The Houston-Galveston region’s dynamic economy has enabled it to recover from the national recession quickly, outperforming its national peers. As one of the fastest growing economies in North America, adequate investment in transportation remains a critical challenge to sustained regional job creation, economic prosperity and quality of life.

**Introduction**
In 2012, the eight county Houston-Galveston region grew faster than any other region in the State of Texas. Since 2010, estimates indicate that the region’s population has grown 4.4% and has seen a 4.6% increase in jobs. By 2040, the region is expected to add 3.3 million residents and 1.5 million jobs. Much of its economic activity depends on a safe and efficient transportation system that moves people and goods regionally, nationally and internationally. Using the stated goals of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update, this report provides leading indicators of the performance of the region’s transportation system and describes some key investments made last year to maintain, operate and expand it.

**Goal 1 – Improve Mobility and Reduce Congestion**
Economic recovery in the region and State is increasing traffic on the roadway system due to greater movement of people and goods. In just one year, the Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) in the eight-county area increased 1% (an additional 1.5 million vehicle miles each day). Since 2009, VMT has grown 5%. Increasing daily VMT also increased congestion costs 2% last year. Along with the cost for fuel, insurance and other expenses, annual congestion costs have grown to $1090 per year for the typical auto commuter. Despite a small increase in suburban transit use, overall transit ridership in the region experienced a 2% decline in Passenger Miles of Travel (PMT) in 2011 (the most recent reporting year).

**Goal 2 – Improve Access to Jobs, Homes and Services**
As shown on the attached map and table, almost $1 billion in multimodal transportation improvements let to contract in 2012. These improvements added highway and transit capacity in several major travel corridors, including BW-8 (Sam Houston Parkway), SH 99 segment D, and METRO’s East End and Southeast light rail corridors. Local governments expanded the regional bikeway network, adding 14.7 miles of bicycle lanes in 2011.

**Goal 3 – Preserve the Transportation System**
TxDOT has made significant gains in improving the condition of the region’s pavements and bridges. The percentage of roadways rated in “good or better” condition increased to 81%, while the percentage of bridges rated “good or better” increased to 83%. “One-time” investment opportunities such as the federal American Rehabilitation and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and various state bond programs have been important resources enabling some “catch up” during the economic downturn. Due to flat or declining motor vehicle tax revenues, TxDOT expenditures for maintenance fell 13% to $276 million in 2012. As a result, the State’s ability to maintain the condition of its system remains uncertain.

**Goal 4 – Support Economic Growth**
The strengthening regional economy contributed to increased freight and passengers moving through the region’s ports and commercial airports. Total tonnage at ports increased 2% to 332 million “short” tons (2,000 lbs each) at the region’s four ports: Houston, Galveston, Freeport, and Texas City. The number of passengers traveling from Bush Intercontinental and Hobby airports increased 1% to 25 million in 2012.

**Goal 5 – Create a Healthier Environment**
The Houston-Galveston region continues to reduce vehicle emissions through its Commute Solutions and Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles programs. The Clean Vehicles program aids fleet operators in replacing older diesel engines with new, cleaner engines and supports the use of clean alternative fuels (such as compressed and liquefied natural gas). In 2012, these programs achieved 514 tons of NOx (a key component of smog) emissions reductions per year.

**Goal 6 – Safety – Minimizing Crashes and Deaths**
Safety is a top regional priority. In 2012, the region experienced a significant increase in the number of vehicle crashes compared to 2011. Vehicle crashes increased 15% (a 6% increase compared to the 5-year average) to 102,400. Additionally, traffic fatalities increased 3% to 565. In 2012, H-GAC launched a distracted driving awareness campaign and a coordinated, multi-community DWI enforcement initiative. Local governments and transportation agencies are working with TxDOT to identify, implement and enhance traffic management and law enforcement focused on reducing the frequency and severity of crashes.

**Goal 7 – Increase Transit Options**
METRO continued its development of the light rail system along its North, Southeast, and East End lines. Additionally, local transit agencies are redoubling efforts to increase ridership through local bus service improvements. In the past several years, suburban transit utilization has seen a consistent increase within Harris County, Fort Bend County and Brazos Transit services.

