

A light blue map of the Houston-Galveston Area Council region, showing county boundaries. The map is centered on the Gulf of Mexico, with the coastline of Texas and Louisiana visible. The title text is overlaid on the map.

# **Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee**

Thursday, April 10, 2025

# Meeting 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 January 9, 2025
  - 3.2 Election of Subcommittee Officers
4. Information Items:
  - 4.1 Resources and Support
    - 4.1a Review of Subcommittee Purpose and Duties – Thomas Gray, H-GAC
  - 4.2 Coordinated Planning
    - 4.2a Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan – Alan Rodenstein, H-GAC
  - 4.3 Other Efforts
    - 4.3a Free Fare Friday – Robyn Egbert, H-GAC
    - 4.2b Regional Transit Ridership Update – Thomas Gray, H-GAC
5. Transit and Human Service Agency Reports (5 minutes or less each)
6. Adjourn

# 1. Introductions, Roll Call, and Certification of Quorum

2025 Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee

Representing	Primary First Name	Primary Last Name	Organization	Alternate First Name	Alternate Last Name	Organization
Local Government	Melanie	Beaman	City of Sugar Land	Sagnik	Raha	City of Sugar Land
Local Government	Brian	Crimmins	City of Houston	Wilson	Calvert	City of Houston
Local Government	Jason	Smith	Montgomery County	Brian	Jackson-Taylor	City of Missouri City
Business Interests	Amy	Skicki	BAYTRAN	Christina	Cabral	Transportation Advocacy Group (TAG)
Citizens Interests	Philip	Salerno	Super Neighborhood Alliance	David	Kim	Urban Land Institute
Social Services/HHS	Angel	Ponce	City of Houston	Paula	Johnson	City of Houston
Social Services/HHS	Thomas	Holstein	Baker Ripley	Andres	Montes	Alvin ISD
Social Services/HHS	Miriam	Guzman	Community Health Network	Ezreal	Garcia	Community Health Network
Social Services/HHS	Ashley	Newell	Mounting Horizons, Inc.	Breah	Knape	Actions, Inc.
Transit Agency	Perri	D'Armond	Fort Bend	Tennille	Jones	Fort Bend
Transit Agency	Ruthanne	Haut	The Woodlands Township	Nicole	Mathews	The Woodlands Township
Transit Agency	James	Oliver	Galveston Island Transit	Jessica	Hawkinson	Galveston Island Transit
Transit Agency	Tatyana	Luttenschlager	METRO	Donald	Hughes	METRO
Transit Agency	Vernon	Chambers	Harris County Transit	Robert	Anders	Harris County Transit
Transit Agency	Wendy	Weedon	Brazos Transit	Jo	Marlow	Brazos Transit
Transit Agency	Shawn	Davis	Conroe Transit	Joseph	Bolletino	City of Conroe
Transit Agency	Claudia	Wicks	Colorado Valley Transit	Angela	Wallace	Colorado Valley Transit
Transit Agency	Ted	Ross	Gulf Coast Transit District	Ken	Fickes	Harris County Transit
Ex-Officio	Travis	Madison	TxDOT - Houston District	Paula	Polk	TxDOT-Houston District
Ex-Officio	Nancy	Peron	TxDOT-Beaumont District	Carolina	Lopez-Herrera	TxDOT-Beaumont District

## 2. Public Comments

- Please click the small “hand” icon at the bottom of your screen to raise your hand in order to be recognized to speak.

# **3.1. Action Item - Approval of RTC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2025**

(The minutes of the January 9, 2025 meeting minutes are contained in the packet emailed to Subcommittee members)

## 3.2. Action Item – Election of Subcommittee Chairs

### Nominations:

- Chair – James Oliver, Galveston Island Transit
- Vice Chair – Wendy Weeden, Brazos Transit District
- Alternate nominations?

