

## PURPOSE

The Greater Houston Region is developing a collaborative and programmatic approach to leverage private and public funding opportunities for railroad projects in the region. The basis for this approach stems from the 2021 Houston-Beaumont Region Freight Study issued by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), which provided the initial working lists of projects for consideration.

## BACKGROUND

The 2021 Freight study is an update to a previous 2007 study prepared for the Houston-Beaumont region focusing on railroad capacity enhancements and roadway-railroad crossings. The study addressed deficiencies within the Houston region's freight network and developed ways to accommodate and prioritize anticipated growth of future freight movements. It also identified improvements that may provide relief to residents and the traveling public who are adversely affected by delays, interruptions, and noise attributed to the movement of freight within the region.

## RESPONSE

Unlike other transportation modes, rail does not have a dedicated federal funding source allocated to the states. Thus, any federal funding programs that are rail oriented are discretionary and awarded on a competitive, nationwide basis. **With the second largest freight rail network in the country**, this working group of the Gulf Coast Rail District (GCRD) is focused on working with project sponsors to submit competitive applications for the betterment of the region.

In an effort to resolve the many freight challenges and capitalize on federal funding opportunities, the greater Houston region has responded by coming together to implement a programmatic approach called the **Houston Area Rail Transformation (HART)**.

## MEMBERS

The members of the working group include representatives from the Class 1 railroads, Gulf Coast Rail District, City of Houston, Port Houston, Harris County, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), Houston-Galveston Area Council, and TxDOT. This coalition of partners is working together to increase the efficiency of Houston's unique rail network through the HART programmatic approach.

## GCRD's MISSION



**Improving safety and security at rail crossings to include grade separations**



**Increasing mobility, access and quality of life**

## RAIL FACTS & FIGURES

**Class I Railroads**



The Port Terminal Railroad Association (PTRA) provides access to facilities along the Port of Houston Ship Channel, and the three Class 1 railroads within the region and the Houston Belt and Terminal Railway Company (HB&T) are partners in PTRA's infrastructure improvements



**2,000 at grade crossings in Houston Beaumont Study Area**

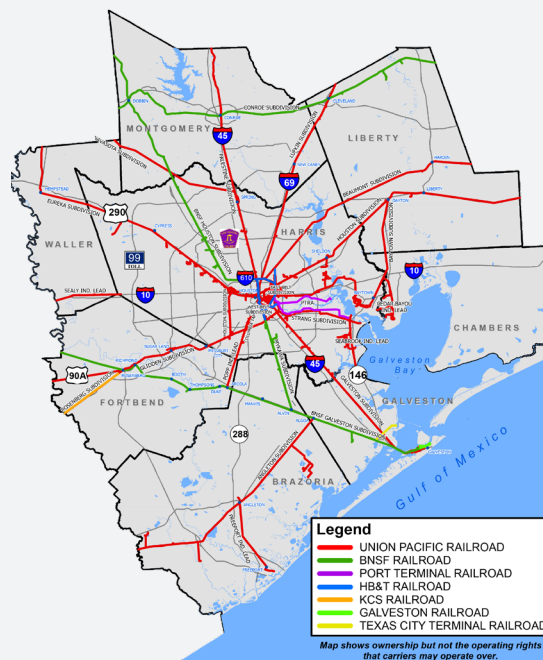


**Over 1,000 miles of track owned by Class I railroads**



**882 million tons moves through TxDOT Houston District (2018)**

## HOUSTON RAIL SUBDIVISION MAP



## ABOUT THE GULF COAST RAIL DISTRICT (GCRD)

GCRD is a political subdivision of the State of Texas created to enhance the economic benefits of rail and passenger transport while improving regional quality of life. GCRD works with public and private partners to develop and implement systematic approaches to improving the regional rail network for the benefit of the region's residents and economy. The GCRD board of directors includes representatives from Harris County, Fort Bend County, Waller County, City of Houston, Port Houston, Galveston County, Montgomery County, Harris County Mayors and Council Association, and Fort Bend County Mayors and Council Association. Ex-Officio members include Texas Transportation Commission, the Gulf Coast Transit District and METRO.



## PENDING APPLICATIONS

US DOT Grant	Project Sponsor	Brief Description	Project Cost
RCE (Construction)	City of Houston, GCRD	The West Belt Improvement Project (Phase I), which includes two railroad underpasses at Commerce Street/Navigation Boulevard and York Street as well as closing the crossings at Milby, McKinney, and Sampson in the East End neighborhood of Houston. It would create a 2.65-mile sealed corridor making it eligible to be considered as a Quiet Zone <a href="https://www.engagehouston.org/railroad-crossing-elimination-grant">https://www.engagehouston.org/railroad-crossing-elimination-grant</a>	\$36.9 million (requested)
RCE (Planning) and CRISI (Planning)	Port Houston	<i>Grade Separation to Improve Safety and Mobility of Goods: Port Road Design</i> - This roadway is the primary access to its Bayport Container Terminal.	\$2.3 million
CRISI (Planning)	TIRZ 8, City of Houston	Preliminary engineering, design, and environmental documentation for the Mykawa Road Rail Safety Improvements Project for two intersections: Mykawa/Bellfort/BNSF Mykawa/Airport/BNSF	\$1.25 million
CRISI (Planning)	Harris County	The planning, preliminary engineering, and environmental review of a grade separation project at the intersection of Kuykendahl Road and Union Pacific Railroad.	\$2.4 million
SMART Phase I	City of Sugar Land, Fort Bend County, Missouri City, City of Stafford, City of Richmond	Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Railroad Monitoring, Communication, and Notification System Project. The goal of the project is to expand this system to more locations within the City and ultimately to other locations along the US 90A corridor within Fort Bend County.	\$2.05 million