

10D. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

A. LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- The vision, goals, and priority areas were finalized by the study’s Steering Committee in January 2021. The first public meeting for the Southeast Harris County Subregional Study was held on April 15, 2021. Public comments were solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website – <https://engage.h-gac.com/> – through May 14, 2021. Stakeholder Meetings were held with Municipal and Civil, Public Safety, School and Residential, and Industrial Business groups on May 4th and 6th. The development of options to address safety, congestion, and mobility issues identified to date is underway.
- The first public meeting for the Liberty County Mobility Study was held on April 29, 2021. Public comments were solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website (<https://engage.h-gac.com/>) through May 14, 2021. Stakeholder Committee Meetings for the Cleveland and Liberty/Dayton areas of the county were held on May 25, 2021. Meetings were also held with the Brazos Transit District and Union Pacific Railroad to discuss transit and freight issues in the County.
- The first Public Meeting for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study was held on April 22, 2021. Public comments were solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website – <https://engage.h-gac.com/> – through May 14, 2021. Public Comments are currently being reviewed.
- Staff are developing methodology for a Transit-Oriented Development analysis of the 8-County H-GAC region.

2. Freight Planning

- The Regional Goods Movement Plan’s consultant selection process was completed, and Board of Directors has authorized H-GAC to negotiate a contract to assist with preparing the plan.
- Staff held the Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting on June 10, 2021. A panel discussion on the future of freight rail was discussed among BNSF, UP, Kansas City Southern Railway, and the Guld Coast Rail District. A presentation by TxDOT rail division was given on the findings of the Houston-Beaumont Rail Study.

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff continued coordination with the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff Office on operations with the Tow and Go Program.
- Staff continued to work on getting the Road Safety Audit Contract in place.
- Staff attended Fort Bend County Traffic Management meeting for 2021 Hurricane Evacuation Routes. Staff attend City of Houston Vision Zero Implementation Group meeting.
- Staff conducted Transportation Systems Maintenance and Operations (TSMO) meeting on May 6th.
- Staff met with Communication Department to discuss 2021 Hurricane Preparedness Campaign.

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- Staff coordinated with Waller County, Chambers County and Montgomery County on Intersection Safety Contract.
- A contract amendment was sent to the City of Houston for Tow and Go contract extension.
- A contract amendment was sent to the City of Houston for Quick Clearance Crash Pilot Project.
- Staff coordinated a Tow operator orientation training for Tow and Go Tow operators at Houston TranStar.
- Staff met with Fort Bend County on Tow and Go expansion into the County.
- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting on May 13th.

4. Environmental Planning

- Staff has completed the “Quick User Guide” to the Eco-Logical tool which is designed to teach a new user how the tool works in several short steps. The guide is going through the final edits before publication. Staff have also begun talks with a contact in the Houston Independent School District to discuss the prospect of students using the Eco-Logical tool within the environmental science or social studies curriculum. The initial talks have revealed an apparent interest in introducing the tool to the classroom.
- Staff is working on an update to the H-GAC Environmental Justice Report as well as the Title VI/Non-discrimination Annual Workplan and Accomplishment Report for Fiscal Year 2020.

5. Resiliency Planning

- Staff began development of a Low Impact Development study to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Houston area.
- Staff continue work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-sector specific resiliency best practices and strategies across the country. The draft report has been reviewed by FHWA and staff are addressing comments.
- Staff have developed a strategy to integrate results from the Resilience & Durability Pilot project into ongoing transportation planning and studies. Sub-regional results from the pilot project will be presented to each sub-regional project steering committee.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Meetings of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Subcommittee was held on May 12th and June 9th. Staff also continue to coordinate the public review efforts for the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

TxDOT continued their series of presentations describing the scope of requested RTP amendments, including IH 10 West (Inner Katy), IH 610 W, SH 288, and SH 36A. The public review period for the amendments was from March 26, 2021 to April 28, 2021 with a [public meeting on April 8, 2021](#).

7. Other Planning Activities

Staff continue to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes are monitored through StreetLight data, transit ridership numbers are reported monthly from transit agencies within the region, and permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on pedestrian/bicyclist 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 and a report on the [Regional Travel Impacts of COVID-19](#).

8. Performance Measures

H-GAC is required to set regional performance targets for seven (7) Public Transportation Agency Safety measures: the number and rate of fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability. Regional targets will be based on the target data from region's public transportation agencies. In the previous four months, H-GAC subcommittees reviewed the draft targets and made recommendations. In May, the draft targets were presented as informational items, and in June, the draft targets will be presented for action. Information related to the Public Transportation Agency Safety draft targets can be found in the [2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program, Appendix B – Draft Update on Transit Safety](#).

