
- Safe Streets 4 All
- Commute Solutions2025 campaigns
- Tow & Go – Media Buying
- Hurricane Preparedness campaign (billing close out)
- US 90A Transit Corridor Study
- Air Quality – Climate Change Engagement for MPO's Collar Counties
- Energy Corridor Memorial Drive Pedestrian Study
- Friendswood Parkway Study
- Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept

### MPO PROGRAMS

#### 1. Commute Solutions

- Staff worked with H-GAC's DAR Team to identify prominent commuting routes within the 8-county region to gain a better understanding of where to push advertisements
- They also developed a media-buy plan to promote the overall Commute Solutions program for 2025
- Staff drafted a preliminary marketing-communications plan for 2025
- They also approved invoices for Harris County Transit to reimburse them for Free Fare Friday
- Staff prepared material to present at a New York Mobility meeting for December 3, 2024
- The outreach team introduced their new point of contact for Commute Solutions to their transit partners and began reaching out to current partners to ensure a smooth transition.

- Staff worked with AECOM on Task 7 of the evaluation and recommendations, building scenarios to evaluate and build out other implementation deliverables. Scenarios include incentive campaigns and a sales and marketing training outline for the TDM team. AECOM also began to develop a guide for the processes and procedures to consider for the upcoming Emergency Ride Home program.
- Staff began coordinating with the project manager of the contractor that has been selected to operate the Emergency Ride Home and a kickoff meeting is expected for January.
- Commute Solutions is working with Connect Smart to host a partner appreciation event at H-GAC in January. The event will spotlight employers who have worked with Connect Smart since launching in 2022 and persuade prospective employers to begin working with the program.

## 2. Incident Management/Tow and Go

- Staff worked with local partners to present to TPC for approval, additional funding for the existing Tow and go programs in City of Houston and Harris County.
- Staff partnered with TxDot to hold an Incident management training at TranStar for Incident responders.
- Staff facilitated the Transportation systems operations and Management subcommittee with a special presentation from Brian Mason at TranStar related to preparing for the FIFA World Cup in 2026.

## 3. Safety Outreach

- The Safety Outreach team continued to work with H-GAC's procurement and contracts department to prepare the procurement documents for the Teens in the Driver Seat and Youth Traffic education Programs.

## 4. Hurricane Evacuation

- No report this month.

## 5. Title VI/Language Access

- Staff completed the 2024 triennial update to the Title VI Program and have submitted it to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) via the TrAMS system, as required by the FTA.
- Staff have also completed the update of the MPO's Language Access Plan (LAP), including updating the demographic information for the Houston-Galveston metropolitan planning area, and conducting a language access needs assessment.
- Efforts are underway to program and implement the proposals and recommendations of these plans in the regular activities of the Transportation department.

## **CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

- Staff continue to monitor post-delivery projects that have not yet met the contractually required emission reductions based upon subrecipient performance. This monitoring effort ensures that grant recipients' usage of vehicles remains within grant requirements and that vehicle use and mileage commitments are met. Staff are currently monitoring 104 project vehicles.
- Participant usage is monitored by staff using a contracted GPS service provider. The current provider's five-year contract will soon expire. Staff is currently developing an request for proposals to procure a contractor to support ongoing monitoring activities in support of the Clean Vehicles Program.

### GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff have worked to prepare for upcoming regional conformity activities. This has included meetings with internal teams and external stakeholders, including TxDOT and FHWA to evaluate the conformity schedule over the next three years. Staff presented at the TAQ Subcommittee Meeting and TAC, providing a brief overview of conformity, its triggers, the anticipated schedule over the next three years, and the associated benefits and risks of this schedule. Staff have recommended conducting three conformity runs over the next three years to satisfy amendments to the RTP/TIP, an anticipated PM2.5 non-attainment designation, and the upcoming 2050 RTP.
- Staff continue to work on activities related to the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program (CPRG). During the current month, staff have been collaborating with project partners to finalize a comprehensive regional greenhouse gas inventory which will support the upcoming Regional Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). Staff have also been working with regional partners to begin to develop goals and targets to support the CCAP. Additionally, staff have recently closed a request for proposals that will help to recruit partners to support the development of a CPRG engagement plan and other outreach activities related to the development of the CCAP.
- Staff worked to launch a series of “Climate Corner” articles to be included in the monthly “Regional Focus” newsletter published by H-GAC. The first two entries in this series focused on resilience and the effect of greenhouse gases on regional health and air quality. These articles will continue to be published monthly on an ongoing basis.
- Staff have been working since late last year to develop a regional project for TCEQ’s Rider 7 project funding that is available to near nonattainment areas to support projects that may assist with the development of the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Our region has been awarded approximately \$450m in project funding. This month, staff have been working with TCEQ to finalize a scope of work for this project and is approaching completion of an RFP to solicit project partners.
- Staff continue to administer an Environmental Protection Agency-funded Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grant to deploy all-electric yard tractors at a local freight warehouse. In October, staff requested close out of an existing DERA project with IKEA to replace yard tractors at their Baytown facility. Staff have been working on developing the final project report. It is anticipated that this project will be completed prior to the end of December.
- Staff are continuing to work to develop a zero-emission vehicle plan for the region. This effort is ongoing. During the current month, staff have been working to rethink some of the plan efforts to better match with other MPO planning efforts.

### TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting modeling supports to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP), and other traffic and travel related data developments within the H-GAC MPO region that supports sub-regional and corridor studies for both TxDOT and other H-GAC member agencies projects. These include modeling support for TxDOT and non-TxDOT projects such as: Loaded network, demographic data, and Replica OD data request for the support of three scenarios for the Friendswood Parkway Corridor Study, Model applications to support three scenarios for the FM 518 Corridor Study, Transit ridership data analysis for the three scenarios for the US 90A Transit Corridor Study, loaded network for base year and future years, and the 2021 Replica OD data, pedestrian and bike information that support the Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept, modeling assistance that supported the Pearland Mobility Study, conducted emission analysis for four projects, and etc.
- Staff analyzed, and completed documentation with consultant teams for the new TAZ structure model runs and analysis and shared model with Cambridge Systematics (CS) consultants and reviewed external-to-external trip table provided by TTI.

- Staff reviewed and updated H-GAC SMART scenario planning scope, tracking TxDOT approval for REMI, OpenPath and MS2 license renewal, Set up REMI analysis for GP-C2. Run TDM no build for year 2040 for GP-C2, set up PM2 analysis project, presented HGAC VisionEval development status to consultants who work for Baltimore MPO, estimated hotel employment numbers at firm level by location using DataAxle for RSG for airport model development, extracted and packaged 2023-2024 traffic count by 15 min. volume and class to CS consultant for TDM update development.
- Staff continued testing and debugging of the ATOM 3 (V8) script with 2045 model and compared results with ATOM 2, Conducting sensitivity analysis for ATOM 3 (V10), continues Updating existing model input files from the TAZ 5217 structure to the new TAZ 5808 structure, continue assisting in Setting up VisionEval production environment.
- Staff started to work with TxDOT TP&P and the TTI on the evaluation committee for the forthcoming commercial vehicle and Galveston special generator survey in the H-GAC MPO region, continue to coordinate with H-GAC website team to develop a data and survey website for H-GAC completed and on-going surveys, continue to work with the H-GAC Procurement team for release of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Regional University surveys within the H-GAC MPO region.
- Staff continues to coordinate with RSG Consultants under the ETC Institute Survey contract for development of the Airport sub-model, working with Cambridge Systematics and her team of sub-contractors for the Travel Demand Model Update and Maintenance tasks.