

**Regional Transit Coordination (RTC) Subcommittee
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Online Meeting/Conference Call
Thursday, April 13, 2023
9:30-11:00 AM**

Agenda

1. Introductions and Certification of Quorum (9) – Sharon Moses-Burnside, City of Houston Planning and Development Department, Vice-Chair
2. Public Comments
3. Action Items:
 - 3.1 Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of February 9, 2023
4. Information Items: (10 minutes or less each)
 - 4.1 Coordinated Planning
 - 4.1a RCTP Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Workgroup Update – Sandy Klanfer, H-GAC
 - 4.2 Other Efforts
 - 4.2a Pearland Transit Need Assessment Update – Alan Rodenstein, H-GAC
 - 4.2b Commute Solutions Update – Emanuel Andrews, H-GAC
5. Transit and Human Service Agency Reports (5 minutes or less each)

2023 RTCS Meeting Dates

July 13, 2023

October 5, 2023

REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 9, 2023 – 9:30-11:00am
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ruthanne Haut – The Woodlands Township (Chair)
Sharon Moses-Burnside – City of Houston Planning
Jil Arias – City of Friendswood
De’Andre Guin – City of Conroe
Perri D’Armond – Fort Bend County Transit
Shain Eversly - METRO
Sean Middleton – Gulf Coast Transit District
James Oliver – Island Transit

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Huey German-Wilson – Trinity-Houston Gardens SN
Sasha Marshall-Smith – Houston Housing Authority
Vernon Chambers – Harris County Transit
Rachel Die – METRO
Jo Marlow – Brazos Transit District
Ted Ross – Gulf Coast Transit District

OTHERS PRESENT

Travis Madison – TxDOT
Arnold Vowles – TxDOT
Brenda Bustillos - TxDOT
Bul Mabil - TxDOT
Melanie Beaman – City of Sugar Land
Anthony Villa-Real, Fort Bend County Transit
Denise Wendler – METRO
Reggie Brown – METRO
Bryan Carroll – METRO
Edgar Hernandez – METRO
Fred Wedley – Jacobs

H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Craig Raborn
Jamila Owens
Thomas Gray
Sandy Klanfer
Alan Rodenstein
Emanuel Andrews
Chris Whaley
Mike Burns
Karen Owen
Lucinda Martinez

BRIEFING

Overview

RTCS Members and Alternates met virtually by teleconference. This special call meeting included the Subcommittee’s endorsement of the objectives and performance metrics for the Regionally Coordinated Transit Plan (RCTP) and METRO’s request for additional funding for the implementation of a regional fare system. The Subcommittee also received updates on the quarterly regional transit ridership survey as well as the 2045 RTP update process.

INTRODUCTIONS AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

ITEM 1 – Ms. Ruthanne Haut, Chair, The Woodlands Township, convened the meeting at 9:33 AM. Roll was called by H-GAC staff and quorum was certified.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ITEM 2 – There were no public comments presented to the Subcommittee.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 3.1 – Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2023

Ms. Haut requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2023 Subcommittee meeting.

Action Item Motion: moved by Sean Middleton, seconded by Perri D'Armond. Action Item approved.

ITEM 3.2 – Endorsement of Regional Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Targets – Jamila Owens, H-GAC

Ms. Jamila Owens provided the Subcommittee with the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASPs) and regional safety targets. Ms. Owens explained that federal regulations require H-GAC to develop regional safety targets by April 2023 that tie into the updated 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), defined the categories for which targets are required, and discussed the difference between Tier I and Tier II transit agencies. She then presented the safety targets for 2023 for Tier I and Tier II agencies. These targets are based on targets from previous years as well as actual performance from 2021 and are weighted by agency vehicle revenue miles.

Sharon Moses-Burnside noted that the target of zero transit fatalities is in line with the City of Houston's Vision Zero program.

Action Item Motion: moved by Vernon Chambers, seconded by James Oliver and Sean Middleton. Action item approved.

