

Transportation

Downtown Houston

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Downtown remains well served by freeways and managed lanes with recent improvements to US 59, I-45 South, and I-10. Improvements are being made on SH 288 and planning is occurring on I-45 North and US 290. Just as important, downtown is the center of Houston's transit network, and as a result employees have access to a variety of commuting options, including light rail, busses, vanpools and carpools. More than 73% of Metro's routes come downtown, making it possible for anyone to use Houston's bus and rail systems and avoid the hassles of driving to and from work. In addition, almost all Park and Ride buses serve downtown. Whether employees are driving alone to work every day (about half do), taking the Park & Ride from the suburbs (29%), riding local buses or light rail (8%), carpooling (11%), bicycling or walking, employees from all parts of the region can reach downtown with or without a car. Important to employers is that this access to transit further eliminates the need for one parking space per employee.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority is in the process of expanding the 7.5-mile light rail line that connects downtown to the Museum District, Texas Medical Center and Reliant Center complex. Five lines are planned in the expansion and groundbreaking events have been held for the North Corridor, East End Corridor, and Southeast Corridor. These expansion lines are anticipated to be complete in 2013 and 2014. The Southeast/ East Corridor lines will provide



needed connectivity for downtown with the area east of downtown along creating and east-west circulation route within downtown. For more information on the expansion, visit <http://www.metro-solutions.org>

Progress is being made to introduce commuter rail to the region. The Houston-Galveston Area Council has undertaken a comprehensive regional commuter rail connectivity study to evaluate the feasibility, accessibility and connectivity requirements of implementing commuter rail service along select corridors in the region. Commuter rail would serve areas beyond the existing Park & Ride system.