B. SHORT RANGE PLANNING

1. Project Programming

- Staff coordinated on the amendments to the 2021-2024 TIP document. Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Staff completed the effort to develop performance measures and targets to comply with federal requirements. A mid-point progress report was developed and is available on the H-GAC website.
- Staff completed coordination efforts on the H-GAC 10-year Plan.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff updated data on H-GAC Website for Mobile Counters program.
- Staff processed requests for Ped/Bike counter data.
- Staff continued coordination with Sugar Land regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA.
- Staff held status meetings with METRO regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA data entry.
- Staff worked with the America Bicycle Education Association to launch the online safety course called CyclingSavvy.
- Staff worked with the American Bicycle Education Association to identify potential in-person bike handling courses.
- Staff participated in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee.
- Procurement is almost complete for permanent and mobile bike/ped counters. The request to proceed with procurement was approved by the Board of Directors.
- Staff revised available bike network mapping with ped/bike counter data and results of the ped/bike counter survey sent to service partners

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- Staff is coordinating with the Ped/Bike Subcommittee on the upcoming bike network GIS layer update.
- Staff coordinated with and liaised between service area partners and internal H-GAC departments regarding TIP prioritization workgroup efforts. Recommendations from the workgroup will be forwarded to the Ped/Bike subcommittee and to the TIP Subcommittee in June 2021.
- Staff is working with the chair to coordinate a priority list for the Ped/Bike subcommittee, including revising the Active Transportation Plan.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee last met on April 8, 2021. The next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2021.
- Staff met with METRO on May 20, 2021 to evaluate applications for the FY 2020 Call for Projects for FTA Section 5310 transit formula funds.
- Work has been completed collecting and analyzing the Public Transit Agency Safety Plans. Safety targets have been completed. The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee, the Transportation Safety Committee and the Transportation Improvement Plan Subcommittee have recommended approval. The Regional Transportation Plan Subcommittee reviewed and recommend approval on May 12. TAC and TPC were briefed in May a request for recommendation and approval scheduled for June.
- Staff continues to conduct a monthly survey regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on regional transit providers. This survey will continue during the course of the pandemic.
- The Year 2 contract with the City of Conroe CMAQ Commuter Pilot Project was extended to December 31, 2021 from March 31, 2021. due to the reduced service provided and funding used as a result of the pandemic. Ridership is slowly improving. One daily morning and evening run will be expanded to a second midday run in August primarily to service essential workers in the Texas Medical Center and Central Business District. Year 3 of the contract is slated to encompass Calendar 2022.
- Implementation of The Woodlands Township - Energy Corridor Commuter service will be delayed until start in January 2022. Both The Woodlands Township and The Energy Corridor District are monitoring the intensity to return to work in the Energy Corridor in the upcoming months.
- An updated application of CMAQ Pilot service for the Fort Bend Transit -Houston Central Business District service was received in October. The staff Evaluation Committee recommended application approval and Management concurred. The project was approved by the Board of Directors on March 16, 2021. Documentation has been received and has was to be presented to Internal Audit for Pre-Award review in May 2021. However, due to delays in bus manufacturing, the project is delayed to August 2022.
- The City of Pearland Transit Feasibility Needs Assessment and Study has begun. Oriented towards its specific suburban needs and challenges with robust community engagement, it is schedule to last eighteen months. A presentation on the study will be provided to TAC and TPC in June. The study will be conducted entirely in house.
- Planning and implementation for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan is on-going. The regional transportation inventory and needs assessment are near completion. A survey of

public and human service transportation providers is underway, as is the Request for Proposals for assistance with a set of focus groups scheduled to take place in Fall 2021.

- Coordination continues between H-GAC, METRO and other regional transit agencies regarding the Regional Transit Seamless Fare System. The Regional Transit Connectivity Workgroup, consisting of transit agency representatives and other interested parties, has been formed to provide input to the overall program, which includes regional fare, regional trip planning, and related efforts. The workgroup last met on May 13, 2021 to finalize the Inter-Agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This document is currently being processed internally and will then be distributed to regional transit agencies for signature. A separate Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between H-GAC and METRO regarding funding for this effort is also being processed.

4. North Houston Communities Transportation Priorities Plan

- Staff continued to work on the scope of work for procuring a consultant for this project.

C. TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Public outreach staff supported the Commute Solutions team by developing materials and promoting Bike Month and Telework Week.
- Staff successfully launched a region-wide billboard campaign for the Regional Safety Campaign. The billboards serve as a reminder to drivers to avoid distracted driving. Radio, digital, and TV ads have also started for HGAC's annual Zip Zone Map/Hurricane Preparedness campaign.
- Several media interviews are in the process of being scheduled with ABC 13 and KHOU due to the start of hurricane season and will feature transportation staff.
- In addition, preliminary planning has started for public meetings regarding updates to the 2022-2023 UPWP and Environmental Justice Report.

D. COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff collaborated with regional partners including the Woodlands Township, Rice University, the City of Sugar Land, the City of Houston, BCycle, BikeHouston, Bike Waller, and Buffalo Bayou Partnership to kick off the 2021 Gulf Coast Regional Bike Month on May 4th.
- Staff met with METRO's Ridership & Client Services for weekly updates and collaboration.
- Staff continues to meet with AECOM for telework planning coordination with area companies and local governments. There is still room to work with six more organizations.
- Staff met with the City of Houston Executive Committee, Managers, Supervisors, and Employees to collaborate on Telework Project SWOT analysis and Focus Group; a total of 7 meetings.
- Staff conducted Brown Bag Lunch Series - Bike Friendly Driver class on May 17.
- Staff met with ConnectSmart and TXDOT teams for monthly coordination meeting on May 17.
- Staff began planning for Telework Week geared for June 21 - 25 2021. Nominations for Telework Heroes are accepted through June 14.

- Staff presented Partnership Perks: A Benefits Guide for Becoming a Commute Solutions Partner webinar on May 17.

E. CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- A request for reimbursement was submitted to TXDOT for Tomball ISD in the amount of \$628,628 for ten (10) school buses.
- Staff continued to work with several ISD's to replace older school buses.
- Staff coordinated with Cy Fair ISD for possible grant funding of electric buses
- Staff worked with several grant recipients to finalize contracts and complete invoicing.
- Staff continued to monitor grant recipient's usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Participated in a variety of internal and external meetings and met with other local government agencies to discuss various projects utilizing CMAQ funds.

F. GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Air Quality staff's Regional Bus Survey is underway. Staff is working to develop an inventory of all types of buses that operate within the H-GAC region. Staff has largely completed the collection of data and analysis of collected data is continuing. The survey is ongoing and will continue to collect data through April 31st. It is anticipated the results will help staff better understand how bus operations contribute to regional air quality as well as to help inform future emission reduction efforts undertaken by the MPO. The survey can be found here: <https://www.h-gac.com/clean-vehicles/regional-bus-survey/> and can still be completed by anyone wishing to participate.
- Staff is continuing to develop the annual Air Quality Initiatives Report for 2021.
- Staff continues to work with air quality staff from NCTCOG to meet with stakeholders to develop zero emission vehicle (ZEV) corridor plan for Interstate 45 between and within the two MPO's service areas. Staff members are continuing to hold meetings with ZEV stakeholders as well as reaching out directly to non-ZEV stakeholders who may have an interest in either all-electric or hydrogen technology. H-GAC staff is working to reach additional stakeholders within the Houston portion of the corridor.
- Air quality staff has been working with other Transportation staff to help develop emissions-related materials for the upcoming TIP Call for Projects.
- H-GAC continues to assist with regional efforts to support the Department of Energy sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under the auspices of this program, staff works 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. As part of this activity, staff is working to develop educational programs related to alternative fuel topics, development of an alternative fueling podcast, and outreach to stakeholder fleets within the H-GAC region to advise on alternative fuel transitions.

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- Staff is continuing to work to administer two separate EPA-funded DERA grants to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. With a completed contract in place for the IKEA project, IKEA has placed orders for project vehicles with final delivery and deployment anticipated within the next several months. Due to funding restraints on the project partner side, the DERA project with H-E-B is continuing, but delayed until late 2021. Both of these projects requested and were granted one-year no-cost extension from EPA to ensure completion of all project objectives.
- Staff is still waiting for news regarding H-GAC's application for EPA's 2021 DERA RFP. Staff developed and submitted a project proposal to replace diesel-powered equipment associated within the regional freight sector. Should this proposal be funded, staff will develop and publish a Call for Projects for program participants beginning in late CY2021.

G. TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

- Staff continues to generally provide travel demand modeling and GIS technical supports and assistances to support H-GAC's Regional Transportation Planning, Transportation Improvement Program, the 2020 Regional Air Quality conformity process, other H-GAC's internal planning work and to H-GAC's member agencies such as TxDOT and METRO, for their various corridor and sub-area transportation planning and studies. Staff is working with TxDOT to determine studies and uses for Streetlight data.
- Staff continues to provide Travel Demand Forecasting technical supports to various H-GAC member agencies in support for various corridor and sub-regional studies such as: Modeling runs for four different 2025 scenarios for TxDOT/Pape-Dawson Engineering, Inc. relating to:
 - I-10 widening from FM1489 to Fry Road (FM1489 to Pinn Oak) from 6 to 8 lanes,
 - Pinn Oak to Katy Fort Bend from 8 to 10 lanes,
 - Katy Fort Bend to Fry Road from 10 to 12 lanes.
 - FM528 widening from BS 35 (Gordon Street) to SH 35, 2 lanes widened to 4 lanes.
 - FM 270 widening from FM 518 to FM646, 2 lanes to 4 lanes.
 - FM 1314 widening from SH 105 to SH 242, 2 lanes to 4 lanes.
 - Provided H-GAC's year 2020 modeling output data for the City of Sugar Land, Public Works Department.
 - Provided H-GAC's modeling zonal demographics data and model output data for the years 2020, 2030, 2040, and 2045 to Mr. Leo Xu of Gunda, Corp.
 - Provided H-GAC's modeling zonal demographics data and loaded networks for the years 2020, 2030, 2040, and 2045 to Mr. Mike Chaney and Mrs. Tian Huang of Alliance Transportation Group (ATG). The Consultants are working on a project for METRO.
- Staff attended various meetings, webinars, workshops, and trainings such as:
 - Responded to air quality conformity comments
 - Attended Texas Technical Working Group meeting; gave update on conformity and public comments
 - NASA A.37 collaboration; wrote draft support letter for collaboration with Baylor University regarding ozone chemistry

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- Attended TTI Texas Master Schedule meeting, update on conformity timeline
 - Participated in ERG contract kick-off meeting.
 - Participated in Meeting, update on Electric Vehicles and its effects on Ozone
- Staff continued to work with Cambridge Systematics (CS) Support Technicians to text-run the H-GAC's newly developed Activity-Based-Model (ABM) model, work with the CS Consultants in completing the validation and calibration of the Activity Based model and the Truck model.
- Staff continued to participate on the online discussion with the staff of the REMI model to discuss H-GAC's REMI model land Use parcel level results.
- Staff continues to develop highway networks as input for the AIMSUN Meso and Micro modeling for Montgomery County Precinct – 2 subarea study and for SE Harris County sub-area studies and continues to evaluate other modeling software with better Meso and Micro capabilities.
- Staff continued to work on internal data request for volume and V/C ratios for the NHHIP, IH 610 express lanes, and Inner Katy corridor, and provides comments on the scope of work for the Regional Goods Movement Study.
- Staff continued to work with the Steering Committee and the consultant for the Origin-Destination (O-D) On-board Transit Survey to update the scope of work, and the survey schedules for the Spring 2022 scheduled data collection. Staff in coordination with the METRO staff is also updating the Inter-local Government Agreement between H-GAC and METRO for the funding of the survey and to reflect the new survey data collection schedule of Spring 2022.
- Staff continued to work with the H-GAC Procurement Group to develop an Inter-Local Government Agreement (ILA) between and H-GAC and the City of Houston for the joint effort of the regional commercial airport (IAH & Hobby) ground access count travel survey. The ILA is now entered into the H-GAC Agiloft, and almost ready to be sent to the City of Houston for review and approval.
- Staff continues to update websites and data dashboards for various Subregional studies such as Montgomery County (Pct-2), Southeast Harris and Liberty Counties.
- Staff continues to provide mapping and GIS technical supports for:
 - i. Mapping existing recommended projects (RTP, TIP, Livable Centers, etc.), transit routes and stops, bike lanes, sidewalks, B-cycle locations.
 - ii. Creating storyboard webpage to house all information/data for North Houston Communities planning project.
 - iii. Creating GTFS feed for web mapping local transit agencies.
 - iv. FHWA Multimodal Network Connectivity City of Sugar Land- Creating online interactive map, Storyboard, Dashboard for Ped/Bike study in Sugar Land. Writing methodology for final report.
 - v. FHWA Multimodal Network Connectivity METRO- Pilot joint project with METRO creating online interactive maps, Storyboard, Dashboard of ped/bike studies, Route Directness Index. Writing methodology for final report.
 - vi. Developing ped/bike regional bikeways online app/map on H-GAC website. Creating the templates for the following: Bikeway Layer, Amenities,

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Intersections, Permanent Structures, Signals, Parks, Playground Equipment to be used by H-GAC region.

- vii. Safe Routes to School- Creating online interactive maps, Safe Route to School Layer, and storyboard. Developing the criteria for Safe Routes to School Layer.
- viii. Mobility Master Plan City of Sugar Land- Providing GIS support with data and guidance in creation of new GIS Layers.