

CLEAN AIR WORK PROGRAM FY2011 – FY2014 REPORT

Background

The Clean Air Work Program outlines programs and projected budgets for the Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles, Commute Solutions, and Clean Air Action public outreach for FY2011 – FY2014. The Houston-Galveston-Brazoria region has been designated as non-attainment for ground level ozone. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, H-GAC is charged with developing an implementation plan to demonstrate the region's progress towards meeting National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) set by the EPA. To that end, H-GAC develops and manages programs including:

- Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles—designed to offset the added cost of replacing or retrofitting older, high-emission, heavy-duty diesel and gasoline engines with cleaner, low-emissions engines. The primary goal of the program is to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx), a critical component in the formation of ground-level ozone. Federal Funds for this activity have been allocated by the Transportation Policy Council as part of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. H-GAC's participation in the cost mitigation for engine replacement or retrofit is determined, in part, by the emissions reductions which will be achieved.
- Commute Solutions—funds and promotes a variety of voluntary alternative transportation and trip reduction programs designed to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality through a reduction of mobile emissions. Programs include:
 - NuRide—online ride matching service that provides rewards, such as discounts at local and national retail establishments, for individuals that use and document commute alternatives, including carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking, teleworking/telecommuting, alternative work schedules, and using public transit. The information gathered on NuRide is then used by H-GAC to calculate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and emissions reductions.
 - Commuter and Transit Services Pilot Programs—funds services that benefit major employment activity and living centers or other major travel corridors such as park and ride services, fixed route circulator, worksite-to-worksite shuttle, or subscription express service. In order to qualify for funding, the projects must provide an additional commuting option and not duplicate or replace an existing transit service.
 - Regional Vanpool Program—provides a van as well as insurance, maintenance, roadside assistance, ride matching and guaranteed ride home services for regional commuters. METRO and area employers provide financial incentives to subsidize the cost of the service.
 - Regional Telework Program—assists local companies in developing telework programs by advising on policies and procedures, assessing home and office needs, and evaluating technological and scheduling needs for staff and managers.

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- Commute Champion/Clean Air Champion Programs—used to document and calculate emissions reductions from regional public and private sector commute alternative programs, clean fleet and operation practices.
- Clean Air Action Program—includes outreach and marketing for the Clean Cities/Clean Vehicles, Commute Solutions, and other Air Quality Programs such as Drayage Loan program, Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, the Local Initiatives Program Air Check Texas, and the Smoking Vehicles program. This program includes a comprehensive marketing and public relations campaign by H-GAC contracts, as well as large annual outreach events such as Fresh Air Friday, Advancing the Choice, and Commute Solutions Month.

Current Situation

The TPC has approved funding for FY2011 – FY2014 to continue the implementation of the above mentioned programs.

Action Requested

For information only