ITEM 3.3 - Regional Fare System: Update and Endorsement of Additional Funding Request – Reggie Brown, METRO

Vernon Chambers, who chairs the Regional Transit Connectivity workgroup, provided some background comments and introduced Reggie Brown from METRO. Mr. Brown was accompanied by Fred Wedley from Jacobs, who is serving as METRO's contractor on this effort. Mr. Brown discussed the purpose and current status of the regional fare program, key takeaways from the assessments conducted with regional transit providers, and an updated cost estimate for the hardware and software required to implement regional fare. Mr. Brown requested the Subcommittee's endorsement of METRO's request to TAC and TPC for additional funding to implement regional fare.

Discussion ensued. Sharon Moses-Burnside inquired about cybersecurity considerations for the regional fare's backend software system. Mr. Brown said that cybersecurity components are included and that METRO intends to store as little personally identifiable information as possible. Perri D'Armond asked for a budget breakdown between METRO and other regional providers, as she needs to be able to explain to elected officials in her county exactly what they're paying for. She also noted that a current Commissioners Court could not obligate a future Court to pay for something. Jamila Owens explained the funding sources for regional fare (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality and Surface Transportation Block Grants, matched by Transportation Development Credits).

Sandy Klanfer briefly listed the expected benefits that the regional fare system would provide, such as reduced dwell times, increased access to services, increased ridership and reduced emissions (as calculated by H-GAC staff).

Ruthanne Haut recognized the tremendous amount of work that has already been done on regional fare and spoke about her agency's experience with its own fare system.

Action Item Motion: moved by Vernon Chambers, seconded by Perri D'Armond. Action item approved.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 4.1 – Regional Transit Ridership Update – Thomas Gray, H-GAC

Mr. Thomas Gray provided the Subcommittee with a summary of regional transit ridership trends in 2022. Regional transit ridership continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, albeit at a slow pace. Fixed-route ridership in 2022 was 29% higher than in 2021, while demand response ridership was 24% higher than 2021. Overall, ridership in 2022 was still about 32% lower than in 2019. METRO accounts for 98% of regional fixed-route ridership and 86% of demand response ridership.

Data for this update came from the quarterly ridership survey conducted by H-GAC staff. Mr. Gray thanked the region's transit providers for completing the survey and said the survey would continue in 2023.

Ruthanne Haut expressed appreciation that regional ridership trends were being tracked.

ITEM 4.2 – 2045 RTP Update – Mike Burns, H-GAC

Mr. Michael Burns presented on the 2045 RTP Update process, including feedback received from the public during the visioning survey. Respondents expressed a desire for more transit, walking and biking options, especially inside Beltway 8. Mr. Burns explained that the HCT Task Force Priority Network that was included in the previous RTP is being carried over into the 2045 RTP Update, and provided an overview of the vision, goals, performance measures and investment categories proposed to be included in the plan. The 2045 RTP Update's final public review period will occur between March 15 and April 17.

Mr. Gray thanked Mr. Burns for his presentation and noted that it was Mr. Burns's last day at H-GAC. Several Subcommittee members wished Mr. Burns well.

Ruthanne Haut said that was good to see transit play a key role in the region's 2045 RTP.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 5 – Transit and Human Service Agency Reports

Ms. Haut invited Subcommittee members to briefly give updates on their agency efforts. She noted that the first Advisory Committee meeting for the Township Transit Study would occur next week, and that The Woodlands Express is preparing to operate a shuttle service for the 2023 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo as well as the preceding Cook-off.

Sandy Klanfer reminded the Subcommittee that H-GAC would be hosting a webinar entitled The Role of Title VI and Environmental Justice in Transportation Planning on Thursday, February 16.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Haut adjourned the meeting at 10:58 AM.

