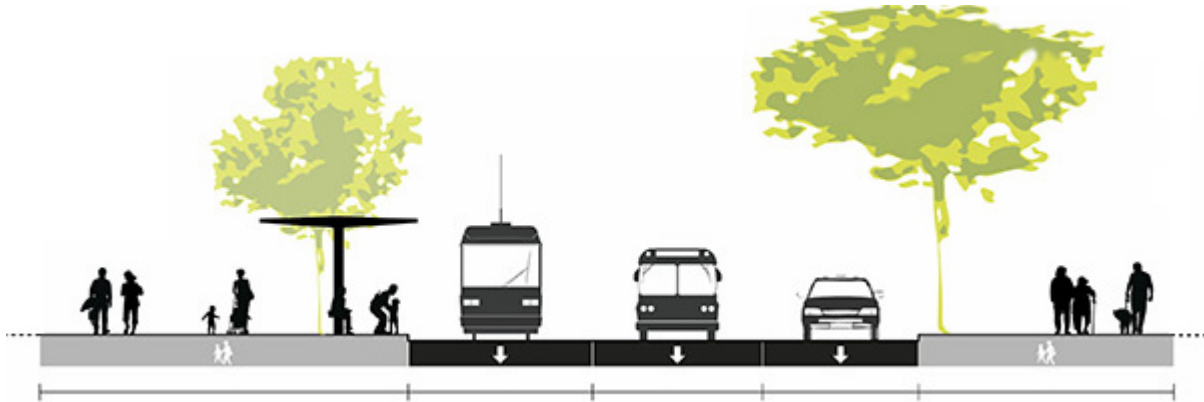


2015 ANNUAL REPORT: Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan



INTRODUCTION

This 2015 Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan (HCSTP) Annual Report is required by Executive Order (E.O.) 1-15, commonly referred to as the Complete Streets Executive Order. The purpose of this Report is to provide the Mayor with an update on implementation of the HCSTP. This Report overviews work completed in the past year, documents measurements of success, and lays out next steps for the upcoming year and beyond. The Planning and Development Department (P&D) developed this Report in collaboration with the Department of Public Works & Engineering (PWE).

2015 PROGRESS

P&D and PWE began work towards implementing the HCSTP immediately following the signing of the E.O. in November 2013. Since then, the City and its partners have made significant progress towards accomplishing the E.O.'s objectives. Significant 2015 accomplishments relating to E.O. implementation include the following:

1. PWE updated Chapter 10 of the Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) on Street Paving Design Requirements to incorporate context sensitive design principles, including complete streets elements. The IDM encourages designers to utilize the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* to improve both mobility choices and community character through a commitment to creating and enhancing walkable communities. This document advocates context sensitive solutions that integrate the multiple functions of urban streets, including mobility and access as well as economic and social functions. Notably, the updated IDM now requires 11-foot, rather than 12-foot, travel lanes, promoting safer driving speeds and more walkable corridors.
2. PWE continued to implement procedural changes consistent with the E.O. These changes follow the completion of the *CIP Process Manual for Infrastructure Programs* for ReBuild Houston in July, 2014. For example, although sidewalks are typically constructed in conjunction with street reconstruction, the *Manual* also includes criteria for prioritizing independent sidewalk projects. These criteria include neighborhood requests, existing master plans for pedestrian facilities, enhancing accessibility for the disabled, completing gaps near schools and transit stops, and locations along major thoroughfares. The *Manual* also includes criteria for prioritizing bikeway projects, with emphasis upon the function, feasibility, funding and maintenance of a proposed bikeway. Bikeway prioritization criteria may be updated following the anticipated adoption of the Houston Bike Plan, anticipated in 2016.

Additional specific changes implemented by PWE include planning and design guidance to incorporate complete streets as well as enhancements to the public engagement process for CIP projects:

- PWE completed a document called *Planning and Design of Mobility Projects to Incorporate Complete Streets Policies* in June, 2015. This document details the most recent updates to policies, procedures and programs that the City has undertaken related to complete streets. It outlines a consistent process to help City staff, consulting engineers, and the community understand how projects are to be developed with a context sensitive approach, particularly during the pre-engineering phase.
 - PWE continues to strengthen its public engagement approach for ReBuild Houston projects. The enhanced approach enables greater community input on projects, earlier in the design process. Every spring, PWE presents projects at CIP town hall meetings held in each City Council district. In addition, PWE holds design meeting presentations near project locations to solicit public input on approved CIP projects before they move into final design. Upon request of the council member, a construction phase meeting is also scheduled to provide the community a chance to review the construction plans and to work directly with residents and businesses about construction-related impacts and schedules.
3. P&D and PWE continued the advancement of sub-regional mobility studies. These sub-regional mobility studies are a critical component of the City's approach to accomplishing complete streets. The studies provide for several enhancements to the City's capital project development, including:
- A systems-level, rather than corridor-level, approach to identifying needs for corridors across an area;
 - Review for needs of all travel modes; and
 - Significant public input opportunities into transportation planning, ensuring that mobility enhancements consider community interests.

