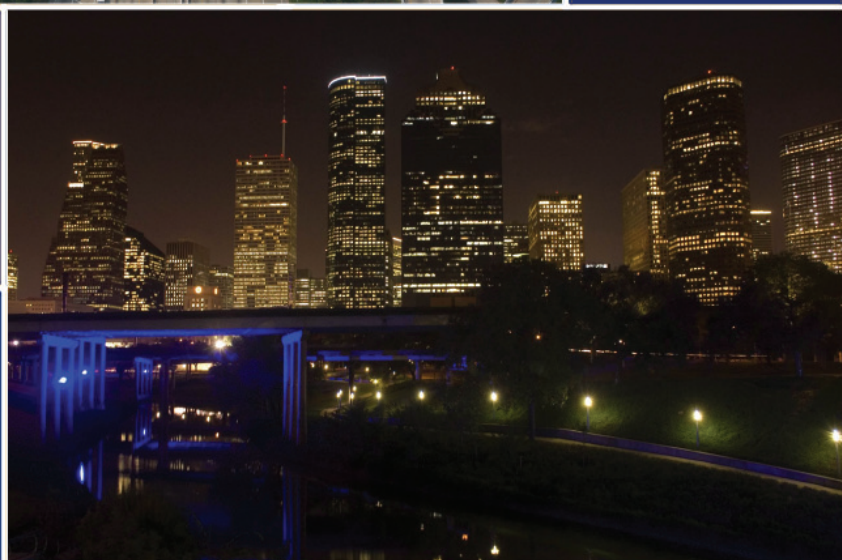


# 2010 ANNUAL MOBILITY REPORT



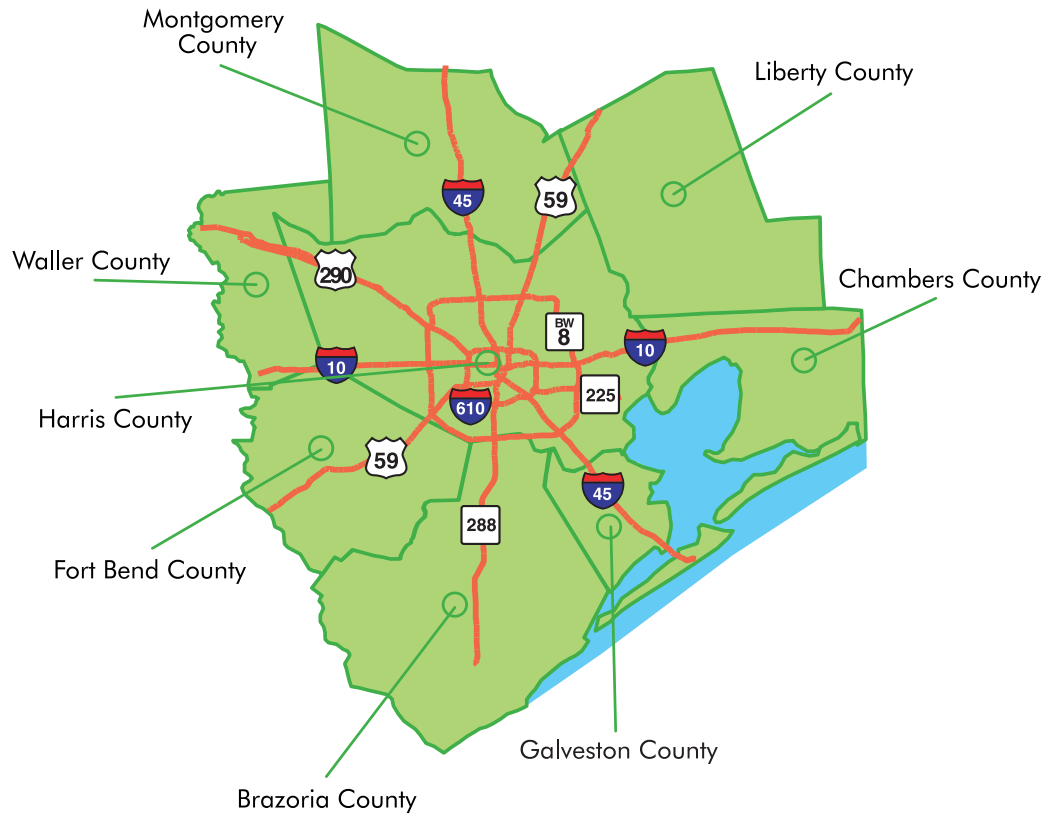
Houston-Galveston  
Area Council

IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION IN THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA



Since 1974, H-GAC has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in the eight-county Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area (TMA).

The TMA includes Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller counties. H-GAC's Transportation Policy Council approves the region's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and near-term implementation program known as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).



The greater Houston region, encompassing 8,000 square miles, is one of the nation's most culturally and economically vibrant areas. Investments in the transportation network have been instrumental in developing the region's complex economy and diverse society. Unquestionably, the region's system of highways, transit, rail, ports, and airports has provided residents with exceptional access to jobs, recreation, education, health care, and the many other aspects of life that make this area uniquely attractive.

However, the transportation system is an asset that needs care and investment. In the coming decades, a projected growth in population of 3.5 million new residents will test an infrastructure system that is already struggling to keep pace with demand. This report highlights what is being done today to meet current and future transportation demands.

This report highlights the roadway and transit projects initiated or completed last year, the impact of the federal stimulus program and the sustainable mobility initiatives that are underway. Perhaps more importantly, this report details the transportation funding shortfall facing the region, as well as possible funding solutions.

# A Letter from the Transportation Director

## Houston-Galveston Area Council

This report documents some of the significant improvements in our region's highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure completed or under development in 2010. In addition, this report describes some of the key transportation planning issues under investigation.

Despite declining resources for State and Federal highway investment, much progress was made improving critical transportation infrastructure in our region, including initiation of construction in three light rail corridors, new express and local bus services, pedestrian investments complementing transit services in three livable centers, construction of a vital missing section of the Sam Houston Tollway/BW 8, and other vital mobility projects.

In 2010, the Transportation Policy Council updated the region's Regional Transportation Plan to reflect declining State and Federal funding. The TPC completed a painful reassessment of the transportation priorities for our region by dramatically reducing short and long term highway investments, including reducing expected funding for state highway maintenance and rehabilitation. Except for projects completed since the original adoption of the 2035 RTP or withdrawn by the project sponsor, the TPC retained all transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects.

H-GAC also initiated two strategic planning studies: an examination of growing freight transportation needs and a "visioning" discussion for future transit investment. As the region's population and employment continues to grow, so will the demand for the products transported on our roadways, rail lines, port and air terminals and pipelines. The Regional Goods Movement Study has begun to identify and program effective improvements to accommodate the increasing demand for freight and goods movement in the Houston-Galveston region.