Next RTCS Meeting – 9:30 AM on Thursday, April 13, 2023



Paratransit/Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Advisory Workgroup



Sandy Klanfer
April 13, 2023

Regional Collaboration • Transportation Planning • Multimodal Mobility



Background and Purpose

- The Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan (RCTP) 2022 update found major barriers to transit use for individuals who rely on paratransit and non-emergency medical transportation
- These barriers limit these individuals' ability to maintain jobs, complete their education, access medical care
- There are no easy answers
- Workgroup brings together service providers and service users to find ways to address these problems

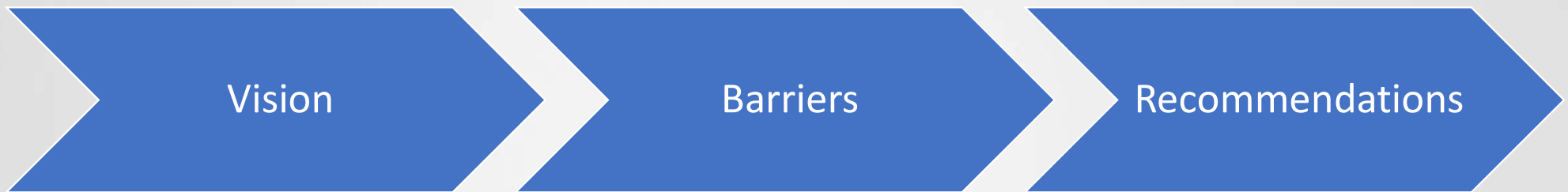
Who is Involved?

- 15 members
- Users of paratransit and NEMT services
- Providers of these services
 - Transit agencies
 - Non-profit providers
 - For-profit providers
- Workgroup chair is Ashley Newell, who is both a service user and a service provider through her role at Mounting Horizons



Workgroup Activities

- Building on work done in RCTP to better understand problems faced by both providers and users of services



- How should transportation services work in our region?

- What isn't working right now? What needs to work better?

- What changes should we be making? How can those changes be implemented?

Visioning Activity

- Workgroup was asked to imagine their ideal transportation system and describe it in a single word, phrase, or sentence
- Members then reviewed these descriptions looking for common ideas or themes
- Themes included:
 - Funding and coverage
 - User-friendliness
 - Equitability
 - Coordination and education

Barriers to Transit Access

- Barriers to transit access have been discussed at all meetings
- Started with barriers laid out in RCTP, and built on them
 - Example: cost concerns
 - Workgroup was able to point to specific O/D and trip types where cost is a particular concern
 - Service providers discussed their costs of providing service



Recommendations

- Establishing a shared vision and understanding of barriers enables the group to develop specific, actionable recommendations
- This discussion is still ongoing
- Recommendations discussed so far include:
 - Workshops/other activities for providers to encourage them to collaborate
 - Improvements to existing travel training programs
 - Post to social media/YouTube to expand reach
 - Expanded funding for transit services
 - Both general public and specialized

Next Steps

- Meetings will continue quarterly
- Continue discussion of recommendations
- Take advantage of opportunities to implement recommendations as they arise
- Help H-GAC continue to build better relationships with transit providers



Questions?



Sandy Klanfer
Senior Transportation Planner
Sanford.Klanfer@h-gac.com



Pearland Transit Need Assessment



Alan Rodenstein, AICP
April 13, 2023

Regional Collaboration • Transportation Planning • Multimodal Mobility



Key Items



Technical Memorandum on existing conditions



Results of online resident survey on public transit



Next Steps

Technical Memorandum Objectives

- Discuss the background and status of transit in Pearland
- Review relevant professional literature on transit and Pearland
- Conduct review of Pearland's existing conditions
- Review transit needs using H-GAC's Transit Need Index
- Examine commuting patterns for intercity travel
- Identify transit services in selected peer cities

