



[h-gac.com](http://h-gac.com)

# Regional Focus

Your Monthly Newsletter from the Houston-Galveston Area Council  
Sept. 2024

From Ozone Action Month to the Metropolitan Planning Organization's 50th Anniversary, there are many ways to engage with H-GAC and be involved in your community this month!

Watch below to learn more and visit: [h-gac.com/calendar](http://h-gac.com/calendar).



# SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, September 27, 2024  
11 A.M.



**H-GAC**  
**mpo**

Join the Houston-Galveston Area Council Metropolitan Planning Organization as we celebrate 50 years of transportation planning for the region.

THE BRIAR CLUB  
2603 TIMMONS LANE  
HOUSTON, TX 77027



## H-GAC Wants You to Breathe Easy this September

*Take transit in September to improve air quality in our region!*

As we enter September, a month notorious for poor air quality, the [Houston-Galveston Area Council's](#) (H-GAC) [Commute Solutions](#) program is launching a campaign challenging residents to take action to reduce ground-level ozone for September.

A collaborative of transit providers, including Harris County Transit, Fort Bend Transit, city of Conroe, and The Woodlands Township, are joining the effort with additional support from Air Alliance Houston, Houston ConnectSmart, and METRO Star. All invite you to "[Breathe Easy](#)" by shifting travel behavior in September.

To make the ride easier, join Harris County Transit, Fort Bend Transit, the city of Conroe, and The Woodlands Township for FREE FARE FRIDAYS, offering free fares for participating routes throughout September. Visit [yourcommutesolution.org/breathe](https://yourcommutesolution.org/breathe) for more information on participating locations or to connect to transit schedules.



In addition to taking the bus, there are additional ways to make a significant, positive impact on our region's air quality during your daily commute.

- **Vanpool or Carpool:** If the bus is not an option, try sharing a ride
- **No Idling:** Turn your car off when stationary to reduce emissions
- **Improve Mileage:** Ensure your tires are properly inflated

- **Fuel Up Later:** Fill your gas tank later in the day to minimize emissions
- **Combine Trips:** Plan your errands to reduce the number of trips you make
- **Active Transportation:** Walk or bike when possible or bring your lunch to reduce midday travel

For more information on the campaign and how you can participate, visit: [yourcommutesolution.org/breathe](https://yourcommutesolution.org/breathe).

## The Area Agency on Aging Hits the Road!

The Houston-Galveston Area Council's [Area Agency on Aging](#) (AAA) has launched its roadshow to visit, meet, and speak with older adults throughout the region to educate them, caretakers, and healthcare professionals about [services](#) available through AAA.



In addition, the AAA will also seek feedback on new, innovative programs of interest to older adults, which could include nutrition and fitness programs, technology demonstrations, arts and crafts classes, and respite and transportation services.

**See below for details on the Brazoria County meeting later this month!**

To learn when the AAA Roadshow will be in your area, watch for announcements in this newsletter and on social, and share the news with individuals in your community!

To learn more about H-GAC's AAA, visit: [h-gac.com/area-agency-on-aging](https://h-gac.com/area-agency-on-aging)

## H-GAC Projects Earn Recognition in State, Local Planning Awards Programs

Three [Houston-Galveston Area Council Livable Centers](#) studies were selected for recognition in the [Texas Chapter Houston Section of the American Planning Association \(APA\)](#) 2024 Planning Achievement Awards. One study was also recognized by the [Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association's 2024 Planning Achievement Awards](#).

The [Prairie View Livable Centers Study](#) earned the Silver Planning Achievement Award for Public Outreach from the state and local chapters of the APA. This award honors an individual, project, or program that uses information and education about the value of planning to create greater awareness among citizens or specific segments of the public. The award celebrates how planning improves a community's quality of life. The Prairie View Livable Centers Study demonstrates that planning should be flexible to recognize the community's needs and adjust outreach to ensure residents understand the process and implementation.

The [Clute Livable Centers Study](#) earned the Silver Planning Achievement Award for Urban Design from the Houston Chapter of the APA. This award honors efforts to create a sense of place, whether a street, public space, neighborhood, or campus effort. The Clute Livable Centers Study represents how catalyst sites supported by the community can lead to positive change.

The [South Houston Livable Centers Study](#) earned the Silver Planning Achievement Award for Transportation from the Houston Chapter of APA. This award honors efforts to increase transportation choices for all populations to reduce dependence on private automobiles, help ease congestion, and reduce climate change impacts. Based on unique engagement opportunities in the community, the South Houston Livable Centers Study represents clear recommendations that will benefit residents.