The Regional Transit Framework Study identifies future transit needs for the region. It includes a detailed level of analysis of current and future transit system plans and explores several scenarios for future transit investment. Furthermore, the study is intended to foster connectivity between activity centers, enhance community mobility through a variety of modes, and create a vision for regional transit services.

This report demonstrates that our State, local governments and transportation agencies are working together to accomplish key mobility goals despite the lack of resources during this difficult economic period. I am pleased to present to you our 2010 Annual Mobility Report.



Alan Clark is the Director of Transportation Planning for the Houston-Galveston Area Council. He is the Director for H-GAC's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is responsible for development of the region's multimodal transportation plans.

The MPO's Transportation Policy Council approves the programming of all federal highway and transit funds in Harris and the adjacent seven counties. Mr. Clark's responsibilities also include coordinating the Houston-Galveston area's response to mandates contained in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan C. Clark".

**Alan C. Clark**  
Transportation Director  
Houston-Galveston Area Council



## The RTP Update



When the original 2035 RTP was adopted in 2007, future revenues for transportation expenditures were forecast to be \$156.7 billion. Since that time, new forecasts have been developed for the State. The latest State forecast predicts much lower revenue from State and federal motor fuels taxes. As a result, the 2035 RTP had to be updated to reflect the revised revenue forecast through 2035 for the Houston region which is approximately half of the previously adopted forecast. Many projects on the state system were removed as a consequence of the revised revenue forecast. Updates have been made to project costs, limits, and scope. Some locally funded projects were removed because they have been completed since 2007. The result is a program of projects totaling approximately \$87 billion. With the exception of the revised revenue forecast and the resulting program of projects, the 2035 RTP Update remains unchanged from the 2035 RTP.

Not only will there be a larger network to maintain in the future, but also system preservation efforts are currently under funded. In the future, more revenues will be needed for system preservation to prevent further deterioration of roadway surfaces.

### The 2035 RTP Update Goals are:

- Improve mobility, reduce congestion
- Improve access to jobs, homes and services
- Increase transit options
- Coordinate transportation and land use plans
- Create a healthier environment



The 2035 RTP Update proposes a collection of strategies to moderate the rate of congestion growth associated with our growing population. These strategies use a combination of programs and projects to improve regional mobility, and by providing more travel options they foster a better quality of life for all residents. The four strategies of the 2035 RTP Update are:

- Increase roadway and transit capacity
- Reduce peak-period travel demand
- Improve the efficiency of existing facilities
- Coordinate land use and transportation investments

# Progress Since Adoption of the 2035 RTP

## Transit

### Light Rail Lines

- East End and Southeast - under construction
- University - preliminary engineering under way

### Fixed Route

- Bellaire & Bissonnett – Signature bus service initiated
- Baytown & Pasadena – three new bus routes
- Lake Jackson/Angleton/Clute/Freeport – four new routes
- Texas City – new park & ride service to Galveston Island
- Fort Bend County – new park & ride service to the Texas Medical Center
- Montgomery County – new Sterling Ridge park & ride service to Houston CBD
- ARRA: \$106 million obligated for transit systems improvements



## Roadways

### Major Expansion Projects Completed

- IH 10 W – Katy Freeway reconstruction
- Galveston Causeway
- SH 99 – Segment I-2 (Phase I)
- US 59 S – SH 6 to SH 99
- US 90A – BW 8 to SH 6
- ARRA: \$480 million obligated for roadway improvements



## Safety & Security

- Developed traffic management plan for emergency evacuation
- Launched a public awareness campaign for hurricane evacuation
- Conducted evacuation for Hurricane Ike with much better results than Hurricane Rita evacuation

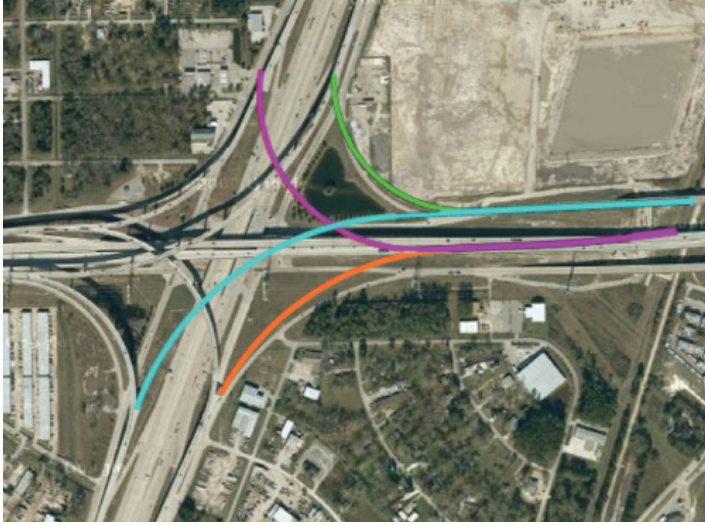
## Bicycle Pedestrian & Livable Centers

- City of Houston completed five new trails, adding 15 miles to its existing bikeway network
- Since installing bike racks on METRO buses, METRO has logged more than 150,000 bike boardings
- Completed Livable Centers studies for East End, Midtown, Upper Kirby, Fourth Ward, Northside, Tomball and Waller
- ARRA: \$15 million allocated to three Livable Centers projects



# Roadway Projects

## ARRA Projects



The State received \$2.25 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) allocation for Surface Transportation Program projects. The Houston region received \$489 million for maintenance and rehabilitation as well as mobility projects.

### **BW 8 at US 59 N-\$30,000,000**

The direct connectors from BW 8 to US 59 are a vital component to the Sam Houston toll road system that the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA) is completing in the northeast portion of the region. This will serve approximately 2.5 million residents in northern Harris and southern Montgomery counties. The toll road system and direct connectors will safely facilitate goods movement to and from the Port of Houston. It is estimated to Open June 2011.

### **IH 610 - East of Ella to IH 45N-\$43,000,000**

IH 610 is the urban circumferential roadway linking major employment centers of the Houston area, including the Port of Houston and the Galleria. The facility operates at capacity with 116,300 cars per day. An even greater demand of 142,000 cars is expected by 2035. The section between Ella and I-45N is one of the last remaining sections of IH 610 needing rehabilitation. The current roadway is in desperate need of new pavement. The estimated reconstruction of the 3.5 mile segment of IH 610 will be completed March 2011.

### **IH 10 - White Oak Bayou Bridge to US 59 - \$6,000,000**

This section of IH 10 is located east of IH 45 to US 59. This project will reconstruct and rehabilitate the original pavement. It is expected to be complete by March 2011. The total cost is \$27 million and is the last remaining segment to be rehabilitated in the IH 10 urban corridor.