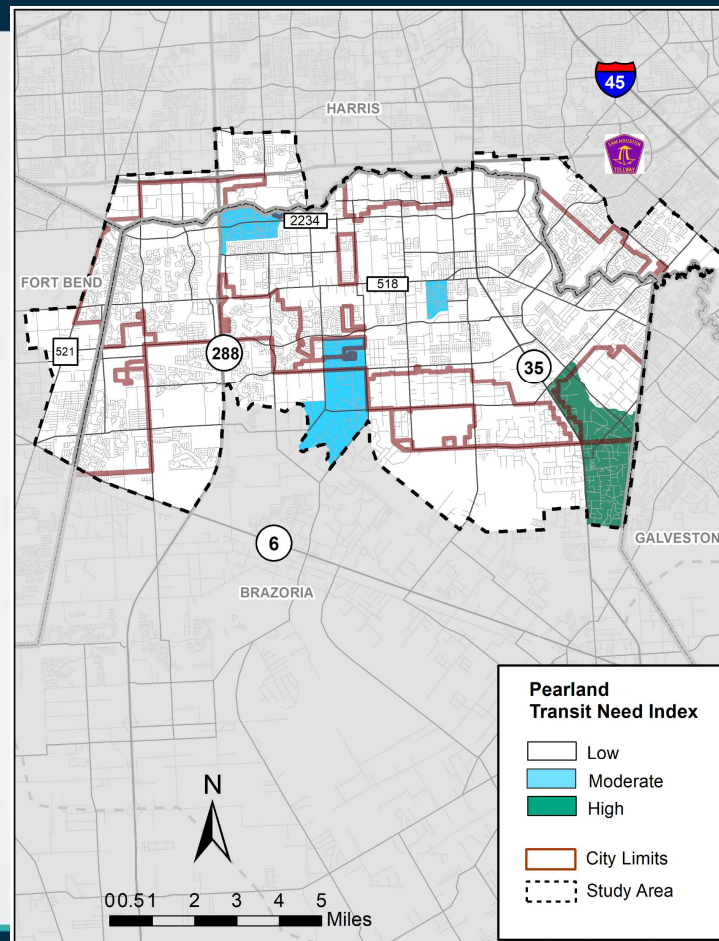


Transit Need Index



- Measures transit service needs for a specific area
- Conducted for the region in 2016 and 2021 as part of RTCP update
- Conducted specifically for Pearland in fall 2022 for this effort
- Uses six variables to weigh transit needs
- Geographic unit of analysis is the Census Block Group
- Evaluates characteristics such as need for transit service and what types of service may be appropriate