**Summary**
The region’s relatively quick recovery from the recession and subsequent growth has resulted in a thriving economy dependent on a safe and efficient transportation system. Although the condition of the roadway system has improved, funding for infrastructure investment has not been enough to reduce congestion costs and vehicle crashes. Of added concern is the decline in transit ridership.

For additional transportation system performance measures visit www.h-gac.com/taq/performance.
# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

## 1. IMPROVE MOBILITY AND REDUCE CONGESTION

### TRAFFIC CONGESTION
- **Cost per Peak Auto Commuter**
  - Up 2%
  - $1,090 per year
  - $1,071 in 2010
  (Source: TTI 2012)

### FREEWAY USAGE
- **Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)**
  - Up 1%
  - 143.8 million daily VMT
  - 142.3 million VMT in 2010
  (Source: TxDOT 2012)

### TRANSIT USAGE
- **Annual Passenger Miles of Travel**
  - Down 2%
  - 546.2 million miles per year
  - 558.5 million miles in 2010
  (Source: National Transit Database 2011)

## 2. IMPROVE ACCESS TO JOBS, HOMES AND SERVICES

### HIGHWAYS
- **Lane Miles Added**
  - Up .05%
  - 3,161 total lane miles in 2011
  - 3,145 total lane miles in 2009
  (Source: TxDOT 2011)

### TOLL
- **Lane Miles Added**
  - Up 11%
  - 699 total lane miles in 2011
  - 628 total lane miles in 2007
  (Source: H-GAC 2011)

### BICYCLES
- **Miles Added**
  - Up 1.4%
  - 1,096 total lane miles in 2011
  - 1,081 total lane miles in 2010
  (Source: H-GAC 2011)

## 3. PRESERVE THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

### ROADWAY PAVEMENT CONDITIONS
- **% of Lane Miles in Good or Better Condition**
  - Up 4%
  - 81.5% of miles in good or better condition in 2012
  - 77.5% of miles in good or better condition in 2011
  (Source: TxDOT 2012)

### BRIDGE CONDITIONS
- **% of On-system Bridges Rated Good/Better**
  - Up 1%
  - 83% of system bridges rated good or better in 2012
  - 82% of system bridges rated good or better in 2010
  (Source: TxDOT 2012)

### MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURES
- **Non-contracted & Contracted Maintenance**
  - Down 13%
  - $275.6 million in expenditures in 2012
  - $315.2 million in 2011
  (Source: TxDOT 2012)

## 4. SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH

### SEA PORTS
- **Annual Total Tonnage**
  - Up 2%
  - 332 million tons in 2011
  - 324 million tons in 2010
  - Includes Freeport, Galveston, Houston, and Texas City
  (Source: USACE 2011)

### COMMERCIAL AIRPORTS
- **Annual Enplaned Passengers**
  - Up 1%
  - 25 million passengers in 2012
  - 24.8 million passengers in 2010
  (Source: Houston Airport System 2012)

### AIR QUALITY
- **8-hr Ozone Standard**
  - Down 1%
  - 88 ppb – 3 year average in 2012
  - 89 ppb - 3 year average in 2011
  - 8-hr 2008 NAAQS is 75ppb
  (Source: TCEQ 2012)

### AIR QUALITY
- **NOx Emissions Reductions**
  - Up 2%
  - 514 tons per year in 2012
  - 502 tons per year in 2011
  (Source: TxDOT, H-GAC 2012)

## 5. CREATE A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT

### TRAFFIC CRASHES
- **Number of Crashes**
  - Up 15%
  - 102,400 crashes in 2012
  - 88,875 crashes in 2011
  (Source: TxDOT, H-GAC 2012)

### TRAFFIC FATALITIES
- **Number of Fatalities**
  - Up 3%
  - 565 fatalities in 2012
  - 551 fatalities in 2011
  (Source: TxDOT, H-GAC 2012)

### LIGHT RAIL
- **Miles Added**
  - No net change
  - 7.5 miles of light rail in 2012
  - Construction underway on North, Southeast, and East End Lines
  (Source: METRO 2012)

