

**Regional Transit Coordination (RTC) Subcommittee  
Houston-Galveston Area Council**

**Thursday, April 9, 2026  
9:30-11:00 AM**

**Agenda**

1. Introductions and Certification of Quorum (9) – James Oliver, Island Transit, Chair
2. Public Comments
3. Action Items:
  - 3.1 Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2026
4. Information Items: (10 minutes or less each)
  - 4.1. Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) – Bennie Chambers and Kareem Heshmat, H-GAC
  - 4.2. Commute Solutions Update: “What Is Your Game Plan?” – Robyn Egbert, H-GAC
  - 4.3. FIFA World Cup Scenario Planning Update – Thomas Gray, H-GAC
5. Transit and Human Service Agency Reports (5 minutes or less each)

**2026 RTCS Meeting Dates (All Meetings Begin at 9:30 AM)**

July 9, 2026

October 8, 2026

# REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

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## SPECIAL CALL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2026 – 9:30-11:00am

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Virtual Meeting

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### MEMBERS PRESENT

James Oliver (Chair) – Island Transit (Galveston)  
Melanie Beaman – City of Sugar Land  
Brian Crimmins – City of Houston  
Thomas Holstein – Baker Ripley  
Ashley Newell – Mounting Horizons, Inc.  
Perri D’Armond – Fort Bend County Transit  
Tatyana Luttschlager – METRO  
Vernon Chambers – Harris County Transit  
Claudia Wicks – Colorado Valley Transit  
Ted Ross – Gulf Coast Transit District

### OTHERS PRESENT

Travis Madison – TxDOT  
Paula Polk – TxDOT  
Carolina Lopez-Herrera – TxDOT  
Bul Mabil - TxDOT  
Alan Clark – METRO  
Huey German-Wilson – Super Neighborhood 48  
Pamela LaBrane – Fort Bend Transit  
Frederick Johnson – City of Conroe  
Marcus Alexander – Gulf Coast Transit District  
Robert Anders – Harris County Transit

### ALTERNATES PRESENT

Paula Johnson – City of Houston  
Nicole Mathews – The Woodlands Township  
Jessica Hawkinson – Galveston Island Transit  
Donald Hughes – METRO

### H-GAC STAFF PRESENT

Jamila Owens  
Marcus Tucker  
Thomas Gray  
Bennie Chambers  
Kareem Heshmat  
Sungmin Lee  
Monique Johnson  
Keehren Baah  
Alan Rodenstein  
Ayo Jibowu  
Robyn Egbert  
Emanuel Andrews  
Catherine Gray  
Mary Schneider  
Karen Owen  
Yetunde Oyewale  
Ebrahim Eslami  
Lucinda Martinez  
Veronica Waller  
Pamela Grady

### OVERVIEW

RTCS Members and Alternates met virtually by teleconference. At this special call meeting, the Subcommittee received a presentation on the Regional Public Transportation Coordinated Plan (RPTCP) update effort. Other presentations concerned the Regional Transit Information Study, the results and trends of the 2025 Regional Transit Ridership Survey, and the upcoming Safe Systems Workshop.

## INTRODUCTIONS AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

**ITEM 1** – In the absence of a Chair or Vice Chair, Thomas Gray, H-GAC staff, called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM. James Oliver, Chair, City of Galveston, joined shortly afterward and assumed leadership of the meeting. Roll was called by H-GAC staff and a quorum was confirmed.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

**ITEM 2** – There were no public comments presented to the Subcommittee.

## ACTION ITEMS

### **ITEM 3.1 – Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2026**

Mr. Oliver requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 meeting of the Subcommittee.

*Action Item Motion: moved by Brian Crimmins, seconded by Vernon Chambers. Action Item approved.*

## INFORMATION ITEMS

### **ITEM 4.1 – Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) Update – Bennie Chambers and Kareem Heshmat, H-GAC**

Bennie Chambers and Kareem Heshmat presented an overview of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP), which is a federally-required five-year plan guiding regional transit coordination across the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. The plan focuses on improving mobility, access to essential services, and coordination among transportation providers.

Sungmin Lee, of H-GAC's Data Analytics and Research division, presented the Transit Need Index methodology which uses demographic and socioeconomic indicators to identify areas with high transit demand. Indicators include population density, zero-car households, older adults, disabilities, youth populations, and poverty rates. Members discussed accessibility factors such as sidewalks and incorporating microtransit data into the analysis.

Chambers and Heshmat shared outreach activities including community events, a community survey, a service provider survey, and partnerships with regional organizations. Members were encouraged to distribute the surveys through their networks.

A draft RPTCP Deliverable was due to TxDOT at the end of the month.

Discussion ensued. Melaine Beaman asked if transit need index data was available for her city (Sugar Land). Sungmin Lee said data could be made available at the municipal level. Ashley Newell asked if sidewalk availability was factored in when walk access to transit was evaluated. Lee replied that it would have been nice to be able to do so, but that level of information was not available. Newell suggested crowdsourcing sidewalk data.

Ebrahim Eslami inquired about localized demand analysis, e.g. for the Rodeo or FIFA World Cup. Lee replied that updated GTFS data for those special events would be required for the analysis to be completed. Vernon Chambers asked if H-GAC staff would reach out to transit providers for data relating to curb-to-curb services. Lee responded in the affirmative.

Jamila Owens emphasized that the service provider survey should be filled out by smaller providers and private nonprofits, and that doing so could result in access to funding. Kareem Heshmat noted that staff has discovered

during events that people are interested in Mobility Links as a service; H-GAC would like to promote it better, but needs accurate information from providers through the survey.

