

## **SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

### **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 was held on April 29, 2021. Public comments will be solicited through the new Engage H-GAC website through May 14, 2021– <https://engage.h-gac.com/> –.
- The first Public Meeting for the Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Study was held 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's 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. The next meeting is being planned for June 10, 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.
- Staff continued to work on getting the Road Safety Audit Contract in place.
- Staff attended Fort Bend County Traffic Management meeting for 2021 Hurricane Evacuation Routes. Staff attend City of Houston Vision Zero Implementation Group meeting.
- Staff attend City of Houston Vision Zero Implementation Group meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff conduct Transportation Safety Committee on April 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff conducted Transportation Systems Maintenance and Operations (TSMO) meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Staff met with Communication Department to discuss 2021 Hurricane Preparedness Campaign.
- Staff coordinated with Waller County, Chambers County and Montgomery County on Intersection Safety Contract.
- A contract amendment was sent to the City of Houston for Tow and Go contract extension.
- A contract amendment was sent to the City of Houston for Quick Clearance Crash Pilot Project.
- Staff coordinated a Tow operator orientation training for Tow and Go Tow operators at Houston TranStar.

- Staff met with Fort Bend County on Tow and Go expansion into the County.
- Staff held a Traffic Incident Management Meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>.
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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 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)

Meetings of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Subcommittee have been held on January 20, 2021, February 10, 2021, March 10, 2021, and April 14, 2021. Election of officers, subcommittee orientation, and a legislative update of transportation-related bills was covered at the April 14 meeting. Staff also continue 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 was from March 26, 2021 to April 28, 2021 with a [public meeting on April 8, 2021](#).

The [next RTP Subcommittee meeting](#) is planned for May 12, 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 last met on April 8, 2021. The next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2021.
- Staff will meet with METRO on May 20, 2021 to evaluate applications for the FY 2020 Call for Projects for 5310 transit formula funds.
- Work has been completed collecting and analyzing the Public Transit Agency Safety Plans. Safety targets have been completed. The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee, the Transportation Safety Committee and the Transportation Improvement Plan Subcommittee have recommended approval. The Regional Transportation Plan Subcommittee will review and recommend on May 12. TAC and TPC will be briefed in May with request for recommendation and approval scheduled for June.
- 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 the 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 on March 16, 2021. Documentation has been received and has been presented to Internal Audit for Pre-Award review in May 2021, and service is expected to begin in February 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 is scheduled to start June 1, 2021 contingent upon final execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A presentation on the study will be provided to TAC and TPC in June. The study will be conducted entirely 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 April 15, 2021 and will meet again on May 13, 2021 to discuss the Inter-Agency Memorandum of Understanding and next steps.

4. North Houston Communities Transportation Priorities Plan

- Staff continued to work on the scope of work for procuring a consultant for this project.

**C. TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH**

- Public Outreach staff assisted the Transportation Department in executing two public meetings for local transportation studies in Liberty County and Montgomery County Pct. 2
- Staff also implemented an awareness campaign on behalf of Commute Solutions' to promote Earth Day and alternate modes of transportation
- Media Buys for Tow and Go and the Regional Safety Campaign were procured and will begin later this month.
- Planning for the 2021 Hurricane Preparedness campaigns is in progress and will start end of this month.
- In addition, staff will finalize the design and layout for the 2021 Safety Report.

**D. COMMUTE SOLUTIONS**

- Staff and internal H-GAC teams presented employer COVID 19 survey results to area management districts.
- 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 and established Gulf Coast Regional Bike Month 2021 in May.
- Staff reached out to employers and program partners to participate in Bike Month activities.
- Staff met with area partners to plan for Bike Month.
- Staff began planning for the Commute Solutions Partnership webinar to be held on Tuesday, May 18th.
- Staff met with the City of Houston, Harris County, and the Energy Corridor District to present recommendations of current telework programs and next steps to execute those recommendations.

**E. CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

- 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 produced a monthly progress report for TxDOT.
- Staff met with other local government agencies to discuss the status of Buy America waiver requests for CMAQ grants.

- Staff met with Freewire, a manufacturer of electric vehicle chargers regarding possible funding for buyers.

**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 31<sup>st</sup>. 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 Initiatives Report for 2021.
- 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 EPA's 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 generally 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 attended various meetings, webinars, workshops, and trainings such as: TAC, RTP, TxDOT Committee and Subcommittee meetings, MJO-MOVES workshop, Houston Coalition Against hate trainings etc. organized by various agencies within the H-GAC region.
- Staff completed reviewing the TxDOT 2020 AADT, mad comparison maps and tables between 2020 vs 2019.
- Staff worked with Cambridge Systematics (CS) Support Technicians to text-run the H-GAC's newly developed Activity-Based-Model (ABM) model, and participated on the online discussion with the REMI model staff to discuss H-GAC's REMI model land Use parcel level results.
- 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 evaluate others modeling software with better Meso and Micro capabilities. Staff also continues to work on internal data request for volume and V/C ratios for the NHHIP, IH 610 express lanes, and Inner Katy corridor.
- Staff worked the Cambridge Systematics Consultant (CS) in completing the validation and calibration of the Activity Based model and the Truck model. Deliverables were received and contract closed out.
- Staff successfully participated in Air Quality Conformity presentations at two public meeting.
- Staff continues to work with the Steering Committee for the Origin-Destination On-board Transit Survey to monitor transit ridership in the region in order to better determine the best time to conducted the transit O-D surveys on the fixed routes systems within the H-GAC region.
- Staff continues to work with the H-GAC Procurement Group to develop an Inter-Local Government Agreement (ILA) between and H-GAC and the City of Houston for the joint effort of 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 continues to provide mapping and GIS technical supports for:
  - i. Mapping existing recommended projects (RTP, TIP, Livable Centers, etc.), transit routes and stops, bike lanes, sidewalks, B-cycle locations.
  - ii. Creating storyboard webpage to house all information/data for North Houston Communities planning project.
  - iii. Creating GTFS feed for web mapping local transit agencies.
  - iv. FHWA Multimodal Network Connectivity City of Sugar Land- Creating online interactive map, Storyboard, Dashboard for Ped/Bike study in Sugar Land. Writing methodology for final report.

**Agenda Item 14C**  
**TPC Meeting Packet – 5/21/21**

- v. FHWA Multimodal Network Connectivity METRO- Pilot joint project with METRO creating online interactive maps, Storyboard, Dashboard of ped/bike studies, Route Directness Index. Writing methodology for final report.
- vi. Developing ped/bike regional bikeways online app/map on H-GAC website. Creating the templates for the following: Bikeway Layer, Amenities, Intersections, Permanent Structures, Signals, Parks, Playground Equipment to be used by H-GAC region.
- vii. Safe Routes to School- Creating online interactive maps, Safe Route to School Layer, and storyboard. Developing the criteria for Safe Routes to School Layer.
- viii. Mobility Master Plan City of Sugar Land- Providing GIS support with data and guidance in creation of new GIS Layers.