7A. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

DATE: Friday, November 20, 2026
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: 3555 Timmons Lane, Conference Room B, Houston, Texas 77027

The presiding officer, Chairman Justin Beckendorff called the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) meeting of October 23, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. to order.

CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM, INTRODUCTIONS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chairman Justin Beckendorff opened the meeting with greetings and requested attendees to take their seats. Chair Beckendorff asked Ms. Allie Isbell (HGAC) to conduct the roll call and verify quorum. Ms. Isbell confirmed that a quorum was present, as documented in Attachment 1. Chair Beckendorff asked the Council if anyone wanted to declare a conflict of interest on any item on the agenda. TPC member, Council Member, Todd Thurber declared a conflict of interest on Item 8. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Allie Isbell (HGAC) provided instructions to the public on how to submit comments online and informed attendees that Spanish translation services were available onsite, while American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation were accessible online. No written comments were submitted by October 22, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Public comments were provided in person, and no public comments were provided online. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

ITEM 5. MPO DIRECTOR REPORT AND ORIENTATION OF AGENDA, MS. JAMILA OWENS, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENTATION, H-GAC

Ms. Jamila Owens, H-GAC provided the MPO Director's Report and highlighted several upcoming opportunities and recent accomplishments of the H-GAC Metropolitan Planning Organization as well updates on several ongoing planning initiatives, program activities, board actions, and upcoming agenda items.

Planning Activities

- The Coordinated Public and Human Services Transit Plan is currently available for public comment. This regional plan covers 13 counties and focuses on improving transit efficiency and addressing transportation gaps throughout the region. Local governments and stakeholders were encouraged to share information about the public review period with their communities.
- The MPO recently hosted its second annual Air Quality Summit, which drew approximately 175 attendees, reflecting significant growth from the inaugural event's attendance of about 100 participants. The event highlighted increasing regional interest in air quality initiatives.
- October was recognized as "Biketober," with members encouraged to support and participate in bicycle-related activities and transportation awareness efforts.

Subregional Planning Program

- Members were reminded that the deadline for submitting subregional planning requests are due. Eligible requests include thoroughfare plans, mobility plans, active transportation plans, and transit plans.
- Submitted requests will be reviewed through the MPO's selection process and considered for inclusion in the next Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- MPO staff also expressed appreciation to jurisdictions that submitted freight grade separation project applications by the established deadline

H-GAC Board recently approved:

- The Zero Emissions Vehicle Plan consultant contract.
- The FM 197 Grade Separation Study consultant contract.
- Acquisition of Remix Transit software, which will enhance the MPO's ability to evaluate and plan for emerging transit services and transportation modes.

Resources for MPO Members

- Members were informed of a newly developed MPO Handbook prepared by TxDOT along with a condensed board member guide. These resources provide an overview of MPO functions, responsibilities, and transportation planning processes and serve as a useful reference following MPO orientation activities.

October Agenda Overview

- The meeting agenda included one action item: a legislative resolution to formally reaffirm and adopt legislative positions previously approved by the committee.
- Several discussion items were also scheduled for presentation and are expected to return in the future for additional consideration.

All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 6. CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Justin Beckendorff introduced the Consent Agenda and noted that the items were routine in nature and could be approved through a single motion unless a member requested that an item be removed for separate consideration. The Consent Agenda included approval of the previous meeting minutes, 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Amendments. A motion and second were received to approve the Consent Agenda. No discussion was offered, and the motion carried unanimously. The Council voted and the Consent Agenda was approved as presented. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 7. 90th SESSION OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE-LEGISLATIVE POLICY PRIORITIES AD HOC COMMITTEE RESOLUTION, JUDGE MARK KEOUGH

Judge Mark Keough presented an outline of a comprehensive legislative advocacy strategy developed by the Legislative Policy Priorities Ad Hoc Committee to advance regional transportation priorities and strengthen the region's voice at the state level. He presented three key components for member jurisdictions.

