

6A. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

DATE: Friday, July 24, 2026

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: 3555 Timmons Lane, Conference Room B, Houston, Texas 77027

---

The presiding officer, Chairman Justin Beckendorff called the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) meeting of July 24, 2026, at 9:35 a.m. to order.

CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM, INTRODUCTIONS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chairman Justin Beckendorff opened the meeting with greetings and requested attendees to take their seats. Chair Beckendorff asked Ms. Jamila Owens (HGAC) to conduct the roll call and verify quorum. Ms. Owens confirmed that a quorum of 16 members was present, as documented in Attachment 1. Judge Mark Keough, Montgomery County Judge announced that Commissioner Rich Wheeler and Chief of Staff Matt Beasley who attended as special guests were recognized. Chair Beckendorff asked the Council if anyone wanted to declare a conflict of interest on any item on the agenda. No members declared a conflict of interest. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

ITEM 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Jamila Owens (HGAC) provided instructions to the public on how to submit comments online and informed attendees that Spanish translation services were available onsite, while American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation were accessible online. No written comments were submitted by July 23, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. One public comment was provided in person, and no public comments were provided online. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

ITEM 5. MPO DIRECTOR REPORT AND ORIENTATION OF AGENDA, MS. ALLIE ISBELL, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION/MPO, H-GAC

Ms. Allie Isbell, (HGAC) provided an update on several ongoing planning initiatives and organizational accomplishments. The MPO continues to advance updates to its core planning documents, including the Public Participation Plan, which was originally presented in February and is scheduled for consideration and action at this meeting. In addition, the Call for Projects for the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan recently closed, generating more than 400 project submissions. She noted that this was the first time the MPO used a new online project submission portal, which received a strong response and was successfully supported by the Data team.

Highlights included:

Safety Action Plans: A second round of public outreach meetings for its Safety Action Plans. Recent meetings were held in Conroe, Missouri City, Waller County, Friendswood, and Pearland, with an additional meeting scheduled in Sugar Land. These meetings focus on gathering public input and discussing potential safety-related transportation projects throughout the region.

Travel Demand Management Team: A recent achievement by the Travel Demand Management team, which received a Gold Award from the Houston Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for excellence in integrated communications. The award reflects the MPO's continued commitment to effective public engagement and outreach.

H-GAC Board: The board at its July 21, 2026 meeting approved a Public Transportation Master Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), which will support future transit planning activities in the region; the Clean Vehicles Program, which will fund the replacement of four Houston ISD buses to improve regional air quality; and adjustments to the FY 2026 mid-year budget to align spending with organizational priorities and support additional staffing needs in critical program areas.

TPC Membership: TPC members were encouraged to attend the Transportation Policy Council Retreat scheduled for August 20-21. The retreat will provide an overview of TPC responsibilities, discuss strategic goals and priorities, and offer opportunities for members to build relationships and engage more deeply in regional transportation planning efforts. Ms. Isbell emphasized the value of the retreat for both new and long-serving members.

All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

#### ITEM 6. CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Beckendorff introduced the Consent Agenda, which contained a single routine item eligible for approval through one motion. Members were given the opportunity to remove any item for separate discussion; however, no requests were made. The Chair called for a motion. A motion was made and seconded. Chair Beckendorff called for a vote, the Council voted and approved the Consent agenda unanimously. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

#### ITEM 7.TPC RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION FOR OUTGOING TPC ADVISORY MEMBER, MR CHUCK WEMPLE, H-GAC

Ms. Allie Isbell (HGAC) read a resolution commending Charles "Chuck" Wemple, Executive Director of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), for his distinguished service and leadership. The resolution recognized Mr. Wemple's contributions to the TPC since 2014, including his service on the Executive and Nominating Committees, and highlighted his impact on regional transportation, mobility, air quality, economic development, disaster recovery, and community planning efforts. The resolution also acknowledged his retirement in 2026, concluding more than 22 years of service to the Houston-Galveston region.

