

# HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL 2022 Annual Report



Houston-Galveston  
Area Council



SERVING TODAY ■ PLANNING FOR TOMORROW



Houston-Galveston  
Area Council



The Houston-Galveston Area Council is one of the largest regional planning commissions in the country. Our service area spans 13 counties and includes 177 cities and 84 independent school districts. The 290-member staff of professionals and 37-member board of directors understand that a strong economy and rapid growth brings both opportunities and challenges. We meet these challenges in three key ways: providing a forum for jurisdictions of all sizes to come together to solve regional issues; identifying and prioritizing funding opportunities; and providing direct services.



# Contents

<b>Welcome Letters .....</b>	<b>3</b>
From Our Chair .....	3
From Our Executive Director .....	3
<b>Growing H-GAC for the Future of Our Region.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Transforming Our Physical Footprint.....	5
Expanding Our Leadership Team.....	5
Launching the Data Analytics and Research Department.....	5
<b>Conversations with Local Governments .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Meeting with Local Leaders County by County.....	7
Increasing Engagement and Exchange of Ideas .....	7
<b>Conversations with Transportation and Public Safety Partners .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Training Regional Law Enforcement to Keep ALERRT to Threats.....	8
Bolstering Emergency Communications Infrastructure .....	9
A New Taskforce to Address Traffic Safety Issues .....	9
Improving Roadway Safety and Accessibility through Technology.....	10
Empowering Commuters with Safe, Reliable Transportation Options Using Partner Programs...11	
Training Residents to Bike Safer Right Where They Live .....	11
<b>Conversations with Businesses and Economic Development Partners.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Continuing Economic Recovery, Promoting Resiliency .....	12
Drawing Business – Big and Small – to Rural Counties .....	12
A Community Approach to Revitalizing Underserved Neighborhoods .....	13
Managing Economic Growing Pains.....	13
<b>Conversations with Residents .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Meeting People Where They Live.....	14
Amplifying Outreach with Virtual Technology .....	15
Promoting Workforce Development through Media Partnerships.....	15
Assisting the Next Generation in Developing Meaningful Careers.....	15
Creating Career Opportunities for Disabled and At-Risk Groups .....	16
Helping Older Residents Weather the Inflation Storm .....	17



**Conversations with Our Peer Professionals..... 18**  
Promoting Regionalism and Cooperative Leadership at Every Level ..... 18  
Achieving Local, State, and National Recognition..... 19  
**How Our Community Conversations Will Shape the Future of H-GAC and the Region... 22**  
**Financials and Auditing ..... 23**  
Expenditures by Program ..... 23  
Funding Sources..... 23  
**2022 Board of Directors..... 24**  
2022 Board of Directors Officers ..... 25  
Past H-GAC Board Chairs ..... 26  
2022 H-GAC Members ..... 27  
**Advisory Committees & Affiliate Groups..... 28**  
Advisory Committees..... 28  
Affiliate Groups..... 29  
**Department and Program Contacts ..... 30**  
**Tribute to Ken Clark..... 33**



# Welcome Letters



**SALLY BRANSON**  
Board Chair

## FROM OUR CHAIR

The Houston-Galveston region welcomed 2022 with great optimism. This was the year we could finally look to life beyond the pandemic. As the old saying goes, “out of adversity comes opportunity.” The Houston-Galveston Area Council capitalized on many new opportunities in 2022 while never losing sight of our primary objective to be a positive impact on people’s lives in our region.

A key opportunity H-GAC seized upon is how we interact with the people and partners of the region. As face-to-face meetings became safer to have, H-GAC set out to take the conversation beyond our agency’s offices and directly to communities. We met with local governments, community partners, stakeholders, and the public where they live versus asking them to travel to us. We went to see what they’re seeing and understand firsthand each of their unique needs. The details of our conversations are covered in this year’s annual report.

H-GAC continues to foster regional collaboration and provide a platform for all to be heard. We understand our region is stronger when we all work together. We learned so much from our community conversations. We look forward to continuing them in 2023 and the new opportunities they will bring for us to better serve this great 13-county region and the people who call it home.

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Houston-Galveston Area Council was excited to resume in-person meetings and activities in 2022. However, it was not enough to simply return to the way things were before the shutdown. If we were going to resume in-person engagement, we had to do so in a meaningful way. To truly understand the issues and the needs of our region’s cities and counties, we had to meet people where they are. We had to immerse ourselves in their communities, see what they are seeing, and really engage with them at a deep level.

The annual report showcases the many ways H-GAC leaders and staff brought the conversation directly to the people – local government leaders, partners, community organizations, and most importantly, residents. What we learned from these discussions will be critical as our agency undergoes its own internal transformation to provide more impactful programs and better serve this great region.

We encourage you to keep the conversations going. Join us at our meetings and events. Invite us out to your community. Reach out to me, our board of directors, and our team. Meaningful discussions bring intentional, lasting change. Our region, and the world, have experienced so much these last few years. However, if there is one thing I have learned as a service-leader, it’s that when we all work together with as many voices at the table as possible, there is no challenge we cannot overcome.



**CHUCK WEMPLE**  
Executive Director





H-GAC team members representing their favorite sports teams as part of an agency-wide Spirit Week. During Spirit Week, we came together to have meaningful conversations about developing our H-GAC core values.



# Growing H-GAC for the Future of Our Region

## TRANSFORMING OUR PHYSICAL FOOTPRINT

In 2022, H-GAC fully implemented a hybrid work environment to encourage more collaboration between employees and departments as well as support better workplace flexibility. As a result, H-GAC was left with a surplus of office supplies and gently used furniture. Rather than let these items end up in a landfill, H-GAC arranged to donate the supplies and furniture to its member independent school districts and governments. As a gesture of gratitude, one of the school districts, Alief ISD, invited H-GAC representatives to its business partner appreciation breakfast in May, where they presented H-GAC with a special recognition award. Alief ISD also recognized H-GAC at its May school board meeting.

Future office renovations will help to further optimize the hybrid work environment and provide the infrastructural and network support necessary to accommodate H-GAC's rapidly growing team and the array of programs and services it provides.

## EXPANDING OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

As its staff and programs expand, so too has H-GAC's leadership roster. In 2022, H-GAC welcomed new leaders Onyinye Akujuo, Juliet Stipeche, and Jochen Floesser. Akujuo serves as the new Chief Operating Officer and oversees the operation of H-GAC's transportation planning programs, public safety, contracts and procurement, H-GAC's enterprise programs, community planning, and data analytics and research initiatives. She also helps to champion innovative

solutions on critical regional issues through strategic leadership and collaboration.

Floesser leads H-GAC's newest department, the Data Analytics and Research Department. He leads in developing robust data models and forecasts for local and regional economic development, transportation planning, air quality, population growth, land use, and flood mitigation.

Stipeche is the new Director of Human Services. She leads Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions, the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging, and the Aging and Disability Resource Center programs. She also serves as executive director of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board.

## LAUNCHING THE DATA ANALYTICS AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

The Data Analytics and Research Department was developed as part of an organizational restructuring that united under a single banner combining several forecast modeling, analysis, and data groups that were previously spread amongst several of H-GAC's existing departments.

As one department, Data Analytics and Research serves as the central information hub local government entities, planning agencies, research institutions, and members of the public can turn to for data-driven research and analytics about the 13-county region. Entities use this data for critical planning activities, including economic forecasting, growth projections, identifying public service needs and gaps, transportation, housing, environmental planning, air quality research, and even strategic community outreach. Many of the department's research projects and reports are available online at [datalab.h-gac.com](http://datalab.h-gac.com) as interactive mapping applications and digital storyboards.



**ONYINYE AKUJUO**  
Chief Operating Officer



**JOCHEN FLOESSER**  
Director of Data Analytics  
and Research



**JULIET STIPECHE**  
Director of Human Services







In 2022, H-GAC hosted a series of pop-ups, where elected officials, community representatives, and other city and county officials could meet to discuss immediate and long-term community needs, and share ideas on how H-GAC can better service their residents.





Meeting with H-GAC leaders and staff, discuss

# Conversations with Local Governments

## MEETING WITH LOCAL LEADERS COUNTY BY COUNTY

For years, H-GAC has served as the place where local governments can come together. In 2022, H-GAC started a series of pop-up town halls where elected officials, community representatives, and other city and county officials could meet with H-GAC leaders and staff directly, discuss immediate and long-term community needs, and share ideas on how H-GAC can better service them and their residents.