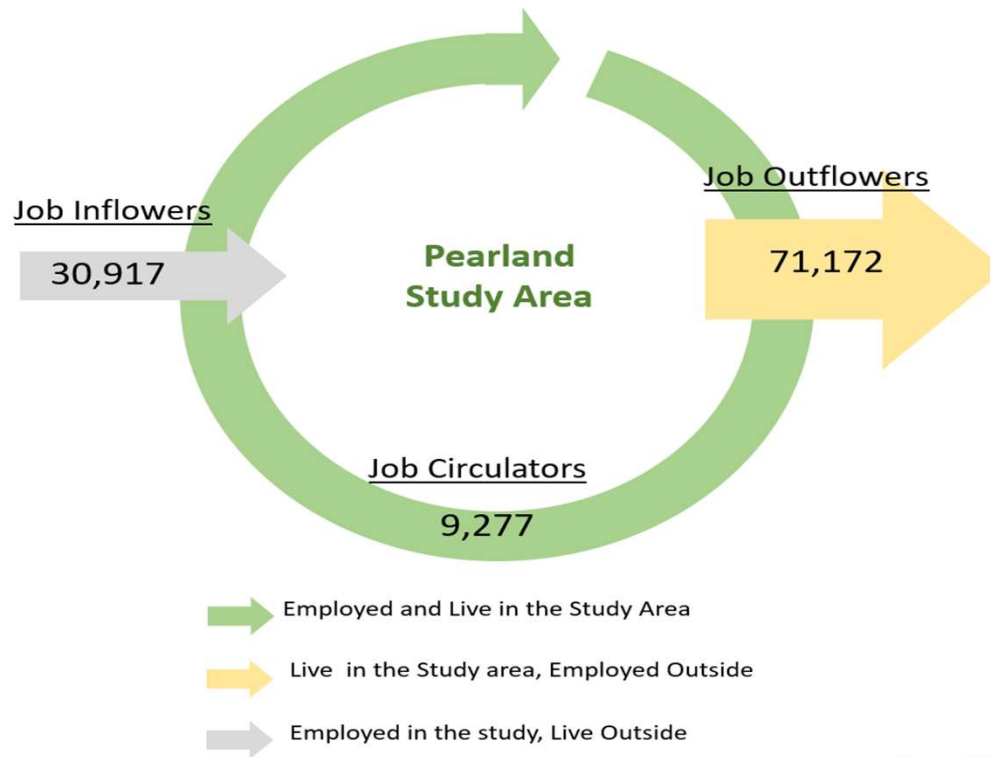
Pearland Total Transit Need Index



Pearland Job Flow Direction 2018

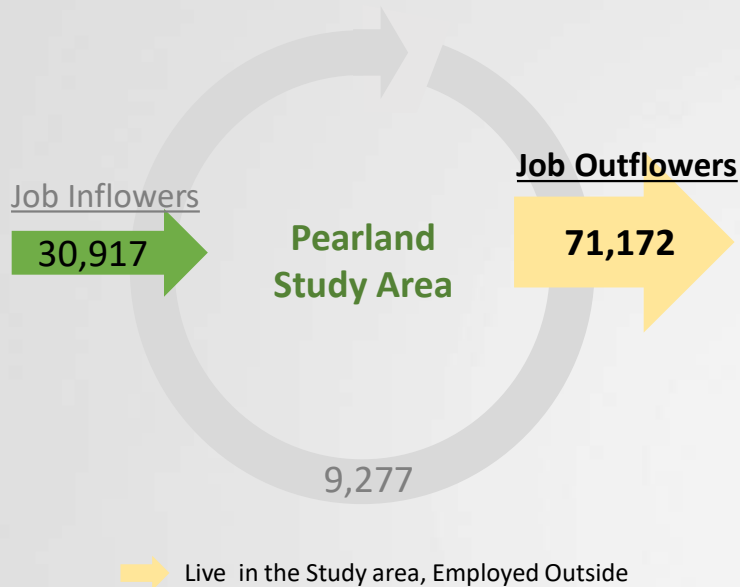


Inflow and Outflow Jobs, 2018



Source: LEHD 2018

Job Outflow Details



| 8 Destination Counties & Top 10 Destination Zip Codes | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------------|-----------|-------|------------|
| County | Jobs | Percentage | Zip Codes | Jobs | Percentage |
| Harris | 58,419 | 82.1% | 77030 | 7,701 | 10.8% |
| Fort Bend | 4,143 | 5.8% | 77002 | 4,551 | 6.4% |
| Brazoria | 3,662 | 5.1% | 77027 | 2,355 | 3.3% |
| Galveston | 3,436 | 4.8% | 77511 | 2,042 | 2.9% |
| Montgomery | 1,085 | 1.5% | 77054 | 1,958 | 2.8% |
| Chambers | 214 | 0.3% | 77056 | 1,600 | 2.2% |
| Liberty | 107 | 0.2% | 77024 | 1,403 | 2.0% |
| Waller | 106 | 0.1% | 77058 | 1,313 | 1.8% |
| Total | 71,172 | | 77007 | 1,289 | 1.8% |
| | | | 77598 | 1,128 | 1.6% |

