

## HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Regional Collaboration • Transportation Planning • Multimodal Mobility

## **Houston-Galveston Area Council**

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is a voluntary association of local governments in the Houston-Galveston region, an area of 12,500 square miles and nearly seven million people. H-GAC works to promote efficient and accountable use of local, state, and federal tax dollars and serves as a problem-solving and information forum for local government needs. The 13 counties in H-GAC's service region are Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton. H-GAC departments include community and environmental planning, data services, human services, public services, and transportation.

## **What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization?**

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a local decision-making body that is responsible for overseeing the metropolitan planning process and deciding how to spend federal transportation funds for capital projects and planning studies. Decisions are guided by information and ideas from a broad group of people including elected officials, planners and engineers, transportation agencies, the public, and other interested parties. H-GAC is designated by the State of Texas as the region's MPO for transportation planning in Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties; a service area of 6.7 million residents.

## **Transportation Policy Council**

The Transportation Policy Council (TPC) provides policy guidance for the MPO and overall coordination of the transportation planning activities within the region. The TPC consists of 28 members from cities and counties representing urbanized areas with a population of more than 50,000 people, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), one at-large member appointed by the H-GAC Board of Directors, and one member representing the Gulf Coast Rail District.

## Our Vision

To be a multimodal transportation system through coordinated investments that support a desirable quality of life and enhanced economic vitality.

## Our Mission

To lead transportation planning efforts that efficiently increase access to mobility and improve air quality through a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuous “3C” process.

## FOCUS AREAS



### Clean Vehicles & Air Quality Initiatives

Supporting alternative energy sources with clean vehicles and reducing emissions to improve air quality.



### Public Outreach

Engaging the public in the transportation planning process through public involvement, education, and awareness.



### Multimodal Planning

Coordinating multimodal transportation planning for improved mobility, safety, and accessibility.



### Traffic Modeling & GIS

Forecasting travel demand for traffic analysis, data development, and regional forecasting.



### Planning & Project Development

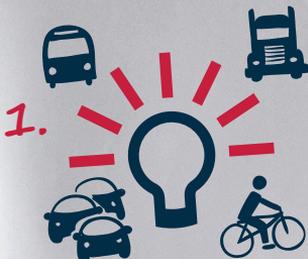
Guiding the transportation planning process and project development.



### Regional Incident Management

Managing traffic incidents to enhance safety and reduce congestion.

# What is the Regional Transportation Plan



Projects to improve mobility are developed by cities, counties, special districts, and transportation agencies. Examples include roadway improvements, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, transit services, and freight connections.



Projects submitted to the MPO are evaluated according to regional vision, goals, and strategies. Regionally significant projects are included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) if the projects meet fiscal constraints and air quality goals.



Sponsors further develop projects through planning, engineering, environmental clearance, and land acquisition for Right-of-Way. The highest priority projects are evaluated and included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for funding and implementation.



After public review and comment, the TPC adopts the TIP.

## Planning Process?



After public review and comment, the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) adopts the RTP.



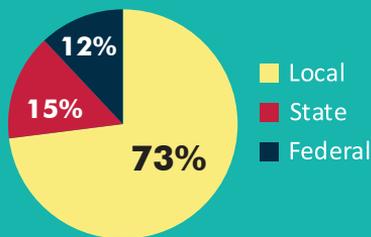
The TIP is combined into the Statewide Transportation Program that is approved by the Texas Transportation Commission and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

## Transportation Funding

Funding for transportation plans and projects comes from a variety of sources including the federal government, state governments, special authorities, public or private tolls, local assessment districts, local government general fund contributions (such as local property and sales taxes), and impact fees.

Most federal transportation funding is distributed to states and providers of public transportation. MPOs, including H-GAC, are responsible for prioritizing the use of a portion of these funds. The MPO works with its state Department of Transportation and transit providers to coordinate and prioritize investments in regionally significant transportation projects.

### Percentages of Federal, State and Local Funding



### Typical Federal Funding Stream



-- MPO Coordination

## **MPO Core Components**

### **Congestion Management Plan (CMP)**

Areas with populations greater than 200,000 are designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). TMAs must have a CMP that identifies actions and strategies to reduce congestion and increase mobility.