### **FM 2004 - SH 288 to BS 288 - \$21,608,000**

Expansion of FM 2004 from Highway 288 to Highway 288-B in Lake Jackson and Richwood which began Oct. 15, 2009, is complete and scheduled to open February 2011. The expansion will increase the number of lanes to four and will include an overpass over Old Angleton Road and the railroad.

### **IH 45 N - Loop 336 to Calvary - \$106,000,000**

This work continues the reconstruction and widening of IH 45 from LP 336 in Conroe to Calvary, a distance of 8.5 miles. The project continues the reconstruction and expansion work already underway in Montgomery County. Upon completion, it will significantly mitigate travel delay in both directions for county residents and visitors.



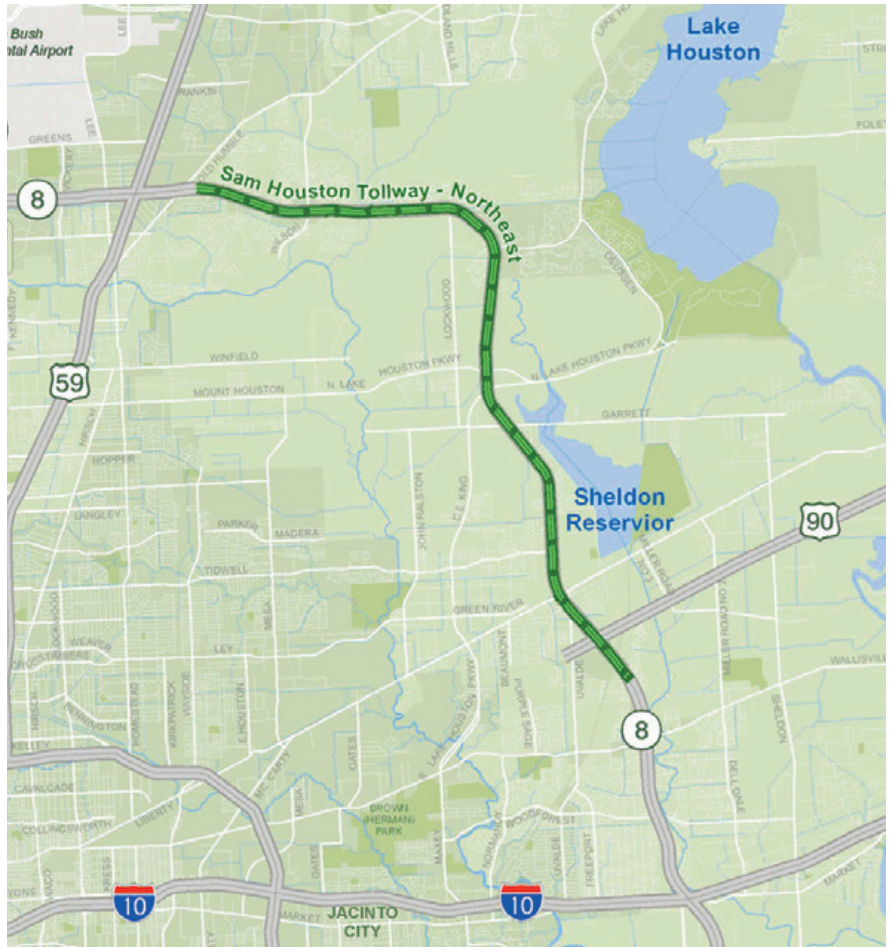
## Other Highway Projects

### **BW 8 - Sam Houston Tollway - East Section: \$550 million**

The final segment of the HCTRA's Sam Houston Tollway is scheduled to open in February 2011. The 13-mile Sam Houston Tollway Northeast project stretches from Old Humble Road near George Bush Intercontinental Airport to just south of US 90A. The toll road will consist of three lanes in each direction and will be flanked on each side by existing free frontage roads.

The roadway is expected to serve a growing population of residential and business development in the region. The project is also expected to reduce congestion on the region's freeway system, especially IH 10, Loop 610, and US 59. Designers expect the new segment will be used by motorists to bypass the central part of Houston.

The completion of the Sam Houston Tollway finishes a process that began more than 50 years ago. The idea of an outer loop highway system that would encircle the city at an average distance of about 12 miles from downtown Houston and connect to the radial freeways dates back to 1953.



### **Other Projects:**

#### **SH 105 Bypass (Prop 14)**

Two lane extension in Liberty County let February 2010 for \$26.8M by TXDOT Beaumont District. 36 percent complete. It is scheduled to open February 2012.

#### **US 59N**

TxDOT project completed the widening in Montgomery County. US 59 North W North was widened to six main lanes, while US 59 North was widened to eight main lanes. The project was completed in July 2010 for \$111.6M.

**Various Grade Separations** (59@360, 146@197, 2100@rr, and 1960@rr) Let May 2010 for \$13.6M; Let July 2010 for \$7.8M; Let July 2010 for \$8.5M; Completed January 2010 for \$18.5M.

#### **W. Brays bayou bike/ped**

Four bike/ped bridges over Brays Bayou let July 2010 for \$7.5M.

# Transit

## METRO Solutions Phase 2

After nearly halting light-rail projects last year, the Metropolitan Transit Authority is reviving its rail building program as it becomes more confident the federal government will deliver a \$900 million grant. In December 2010, the Federal Transit Administration sent the first \$50 million of the grant money for use on the North and Southeast lines. The grant will be incorporated into the funding for the METRO Rail North and Southeast Corridor Light Rail projects. Both of the Corridor Light Rail projects will employ dual track electric light rail lines.



\$106 million in ARRA funding was allocated to the Houston region in accordance with the Urbanized Area Formula Program and the Nonurbanized (rural) Area Formula Program. An additional \$2.3 million was allocated to the Fixed Guideway Infrastructure Investment Program.

The chart below lists all federally obligated totals by areas in the region.

The Metro board recently approved a mid-year change to its \$143 million rail construction budget for fiscal year 2011 that gives METRO staff authorization to more than double spending to \$345 million. If it can get the FTA to sign off on its new plan for buying the rail cars, Metro intends to invite bids later this month to



supply more than 100 rail cars. Metro plans to open its second and third rail lines in October 2014.

## METRO 75 Energy Corridor Connector

METRO's new 75 Energy Corridor Connector was launched February 25, 2010. Providing convenient, stress-free transportation in and around the Corridor, the



Energy Corridor Connector runs Monday through Friday along Eldridge Parkway between Memorial

Drive and Richmond. Southbound service is available from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with northbound service running 6:10 a.m. to 6:10 pm.

The circulator route consists of 62 stops including employers such as BP America, CITGO Petroleum and WorleyParsons to restaurants including Beck's Prime, Cattleguard, and Lasagna House.

