

H-GAC, TCEQ Short List SIP Local Government Stakeholders Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

January 27, 2009
2:00pm to 4:00pm
H-GAC
3555 Timmons Lane,
2nd Floor, Room A
Houston, Texas 77027

Persons Present:

Patrick Buzbee (**Montgomery County**), Bob Allen (**Harris County**), Cristina Gossett (**City of Deer Park**), Snehal Patel (**Harris County Attorney's Office**), Nick Finan (**City of Texas City**), Charles Dean (**Harris County**), Perri D'Armond (**Greater Fort Bend EDC**), Don Brandon (**Chambers County**), DeWight Dopslauf (**Harris County Purchasing**), Ann Werlein (**Fort Bend County**), Ken Gathright (**Port of Houston Authority**), Stacie Henderson (**City of Sugar Land**), Luis Rodriguez (**City of Sugar Land**), Dolly Arons (**City of Shoreacres**), Kerry Collins-Leggett (**City of Alvin**), Gail Miller (**Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Sylvia Garcia's Office**), Larry Buehler (**City of Alvin**), Jim Wigihton (**Brazoria County District Attorney's Office**), Cindy Sumrall (**Fort Bend County Transit**), Catarina Cron (**Harris County**), Scott Tuma (**City of League City**), Shaun Light (**City of Houston, Large-Position 3 Councilwoman Melissa Noriega's Office**)

Staff Present:

Steve Howard, Jeff Taebel, Shelley Whitworth, Graciela Lubertino, Kelli Angelone, Connie Chao, Mary Schuwerk, J. Ben Finley, Andrew DeCandis, Shaida Dezfuli, Ilyas Choudry, Veronica Baxter-Lamb, Gina Mitteco, Meredith Dang, Jerry Bobo, Ashley K. Wadick (**TCEQ**), Cynthia Williams (**TCEQ**), Lola Brown (**TCEQ**), Theo Kosub (**TCEQ**)

Purpose of Meeting: Workshop to provide tools for local government on how to reduce NOx emissions

SIP Presentation: Overview of SIP Process and Voluntary Control Strategies
Shelley Whitworth, H-GAC Air Quality Program Manager, described the State Implementation Plan and gave an overview of the process. The purpose is to reduce emissions through state and local controls. Nitrogen oxide (NOx) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) levels were estimated in a TCEQ modeling emissions inventory in 2005 and predicted for 2018. Currently, 8-hour ozone design values have a downward trend which means that the ozone level is slowly decreasing in the HGB region. However, more on-road and non-road reductions must happen to continue the downward ozone level trend. Government agencies are encouraged to take more voluntary measures to reduce emissions. Recommended on-road voluntary control measures are: Alternative

commuting, regional traffic flow improvement, and vehicle retrofit and replacement. Recommended non-road voluntary control measures are: Engine replacement and retrofit programs, government construction incentives, limits on construction idling, promoting cleaner garden and lawn equipment. Some local actions that government can take are to support on-road and non-road voluntary control measures, enact ordinances promoting livable centers and multi-use developments, support increased transit service, expand the use of natural gas in vehicle fleets, add bicycle and pedestrian control strategies, increase fleet turnover for newer vehicles, encourage practices which reduce emissions, and increase public education about air quality issues. H-GAC encourages the signing of Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) to formalize emission reduction commitments to the SIP. Local SIP commitments must be submitted to TCEQ no later than February 20, 2009. Finalized MOA documents must be submitted to TCEQ by April 2009.

H-GAC Open Session to Explore Different Voluntary Measures: Twenty minutes were taken to have local government staff visit stations around the room and ask questions about the different voluntary measures available to them. The stations were the following: Fleet Turnover, Support Commute Solutions, Airport Control Strategies, Non-Road Mobile Control Strategies, Traffic Signal Strategies, Idle Reduction Strategies, Livable Cities/Bicycle /Pedestrian Program, All On-Road Funding Available: Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ), TERP funds, Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP), Local Initiative Project (LIP), Surface Transportation Program Metro Mobility (STPMM), Surface Transportation Project Enhancements (STPE), and Local Funds. The group came back afterwards for a group discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: A question was asked by Dolly Arons of the City of Shoreacres: Are there other funds besides the TERP program that may be available for local government use? Shelley Whitworth answered it saying that TERP was the main funding available for now although there were plans to expand the availability of SEP funds to include local government fleets.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 3 pm

ACTION ITEM: Local governments work to decide on voluntary control measures to commit to, and sign an MOA formalizing the commitment to reduce emissions in their respective areas.