## H-GAC's Parks and Natural Areas Awards Application Period Open

H-GAC's annual [Parks and Natural Areas Awards program](#) is now open for applications.

Apply today for recognition in the 19th annual awards program honoring parks and natural areas demonstrating outstanding practices in the Houston-Galveston region.

The Parks and Natural Areas Awards recognize projects in four categories:

1. Projects Over \$500,000
2. Projects Under \$500,000
3. Planning Process and Policy Tools
4. Programming

The application period closes at **5 p.m. on Monday, September 30.**

An [application guide is available online](#) to help you prepare your application before entering information in the online application portal.

No funding is associated with this awards program.

Winners will be notified in December and recognized in 2025. For more information, contact: [Andrea Tantillo](#).

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## H-GAC Soliciting Questions for TxDOT Conversation

*Submit your most pressing questions by September 13!*



In October, H-GAC will publish an on-demand recorded conversation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) instead of holding the October Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable and the Rural and Small Town Downtown Revitalization Summit.

The conversation will focus on ways downtowns can work with TxDOT on revitalization projects, such as sidewalks, road closures, funding mechanisms, special requests, and safety considerations.

To help us prepare and get the most out of this recorded conversation, [send us your questions by 12 p.m. on September 13](#). We can't guarantee that every question will be asked and answered, but we'll try to get to as many as possible.

Is there something you've always wondered about downtowns and the best way to work with TxDOT? [Let us know](#).

For more information, contact [Andrea Tantillo](#).

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# GIS Day

Secure your spot as a sponsor today!

Nov 21-22 | Houston, TX

## LIMITED SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

- GIS Industry Influence
- Targeted Exposure
- Networking Opportunities

In 2023, GIS Day attracted an impressive crowd of more than 250 professionals, and this year's event will be even better! The Houston-Galveston Area Council is thrilled to collaborate on the launch of GIS Day 2024 – Houston's leading GIS event – and YOU have the opportunity to sponsor this event.

### You Can't Afford to Miss This:

- Targeted Exposure: Connect with other industry professionals attending this year's GIS Day and engage with more than 300 students and educators from Houston and the surrounding region.
- Premium Visibility: Secure a dedicated space for your company in the exhibit hall, participate in the educational awareness program, and associate your brand with a growing and influential event.
- Networking Opportunities: Interact directly with decision-makers, innovators, and stakeholders, creating valuable connections and potential collaborations.

### Act Now to Secure Your Sponsorship:

Join us as a sponsor for GIS Day 2024 and ensure you don't miss out on the benefits that come with it. The exposure, connections, and influence you gain will be invaluable to your business and professional network.



SECURE YOUR SPONSORSHIP

**Upcoming Events**  
Learn how you can be involved in your community!

SEP 9



## Parks and Natural Areas Roundtable (In-person)

Make plans to attend the next H-GAC Parks and Natural Areas Roundtable:

**1:30 to 4:30 p.m., Monday, September 9**

**The Houston-Galveston Area Council**

3555 Timmons Ln., Houston 77027 | Second-floor conference rooms ABC

Tentative agenda presentations include:

- Ashley R. Morgan-Olivera, director of Research and Education/Outreach for the Texas Invasive Species Institute at Sam Houston State University, discussing invasive species in the Houston-Galveston region, and their removal and reporting at [Texasinvasives.org](https://www.texasinvasives.org)
- Bryan Frazier, Brazoria County Parks director, discussing award-winning projects and programs
- Eric Heppen, Harris County Pct. 3 project manager, discussing templates and other efficient tools for parks planning

Attendees will:

- Discuss the Parks and Natural Areas Awards program
- Learn about a new online interactive trail mapping tool
- Hear about the 2024 WISE Awards winners
- Engage in a roundtable discussion of events and activities throughout the region

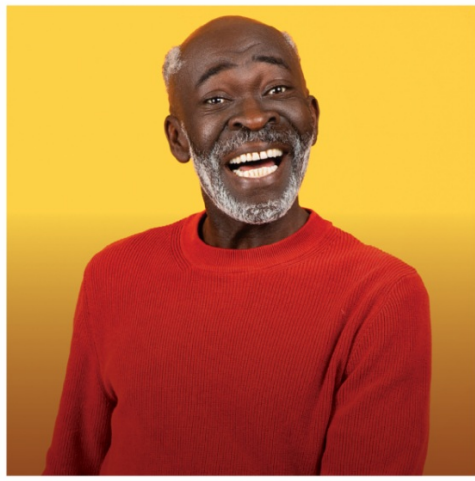
[Registration is requested, but not required, to attend](#)

For more information, contact: [Andrea Tantillo](#).