Additionally, H-GAC leaders and staff are attending more city, county, and school board meetings, as well as community events, workshops, and public meetings hosted by local governments and their partners, to better understand the communities we serve and what the local issues are. We are learning, sharing ideas, discussing solutions, and exploring novel opportunities to advance and enhance each municipality and the neighborhoods within from the grassroots.

## INCREASING ENGAGEMENT AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

As a result of these efforts, attendance and engagement at H-GAC's intergovernmental events have skyrocketed. Annual workshops and new training events, such as the board orientation event in the fall of 2022, have received record attendance. H-GAC's first-ever City Managers Summit, which was held on Aug. 12, received an overwhelming response, with city managers and staff from across the region in attendance. H-GAC also experienced widespread engagement by emergency management leaders and state and federal representatives at a December summit event to address

fragility in the region's electric grid. This new level of engagement with local governments has also opened new opportunities for partnerships, to expand and improve member services, and even add new member governments to H-GAC.

Community and environmental team members are also hosting workshops and field trips out in the region to directly engage local governments, city planners, community groups, partner organizations, and residents, and share best practices in addressing regional issues such as conservation, water quality, parks and natural areas, sustainable infrastructure, solid waste management, downtown revitalization, and housing affordability. On Aug. 3, the community and environmental team hosted the Missing Middle Housing Summit, a peer-exchange event that brought together local government professionals, housing experts, and community advocates to discuss the reasons behind a lack of diversity in housing types beyond large-scale complexes and single-family homes and potential solutions to improve access to affordable housing. Throughout the year, they have hosted roundtable discussions and summits with local governments and stakeholders on revitalizing and supporting rural and small-town downtown spaces.

In December, our transportation experts partnered with the Federal Highway Administration to organize a two-day freight and technology peer exchange at the E.B. Cape Center in Houston's East End. The goal of the event was to bring together freight experts, planners, industry leaders, transportation, city and state transportation agency officials from across the region and the nation to discuss the future of freight, its challenges and opportunities, and what it all means for the residents of the region. Taking on these issues and engaging with leaders, advocates, experts, state and federal officials is already leading to new funding opportunities and partnerships that will increase the impact of H-GAC's programs now and in the years to come.





Funded through a homeland security grant secured by H-GAC, Klein ISD Police Department is one of five ALERRT training hubs in the region to which police departments can send their officers for training.

## Conversations with Transportation and Public Safety Partners

Tragic incidents such as the Uvalde school shooting have drawn national attention to the issue of school safety. On top of that, roadway fatalities are increasing nationwide. Texas and the H-GAC region are no exception to this harrowing trend. In fact, Texas is leading in roadway fatalities. It does not have to be this way. In 2022, H-GAC took critical steps together with public safety and transportation organizations to

address issues of safety in our schools, on our roads, and in our communities.

### **TRAINING REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TO KEEP ALERRT TO THREATS**

For years, H-GAC has been a leading provider of law enforcement education. By working with partner institutions and thanks to a combination of state and federal funding, H-GAC provides free law enforcement training that arms officers with the latest knowledge and tactics they need to protect communities and save lives. Classes are made available at facilities throughout the 13 counties, and they include ALERRT training, the gold standard of active shooter training.



ALERRT (Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training) is a specialized, research-based program that trains law enforcement officers and first responders to immediately and effectively respond to active shooter events. The program originated from the ALERRT Center at Texas State University in 2002 in response to the 1999 Columbine attack. Since its inception, the ALERRT curriculum has become the national standard in active shooter response training. The vital training has proven to shorten response times in an active shooter crisis and strengthen law enforcement coordination and abilities.

H-GAC recognized the importance of ALERRT early on. In addition to the quality, research-driven curriculum, H-GAC saw the tremendous need for active shooter training through its surveying of law enforcement jurisdictions across the region. H-GAC became one of the first law enforcement training providers in Texas to offer ALERRT. It remains the only council of government in Texas that provides it, and it is made available for free to all law enforcement officers in the region.

Klein ISD Police Department quickly seized the opportunity to train its officers with ALERRT, and it now serves as one of five training hubs in the region to which police departments can send their officers. At these hubs, officers practice team movement, room entry techniques, approaching and breaching the crisis, administering first aid to victims, and post engagement priorities of work in real-world scenarios. H-GAC provides the equipment used in the training while Texas State University provides the curriculum. Since Klein ISD Police Department became a training hub in 2013, hundreds of officers from all corners of the region have trained at this facility. Combined with the other four training hubs, thousands of officers have the knowledge necessary to answer the call quickly when the worst happens.



David Fink, transportation manager, discusses the Tow and Go program with Fox 26 Houston and provides safety tips to prevent vehicles from stalling. Tow and Go is a key strategy in solving the region's freeway congestion and traffic safety issues.

### **BOLSTERING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE**

When responding to an emergency or disaster, communication is critical. Having a robust emergency communications infrastructure in place that provides strong signal connection can make all the difference in coordinating rapid response to an emergency and saving lives. In the fall of 2022, Austin County officials broke ground on a new radio communications tower that will significantly boost signal strength and connectivity for emergency communications in the western rural part of the region.

This new tower is one of many improvement projects H-GAC has helped fund through federal homeland security grants over the years. H-GAC will continue to work with law enforcement agencies and public safety officials to strengthen our region's emergency communications infrastructure and ensure the communications system remains secure and reliable for our region's first responders no matter where they are assisting people.

### **A NEW TASKFORCE TO ADDRESS TRAFFIC SAFETY ISSUES**

To start making a meaningful impact towards improving traffic safety in the region, H-GAC's Transportation Policy Council in 2022 authorized the formation of a Transportation Safety Taskforce. This taskforce, made of city and county officials, state and local transportation agency representatives, community advocacy group leaders, and safety experts, will take a comprehensive approach to roadway safety and consider new, aggressive strategies, policies, and programs that will reduce roadway injuries and fatalities and achieve better, tangible safety outcomes.

The taskforce began meeting in the fourth quarter of 2022 and is slated to remain active for at least 12 months. Additionally, H-GAC has been conducting intersection safety audits targeting those intersections at highest risk for serious and fatal crashes. The recommendations from these audits will lay the groundwork for better road design that will help prevent serious crashes and better serve drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.







H-GAC partnered with CyclingSavvy and the American Bicycling Education Association to provide free on-the-bike training classes for adults at parks and greenspaces throughout the region – from Galveston and League City to The Woodlands and Winnie, Texas.



Craig Raborn, director of transportation, discusses Connect Smart, the region's first mobility app that integrates trip planning with a variety of travel options.



H-GAC participated in Crash Responder Safety Week, an initiative recognizing traffic incident management in our communities.

## IMPROVING ROADWAY SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Another important component of transportation safety is reducing congestion. Research suggests that as traffic congestion increases, especially when a high rate of speed is maintained, so do the frequency and volume of crashes, injuries, and fatalities. Reduced traffic congestion can help improve safety on our roads as well as increase access to areas for work and play for people of all abilities. It also helps to improve air quality and livability.

On Sept. 16, H-GAC joined with the Texas Department of Transportation and transportation providers across the region to celebrate the launch of ConnectSmart, the

region's first mobility app that integrates trip planning and navigation with a variety of travel options in a one-stop source. The app is the culmination of years of collaboration between H-GAC, TxDOT, Houston tech firm Metropia, city and county agencies, transportation providers such as METRO and B-Cycle, and partner agencies such as Houston TranStar. With it, users can not only plan an entire trip from start to finish, but they can also discover the best transportation options for that trip, including those beyond driving. It also has H-GAC's Tow and Go program fully integrated so that drivers can easily call for assistance if they find themselves stranded on the freeway due to mechanical failure and receive a free tow to the nearest exit.



## **EMPOWERING COMMUTERS WITH SAFE, RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS USING PARTNER PROGRAMS**

H-GAC's Commute Solutions partners with transportation providers, employers, colleges and universities, and property managers to help commuters in the region discover transportation options beyond single-occupancy driving. Throughout 2022, Commute Solutions team members attended employer and community events to meet commuters directly, understand their travel needs, and educate them on the many transportation options available to them. The team has also worked with employers to help build robust commuter and telework programs that incentivize workers to take advantage of carpool/vanpool, transit, biking, walking, and telework options where available to them.