| Top 10 Destination Cities & Destination Management Districts | | | | | |
|--|--------|------------|---------------------|-------|------------|
| Cities | Jobs | Percentage | Management District | Jobs | Percentage |
| Houston | 44,272 | 62.2% | TEXAS MEDICAL | 7,616 | 9.5% |
| | | | CENTER | | |
| | | | HOUSTON | 4,584 | 5.7% |
| Pasadena | 3,083 | 4.3% | DOWNTOWN | | |
| Alvin | 1,943 | 2.7% | HOBBY AREA | 1,492 | 1.9% |
| Sugar Land | 1,933 | 2.7% | WESTCHASE | 1,361 | 1.7% |
| Webster | 1,122 | 1.6% | UPTOWN | 1,270 | 1.6% |
| Deer Park | 1,033 | 1.5% | SOUTHWEST | 1,061 | 1.3% |
| League City | 1,022 | 1.4% | MEMORIAL CITY | 990 | 1.2% |
| Galveston | 727 | 1.0% | SPRING BRANCH | 914 | 1.1% |
| La Porte | 720 | 1.0% | GREATER SOUTHEAST | 807 | 1.0% |
| Stafford | 703 | 1.0% | GREATER EAST END | 748 | 0.9% |

Source: LEHD 2018

Key Report Findings



- The community has grown rapidly and is projected to continue to do so through 2030
- Pearland remains a relatively low-density suburban city
 - Pearland has a lower level of current transit need and existing intracity transit service; fixed route service would be difficult to maintain
 - Intracity service with demand response or on-demand service appears to be a possible fit for Pearland to meet existing transit needs
- Pearland has considered transit service between 288 and the Texas Medical Center; this remains a potential mobility alternative

Pearland Survey Results

- 2,307 Pearland residents (city and ETJ) responded to the public survey*
- 56% of residents are in favor of public transit in Pearland while 44% do not want public transit in their community.
- Transit for persons with disabilities and seniors is favored by Pearland residents by approximately 75% to 25%
- The majority of travel to work or other destinations among the survey responders is driving alone (73%) followed by telework (14%).

* Study conducted March 8 – April 8, 2022



Pearland Public Survey Comments



- Some respondents who opposed general public transit nevertheless favored services for seniors and persons with disabilities
- Some respondents expressed interest in local service
- The need for park-and-ride services to Houston was discussed
- The need for public transit for seniors, people living with disabilities and students was mentioned
- Respondents voiced strong concern safety in Pearland if public transit is implemented; opposition to transit was often tied to this concern
- There was a desire for sidewalks and bike paths regardless if public transit is implemented or not

Next Steps

Publishing and posting final Technical Memorandum on Engage H-GAC Website

1st round of Public Meetings – May 16 West Pearland Library; May 23 Pearland City Hall

Develop Alternatives Analysis and Trip Modeling

Questions?

Alan Rodenstein
alan.rodenstein@h-gac.com
713-993-2407



Commute Solutions Updates



Emanuel Andrews
April 13, 2013

Regional Collaboration • Transportation Planning • Multimodal Mobility

Earth Day Events



- Commute Solutions participating all month long
- Appearing in various employer-based and community events including:
 - NASA
 - UTMB
 - AIG
 - Discovery Green
 - LaCenterra @ Cinco Ranch
 - Pearland
 - Hines

Bike Encouragement Campaign



- Campaign launch fast approaching
- Engagement site already live
 - Love to Ride: Bike the Gulf
 - Create your free account today!
- Steering committee currently assembling and meeting soon



Commute Fest 2023



- Collaboration with METROStar Vanpool
- Engage residents in high density areas with long commutes
- Objectives:
 - Engage. Educate. Entice
- Working list of locations throughout service region



University Engagement



- Engaging with leadership to understand challenges of commuters
- Collaborations with Student Services, Transportation, Sustainability, affinity groups, etc.
- Objective:
 - Assess needs
 - Educate students about available resources
 - Many don't know about transit subsidies
 - Coordinate on-campus engagements
 - ConnectSmart enrollment

Thank You

Contact Information:

Emanuel Andrews, Sr. Program Coordinator/Technical Lead,
emanuel.andrews@h-gac.com

Francis Rodriguez, Sr. Program Coordinator, francis.rodriguez@h-gac.com

<http://www.yourcommutesolution.org>