

11. UPDATE ON CONNECTSMART

BACKGROUND

The importance of advanced technologies and large-scale deployments to mitigate congestion has been fully recognized at different government levels. As such, the United States Department of Transportation established the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) initiative to provide grants to eligible state, regional and local entities to develop model deployment sites for large scale installation and operation of advanced transportation technologies. The ATCMTD related deployments are expected to improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure return on investment.

The Texas Department of Transportation Houston District's ConnectSmart Program was one of the 2016 ATCMTD grant recipients, aiming to deploy an advanced technology platform that integrates Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) and Active Demand Management (ADM) with multimodal demand/mobility management. The Federal Highway Administration defines TSMO as a "set of strategies that focus on operational improvements that can maintain and even restore the performance of the existing transportation system before extra capacity is needed." Furthermore, FHWA defines ADM as the "use of information and technology to dynamically manage demand by influencing daily travel choices to support redistributing travel to less congested times of day or routes or reducing overall vehicle trips by influencing a mode choice."

CURRENT SITUATION

Scheduled to launch September 16, 2022, the ConnectSmart Program will provide integrated trip planning and navigation across a wide array of mode options, including carpooling. Other features include toll rates on routes, high-comfort bike lanes and BCycle station locations as well as the ability to purchase, store, and redeem digital transit tickets right in the app. ConnectSmart is also a critical element in regional congestion mitigation efforts as it enables Active Demand Management strategies to help advance the region's Transportation Systems Management & Operations goals.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council, through Commute Solutions and Tow and Go, is one of several partners to the ConnectSmart program.

ACTION REQUESTED

For Information and Discussion