During 2015, P&D and PWE published two sub-regional mobility studies: the Heights-Northside and the Northwest Mobility Studies. These studies reviewed the land use context and developed a recommended multi-modal classification for thoroughfares and collectors throughout each study area. The multi-modal classifications will be utilized by PWE during the design of reconstruction projects.

P&D also participated as a stakeholder in studies led by other agencies and entities, including the SH 249 Access Management Study and the Greenway Plaza Special Districts Study. P&D and PWE are currently reviewing target areas and potential funding sources for future mobility studies.

4. H-GAC, in partnership with the City of Houston and other funding partners, completed the Greater West Houston Mobility Plan. This Plan includes projects that are intended to reduce traffic stress on congested corridors in West Houston by providing alternative connections within the area, and to utilize transit and alternative modes to provide transportation choices.
5. P&D further incorporated the context-sensitive approach identified in the E.O. into the City's annual process for amending the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP). In 2015, P&D administered 136 amendments to the MTFP, of which 103 were proposed by P&D based on recommendations from sub-regional mobility studies. The remainder of the amendments were proposed by external applicants. These amendments were developed using the complete streets philosophy identified in the E.O.

6. P&D published the HCSTP web site. The web site identifies ongoing accomplishments and progress in implementing the HCSTP. The site is updated with current and future activities and will provide documentation and links to the products that comprise the HCSTP. The web address is www.houstontx.gov/completestreets.
7. METRO’s “reimagined” bus network was implemented in August 2015, with the goal of providing simpler, faster, more frequent transit service throughout the METRO service area. This updated network is part of the City’s Transit Plan, a component of the HCSTP as required by the EO.
8. The City began an update to the Bicycle Plan. This project will complete the first update of the Bike Plan since 1993 and is led by P&D with assistance from PWE, Parks, and other partners. The Plan will identify projects to create a citywide bicycle network that will serve a broad spectrum of people who bike at all skill levels, provide more transportation choices, and build on efforts such as the Bayou Greenways Initiative to create a well-connected citywide bicycle system of both on and off-street facilities. P&D anticipates that this project will be completed in spring 2016. The updated Bicycle Plan will be a component plan of the HCSTP and will fulfill the E.O. requirement for a bikeway plan.
9. P&D began drafting the HCSTP Framework. The Framework will identify guiding principles, examine alignment between the HCSTP and Plan Houston, further develop performance metrics, more specifically define the components of the HCSTP, and describe implementation processes. The Framework will include the Context Report and provide the Multi-Modal Classification required by the EO. It will also identify best practices and explore the development of evaluative tools to support complete streets implementation. P&D expects to publish the HCSTP Framework in 2016.
10. P&D continued developing the HCSTP database and map. The HCSTP database and map will use GIS to show Multi-Modal Classification (MMC), context, and MTFP designation for roadway segments within the City. It will be used as a guidance resource for City staff and developers and as an information source for the public. Publication is anticipated in summer 2016.

2015: MEASURING SUCCESS

The E.O. requires that the City measure its success in implementing the HCSTP, providing system-wide totals within City limits detailing efforts that support fulfillment of the Plan. The E.O. stipulates that Fiscal Year 2014 serves as a baseline for improvements implemented. Additional indicators may be developed and included in future reports. The HCSTP Framework, currently in development, will include suggestions for additional indicators to measure progress towards the goal of implementing complete streets as defined in the EO.

Indicator	FY 2014	FY 2015
Linear miles of new/reconstructed sidewalks	78.6	51.6
Linear miles of new/restriped on-street bicycle facilities	60.1	87
New/reconstructed curb ramps	1,710	1,116
Linear miles of new/reconstructed streets (lane miles)	32.35	70

Indicator	FY 2014	FY 2015
Linear miles of overlaid streets (lane miles)	128.73	222
New/reconstructed transit stops with shelters	52	40
Transit stops added to system	29	*See note

*Note: METRO's new bus network, implemented in 2015, resulted in a significant change to the number of stops in the system, as stops were added, relocated, discontinued and/or removed. Approximately 884 stops were added to the system, but about 10 to 15 were later removed at the request of nearby residents and/or property owners. METRO has about 8,899 active bus stops and about 37 light rail stations.

NEXT STEPS: 2016 AND BEYOND

Next steps for completing HCSTP component plans and other items mandated by the E.O. are as follows:

Task	Lead
Bicycle Master Plan	P&D
Publish HCSTP Framework, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context Report • Multi-Modal Classification Plan (MMC) 	P&D
Publish HCSTP Database and Map	P&D
Complete Context and MMC for ReBuild Houston 5+5 projects	P&D, PWE
CIP Process Manual update	PWE
Transit Plan (long term plan)	METRO
Pedestrian Plan	P&D, PWE
Master Parking Plan	ARA, PWE
Rail Plan	PWE, Gulf Coast Rail District