Chair Beckendorff called for a motion, a motion was made by Council Member Sally Branson and a second by Mayor John Escoto. Chair Beckendorff called for a vote. The Council voted and approved TPC Resolution No. 2026-19. Following the resolution's approval, Mr. Wemple expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve the region, emphasizing the importance of improving transportation safety, reducing congestion, and advancing mobility options for residents and businesses. He thanked TPC members and MPO staff for their collaboration and dedication to addressing regional transportation challenges. Members shared remarks recognizing Mr. Wemple's professionalism, leadership, mentorship, and commitment to the region. Speakers highlighted his ability to navigate complex issues, provide thoughtful guidance, and foster collaboration among regional partners. Members also expressed confidence in the strong foundation he leaves behind and wished him success in retirement. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

ITEM 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, MS. CAROLINE BAILEY, H-GAC

Mr. Caroline Bailey (HGAC) presented the updated Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP serves as the MPO's guiding document for public and stakeholder engagement and is required to be maintained in compliance with federal and state regulations. The previous plan was adopted in 2019. Following an initial presentation to TAC and TPC in February 2026, the draft plan underwent a 45-day public comment period from April 20 through June 3, including an in-person public meeting on May 20. Staff received one public comment from METRO, which focused on administrative approval processes for formula-funded transit projects. The comment and H-GAC's response were documented in the plan appendix.

Key updates to the plan include a restructured format organized by chapters, the addition of public engagement principles and goals, revised Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) amendment procedures and expanded public engagement strategies that incorporate virtual and hybrid participation methods developed since the COVID-19 pandemic. New engagement tools include livestreaming, hybrid meetings, online polling and chat features, webinars, and enhanced social media outreach.

The update also streamlines certain TIP amendment procedures. Administrative approval is now permitted for project cost increases under \$1 million, sponsor changes, and the removal of Transportation Development Credits (TDCs), while larger project changes and TDC increases exceeding \$1 million continue to require TPC approval. Staff noted these revisions are intended to improve efficiency while maintaining appropriate oversight. Ms. Bailey requested approval of the updated Public Participation Plan and TPC Resolution No. 2026-17 by the TPC.

Chair Beckendorff called for a motion. A motion was made by Mayor Jerry Mouton and a second by Judge Mark Keough. A discussion occurred after the presentation. The Council unanimously approved the updated Public Participation Plan and TPC Resolution No. 2026-17. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

ITEM 9. COMMUTE SOLUTIONS MONTH, MS. ROBYN EGBERT, H-GAC

Ms. Robyn Egbert (H-GAC) presented a resolution recognizing September 2026 as Commute Solutions Month. The initiative builds on the agency's "Free Fare Fridays, Breathe Easy" campaign, launched in 2024 to encourage alternative transportation options, reduce traffic congestion, and improve regional air quality during September, historically one of the region's most challenging months for ozone levels.

Ms. Egbert reported the campaign has contributed to an 18% year-over-year increase in transit ridership, with participating transit providers experiencing sustained growth beyond the promotional period. Recent transportation demand management efforts, including shuttle services during major events, also helped reduce vehicle travel and congestion across the region. For 2026, the program will expand to include additional transit providers in Brazoria and Galveston Counties, offering free transit rides each Friday in September on participating services. The presentation also highlighted other commute alternatives available to residents, including carpooling through the Connect Smart platform, vanpool services, and everyday actions that can reduce vehicle emissions, such as limiting idling and combining trips. Ms. Egbert requested approval of TPC Resolution No. 2026-18 recognizing September as Commute Solutions Month. A discussion occurred after the presentation.

Chair Beckendorff called for a motion. A motion was made by Council Member Suzanne Whatley and a second by Mr. Thomas Jasien. The Council voted and approved TPC Resolution No. 2026-18 recognizing September as Commute Solutions Month. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

ITEM 10. 2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) YEAR-END AMENDMENTS, DR. NEELY KIM, H-GAC

Dr. Neely Kim (HGAC) presented the FY 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) year-end amendments, which support the annual closeout of FY 2026 activities and preparation for FY 2027. The UPWP serves as the region's two-year transportation planning work program, outlining federally required planning activities, priorities, budgets, and project implementation efforts. Staff is currently preparing for the FY 2026 closeout process, including project status reviews, contract management, budget reconciliation, and required reporting to TxDOT and the Federal Highway Administration.

The proposed amendment requests the carry-forward of funding and activities for 23 ongoing projects that require additional time for completion. As a result, project funds from FY 2026 would be reprogrammed into FY 2027, increasing the FY 2027 project budget from approximately \$31.1 million to \$37.7 million. Dr. Kim explained that these adjustments are part of the routine annual process to ensure continuity of active planning studies and projects.