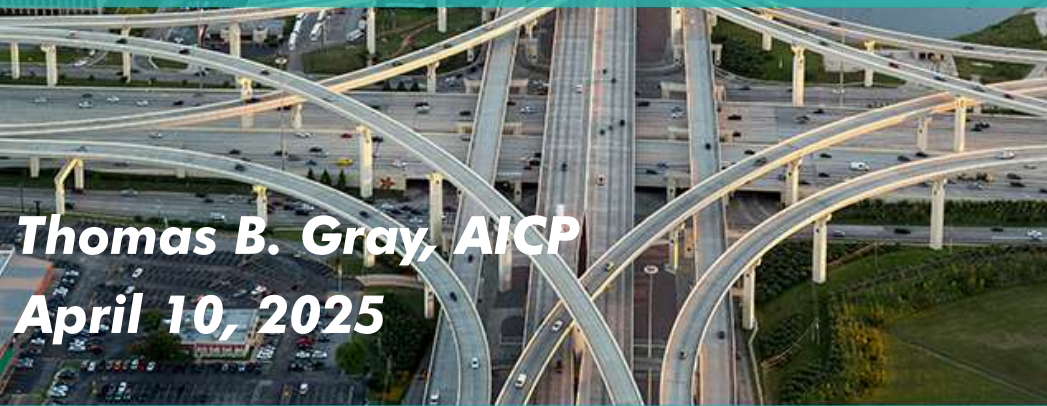
# 4.1a. Review of Subcommittee Purpose and Duties

Thomas Gray, H-GAC Staff





# Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee Orientation



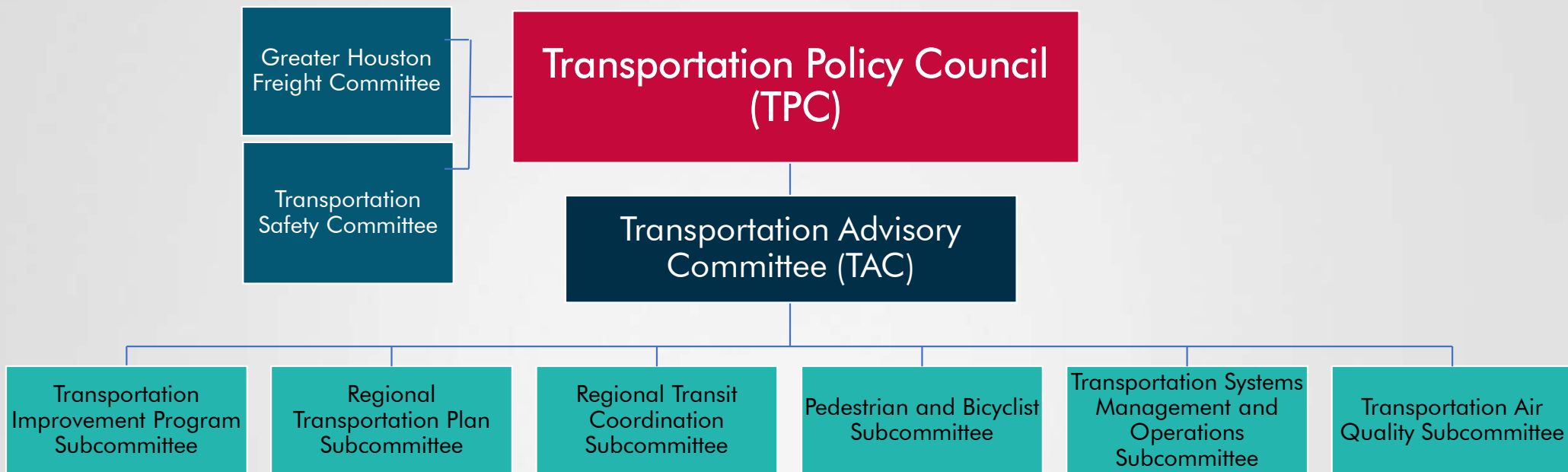
**Thomas B. Gray, AICP**  
**April 10, 2025**



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# TPC, TAC and the Subcommittees



# Transit Subcommittee Purpose



- Provide guidance related to the implementation of regional transit coordination pilot projects that were identified in the regional transit coordination action plan;
- Assist with tasks related to the development of regional transit planning initiatives that focus on identifying opportunities for expanding transit services in the region for all, as well as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the current regional transit system;
- Promote regional coordination among existing and future public and private transportation providers, social service and health and human service agencies.