A shining example of this work is Commute Solutions' partnership with the University of Houston Downtown. UH Downtown is launching a Basic Needs Initiative to improve student access to those basic needs (e.g., food, housing, childcare, mental health, financial resources, etc.) that are vital for ensuring strong academic performance, increasing graduation, and supporting their overall well-being. An important component of this initiative is transportation, which is where Commute Solutions has stepped in to help. Commute Solutions is working with the university to bolster its travel demand program for students and connect them with reliable commuting options to get to campus.

Research conducted by Commute Solutions found the most popular commuting option students want to use is carpooling. Therefore, the modified travel demand program will be centered around connecting students with ways to organize carpools and vanpools to travel to campus safely and affordably. Other commuting options, such as public transportation, biking, and walking (if

possible) will be shared as well. This partnership is one example of how Commute Solutions works closely with universities, colleges, employers, and area transportation providers to ensure our region's students, workers, and travelers can get where they need to go on time and safely no matter what their socioeconomic means or abilities are.

classes for adults at parks and green spaces throughout the region – from Galveston and League City to The Woodlands and Winnie, Texas.

These classes, in tandem with a free, online course, cover the basics of bicycling traffic rules and offer a safe space where residents of all bicycling abilities can practice defensive riding



H-GAC and the Federal Highway Administration hosted the Freight Technology Peer Exchange to highlight key freight traffic and regional safety issues. Pictured are Chuck Wemple, H-GAC Executive Director, and Carol Haddock, City of Houston Public Works Director.

## **TRAINING RESIDENTS TO BIKE SAFER RIGHT WHERE THEY LIVE**

According to a recent survey by the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, more than half of the region's residents want to bike more often. However, many hesitate due to safety concerns and lack of awareness of the rules of bicycling on roadways. In 2022, H-GAC partnered with CyclingSavvy and the American Bicycling Education Association to provide free on-the-bike training

techniques and handling unexpected situations right where they live. More confident and knowledgeable bike riders are also more predictable riders to the motorists and pedestrians with whom they share the road. Not only does this make for safer roadways, but it can also help to foster community cohesion by offering residents another means of interacting with their surroundings and their neighbors.







Workforce Solutions assisted Bay City and Matagorda County in convincing major employer Tenaris to build a \$1.8 billion seamless pipe mill. Since it opened, it has created hundreds of quality jobs for area residents and helped stimulate the local economy.



Chef Shawn Watkins opened The Fat Grass restaurant in Bay City with the help of a loan received from the Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation.

## Conversations with Businesses and Economic Development Partners

### CONTINUING ECONOMIC RECOVERY, PROMOTING RESILIENCY

The Houston-Galveston region continues to recover from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, new issues, such as ongoing supply chain shortages, the war in Ukraine, and inflation, threaten to disrupt what progress has been made for businesses and communities.

In 2022, the Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation partnered with Fort Bend County to launch a new revolving loan program to help small businesses continue their recovery from the pandemic and better position themselves to weather future disruptions. Named the Triple 'R' Loan Program – which stands for “Regional, Revolving, Resilience” – the program provides loans for businesses to cover working

capital costs and grants to help cover critical business expenses and needs.

To ensure disadvantaged small businesses in the county had an equal chance at applying for the program, the local development corporation partnered with church groups and other community nonprofits to raise awareness for harder to reach populations. The result was nearly 500 applications from small business owners across Fort Bend County. Nearly all these applicants were approved for funding, with almost \$10 million in funding distributed.

In the long term, the local development corporation hopes to make the Triple 'R' Loan program a regional program and a model for other cities, counties, and municipalities in the H-GAC service area.

### DRAWING BUSINESS – BIG AND SMALL – TO RURAL COUNTIES

From Tesla to Hewlett Packard, big businesses have been flocking to Texas in recent years. The Houston-Galveston region, with its access to some of the world’s largest ports, a suite of well-developed global industries, and a skilled, diverse workforce, is drawing more than its fair share. Major employers like this can make all the difference when they set up shop in rural counties. They keep well-paying jobs inside the county so that residents do not have to travel elsewhere for quality work. With these jobs, residents can buy homes, goods, and services locally and stimulate the local economy.

In 2022, Workforce Solutions stepped up its work with local government leaders and economic development groups to ensure our region’s rural cities and counties are not left behind in the race to attract big business. They are working to create success stories like that of Bay City in Matagorda County.

With their help, Bay City successfully won an agreement with Tenaris to build a \$1.8 billion steel pipe manufacturing facility. Since it opened in 2017, the plant has generated hundreds of quality manufacturing jobs and made a substantial economic impact on Bay City and Matagorda County as a whole.

In addition to attracting big businesses to rural counties, H-GAC seeks to help entrepreneurs in rural counties launch and grow their businesses so they can play their part in uplifting their local economy and promoting quality of life. Entities like the Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation and the Gulf Coast Economic Development District are reaching out to rural city and county leaders and partners to provide access to small business financing and educational opportunities in the neighborhoods these entrepreneurs call home.

They want aspiring small business owners to achieve the same success as Shawn Watkins, the chef and owner of The Fat Grass Restaurant and Bar in Bay City. Watkins opened Fat Grass in 2010 with the help of a loan he received through the local development corporation. Twelve years later, his restaurant is thriving and has become a beloved staple for Bay City residents and visitors.

## **A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO REVITALIZING UNDERSERVED NEIGHBORHOODS**

One of the major challenges to rapid economic growth is the fact that it can often be disproportionate, especially when it comes to historically underserved neighborhoods. As the region recovers from the pandemic, H-GAC's small business and economic development representatives are reaching out to these neighborhoods to discuss

how they can help ensure these communities are part of the recovery and have the resources they need to not only revitalize, but also thrive in the future.

For communities like the African American-founded Community of Barrett in Harris County, revitalization and economic opportunity are not the only important factors. They must also ensure the history and cultural character of their neighborhoods are not diminished as revitalization occurs. H-GAC is taking a strategic, community-driven approach to revitalizing communities like Barrett.



Chambers County Commissioner Billy Combs describes the challenges from rapid industrial growth while touring the KTN plastic packaging facility in Baytown.

In 2022, H-GAC representatives from the Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation, Workforce Solutions, the Livable Centers program, and the Gulf Coast Economic Development District met with the Barrett Economic and Community Development organization to discuss next steps towards implementing a development plan originally formed by Harris County Precinct 2. The plan includes several key elements that will improve safety and mobility, bolster youth education and workforce development, and spark local entrepreneurship and innovation that creates jobs, stimulates the local economy, and honors and celebrates the rich historical roots of the community.

## **MANAGING ECONOMIC GROWING PAINS**

Despite recent events, the region continues to grow at a rapid rate. Some of the fastest-growing areas are

in the counties directly surrounding Harris County. In one example, Fulshear, a city in northwest Fort Bend County, experienced a more than 1,300% population increase according to the preliminary results of the 2020 U.S. Census. Cities like Iowa Colony, Conroe, Katy, Manvel, and Mont Belvieu have also experienced unprecedented population growth and land development.

While this kind of growth can bring great opportunities for a city or township, it can also create strains on infrastructure, exacerbate pre-existing inequities, and pose environmental and quality of life issues. In 2022, H-GAC visited with county and city leaders to better understand the issues that have arisen from rapid growth and development and how they are impacting the communities they serve.

A prime example of communities facing challenges from rapid growth is Chambers County. Due to an unprecedented increase in industrial development, residents, particularly those near the Cedar Point industrial complex, are facing increased traffic and congestion from construction and freight vehicles moving and shipping goods and materials from warehouses along the ports. The increased industrial traffic has created safety and quality of life concerns and is putting a strain on area roadways.

H-GAC leaders and officials have visited with city and county officials, residents, and other stakeholders to better understand their issues. From these visits and conversations, H-GAC experts are developing long-term planning strategies that will mitigate these economic growing pains. They are also working to expedite funding resources necessary to implement those strategies.





