

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - *updated September 2021*

## COMPILATION: A STATEMENT OF VULNERABILITY REGARDING TEXAS' MEGAREGION CORRIDORS

Megaregional travel crosses the lines of political jurisdictions and typical planning boundaries. Public transportation planning work is often done with little or no attention to the needs of vulnerable populations. As new plans for high-speed rail and other mobility options continue to develop in the Texas Triangle and Gulf Coast megaregions, minorities and those with low incomes, particularly people living in rural and suburban communities, face the greatest risks in being left out of the conversation. This research aims to assist decision making by providing an assessment tool to identify the location of vulnerable populations and determine the travel needs that can be met in the megaregion - outside traditional jurisdictional boundaries.

The study team developed a composite vulnerability index (CVI) that collected variables of ethnicity, female-headed households, languages-spoken, as well as percent of income spent on transportation. Two travel corridors showed high regional levels of vulnerability - US290 from Houston to Austin; and IH10 from Houston to the Texas state line. Individuals and families in these areas must spend a larger portion of their incomes moving around, leaving less for addressing all other needs. Increased access to public transportation could provide a solution.

The public entities expected to recognize and address the gap between need and available transit service are MPOs, COGs, and rural transit providers. These agencies require the assessment of purpose and need as a starting point to address mobility gaps. The year 5 research will assemble findings from all previous years to present the perspective of vulnerability proximate to each Texas Megaregion corridor.

This study was funded by the consortium of Cooperative Mobility for Competitive Megaregions (CM<sup>2</sup>). CM<sup>2</sup> is a USDOT Tier-1 University Transportation Center (UTC). CM<sup>2</sup>'s consortium partners include The University of Texas at Austin, Louisiana State University, Texas Southern University, and the University of Pennsylvania, with affiliates at Cornell University and Rutgers University.

Compilation: A Statement of Vulnerability Regarding Texas' Megaregion Corridors (#CM2-64)

Carol Abel Lewis, Ph.D. and  
Gwen Goodwin, Ph.D.,  
Texas Southern University

01/01/2021 - 07/31/2022

Project Information Form:

<https://tinyurl.com/pf6ypeje.pdf>



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

