



## Public Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026  
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

### In Attendance:

#### Organizers:

##### Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC):

- Cornell Evans, Jr., H-GAC Project Manager
- Rachel Windham, H-GAC Project Manager

##### Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ):

- Proy Chalitruangkul, TCEQ Project Manager

#### In-Person Attendees:

Jaime Gonzalez (University of Houston Institute for Ecological Resilience)  
Sam Hill (Texas A&M Forest Service)

#### Virtual Attendees:

Andrea Barrera (Bayou Preservation Association)  
Coral Lozada (Houston Methodist Office of Sustainability)  
Daniel Milliken (Willow Waterhole Green Space Conservancy)  
Jennifer Irving (Houston Advanced Research Center)  
Laura Parker (Harris County Precinct 4)  
Mortan Sager (Bayou Preservation Association)  
Natasha Zarnstorff (Galveston Bay Foundation)  
Robert Snoza (Harris County Flood Control District)  
Suzanne Wang (N/A)  
Karina Yonekawa-Blest (Friends of Fonde Park)

### Meeting Notes:

#### Welcome and Introductions

- Cornell Evans and Rachel Windham (H-GAC) commenced the hybrid meeting at 5:00 pm by welcoming the attendees. Mr. Evans introduced himself and the participants in the room, then called roll for virtual attendees.

#### Project Overview and Preliminary Findings

- Mr. Evans provided an overview of the Brays and Sims Bayou watershed.
  - The Brays and Sims Bayou watershed is located primarily within Harris County, with a small portion of the western side touching Fort Bend County. Major cities include Houston, South Houston, Bellaire, West University Place, and Southside Place with roadways such as I-45 and I-69 running through the watershed. The watershed is heavily developed, with the exception of a small percentage of forest, wetland and pasture land cover types mostly found in Sims Bayou.
  - Assessments of surface water in the Brays and Sims Bayou watershed indicate impairments for contact recreation use due to bacteria levels in exceedance of the state water quality standard. There are also concerns for aquatic life and general use due to high nutrient levels and depressed oxygen.
  - Sources of fecal indicator bacteria include point sources such as improperly treated wastewater discharge, and nonpoint sources including overflow from on-site sewage facilities and illicit sewage, waste from pets and livestock, and waste from wildlife and invasive species.
  - Preliminary analyses of data collected quarterly between 2020 and 2024 show bacteria levels exceeding state water quality standards in segments such as Brays Bayou Above Tidal, Sims Bayou Above Tidal, Willow Waterhole Bayou Above Tidal, and Plum Creek Above Tidal. However, Canal C-147 was shown to be either below the standard or within compliance. The mean exceedances, or the number of samples that exceeded the standard, were observed for dissolved oxygen. Several segments such as the Houston Ship Channel and Country Club Bayou Above Tidal exceeded the standard, while others such as Bintliff Ditch and Berry Bayou Above Tidal were within compliance. Similarly, the parameters total phosphorus, nitrate, and ammonia were analyzed, showcasing mean exceedances for all segments listed in the provided table except for Kulman Gully Above Tidal and Pine Gully Above Tidal. More information can be found in the Acquired Data Analysis Report, which is currently in review by TCEQ and will be published on the project website soon: <https://www.h-gac.com/watershed-based-plans/brays-sims-bayou>.
  - Load duration curve analyses relating streamflow to water quality data indicate:
    - Bacteria loads exceed the state water quality standard in high flow through dry conditions across the watershed which could indicate nonpoint source pressures are the major influence of high levels of

bacteria. However, it should be noted that point source pollution can also occur during or be exacerbated by high flow events

- Loading is below the standard for low flow conditions in Brays Tidal and Sims Tidal
- Fecal indicator bacteria loading in other low conditions varied among sites.

### Partnership Mission, Structure, and Outlook

- The Brays and Sims Bayou Watershed Partnership is being formed to develop a watershed protection plan informed by data analyses and stakeholder knowledge.
- Framework for the Brays and Sims Bayou Watershed Partnership was described and included more detail on meeting roles including general stakeholders, focused work groups and steering committee members.
- A projected timeline was reviewed showing the milestones that the partnership hopes to achieve by the end of 2027. The last steps include the development and implementation of a watershed protection plan (WPP) document.
- A call was made for notice of any other projects or organizations that may already be established in the watershed that the partnership can work alongside.

### Next Steps and Discussion

- The outlook between the current meeting and the next scheduled meeting (March 2026) was discussed. At the next meeting, the partnership will decide on a steering committee and review more technical information produced by H-GAC.
- Next meeting in March will look into more individual sources as well as assessments for those sources.
- Mr. Gonzalez inquired about the location and processes of TCEQ's water quality monitoring stations, as well as EPA's current status.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:40 pm.

For more information, visit <https://www.h-gac.com/watershed-based-plans/brays-sims-bayou>, or contact project staff:

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