Mike Burns, principal transportation planner, receives feedback from Liberty County residents at a public meeting H-GAC hosted in Dayton, Texas about the update of the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

## Conversations with Residents

### MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY LIVE

H-GAC's office at Timmons Lane has long served as a gathering place for public meetings. However, not everyone in the region has the time or capability to physically travel there to participate, especially if they live in the outermost counties of H-GAC's service area. To help address these types of issues and encourage more public participation, the transportation team took a different approach when it came time to update its 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

Rather than host several public meetings at the H-GAC office, the team took the meetings out into the region. H-GAC representatives held public meetings in each county of the eight-county metropolitan planning area,

first in May and later in the fall of 2022. Each public meeting was specially organized so that residents in attendance could discuss transportation issues specific to their county and to allow for more in-depth feedback. H-GAC also put out a visioning survey so that anybody in the region unable to attend public meetings could still make their voices heard through online feedback.

Workforce Solutions also in November 2022 took the state's largest hiring event for veterans and their families directly to the people. In lieu of hosting a single job fair or going fully virtual, the agency hosted multiple Hiring Red, White and You! job fair events on the same day at career offices in communities across the region. The community-driven approach allowed for more convenient participation and opportunities to make a more personal connection between veterans and employers. As a result, many participants received on-the-spot job interviews and even employment offers.



## AMPLIFYING OUTREACH WITH VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY

In addition to hosting more public meetings out in the region, H-GAC has taken full advantage of virtual technologies to host more virtual and hybrid meetings that increase accessibility to those in the public who want to participate but are unable to physically travel. When H-GAC was called upon to develop a method of distribution for nearly half a billion dollars in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funds that would help support disaster mitigation and resiliency improvement projects, H-GAC made full use of virtual meeting technology to allow for more members of the public in communities across the region to participate.

This resulted in participation from a wider, more diverse collective of members of the public as well as local government leaders, state and national representatives, advocacy groups, and community leaders. The feedback from such a diverse array of people was instrumental in ensuring the final method of distribution allocates the mitigation funds in a manner that is equitable, meets local needs, and makes the most impact in increasing the region's resiliency.

## PROMOTING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

The COVID-19 pandemic offered a unique opportunity for Workforce Solutions to partner with major, local TV media on showcasing area employers and helping residents find quality jobs and develop good careers. As of 2022, Workforce Solutions has partnerships with ABC 13, Fox 26, Univision 45, and KHOU 11, where they hold weekly virtual jobs fairs featuring employers in the area and they provide important information and tips to help residents in their job search.

Through these partnerships, Workforce Solutions has amassed an accumulated viewership of more than 253 million. The partnerships have helped thousands of residents find jobs with area employers, including Rolando Cardona, a high school dropout who, after attending an ABC 13 virtual job fair, secured an



apprenticeship with Apache, obtained his GED, and is buying his first home at the age of 21.

Another new partnership established in 2022 is a weekly, 30-minute show, titled, "Your Career, Your Choice – powered by Workforce Solutions." The show helps viewers navigate the local job market with expert advice from workforce professionals and employers. It also provides viewers with local resources and organizations that can help them advance from only having a job to having a well-paying career with unlimited growth potential. The first season concluded in late 2022. Episodes aired Saturdays on KHOU's sister station Quest Texas 55 and are currently available to view online on the Workforce Solutions YouTube channel.

One of Workforce Solutions' most groundbreaking media partnerships has been with Strada Education Network. Together with Workforce Solutions' counterparts in Greater Dallas, North Central Texas, and Tarrant County, they entered a new frontier in storytelling by helping Roadtrip Nation produce its latest

documentary film. It was the first time Roadtrip Nation has ever worked with a public workforce system organization.

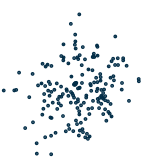
The film premiered in September 2022, called "Wide Open Range." It follows four young adults based out of Houston and Dallas – Yesenia Anaya, Chandler Foreman, Keilahn Garrett, and Anthony Martinez – as they travel across the Lone Star State to talk with aerospace engineers, artists, motivational speakers, and other inspiring Texans and discover their potential career pathways. It is available to view online at RoadtripNation.com. The film aired on Houston Public Media and was shared across Workforce

Solutions' social networks.

## ASSISTING THE NEXT GENERATION IN DEVELOPING MEANINGFUL CAREERS

For young people in the region like the Roadtrippers in "Wide Open Range" who are unsure of their career path or simply want to explore their options, Workforce Solutions is here to help.

Their career counselors provide resources and counseling to help young people prepare graduation plans, improve their financial literacy, and explore a variety of post-high school education avenues to find an occupation that will lead them to a fulfilling, life-long career. They also offer professional development for teachers and administrators. The career education specialists have agreements with numerous school districts in the region, including El Campo ISD, Fort Bend ISD, Galveston ISD, HISD, Goose Creek Consolidated ISD, Sheldon ISD, and Spring ISD. Since 2019, they have impacted more than 64,000 students.





The Roadtrip Nation documentary 'Wide Open Range' follows four young adults based out of Houston and Dallas as they travel across the Lone Star State to talk with aerospace engineers, artists, motivational speakers, and other inspiring Texans and discover potential career pathways.

To further aid young people, Workforce Solutions partnered with BridgeYear, an organization that connects underserved youth to careers and educational pathways, to introduce virtual reality technology into their educational programs. Students can use virtual reality headsets to simulate working in 28 different career options in six industries. The career education counselors have provided the headsets at schools, job fairs, career education events, and other community events throughout the region, providing young people a highly visual, accessible way to explore a wide variety of career options and experience the exciting possibilities the future can hold for them.

Workforce Solutions also continues its grant-funded apprenticeships program to place individuals into paid registered apprenticeships with participating employers throughout the region. So far, more than 1,300 apprentices have been placed in 23 career fields ranging from information technology and cybersecurity to skilled trades and childcare services.

## **CREATING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED AND AT-RISK GROUPS**

Employers flock to the Houston-Galveston region for its diverse, skilled workforce. For the betterment of the region, it is essential that disabled and at-risk groups have equitable opportunities to participate in that workforce. H-GAC via Workforce Solutions is doing its part to ensure these groups have the skills, support, and resources they need to overcome barriers, find quality jobs, and achieve career and economic success.

In 2022, Workforce Solutions, the Foster Youth Collaborative, and 45 partner agencies throughout the region hosted the inaugural Foster Youth Conference. With many foster youths at high risk of becoming homeless after aging out of foster care, the goal of the conference was to connect foster youth to resources, including employment and job training opportunities as well as wrap around services, they will need after leaving foster care. Eighty-five youth attended the inaugural event, and, due to the event's resounding success, the next conference has already been scheduled for May 2023, during Foster Youth Awareness Month.



Additionally, Workforce Solutions concluded its Supported Employment Pilot in 2022. The goal of the program was to help individuals with intellectual development disabilities/autism to achieve incremental workplace success leading to long-term competitive employment. Participants received job placement and a coach at one of 18 participating worksites throughout the region. Of the 29 individuals referred to participate in the program, half had been deemed “unemployable.” At the conclusion of the pilot, more than half of the participants became permanently employed.

Workforce Solutions also has a training and employment navigator pilot to assist human trafficking victims in recovering and reentering the workforce. This important pilot is funded through the Texas Workforce Commission’s Texas Employment Empowerment Model. Through it, the agency has received 39 referrals from organizations classified as Commercial Sexually Exploited Youth Advocacy Agencies. They include The Landing, YMCA, Common Thread, and Unbound Houston. Workforce Solutions is currently hosting seminars to increase employer awareness of the pilot and encourage membership in the Texas Businesses Against Trafficking partnership. Since

the seminars began in April 2022, nine area employers have expressed interest in joining.

### **HELPING OLDER RESIDENTS WEATHER THE INFLATION STORM**

A more volatile global economy has raised the inflation rate to the highest it’s been in 40 years. While residents all over are feeling the impact on their wallets, older adults, especially those on fixed incomes, have been especially hit hard. As their funds get stretched to the limit and necessities like food, transportation, and prescription medications become harder to afford, more senior citizens in the region are turning to area service providers like the Houston-Galveston Area Agency on Aging and the Texas Gulf Coast Aging and Disability Resource Center for aid.

The Medicare benefits counselors with the Area Agency on Aging provide free, unbiased assistance to senior citizens and their caregivers in navigating their Medicare benefits plans. They take calls and conduct monthly visits to community and retirement centers out in the region to assist seniors. Given their expertise of state, federal, and local programs as well as their partnership with local nonprofits and care providers, the

Medicare benefits counselors have proven to be crucial allies in helping seniors weather the inflation storm. They have worked to connect seniors with assistance programs that will help them save on food, housing, gas, transportation services, and prescription medications.

