



Long-Range Transportation Planning

Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC); Houston, TX

One of the primary responsibilities of Councils of Governments (COGs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) is to facilitate shared decision making on transportation investments between federal, state and local governments. In the Houston-Galveston region, local transportation funding comprises approximately half of all transportation investment followed by state and federal funding.

Every four years, development of the region's long-range transportation plan is informed by subregional studies, corridor studies, and place-based plans integrating active transportation, highway, freight, and mass transit needs. Over the last six years, the H-GAC MPO has initiated or completed almost 30 subregional, corridor, and place-based studies with local governments and state and local transportation agencies that are guided by community goals and outcomes as well as state and regional transportation performance measures. Priority projects identified through these planning initiatives are building blocks for development of the Regional Transportation Plan and future funding opportunities.

In 2015 and 2018, the H-GAC's Transportation Policy Council solicited project funding proposals from its local governments and state and local transportation agencies for the update of its ten-year program of projects. Almost 400 projects from seventy-five local governments and state and local transportation agencies with a value of \$7 billion were submitted as candidates. Using performance based, quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures, state and federal transportation funding awards of \$3.6 billion were made to almost 200 projects. These, as well as many of the currently unfunded candidate projects, were incorporated in the updates of the Regional Transportation Plan where they could participate in project development activities such as planning and environmental analysis, readying them for future implementation or new funding opportunities.

Competitive Advantage Projects

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC); Columbus, OH

Competitive Advantage Projects is an initiative of MORPC and the regional economic development partner, Columbus2020, to advance strategic infrastructure investments across the Columbus region. The goal of the initiative is to prioritize critical infrastructure projects and work toward making the projects a reality through technical assistance and advocacy at both the state and federal levels. The current project list includes 43 projects, identified by ten county working groups.

Rural Transportation Planning

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC); Columbus, OH

With a focus on bridging the rural-urban divide while meeting rural transportation planning needs, the Columbus area regional council and MPO, MORPC, partnered with seven rural counties in the nonmetropolitan areas of our region to provide transportation planning products and services through the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO). CORPO is a Regional Transportation Planning Organization tasked with coordinating transportation planning with local stakeholders. Leveraging the resources of the MPO to assist surrounding rural areas allows for better regional investment and planning strategies.

Transportation and Land Use: The Lower Mystic Working Group

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC); Boston, MA

In October 2018, the Lower Mystic Working Group presented the findings of a two-year planning process that analyzed numerous transportation infrastructure elements and policies aimed at reducing auto trips around the Sullivan Square area, which is a five-square mile area spanning the Charlestown neighborhood of Boston as well as parts of Everett and Somerville. The Working Group concluded that the primary answer to overcoming the area's transportation challenges amidst its ongoing growth is the robust expansion of public transit services, to be supplemented by other transportation infrastructure improvements and coordinated with changes in local development policies that will support modal shift from private vehicles to public transit, walking and cycling.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council coordinated the effort that included eleven public agencies and used a detailed quantitative modeling approach to test different scenarios of infrastructure and policies under future conditions in the year 2040. The final report offers a vision of regional coordination for both land use and transportation in order for this critical project to be successful.

Unified Transportation Plan

Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC); Salt Lake City, UT

All of Utah's transportation agencies work together to develop Utah's Unified Transportation Plan -- which comprehensively addresses all the road, transit, and transportation alternatives needs, for new capacity and maintenance and operations. The plan has been cited as a "model of regional collaboration" by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. WFRC, through its MPO, organizes all the transportation agencies to work together, identify highest priority needs, and collaboratively develop the most effective possible plan.

Regional Mobility Systems

Capital Regional Council of Governments (CROCOG); Hartford, CT

Metropolitan regions are an ideal test bed for emerging transportation innovation in several areas of mobility systems: Integrated fare systems, integrated trip planning including transit, walking bikeshare and transportation network companies, regional bikeshare connected to transit and town centers, complete streets or active transportation connecting transit stops to surrounding community areas.