#### **ITEM 4.2 – Regional Transit Information Study (RTIS) Update – Bennie Chambers, H-GAC**

Bennie Chambers provided an update on the Regional Transit Information Study (RTIS), which evaluates how transit information is communicated across agencies and identifies opportunities to improve coordination, accessibility, and rider information. Chambers presented the study's key findings so far and next steps as the study concludes.

There were no questions or comments from the Subcommittee.

#### **ITEM 4.3 – 2025 Regional Transit Ridership Survey – Thomas Gray, H-GAC**

Thomas Gray presented 2025 regional transit ridership trends resulting from the quarterly survey of transit providers conducted by H-GAC. Regional ridership in 2025 reached approximately 79.7 million boardings, recovering to about 88-89% of pre-pandemic levels. Park and ride ridership is still only about half of what it was before the pandemic, owing largely to widespread adoption of work-from-home practices. However, demand response ridership has exceeded 2019 levels, likely due to new microtransit services being offered by regional providers.

There were no questions or comments from the Subcommittee.

#### **TRANSIT AND HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY REPORTS**

H-GAC staff provided a brief presentation regarding the Safe Systems Workshop, which will be held on April 7, 2026 at 2:00 PM, and requested that transit providers attend if they were able to do so.

H-GAC staff also announced the FIFA World Cup Scenario Planning Workshop on March 24, 2026 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Again, transit providers were invited to attend.

Melanie Beaman announced that Sugar Land's on-demand microtransit pilot had been renewed for an additional year, and an electric vehicle had been added to its fleet.

Ashley Newell announced that Mounting Horizons had participated in disaster preparedness event and received feedback on gaps/issues re: evacuation, especially from the Galveston Housing Authority.

Travis Madison reminded providers about the TxDOT Transit Operators meeting May 1 in Lubbock.

Kareem Heshmat informed Subcommittee members that the Paratransit/NEMT working group would be re-activating and to keep an eye out for announcements.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Oliver adjourned the meeting at 10:31 am.

**Next RTCS Meeting – 9:30 AM on Thursday, April 9, 2026**

Robyn Egbert  
April 9, 2026  
Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee



# LIFTOFF... TO A BETTER COMMUTE!



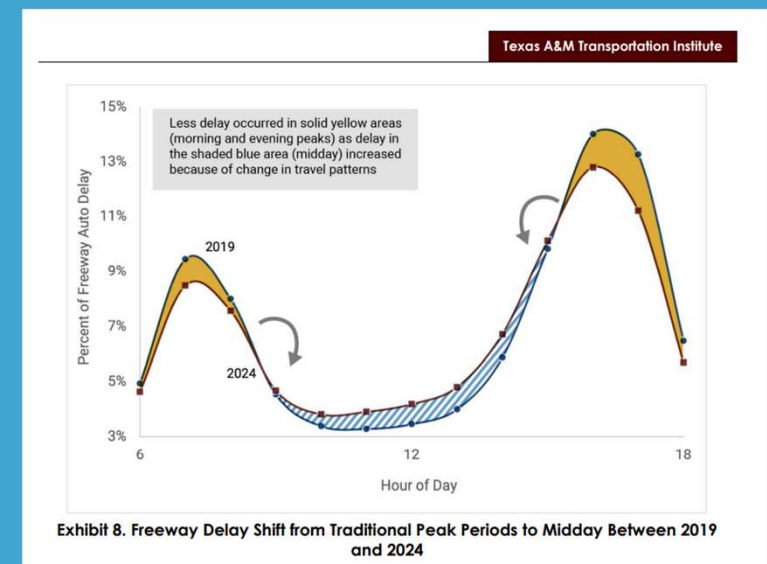
# Agenda

- Current Commuting Landscape
- The Transportation Challenge Ahead
- How to Build Your Game Plan
  - For Employers
  - For Commuters
- Fan Fest – Being Part of the Festivities without a ticket



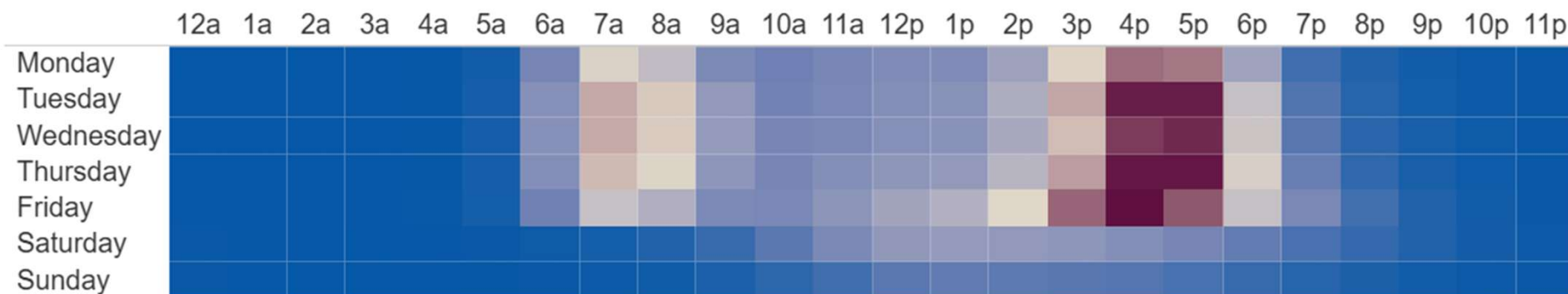
# Current Commuting Landscape

- Houston ranks 5<sup>th</sup> nationally for peak-hour congestion (2025, TTI)
- Regional population has grown 9% since 2019, intensifying roadway demand
- Congestion patterns have shifted to non-traditional peak hours
- Commuters must build in nearly double the travel time to ensure on-time arrival



