

## 9C SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES

### LONG RANGE PLANNING

#### 1. Sub-regional Planning Initiatives (SPI)

- Southeast Harris County Subregional Study has been completed. For more information visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)
- The final report for the Liberty County Mobility Study is being completed. For more information visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)
- Montgomery County Precinct 2 Mobility Plan study team presented the final recommendations at the last Steering Committee Meeting on September 29, 2022. The final document is being drafted. For more information visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)
- Staff developed Advanced Funding Agreements (AFA) for regional planning studies included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The AFA's have been submitted to TxDOT for approval.
- Staff is procuring 5 subregional plans: FM 518 Corridor Study, Pearland Mobility Study, Washington Ave. Corridor Study, Chambers County and Old 6<sup>th</sup> Ward planning study. All these projects are included in the 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Work on these studies will begin when the Advanced Funding Agreements are approved by TxDOT.

#### 2. Freight Planning

- The next Greater Houston Freight Committee meeting will be held in February 2023. Date and time to be announced.
- The last Steering Committee meeting for the Regional Goods Movement Plan was held on December 1, 2022. For more information visit: [www.engage.h-gac.com](http://www.engage.h-gac.com)

#### 3. Regional Incident Management, Safety, and Operations

- Staff held a Tow and Go™ Management Meeting at Houston TranStar with TxDOT, Houston TranStar Staff, Harris County Sheriff Officer, Houston Police Department, AECOM and the Tow and Go Contractors was held on December 5, 2022.
- Tow and Go performed 2,624 "No Cost Tows" in November. Average Clearance Times was 24 minutes and 41 seconds.
- In October 2022, the 8-county region experienced 76 traffic fatalities based on data from TxDOT Crash Record Information System (CRIS), which was a 5% decrease when compared to October 2021 which recorded 80 fatalities.
- The number of traffic crashes recorded in CRIS in the 8 County Area was 15,441 for October 2022, an 8% decreased when compared to October 2021 which recorded 16,720 crashes.
- The number of fatalities from January 1 to October 31, 2022 for the 8-county region was 616. In 2021, during this same period the number of fatalities was 623. This is a 10 % decrease this year when compared to for the same period in 2021.
- H-GAC Safety Task Forces held their first Meeting on November 7, 2022.

4. Environmental Planning

- Staff is developing a process and worksheet to assess and document the environmental justice issues associated with proposed transportation projects and planning decisions.
- Staff are updating the Eco-Logical tool to include links to existing environmental assessment and final environmental impact statements for roadway projects within the planning area. Staff will coordinate with TxDOT and consultants working on local Planning and Environmental Linkages studies to examine the application of Ecological tools on those studies.
- Staff are continuing to work on an update to the regional Environmental Justice report.

5. Resiliency Planning

- Staff continues the development of a Low Impact Development tool to examine how to cost-effectively integrate low impact development into transportation projects in the Metropolitan Planning Area.
- Staff completed work on the Resilience & Durability Pilot project as part of the FHWA program to develop transportation-specific resiliency best practices and strategies. The draft report has been finalized and accepted by FHWA. Staff has completed an update of the Foresight Panel on Environmental Effects report with outcomes from the Pilot project.

6. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- Phase 2 of the RTP public outreach is now underway. Staff held a second round of virtual and in-person public meetings around the region from October to December 2022. This outreach will include sharing and requesting feedback on the Visioning outreach results along with the investment strategies to address safety, reliability, and other identified needs. More information on the upcoming meetings can be found at: <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate>
- The third and final round of public outreach will occur February to April 2023. These meetings are to present and receive comments on the draft 2045 RTP Update. Please see <https://engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate> for more information.

7. Other Planning Activities

- Staff continued to monitor regional travel impacts of COVID-19. Regional travel volumes were monitored through StreetLight data. Transit ridership numbers are now reported quarterly from transit agencies in the region. Permanent pedestrian/bicyclist counters provide updates on counts along regional pedestrian/bicyclist facilities. Staff have developed an online [COVID-19 Regional Traffic Impacts App](#) which displays vehicular, active, and transit transportation patterns during the Pandemic.
- Staff submitted a scope of work for updating the Congestion Management Process for internal review to help move forward that project and guide the work of the workgroup.

## SHORT RANGE PLANNING

### 1. Project Programming

- Staff coordinated on the amendments to the 2023-2026 TIP document. Staff coordinated with TxDOT and local governments on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Staff met with local sponsors as part of the quarterly TIP monitoring efforts.
- Staff worked on the development of project selection criteria for the next Call for Projects and coordinated with various subcommittees.