The Texas Gulf Coast Aging and Disability Resource Center, which provides information and referrals to long-term service and support programs, has also become an important resource in helping seniors and people with disabilities by assisting them in securing affordable housing and in-home care arrangements. The Area Agency on Aging also assists seniors through its congregate meals and delivery programs, free health education workshops conducted at community centers as well as virtually through Zoom, and through their ombudsmen, who educate and advocate for those living in long-term care facilities.

Each of these groups, with the generous help of nonprofits, care providers, and other community partners, is empowering our region’s older adult and disabled residents to overcome uncertainty and remain healthy, secure, and independent for as long as possible.



Mallory Freitag-Hejja, aging program administrator, attends a seniors exercise class hosted by the Area Agency on Aging.



Workforce Solutions’ career offices play a critical role in helping residents find quality jobs and build lasting careers.







The Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation received a National Association of Regional Councils Achievement Award in recognition of their small business financial assistance programs.

## Conversations with Our Peer Professionals

### PROMOTING REGIONALISM AND COOPERATIVE LEADERSHIP AT EVERY LEVEL

As one of the country's largest councils of governments, H-GAC has long positioned itself as a leader in advancing cooperative leadership and regionalism among its fellow professional organizations. State and national organizations like the Texas Municipal League, the Texas Association of Regional Councils, and the National Association of Regional Councils offer ample opportunities to share knowledge and ideas that will address large-scale issues that universally affect everyone. Over the years, many H-GAC leaders and board members served as officers and committee members of these organizations. That continued in 2022.

Waller City Councilmember Nancy Arnold, who serves on the H-GAC Board of Directors and several advisory committees, was named president-elect of the Texas Association of Regional Councils. Executive Director Chuck Wemple served as second vice chair of the

National Association of Regional Councils' Executive Council, the association's advisory body.

H-GAC leaders also serve as officers of the Texas Municipal League Region 14. Sugar Land Mayor Joe Zimmerman serves as president, Webster Mayor Pro Tem Beverly Gaines serves as vice president, Intergovernmental Relations Director Rick Guerrero serves as secretary-treasurer, and Huntsville Mayor Andy Brauningner serves as board director. H-GAC also hosted meetings and events with these organizations, allowing their representatives the opportunity to experience for themselves the tremendous growth and change occurring in the H-GAC region.

By participating on committees and boards of these organizations, H-GAC serves as a bridge of learning and ideas. The latest research and trends from state and national experts can reach local governments that may otherwise not have the budget or capacity to access them. And the successes, challenges, and opportunities discovered through H-GAC's work with communities in the region can be advanced to stoke larger conversations and drive policy to create lasting positive impact on residents and future generations in the region, Texas, and even the nation.

## ACHIEVING LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

More than ever, H-GAC leadership and staff are being invited to serve on national, state, and local leadership boards and committees and speak at professional conferences, where they can share success stories, establish best practices, and empower their peer professionals with knowledge and experience so they can replicate H-GAC's successes in their communities. At the same time, H-GAC continues to garner local, state, and national awards and honors for its programs and team members.

Some of the awards and honors H-GAC teams received in 2022 include:

- H-GAC's communications team was named Government Communications Team of the Year at the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter's Excalibur Awards ceremony in July.
- The Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation received a National Association of Regional Councils Achievement Award in recognition of their small business financial assistance programs, which steered more than \$12 million in federal funding to support small businesses in the region through the pandemic and beyond.
- The Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation received a Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) technical assistance award, which will help increase the group's internal capacity and put it on the pathway to full CDFI certification. Achieving CDFI certification would establish the local development corporation as a federally recognized entity that empowers economically distressed communities and provides financial services to underserved and low-income groups.

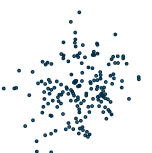


Pictured from left, Allie Isbell, assistant transportation director, and Onyinye Akujuo, chief operating officer, were honored by the WTS International Houston Chapter as transportation women on the move.



Juliet Stipeche, director of human services, was named one of the Top 30 Influential Women in Houston for 2022.

- Two Livable Centers studies and the Regional Conservation Initiative received regional and state chapter awards by the Texas chapter of the American Planning Association.
- The National League of Cities accepted the City of Houston and H-GAC's Small Business Collaborative into its next cohort. The league will provide technical assistance, best practices, and additional resources for the collaborative to establish an ecosystem of small business resource providers.
- Jamila Owens, transportation manager who oversees Commute Solutions and H-GAC's bike-pedestrian programs, was elected to the Association for Commuter Transportation National Certification's board of trustees.
- Juliet Stipeche, director of human services, was named one of the Top 30 Influential Women in Houston for 2022.
- Onyinye Akujuo, H-GAC chief operating officer, and Allie Isbell, transportation assistant director, were named 'Women on the Move' by WTS International – Houston Chapter.
- Robyn Egbert, outreach coordinator in communications, served on the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter's board of directors. She also led the planning and execution of PR Day, the organization's signature annual event, in October.
- Ronnie Barnes, Darryl Briscoe, Omar Fortune, and Isaac Perez from H-GAC's enterprise programs became certified by the Texas Economic Development Council as basic economic developers. They are now eligible to obtain further certification through the International Economic Development Council and become fully certified economic developers.







Workforce Solutions apprenticeship program provides professionals with the mentorship and training necessary to improve their work skills and advance their careers. The program combines paid on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced journey workers with related classroom instruction.



H-GAC's communications team participates in PR Day held by the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter, the premier public relations organization in the country.



Jamila Owens, travel demand management manager, presents an award to METRO's Board of Directors, recognizing their critical role in H-GAC's Commute Solutions initiative.





H-GAC's Livable Centers program joined Harris County Public Health and Harris County Precinct 2 in a training that helps provide technical skills needed for infrastructure audits.



H-GAC's Regional Conservation Initiative earned Silver recognition in the Environmental Planning category from the American Planning Association Texas Chapter. This award honors efforts to create more sustainable and greener communities.





City of Waller Councilmember Nancy Arnold with fellow Texas Association of Regional Councils board officers.



H-GAC Transportation Principal Planner Andrew DeCandis discusses electric vehicles on a panel at the 2022 Evolve Houston Relaunch Event.



H-GAC Chair Elect and Waller County Judge Trey Duhon speaking at the H-GAC pop-up event in Waller County.

## How Our Community Conversations Will Shape the Future of H-GAC and the Region

2022 has been a transformative year for H-GAC. Across the agency, team members have raised the bar in how we work and how we engage leaders, partners, and residents. We have had many important conversations and learned important lessons.

Resiliency in all ways will continue to be a regionwide issue. We must do more to fortify our roads, our utilities, and other critical infrastructure to not only stand against more extreme weather events but also external public security threats. We must work to fortify our regional economy to weather adverse economic events from an increasingly more volatile future by promoting forward-thinking, adaptable skills in our workforce, encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation, and increasing access to affordable, quality education and training for youth.

Accessibility to basic needs will continue increase in importance as our population grows and becomes more diverse. More than ever, people need equitable access to affordable housing, quality childcare, physical and mental health care, and even high-speed internet. H-GAC must do its part to address the gaps in access to these important needs and the opportunities that spring from them. Our most vulnerable populations, such as

seniors and people with disabilities, will also continue to require support in maintaining independence and quality of life through uncertainty.

We must be able to assist those communities currently experiencing adverse impacts from too much growth too quickly, and we must continue to foster economic opportunity in our rural communities by aiding them in revitalizing small towns, increasing access to affordable high-speed internet, bolstering rural transportation planning efforts, improving existing infrastructure, establishing new infrastructure where needed, improving communications resources for emergency responders, and bringing quality jobs to the region.

In 2023 and beyond, what we have learned will serve as the bedrock in transforming how H-GAC serves the region. It will set us on the path towards a more customer-centered approach to engaging with residents and stakeholders, the programs and services we provide, and regional planning. It will also be a critical guideline in setting long-term goals for the region and the core values we must have to achieve those goals.