# Subcommittee Bylaws Highlights



- Maximum 18 members (9 transit, 3 Local Governments, 4 Social Services, 2 Citizen and Business Interests)
- Members and Alternate Members - One year term
- Officers – One year term; may serve up to two years consecutively
- Vacancies must be filled by TAC
- 50% is a quorum

# Subcommittee Workgroups

- 
- Mobility Management
  - Paratransit/NEMT
  - Regional Transit Connectivity
  - Transportation Demand Management
  - Performance Measures Reporting **NEW!**

# Transit Planning

- Federal Performance Measures
- Sub-regional Transit Studies
  - Dayton
- High-Capacity Transit
  - US 90 A Study
  - Regional Bus Study
- Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (formerly RTCP)
  - Mobility Links
  - Regional Transit Connectivity/Fare
  - Regional Transit Information Study

## Mobility Links

### Find a Transportation Service Provider

Search for transportation service providers in the Houston-Galveston region by using any of the following search criteria.

#### County Service Area

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Austin County    | <input type="checkbox"/> Galveston County  | <input type="checkbox"/> Walker County  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazoria County  | <input type="checkbox"/> Harris County     | <input type="checkbox"/> Waller County  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chambers County  | <input type="checkbox"/> Liberty County    | <input type="checkbox"/> Wharton County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado County  | <input type="checkbox"/> Matagorda County  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fort Bend County | <input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery County |   |

#### Service Type

- ☐ All Trip Purposes  
☐ Non-Emergency Medical Trips  
☐ Shopping/Recreational/Other Trips

#### Passenger Type

- ☐ General Public  
☐ Disabled/Elderly  
☐ Other (Veteran, Youth)

#### Organization Name

Search

Reset



# Transit Implementation



- **Commuter and Transit Pilot Program**
  - Commuter or First Mile/Last Mile Solutions
  - Conroe Park and Ride (2019)
  - Woodlands to Energy Corridor (2022)
  - Fort Bend to Downtown (2023-2024)
  - Sugar Land Microtransit (2025)
- **Federal Formula Grant Funding**
  - 5307 (Urbanized Area)
  - 5310 (Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)

# Transit Outreach - Commute Solutions

## ■ **Support for Transit:**

- TDM and Telework Plans for Employers and Property Managers
- Regional Marketing and Education Campaigns
  - Love To Ride
  - Woodlands to ECD
- Ozone Action
- Emergency Ride Home Expansion



[www.yourcommutesolution.org](http://www.yourcommutesolution.org)

# ***Additional Areas of Interest***



- Congestion Management Process
- Sub-regional Studies (Mobility and Thoroughfare Plans)
- Development of the Regional Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program Call for Projects
- Safety Measures
- Air Quality Impacts
- Ped Bike Planning

# Contact Information



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Program Manager, Travel Demand Management  
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832-681-2522

# **4.2a. Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan**

Alan Rodenstein, H-GAC Staff





# ***Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP) Update***



***Alan Rodenstein, AICP***  
***April 10, 2025***

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# Background of the Coordination Plan

- Started in 2006 by TxDOT and is updated every 5 years
  - Federal coordination planning is required every 5 years
- FTA 5310 funding requires a coordinated regional plan
- Gulf Coast Region (16) has the same boundaries as the H-GAC 13-county region
- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee (RTCS) is the entity that oversees the development and approval of the coordinated plan
  - Is the Regional Coordination Council (RCC) for our region
- H-GAC has and will conduct the study with staff resources, supplemented by consulting assistance
  - RTCS is integral to the process

# What Does The RPTCP Accomplish?

- Identify existing public transit and human service transportation in the region
- Consider regional transportation gaps and identify level of transit needs
- Strongly engage public for input
- Develop programs that enhance regional collaboration and remove boundaries for travel

# What Have the Coordination Plans Achieved?

- Harris County Rides
- Mobility Links
- General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) support for smaller agencies
- Greater Regional Collaboration



# Additional Projects in Process

- Regional Transit Connectivity (i.e. fares) (ongoing)
- Regional Transit Information Study (underway)
- Regional Bus Study (starts mid-2025)
  - Originally recommended by High-Capacity Transit Task Force, RPTCP recommended expansion to all 13 counties in region



# RPTCP Current Update Highlights

- Grant application submitted to TXDOT March 2025
- Strong public outreach and engagement for a large region and post-COVID
  - Focus groups, in-person and online meetings
  - Website and online survey(s)
- Enhanced gap and transit needs analysis
- Will procure consultant for public outreach and designing gaps/needs analysis