The amendment also adds two new planning activities under Task 5 without requesting additional funding: the Sienna Corridor Plan and the Navigation Corridor Study. Dr. Kim noted that these studies will utilize existing programmed resources and support ongoing regional planning efforts. The item was presented for information and discussion, with staff continuing work on the proposed amendments and future UPWP updates.

During discussion, members sought clarification regarding the previously programmed State Highway 35 corridor study. Dr. Kim explained that the original study will not advance due to local concerns and will be replaced by alternative corridor planning efforts funded under the same program area. Questions were also raised regarding the scope of potential corridor improvements and future planning priorities.

Judge Mark Keough expressed concern that the UPWP does not explicitly reference roadway expansion as a transportation strategy for rapidly growing counties. He emphasized the importance of recognizing capacity expansion alongside multimodal transportation solutions and requested that staff develop language addressing expansion needs for consideration at a future meeting. Staff acknowledged the request and agreed to bring proposed language back for review. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

For Discussion only. No action needed.

ITEM 11. DRAFT 2027 UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (UTP) UPDATE, MR GRADY MAPES, P.E., TXDOT, HOUSTON

Mr. Grady Mapes P.E., TxDOT Houston District Director of Transportation Planning and Development, presented an overview of the draft 2027 Unified Transportation Program (UTP), TxDOT's 10-year statewide transportation investment plan. The draft UTP totals approximately \$95 billion, representing a \$6.6 billion reduction from the current 2026 UTP, largely due to revised federal funding projections and other revenue adjustments. Despite the reduction, staff noted that the proposed UTP remains the fourth-largest in the program's history and continues to support significant transportation investments statewide. The presentation highlighted reductions across most UTP funding categories while emphasizing that TxDOT's priorities remain focused on system preservation, safety, and project delivery. For the Houston-Galveston region, funding allocations in key categories remain relatively strong, with the region projected to receive substantial shares of statewide Category

2, 5, 7, and 9 funding. However, category-level funding available to the region is expected to decrease compared to prior years.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on Category 2 funding, project readiness, and differences between projects reflected in the draft UTP and those previously prioritized by the Transportation Policy Council (TPC). Staff explained that funding recommendations are increasingly based on project readiness, including the status of design, right-of-way acquisition, utility coordination, and available project development funding. Staff acknowledged discrepancies between UTP programming and TPC-prioritized projects and emphasized the need for stronger coordination between TxDOT and the MPO to ensure alignment of regional priorities and funding decisions.

Council members discussed the implications of uncertain federal transportation funding, project cost inflation, and the region's rapid population growth. Questions were raised regarding how funding allocations are determined, how project priorities are established, and how discrepancies between the UTP and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be resolved. TxDOT and MPO staff confirmed that projects ultimately must align with TPC-approved planning and programming documents before advancing to implementation. Members emphasized the importance of maintaining a coordinated pipeline of "shelf-ready" projects to position the region to take advantage of future funding opportunities. Staff agreed that improved collaboration, earlier project prioritization discussions, and greater transparency in the UTP development process will be important as the region continues to address growing transportation needs amid an increasingly constrained funding environment. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

For Information only. No action needed

#### ITEM 12. LEGISLATIVE POLICY PRIORITIES AD HOC COMMITTEE, CHAIR JUSTIN BECKENDORFF

Chair Beckendorff announced the formation of a Legislative Policy Priorities Ad Hoc Committee to coordinate a legislative strategy to address the region's growing transportation funding challenges. The committee will be chaired by Judge Mark Keough and includes Council Member Sally Branson, Commissioner Lesley Briones, Mr. Kerrick Henry, Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, and Council Member Suzanne Whatley. The group was intentionally kept small to focus on developing regionwide legislative priorities and funding strategies rather than individual project requests. The committee's primary objective will be to develop a unified set of transportation funding priorities and advocacy messages for engagement with state legislators, the Governor's Office, and the Texas Transportation Commission. TPC leadership emphasized that success will require participation from all member agencies and jurisdictions to ensure a consistent regional message regarding the need for additional transportation infrastructure funding. Members were encouraged to actively engage their state representatives and senators and participate in future advocacy efforts in Austin. The Chair expressed the hope the committee would establish an ongoing annual process for coordinated legislative outreach, helping elevate transportation infrastructure as a key regional and statewide priority. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording [HERE](#)

