6A. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

DATE: Friday, October 23, 2026
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: 3555 Timmons Lane, Conference Room B, Houston, Texas 77027

The presiding officer, Chairman Justin Beckendorff called the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) meeting of September 25, 2026, at 9:33 a.m. to order.

CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM, INTRODUCTIONS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Chairman Justin Beckendorff opened the meeting with greetings and requested attendees to take their seats. Chair Beckendorff asked Ms. Jamila Owens (HGAC) to conduct the roll call and verify quorum. Ms. Owens confirmed that a quorum of 23 members were present, as documented in Attachment 1. Chair Beckendorff asked the Council if anyone wanted to declare a conflict of interest on any item on the agenda. No members declared a conflict of interest. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Jamila Owens (HGAC) provided instructions to the public on how to submit comments online and informed attendees that Spanish translation services were available onsite, while American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation were accessible online. No written comments were submitted by September 24, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. One public comment was provided in person, and no public comments were provided online. All presentations, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 5. MPO DIRECTOR REPORT AND ORIENTATION OF AGENDA, MS. ALLIE ISBELL, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DELIVERY, AND MS. JAMILA OWENS, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENTATION, H-GAC

Ms. Allie Isbell provided the MPO Director's Report and highlighted several upcoming opportunities and recent accomplishments of the H-GAC Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Staff reminded members that the **Call for Subregional Studies** remains open through **October 19**, inviting applications for mobility, corridor, and modal planning studies. Members were also informed that the **Freight At-Grade Rail Separation Feasibility Study Call for Projects** is open through **November 9**.

Ms. Isbell reported that several staff members recently attended the **Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Conference**, where H-GAC staff participated in panel discussions and shared best practices with MPO peers from across the nation.

Ms. Jamila Owens announced that H-GAC received the **2026 AMPO Outstanding Overall Achievement Award for a Large MPO**, the organization's highest recognition in that category. The award recognized the region's **Commute Solutions FIFA travel demand management and outreach efforts**, which included extensive coordination with employers, commuters, and transportation partners to prepare for

1. Increase State Highway Fund Allocations
    - Increase revenue shares from Proposition 1 and Proposition 7.
    - Reduce transfers to the State Highway Fund Enterprise Fund.
    - Increase annual funding from approximately $2.5 billion to $5 billion for highway construction, maintenance, and infrastructure improvements.
2. Dedicate Excess Toll Revenue to Transportation Infrastructure
    - Require surplus toll revenue to be used exclusively for transportation purposes.
    - Eligible uses would include highway construction, roadway maintenance, safety improvements, and congestion relief projects.
3. Increase Investment in Unsafe At-Grade Railroad Crossings
    - Expand funding dedicated to addressing unsafe at-grade railroad crossings.
    - Revised language focuses resources on crossings identified as posing safety risks.
4. Preserve Legislative Intent of the Federal Aid Highway Act
    - Modify state provisions affecting MPO administration of federal transportation funds.
    - Provide MPOs with greater flexibility in allocating federal funding categories based on regional priorities and needs.
    - Reduce limitations created by TxDOT rulemaking authority over certain federal funds.
5. Reauthorize the County Transportation Infrastructure Fund
    - Broaden eligibility beyond oil and gas-related roadway damage.
    - Allow funding for roadways impacted by a wider range of industrial activities, including freight and port-related transportation.
    - Increase funding opportunities for high-growth regions experiencing infrastructure impacts from economic development.

Council Discussion

- Members expressed strong support for establishing formal legislative priorities and presenting a unified regional voice.
- The importance of developing supporting materials, including:
    - Legislative talking points,
    - Background information,
    - Regional examples, and
    - A formal resolution for local adoption, was discussed.
- Members highlighted the need to coordinate advocacy efforts among:
    - TPC,
    - H-GAC,
    - Transportation Advocacy Group (TAG),
    - Counties,
    - Municipalities, and
    - Regional stakeholders.

- Discussion emphasized the need to identify legislative champions in both the Texas House and Senate to sponsor and advance the priorities.
- Representatives of the Gulf Coast Rail District voiced support for the railroad crossing priority and noted ongoing efforts to identify and prioritize at-risk crossings across the region.

Motion:
A motion was made by Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs and seconded by Councilmember Sally Branson to approve the **Legislative Policy Priorities recommendations**. Following discussion, the members voted, and the motion carried.

Using the most recent data available from transit providers and the National Transit Database, Mr. Heshmat reviewed regional performance and reported that the region was generally performing as expected across the four asset categories of rolling stock, equipment, facilities, and infrastructure. He also acknowledged the efforts of participating transit agencies in collecting and reporting asset condition data.

Mr. Heshmat stated that, based on consultation with transit providers and a review of state-of-good-repair guidance, H-GAC developed proposed regional performance targets for 2028 and 2030. He further reported that approximately $1.9 billion in federal funding had been programmed through 2030 to support transit capital and infrastructure investments needed to maintain assets in a state of good repair and achieve future performance targets.