2025, Urban Mobility Report, Texas Transportation Institute

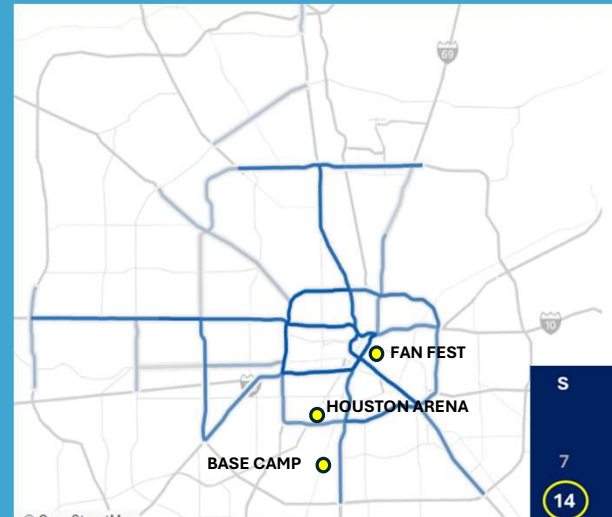
## What Time Did Congestion Happen in 2024



Between **0.0% to 3.0%** of **Houston's** weekly delay occurs during each hour of each day. The heat map represents the average congestion that occurs as a percentage of each hour during the entire week.

# The Transportation Challenge Ahead

With 500,000 visitors, 7 World Cup matches, and concurrent major events over 39 days, how will you and your community navigate this unprecedented disruption?



© OpenStreetMap  
2025, Urban Mobility Report,  
Texas Transportation Institute

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	JUNE
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30					
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4	JULY
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

# How to Build Your Game Plan – for Employers

- Host tailored workshops & strategy sessions for organizations
- Supply ready-to-use communication materials (social media graphics, newsletter content)
- Connect employers to transportation demand management tools (ConnectSmart, vanpool, transit services)
- Support outreach events and stakeholder meetings



# Employer Transit Toolkit

- Developed an accessible resource explaining alternative commute options for traveling in and around Harris County, which will experience the bulk of FIFA World Cup traffic



**METRO (Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County)**

- Coverage: Houston and select surrounding communities in Harris County.
- Service Types: Local Buses, METRORail, Express Park & Rides, METRO curb2curb, Community Connector
- Website: RideMETRO.org
- Telephone: 713-635-4000

**METRO Vanpool**

- Coverage: 8-County Houston region, outside of METRO coverage area
- Service Types: Shared van for 5-15 commuters
- Website: RideMETRO.org/vanpool
- Telephone: 713-224-RIDE (7433)

**Rides**

- Coverage: For seniors, disabled and low-income residents outside of METRO coverage area
- Service Types: 50% subsidy on shared ride & taxi partners
- Website: Rides.HarrisCountyTX.gov

**The Woodlands Express**

- Coverage: Service from The Woodlands to Houston's central business district, the Texas Medical Center, Greenway Plaza, and the Energy Corridor.
- Service Types: Comfortable coach buses
- Website: [thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/Departments/Transportation/The-Woodlands-Express](http://thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/Departments/Transportation/The-Woodlands-Express)

**Harris County Transit**

- Coverage: Harris County residents outside of METRO coverage area
- Service Types: Fixed route ADA Paratransit, Shuttle service to Park & Rides, Micro Transit
- Website: [transit.harriscountytx.gov](http://transit.harriscountytx.gov)

**Conroe Park & Ride (Route 291)**

- Coverage: From Conroe to downtown Houston, the Texas Medical Center, and the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center
- Service Types: Express coach bus
- Website: [cityofconroe.org/services/transit/park\\_ride.php](http://cityofconroe.org/services/transit/park_ride.php)

**ConnectSmart**

- Coverage: Greater Houston Region
- Service Types: An all-in-one app to plan trips, get traffic and transit alerts, carpool, and telework while getting rewarded.
- Download: "ConnectSmart Mobility" on App Store or Google Play

**Fort Bend Transit**

- Coverage: Fort Bend County area, the Texas Medica Center, Downtown Houston, Energy Corridor, Greenway Plaza and The Galleria area
- Service Types: Commuter Service to Houston area, Shared ride curb-to-curb service
- Website: [FBCTransit.org](http://FBCTransit.org)

Your Game Plan for a Smarter Ride | [CommuteGamePlan.com](http://CommuteGamePlan.com)

# Commute Solutions in the Community

- Feb. 10 – HR Employees & Transit Partners
- March 23 – South Main Alliance
- March 30 – Bay Area Houston Transportation Partnership
- April 8 – Downtown Houston+
- April 9 – Regional Transit Subcommittee Meeting
- April 14 – Virtual Workshop
- April 16 – M.D. Anderson
- April 23 – North Houston Association/East Aldine
- April 24 – Houston City College
- .... And more!



# How to Build Your Game Plan – for Commuters

- Educate commuters to identify “high-traffic” days
- Connect commuters with alternative transportation options (carpool, vanpool, transit etc.)
- Utilize TranStar & ConnectSmart to identify road closures & congestion during tournament
- Deployed a digital marketing strategy

