

## 12F. 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](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)
- Liberty County Mobility Study has been completed. Staff are reviewing the final document.
- Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan study team presented the draft recommendations at the second public meeting on August 4, 2022. The recommendations can be viewed at <http://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 is scheduled for September 1, 2022.
- The last Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan was held on June 28, 2022. For more information visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)

#### 3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, HCSO, HPD, AECOM and Tow and Go Contractors was held on August 11, 2022.
- A Transportation System Maintenance and Operations (TSMO) meeting was held on August 4, 2022.
- The next Safety Meeting is on August 30, 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)

- Staff are reviewing the results of the RTP Visioning Survey and preparing for the second phase of public outreach that will occur this fall.
- The next RTP Subcommittee Meeting will occur on August 17, 2022, where the Visioning Survey results will be presented.
- The first phase of the RTP Visioning Outreach occurred in May with meetings in all 8 Counties (Harris, Liberty, Chambers, Galveston, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Waller, and Montgomery County). For more information on the project visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)

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 2021-2024 TIP document. Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- 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 and bicycle and public transportation projects. H-GAC staff developed the annual report in cooperation with TxDOT and local public transportation providers and is available on the [H-GAC website](#).

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff continues to maintain and monitor permanent pedestrian and bicycle counting equipment and data and has launched a new GIS based way to report the data for permanent counters and is now focused on doing the same for mobile counters.

- Staff continues to manage the Adult Bicycle Safety program and think of ways to build awareness and interest in Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller counties. The AFA was recently extended through May 2023 and staff are working on extending the vendor contract through May 2023.
- Staff continues participation in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee.
- Staff are continuing work to revise the scope, budget, and timeline in anticipation of procuring a consultant to revise the 2045 Active Transportation Plan.
- Staff continue to advance Ped/Bike Subcommittee workgroups. One workgroup will revise the regional bike network GIS data and the other workgroup will develop an active transportation focused travel demand modeling solution. The bike network GIS data update workgroup will be making formal recommendations to the Ped/Bike Subcommittee in July 2022 regarding immediate short-term implementation.
- Staff hosted the League of American Bicyclists to present on their Bicycle Friendly America program during a special Ped/Bike Subcommittee meeting on July 15.
- Staff continued to hold monthly meetings with local sponsors for the Local Active Transportation Studies to refine scopes of work and project budgets.
- Staff is working to submit paperwork for the Advanced Funding Agreements for the Local Active Transportation Studies, and is also preparing consultant scopes of work and Interlocal Agreements for each of these studies.

### 3. Transit Planning

- The regular quarterly meeting of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee was held on July 14, 2022. A new Chair and Vice Chair were elected.
- Staff continues to refine the scope of work for High-Capacity Transit feasibility studies and prepare paperwork for Advanced Funding Agreements for the bulk of these studies. The first study is funded through the Unified Planning Work Program and will focus on the US 90A corridor, conducted in partnership with the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD).
- A Technical Memorandum for the City of Pearland Transit Study with existing conditions and peer analysis is being refined internally. Due to additional revisions the Steering Committee and Public Meetings have been pushed back but are still anticipated to take place in the fall.
- Staff has completed the City of Dayton transit study Request for Proposals, and it is expected to be released in late August.
- The Woodlands – Energy Corridor commuter service is underway. Staff are coordinating with The Woodlands Township on invoicing, ridership and, through the Commute Solutions program, marketing.
- The action plan for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan is complete, and work has begun on the scope for a transit information study recommendation coming out of the most recent plan update.
- 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 summer. A meeting

was held on July 12 with regional stakeholders participating as part of the Regional Transit Connectivity Workgroup of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee.

- A new Paratransit/NEMT workgroup of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee also held their first meeting in July. This workgroup will focus on closing the gaps with paratransit and non-emergency medical transportation services in the region and includes service providers and users of the services.

#### TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff completed 8 public meetings in each of the eight counties within the MPO for the RTP 2045 Update. Planning for a second phase of public outreach is in progress and slated to occur in October 2022.
- The RTP 2045 Update digital survey is live until July 31. <https://engage.h-gac.com/>
- The June edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released on June 21. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Region-View-June-2022.html?soid=1101570321083&aid=aBOagpiyVV8>
- Planning and implementation efforts are underway for the Montgomery County Pct. 2 Study public meeting. It will occur at 6 p.m. on August 4 at the Magnolia Event Center.
- The launch of media buys and advertising with local vendors for Hurricane Preparedness started June 1 and will continue through October of this year.

#### COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff sponsored the NASA Johnson Space Center Commuter Series. This included two webinars held for NASA employees – Commute Options Talk and Fuel-Efficient Driving Tips.
- Staff presented the Future of Work Survey to TAC and TPC.
- Staff began executing plans for Commute Solutions Month 2022, which will focus on recognizing those who have partnered with the program this year.
- Staff also closed out Commuter Surveys with one company and one university.
- Staff closed a commuter survey for a company in Waller County. The survey was executed in three languages – English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and received 1300 responses.
- Staff continued to make progress on telework policy development and implementation with employer partners. One partner launched their telework program – evaluation to follow.
- Staff continues coordination with TXDOT's ConnectSmart project to develop TDM components of the application and discuss marketing and outreach. The project is scheduled for full launch September 16, 2022.
- Staff received an extension of their current Advanced Funding Agreement with TXDOT and is working on the scope for an emergency ride home request for information and a procurement for a bike engagement consultant.

#### CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- During last month, staff continued to work with several ISD's in the Houston-Galveston region to replace older school buses. An application was received from Rice University for a new electric bus. Staff continued to coordinate with Cy Fair ISD for grant funding of electric buses. Additionally, two SEP-funded contracts are in the works 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 worked on creating a new RFA and application specifically for electric vehicle chargers.

- Staff continued to monitor grant recipients' usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- 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 met with TxDOT and discussed electric vehicles and charging stations as projects for CMAQ funding.
- Staff is meeting with electric charger manufacturers to verify Buy America compliance and program interest.

#### GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- H-GAC staff is cohosted a hybrid webinar with staff from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that focused on the new EPA Clean School Bus Program on August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30am. This webinar included presentations from EPA with details about the Clean School Bus funding opportunity, H-GAC staff to discuss the Clean Cities Program, representatives from Evolve Houston to discuss how school districts can embark on school bus electrification initiatives, and Highland Electric Buses to show one example of how school districts can receive support to facilitate the electrification process.
- Staff is working to develop performance CMAQ performance measures. We are coming to the end of the first performance cycle and beginning the second cycle. To help support this activity, Air Quality staff has been working to assess emission reductions from CMAQ funded projects between 2018 and 2021 as well as develop estimates for CMAQ funded projects upcoming between 2022 and 2025. Draft versions of these estimates have been developed and are being presented to advisory committees for review and feedback. Draft versions of the written reports to FHWA are also in process and will be ready for review in time for the September TAC and TPC meetings.
- Air quality staff has completed working with an intern hosted as part of the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) Climate Corps Fellow Program. This intern worked with Air Quality and Project Delivery staff to help explore and develop strategies to help create a decision support framework to help Integrate environmental justice and health impacts into the TIP at a future date.
- Staff hosted a meeting of the Regional Air Quality Planning and Advisory Committee (RAQPAC) on July 28<sup>th</sup>. This meeting featured presentations from EDF Climate Corps fellowship interns from both H-GAC and Harris County to discuss their work from this summer.
- Staff continued to assist, when possible, the air quality team from the North Central Texas Council of Governments to meet with stakeholders to develop Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) corridor plan for Interstate 45 between and within the two MPO's service areas. The final plan is nearly complete it is anticipated that this report will be released to the public by the end of August.
- 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. The most recent month has focused on planning for future events to include: the school bus electrification event described above as well as potential follow-on electrification

events, an upcoming stakeholder meeting, and assisting with 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 is currently installing EV charging equipment to facilitate vehicle purchases and it is anticipated that the entire project will be completed by the end of 2022. For the 2019 DERA project, staff is preparing a call for projects to find a new partner to complete the project.

#### TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff completed sub-regional and corridor studies such as the City of Houston Thoroughfare Plan Amendment, the Inner Katy corridor study and continues to provide travel demand modeling to support other sub-regional and corridor studies, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and other transportation planning processes within the H-GAC region such as: Assisting Transportation Department with the presentation of the draft staff recommendation targets for the Federal Performance Measures for Reliability, Congestion and Air Quality, working with the Chambers County team of business and elected officials over their freight and commercial vehicles impact within their region, assisting with the updates to the methodology for the City of Houston Greenhouse Gas Emission request.
- Staff continue to self-train and test-run on the newly Activity-Based-Model (ABM) forecasting tools for better familiarization of the model's capabilities and functionalities.
- 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 work with conformity partners on comments for the conformity documentation and timelines for the 2045 RTP update, and participate in the July 28, 2022, TCEQ Air Quality Technical Information and Air Quality Research Program (AQRP) Advisory Council Funding meetings.
- Staff continued to provide GIS technical support for the highway GIS networks development for the RTP, TIP, sub-regional and corridor studies, and in creating the New-Regional Bikeway Networks updates, and a web app for Active Transportation Viewers.
- Staff completed the enhancement of the capabilities of the website and dashboard to assist H-GAC's member agencies to view their various corridor and sub-area transportation planning and studies, and work with TxDOT to utilize Streetlight data.
- Staff continued to serve in various Steering Committees and work with the Prime Contractors for the Tour Base data collection of the Transit On-board Origin-Destination (O-D) Survey, and in the planning and survey design of the Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P. Staff continues to work on procurement of the Contractor for the Airport Ground Access Survey; evaluation of proposals received in response to the RFP will start August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project. Data collection for traffic counts on non-State systems is scheduled to commence in September 2022.

- Staff completed the extraction of the H-GAC traffic count data for Harris County and sent to Harris County Engineering Department, the download and the review of traffic count data for the Regional Goods Movement study, updates of VE version from 3.07 to 3.09, updates of the VE RStudio platform from version 4.1.2 to 4.1.3 and update of the VE Household module with H-GAC region PUMs person and households.