

9E. SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

LONG RANGE PLANNING

1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Southeast Harris County Subregional Study has been completed. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- The final report for the Liberty County Mobility Study is being completed. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com
- Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan study team presented the draft recommendations at the second public meeting on August 4, 2022. The recommendations can be viewed at <http://www.engage.h-gac.com>.
- Staff developed Advanced Funding Agreements (AFA) for regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The AFA's have been submitted to TxDOT for approval.
- Staff developed draft project scopes of work for the regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and are coordinating with local partners.

2. Freight Planning

- The next Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2022, topic is Transportation Equity.
- The last Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan was held on June 28, 2022. For more information visit: www.engage.h-gac.com

3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with AECOM, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County Sheriff Office (HCSO), Harris County Toll Road Authority, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), Houston Police Department (HPD), Houston TranStar Staff, and Tow and Go Contractors was held on September 8, 2022.
- Staff held a Tow and Go™ Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, HCSO, HPD, AECOM and Tow and Go Contractors was held on September 6, 2022.
- The contract with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) "Teens in the Driver Seat" Contract until May 31, 2023.
- Staff attend a After Action Review by the Harris County Fire Marshall Office involving an 18-wheeler rollover Crash involving Hydrogen Peroxide.
- Staff attend TxDOT Bi-Monthly Statewide Traffic Incident Management Meeting on August 17, 2022.
- Tow and Go performed 3,182 "No Cost Tows" in August. Average Clearance Times was 15 minutes and 56 seconds.
- In July 2022, the 8-county region experienced 59 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was a 23% decrease compared to July 2021 which recorded 77 fatalities.

- The number of traffic crashes recorded in CRIS in the 8 County Area was 12,714 for July 2022, a 15% decreased when compared to July 2021 which recorded 14,923 crashes.
- The number of fatalities from January 1 to July 31st in 2022 for the 8-county region was 462. In 2021, during this same period the number of fatalities was 471. This is a 2 percent decrease this year when compared to for the same period in 2021.

4. Environmental Planning

- Staff is developing a process and worksheet to assess and document the environmental justice issues associated with proposed transportation projects and planning decisions.
- Staff are updating the Eco-Logical tool to include links to existing environmental assessment and final environmental impact statements for roadway projects within the planning area. Staff will coordinate with TxDOT and consultants working on local Planning and Environmental Linkages studies to examine the application of Ecological tools on those studies.
- Staff are continuing to work on an update to the regional Environmental Justice report.

5. Resiliency Planning

- Staff continues the development of a Low Impact Development tool to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area.
- Staff completed work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-specific resiliency best practices and strategies. The draft report has been finalized and accepted by FHWA. Staff has completed an update of the Foresight Panel on Environmental Effects report with outcomes from the Pilot project.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- The Visioning phase of outreach was completed at the end of July 2022. The region received over 2,000 survey responses from outreach in all eight MPO counties and with various stakeholder groups.
- Staff are now preparing for a second round of virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach will include sharing and requesting feedback on the Visioning outreach results along with the investment strategies to address safety, reliability, and other identified needs.
- The final round of public outreach to review the draft 2045 RTP Update will be from February to April 2023, which will conclude with a request for the TPC to approve the 2045 RTP Update. Please see <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtpupdate> for more information.

7. Other Planning Activities

- Staff continued to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes were monitored through StreetLight data. Transit ridership numbers are now being reported on a quarterly basis from transit agencies within the region. Permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on 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.

- Staff has secured additional members for the Congestion Management Process Update Workgroup and is refining the scope of work for the update and responsibilities for the workgroup.