**Liftoff to a Better Commute**  
Event day traffic?  
Create your commute game plan!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>JUNE 07</b> Astros Home Game TBD	<b>JUNE 08</b>	<b>JUNE 09</b>	<b>JUNE 10</b>	<b>JUNE 11</b> Watch Party Mexico vs. South Africa 2 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 12</b> Watch Party USA vs Paraguay 8 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 13</b>
				Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest
<b>JUNE 14</b> Germany vs Curacao 12:00 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 15</b> Home Game	<b>JUNE 16</b> Home Game	<b>JUNE 17</b> Portugal vs FIFA Playoff 1 12 P.M. CT Home Game	<b>JUNE 18</b> Watch Party Mexico vs South Korea 8 P.M. CT Energy Convention	<b>JUNE 19</b> Watch Party USA vs Australia 2 P.M. CT Home Game	<b>JUNE 20</b> Netherlands vs UEFA Playoff B 12 P.M. CT Home Game
Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest	Fan Fest
<b>JUNE 21</b> Home Game	<b>JUNE 22</b>	<b>JUNE 23</b> Portugal vs Uzbekistan 12 P.M. CT Concert 8:00 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 24</b> Watch Party Mexico vs UEFA Playoff D 8 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 25</b> Watch Party USA vs UEFA Playoff C 9 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 26</b> Cabo Verde vs Saudi Arabia 7 P.M. CT	<b>JUNE 27</b>

# FIFA World Cup Shuttle Pilot Program

- Teaming up with The Woodlands Express for a pilot program that encourages transit use to help people skip the World Cup traffic
- 9 extra buses on match days
  - $9 \times 7 \times 55 = 3,465$  round-trips not traveled
- Seeking H-GAC Board of Directors approval on April 21



# Fan Fest - How to be part of the festivities without a game ticket

- Promote alternative transportation options for local fans
- Distribute Park & Ride maps and information
- Leverage existing commuter routes to downtown
- Connect fans with transit providers: Woodlands Express, Conroe Connection, METRO, Fort Bend County Transit





# Robyn Egbert

TDM Supervisor

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[CommuteGamePlan.com](http://CommuteGamePlan.com)





# FIFA World Cup Scenario Planning Update



**Thomas B. Gray, AICP**  
**April 9, 2026**

Regional Collaboration • Transportation Planning • Multimodal Mobility



# Seven Games

- Five Group Stage Matches
  - All 10 matchups set
  - 3 weekday, 2 weekend
  - 4 of 5 will be noon kickoff
- Two Knockout Round Matches
  - Teams TBD
  - Monday 6/29 (Round of 32)
  - Saturday 7/4 (Round of 16)
  - Both will be noon kickoff



The graphic displays the schedule for the Group Stage of the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Houston. It features the tournament logo at the top, followed by the text 'GROUP STAGE'. Below this, five match cards are listed, each showing the teams, their flags, a 'V' for versus, and the date and time of the match.

Match	Date	Time
GERMANY vs CURAÇAO	JUNE 14	12:00 PM CT
PORTUGAL vs COD/JAM/NCL	JUNE 17	12:00 PM CT
NETHERLANDS vs UKR/SWE/POL/ALB	JUNE 20	12:00 PM CT
PORTUGAL vs UZBEKISTAN	JUNE 23	12:00 PM CT
CABO VERDE vs SAUDI ARABIA	JUNE 26	7:00 PM CT

