

PLANNING ACTIVITIES REPORT

A. LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- The first public meeting for the Southeast Harris County Subregional Study was held on April 15, 2021. The vision, goals, and priority areas were finalized by the study's Steering Committee in January 2021. Public comments will be solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website – <https://engage.h-gac.com/> – through May 14, 2021, followed by the development of options to address safety, congestion, and mobility issues identified to date.
- The first public meeting for the Liberty County Mobility Study is scheduled for April 29, 2021. Public comments will be solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website – <https://engage.h-gac.com/> – through May 14, 2021.
- Staff are preparing for the first Public Meeting for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study on April 22, 2021. More information on the meeting can be found at <https://engage.h-gac.com/>.
- Staff are developing methodology for a Transit-Oriented Development analysis of the 8-County H-GAC region.

2. Freight Planning

- The Regional Goods Movement Plan Request for Proposals (RFP) was published by Procurement. Consultant selection process was completed, and Board of Directors has authorized H-GAC to negotiate a contract to assist with preparing the plan.
- Staff held the Greater Houston Freight Committee on March 18, 2021. Quarterly meetings were scheduled for 2021.

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff continued coordination with the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff Office on operations with the Tow and Go Program.
- H-GAC staff met with the Engineering firm to negotiate the contract for Intersection Safety Audit contract.
- Staff finalized the 2021 Hurricane Evacuation Routes Map for the Houston Galveston Region. Staff also finalized the Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston, Harris, and Matagorda Hurricane Evacuation Zip Zones
- Staff held the Transportation Safety Committee on March 30, 2021.
- Staff met with Communication Department to discuss 2021 Hurricane Preparedness Campaign.
- Staff attend City of Houston Vision Zero Implementation Group meeting.
- Staff held Traffic Incident Management meeting

4. Environmental Planning

- Staff has completed the “Quick User Guide” to the Eco-Logical tool which is designed to teach a new user how the tool works in several short steps. The guide is going through the final edits before publication. Staff have also begun talks with a contact in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) to discuss the prospect of students using the

Eco-Logical tool within the environmental science or social studies curriculum. The initial talks have revealed an apparent interest in introducing the tool to the classroom.

- Staff is working on an update to the H-GAC Environmental Justice Report as well as the Title VI/Non-discrimination Annual Workplan and Accomplishment Report for Fiscal Year 2020.

5. Resiliency Planning

- Staff began development of a Low Impact Development study to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Houston area.
- Staff continue work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-sector specific resiliency best practices and strategies across the country. The draft report has been reviewed by FHWA and staff are addressing comments.
- Staff have developed a strategy to integrate results from the Resilience & Durability Pilot project into ongoing transportation planning and studies. Sub-regional results from the pilot project will be presented to each sub-regional project steering committee.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

A meeting of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Subcommittee was held on January 20, 2021, February 10, 2021, and March 10, 2021. Staff summarized the status of the Congestion Management Process updating and summarized the development of new federally required transit safety performance measures. Staff also continued to coordinate the public review efforts for the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

TxDOT continued their series of presentations describing the scope of requested RTP amendments, including IH 10 West (Inner Katy), IH 610 W, SH 288, and SH 36A. The public review period for the amendments is scheduled from March 26, 2021 to April 28, 2021 with a [public meeting scheduled for April 8, 2021](#).

The [next RTP Subcommittee meeting](#) is planned for April 14, 2021 at 1:30pm.

7. Other Planning Activities

Staff continue to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes are monitored through StreetLight data, transit ridership numbers are reported monthly from transit agencies within the region, and permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on pedestrian/bicyclist 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 and a report on the [Regional Travel Impacts of COVID-19](#).

8. Performance Measures

H-GAC is required to set regional performance targets for four (4) public transportation safety measures: fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability. Regional targets will be based on the target data from region's public transportation agencies. In the upcoming months,

H-GAC subcommittees will review the draft targets and make recommendations. In May, the draft targets will be presented for information, and in June, the draft targets will be presented for action. Information related to the Public Transportation Safety Targets can be found at: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2020-04/SPTs-Guide-20200413-v1-1.pdf>.

B. 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.
- Discussions on the Transportation Development Credit policy and possible new uses of the available credits continued at the TIP Subcommittee. Efforts made to update the current policy as staff continues to refine the policy to present recommendations to the TAC and TPC.
- Staff completed the effort to develop performance measures and targets to comply with federal requirements. A mid-point progress report was developed and is available on the H-GAC website.
- Staff completed coordination efforts on the H-GAC 10-year Plan.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff updated data on H-GAC Website for Mobile Counters program.
- Staff processed requests for Ped/Bike counter data.
- Staff continued coordination with Sugar Land regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA.
- Staff held status meetings with METRO regarding the multimodal network connectivity pilot project grant from FHWA and is working to complete data entry.
- Staff worked with the America Bicycle Education Association to prepare the online safety course called CyclingSavvy.
- Staff participated in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee.
- A procurement is underway for permanent and mobile bike/ped counters.
- Staff worked on revising available bike network mapping with ped/bike counter data and results of the ped/bike counter survey sent to service partners
- Staff is coordinating with the Ped/Bike Subcommittee on the upcoming bike network GIS layer update.
- Staff continued to coordinate with and liaised between service are partners and internal H-GAC departments regarding TIP prioritization workgroup efforts.