### **Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

The PPP outlines the overall strategy for public involvement in all transportation-related activities of the MPO.

### **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

The RTP identifies the region's transportation needs, goals, and policies over the next 25 years. The RTP sets the framework for a balanced and forward thinking system

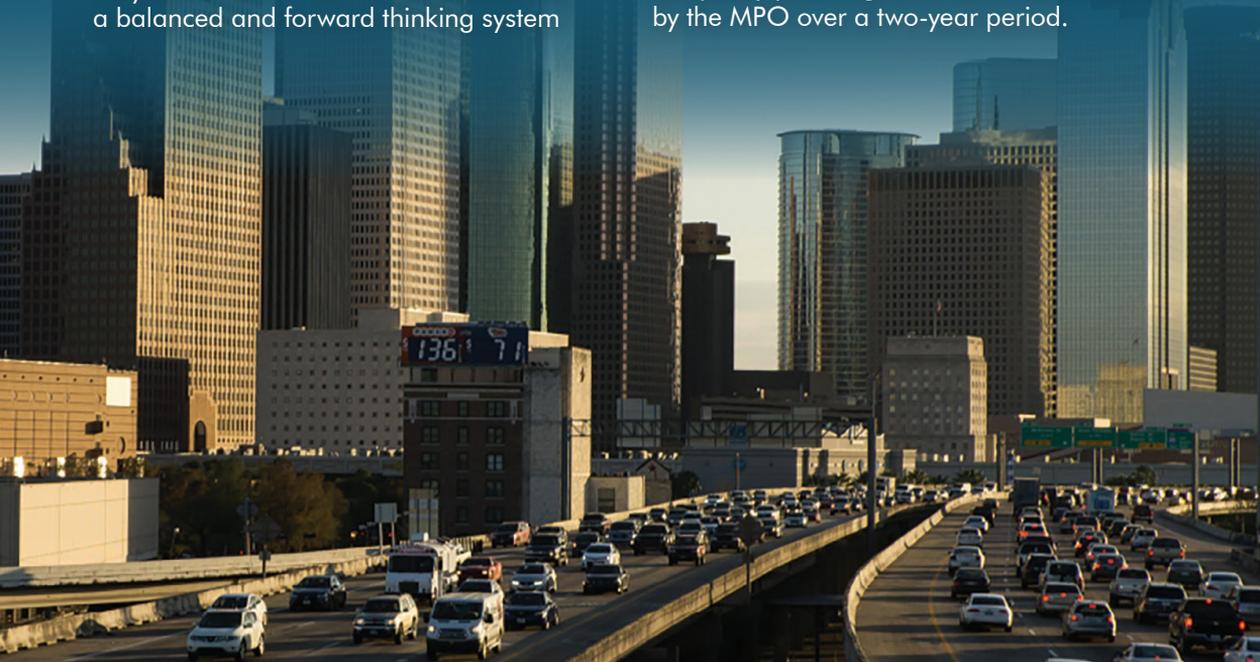
with the identification of major investment strategies supporting traditional modes, such as roadway improvements, and alternative modes, like mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The TIP is a short-range program of transportation improvements based on the long-range transportation plan. The TIP lists projects that are to be funded and implemented in the next three to four years.

### **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The UPWP is a guide for transportation and air quality planning activities to be conducted by the MPO over a two-year period.



## Commute Solutions

Commute Solutions provides alternative transportation resources in the Houston-Galveston region for commuters and employers. The initiative aims to reduce peak period commuter trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT), improve traffic mobility, and improve regional air quality by reducing ozone-forming vehicle emissions. The program's campaign "Road Warriors for Smarter Commutes" encourages commuters to try something new one day a week – carpool, vanpool, bus, bike, or rail.



## Public Involvement

Public participation is an essential component of the transportation planning process and residents can continuously connect with us through various ways.

- Follow us on social media
- Sign up for our newsletter
- Use our website to learn about current transportation efforts
- Submit comments on our projects, plans, and studies via web, social media, email, mail, and telephone
- Attend public meetings
- Attend transportation fairs and events
- Attend our Brown Bag Lunch Series
- Become a Road Warrior for Smarter Commutes



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