

TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT AND CMAQ PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Background

A performance-based transportation planning process is required by federal regulations in the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). A component of performance-based planning requirements includes the formal adoption of performance measures and targets in key areas by specific federal deadlines. The Performance Measure Final Rules were established at different times, therefore, creating different deadlines.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-Act) upcoming deadlines for target-setting of performance measures for Transit Asset Management on October 1, 2018 and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality by November 16, 2018. A CMAQ Performance Plan is due October 1, 2018. Measuring and tracking the performance of the region's transportation system provide a strategic approach to evaluate the effectiveness of transportation investments and track progress toward achieving goals.

The first set of Safety Performance Measures was formally approved by the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) on January 19, 2018.

Current Situation

Transit Asset Management (TAM) – The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and mandated the Federal Transit Administration to develop a TAM rule to establish a systematic process of operating, maintaining, and improving public capital assets. The TAM Rule requires all transit agencies that are designated recipients and subrecipients of federal funds to develop initial State of Good Repair targets in January 2017 and complete a TAM Plan by October 1, 2018.

In May 2018, the TPC approved an interagency Memorandum of Understanding for regional collaboration to implement performance-based planning and programming between transit operators, TxDOT and H-GAC. The Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee has been coordinating performance measure target-setting with transit operators. Based on the federal rule, transit operators in the region are required to set targets for four measures. Additionally, H-GAC is required to set a regional target for the four transit asset categories:

1. Equipment
2. Rolling stock
3. Facility
4. Infrastructure

Based on the federal rule, H-GAC is reached out to all transit operators in the region and requesting transit data and agency-level metrics and targets to formulate a regional target. Depending on the data received from transit agencies, H-GAC will set a regional performance target for all transit asset categories. TxDOT's Public Transportation Division, acting on the behalf of rural, small urban and enhanced mobility & disabled providers, established a 15% performance target for rolling stock, equipment and facility. This target means that 15% of assets will be at or beyond ULB by the target year.

H-GAC may choose to adopt the State's 15% target or set its own regional target depending on the data received from transit agencies. H-GAC staff held a working group meeting on August 8 to set up a regional TAM target. Following the discussion, H-GAC will set up a regional target based on the highest percentage target established by transit providers for each of four asset categories, which allows most flexibility as a regional target. Once targets are adopted, H-GAC will incorporate TAM-related performance based planning into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Transit Asset Management performance measure progress is reported annually.

Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Emission Reduction – Due to new requirements resulting from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST Act) of 2015, MPOs that receive CMAQ funds must work with state DOTs to develop the emissions reduction target for CMAQ-funded projects in non-attainment regions. In response to this requirement, TxDOT reached out to MPOs in Texas nonattainment regions for assistance in the development of emission reduction estimates for 2019 through 2022. Through consultations with H-GAC, NCTCOG, and El Paso MPOs, a methodology was developed that utilizes recent emission reductions for the years of 2014 to 2017 to create an estimate of future CMAQ emission reductions. Applying this methodology to projects within the Houston region, H-GAC staff is developing an annual emission reduction estimate of the ozone precursors nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) for 2019-2022, based on previous results. This annual estimate will be rolled into two- and four-year targets for the region.

Once targets are adopted, H-GAC will incorporate the CMAQ-related targets and performance based planning process into the TIP and RTP. CMAQ performance measure progress is reported biennially with four-year performance periods and may be revised in two years.

Action Requested

For information only.