3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee met on April 8, 2021.
- Staff met with representatives from METRO, Harris County Transit, and Fort Bend County Transit to evaluate applications for the FY 2020 Call for Projects for 5307 transit formula funds on April 12, 2021.

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- Staff is working with METRO to evaluate applications for the FY 2020 Call for Projects for 5310 transit formula funds. METRO has yet to provide application for review by H-GAC.
 - Work continues in collecting and analyzing the Public Transit Agency Safety Plans. Initial safety targets have been. The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee has recommended approval. The Transportation Safety Committee will review for recommendation later in April. TAC and TPC will be briefed in May.
 - Staff continues to conduct a monthly survey regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on regional transit providers. This survey will continue during the course of the pandemic.
 - The Year 2 contract with the City of Conroe CMAQ Commuter Pilot Project was extended to December 31, 2021 from March 31, 2021. due to the reduced service provided and funding used as a result of the pandemic. One daily morning and evening run will be expanded to a second midday run in August primarily to service essential workers in the Texas Medical Center and Central Business District. Year 3 of the contract is slated to encompass Calendar 2022.
 - Implementation of The Woodlands Township - Energy Corridor Commuter service will be delayed until at least early 2022 due to COVID 19. Both The Woodland Township and The Energy Corridor District are monitoring the intensity to return to work in the Energy Corridor in upcoming months.
 - An updated application of CMAQ Pilot service for the Fort Bend Transit -Houston Central Business District service was received in October. The staff Evaluation Committee recommended application approval and Management concurred. The project was approved by the Board of Directors and service is expected to begin in early 2022.
 - Planning for the start with the City of Pearland to conduct a Transit Feasibility Study oriented towards its specific suburban needs and challenges with robust community engagement. The first meeting is scheduled for early February. A presentation on the study will be provided to TAC and TPC in May. The study is slated to begin in early June and will be conducted in house.
 - Planning and implementation for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan is on-going. The regional transportation inventory is near completion as is the Request for Proposals for assistance in survey work, focus groups and program outreach.
 - Coordination continues between H-GAC and METRO regarding the Regional Transit Seamless Fare System. The Regional Transit Connectivity Workgroup, consisting of transit agency representatives and other interested parties, has been formed to provide input to the overall program, which includes regional fare, regional trip planning, and related efforts. The workgroup met on March 11, 2021 and April 15, 2021.
4. North Houston Communities Transportation Priorities Plan
- Staff continued to work on the scope of work for procuring a consultant for this project.
 - Staff continued reviewing existing studies and reports related to the study area.
 - Staff procured new virtual public engagement platform, Bang the Table.
 - Staff continued development of a Data Storyboard that shows demographics, travel modes, travel patterns, and other relevant data to the study area.
 - Staff continued to attend public and stakeholder meetings related to TxDOT's North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

- Staff attended the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations' (AMPO) Q1 Public Involvement Working Group and the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Plan Working Group.

C. TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Public Outreach staff assisted the Transportation Department in preparing for a public meeting on April 8, 2021 to review amendments to the Regional Transportation Plan.
- In addition, staff also worked on developing new marketing materials and an employer commute survey for the Commute Solutions program.
- The staff has continued to support the Transportation Department in the planning for upcoming studies in Montgomery, Liberty, Southeast Harris and for other large projects coming in 2021.
- Staff developed a campaign report for the 2020 Zip Zone Map/Hurricane Preparedness campaign.
- Staff began strategic planning for the phase two launch of Mobility Links.

D. COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff and internal H-GAC teams are presenting employer COVID 19 survey results to area management districts, this initiative should be completed by April 22.
- Staff met with METRO's Ridership & Client Services for weekly updates and collaboration.
- Staff continues to meet with AECOM for telework planning coordination with area companies and local governments. There is still room to work with six more organizations.
- Staff met with area partners to finalize plans for Earth Day.
- Staff reached out to employers and program partners to participate in Earth Day activities.
- Staff met with area partners to plan for Bike Month.
- Staff began planning for the Commute Solutions Partnership webinar held on Tuesday, April 27th.
- Staff met with the City of Houston, Harris County, and the Energy Corridor District to evaluate current telework plans to assist each employer with revamping current telework policies/programs.