1. Legislative Priorities Resolution outlining the transportation priorities previously approved by the TPC.
2. Template Local Resolution that cities, counties, and other local governments can customize and adopt through their governing bodies.
3. Discussion and Reference Materials providing detailed explanations of each legislative priority to assist local officials in communicating the importance of the proposals to stakeholders and elected representatives.

Judge Keough requested approval from the Council. Chair Beckendorff called for a motion. A motion was made and a second was received to approve the resolution.

During discussion comments highlighting unified support from the region's counties and municipalities would strengthen the region's ability to secure additional transportation funding and legislative support during the upcoming 90th Texas Legislative Session. Members also expressed appreciation to the Legislative Policy Priorities Ad Hoc Committee and H-GAC staff for developing the legislative strategy and supporting materials. The Council voted and approved TPC Resolution No. 2026-28. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 8. 2027- 2030 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) & 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) – FUTURE AMENDMENTS, MR. JIM DICKINSON, H-GAC

Mr. Jim Dickinson (HGAC) provided a preview of 22 draft amendments to the 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He presented the proposed amendments and explained how they fit within the broader regional transportation planning framework. Key proposed amendments included:

- The City of Pearland is requesting modifications to the funding structure of the Mike Hauer Road widening project to support a scope enhancement that includes a trail component. The proposal would convert a portion of Surface Transportation Block Grant funds to Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and add $2 million in local funds
- The Gulf Coast Railroad District is requesting updates to the descriptions and funding amounts of four Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Urban Area Formula-funded projects based on actual allocations. The district also proposes advancing the projects to Fiscal Year 2027 and grouping them in the statewide transit program
- METRO is proposing to carry over four projects from Fiscal Year 2026 to Fiscal Year 2027. Three projects are funded with METRO funds, while the fourth is a previously programmed regional transit fare collection project funded through FTA formula funds.
- The Woodlands Township is requesting revisions to the descriptions of two trolley acquisition projects to address Federal Transit Administration requirements.
- The TxDOT Houston District submitted several requests, including:
    - Updates to project descriptions for two segments of the State Highway 288 reconstruction and widening project in Harris County
    - Carryover of two segments of the FM 2920 reconstruction and widening project into Fiscal Year 2030.
    - Updates and additional programming for State Highway 99 projects in Fort Bend County, including five new projects funded entirely through state toll revenues.

Mr. Dickinson noted that the 22 projects are distributed throughout the eight-county region and emphasized that the amendments remain in draft form. Several cost estimates may be revised before the amendments are brought back to the TPC for formal approval next month. During discussion, Dr. Shelley Sekula Gibbs, The Woodlands Township, invited TPC members to attend the unveiling of six new trolley vehicles on November 7th at 10:00 a.m. at the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. The presentation concluded with a reminder that the item was for informational purposes only and no action was requested from the Council at this time. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

ITEM 9. CALL FOR PARTNERS FOR THE COMMUTER AND TRANSIT PILOT PROGRAM, MR. EMANUEL ANDREWS, H-GAC

Mr. Emanuel Andrews, (HGAC) gave an overview of the upcoming 2027 Call for Partners for the Commuter and Transit Pilot Program. Supported by Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding through an agreement with TxDOT, the program serves the eight-county metropolitan planning area. Its goal is to reduce vehicle emissions and vehicle miles traveled by supporting innovative transit and transit-supportive services. HGAC has worked with local governments and transit agencies on these efforts since 1999.

Program structure and upcoming changes

Eligible regional sponsors may apply to plan and launch pilot services. Proposals are evaluated for funding eligibility, regional transportation goals, and long-term sustainability. Selected projects receive three to five years of operating support, with sponsoring agencies expected to develop a path to continue the service after pilot funding ends.

For the 2027 call, HGAC plans to move to an annual application cycle and refine the guidelines using stakeholder feedback. The local contribution structure is also changing: the presentation described a shift from a 20% local match to a 10% contribution to the Regional Excellence Fund, incorporating Transportation Development Credits (TDCs). The change is intended to reduce barriers for sponsors while supporting transportation demand management and Unified Planning Work Program activities.