### PARK-AND-RIDE LOTS
- **Number of Lots**
  - Down 1 lot
  - 38 park-and-ride lots in 2012
  - 39 park-and-ride lots in 2011
  (Source: METRO 2012)

## 6. SAFETY – MINIMIZING CRASHES AND DEATHS

## 7. INCREASE TRANSIT OPTIONS

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**LEGEND:**
- **GREEN** - Change with positive effect
- **RED** - Change with negative effect
- **ORANGE** - No discernible effect

Net Increase  
Net Decrease  
No Net Change
The Top 20 Projects Let to Construction in the Houston-Galveston Region in FY 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STREET</th>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
<th>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 MTRORAIL SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR</td>
<td>IH 45 AT CAPITAL</td>
<td>PALM CENTER</td>
<td>SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR (FY 2012)</td>
<td>$173,035,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 MTRORAIL NORTH CORRIDOR</td>
<td>NORTHLINE MALL</td>
<td>UH DOWNTOWN</td>
<td>METRO SOLUTIONS-NORTH CORRIDOR (FY 2012)</td>
<td>$158,965,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SH 99</td>
<td>IH 10 W</td>
<td>US 59 S</td>
<td>SEG D: CONSTRUCT OVERPASSES AND APPROACHES AT MAJOR AT-GRADE INTERSECTIONS</td>
<td>$145,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 BW 8</td>
<td>US 59</td>
<td>SH 288</td>
<td>WIDEN EXISTING FOUR-LANE TOLWAY TO EIGHT-LANES</td>
<td>$120,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 EAST END CORRIDOR</td>
<td>HARRISBURG AT TOLEDO AVE</td>
<td>MAGNOLIA TRANSIT CENTER</td>
<td>METRO SOLUTIONS EAST END CORRIDOR (FY 2012)</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 BELLAIRE BVD</td>
<td>ROGERSALE ST</td>
<td>MARY BATES ST</td>
<td>COMPLETE RECONSTRUCTION AND WIDENING WITH THE ADDITION OF ONE WESTBOUND TRAVEL LANE INCLUDING RELATED UNDERGROUND WATER, SEWER, DRAINAGE AT ALL SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS</td>
<td>$25,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 SH 99</td>
<td>AT IH 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>CONSTRUCT FOUR DIRECT CONNECTORS</td>
<td>$12,985,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 YALE ST</td>
<td>PARKER RD, W</td>
<td>TIDWELL</td>
<td>WIDEN TO FOUR-LANE DIVIDED ROAD</td>
<td>$12,593,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 BELLAIRE BVD / WHEATLEY ST</td>
<td>GULF BANK W</td>
<td>LITTLE YORK W</td>
<td>RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A FOUR-LANE DIVIDED CONCRETE ROADWAY WITH STORM DRAINAGE, CURB, SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS, STREET LIGHTING, TRAFFIC CONTROL, AND NECESSARY UNDERGROUND UTILITIES</td>
<td>$11,862,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 ALDINE MAIL ROUTE RD</td>
<td>AIRLINE DR</td>
<td>ALDINE WESTFIELD RD</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT FOUR-LANE CONCRETE BVD SECTION W/CURB &amp; GUTTER AND STORM SEWERS</td>
<td>$10,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 CASHIERE &amp; HIRAM CLARK BUS OPERATING FACILITIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FACILITY REHABILITATION</td>
<td>$10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 SH 36</td>
<td>JONES CREEK</td>
<td>FORT BEND C/J</td>
<td>ACP Overlay and Re-Stripe to Provide Hurricane Evacuation Markings in Shoulder</td>
<td>$10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 BW 8</td>
<td>0.8 M W OF US 59 N</td>
<td>0.3 M E OF OLD HUMBLE RO</td>
<td>WIDEN EXISTING TO SIX MAIN LANES</td>
<td>$5,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 KIRBY DR</td>
<td>HOLMES RD</td>
<td>REED RD</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT FOUR-LANE DIVIDED ROAD</td>
<td>$8,652,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 CR 220</td>
<td>SH 288</td>
<td>FM 523</td>
<td>RECONSTRUCTION TWO-LANE ROADWAY FROM SH 288 TO E OF BS 288. CONSTRUCT NEW TWO-LANE BRIDGE OVER UP RR. CONSTRUCT NEW TWO-LANE ROADWAY FROM W OF BS 288 TO FM 523.</td>
<td>$8,320,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 HOUSTON TRANSTAR</td>
<td>AT 6022 KATY RD</td>
<td>FM 523</td>
<td>TRANSTAR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER EXPANSION</td>
<td>$7,875,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 KEEGANS BAYOU TRAIL</td>
<td>KIRKWOOD DR</td>
<td>GESSNER DR</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT HIKE &amp; BIKE TRAIL</td>
<td>$6,547,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 WASHINGTON AVE / HEMPESTAD RD</td>
<td>WASHINGTON/KATY ROAD SPLIT</td>
<td>IH 10</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT EIGHT-LANE DIVIDED (RAISED MEDIAN) URBAN STREET FACILITY (PHASE 1 OF 2)</td>
<td>$6,508,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 BRAY’S BAYOU CONNECTOR TRAIL</td>
<td>RICHMOND</td>
<td>ART STORRY PARK</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT SHARED USE TRAIL</td>
<td>$4,901,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 SCOTT ST</td>
<td>ONIX DR E</td>
<td>ALMEDA Genoa Rd</td>
<td>CONSTRUCT FOUR-LANE ROAD</td>
<td>$4,600,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FY 2012 PROJECTS LET TO CONSTRUCTION
TOTAL = $977,587,118