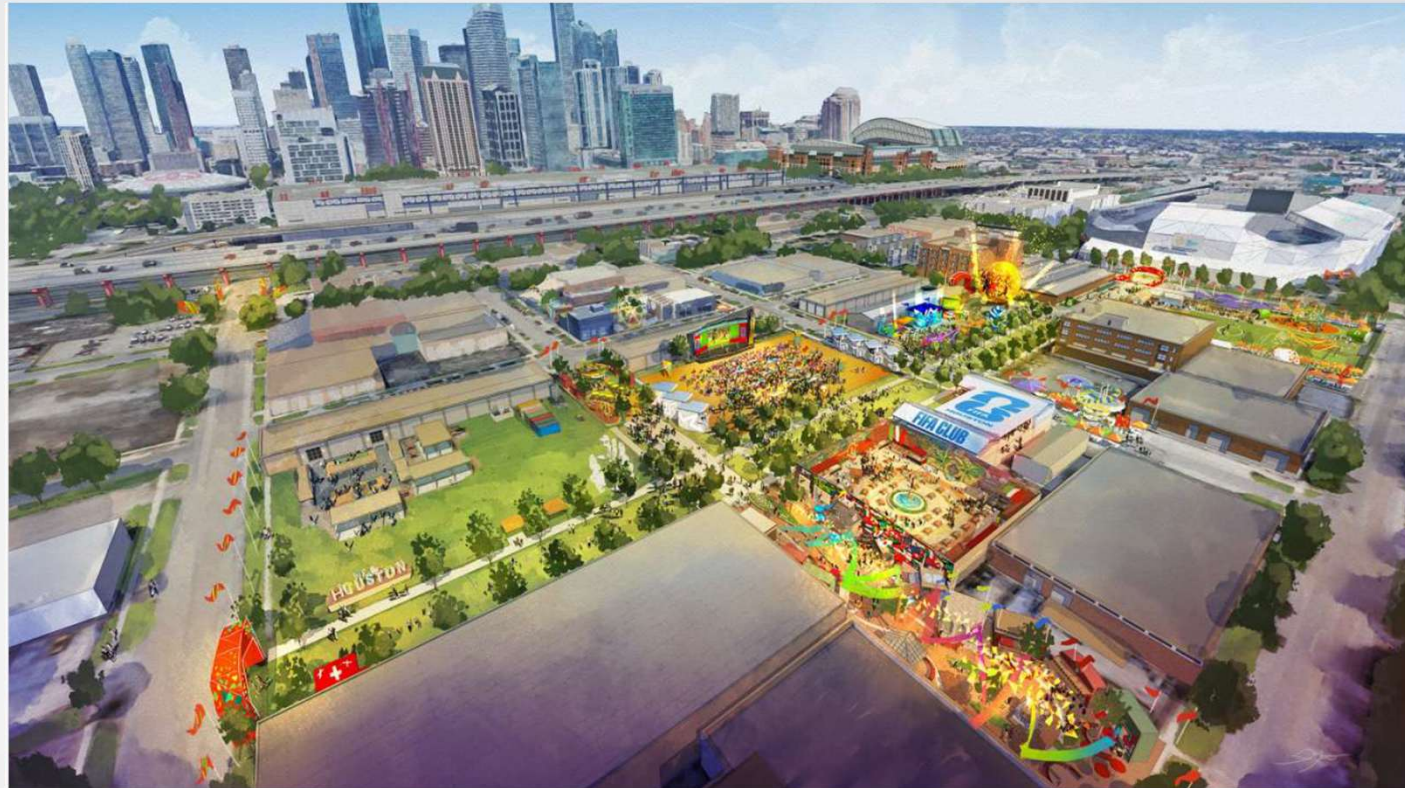
# Gameday Access

- Stadium lots will serve specific functions
  - Cars, buses, rideshare
  - General spectators vs VIPs
- Some roads around stadium to be closed six hours before match times



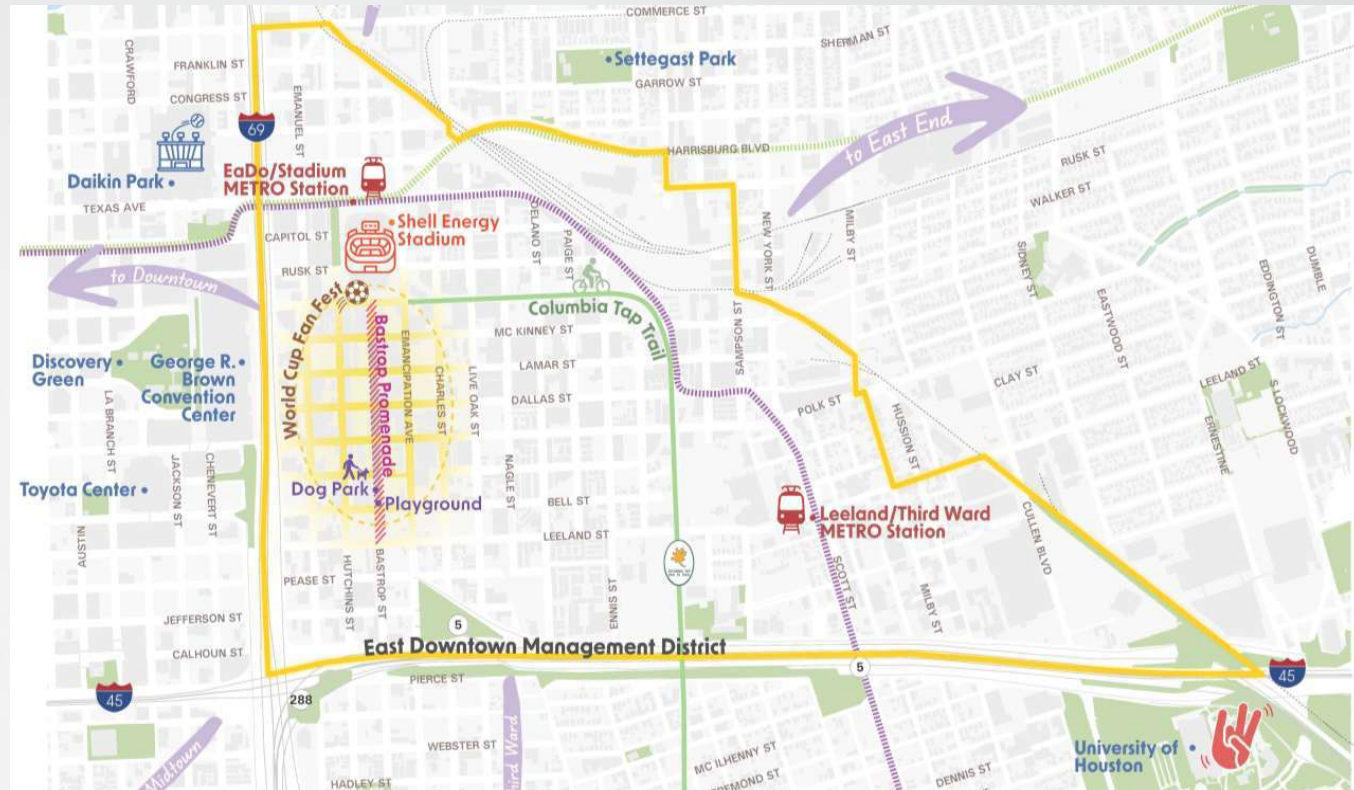
# Houston FIFA Fan Festival

- EaDo
- June 11 - July 19
  - Open 34 out of 39 days
- Free general admission
- Over 500,000 attendees expected



# Houston FIFA Fan Festival

- METRORail Green and Purple Lines
  - Temporary sidewalk widening between EaDo/Stadium Station and festival entrance
- Columbia Tap Trail
  - Bike/ped connection to stadium