E. CLEAN VEHICLES/HEAVY DUTY DIESEL REPLACEMENT PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1. Clean Vehicles Program

- Staff continues to work with several ISD's to replace older school buses.
- Staff is working with several grant recipients to finalize contracts and complete invoicing.
- Staff continues to respond to incoming phone calls and email requests for program information.
- Staff continues to monitor grant recipient's usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings.
- Staff assisted in the development of a Buy America certification form for Alternative Fueling Stations.

- Staff received H-GAC Board approval for the new AFA for CSJ643. A Resolution was also approved and signed by the H-GAC Board.
- Staff produced a monthly progress report for TxDOT.

2. Heavy Duty Diesel Replacement Program

- Staff continues to work with grant recipients to finalize contracts and complete invoicing
- Staff continues to respond to incoming phone calls and email requests for program information
- Staff continues to monitor grant recipient's usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff continues to follow-up with grant recipients who are not achieving their emission/mileage commitments.

F. GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Air Quality staff's Regional Bus Survey is underway. Staff is working to develop an inventory of all types of buses that operate within the H-GAC region. The survey is ongoing and will continue to collect data through April 31st. It is anticipated the results will help staff better understand how bus operations contribute to regional air quality as well as to help inform future emission reduction efforts undertaken by the MPO. The survey can be found here: <https://www.h-gac.com/clean-vehicles/regional-bus-survey/> and staff is continuing to reach out to involve additional survey respondents.
- Staff is developing the annual Air Quality Ini
- Staff continues to work with stakeholders from other MPOs as well as state agencies to develop an Electric School Bus demonstration project as part of a statewide working group. This group is working with OEMs to vet suitable project vehicles, formulating funding opportunities for the proposed project. Staff is currently participating in an ongoing series of webinars to generate interest and feedback from ISDs within Texas.
- Staff continues to work with air quality staff from NCTCOG to meet with stakeholders to develop zero emission vehicle (ZEV) corridor plan for Interstate 45 between and within the two MPO's service areas. Presently members from both staffs are holding meetings with ZEV stakeholders as well as reaching out directly to non-ZEV stakeholders who may have an interest in such technology. H-GAC staff is working to reach additional stakeholders on the Houston side.
- H-GAC continues to assist with regional efforts to support the Department of Energy sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under the auspices of this program, staff works 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.
- Staff is continuing to work to administer two separate EPA-funded DERA grants to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. With a completed contract in place for

the IKEA project, IKEA has placed orders for project vehicles with final delivery and deployment anticipated in the first half of 2021. Due to funding restraints on the project partner side, the DERA project with H-E-B is continuing, but delayed until late 2021.

- For the EPAs 2021 DERA RFP, staff developed and submitted a project proposal to replace diesel-powered equipment associated within the regional freight sector. Should this proposal be funded, staff will develop and publish a Call for Projects for program participants beginning in late CY2021.

G. TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand modeling and GIS technical supports and assistances to support H-GAC's Regional Transportation Planning, Transportation Improvement Program, the 2020 Regional Air Quality conformity process, other H-GAC's internal planning work and to H-GAC's member agencies such as TxDOT and METRO, for their various corridor and sub-area transportation planning and studies.
- Staff setup and continues to research and collect industry profiles data for Regional Goods Movement study.
- Staff continues to develop highway networks as input for the AIMSUN Meso and Micro modeling for Montgomery County Precinct – 2 subarea study and for SE Harris County sub-area studies. Staff also continues to provide GIS technical Supports to these regional corridor studies.
- Staff continues to participate and assist the Cambridge Systematics in validation and calibration of the Activity Based model.
- Staff successfully completed the model runs and the Trans-VMT runs and calculations for the 2020, 2030, 2040, 2045 conformity Air Quality Analysis and findings using the Cube Voyager platform.
- Staff continues to work with the Steering Committee of the Origin-Destination On-board Transit Survey to monitor transit ridership in the region, developed the Request for Information for potential contractors, and working with the H-GAC Procurement Group for the release and the release of the Request for Proposals. Steering Committee continues to meet to evaluation options to achieve better survey results.
- Staff continues to work with City of Houston Aviation department to develop a MOU/Inter-Local Government Agreement, setup steering committee to review and develop scope of services, sample size, and timeline for regional commercial airport (IAH & Hobby) ground access count travel survey.
- Staff continues to update websites and data dashboards for various Subregional studies such as Montgomery County (Pct-2), Southeast Harris and Liberty Counties.
- Staff continuing GTFS feed for local transit agencies to add update transit routes on Google maps.
- Staff continues to participate in the conformity conference calls and the Texas Technical Working Group Advisory Committee meetings. Staff developed both TAC and TPC background papers and presentations on conformity analysis and results.