Additionally, the METRO 75 Energy Corridor Connector stops at the Kendall Library, CVS Pharmacy, Kroger and L.A. Fitness. And, if you commute, the new connector "connects" to the Addicks Park & Ride, Dairy Ashford Crosstown, Briar Forest, Westheimer-West Oaks and Memorial.

Visit <http://www.energycorridor.org>.

TRANSIT FUNDING (Millions of \$)	
	Grant Award
<b>Transit Total</b>	<b>106.476</b>
<b>Houston Urbanized Area<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>93.210</b>
Formula Funds	90.902
Fixed Guideway	2.309
<b>Other Urbanized Areas</b>	<b>6.251</b>
Galveston	1.575
Lake Jackson-Angleton	1.387
Texas City	1.609
The Woodlands	1.680
<b>Nonurbanized (Rural)</b>	<b>7.015</b>
The District (Brazos Transit District)	4.563
Fort Bend County	0.622
Gulf Coast Center	0.898
Colorado Valley Transit	0.932

1. Houston Urbanized Area Providers: METRO, Harris Co. Transit and Fort Bend Co. Transit



## Commute and Transit Pilot Projects

### Island Connect Park & Ride (aka Mall of the Mainland)

The Island Connect Park & Ride Service, sponsored by the Gulf Coast Center/ Connect Transit, links the Mainland and Galveston and will serve the residents of Galveston County. This commuter service, which began operations on July 6, 2010 is administered by Connect Transit and operated by the City of Galveston.



The Island Connect Park & Ride picks passengers up at the Mall of the Mainland and takes them approximately 19.44 miles to stops at the University of Texas Medical Branch, downtown Galveston, and 53rd/Broadway. Passengers are allowed free transfers to Galveston's Island Transit fixed-route system and Connect Transit's Texas City fixed route system. The project is funded by a combination of Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) dollars and local match for the first three years. The total CMAQ contribution to this project is \$725,097.

For information on schedules and other routes visit [www.islandtransit.net](http://www.islandtransit.net)

### Fort Bend Express Park & Ride (aka Fort Bend County)



This service, sponsored by Fort Bend County, is a park & ride which links Fort Bend County residents to the Texas Medical Center by way of U.S. 59. The buses travel 33 miles in each direction from the City of Rosenberg to the Medical Center, there are multiple points of access for Fort Bend County residents as the project will utilize multiple parking facilities.



The Fort Bend Express Park & Ride service is operated by AFC Corporate Transportation under their pre-existing contract with Fort Bend County. CMAQ funds will only be used to pay the costs of contracted bus service. The project is funded by a combination of CMAQ and other funding for the first three years, with the total amount of CMAQ funding of \$423,048. Service began on June 28, 2010 and serves passengers during the morning and through the afternoon.

# Major Planning Initiatives

## Regional Aviation System Plan



The Regional Aviation System Plan (RASP) is the framework for airport development in the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. The plan examines the region's airports, evaluates how well they are performing today, and determines what improvements are needed in the future. The RASP seeks to ensure that the region's airports are preserved, that they have the facilities and capacity to operate safely and efficiently, and that they provide maximum economic benefits to their local communities and the region.

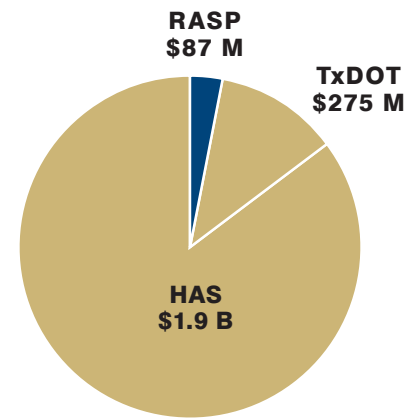
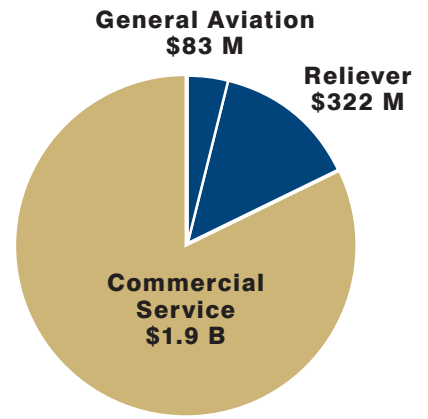
The RASP forecasts aviation activity for the 26 system airports in the Houston-Galveston region for 2015, 2020 and 2030. The forecasts include general aviation operations, based aircraft numbers and aircraft fleet mix. The 26 system airports are expected to grow from 1.94 million operations and 2,938 based aircraft in 2008 to more than 2.4 million operations and 3,839 based aircraft in 2030.

The recommended roles for the system airports are shown in the table on the left. The regional aviation system has two commercial service airports (CMS) and 10 reliever airports (RL). The 14 remaining general aviation airports are classified as business-corporate airports (BC), community service airports (CS) and basic service airports (BS).

AIRPORT	ROLE
<b>COMMERCIAL SERVICE AIRPORTS</b>	
George Bush Intercontinental	CMS
William P. Hobby	CMS
<b>RELIEVER AIRPORTS</b>	
Texas Gulf Coast Regional	RL
David Wayne Hooks Memorial	RL
Ellington Airport	RL
Houston Southwest	RL
La Porte Municipal	RL
Lone Star Executive	RL
Pearland Regional	RL
Scholes International	RL
Sugar Land Regional	RL
West Houston	RL
<b>GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORTS</b>	
Bay City Municipal	BC
Baytown	CS
Chambers County	CS
Cleveland Municipal	CS
Eagle Lake	CS
Houston Executive	BC
Huntsville Municipal	BC
Liberty Municipal	CS
Palacios Municipal	CS
Robert R. Wells, Jr.	CS
Weiser Airpark	BS
Wharton Regional	BC
North Houston Business	CS
Winnie-Stowell	BS