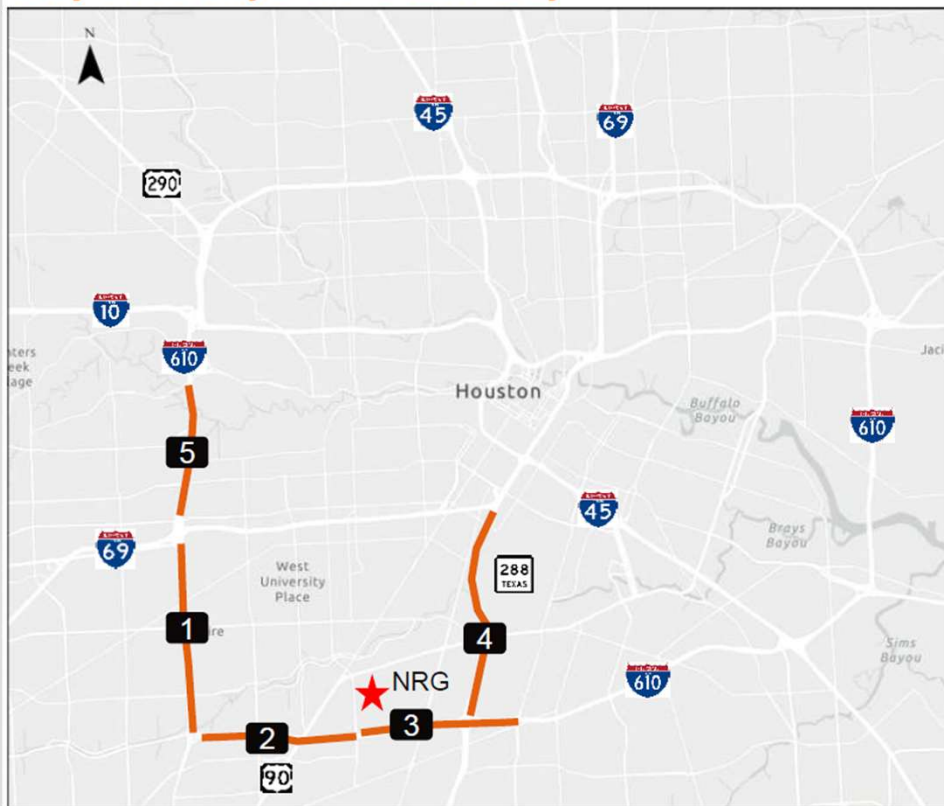


# Scenario Modeling

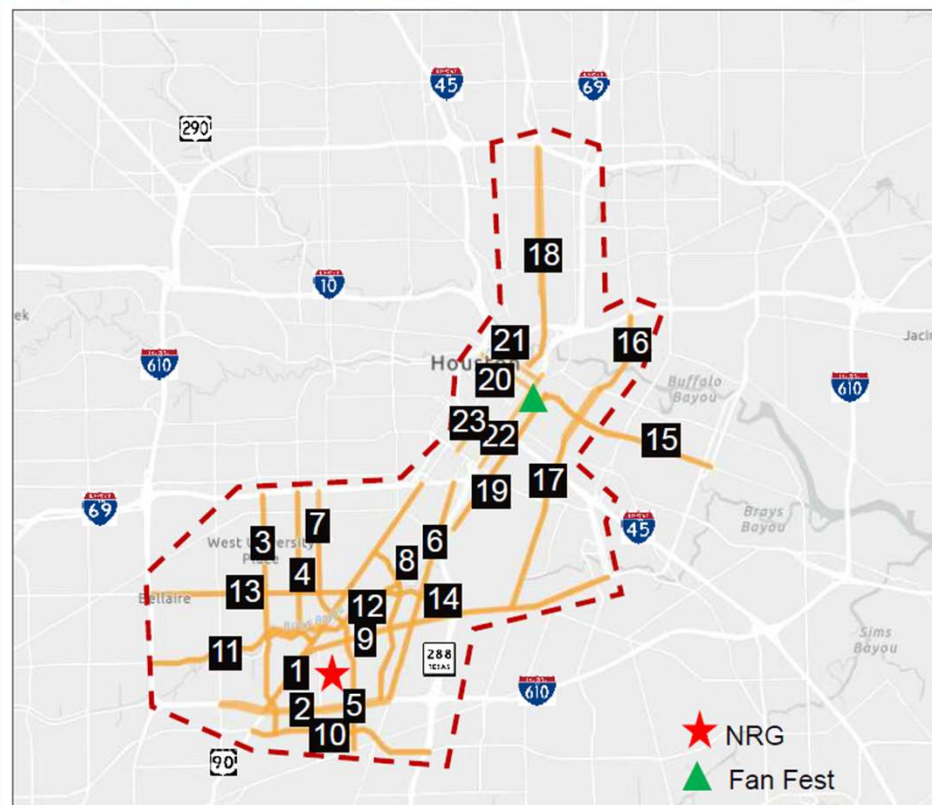
- Baseline scenario: weekday game, noon kickoff
- Modeled scenarios:
  - Weekday game + major crash on I-610
  - Weekday game + major crash on SH 288
  - Weekday game + major crash on Sidney Sherman Bridge (I-610 over Ship Channel)
  - “All Aboard” (transit-focused scenario)
    - METRORail Red Line max capacity is 4,000 passengers/hour/direction
  - Travel Demand Management/Telecommute