# Role of RTCS

- Review reports/presentation of H-GAC staff at each meeting starting in July 2025
- Comment and feedback concerning reports
- Approval request for Final Report anticipated in July or August 2026

# Schedule for RPTCP

- Kickoff: June 2025
- Interim Phase: July 2025 – January 2026
- Final Phase: February 2026 – September 2026

# Schedule for RPTCP

- Kickoff: June 2025
- Interim Phase: July 2025 – January 2026
  - Transit – Human Services Inventory
  - Available Rolling Stock
  - Provider Profiles
  - Gap (and overlap) Analysis for Region and 13 Counties
  - Transit Needs Index
  - Interim Report of the Above Elements
- Final Phase: February 2026 – September 2026

# Schedule for RPTCP

- Kickoff: June 2025
- Interim Phase: June 2025 – January 2026
- Final Phase: February 2026 – September 2026
  - Identify and prioritize unmet needs
  - Develop goals and strategies
  - Prioritize potential projects
  - Draft and final report



# Questions?

Alan Rodenstein

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713-993-2407

# 4.3a. Free Fare Friday

Robyn Egbert, H-GAC Staff

# Free Fare Friday

Encouraging Transit Ridership through Incentivization

Robyn Egbert, Principal Program Coordinator  
April 10, 2025

[h-gac.com](http://h-gac.com)

Serving Today • Planning for Tomorrow



# Agenda

- What was 'Free Fare Friday'?
  - Campaign overview
  - Participating transit agencies
  - Projected ridership
  - Spreading the word!
- Results of 'Free Fare Friday'
  - Projected vs. actual
  - Before, During, and After
  - Impact on Air Quality
- Planning for September 2025
- Questions?

# Introduction – Free Fare Friday

- Commute Solutions celebrated its **30<sup>th</sup> anniversary** with H-GAC this September
- Purpose of campaign was to encourage commuters to try transit and create a mode shift to reduce vehicle miles traveled across the region and improve the region's air quality.
- To incentivize the mode shift, fares would be covered by federal funds through H-GAC's Commute Solution program, providing commuters with an opportunity to try transit at **no cost**.



# Partnering Transit Agencies

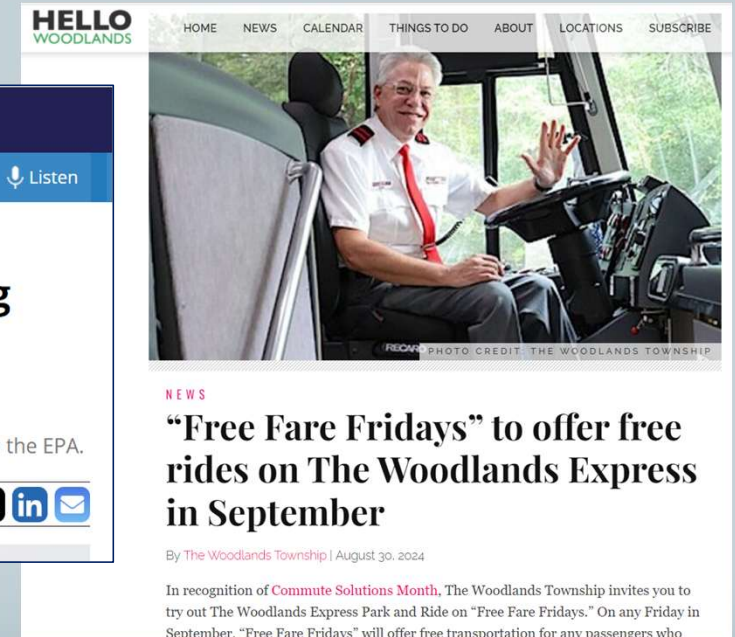
- Commute Solutions partnered with 4 transit agencies:
  - The Woodlands Express
  - Conroe Connection
  - Harris County Transit
  - Fort Bend Transit
- Riders did not have to pre-purchase tickets, or register in advance



# Anticipated Number of Riders

Transit Agency Name	Projected Daily Ridership (Friday)	Projected Monthly Ridership (Fridays)
Fort Bend County Transit	1,180	4,720
The Woodlands	1,060	4,240
Conroe Connection (Commuter)	100	400
Conroe Connection (local)	130	520
Harris County Transit	550	2,200