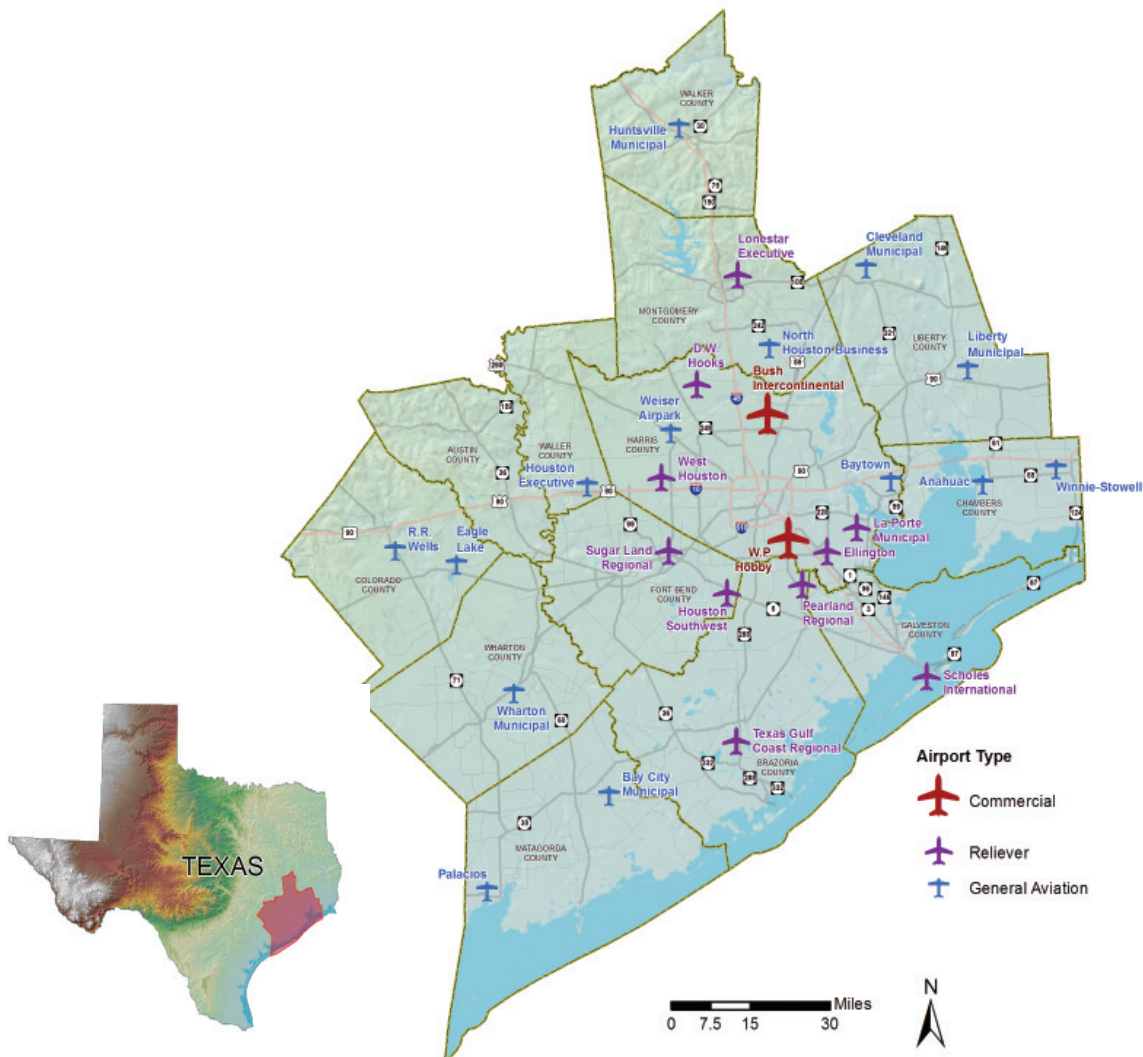


Based on current issues at the system airports and predicted airside and landside capacity shortfalls over the next 20 years, an optimal plan is developed. The optimal plan consists of existing airport projects and proposed projects to increase capacity, eliminate inefficiencies and expand capabilities. The RASP includes airport improvements planned by the Houston Airport System (HAS), TxDOT and projects recommended by this study. The airport projects are classified as short-term (2010-2015), mid-term (2016-2020) and long-term (2021-2030). The total cost of the RASP is \$2.28 billion over the next 20 years and includes \$1.9 billion for HAS projects, \$275 million for TASP projects and \$87 million for projects recommended by this study. Improvements identified in the RASP are classified by program objective.



**TOTAL = \$2.28 BILLION**

OBJECTIVE (\$000)	COMMERCIAL SERVICE	RELIEVER	GENERAL AVIATION	TOTAL
<b>ALL AIRPORTS</b>				
Safety	\$26,350	\$21,009	\$3,416	\$50,775
Preservation	\$96,300	\$90,639	\$25,077	\$212,016
Standards	\$163,101	\$40,523	\$3,317	\$206,941
Upgrade	\$539,696	\$46,073	\$15,349	\$601,118
Capacity	\$1,015,805	\$88,807	\$32,836	\$1,137,448
Misc	\$29,439	\$35,039	\$2,837	\$67,315
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,870,691</b>	<b>\$322,090</b>	<b>\$82,832</b>	<b>\$2,275,613</b>





## The Regional Transit Framework Study

H-GAC conducted the Regional Transit Framework Study (RTFS) over the past year to identify long-range regional transit needs and future transit opportunities for the region. It is envisioned the RTFS study will define a framework or blue-

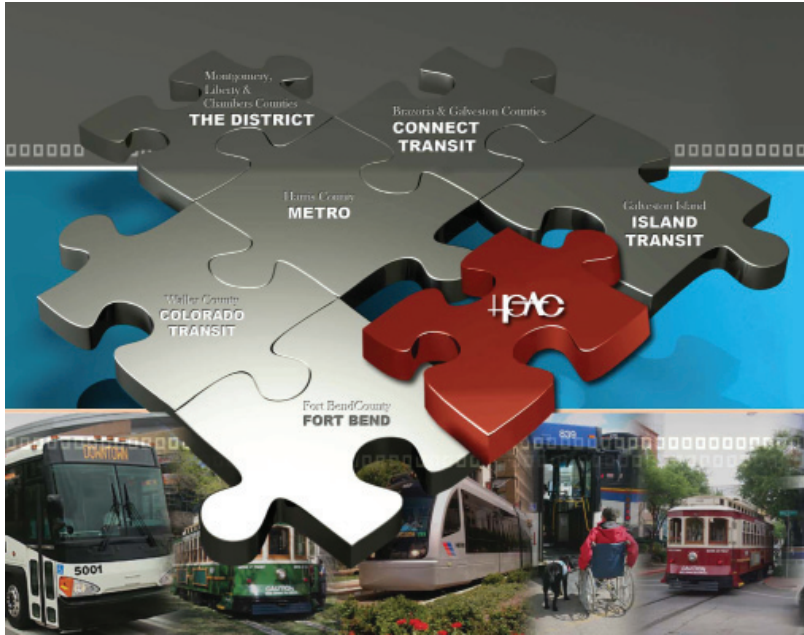
print for developing a regional transit system appropriate for the community. The results of the study have developed four regional transit scenarios providing the region with alternate visions for addressing the region's transit needs by 2040.