# Impacts to Freeways and Arterials

## Key Freeways for Game Day



## Key Focus Area and Arterials on Game Day

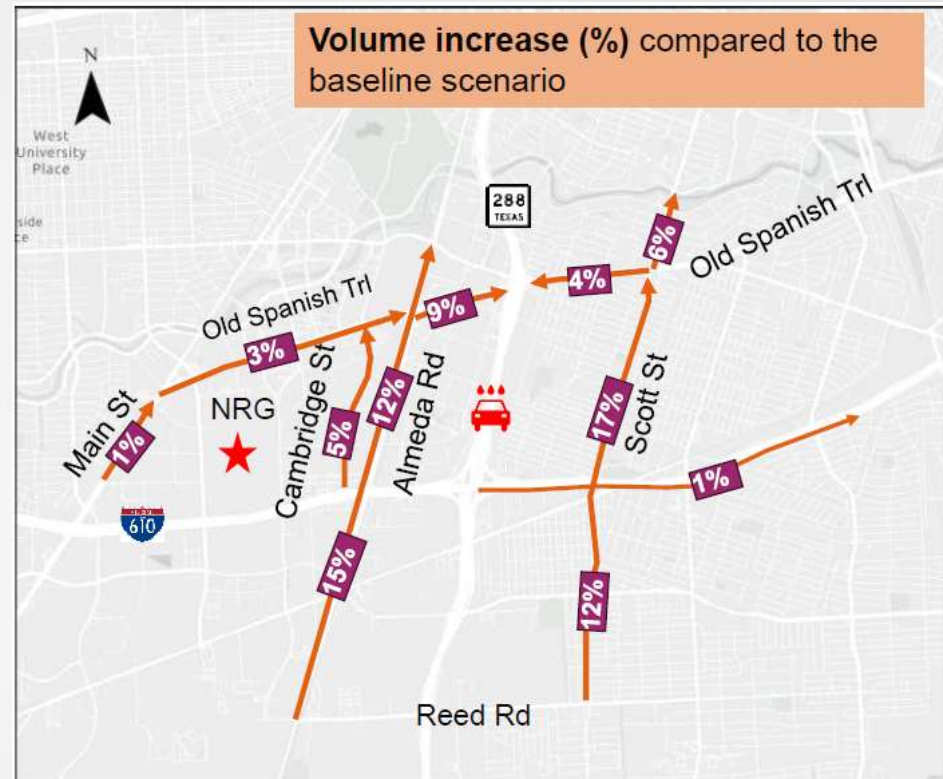


# Impacts from Traffic Incidents

Incident Scenario 1: IH-610 SB, south of IH-69

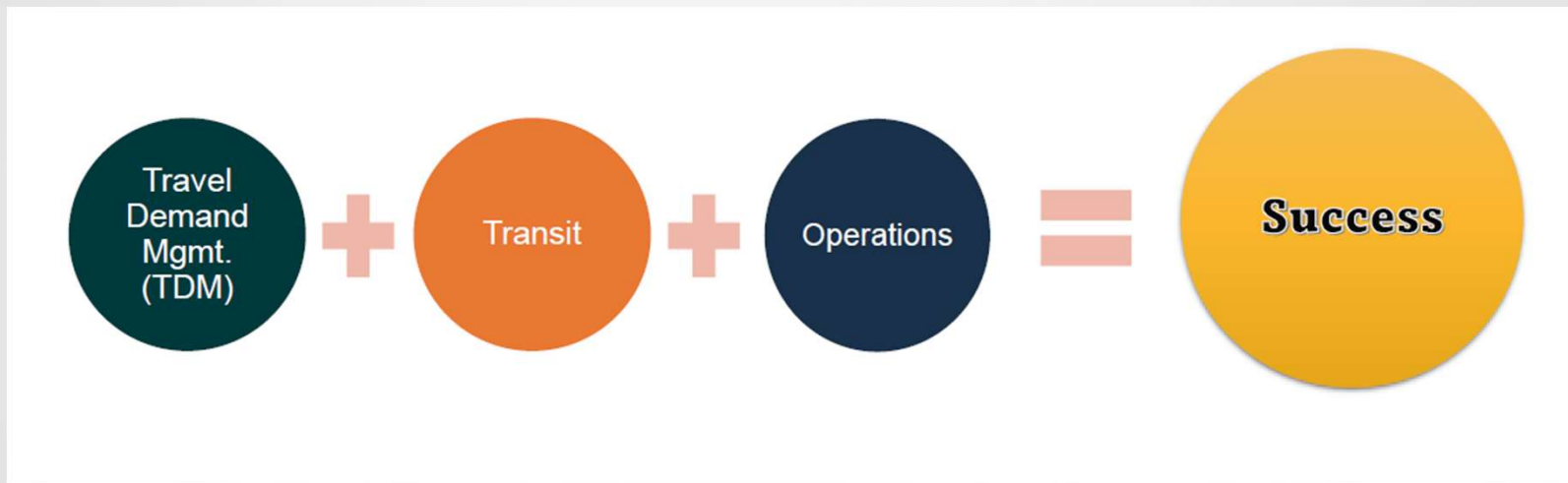


Incident Scenario 2: SH-288 NB, north of 610



# Strategies

- Travel Demand Management (reduction in HBW trips)
- Transit (Red Line, direct P&R service to stadium)
- Operations (freeways and arterials management, emergency response)



# *Individual Operational Plans*

- METRO – Transit Operations during FIFA World Cup
- H-GAC Commute Solutions – TDM
- Houston TranStar – Freeway Operations/Incident Response
- City of Houston Public Works – Arterial Management
- Houston Airport System – Airport Operations
- The Woodlands Township – Woodlands Express Shuttles