SHORT RANGE PLANNING

1. Project Programming

- Staff coordinated on the amendments to the 2023-2026 TIP document. Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Staff met with local sponsors as part of the quarterly TIP monitoring efforts.
- Staff worked on the development of project selection criteria for the next Call for Projects and coordinated with various subcommittees.
- Staff finalized the Reliability, Congestion and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality federal performance measures reporting and targets in coordination with four H-GAC subcommittees, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Transportation Policy Council (TPC). The scorecards, [reporting](#) of past performance, and future targets can be found on the Transportation Performance Measures [webpage](#). TAC and TPC will consider approval of the reporting and targets this month.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Staff continues to maintain and monitor permanent pedestrian and bicycle counting equipment and data and has launched a new GIS based way to report the data for permanent counters and is now focused on doing the same for mobile counters.
- Staff has begun planning for a series of Adult Bicycle Safety Education workshops in late 2022 through mid-2023. Marketing efforts are being extended to area races, challenges, and major corporations in the outlying counties. The online courses are also being offered during the same time frame. Marketing efforts are being extended to local events, major employment generators, and law enforcement agencies. In addition, staff is seeking certification from the League of American Bicyclists to become instructors so that we can expand class offerings and have additional flexibility.
- Staff continues participation in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee.
- Staff continue to advance Ped/Bike Subcommittee workgroups. The bike network GIS data update workgroup made formal recommendations to the Ped/Bike Subcommittee in July 2022 regarding immediate short-term implementation. Nomenclature is being standardized to ensure ease of automation for future updates (e.g. the same language and definitions are being adopted across the region service area).
- Staff has been providing data and similar technical support to service area members that are submitting an application for Bicycle Friendly Community designation by the League of American Bicyclists. The immediate application deadline is September 29, 2022. The next application deadline will not happen until February 2023. This particular designation is offered twice a year.

- Staff continued to work on the scope of work for AFA projects and hold monthly meetings with local sponsors for the Local Active Transportation Studies
- Staff worked with procurement to release Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan RFP and will hold a pre-proposal meeting on September 21st.
- Staff submitted paperwork for the Advanced Funding Agreements to TXDOT for the Local Active Transportation Studies and is preparing Interlocal Agreements for each of these studies.
- Staff created an outline for Active Transportation Toolkit as well as Safe Route to School program
- Staff drafted project proposal for UPWP

3. Transit Planning

- The next regular quarterly meeting of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee will occur on October 13, 2022.
- Staff continues to refine the scope of work for High-Capacity Transit feasibility studies and prepare paperwork for Advanced Funding Agreements for the bulk of these studies. The first study is funded through the Unified Planning Work Program and will focus on the US 90A corridor, conducted in partnership with the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD).
- A Technical Memorandum for the City of Pearland Transit Study with existing conditions and peer analysis is being refined internally. Due to additional revisions, the Steering Committee and Public Meetings have been pushed back but are still anticipated to take place in the fall.
- Staff have completed the City of Dayton transit study Request for Proposals, and it is expected to be released in September.
- The Woodlands – Energy Corridor commuter service is underway. Staff are coordinating with The Woodlands Township on invoicing and ridership. T Service has been adjusted to two runs in the morning and two in the evening. A contract revision is being developed to adjust to the new circumstances.
- The action plan for the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan is complete, and work has begun on the scope for a transit information study recommendation coming out of the most recent plan update. Tracking of performance metrics to evaluate progress on RCTP objectives is also underway.
- Coordination continues between H-GAC, METRO and other regional transit agencies regarding the Regional Transit Connectivity Project, including the Seamless Fare System, regional trip planner, data management system, and related efforts. Initial assessments to determine agencies' needs and capacity are underway and are scheduled to be completed this fall.
- A new Paratransit/NEMT workgroup of the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee also held their first meeting in July. This workgroup will focus on closing the gaps with paratransit and non-emergency medical transportation services in the region and includes service providers and users of the services. Additional members were recruited to the group in August, in advance of the next meeting in September.

TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff are planning a second phase of public outreach for the RTP 2045 Update. The first public meeting will occur on Oct. 13.

- The August edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released on August 23. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Region-View-August-2022.html?soid=1101570321083&aid=qrNVdijhGw8>
- Media coverage was secured with Fox 26 and Community Impact regarding the Tow and Go program and Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
 - Pearland Transit Study
 - Bike Safety Training Courses
 - Public Participation Policy Update
 - Freight and Tech Forum

COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff continued executing plans for Commute Solutions Month 2022, which will focus on recognizing those who have partnered with the program this year. This includes preparing certificates of appreciation for partners, social media campaign, and an update to the partners page on the Commute Solutions website.
- Staff presented a resolution for approval to recognize September as Commute Solutions Month to TAC and TPC. The resolution was amended to remove World Car Free Day. The motion passed and was approved.
- Staff attended the University of Houston-Downtown Welcome Week and discussed students' current mode of commute and alternative options.
- Staff with the assistance of the AECOM Consultant team constructed a focus group meeting to gain feedback on a recently launched Compressed Work Week Schedule program.
- Staff continued to make progress on telework policy development and implementation with employer partners.
- Staff continues coordination with TXDOT's ConnectSmart project to develop TDM components of the application and discuss marketing and outreach. The project is scheduled for full launch September 16, 2022.

CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- During last month, staff continued to work with several ISD's in the Houston-Galveston region to replace older school buses. An application was received from Rice University for a new electric bus. Staff continued to coordinate with Cy Fair ISD for grant funding of electric buses. Additionally, two SEP-funded contracts are in the works Danbury and Lamar Consolidated ISD's.
- Staff continued to examine and develop the parameters needed to establish an electric charging infrastructure component to the Clean Vehicles Program. Staff worked on creating a new RFA and application specifically for electric vehicle chargers.
- Staff continued to monitor grant recipients' usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings and met with other local government agencies to discuss projects utilizing Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Staff met with TxDOT and discussed electric vehicles and charging stations as projects for CMAQ funding.
- Staff is meeting with electric charger manufacturers to verify Buy America compliance and program interest.

GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff has completed development of CMAQ performance measures. Air Quality staff has been working to assess emission reductions from CMAQ funded projects between 2018 and 2021 as well as develop estimates for CMAQ funded projects upcoming between 2022 and 2025. Draft versions of these estimates were presented to advisory committees for review recommendation to TAC and TPC. Draft versions of the written reports to FHWA have also been completed and will be presented for review at the September TAC and TPC meetings.
- Staff hosted a meeting of the Regional Air Quality Planning and Advisory Committee (RAQPAC) on August 25th. This meeting featured presentations from Priya Zachariah, the Chief Resilience and Sustainability Officer from City of Houston to discuss recent efforts undertaken by her office, as well as Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC Principal Planner, to discuss CMAQ performance measures as well as the recently signed-into-law, Inflation Reduction Act.
- H-GAC continued to work on regional efforts to support the Department of Energy sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under this program, staff worked 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. During the most recent month, the Coalition hosted a hybrid webinar focused on the EPA Clean School Bus Program as well as providing assistance in planning an anticipated autumn event focusing on the transition to zero-emission vehicles.
- Staff is continuing to administer two separate Environmental Protection Agency-funded Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grants from the 2018 and 2019 Calls for Projects to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. Staff has been working with IKEA to replace two existing diesel yard tractors at their Baytown facility with all-electric models. IKEA is currently installing EV charging equipment to facilitate vehicle purchases and it is anticipated that the entire project will be completed by the end of 2022. For the 2019 DERA project, staff is preparing a call for projects to find a new partner to complete the project.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting support to the City of Houston for Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory re-calculated for the years 2014, 2019 and 2020 and for various in-house planning processes in support of other sub-regional and corridor studies, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- Staff continues to provide GIS technical support for the highway GIS networks development for the RTP such as the development of the TDM network for 2045, Project mapping and review for new project call for 2045 update, TIP such as the review for new 2023 TIP projects, sub-regional and corridor studies such as the Waller County special data request on land use and transportation related data and activities within the county.
- Staff continues to assist Transportation Department with presentation of the draft staff recommendation targets for the Federal Performance Measures for Reliability, Congestion, and Air Quality.

- Staff continues on-going development and implementation of the Regional Activity Based Model (ABM), completed a test run of the new ABM forecasting tools for the modeling year 2020, but the familiarization of the new tools continues.
- Staff continue to work on the ERG contractor's contract for the MOVES3 Spatial Emission Estimator (SEE) used for estimating regional on-road emission inventories of criteria, toxic and GHG emission for each hour of a day with highly detailed spatial resolution tools update, continues to work with conformity partners on comments for the conformity documentation and timelines for the 2045 RTP update, and participate in the July 28, 2022, TCEQ Air Quality Technical Information and Air Quality Research Program (AQRP) Advisory Council Funding meetings.
- Staff continued to serve in the Steering Committees and work with the Prime Contractor for the O-D Survey data collection, data collection and the 1st expansion are complete, the Tour Base data collection and 2nd expansion are still on-going. The planning, survey design and pilot survey of the Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P is on-going, the procurement of the Prime Contractor for the Airport Ground Access Survey is on-hold because of unsatisfactory Proposal response received from a sole contractor on the RFP.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project. Planning for data collection for traffic counts on non-State systems is on-going.
- Staff completed testing REMI 10-region, updating VisionEval VESim-Households module with HGAC PUMS data.