The scenarios were developed through a three-phase planning process that relied on multiple outreach methods to obtain community input. The first phase of the study included a review of current and future regional travel patterns, travel markets, and projected population and employment growth. In addition, transit services in six areas similar to the Houston region were analyzed to gain insight on successes and lessons learned by other regional approaches to public transportation. Utilizing this information, the second and third phases of the planning process focused on the development of the four alternative regional

transit scenarios. The four transit scenarios were developed for the RTFS with consideration to the required level of investment and alternative objectives.

- Scenario 1: Incremental Expansion - Assumes current annual transit investments in the region are continued through 2040 with implementation of future regional transit investments based on the region's highest needs and priorities.
- Scenario 2: Maximize Transit Access - Increase existing transit funding by approximately 25 percent. Expand direct access to public transit services to more areas of the region and focus on the use of premium bus services such as commuter express and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).
- Scenario 3: Maximize Transit Share - Increase existing transit funding by approximately 25 percent. Expand transit availability throughout the region, but prioritize future major transit investments such as high capacity transit services in high demand corridors and activity centers to maximize use of transit.
- Scenario 4: Incremental Expansion - As a financially unconstrained alternative, this scenario identifies a regional transit program designed to meet many of the regional transit deficiencies and needs identified in this study.

For more information and documents go to: [www.h-gac.com/taq/transit\\_planning/framework\\_study/default.aspx](http://www.h-gac.com/taq/transit_planning/framework_study/default.aspx).



## Regional Goods Movement Study

The H-GAC Regional Goods Movement Study is a multi-year effort to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of our freight transportation system. This eight-county, comprehensive study involves collecting freight specific data, providing information to the public and freight stakeholders about our freight transportation system, and identifying issues and impacts in that system. The Regional Goods Movement Study final deliverables include a Regional Goods Movement Plan that details programs and projects for the improvement of our freight transportation system, as well as crucial freight community data.



During 2010, the study made progress in several areas, such as increasing public awareness of freight related topics and issues through public outreach as well as freight data collection and technical documentation. The first round of public meetings was held in four locations in our region – Lake Jackson, Conroe, Rosenberg and Baytown. In addition, the first meeting of the Regional Goods Movement Steering committee also convened to review efforts and provide overall guidance.

All meeting materials provided to the public and to the steering committee can be found on the Regional Goods Movement website, located at the H-GAC Transportation site, [www.h-gac.com/taq/](http://www.h-gac.com/taq/).



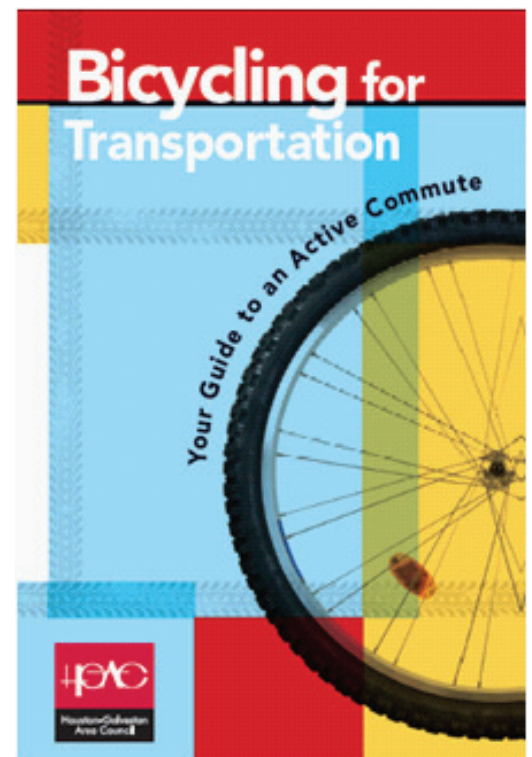
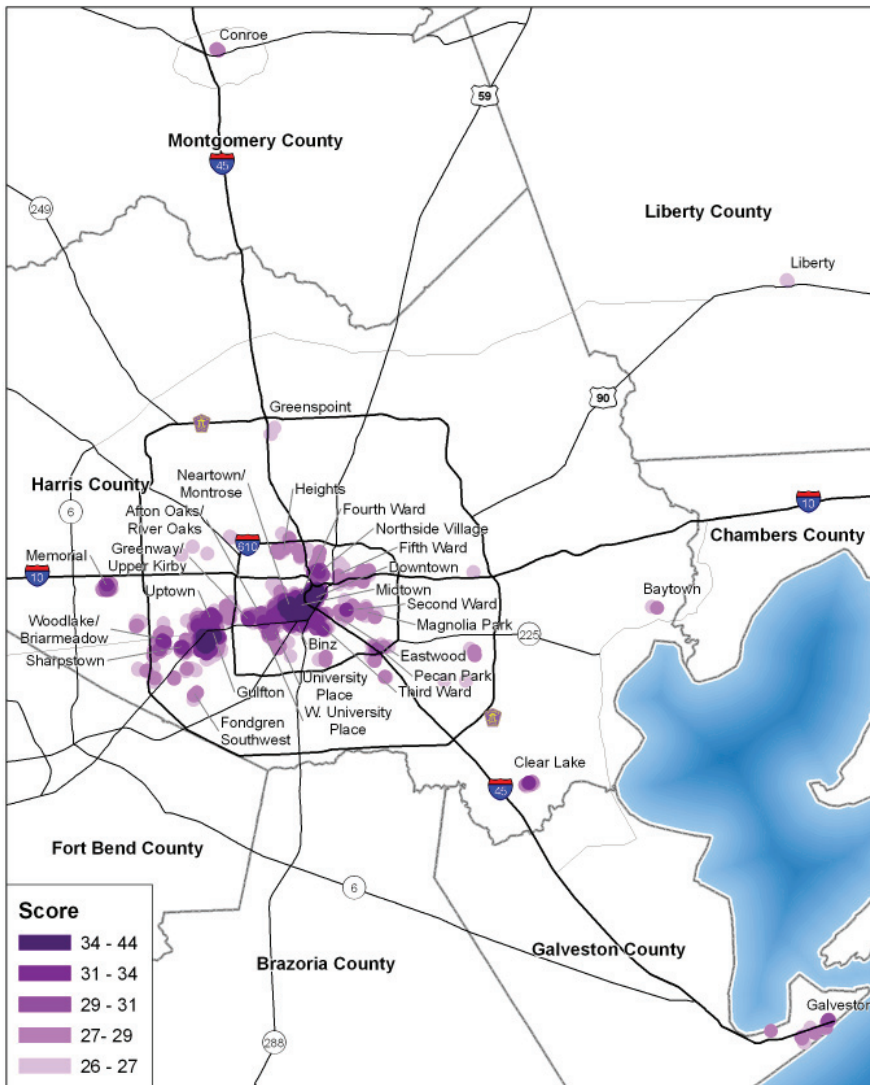
## Bicycle-Pedestrian Planning

The H-GAC Pedestrian-Bicyclist Program coordinates programs and projects that improve mobility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the eight-county Houston-Galveston region. In 2010, H-GAC updated its regional Pedestrian-Bicyclist Special Districts Study. This study is a key element of the Pedestrian-Bicyclist Program as it identifies the top districts within the region where there are significant opportunities to replace vehicle trips with pedestrian

or bicycle trips based on factors such as destinations, land use mix, density, and demographics. The results of the study have been used to help guide regional investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

H-GAC also expanded its education and outreach efforts by hosting two workshops focused on trail and bikeway planning, as well as a two-day pedestrian safety design workshop sponsored by FHWA. In April, H-GAC published a brochure, "Bicycling for Transportation: Your Guide to an Active Commute," to provide information for safe and convenient bike commuting and to encourage people to try biking for routine trips.