# METRO

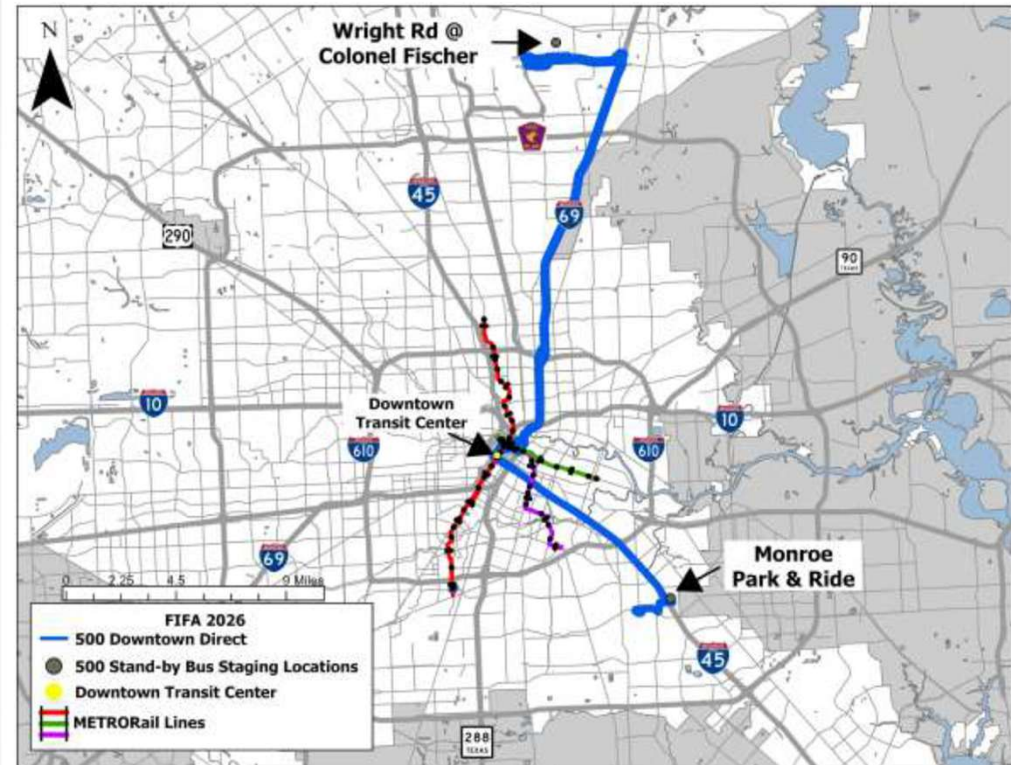
- Four Service Categories



- Service enhancements will overlay regular fixed route bus and rail
- Effective June 7 through July 11
- Contracted providers will supplement METRO resources

# METRO

- Greater frequency/extended service hours on METRORail
  - Red Line serves stadium
  - Green/Purple Lines serve Fan Fest
- 500 Downtown Direct
  - Serves both airports
  - 30 minute headway





# Houston TranStar

- Area Command
  - Multi-agency coordination and oversight
  - Integrated response across jurisdictions
- Joint Information Center
  - Coordinated public messaging across agencies
  - Real-time traveler information
- Focus on rapid clearance



# City of Houston Public Works

- Arterial Management
  - Signal timing, detection cameras, operational improvements
  - Focus on corridors identified during scenario modeling (Almeda, Bellaire/Holcombe, N/S Braeswood, W Belfort, etc)
- Operational Adjustments during FIFA World Cup
  - Deploy dedicated technicians to stadium, FanFest, Galleria
  - Targeted preventative maintenance of traffic signals
  - Add traffic signal consultants

# ***Houston Airport System***

- Airfield Operations
- Terminal Operations and Ground Transportation
  - Passenger processing (TSA and customs)
  - Curbside management
- Security / Emergency Preparedness
- Shared Services, Workforce & Customer Experience
- Data & Analytics

# Houston Airport System

## Inbound/Outbound Fan Movements

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6/7	6/8	6/9	6/10	6/11	6/12	6/13
					Germany & Curacao Fans Inbound from Home County	Germany & Curacao Fans Inbound from Home County
6/14	6/15	6/16	6/17	6/18	6/19	6/20
Germany v. Curacao (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>	Germany & Curacao Fans Outbound to Kansas City and Toronto	Portugal & TBD Fans Inbound from Home County	Portugal v. TBD (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>	Portugal (stays in Houston) & TBD Fans Outbound to Guadalajara	Netherlands & TBD Fans Inbound from Dallas and Monterrey	Netherlands v. TBD (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>
6/21	6/22	6/23	6/24	6/25	6/26	6/27
Netherlands & TBD Outbound Fans to Dallas and Kansas City	Portugal (already in Houston) & Uzbekistan Fans Inbound from Mexico City	Portugal v. Uzbekistan (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>	Portugal & Uzbekistan Fans Outbound to Atlanta and Miami	Cabo Verde & Saudi Arabia Fans Inbound from Atlanta and Miami	Cabo Verde v. Saudi Arabia (7 pm)	Cabo Verde & Saudi Arabia Fans Outbound to TBD (last group match)
6/28	6/29	6/30	7/1	7/2	7/3	7/4
Round of 32 Inbound Fans from Atlanta or Miami, and Dallas or KC	Round of 32 (Potential Brazil v. Netherlands/Japan) (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>	Round of 32 Outbound Fans to New York and Home County		Round of 16 Inbound Fans from Los Angeles and Monterrey	Round of 16 Inbound Fans from Los Angeles and Monterrey	Round of 16 (Potential Canada/Mexico v. Netherlands/Morocco) (12 pm) <i>Late/Overnight Departures</i>
7/5	7/6	7/7	7/8	7/9	7/10	7/11
Outbound Fans to Boston and Home County	Outbound Fans to Boston and Home County					

- Peak Inbound
- Peak Outbound
- Match Day
- Holiday

Note: The days between matches will have overlapping outbound and inbound fan movements, with outbound peaking MD+1 and inbound peaking MD-1.

# The Woodlands Township

- Woodlands Express service to stadium
  - Three town center pickup locations
  - Departures begin 3 hours before kickoff
  - Nine buses will be assigned exclusively to this service (one bus per round trip)
- Fare is \$17 round trip
  - Wristbands with customer service number for each rider
  - Rides open to the public on first-come, first-serve basis
  - Projected daily ridership: 400-500 pax



# Next Steps

- April – May
  - Support with data needs and insights to regional stakeholders
  - Configure Big Data (INRIX) performance measures during games
- June – July
  - Post-event performance measure summary for game days
  - Support with post-event data needs and insights
- August – September
  - Document lessons learned
  - Share with regional stakeholders, TAC and TPC