Current pilot examples

- Fort Bend Transit downtown commuter service: In its third year, the express service connects Fort Bend County with downtown Houston. It reportedly removes approximately 10,000–13,000 vehicles from the corridor each month and is progressing toward permanent integration.

- City of Sugar Land on-demand service: The service provides flexible trips for purposes such as work, shopping, school, and family visits. It averages more than 7,000 rides per month and has attracted over 2,000 new riders, according to the presentation.

Application timeline and service scope

HGAC is gathering feedback from regional stakeholders and expects to hold a pre-proposal workshop early in the year, followed shortly by a Call for Partners open for approximately six to seven weeks. The workshop is expected to address project readiness and strategies for sustaining services after the pilot period. The program can support more than conventional commuter routes. Examples discussed included on-demand transit, car sharing, bike sharing connected to transit, and lunchtime shuttles. A discussion occurred after the presentation which included the following highlights

Discussion highlights

- Participants emphasized the challenge of maintaining popular services once temporary funding ends. Suggestions included phasing in local contributions, pursuing federal or other funding, submitting service data to the National Transit Database to support eligibility for Federal Transit Administration funding, and exploring partnerships with local businesses, destinations, and organizations. Advertising or sponsorship on vehicles was also discussed as a possible revenue source, subject to local agency decisions.

- The discussion also touched on automated vehicles. One participant described prior operational difficulties with an automated bus; the group noted that the technology may be reconsidered as it matures and becomes more suitable for public transit.

- The presentation discussion cited approximately $6 million in current program funding, with a possibility of seeking additional funds depending on the number of applications received. Draft guidelines are expected to be shared for stakeholder review before the call is finalized. The item was for informational purposes only and no action was requested from the Council at this time. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 10. REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COOORDINATED PLAN 2027-2031, MR. BENNIE CHAMBERS, III, H-GAC

Mr. Bennie Chambers, III, (HGAC) presented an update on the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan for 2027–2031. The plan is a five-year regional coordination strategy focused on improving public transit and human services transportation across the 13-county Gulf Coast region. The plan is intended to identify transportation needs, priorities, and recommended actions to support future planning and funding opportunities; however, it is not itself a funding or project programming document.

Key Findings and Regional Needs

Through stakeholder engagement and regional analysis, several recurring transportation needs were identified:

- Expanded transit service coverage throughout the region.
- Improved connections across county lines and between service providers.
- Increased availability of early morning, evening, and weekend transit service.
- Better first- and last-mile connections.
- Easier access to transportation information, particularly for riders navigating services offered by multiple agencies.

These findings formed the foundation for the plan's recommendations and investment priorities.

Strategic Focus Areas

The draft plan is organized around five primary focus areas designed to improve mobility and transportation coordination across the region:

1. Mobility and rider experience, including accessibility, safety, affordability, and access to medical services.
2. Service coordination and regional partnerships.
3. Mobility pathways and connectivity.
4. Information and public awareness.

5. Funding opportunities and transportation system resilience.

Recommended Actions

To address identified needs, the plan proposes a variety of strategies, including:

- Enhanced coordination of medical and specialized transportation services.
- Evaluation of cross-county transit connections.
- Exploration of flexible mobility pilot programs.
- Improved multimodal connectivity and access.
- Development of multilingual transportation information resources.
- Identification of funding sources and implementation partners to support future projects.

Public Review and Engagement

The draft plan is currently available for public review, with feedback being solicited from residents, transit providers, local governments, and regional partners. Staff will review and incorporate comments before presenting the revised plan to the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee for consideration and adoption. The final plan will then be submitted to TxDOT.

During discussion, members asked about public engagement efforts and the level of participation received to date. Staff reported receiving approximately 20 comments during the public review period and noted that earlier outreach efforts generated nearly 1,300 survey responses. Social media platforms and online surveys were identified as effective tools for gathering public input and increasing awareness of regional transportation issues.