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SEP 10





**Join us in Brazoria County!**  
 Tuesday, September 10, 2024  
 10 AM–12 PM  
**LEARN ABOUT OUR SERVICES — TELL US WHAT YOU NEED**  
 Sweeny Senior Citizens Building | 205 N Oak St | Sweeny, TX 77480



**SEP 17**

TUESDAY, SEP  
**17**  
 AT 10 A.M.

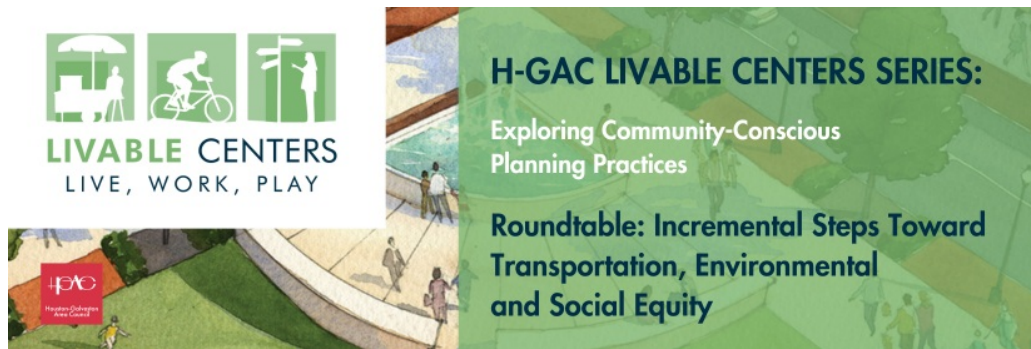
**H-GAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**



**Attend In Person:**  
  
 Houston-Galveston Area Council  
 3555 Timmons Ln.  
 Houston, TX 77027  
 Second-Floor Conference Rooms A, B & C

**Watch On-line:**  
 [H-GAC.COM/LIVE](https://www.h-gac.com/live) 

SEP 19



H-GAC Livable Centers Workshop: Incremental Steps Toward Transportation, Environmental, and Social Equity:

**8 to 11 a.m., Thursday, September 19**

**The Houston-Galveston Area Council**

3555 Timmons Ln., Houston 77027 | Second-floor conference rooms ABC

At this annual land use/transportation workshop, we'll bring together experts in transportation, environmental sustainability, and social equity to share insights and explore how we can create transportation systems that serve everyone's needs while protecting the environment and promoting equity.

Join us as we:

- Explore the intersectionality of transportation equity, environmental justice, and social equity
- Share incremental successes in working toward a future where transportation systems are inclusive and environmentally sustainable
- Hear from experts on strategies for integrating environmental and health considerations into transportation planning and policy
- Share best practices for encouraging sustainable transportation options

Speakers include:

- Rushka Tcholakova, director of Community Programs, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Houston - *LISC's Holistic Community Planning Through a Lens of Equity*
- Bill Ervin, senior planner, Houston-Galveston Area Council - *Improving Water Quality in Underserved Communities*
- Peter Eccles, director of Policy and Planning, The American Planning Association's American Institute of Certified Planners - *A LINK Houston, LINK Houston's 2024 Equity in Transit Report*

[Registration is requested but not required to attend](#)

For more information, email: [livablecenters@h-gac.com](mailto:livablecenters@h-gac.com).

*This event is eligible for 2.0 CM Credits from the American Planning Association.*



SEP 20



**SAVE THE DATE**

# CITY MANAGERS SUMMIT

**11 AM - 1 PM | Friday, September 20**

Houston-Galveston Area Council  
2nd Floor Conference Room  
3555 Timmons, Houston TX 77027

RSVP to [Benjamina.Covarrubias@h-gac.com](mailto:Benjamina.Covarrubias@h-gac.com)



Register at:  
[bit.ly/LeadingWithPurposeWorkshop](https://bit.ly/LeadingWithPurposeWorkshop)

**SEP 27**



**TRANSPORTATION POLICY  
COUNCIL MEETING**

**FRIDAY, SEP. 27 AT 9:30 AM**

**Attend In Person:**  
Houston-Galveston Area Council  
3555 Timmons Ln.  
Houston, TX 77027  
Second-Floor Conference Rooms A, B & C

**Watch On-line:**  
 [H-GAC.COM/LIVE](https://H-GAC.COM/LIVE)




Let's get social!

[@HouGalvAreaCOG](#)



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