

12B. 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
- The final report for the Liberty County Mobility Study is being completed. 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 developed draft project scopes of work for the regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and are coordinating with local partners.

2. Freight Planning

- The next Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting will be held in January/February 2023. Date and time to be announced.
- The next Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan will be held on December 1, 2022. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with AECOM, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County Sheriff Office (HCSO), Houston Police Department (HPD), Houston TranStar Staff, and Tow and Go Contractors on October 13, 2022 to perform the 2022 FHWA Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Self-Assessment
- Staff held a Tow and Go™ Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, HCSO, HPD, AECOM and Tow and Go Contractors was held on November 1, 2022.
- Tow and Go performed 2,962 "No Cost Tows" in October. Average Clearance Times was 17 minutes and 55 seconds.
- In September 2022, the 8-county region experienced 80 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was a 10% increase when compared to September 2021 which recorded 73 fatalities.
- The number of traffic crashes recorded in CRIS in the 8 County Area was 14,928 for September 2022, a 3% decrease when compared to September 2021 which recorded 15,386 crashes.
- The number of fatalities from January 1 to September 30, 2022 for the 8-county region was 608. In 2021, during this same period the number of fatalities was 617. This is a 2 percent decrease this year when compared to for the same period in 2021.

- Staff conducted a Transportation Policy Council Safety Committee meeting on October 25, 2022.

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 continues the development of a Low Impact Development tool to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area.
- 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.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- Phase 2 of the RTP public outreach is now underway. Staff are holding a second round of virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach will include sharing and requesting feedback on 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 February to April 2023. The purpose of these meetings is to present and receive comments on the draft 2045 RTP Update. Please see <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate> 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 being reported on a quarterly basis from transit agencies within 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 has secured additional members for the Congestion Management Process Update Workgroup and is refining the scope of work for the update and responsibilities for 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.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff has finalized a series of Adult Bicycle Safety Education workshops in all of the counties surrounding Harris. (The course in Harris already took place.) Online introductory courses for bike riding are also available free of charge to anyone in the eight county MPO area. 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.
- The evaluation committee worked on the Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan procurement submissions and revised the ILA for internal approvals.
- Staff is continuing work on scopes for the Memorial Drive, Friendswood, and Buffalo Bayou active transportation planning projects to move these scopes towards internal approvals and procurement.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee cancelled their special call meeting for November 17, 2022 to allow transit agencies more time to complete their agency safety plans in accordance with federal guidelines.
- Staff are planning two focus groups to gather feedback on ways to improve the Commuter and Transit Pilot Program call for partners.
- Staff is working on a scope of work to begin a transit information study to better understand the information needs of potential riders when determining when and how to ride transit.
- Coordination continues between H-GAC, METRO and other regional transit agencies regarding the Regional Transit Connectivity Project, including the Seamless Fare System, regional trip planner, data management system, and related efforts. Initial assessments to determine agencies' needs and capacity are underway and are scheduled to be completed this fall.
- Staff is continuing coordination with TxDOT, H-GAC and local sponsors to kick off the TSU Automated Transit Study, US90A, Outer WestPark and Dayton Transit Studies.
- Staff worked to update the interim report to be delivered to Pearland for the Pearland Transit Studies and will be working with Data Analytics to revise maps for a second round of internal approvals before bringing the steering committee back together for next steps and public meeting preparation.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff implemented the second phase of public outreach for the RTP 2045 Update in October. There are three meetings left. For more information, visit www.engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate
- The October edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released on October 20. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Region-View-October-2022.html?soid=1101570321083&aid=bQFDltmkb1E>
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
 - Pearland Transit Study
 - Bike Safety Training Courses
 - Public Participation Policy Update
 - Freight and Technology Forum
 - Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff closed out Commute Solutions Month and began evaluation of the campaign goals.
- Staff is working with the City of Houston to evaluate their telework
- New staff member Emanuel Andrews joined the Commute Solutions program as a technical lead and project manager.
- Staff with the assistance of the AECOM Consultant team worked together to launch a survey to analyze an employer partner's telework program.
- Staff continued to make progress on telework policy development and implementation with employer partners.
- Staff launched an employer challenge using for the first time, the ConnectSmart Platform. This challenge is being used to develop best practices for launching with additional employers.

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 received and addressed questions and comments from TxDOT. Staff reviewed the Synchro files for how a specific project was modeled in the SE Harris Sub-area Study
- 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 new project call for 2045 update, review for new 2023 TIP projects, sub-regional and corridor studies.

- 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 on the ERG contractor's contract for the MOVES3 Spatial Emission Estimator (SEE) used for estimating regional on-road emission inventories of criteria, toxic and GHG emission for each hour of a day with highly detailed spatial resolution tools update, continues to participate in AMPO discussion about the draft-greenhouse gas emission performance measure rule proposed by FHWA, and continues to work with conformity partners on comments for the conformity documentation and timelines for the 2045 RTP update.
- Staff continued to serve in the Steering Committees and work with the Prime Contractor for the O-D Survey data collection, the secondary expansion of the O-D Survey data collected is on-going, and the tour-based component of the ABM data collection set is on-going. The planning, survey awareness, survey design and pilot survey of the Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P is on-going, the 2nd attempt to procure the Prime Contractor for the Airport Ground Access Survey is on-going; RFP was re-issued 10/26/2022, and pre-proposal conference is scheduled for 11/08/2022.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project, continues planning for data collection for traffic counts on non-State systems is on-going, modified H-GAC 2022 traffic count locations to include 63 additional new locations, created and did a REMI presentation to the City of Houston, Planning Department, reviewed, updated and documented the VE and the VE RSPM 5K Bzone input files, assisted with the 11 county Demo data for the High Speed rail project, .