Mr. Heshmat concluded the presentation by requesting approval of **Resolution No. 2026-21**, adopting the regional Transit Asset Management performance measures and targets for 2028 and 2030.

Motion:
A motion to approve was made by Councilmember Alcorn and seconded by Commissioner Briones. The Council voted and the motion carried. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 10. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN (PTASP) MEASURES UPDATE, MR. KAREEM HESHMAT, H-GAC

Mr. Kareem Heshmat, Supervisor of Transportation Safety with H-GAC, presented the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan performance measures and targets, noting that this was the second of two federally required public transportation performance measure updates. He explained that, while Transit Asset Management focuses on the state of good repair of physical assets, the Public Transportation Safety measures monitor fatalities, injuries, and mechanical failures across the public transit network.

Mr. Heshmat reported that the number of federally required safety performance measures increased from seven to fourteen in 2024. He explained that H-GAC evaluates the data relative to vehicle revenue miles and is utilizing a Vision Zero approach as the baseline for fatality performance measures. He also noted that, as additional data becomes available through the National Transit Database, a clearer picture of performance will emerge for the newly established measures.

Mr. Heshmat reviewed safety performance results and proposed targets for Tier I and Tier II transit providers, including bus, paratransit, rail, and demand-response services. He noted that some 2023 performance measures fell short of their targets, while other areas were performing well, and expressed optimism that performance would improve in future years. He also acknowledged the efforts of regional transit agencies in maintaining safe and reliable service throughout the region.

Mr. Heshmat concluded the presentation by requesting approval of **Resolution No. 2026-22**, adopting the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan performance measures and targets.

During discussion, a member asked whether any penalties or consequences existed if the performance targets were not met. Mr. Heshmat confirmed that the measures are goals and that there are no penalties associated with failing to achieve them.

Motion:
A motion to approve **Resolution No. 2026-22** was made and was seconded. The Council voted and the motion carried. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

A council member asked why proposed interstate reliability targets decreased from prior targets despite efforts to improve transportation conditions. Staff explained that the original targets were established during the pandemic, when reduced travel and increased telework resulted in higher reliability and lower congestion. Current projections reflect a return to pre-pandemic travel patterns, continued population growth, and anticipated construction impacts on interstate facilities. Additional clarification was provided that the targets are intended to be realistic and achievable based on forecast conditions.

Motion:
A motion was made and seconded to approve **Resolution No. 2026-23** adopting the proposed reliability, congestion, and air quality performance measure targets. The Council voted, and the motion carried. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 12. 2027-2030 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) & 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) AMENDMENTS, MR. STEPHEN KEEN, H-GAC

Mr. Stephen Keen, Principal Planner with H-GAC, presented draft amendments to the 2027–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He began by reviewing the relationship between the TIP and the region's long-range planning documents, noting that the TIP is contained within the broader planning framework established by the RTP.

The first proposed amendment, submitted by the **TxDOT Houston District**, would revise the scope of the **FM 523 project in Brazoria County**. The amendment would separate the roadway reconstruction elements into a standalone project while retaining the sidewalk construction component within the existing project funded through Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.

Mr. Keen also presented a request from the **City of Conroe** to program transit project groupings for **fiscal years 2027 and 2028**. These project groupings would include public transportation activities and expenditures related to capital, operations, planning, and administration. Staff noted that all projects included in the request would be newly programmed during those fiscal years. A regional map was displayed showing the geographic distribution of the proposed amendments.

Mr. Keen reminded the Council that the amendments were in draft form and remained subject to additional review and revision. Staff anticipates returning the proposed amendments to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for recommendation and to the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) for action at the next meeting.

Council Discussion
The Chair noted that the proposed amendments were relatively straightforward and invited questions from Council members. No questions or comments were offered. No action was taken, as the item was presented for discussion and review purposes only. Staff will return the proposed amendments to the Council at a future meeting for consideration and approval. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE.

ITEM 13. 2050 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT LIST FOR AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS, MR. STEPHEN KEEN, H-GAC

Mr. Stephen Keen, Principal Planner with HGAC, presented the draft list of regionally significant projects for inclusion in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) air quality conformity process. He clarified that the list does not represent the full RTP project inventory, but only those projects that meet federal requirements for air quality conformity analysis.

during her first year with the Air Quality Program and noted that significant preparation has already been completed for the upcoming conformity determination.

Dr. Statkewicz provided an overview of the transportation conformity process and explained that the Houston-Galveston region is required to conduct conformity analyses because it remains in nonattainment for both the 2008 and 2015 federal ozone standards. She noted that the region is classified as **severe nonattainment** under the 2008 ozone standard and **serious nonattainment** under the 2015 ozone standard. Although Waller and Liberty Counties are not included under the 2015 standard designation, the region as a whole remains subject to transportation conformity requirements.