2022 showed just how much H-GAC's work matters to the leaders and residents of this region. We will continue to build on our success and take it farther by fostering more collaboration, embracing more community voices, and increasing the quality and quantity of our programs and services. But we cannot do this work alone. We will need everybody's involvement from every corner of the region.

# Financials and Auditing

H-GAC’s unified budget for 2022 is presented below. This summary provides an overview of the funding streams and anticipated expenditures by program area. Budget documents and audit reports can be viewed at [h-gac.com](http://h-gac.com). In addition to the independent annual audit, H-GAC routinely undergoes monitoring and evaluation by funding partners and the internal auditing department. The internal auditing staff conducts pre-award assessments, contracts compliance inspections, and works with agency departments to identify process improvements.

## EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM

Aging	\$12,053,445
Community & Environmental	\$7,520,180
Data Services	\$5,193,591
Workforce	\$413,543,256
Public Services	\$8,705,339
Transportation	\$24,733,764
Local Activities	\$196,610
Capital Expenditures	\$929,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$472,875,185</b>

## FUNDING SOURCES

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	\$200,000
U.S. Department of Agriculture	\$9,559
Commission on State Emergency Communication	\$654,904
Texas Division of Emergency Management	\$1,874,389
Texas Department of Transportation	\$25,073,979
Texas Criminal Justice Division	\$1,161,508
Texas Workforce Commission	\$414,255,447
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	\$2,933,918
Texas General Land Office	\$149,057
Texas Health and Human Services Commission	\$9,612,000
Other Public Agencies	\$9,187,112
Local Contracts	\$6,452,653
Houston-Galveston Area Council Funds	\$1,310,659
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$472,875,185</b>



**NANCY HAUSSLER**  
Chief Financial Officer



**JEAN MAHOOD**  
Director of Finance



**CHARLES HILL**  
Director of Internal Audit





# 2022 Board of Directors

The Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors is composed of 37 elected officials representing 13 counties, 107 cities, and 11 school districts. The board leads collaborative efforts with local governments that consider regional issues and fosters cooperation in solving area-wide challenges.

## **AUSTIN COUNTY**

Honorable Tim Lapham  
County Judge

## **BRAZORIA COUNTY**

Honorable Stacy Adams  
Commissioner

## **CHAMBERS COUNTY**

Honorable Tommy Hammond  
Commissioner

## **COLORADO COUNTY**

Honorable Ty Prause  
County Judge

## **FORT BEND COUNTY**

Honorable Andy Meyers  
Commissioner

## **GALVESTON COUNTY**

Honorable Joseph Giusti  
Commissioner

## **HARRIS COUNTY**

Honorable Lina Hidalgo  
County Judge

Honorable Adrian Garcia  
Commissioner

## **LIBERTY COUNTY**

Honorable Jay Knight  
County Judge

## **MATAGORDA COUNTY**

Honorable Nate McDonald  
County Judge

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

Honorable Charlie Riley  
Commissioner

## **WALKER COUNTY**

Honorable Jimmy Henry  
Commissioner

## **WALLER COUNTY**

Honorable Trey Duhon  
County Judge

## **WHARTON COUNTY**

Honorable Phillip Spenrath  
County Judge

## **CITY OF ALVIN**

Honorable Martin Vela  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF BAYTOWN**

Honorable Charles R. Johnson  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF CONROE**

Honorable Jody Czajkoski  
Mayor

## **CITY OF DEER PARK**

Honorable Bill Patterson  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD**

Honorable Sally Branson  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF GALVESTON**

Honorable Craig Brown  
Mayor

## **CITY OF HOUSTON**

Honorable Sallie Alcorn  
Councilmember

Honorable Letitia Plummer  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF HUNTSVILLE**

Honorable Andy Brauning  
Mayor

## **CITY OF LAKE JACKSON**

Honorable Gerald Roznovsky  
Mayor

## **CITY OF LA PORTE**

Honorable Chuck Engelken, Jr.  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF LEAGUE CITY**

Honorable Larry Millican  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF MISSOURI CITY**

Honorable Jeffrey Boney  
Mayor Pro Tem

## **CITY OF PASADENA**

Honorable Cary Bass  
Councilmember

## **CITY OF PEARLAND**

Honorable Kevin Cole  
Mayor

## **CITY OF ROSENBERG**

Honorable Kevin Raines  
Mayor

## **CITY OF SUGAR LAND**

Honorable Joe Zimmerman  
Mayor

## **CITY OF TEXAS CITY**

Honorable Jami Clark  
Commissioner

## **GENERAL LAW CITIES**

Honorable Joe Garcia  
Mayor, City of Pattison

Honorable Nancy Arnold  
Councilmember, City of Waller

## **HOME RULE CITIES**

Honorable Carolyn Bilski  
Mayor, City of Sealy

Honorable Cecil Willis  
Mayor, City of Stafford

## **INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Honorable Rissie Owens  
Trustee, Huntsville ISD

## **EX-OFFICIO, NON-VOTING**

Honorable Garnet Coleman  
State Representative  
Texas House of Representatives  
District 147

# 2022 Board of Directors Officers



**HON. SALLY BRANSON**  
CHAIR  
Councilmember  
City of Friendswood



**HON. TREY DUHON**  
CHAIR ELECT  
County Judge  
Waller County



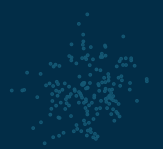
**HON. RISSIE OWENS**  
VICE CHAIR  
Trustee  
Huntsville ISD



**HON. WILLIAM KING, III**  
CHAIR  
January – May 2022  
Councilmember  
City of Dickinson



**HON. KEN CLARK**  
CHAIR ELECT  
January – May 2022  
Commissioner  
Galveston County





# Past H-GAC Board Chairs

- County Judge Bill Elliott\* | Harris County | 1966, 1970
- Commissioner Dixie Brown\* | Brazoria County | 1967
- Mayor Eddie Schreiber\* | City of Galveston | 1968
- Councilmember Lee McLemore\* | City of Houston | 1969
- County Judge Oscar F. Nelson, Jr.\* | Chambers County | 1971
- Mayor Emmett Lowry\* | City of Texas City | 1972
- Trustee Leonard Robbins\* | Houston ISD | 1973
- County Judge Ray Holbrook | Galveston County | 1974
- County Judge Lester J. Cranek\* | Colorado County | 1975
- Councilmember Homer Ford\* | City of Houston | 1976
- Mayor Benny Howard | City of Richwood | 1977
- Commissioner Tom Bass\* | Harris County | 1978
- Commissioner Charles T. Doyle | City of Texas City | 1979
- Mayor Ben Babovec\* | City of Rosenberg | 1980
- County Judge R. A. Deison\* | Montgomery County | 1980-81
- Councilmember Mary Elizabeth Wilbanks\* | City of Baytown | 1982
- Mayor Tom Reid | City of Pearland | 1983
- County Judge Jon Lindsay | Harris County | 1984
- Councilmember Verne Cox\* | City of Pasadena | 1985
- County Judge Jodie Stavinoha\* | Fort Bend County | 1986
- Councilmember Christin Hartung | City of Houston | 1987
- County Judge A. M. McCaig\* | Waller County | 1988
- Mayor John Coggeshall\* | City of Galveston | 1989
- Commissioner Billy Joe Plaster\* | Brazoria County | 1990
- Alderwoman Sandra Cable\* | City of Stafford | 1991
- Commissioner Joe Malak, Jr.\* | Walker County | 1992
- Councilmember Ernest McGowen, Sr.\* | City of Houston | 1993
- County Judge J. Lee Dittert, Jr.\* | Austin County | 1994
- Councilmember Sandra Pickett | City of Liberty | 1995
- Commissioner Bob Lutts\* | Fort Bend County | 1996
- Director Tom Manison\* | Waters Davis SWCD | 1997
- Commissioner H. Frank Simpson\* | City of Texas City | 1998
- County Judge Carolyn Bilski | Austin County | 1999
- County Judge John Willy | Brazoria County | 2000
- Councilmember Guy Sutherland\* | City of La Porte | 2001
- Alderman Terry Henley | City of Meadows Place | 2002
- Commissioner Andy Meyers | Fort Bend County | 2003
- Councilmember Bill Welch | City of Pasadena | 2004
- County Judge Greg Westmoreland | Matagorda County | 2005
- Councilmember Denton McDugle | City of Deer Park | 2006
- Councilmember Addie Wiseman | City of Houston | 2007
- Commissioner B.J. Gaines, Jr. | Walker County | 2008
- County Judge Al Jamison\* | Colorado County | 2009
- Councilmember Kerry Neves | City of Dickinson | 2010
- Commissioner Craig Doyal | Montgomery County | 2011
- Mayor Delores Martin | City of Marvel | 2012
- County Judge Ed Emmett | Harris County | 2013
- Councilmember Darrell Morrison | City of Pasadena | 2014
- County Judge Nate McDonald | Matagorda County | 2015
- Councilmember Chuck Engelken, Jr. | City of La Porte | 2016
- Commissioner Gary Nelson | Chambers County | 2017
- Councilmember Floyd Emery | City of Missouri City | 2018
- Commissioner Stacy Adams | Brazoria County | 2019
- Councilmember Nancy Arnold | City of Waller | 2020
- County Judge Phillip Spenrath | Wharton County | 2021
- Mayor Pro Tem William King III | City of Dickinson | 2022