The discussion also included an update on upcoming transportation funding opportunities. Staff advised that a transit and pilot program call for projects is expected in the near term and that MPO staff will begin developing a formal policy framework to guide the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) call for projects. Additional information and timelines will be presented to the Transportation Policy Council in future meetings. The item was for informational purposes only and no action was requested from the Council at this time. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 11. FEDERAL CERTIFICATION REVIEW, MS. ALLIE ISBELL AND MS. JAMILA OWENS, H-GAC

Ms. Allie Isbell, (HGAC) and Ms. Jamila Owens (HGAC) presented the status of the Federal Certification Review. The region received full certification following a federal review conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The review assessed whether the regional transportation planning process met federal requirements and involved regional partners, including transit agencies. The review resulted in no corrective actions.

Recommendations

The review identified several opportunities to strengthen ongoing planning and coordination:

- Consider adding an ex officio representative from FTA Region 6 to the Transportation Policy Council (TPC).
- Continue working with TxDOT and HGAC's fiscal agent to update or extend the governing agreement by September 30, 2027.

- Keep partner agreements and memoranda of understanding current, including updates to transit service areas.
- Periodically review the Public Participation Plan and assess the effectiveness of its strategies.
- In the congestion management process, consider identified strategies before advancing directly to capacity expansion projects.
- Coordinate with TxDOT, FTA, and transit agencies on the annual listing of obligated projects.

Commendations

The review recognized three regional accomplishments:

- Meeting the target in the Transit Asset Management plan, which assesses the condition and safety of transit capital assets.
- Regional transit partners' adoption of a Vision Zero policy.
- Establishing a project delivery team that meets quarterly with project sponsors to help keep projects on track.

Next steps

HGAC plans to review the recommendations internally and consider how to incorporate them into the next Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Staff will also seek input from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and TPC as work on the UPWP begins. The program is due the following summer.The item was for informational purposes only and no action was requested from the Council at this time. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJORNMENT

Chair Beckendorff informed the Council of upcoming meetings

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory (RAQPAC) Committee Meeting	October 29	10:00 a.m.	Virtual
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting	November 4	9:30 a.m.	In Person
Great Houston Freight (GHF) Committee Meeting	November 5	1:30 p.m.	Hybrid
Transportation Policy Council Meeting	November 20	9:30 a.m.	In Person

Chair Beckendorff adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

Hon. Sally Branson, TPC Secretary
Transportation Policy Council

Attachment 1
MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL (TPC)
FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA
October 23, 2026

ROLL

AGENCY		VOTING MEMBER/ALTERNATE	REPRESENTING
Baytown, City of	_____	Honorable Charles Johnson Mayor	City of Baytown
	_____	Kenrick Griffith – Alternate	
Conroe, City of	_____	Honorable John Sellars Mayor Pro Tem	City of Conroe
	_____	Mr. Jason Miller– Alternate	
Galveston, City of	X	Honorable Alex Porretto Council Member	City of Galveston
	_____	Honorable Bob Brown	
Houston, City of Position No. 1	X	Honorable Sallie Alcorn Council Member	City of Houston
	_____	Honorable Willie Davis- Alternate	
Houston, City of Position No. 2	X	Honorable Carolyn Evans-Shabazz Council Member	City of Houston
	_____	Honorable Joaquin Martinez - Alternate	
Houston, City of Position No. 3	X	Randy Macchi Director -Houston Public Works	City of Houston
	_____	David Wurdlow - Alternate	
League City, City of	_____	Honorable Tommy Cones Council Member	City of League City
	_____	Honorable Andy Mann - Alternate	
Missouri City, City of	X	Shashi Kumar, P.E. Assistant City Manager	City of Missouri City
	_____	Nicholas L. Cook – Alternate	
Pasadena, City of	_____	Sarah Benavides, P.E. Sr. Assistant Public Works Director	City of Pasadena
	_____	Mark Gardemal – Alternate	