For Information Only. No action needed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJORNMENT

Chair Beckendorff informed the Council of upcoming meetings

| EVENT                                                     | DATE      | TIME       | LOCATION  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Technical Advisory Committee Meeting                      | August 19 | 9:30 a.m.  | In person |
| Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee (RAQPAC) | August 19 | 10.00 a.m. | Virtual   |
| Transportation Safety Committee Meeting                   | August 25 | 1:30 p.m.  | Virtual   |
| Greater Houston Freight Committee Meeting                 | August 27 | 1:30 p.m.  | Hybrid    |
| Area Emission Reduction Credit Organizational Meeting     | August 27 | 2:00 p.m.  | Hybrid    |
| Transportation Policy Council Meeting                     | August 28 | 9:30 a.m.  | In person |

Chair Beckendorff adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording

For Information Only. No action needed.

---

Hon. Sally Branson, TPC Secretary  
Transportation Policy Council

**Attachment 1**  
MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL (TPC)  
FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA  
July 24, 2026

ROLL

| <u>AGENCY</u>                      |                       | <u>VOTING MEMBER/ALTERNATE</u>                                                              | <u>REPRESENTING</u>   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Baytown, City of                   | <u>  X  </u><br>_____ | Honorable Charles Johnson<br>Mayor<br>Kenrick Griffith – Alternate                          | City of Baytown       |
| Conroe, City of                    | _____<br>_____        | Honorable David Hairel<br>Council Member<br>Vacant – Alternate                              | City of Conroe        |
| Galveston, City of                 | <u>  X  </u><br>_____ | Honorable Alex Porretto<br>Council Member<br>Honorable Bob Brown                            | City of Galveston     |
| Houston, City of<br>Position No. 1 | _____<br><u>  X  </u> | Honorable Sallie Alcorn<br>Council Member<br>Honorable Willie Davis- Alternate              | City of Houston       |
| Houston, City of<br>Position No. 2 | _____<br>_____        | Honorable Carolyn Evans-Shabazz<br>Council Member<br>Honorable Joaquin Martinez - Alternate | City of Houston       |
| Houston, City of<br>Position No. 3 | _____<br>_____        | Randy Macchi<br>Director -Houston Public Works<br>David Wurdlow - Alternate                 | City of Houston       |
| League City, City of               | _____<br>_____        | Honorable Tommy Cones<br>Council Member<br>Honorable Andy Mann - Alternate                  | City of League City   |
| Missouri City, City of             | <u>  X  </u><br>_____ | Shashi Kumar, P.E.<br>Assistant City Manager<br>Nicholas L. Cook – Alternate                | City of Missouri City |
| Pasadena, City of                  | <u>  X  </u><br>_____ | Sarah Benavides, P.E.<br>Sr. Assistant Public Works Director<br>Mark Gardemal – Alternate   | City of Pasadena      |

| <u>AGENCY</u>               |                           | <u>VOTING MEMBER/ALTERNATE</u>                                                                       | <u>REPRESENTING</u>    |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Pearland, City of           | <u>          </u>         | Vacant                                                                                               | City of Pearland       |
|                             | <u>      X      </u>      | Trent Epperson-Alternate                                                                             |                        |
| Sugar Land, City of         | <u>      X      </u>      | Honorable Suzanne Whatley<br>Council Member                                                          | City of Sugar Land     |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Honorable Jim Vonderharr– Alternate                                                                  |                        |
| Texas City, City of         | <u>                  </u> | Vacant                                                                                               | City of Texas City     |
|                             | <u>      X      </u>      | Mayor<br>Jon Branson - Alternate                                                                     |                        |
| Smaller Cities – Position 1 | <u>      X      </u>      | Honorable Jerry Mouton<br>Mayor                                                                      | Smaller Cities         |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Vacant<br>Alternate                                                                                  |                        |
| Smaller Cities – Position 2 | <u>      X      </u>      | Hon. John Escoto<br>City of Shenandoah                                                               | Smaller Cities         |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Hon. Dusty Thiele-Alternate<br>City of Katy                                                          |                        |
| Smaller Cities – Position 3 | <u>      X      </u>      | Hon. Sally Branson<br>City of Friendswood                                                            | Smaller Cities         |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Hon. Ross Gordon-Alternate<br>City of Bellaire                                                       |                        |
| The Woodlands Township      | <u>      X      </u>      | Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs<br>Board Member -The Woodlands<br>Township Board                            | The Woodlands Township |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Craig Eissler-Alternate                                                                              |                        |
| Brazoria County             | <u>      X      </u>      | Matt Hanks, JD, P.E.<br>County Engineer                                                              | Brazoria County        |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Honorable David Linder – Alternate                                                                   |                        |
| Chambers County             | <u>      X      </u>      | Honorable Ryan Dagley<br>County Commissioner                                                         | Chambers County        |
|                             | <u>                  </u> | Honorable Tommy Hammond-Alternate                                                                    |                        |
| Fort Bend County            | <u>                  </u> | Honorable Grady Prestage<br>County Commissioner, 1st Vice Chair<br>Stacy Slawinski, P.E. – Alternate | Fort Bend County       |