Dr. Statkewicz explained that transportation conformity serves as the connection between air quality planning and transportation planning by ensuring that transportation investments contained in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are consistent with air quality goals and emissions budgets established through the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

The presentation outlined several events that can trigger a new conformity determination. For the current cycle, the development of the **2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** and the **2027–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is initiating the conformity process. Other potential triggers may include new nonattainment designations or updated emissions budgets.

Staff noted that transportation conformity is typically a **12- to 20-month process**. The region is currently in the process initiation stage, with network and emissions analyses anticipated to begin later this year and continue into early next year. Dr. Statkewicz emphasized the importance of beginning the process early due to the length of agency review periods.

As an example, staff reported that the previous conformity determination process spanned **477 days**, from March 2025 through July 2026, with **225 days dedicated to partner agency review**. H-GAC staff responded to all review comments within 30 days, though significant time was required to receive and resolve comments from partner agencies.

Dr. Statkewicz also reviewed the proposed timeline contained within the region's **Pre-Analysis Consensus Plan**, which documents modeling assumptions and inputs and allows partner agencies to review and provide feedback before modeling begins. Staff plans to initiate coordination with partner agencies in October and request comments within a 45-day review period. The proposed schedule is designed to keep the region on track to meet federal conformity and RTP adoption deadlines.

No substantive questions or comments were raised by members following the presentation.
The Transportation Policy Council received an update on the transportation conformity process and upcoming schedule. No action was taken on this item. The project list was presented for discussion and is scheduled to return for approval at a future meeting. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

ITEM 15. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS TO FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND CONFORMITY PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS, MR. ANDREW DECANDIS, H-GAC

Mr. Andrew DeCandis presented a discussion item outlining potential policy and regulatory recommendations intended to improve the efficiency of the transportation conformity process and related transportation planning activities. The effort was developed through ongoing collaboration between H-GAC staff and Dr. Shelly Sekula-Gibbs.

No action was taken on this item. Staff presented the proposed recommendations for discussion and stakeholder feedback, with additional coordination and analysis anticipated before any future action is considered. Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJORNMENT

Chair Beckendorff informed the Council of upcoming meetings

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Gulf Coast Rail District – Rail and Road Safety Workshop	October 6-7	9:00 a.m.	See Attached Flyer
Air Quality Houston Regional Summit	October 8	9:00 a.m.	See Attached Flyer
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting	October 14	9:30 a.m.	In Person
Transportation Policy Council Meeting	October 23	9:30 a.m.	In Person
Transportation Safety Committee Meeting	October 27	1:30 p.m.	Virtual
Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory (RAQPAC) Committee Meeting	October 29	10:00 a.m.	Virtual

Chair Beckendorff adjourned the meeting at 11:08 a.m.

Presentation, comments, and discussions are available in the official meeting recording HERE

Hon. Sally Branson, TPC Secretary
Transportation Policy Council

Attachment 1
MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL (TPC)
FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA
SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

ROLL

AGENCY	VOTING MEMBER/ALTERNATE	REPRESENTING

	____	Mayor	
	X	Vacant - Alternate	
Smaller Cities – Position 1	X	Honorable Jerry Mouton Mayor	Smaller Cities
	____	Hon. Todd Thurbur - Alternate	
Smaller Cities – Position 2	X	Hon. John Escoto City of Shenandoah	Smaller Cities
	____	Hon. Dusty Thiele-Alternate City of Katy	
Smaller Cities – Position 3	X	Hon. Sally Branson-**Secretary** City of Friendswood	Smaller Cities
	____	Hon. Ross Gordon-Alternate City of Bellaire	
The Woodlands Township	X	Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs Board Member -The Woodlands Township Board	The Woodlands Township
	____	Craig Eissler-Alternate	
Brazoria County	X	Matt Hanks, JD, P.E. County Engineer	Brazoria County
	____	Honorable David Linder – Alternate	
Chambers County	____	Honorable Ryan Dagley County Commissioner	Chambers County
	____	Honorable Tommy Hammond-Alternate	
Fort Bend County	X	Honorable Grady Prestage County Commissioner, **1st Vice Chair**	Fort Bend County
	____	Stacy Slawinski, P.E. – Alternate	
AGENCY		VOTING MEMBERSHIP	REPRESENTING
Galveston County	X	Honorable Robin Armstrong County Commissioner	Galveston County
	____	Honorable Joe Giusti– Alternate	
Harris County Position No. 1	____	Honorable Adrian Garcia County Commissioner, Pct. 2	Harris County
	X	Dr. Milton Rahman – Alternate	
Harris County Position No. 2	X	Honorable Lesley Briones-**2nd Vice Chair** County Commissioner, Pct. 4	Harris County

Texas State Senate	____	Hon. Carol Alvarado	8-County Region
Freight Rail Interests	X	Clint Schelbitzki/**Richard Zientek**	Union Pacific
Texas State Legislator	____	Hon Dennis Paul	8-County Region
Wharton County	X	Hon. Phillip Spenrath	Wharton County

NON-VOTING

H-GAC	X	Ron Papsdorf	H-GAC
TxDOT-Houston	____	Vacant	TxDOT-Houston