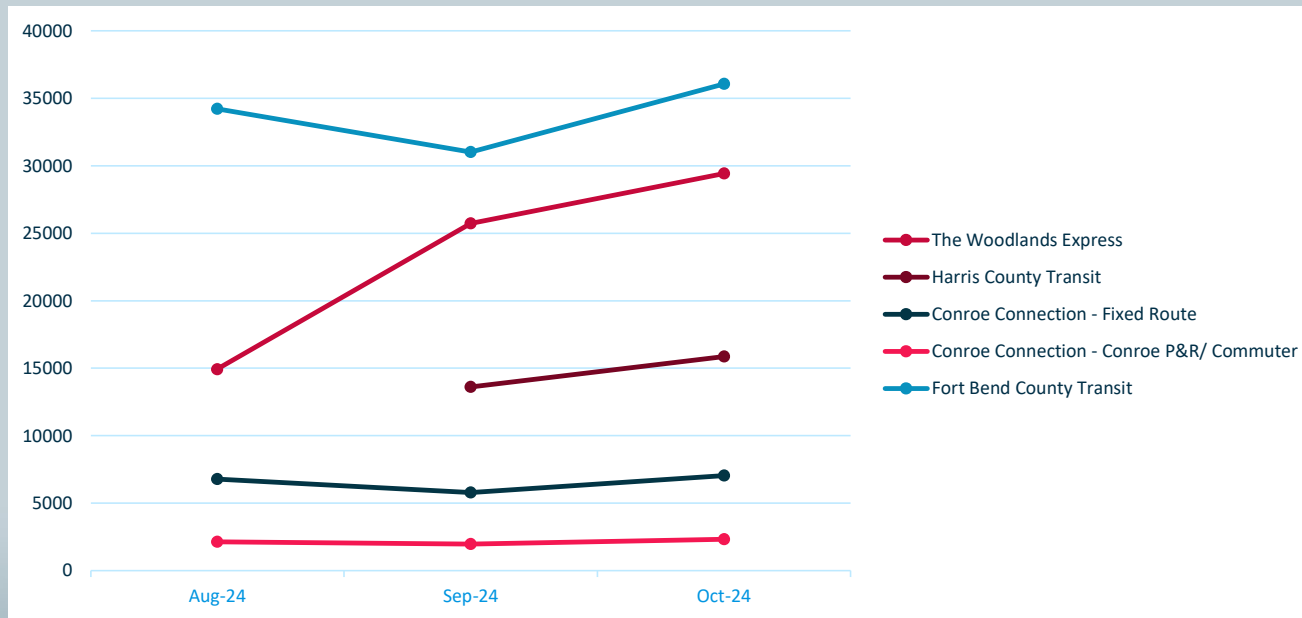
# Spreading the Word!



# Results of Free Fare Friday

Transit Agency Name	Projected Daily Ridership (Friday)	Actual Daily Ridership (Friday)	Projected Monthly Ridership (Fridays)	Actual Monthly Ridership (Fridays)
Fort Bend County Transit	1,180	N/A	4,720	N/A
The Woodlands	1,060	318	4,240	1,275
Conroe Connection (Commuter)	100	58	400	230
Conroe Connection (Local)	130	351	520	1,405
Harris County Transit	550	648	2,200	2,594

# Before vs. During vs. After





# Impact on Air Quality

Transit Agency	Sept Delta	Sept Emissions Change
The Woodlands Express	2433	4,586.21
Harris County Transit	-176	(331.76)
Conroe Connection - Fixed Route	854	1,609.79
Conroe Connection - ADA Paratransit	-144	(271.44)
Conroe Connection - Conroe P&R/ Commuter	109	205.47
Fort Bend County Transit	7914	14,917.89

NOx Removed	20.38 kg
	1.02 kg/day!

