

10. RAILROAD CROSSING PROGRAM UPDATE

BACKGROUND

H-GAC is initiating a planning program to support the development of solutions at rail crossings through feasibility studies. The Freight Grade Separation Program, aims to aid in the development of improvements that enhance safety, speed, and reliability in regional transportation. In July 2026, we introduced the program to the Greater Houston Freight Committee and shared the project evaluation criteria developed by H-GAC staff to encourage project submissions. The following month, in August 2026, we presented it to the TAC and TPC, receiving strong support from all groups. As the metropolitan planning area continues to grow, we face ongoing safety and efficiency issues at about 1,200 at-grade crossings near key freight routes, ports, and historic neighborhoods. These crossings pose safety hazards and often delay travelers. While many stakeholders are pursuing statewide funding, not all crossings will qualify or be ready to seek support. The Freight Grade Separation Program targets communities that need solutions but want to assess the feasibility of significant infrastructure investments. Planning feasibility studies is the first step of the project pipeline leading to implementation and construction.

CURRENT SITUATION

H-GAC has begun the process to launch the Freight Grade Separation Study call for projects and anticipates accepting applications from interested participants as early as January 2026. We anticipate the application submission window from late January 2026 through the end of February 2026 although this schedule may be adjusted.

Staff will provide an update on the Freight Grade Separation Program Call for Projects, including details on submission guidelines, key milestones, and a draft timeline for completing the call for projects.

ACTION REQUESTED

Information only.