Top 1,000 Districts by Score





## TxDOT's Transportation Enhancement Program

Nine projects from the Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area (TMA) were selected for funding in TxDOT's 2010 call for Transportation Enhancements Projects. Seven of the funded projects include a bicycle and pedestrian component. The following pedestrian and bicycle projects were selected for funding in 2010:

- City of Sugar Land: U.S. 59 Ped/Bike Improvements
- City of Houston: International Management District Bikeways
- City of Houston: Houston SE Downtown Sidewalks
- City of Houston: Cullen Park Path
- City of Houston: Brays Path
- City of Houston/Hermann Park Conservancy: Fannin/Main Esplanades
- City of League City: FM 518 Bypass Bikeway

### City of Houston Bikeways

The City of Houston has started construction on several major bikeway projects that will significantly improve bicycle connectivity when completed. Projects under construction include the West White Oak Bayou Extension, Herman Brown Park Trail, Houston Heritage East and West, as well as four bridges across Brays Bayou.



Photo: Jim Mackey

Construction on the West White Oak Bayou Trail Extension

## Livable Centers

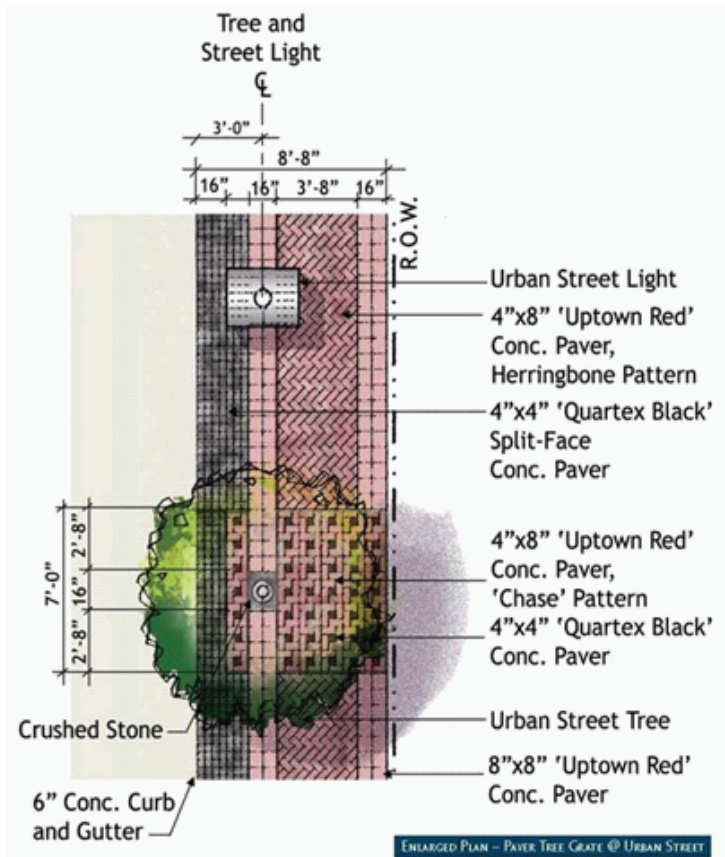
The goal of H-GAC's Livable Centers Program is to help create walkable, mixed-use places that provide multi-modal transportation options, improve environmental quality and promote economic development.

Livable Centers are gaining momentum throughout the Houston-Galveston region, with study and implementation projects under way throughout the eight-county area. A recent call for new studies solicited nine new applications from suburban, rural and urban areas. The map below shows Livable Center studies and implementation projects currently funded in the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The purpose of the Livable Centers Planning Studies is to facilitate the implementation of Livable Centers projects. Project outcomes may include proposed future land uses, transportation facilities, street design and pedestrian improvements, and parking plans. Studies also include a fiscal feasibility analysis and a proposed implementation plan. Implementation projects aim to foster travel choices by creating safe environments for walking, bicycling and transit.

### Livable Centers Implementation Projects:

- Uptown Houston District: Construct pedestrian streetscape improvements (sidewalks, shelters, landscaping and lighting) along transit corridors, including the future Post Oak light rail line. (\$6.3 million)
  - Greater Southeast Management District: Construct pedestrian streetscape improvements along transit corridors to improve pedestrian access to transit services (\$423,000).
  - Island Transit (Galveston): Seawall Boulevard transit and pedestrian access and beautification (\$1.9 million).
  - Woodlands Town Center: Construction of transit waterway and pedestrian amenities (\$6.5 million).





## Livable Centers Studies:

### City of Houston Midtown: (Completed April 2010)

This study had two primary aims – to identify specific projects and strategies to help make transit-oriented development a reality around the HCC/Ensemble light rail station and to help integrate the City of Houston’s property at 3300 Main Street as a transit-oriented development and a public gathering place with streetscape and pedestrian-friendly elements. The Livable Centers study creates a master plan for the area that analyzes the safety and quality of the pedestrian environment, identifies existing as well as potential future pedestrian generators, and provides design solutions for an enhanced, attractive and safe pedestrian environment.



### Upper Kirby and Northside: (Completed August 2010)

There are two separate study areas for this project, Upper Kirby and Northside. Each study area is located along a future METRO light rail corridor within the City of Houston. The Northside study area encompasses roughly a quarter-mile radius surrounding the identified future light rail stations at Burnett Plaza, Quitman, Boundary and Moody Park. The Upper Kirby study area encompasses the future Kirby Station of the University light rail along Richmond Avenue. The goal of the study is to create and support a connected, walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment

that will encourage more transit usage and enhance neighborhood connectivity of the future light rail stations within the study areas. A major focus of the study is an examination of strategies to allow for sharing of the right-of-way by transit vehicles, cars, bikes and pedestrians in such a way that supports safety for all modes of travel and a high quality pedestrian environment.

