

**APPROVAL OF 2010 PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (LETTING SCHEDULE) FOR THE
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE EIGHT COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

Background

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the eight county Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area, it is the Transportation Policy Council's (TPC) responsibility to approve or disapprove proposed programming of federally supported highway and transit projects. The Policy Council's approval is documented through the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a multi-year listing of highway and transit projects which shows the proposed use of federal funds for specific projects. The TIP must be constrained to actual or reasonably expected federal, state and local funds. The listing of projects for funding obligation by year is a reflection of the priority given each project by the Transportation Policy Council and each project's expected readiness for contract letting.

Prior to the beginning of the State's fiscal year, an estimate of available state and federal funds for the letting of new highway funded projects in the upcoming year is prepared by TxDOT. This estimate is distributed by various funding categories and by TxDOT district. Working with its districts, TxDOT develops a proposed letting schedule for the new fiscal year based on this latest estimate of available funding. This funding ideally should closely match the state and federal funding estimated for projects shown in the corresponding year of the TIP. Because of the steep rise in fuel costs and the economic recession, actual state and federal funding has fallen significantly short of estimates made just three years ago for the current TIP. As a consequence, the TIP contains significantly more projects than can be funded. Even with the federal stimulus, the highway funding for projects in fiscal years 2008 through 2010 of the TIP require \$1.52 billion more than that which is available.

Current Situation

The Houston and Beaumont Districts were provided funding estimates for 2010 and requested to identify project lettings consistent with the estimated funding. Working with the TIP Subcommittee, H-GAC is reviewing projects for readiness for contract letting during FY 2010. A list of projects proposed for contract letting is posted at:

<http://www.h-gac.com/taq/commitees/TAC/2009/09-sep/default.aspx>.

Action Requested

Staff requests approval of the proposed FY 2010 project letting schedule for the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program and request approval to prepare amendments delaying remaining TIP projects.