\*Deceased

# 2022 H-GAC Members

## COUNTIES (13)

Austin  
Brazoria  
Chambers  
Colorado  
Fort Bend  
Galveston  
Harris  
Liberty  
Matagorda  
Montgomery  
Walker  
Waller  
Wharton

## CITIES OVER 25,000 (17)

Alvin  
Baytown  
Conroe  
Deer Park  
Friendswood  
Galveston  
Houston  
Huntsville  
La Porte  
Lake Jackson  
League City  
Missouri City  
Pasadena  
Pearland  
Rosenberg  
Sugar Land  
Texas City

## HOME RULE CITIES (37)

Angleton

Bay City  
Bellaire  
Cleveland  
Clute  
Dayton  
Dickinson  
El Campo  
Freeport  
Fulshear  
Galena Park  
Hempstead  
Hitchcock  
Humble  
Iowa Colony  
Jacinto City  
Jersey Village  
Katy  
La Marque  
Liberty  
Manvel  
Mont Belvieu  
Nassau Bay  
Palacios  
Prairie View  
Richmond  
Richwood  
Santa Fe  
Seabrook  
Sealy  
Stafford  
Sweeny  
Tomball  
Webster  
West University Place  
Wharton  
Willis

## GENERAL LAW CITIES (53)

Anahuac  
Arcola  
Bayou Vista  
Beach City  
Bellville  
Brazoria  
Brookshire  
Brookside Village  
Bunker Hill Village  
Clear Lake Shores  
Columbus  
Daisetta  
Danbury  
Eagle Lake  
East Bernard  
El Lago  
Hedwig Village  
Hillcrest Village  
Holiday Lakes  
Hunters Creek Village  
Jamaica Beach  
Jones Creek  
Kemah  
Kendleton  
Magnolia  
Meadows Place  
Morgan's Point  
Needville  
New Waverly  
Oak Ridge North  
Old River-Winfree  
Oyster Creek  
Panorama Village  
Pattison  
Piney Point Village

Riverside  
San Felipe  
Shenandoah  
Shoreacres  
South Houston  
Southside Place  
Splendora  
Spring Valley Village  
Stagecoach  
Surfside Beach  
Taylor Lake Village  
Thompsons  
Tiki Island  
Waller  
Wallis  
Weimar  
West Columbia  
Weston Lakes

## INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS (11)

Alief ISD  
Columbia-Brazoria ISD  
Deer Park ISD  
Fort Bend ISD  
Hempstead ISD  
Hitchcock ISD  
Huntsville ISD  
Magnolia ISD  
Needville ISD  
Pearland ISD  
Waller ISD





# Advisory Committees & Affiliate Groups

Advisory committees and their affiliated groups are an essential part of H-GAC's work. The leadership and knowledge of the volunteers that serve on these committees is the key to their success. Many of H-GAC's advisory committees are appointed by the board, based upon nominations from individual board members and other groups.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

### Aging and Disability Advisory Committee

**Purpose:** Advise H-GAC Board of Directors on needs, services, and programs for older citizens in 12 H-GAC counties (all but Harris).

**Contact:** Romania Paniagua, Administrative Assistant  
Romania.Paniagua@h-gac.com  
713-993-4507

### Clean Rivers Program Basin Steering Committee

**Purpose:** Serves as the primary forum for discussion of water quality issues and advises the H-GAC Board of Directors on all administrative matters related to the Clean Rivers Program.

**Contact:** Todd Running, Water Resources Program Manager  
Todd.Running@h-gac.com  
713-993-4549

### Criminal Justice Advisory Committee

**Purpose:** Advise H-GAC Board of Directors on law enforcement and criminal justice issues.

**Contact:** Madeline McGallion, Public Safety Program Manager  
Madeline.McGallion@h-gac.com  
713-993-2427

### Natural Resources Advisory Committee

**Purpose:** Advise H-GAC Board of Directors and staff on environmental and natural resources issues.

**Contact:** Rachel Windham, Planner  
Rachel.Windham@h-gac.com  
713-993-2497

### Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee

**Purpose:** Advise H-GAC Board of Directors and, as appropriate, Transportation Policy Council on air quality issues.

**Contact:** Andrew DeCandis, Principal Planner  
Andrew.DeCandis@h-gac.com  
832-681-2589

### Regional Flood Management Committee

**Purpose:** Assist and advise elected officials on issues related to all aspects of flood management in the region.

**Contact:** Justin Bower, Principal Planner  
Justin.Bower@h-gac.com  
713-499-6653

### Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Council

**Purpose:** Assist and advise elected officials on matters related to regional homeland security issues.

**Contact:** Justin Riley, Principal Public Safety Planner  
Justin.Riley@h-gac.com  
832-681-2548

### Solid Waste Management Committee

**Purpose:** Assist and advise elected officials on issues related to solid waste management in the region.

**Contact:** Cheryl Mergo, Community and Environmental Senior Program Manager  
Cheryl.Mergo@h-gac.com  
713-993-4520

## AFFILIATE GROUPS

### Area Emission Reduction Credit Organization

**Purpose:** Promotes coexistence of air quality improvement and economic development by generating and trading emission reduction credit and receiving/dispersing funds from local Supplemental Environment Projects and Clean School Bus Program donations.

**Contact:** Jim Mahood, Senior Program Coordinator  
CleanVehicles@h-gac.com  
832-681-2511

### Energy Purchasing Corporation

**Purpose:** Acts as an agent to negotiate purchase of electricity on behalf of participating political subdivisions.

**Contact:** Gwen Norman, Public Services Contract and Energy Manager  
Gwen.Norman@h-gac.com  
713-993-2420

### Gulf Coast Economic Development District

**Purpose:** Assist and advise elected officials on issues related to economic develop and provide oversight to H-GAC economic development planning programs.

**Contact:** Darryl Briscoe, Planner  
Darryl.Briscoe@h-gac.com  
713-499-6686

### Geographic Data Workgroup

**Purpose:** Consortium of regional area geographic users involved in collectively sharing, distributing, and acquiring digital geospatial data.

**Contact:** Molly Eskelson, GIS Analyst  
Molly.Eskelson@h-gac.com  
832-681-2622

### Gulf Coast Regional 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District

**Purpose:** Promote enhanced public safety and increased fiscal and service efficiencies in the administration of emergency communications for the municipalities and counties of Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Matagorda, Liberty, Walker, Waller, and Wharton.

**Contact:** Kim Ward, Senior Manager  
Kim.Ward@gulfcoast911.org  
713-993-4514

### Gulf Coast Workforce Board

**Purpose:** Provide policy guidance, planning, oversight, and evaluation for the Texas Gulf Coast region's public workforce system.

**Contact:** Juliet Stipeche, Director of Human Services  
Juliet.Stipeche@wrksolutions.net  
713-993-4524

### Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation

**Purpose:** Implement Small Business Administration Section 504 loan program; provide long-term, moderate interest loans to eligible small businesses.

**Contact:** Omar Fortune, Public Services Senior Manager  
Omar.Fortune@h-gac.com  
713-993-2409

### Transportation Policy Council

**Purpose:** Provide policy guidance and overall coordination of transportation planning activities within the H-GAC eight-county metropolitan planning area; select/approve federal funding for highway and transit projects in the eight counties.