### Fourth Ward: (Completed Oct. 31 2010)

The Fourth Ward study has two goals: to design a transit-oriented development (TOD) for the city-owned property at Gillette and West Dallas and to create a general development plan for Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 14 (TIRZ), also known as the Fourth Ward or Freedmen’s Town. The study examines historic preservation, affordable housing, economic development, circulation, parking, greening and signage concepts. The study seeks to improve accessibility and mobility for all transportation modes within the community preserving and strengthening its historic identity.



### Energy Corridor: (Completed Nov. 2010)

The Energy Corridor study examines creation of a walkable, mixed-use, transit supportive environment in the area surrounding the Addicks park and ride lot. The study creates a vision of how the area can improve accessibility for all modes across IH-10, improve linkages for pedestrians and bicyclists to green space, and create a center and identity for this growing part of the region.



## Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program

In 2010 the Houston Gulf Coast Planning Region was awarded a \$3.75 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. This grant award will allow the Houston Gulf Coast Planning Region to create a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Transportation, awarded the grant to support more livable and sustainable communities for the 13 counties in the Houston Gulf Coast Planning Region.



To apply for the grant, H-GAC partnered with the City of Houston, Harris County, the United Way of Greater Houston and more than 20 other consortium partners to work together with a common goal of building a sustainable future for generations to come. The goal of this newly created program is to “support cooperative regional planning efforts that integrate housing, transportation, environmental impact and economic development.” The plan will address the interaction of land use, transportation, housing, economic development, infrastructure, and environment – and the social equity issues related to each. The plan will also include implementation strategies for the region’s urban, suburban, rural, and coastal communities.

### Principles of Sustainability

HUD, DOT, and EPA have outlined six guiding principles to their partnership.

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods

### H-GAC’s Goal in Developing a Regional Sustainable Development Plan

- Enrich efforts that support workforce improvements, facilitate job growth
- Attract new residents, and conserve the natural environment enhance the built environment
- Enable the pursuit of federal funding for implementation of transportation, housing, hazard mitigation, and community and economic development projects that further sustainability in the region

For more information, to view webinar, or to apply for a grant, please visit the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program website:

<http://www.h-gac.com/community/sustainability/default.aspx>

## Safety

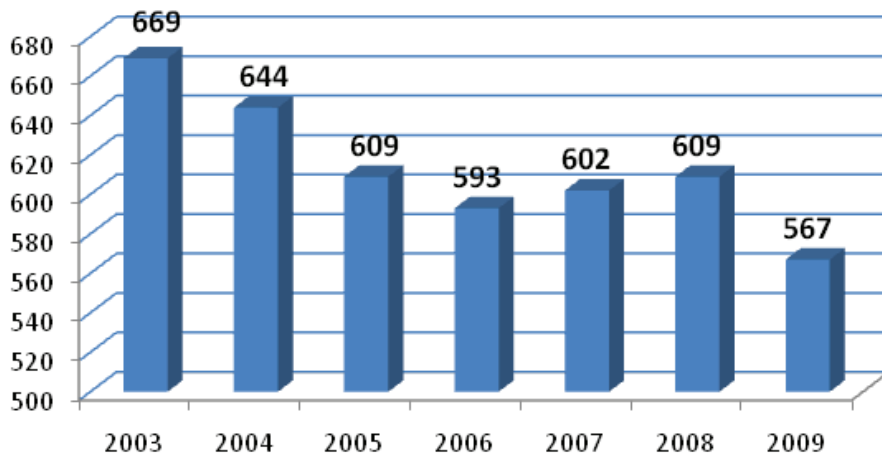


Despite a slight increase in 2009, serious motor vehicle crashes (defined as involving an injury, fatality, or at least \$1,000 in damage) have continued to trend downward since 2003. Regionally, serious crashes declined by 17 percent from 119,464 in 2003 to 99,007 in 2009. Fatalities declined to their lowest levels since 1996 to 567 deaths in 2009. Injuries dropped by nearly 37 percent from 84,841 injuries in 2003 to 53,499 in 2009.

Crashes in most areas of interest have been on the decline during this period. Most notably, crashes involving young drivers (ages 15-20) have dropped nearly 18 percent since 2003, and crashes involving large trucks declined almost 25 percent for the same period. However, crashes involving our most vulnerable road users, specifically bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorcyclists, have been on the rise. Despite consisting of only three percent of all serious traffic crashes, these three

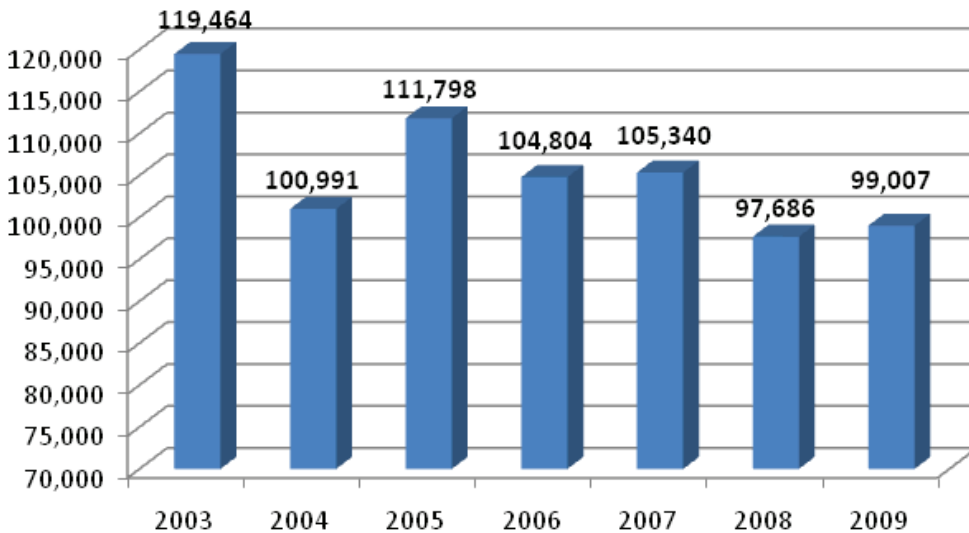
areas represent more than 32 percent of fatalities in the region.

### Total Regional Fatalities



Traffic safety in the region continues to show progress, which may be partially due to the increased efforts to promote safer driving locally. The State's Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP) calls for annual fatalities and serious injuries to drop to 1.40 per 100 million Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and 41.2 per 100 million VMT by 2010. The region has exceeded those goals with a fatality rate of 1.01 fatalities per 100 million VMT and a serious injury rate of 28.3 injuries per 100 million VMT.

### Total Regional Crashes



For more information about H-GAC's Traffic Safety Program, please visit <http://www.h-gac.com/trafficsafety>.



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