# Overall Results

- Grew overall awareness and education about commuting options in our region
- Ridership during non-free fare days were higher during month of September
- Compared to September 2023, transit agencies saw a 15% increase in ridership!
- Trends in ridership continued after the campaign
- Improved partnerships with local transit agencies

# Planning for 2025

- Opportunity to grow number of participating transit agencies
- Opportunity to include more days of the week
- Start communicating about campaign earlier
- Opportunity to continue educating and spreading awareness that public transportation can be a viable commuting option

# Contact Me!

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[www.yourcommutesolution.org](http://www.yourcommutesolution.org)

# 4.3b. Regional Transit Ridership Update

Thomas Gray, H-GAC Staff





# ***Regional Transit Ridership Update***



**Thomas B. Gray, AICP**  
**February 1, 2024**

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# Background

- During the pandemic, H-GAC staff conducted a monthly survey of the effects of COVID-19 on regional transit agencies
  - Service adjustments
  - Mitigation efforts
  - Ridership
- Survey was ended at end of 2021 at agencies' request
- Subcommittee still saw value in monitoring regional ridership trends
- Current survey is conducted quarterly, collects monthly ridership as well as information about major service changes

# Key Findings

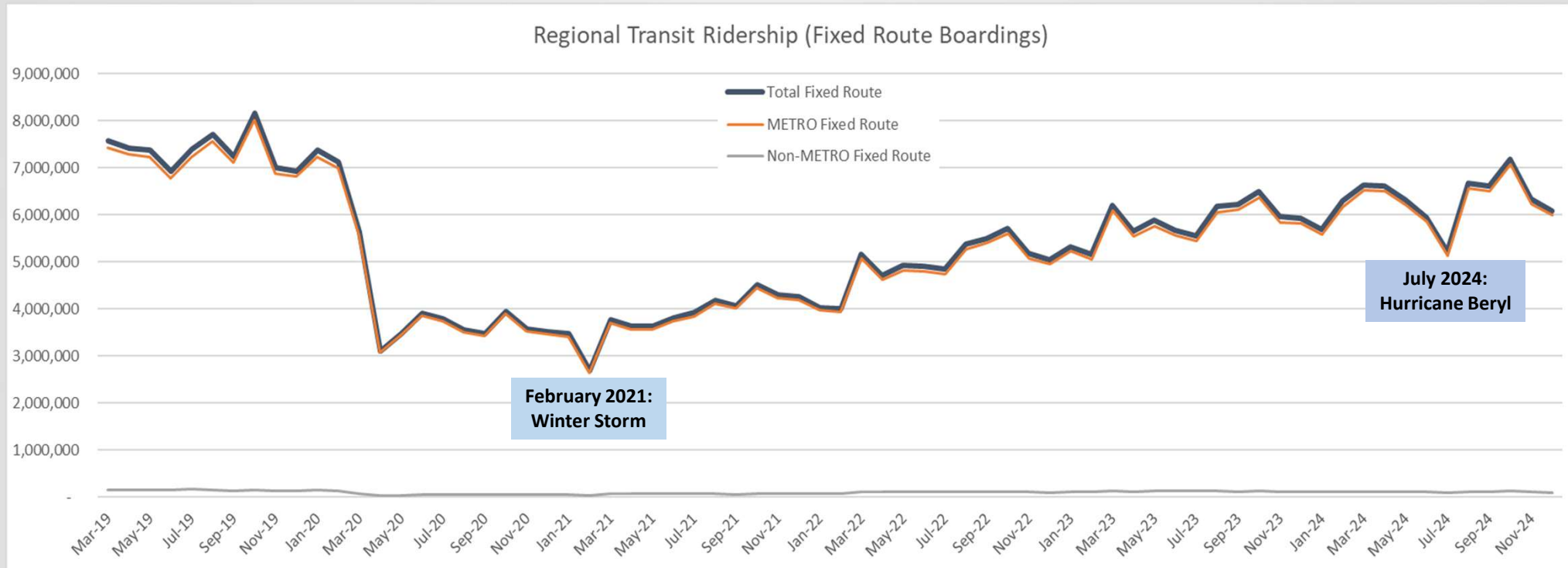
- Regional ridership (all modes) continues to recover:

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Boardings	90,086,534	53,844,212	47,641,830	61,139,810	72,239,788	78,071,798
Share of 2019	100.0%	59.8%	52.9%	67.9%	80.2%	86.7%

- Local bus and demand response continue to show the most recovery; park and ride shows the least
  - METRO local bus ridership has almost fully recovered
  - METRO park and ride carried only 45% of 2019 ridership
  - Fort Bend Transit saw increase in P&R ridership (new service)