### 2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Planning

- Adult Bicycle Safety Program - (1) Staff scheduled a series of in-person adult bicycle handling classes (e.g. Train Your Bike) in all the counties surrounding Harris County. Train Your Bike classes have been completed in Galveston and Harris counties. (2) Online introductory courses for bike riding (e.g. CyclingSavvy) are also available free of charge to anyone in the eight county MPO area. (3) Bicycle Friendly Driver classes are in process of being scheduled. More information can be found here - <https://www.h-gac.com/pedestrian-bicyclist-planning/bike-safety>
- Staff continues participation in meetings with the Houston Bicycle Advisory Committee and Houston Traffic Safety Committee.
- The evaluation committee worked on the Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan procurement submissions and revised the ILA for internal approvals.
- Staff is continuing work on scopes for the Memorial Drive, Friendswood, and Buffalo Bayou active transportation planning projects to move these scopes towards internal approvals and procurement.
- Regarding the Local Active Transportation Study program, staff has completed the evaluation for Bay Area Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan RFP submission and started preparing the recommended consultant to submit to H-GAC Board. Staff is monitoring the ILA approval process and will notify Harris County Precinct 2 once approved by H-GAC leadership. Staff will review the scopes of work for Memorial Drive Bike and Pedestrian Study and Connecting Buffalo Bayou East Design Concept Development with Transportation Directors. Staff incorporated input from City of Friendswood to City of Friendswood Master Trail Plan scope of work and sent it out for internal TDM review.
- Staff drafted the framework for the Active Transportation Toolkit.
- Staff is in process drafting scope of work for Safe Route to School.
- Staff continues to work with the Pedestrian/Bicyclists Subcommittee and associated workgroups to advance solutions beneficial to the region. Preparations for the January 2023 subcommittee meeting have begun. The GIS Network Update Workgroup continues to reach out to smaller municipalities to ensure their needs are being addressed with the development of a standardized GIS format and quality/functional criteria. The Active Transportation Modeling Workgroup continues to coordinate with Data Analytics and Research Department.
- Staff arranged for 2 short duration pedestrian counting equipment at the Mercer Botanic Gardens in Harris County that will be in place for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the month of December 2022 and the entire month of March 2023. The main objective of both deployments will be to gauge the increase & decrease in attendance at specific events and the changes in the weather.

- Staff completed the purchase of a high-powered cordless drill to facilitate the installation of new short duration counting equipment that features pneumatic tubes to record bicyclist traffic movements. Staff consulted with both internal and external staff to make this purchase.
- Staff met with H-GAC webmaster to discuss ongoing development of an addition to the bicycle pedestrian counter webpage that would allow users to view & download data from 4 long-term count sites. An internal demo of the page is fully functional, the webmaster is taking time to finalize the display and behavior of the page and anticipates that it should be ready by the end of 2022.

### 3. Transit Planning

- The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee cancelled their special call meeting for November 17, 2022, to allow transit agencies more time to complete their agency safety plans in accordance with federal guidelines. The Subcommittee's next regular meeting will occur on Thursday, January 12, 2023.
- Staff are planning two focus groups to gather feedback on ways to improve the Commuter and Transit Pilot Program call for partners.
- Staff has continued to advance a scope of work for a transit information study to better understand the information needs of potential riders when determining when and how to ride transit.
- Coordination continues between H-GAC, METRO and other regional transit agencies regarding the Regional Transit Connectivity Project, including the Seamless Fare System, regional trip planner, data management system, and related efforts. Initial assessments to determine agencies' needs and capacity are nearing completion, and implementation is expected to begin in 2023.
- Staff is continuing coordination with TXDOT, H-GAC and local sponsors to kick off the TSU Automated Transit Study, the US 90A Transit Corridor Study, the Outer Westpark Study and the and Dayton Transit Study.
- Staff worked to update the interim report to be delivered to Pearland for the Pearland Transit Studies and will be working with Data Analytics to revise maps for a second round of internal approvals before bringing the steering committee back together for next steps and public meeting preparation.

### TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Staff completed the second phase of public outreach for the RTP 2045 Update in November. Planning is underway for a third round in the spring of 2023. For more information, visit [www.engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate](http://www.engage.h-gac.com/2045rtupdate)
- The November edition of the transportation focused newsletter, Region View, was released on is available at <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Region-View-November-2022.html?soid=1101570321083&aid=o3mYTDdrcbs>
- Planning for the following projects is currently underway:
  - Pearland Transit Study
  - Bike Safety Training Courses
  - Public Participation Policy Update
  - Freight and Technology Summit

- Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan
- 2023 Commute Solutions Digital Marketing Plan

## COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

- Staff are proud to announce the addition of two new Commute Solutions partners - Scenic Houston and The League City Chamber of Commerce.
- Staff provided a Certificate of Appreciation to Daikin Comfort Technologies at their annual Neighbor's Night event.
- Staff attended a Health and Wellness Expo hosted by the League City Chamber of Commerce. There was a lot of interest surrounding Bike/Ped and ConnectSmart.
- A focus group meeting was held to assess the compressed work week schedule recently implemented at the Memorial City location for Oncology Consultants. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.
- Staff launched a survey to City of Houston employees currently participating in the telework pilot program. The feedback from employees was positive and will be shared with the city Mayor.
- Staff began to work with the ConnectSmart team to develop a seamless onboarding process for employer partners.
- Staff worked on the development of the Commute Solutions strategic plan for 2023.
- Staff is planning a Regional TDM Coordination Meeting on December 16, 2022.

## CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAMS PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff continued to monitor current projects and calculate emission reductions based upon Subrecipient performances. Staff continued to monitor grant recipients' usage of vehicles to assure grant requirements for vehicle use and mileage are met.
- Staff continued to coordinate with Cy Fair ISD for grant funding of electric buses, and Pasadena ISD for grant funding for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses. Additionally, Staff continued to work with two SEP-funded contracts; Danbury and Lamar Consolidated ISD's.
- Staff continued to examine and develop the parameters needed to establish an electric charging infrastructure component to the Clean Vehicles Program.
- Staff continued to process closeouts for projects meeting minimum contracted requirements for all project vehicles.
- Staff participated in a variety of internal and external meetings and met with other local government agencies to discuss projects utilizing Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.
- Staff continues to meet with electric charger manufacturers to verify Buy America compliance and program interest.

## GENERAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Staff is working with partners Environmental Defense Fund, Port of Houston, and Evolve Houston to develop a Commercial Zero Emission Vehicle Event that will include presentations on topics related to zero emission vehicles of all types as well as a ride & drive event that will feature a variety of light and heavy duty electric and hydrogen powered vehicles. The event will be held at

NRG Center on November 30<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am to 5:00 pm. This event is free. You can reserve your spot [here](#).

- Staff attended the American Planning Association Texas Chapter's Annual Planning Conference on October 19-21. Staff participated in a panel on equity considerations in transportation electrification.
- Staff is working to update our region's annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> Path Forward report. Staff has been working closely with regional stakeholders over the past several months to review and update the annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> report. It is anticipated that the draft report will be brought to RAQPAC for discussion at the December meeting and for approval at the committee's January meeting. The 2021 version of this report can be found [here](#).
- H-GAC continued to work on regional efforts to support the Department of Energy sponsored Houston-Galveston Clean Cities Coalition. Under this program, staff worked with regional fleets to foster economic, environmental, and energy security by working to advance affordable, domestic transportation fuels, energy efficient mobility systems, and other fuel-saving technologies and practices. During the most recent month, the Coalition hosted a hybrid webinar focused on the EPA Clean School Bus Program as well as providing assistance in planning an anticipated autumn event focusing on the transition to zero-emission vehicles.
- Staff is continuing to administer two separate Environmental Protection Agency-funded Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grants from the 2018 and 2019 Calls for Projects to deploy all-electric yard tractors at local freight warehouses. Staff has been working with IKEA to replace two existing diesel yard tractors at their Baytown facility with all-electric models. IKEA has installed EV charging equipment at the host facility to facilitate the vehicle purchases and it is anticipated that the vehicles will be delivered in 2023. For the 2019 DERA project, staff is continuing to prepare a Request for Applicants to find at least one new partner to complete the project.

#### TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING & FORECASTING

- Staff continues to provide travel demand and forecasting support to various in-house planning processes that includes sub-regional and corridor studies, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Air Quality and Conformity determination.
- Staff continues to provide GIS technical support for the highway GIS networks development for the RTP through the TDM project database conversion into GIS layers for base year and future scenario years planning, project mapping and review for 2023 TIP projects, sub-regional and corridor studies.
- Staff continues enhancing the on-going development and implementation of the Regional Activity Based Model (ABM), and the familiarization and documentation of the ABM forecasting tools.
- Staff continue to work on the ERG contractor's contract for the MOVES3 Spatial Emission Estimator (SEE) used for estimating regional on-road emission inventories of criteria, toxic and GHG emission for each hour of a day with highly detailed spatial resolution tools update, continues to participate in AMPO discussion about the draft-greenhouse gas emission performance measure rule proposed by FHWA, and continues to work with conformity partners on comments for the conformity documentation and timelines for the 2045 RTP update

from the FHWA, updated the conformity website with correct and updated documents, and prepare new timeline for next conformity to the 2045 RTP update.

- Staff continued to serve in the Steering Committees and work with the Prime Contractor for the O-D Survey data collection, the secondary expansion of the O-D Survey data collected is still on-going, and the tour-based component of the ABM data collection set is on-going. Staff participate in the Steering Committee for the on-going Household Survey with TxDOT TP&P, and in the Steering Committee for the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt to procure the Prime Contractor for the Airport Ground Access Survey; RFP is due back on 12/08/2022.
- Staff continued to process INRIX speed data in relation to the H-GAC traffic count project, continued planning for data collection for traffic counts on non-State systems, completed the REMI Tran-Sight presentation and user discussion with NCTCOG, completed the development of the REMI model transit fare reduction impact study, and reviewing how to use the REMI model for the TIP project evaluation and completed the VisionEval 5K scenarios 2b, 3, 4a, 4b and 5a development.
- Staff attended two training sessions hosted by TxDOT to go over the new location-based services that will now be provided for Texas. Staff will have access to Wejo, Replica, and INRIX data as part of this contract.
- Staff working METRO and their consultants for modeling support with several METRO-Next projects (University, Gulfton, and Inner Katy).