**Contact:** Craig Raborn, Director of Transportation  
Craig.Raborn@h-gac.com  
713-993-4585





# Department and Program Contacts

## COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Communications and Public Outreach	Meagan Coughlin, APR Director of Communications and Outreach	713-993-4504 Meagan.Coughlin@h-gac.com

## COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Bringing Back Main Street	Andrea Tantillo Principal Communications Coordinator	832-681-2507 Andrea.Tantillo@h-gac.com
Clean Rivers Program	Todd Running Water Resources Program Manager	713-993-4549 Todd.Running@h-gac.com
Clean Waters Initiative	Rachel Windham Planner	713-993-2497 Rachel.Windham@h-gac.com
Criminal Justice Planning	Madeline McGallion Public Safety Program Manager	713-993-2427 Madeline.McGallion@h-gac.com
Elder Justice	Jackie Pontello Principal Program Coordinator	346-500-4620 Jackie.Pontello@h-gac.com
Emergency Preparedness	Justin Riley Senior Public Safety Planner	832-681-2548 Justin.Riley@h-gac.com
Floodplains/Flooding	Justin Bower Principal Planner	713-499-6653 Justin.Bower@h-gac.com
Hazard Mitigation	Cheryl Mergo Community and Environmental Senior Program Manager	713-993-4520 Cheryl.Mergo@h-gac.com
Law Enforcement Training	Michael Lambert Public Safety Planner	713-993-6655 michael.lambert@h-gac.com
Livable Centers	Jose Cantu Community and Environmental Planner	832-681-2679 Jose.Cantu@h-gac.com
Parks and Natural Areas	Andrea Tantillo Principal Communications Coordinator	832-681-2507 Andrea.Tantillo@h-gac.com
Regional Conservation	Cheryl Mergo Community and Environmental Senior Program Manager	713-993-4520 Cheryl.Mergo@h-gac.com
Solid Waste/Recycling	Erin Livingston Principal Planner	832-681-2525 Erin.Livingston@h-gac.com
Trash Bash	Kendall Guidroz Senior Planner	713-993-2469 Kendall.Guidroz@h-gac.com
Trash Free Texas	Kendall Guidroz Senior Planner	713-993-2469 Kendall.Guidroz@h-gac.com
Water Resources/Water Quality	Todd Running Water Resources Program Manager	713-993-4549 Todd.Running@h-gac.com

## DATA ANALYTICS AND RESEARCH

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Aerial Imagery/LiDAR	Thushara Ranatunga Principal Data Analyst	832-681-2551 Thushara.Ranatunga@h-gac.com
Air Quality/Air Quality Conformity Analysis	Graciela Lubertino Principal Data Analyst	713-993-4582 Graciela.Lubertino@h-gac.com
Census Information	Pramod Sambidi Senior Manager	713-993-2451 Pramod.Sambidi@h-gac.com
Data Analysis Services and Products	Jochen Floesser Direct of Data Analytics and Research	713-993-4544 Jochen.Floesser@h-gac.com
Employment Data/Forecast – Population and Employment	Pramod Sambidi Senior Manager	713-993-2451 Pramod.Sambidi@h-gac.com
Geographic Data Workshop	Thushara Ranatunga Principal Data Analyst	832-681-2551 Thushara.Ranatunga@h-gac.com
Land Cover Data	Thushara Ranatunga Principal Data Analyst	832-681-2551 Thushara.Ranatunga@h-gac.com
Land Use Data	Sungmin Lee Manager	832-681-2561 Sungmin.Lee@h-gac.com
Regional Economic/ Demographic Data	Pramod Sambidi Senior Manager	713-993-2451 Pramod.Sambidi@h-gac.com
Regional Travel Network	Frank Pagliei Principal GIS Analyst	713-993-2463 Frank.Pagliei@h-gac.com
Travel Demand Modeling	Heng Wang Manager	832-681-2996 Heng.Wang@h-gac.com
Web Applications and Interactive Tools	Sungmin Lee Manager	832-681-2561 Sungmin.Lee@h-gac.com

## DATA SERVICES

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Aerial Imagery/ArcGIS	Tanya Nguyen Director of Data Services	713-993-4569 Tanya.Nguyen@h-gac.com
Gulf Coast Regional 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District	Kim Ward Senior Manager	713-993-2459 Kim.Ward@gulfcoast911.org

## HUMAN SERVICES

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Area Agency on Aging	Mallory Freitag Heijja Administrator	1-800-437-7396 (main line) 713-993-4535 (direct) Mallory.Freitag@h-gac.com
Texas Gulf Coast Aging and Disability Resource Center	Curtis Cooper Senior Manager	855-937-2372 (main line) 713-993-4534 (direct) Curtis.Cooper@h-gac.com
Workforce Solutions	Juliet Stipeche Director of Human Services	713-993-4524 Juliet.Stipeche@wrksolutions.net





## INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Intergovernmental Relations	Rick Guerrero Director of Intergovernmental Relations	713-993-4598 Rick.Guerrero@h-gac.com

## H-GAC ENTERPRISE PROGRAMS

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Gulf Coast Economic Development District	Darryl Briscoe Planner	713-499-6686 Darryl.Briscoe@h-gac.com
HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing	Ronnie Barnes Director of Public Services	713-499-6665 Ronnie.Barnes@h-gac.com
HGAC Energy	Gwen Norman Public Services Contract and Energy Manager	713-993-2420 Gwen.Norman@h-gac.com
Houston-Galveston Area Local Development Corporation	Omar Fortune Public Services Senior Manager	713-993-2409 Omar.Fortune@h-gac.com

## TRANSPORTATION

Program Area	Contact Name	Contact Information
Bicycle and Pedestrian	Jamila Owens Manager	832-681-2522 Jamila.Owens@h-gac.com
Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles	James Garland Assistant Director	832-681-2692 James.Garland@h-gac.com
Commute Solutions	Jamila Owens Manager	832-681-2522 Jamila.Owens@h-gac.com
Freight and Goods Movement	James Garland Assistant Director	832-681-2692 James.Garland@h-gac.com
Gulf Coast Regional Tow and Go Program	David Fink Manager	713-993-4558 David.Fink@h-gac.com
Hurricane Evacuation Planning	David Fink Manager	713-993-4558 David.Fink@h-gac.com
Public Transportation	Jamila Owens Manager	832-681-2522 Jamila.Owens@h-gac.com
Regional Transportation Plan	Anita Hollmann Transportation Regional Manager	713-993-4587 Anita.Hollmann@h-gac.com
Transportation Improvement Program	Adam Beckom Manager	713-993-4567 Adam.Beckom@h-gac.com
Transportation Performance Measures	Karen Owen Senior Planner	832-681-2614 Karen.Owen@h-gac.com
Transportation Planning Studies	Allie Isbell Assistant Director	713-993-2411 Allie.Isbell@h-gac.com
Transportation Safety	David Fink Manager	713-993-4558 David.Fink@h-gac.com

# Tribute to Ken Clark



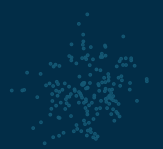
Galveston County Commissioner  
and H-GAC Chair Elect

As we look back on 2022, we honor the life and service of former Galveston County Commissioner and H-GAC Board Member Ken Clark. He served on the Galveston County Commissioners Court since 1998 and was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors for the Houston-Galveston Area Council in 2009. During his time on the H-GAC Board, Ken served on committees such as the Legislative and Planning Committees and as the chair of several committees including the Finance and Budget Committee and the Transportation Policy Council, where he helped secure hundreds of millions of dollars in road and drainage projects for Galveston County communities and the region as a whole.

Ken Clark was nominated to serve as the vice chair of the Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors in 2021 and in 2022 to serve as chair elect.

Clark was a passionate voice for improving transportation in the region and deeply committed to community and public service. He was a strong advocate for fiscal responsibility and government accountability and was known for bringing a candid approach to the dialogue he shared with his fellow board and committee members. Ken wasn't afraid to ask the important questions to ensure the organization would efficiently meet the needs of his constituents, as well as the 13 counties served by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Ken Clark's loss has been felt deeply throughout the region and will continue to be felt in the years to come by all who had the fortune to work with him, especially all at the Houston-Galveston Area Council.







3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120  
Houston, Texas 77027  
713-627-3200  
h-gac.com  
@HouGalvAreaCog