| <u>AGENCY</u>                             |                               | <u>VOTING MEMBERSHIP</u>                                                                               | <u>REPRESENTING</u>     |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Galveston County                          | <u>  X  </u>                  | Honorable Robin Armstrong<br>County Commissioner<br>Honorable Joe Giusti– Alternate                    | Galveston County        |
| Harris County<br>Position No. 1           | <u>      </u>                 | Honorable Adrian Garcia<br>County Commissioner, Pct. 2<br>Dr. Milton Rahman – Alternate                | Harris County           |
| Harris County<br>Position No. 2           | <u>      </u><br><u>  X  </u> | Honorable Lesley Briones-Secretary<br>County Commissioner, Pct. 4<br>Roberto Treviño, P.E. – Alternate | Harris County           |
| Liberty County                            | <u>  X  </u>                  | Honorable Jay Knight<br>County Judge<br>Honorable Greg Arthur - Alternate                              | Liberty County          |
| Montgomery County                         | <u>  X  </u>                  | Honorable Mark Keough<br>County Judge<br>Matt Gray – Alternate                                         | Montgomery County       |
| Waller County                             | <u>  X  </u>                  | Honorable Justin Beckendorff<br>County Commissioner – <b>Chair</b><br>Kendric Jones- Alternate         | Waller County           |
| Houston Metropolitan<br>Transit Authority | <u>      </u><br><u>  X  </u> | Elizabeth Gonzalez Brock<br>METRO Chair<br>Thomas Jasien-Alternate                                     | METRO                   |
| TxDOT-Houston                             | <u>      </u><br><u>  X  </u> | Glenn Allbritton, P.E.<br>District Engineer<br>Varuna Singh, P.E.– Alternate                           | TxDOT Houston District  |
| TxDOT-Beaumont                            | <u>      </u><br><u>  X  </u> | Ana I. Mijares, P.E.<br>District Engineer<br>Lisa Collins, P.E. – Alternate                            | TxDOT Beaumont District |
| Port Freeport                             | <u>      </u><br><u>  X  </u> | Phyllis Saathoff<br>Executive Director<br>Rob Lowe-Alternate                                           | Port Freeport           |
| Port Houston                              | <u>  X  </u>                  | Charlie Jenkins<br>Chief Executive Officer<br>Kerrick Henny-Alternate                                  | Port Houston            |

AGENCY

Gulf Coast Rail District

  X  

VOTING MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Jon Keeney  
Mayor-GCRD Board Member  
Veronica Chapa-Gorczyński-Alternate

REPRESENTING

Gulf Coast Rail District

  31  

Total Voting Membership

  25  

Voting Membership Present

  16  

Required Quorum

AGENCY

Texas State Senate  
Freight Rail Interests  
Texas State Legislator  
Wharton County

  X  

  X  

EX-OFFICIOS

Hon. Carol Alvarado  
Clint Schelbitzki/**Richard Zientek**  
Hon Dennis Paul  
Hon. Phillip Spenrath

REPRESENTING

8-County Region  
Union Pacific  
8-County Region  
Wharton County

NON-VOTING

H-GAC  
TxDOT-Houston

  X  

  X  

Ron Papsdorf  
Catherine McCreight

H-GAC  
TxDOT-Houston