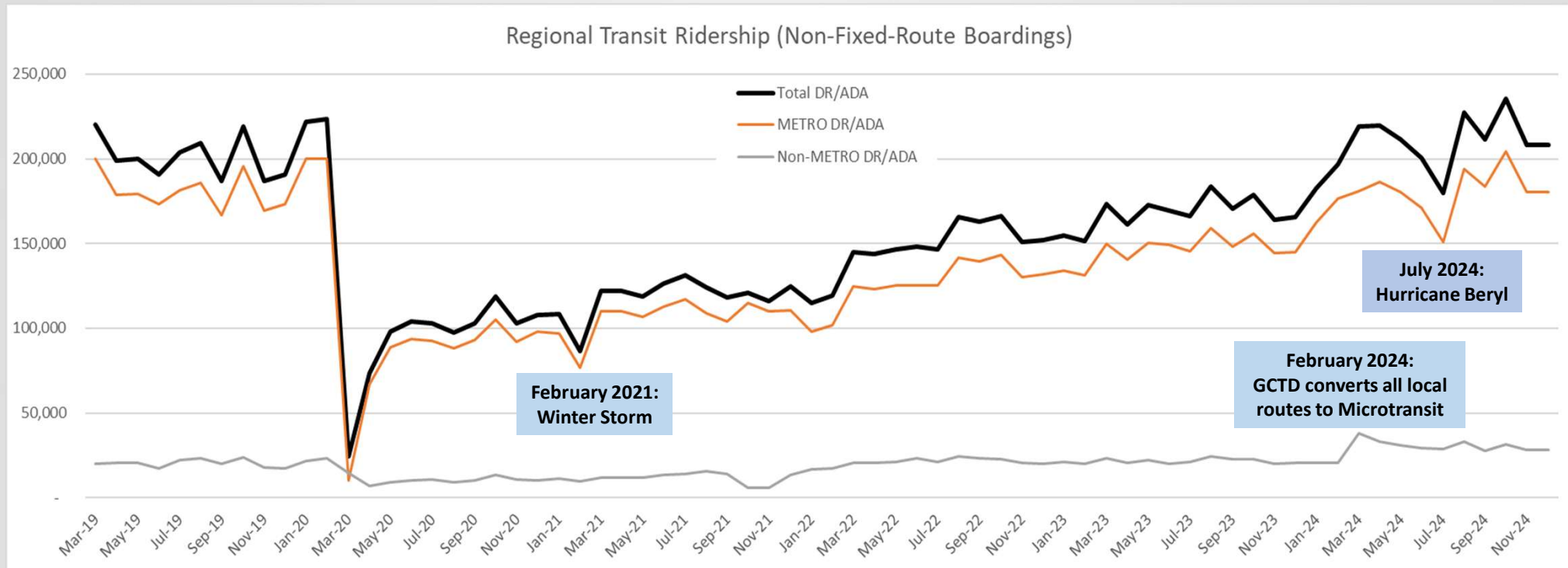


# Regional Fixed-Route Ridership Trends



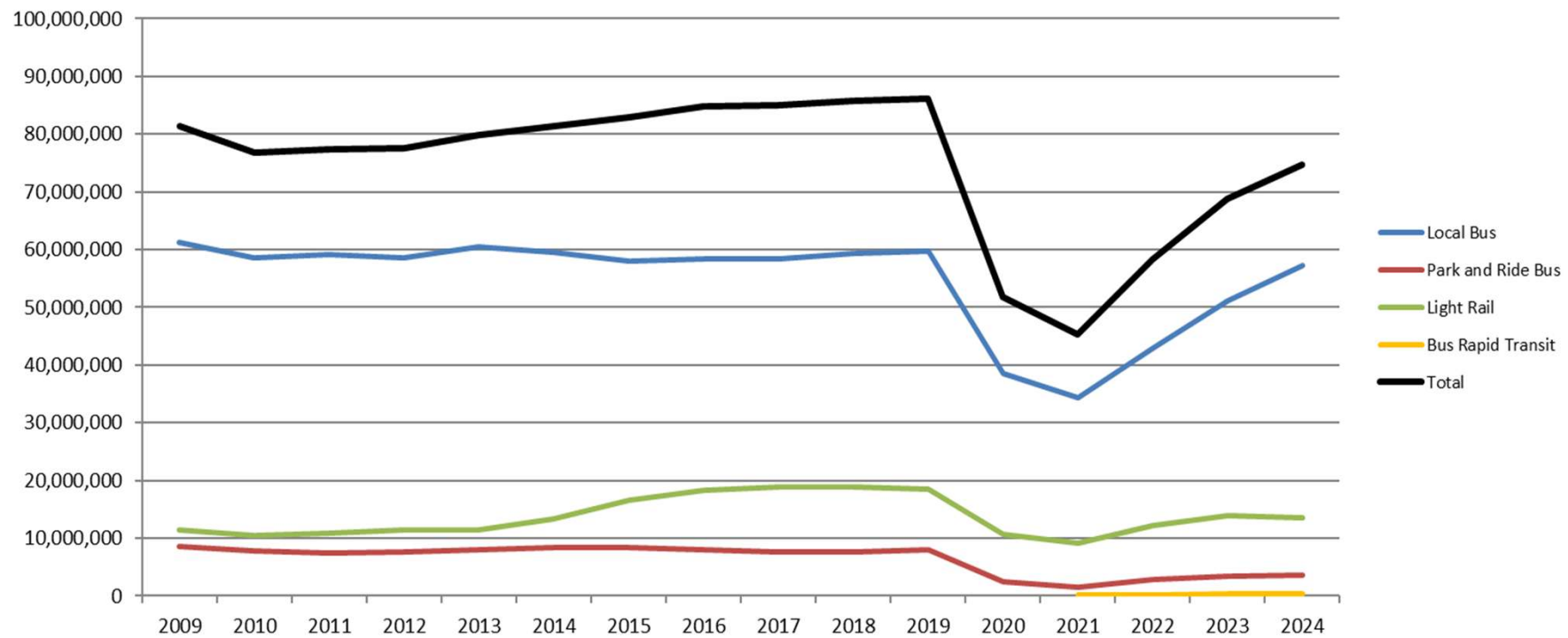
METRO carried 98% of the region's fixed-route ridership in 2024

# Regional Non-Fixed-Route Ridership Trends



METRO carried 86% of the region's non-fixed-route (e.g. ADA paratransit, demand response, microtransit) in 2024

# METRO Fixed-Route Ridership by Mode



# Next Steps

- H-GAC staff will continue to conduct survey in 2025 on quarterly basis
  - Will be sending out survey for Q1 2025 shortly
- We know your staff is busy and we appreciate your continued help!

***THANK YOU!***



# **5. Transit and Human Service Agency Reports**

(Please limit to five minutes or less per agency)

# **AREA AGENCY ON AGING OLDER AMERICANS ACT TITLE III TRANSPORTATION SERVICES GRANT**

For demand/response transportation designed to carry older individuals (60+) from specific origin to specific destination upon request. Older individuals request the transportation service in advance of their need, usually twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) hours prior to the trip. Trip purposes include:

- Medical Services
- Essential Shopping
- Senior Centers

H-GAC will pay Contractors on a unit rate reimbursement basis for services rendered.

# Target Population, Service Area and Delivery



## Target Population

Individuals 60 years of age and older with special emphasis on service to those living in rural areas, with greatest social and economic need, minorities, severe disabilities, limited English speaking ability, and with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders

## Service Area

The provider agrees to provide services identified in this Scope of Services in the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging region: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton Counties.

## Service Delivery

The provider must serve the entire county area identified and not just parts of the county area

# Procurement Schedule

Event	Date
Pre-Proposal Call	April 8, 2:00pm CST
Questions Deadline:	April 18, 12:00pm CST
Closing Date/Submission Deadline:	May 8, 12:00pm CST
Estimated Contract Start:	October 1, 2025 (FY 2026)

**Please submit all questions to the corresponding solicitation in [H-GAC's Procurement Portal](#)**

# In Memoriam



Paulette Shelton

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# 2025 Meeting Dates

- July 10, 2025
- October 9, 2025

All meetings begin at 9:30 AM

# Meeting Adjourned

RTC Subcommittee Staff Contacts:

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