

11D. HOUSTON AREA RAIL TRANSFORMATION (HART) UPDATE

**BACKGROUND**

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MPO Staff have been participating in initial discussions to form a conceptual group of stakeholders to coordinate and prioritize regional freight infrastructure to seek grant funding opportunities. The group consists of interested parties from the region including the Gulf Coast Rail District, TxDOT, the City of Houston, Harris County, Port of Houston, METRO, interested parties from the private sector, and the Class I railroad companies. This group is not finite and seeks additional freight-focused participation in recognition of the region's growing urgency in capacity needs, including rail.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

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The Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) Board of Directors convened on January 23, 2023 to establish the Houston Area Rail Transformation committee to facilitate the formation of this rail prioritization effort. The Houston-Galveston Area Council will continue to provide technical assistance to the HART committee going forward.

**ACTION REQUESTED**

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For information and discussion only