AGENCY		VOTING MEMBER/ALTERNATE	REPRESENTING
Pearland, City of	_____	Vacant	City of Pearland
	X	Trent Epperson-Alternate	
Sugar Land, City of	X	Honorable Suzanne Whatley Council Member	City of Sugar Land
	_____	Honorable Jim Vonderharr– Alternate	
Texas City, City of	_____	Vacant Mayor	City of Texas City
	_____	Vacant - Alternate	
Smaller Cities – Position 1	_____	Honorable Jerry Mouton Mayor	Smaller Cities
	X	Hon. Todd Thurbur - Alternate	
Smaller Cities – Position 2	_____	Hon. John Escoto City of Shenandoah	Smaller Cities
	_____	Hon. Dusty Thiele-Alternate City of Katy	
Smaller Cities – Position 3	X	Hon. Sally Branson-**Secretary** City of Friendswood	Smaller Cities
	_____	Hon. Ross Gordon-Alternate City of Bellaire	
The Woodlands Township	X	Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs Board Member -The Woodlands Township Board	The Woodlands Township
	_____	Craig Eissler-Alternate	
Brazoria County	X	Matt Hanks, JD, P.E. County Engineer	Brazoria County
	_____	Honorable David Linder – Alternate	
Chambers County	_____	Honorable Ryan Dagley County Commissioner	Chambers County
	_____	Honorable Tommy Hammond-Alternate	
Fort Bend County	X	Honorable Grady Prestage County Commissioner, **1st Vice Chair**	Fort Bend County
	_____	Stacy Slawinski, P.E. – Alternate	

AGENCY		VOTING MEMBERSHIP	REPRESENTING
Galveston County	_____	Honorable Robin Armstrong County Commissioner	Galveston County
	_____	Honorable Joe Giusti– Alternate	
Harris County Position No. 1	_____	Honorable Adrian Garcia County Commissioner, Pct. 2	Harris County
	X	Dr. Milton Rahman – Alternate	
Harris County Position No. 2	X	Honorable Lesley Briones-2nd **Vice Chair** County Commissioner, Pct. 4	Harris County
	_____	Roberto Treviño, P.E. – Alternate	
Liberty County	X	Honorable Jay Knight County Judge	Liberty County
	_____	Honorable Greg Arthur - Alternate	
Montgomery County	X	Honorable Mark Keough County Judge	Montgomery County
	_____	Matt Gray – Alternate	
Waller County	X	Honorable Justin Beckendorff County Commissioner – **Chair**	Waller County
	_____	Kendric Jones- Alternate	
Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority	_____	Elizabeth Gonzalez Brock METRO Chair	METRO
	X	Thomas Jasien-Alternate	
TxDOT-Houston	X	Glenn Allbritton, P.E. District Engineer	TxDOT Houston District
	_____	Varuna Singh, P.E.– Alternate	
TxDOT-Beaumont	_____	Ana I. Mijares, P.E. District Engineer	TxDOT Beaumont District
	_____	Lisa Collins, P.E. – Alternate	
Port Freeport	X	Phyllis Saathoff Executive Director	Port Freeport
	_____	Rob Lowe-Alternate	
Port Houston	X	Charlie Jenkins Chief Executive Officer	Port Houston
	_____	Kerrick Henny-Alternate	

AGENCY		VOTING MEMBERSHIP	REPRESENTING
Gulf Coast Rail District	_____	Hon. Jon Keeney Mayor-GCRD Board Member	Gulf Coast Rail District
	_____	Veronica Chapa-Gorczynski-Alternate	

31	**Total Voting Membership**	
21	**Voting Membership Present**	
16	**Required Quorum**	

AGENCY		EX-OFFICIOS	REPRESENTING
Texas State Senate	_____	Hon. Carol Alvarado	8-County Region
Freight Rail Interests	X	Clint Schelbitzki/**Richard Zientek**	Union Pacific
Texas State Senate	_____	Hon. Brett Ligon	
Texas State Legislator	_____	Hon Dennis Paul	8-County Region
Wharton County	X	Hon. Phillip Spenrath	Wharton County
		NON-VOTING	
H-GAC	X	Ron Papsdorf	H-GAC
TxDOT-Houston	_____	Vacant	TxDOT-Houston