

11B. HOUSTON AREA RAIL TRANSFORMATION (HART) UPDATE

BACKGROUND

MPO Staff have been participating in initial discussions to form a group of stakeholders to coordinate and prioritize regional freight infrastructure to seek grant funding opportunities. The group consists of interested parties from the region including the Gulf Coast Rail District, TxDOT, the City of Houston, Harris County, Port of Houston, METRO, interested parties from the private sector, and the Class I railroad companies. This group is not finite and seeks additional freight-focused participation in recognition of the region's growing urgency in capacity needs, including rail.

The Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) Board of Directors meeting on December 6, 2022, included discussion concerning creation of a Houston Area Rail Transformation (HART) committee. GCRD formally approved the development of HART as one of the agency's official committees on January 17, 2023.

CURRENT SITUATION

To assist with HART co-facilitation, H-GAC will continue to support efforts including coordination with regional partners. Currently, HART has compiled a draft list of potential rail crossing projects from current stakeholders and requests additional project locations from this body.

ACTION REQUESTED

For information and discussion.