CROCOG has a ten-mile exclusive guideway bus rapid transit system and hourly heavy rail service from Hartford to New Haven and New York city and an RFP for a metropolitan regional scope bikeshare program as building blocks for a regional mobility system. The next mobility projects for CROCOG are: finding funding to test an autonomous 40-foot bus on exclusive guideway bus rapid transit system;

building out complete street connections to seventeen train and rapid transit stations and implementing metropolitan regional bikeshare in spring 2020.

Transit Corridor Development Impacts

Capital Regional Council of Governments (CRCOG); Hartford, CT

CRCOG engages in land use and economic development integrated planning using advanced scenario planning software to examine positive impacts of building out rapid transit or high frequency transit corridors, transit adjacent housing and commercial development and complete street connections to transit. CRCOG did a transit corridor intensification study and examined carbon emission reductions and other impacts of intensification of transit use. Next, as part of their regional land use plan, CRCOG would like to integrate their regional economic development strategy, long range transportation plan MTP, with transit corridor intensification using Urban Footprint software.

Mobility Go Zone & Pricing Feasibility Study

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG); Los Angeles, CA

In March, SCAG released its Mobility Go Zone & Pricing Feasibility Study. The study, which was funded through a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's Value Pricing Pilot Program, aimed to evaluate the technical feasibility and impact of congestion pricing strategies.

A "Mobility Go Zone" was defined as a geographic area with a suite of mobility service options for commuters, visitors, and residents to reduce dependency on personal automobiles. This expanded mobility ecosystem included increased local bus circulator routes, express commuter buses, bike share options, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure and incentive methods, including the decongestion fee on vehicles entering during peak traffic periods. Revenues collected from the fee would be used to fund local transportation improvements to help reduce congestion, carbon emissions, and offer improved travel options to the public.

SCAG's study found that with the implementation of a Mobility Go Zone Program, travelers choosing to drive a car into the study area would decrease by 19% during peak periods, including a 22% reduction of single occupancy vehicles entering the zone. Travelers choosing to take transit or bike/walk into the area would increase by 9% and 7% during peak periods, respectively.

Operation Green Light

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC); Kansas City, MO

This cooperative effort to coordinate timing for hundreds traffic signals across the region celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2018. Operation Green Light launched an interactive signal map that allows users to click on a traffic signal and find out which jurisdiction owns and operates it, along with contact information.

Beyond the Loop

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC); Kansas City, MO

The Beyond the Loop study of the Buck O'Neil Memorial Bridge on US-169 over the Missouri River, led by MARC in partnership with the city of Kansas City, Missouri, the Missouri and Kansas departments of transportation and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas, wrapped up in 2018. The planning and environmental linkages study identified a range of feasible options for the bridge and north loop of I-70 and resulted in an expedited environmental review process for a new bridge. The city of Kansas City, Missouri, and the Missouri Department of Transportation are currently working to complete a funding package that will leverage federal, state and local dollars for construction of the new bridge. In 2018, the study received recognition from several professional organizations including national recognition from the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Transportation Innovation

Mid-America Regional Council (MARC); Kansas City, MO

In 2018, MARC led a regional effort to examine issues related to autonomous and connected vehicles and create a policy framework that will help the region position itself to maximize opportunities and minimize negative impacts of this new and potentially disruptive transportation technology. A series of facilitated meetings resulted in a strategic framework for unmanned aircraft systems, also known as drones, to address opportunities and challenges related to their adoption.

Safety and Reliability of the Region's Metro Transit System

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), Washington, DC

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG) has made ensuring the safety and reliability of the region's Metro transit system a top priority over the past several years. In its role as a regional council, MWCOCG convened elected officials and subject matter experts from multiple state, county, and city governments to focus on the transit system's capital needs. The months of reviewing analyses, discussing, and debating helped leaders in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia forge consensus on Metro's funding needs, which—along with support from business and civic organizations—ultimately resulted in a landmark agreement in 2018. The \$500 million-a-year in new, dedicated funding will allow Metro to implement its \$15.5 billion, ten-year capital improvement program.

MWCOCG also helped area jurisdictions establish the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, the independent body now responsible for overseeing and enforcing safety practices of the Metro system. As with the dedicated funding effort, COG supported dialogue among the officials crafting the safety commission legislation across three jurisdictions. Through wide-ranging legal, technical, and administrative staff support, COG assisted the commission from its creation to federal certification in 2019.