

11E. 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
- H-GAC staff are receiving the final deliverables for the Liberty County Mobility Study and are preparing to close out the project. 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. 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 5 subregional plans: FM 518 Corridor Study, Pearland Mobility Study, Washington Ave. Corridor Study, Chambers County and Old 6th Ward, planning study. Two additional studies are anticipated to be procured in the first quarter of 2023 and include Cemetary 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 will be held in February 2023. Date and time to be announced.
- The last Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan was held on December 1, 2022 followed by a Stakeholder meeting January 12, 2023. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
The Houston Area Rail Transformation (HART) working group continues to meet on a bi-weekly basis to discuss rail crossing issues. The next meeting is planned for January 20, 2023.

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Tow and Go™ Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, Harris County Sheriff Officer (HCSO), Houston Police Department (HPD), AECOM and the Tow and Go Contractors on January 3, 2023.
- Staff met with HPD Chief Finner and Staff to discuss HPD staffing the control room floor at Houston TranStar Monday through Friday during the peak traffic hours.
- Staff met with Kimley-Horn to discuss the Intersection Safety Contract Task 4 work that was amended to the contract in December 2022.
- Staff attended Federal Railroad Administration Safety and Trespassing Planning meeting on January 12, 2023
- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management (TIM) meeting at Houston TranStar on January 12, 2023.

- Staff attended weekly Statewide TIM Calls during December and January.
- Tow and Go performed 2,751 “No Cost Tows” in December 2022. Average Clearance Times was 14 minutes and 31 seconds.
- In 2022, the Tow and Go Program performed over 35,000 “No Cost” Tows with an average clearance time of 17 minutes and 11 seconds.
- In November 2022, the 8-county region experienced 70 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was an 8% increase when compared to November 2021 which recorded 65 fatalities.
- The number of traffic crashes recorded in CRIS in the 8 County Area was 14,889 for November 2022, a 4% decreased when compared to November 2021 which recorded 15,589 crashes.
- The number of fatalities from January 1 to November 31, 2022 for the 8-county region was 769. In 2021, during this same period the number of fatalities was 768. This is almost the same in 2022 when compared to for the same period in 2021.

4. Environmental Planning

- Staff is developing a process and worksheet to assess and document the environmental justice issues associated with proposed transportation projects and planning decisions.
- 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 continues to track the PROTECT Resiliency Grant opportunity.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- Phase 2 of the RTP public outreach was completed in 2022. .and included virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach included sharing and requesting feedback specific to the Visioning outreach results along with the investment strategies to address safety, reliability, and other identified needs. More information on the upcoming meetings can be found at: <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate>
- The third and final round of public outreach will occur March to April 2023. These meetings are to present and receive comments on the draft 2045 RTP Update. Updates regarding the public

outreach process are anticipated in February 2023. 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.

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 the [H-GAC website](#).

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Adult Bicycle Safety Program - (1) Staff scheduled a series of in-person adult bicycle handling classes (e.g. Train Your Bike) in all the counties surrounding Harris County. Train Your Bike classes have been completed in Fort Bend, Galveston and Harris counties. (2) Online introductory courses for bike riding (e.g. CyclingSavvy) are also available free of charge to anyone in the eight county MPO area. (3) Bicycle Friendly Driver classes are in process of being scheduled. More information can be found here - <https://www.h-gac.com/pedestrian-bicyclist-planning/bike-safety>
- Staff continues participation in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee and Houston Traffic Safety Committee.
- Staff coordinated with Procurement and Harris County attorney's office for an ILA amendment. The updated ILA was approved and sent to Harris County, Staff have submitted the request of procuring to the January Board of Directors meeting for approval.
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- Staff have met with Transportation directors to review the scope of work for Connecting Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept and Memorial Drive Bike and Pedestrian Study. Staff are submitting procurement plans for those two projects.
- Staff has sent the scope of work of City of Friendswood Master Trail Plan to Communications reviewing the public engagement portion and in process of scheduling meeting with Transportation directors to review the scope of work.
- Staff created draft for an Active Transportation Plan webpage and sent to Active Transportation team for internal review. Staff will incorporate the input and get a final draft to work with the Web team. Staff created work plan for Safe Routes to School and sent for manager and active transportation to review. Staff continues to work with the Pedestrian/Bicyclists Subcommittee and associated workgroups to advance solutions beneficial to the region. Establishing priorities for calendar year 2023 are in process. The GIS Network Update Workgroup continues to reach out to smaller municipalities to ensure their needs are being addressed with the development of a standardized GIS format and quality/functional criteria. The Active Transportation Modeling Workgroup continues to coordinate with Data Analytics and Research Department.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee met on Thursday, January 12, 2023. A Special Call meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2023 to consider approval of regional transit safety targets.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Phase 2 of the RTP public outreach was completed in 2022. .and included virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach included sharing and requesting feedback specific to the Visioning outreach results along with the investment strategies to address safety, reliability, and other identified needs. More information on the upcoming meetings can be found at: <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate>
- The third and final round of public outreach will occur March to April 2023. These meetings are to present and receive comments on the draft 2045 RTP Update. Updates regarding the public outreach process are anticipated in February 2023. Please see <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate> for more information.
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
 - Pearland Transit Study
 - Bike Safety Training Courses
 - Freight and Technology Summit
 - Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan
 - 2023 Commute Solutions Digital Marketing Plan
 - Regional Goods Movement Plan Update
 - Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff consulted the development and launch of the ConnectSmart application and will continue to work with the ConnectSmart development team to continue with the improvements
- Staff is coordinating with METRO on a co-promotional campaign that will introduce new technology and promote alternative modes to driving a alone in a series of events throughout 2023.
- Staff is working with the Communications and Outreach team to develop a plan to increase awareness and drive traffic to the website, social media accounts, and the ConnectSmart application.
- Staff coordinated the Regional TDM Coordination Meeting on December 16, 2022 to promote more purposeful collaboration amongst transit and bike/ped partners.
- Staff received board approval to award contractor to evaluate and redesign the TDM program beginning early 2023. Staff received board approval to award a contractor to plan and facilitate two bike encouragement campaigns beginning early 2023

CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- 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.
- Staff continues to meet with electric charger manufacturers to verify Buy America compliance and program interest.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff is working with partners Environmental Defense Fund, Port of Houston, and Evolve Houston to develop a Commercial Zero Emission Vehicle Event that will include presentations on topics related to zero emission vehicles of all types as well as a ride & drive event that will feature a variety of light and heavy duty electric and hydrogen powered vehicles. The event will be held at NRG Center on November 30th from 8:30am to 5:00 pm. This event is free. You can reserve your spot [here](#).

- Staff attended the American Planning Association Texas Chapter's Annual Planning Conference on October 19-21. Staff participated in a panel on equity considerations in transportation electrification.
- Staff is working to update our region's annual PM_{2.5} Path Forward report. Staff has been working closely with regional stakeholders over the past several months to review and update the annual PM_{2.5} report. It is anticipated that the draft report will be brought to RAQPAC for discussion at the December meeting and for approval at the committee's January meeting. The 2021 version of this report can be found [here](#).
- 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. During the most recent month, the Coalition hosted a hybrid webinar focused on the EPA Clean School Bus Program as well as providing assistance in planning an anticipated autumn event focusing on the transition to zero-emission vehicles.
- Staff is continuing 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 has been working with IKEA to replace two existing diesel yard tractors at their Baytown facility with all-electric models. IKEA has installed EV charging equipment at the host facility to facilitate the vehicle purchases and it is anticipated that the vehicles will be delivered in 2023. For the 2019 DERA project, staff is continuing to prepare a Request for Applicants to find at least one new partner to complete the project.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting support to various in-house planning processes that includes sub-regional and corridor studies, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Air Quality and Conformity determination.
- Staff continues to provide GIS technical support for the highway GIS networks development for the RTP through the TDM project database conversion into GIS layers for base year and future scenario years planning, project mapping and review for 2023 TIP projects, sub-regional and corridor studies.
- Staff worked on modeling request on Hollister Road project from Harris County Precinct One, provided RTP support to Transportation Department with modeling data analysis and roadway and transit mapping.
- Staff began preparing networks for the 2023 Air Quality Conformity Determination to ensure that the model results and networks are correct after receiving the letter approving the Air Quality Conformity Determination in November.
- Staff continues enhancing the on-going development and implementation of the Regional Activity Based Model (ABM), and the familiarization and documentation of the ABM forecasting tools.
- Staff continue to work with ERG on the SEE tool update for MOVES3

- Staff continues attending the Texas Technical Working Group quarterly meeting and RTP and TIP group to provide guidance regarding conformity, work on Pre-Analysis consensus document for conformity, started conformity process for 2045 RTP Update
- Staff continued to coordinate the efforts of the O-D Steering Committee team and the prime contractor as the collected O-D Transit On-board Survey data, the collected 978 samples of the Tour based data, the secondary expansion, and the draft reports are near completion and now going through committee reviews.
- Staff continue to participate in the Steering Committee for the on-going Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P in the H-GAC MPO region, and in the Steering Committee for the 2nd attempt to procure the Prime Contractor for the Airports (Hobby & IAH) Ground Access Survey.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project, continues to research and develop the REMI model for regional transit fare reduction study.
- Staff continues participating in the review of the traffic count work schedule and collection process by the prime contractor on non-State systems.
- Staff continues to develop VE 5K bzone model