US 290 – Construction crews working on the new ramp that will take motorists directly from US 290 to I-10. This work is part of $1.8 billion in planned corridor improvements by TxDOT.

METRORail North Line – The North Line, scheduled to open in December 2013, is one of three light rail lines under construction. The two other lines are the East End and Southeast Lines.

Beltway 8 – The widening of Beltway 8 from four to eight toll lanes is a $120 million project sponsored by the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA). This project begins at US 59 and continues east to SH 288.

SH 99 – Work on the SH 99 Grand Parkway continues with the construction of overpasses at key at-grade intersections along Segment D. Other improvements include the construction of four direct connectors at IH-10.
I am proud to present to you the Houston-Galveston region’s 2012 Mobility Report. This year we have chosen to offer information that is easy to understand for the average reader, yet of extraordinary relevance in our efforts to keep our region an attractive place to live, work, play and raise families.

This report summarizes key performance measures on the state of our transportation system in a new format. Trends in these performance measures can highlight successes. They can also pinpoint areas of attention and opportunities for future investment. This report should provide policymakers with useful feedback on work accomplished and areas of emphasis as we anticipate accelerated population growth in the Houston-Galveston region.

This document highlights some key indicators of transportation system performance that directly relates to our 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update’s stated goals. These performance measures are intended to answer key questions: Are we meeting these regional goals? Are we moving in the right direction?

A record 144 million vehicle miles of travel are carried over the region’s roadways on an average workday. Up 5% over the last five years, the costs of congestion experienced by commuters continue to grow as a new phase of freeway and tollway projects enter construction. Of additional concern, the number of vehicle crashes increased 15% over the previous year, while transit ridership in the region’s core continues to decline.

Our challenges are many: managing our roadways to ensure reliable operation; reducing vehicle crashes and the resulting congestion; responsibly growing our transportation assets; and finding ways to restore growth in transit ridership.

We encourage you to visit our website to review a comprehensive list of performance measures at www.h-gac.com/taq/performance.

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Alan C. Clark
Transportation Director
Houston-Galveston Area Council

$1,090
Cost per Commuter
↑ Up 2%

144
Million Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel
↑ Up 1%

546
Million Passenger Miles of Travel
↓ Down 2%

102
Thousand Traffic Crashes
↑ Up 15%

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is a voluntary association of local governments and local elected officials in the 13-county Gulf Coast Planning Region. The Gulf Coast Planning Region consists of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton counties. Organized in 1966, H-GAC provides a forum for the discussion of area-wide concerns, promoting regional cooperation through comprehensive planning and services to local governments.

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