

6. LAUNCH OF CONNECTSMART APPLICATION

Background

The importance of advanced technologies and large-scale deployments to mitigate congestion has been fully recognized at different government levels. The Texas Department of Transportation Houston District's ConnectSmart Program was one of the 2016 Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) grant recipients, aiming to deploy an advanced technology platform that integrates Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) and Active Demand Management (ADM) with multimodal demand/mobility management. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines TSMO as a "set of strategies that focus on operational improvements that can maintain and even restore the performance of the existing transportation system before extra capacity is needed." The FHWA defines ADM as the "use of information and technology to dynamically manage demand by influencing daily travel choices to support redistributing travel to less congested times of day or routes or reducing overall vehicle trips by influencing a mode choice."

Current Situation

ConnectSmart aims to establish a model methodology and technology deployment site that enhances the safety, reliability, and efficiency of Houston's regional transportation system by informing regional travelers of traffic conditions, travel modes, and alternative routes for their trip, in an overall effort to reduce congestion and enhance quality of life and economic vitality. TxDOT partnered with H-GAC, regional transit agencies, and several other agencies on this initiative. Scheduled to launch in September 2021, the ConnectSmart program will provide:

- integration of various advanced mobility technologies and data sources to provide predictive and reliable trip information (e.g., mode options, multi-/inter-modal travel times, cost, and reliable departure/arrival times);
- promotion of currently available and emerging sustainable mobility options; and
- user engagement via behavior changing techniques.

Action Requested

Information only.