10. 2050 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT LIST FOR AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS AND RTP FISCAL FORECAST

BACKGROUND

The 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range strategic plan that guides transportation policies, programs, and investment decisions across the region for the next 20 years and beyond. As a core document of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the RTP directs federal, state, and local funding toward transportation improvements that advance the region's adopted vision. Federal statute requires the RTP to be updated every four (4) years. The current RTP was adopted in 2024 and will expire on November 1, 2027.

The development of the 2050 RTP includes a comprehensive planning process designed to meet federal requirements. Key elements of this process include public engagement; adoption of a regional vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures; analysis of existing and projected future conditions; a Call for Projects; development of a fiscally constrained project list; and completion of an air quality conformity analysis.

CURRENT SITUATION

Federal regulations require all regionally significant transportation projects to be included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), regardless of funding source. As an air quality nonattainment area, the H-GAC region must identify and model all Regionally Significant added-capacity roadway and fixed-guideway transit projects (definitions on following page) to meet federal transportation conformity requirements. Using federal criteria, staff developed the RTP 2050 Regionally Significant Project List for Air Quality Conformity, which combines newly submitted projects with those carried forward from the current RTP. This list will serve as the foundation for regional travel demand modeling and transportation conformity analyses that support adoption of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The Regionally Significant Project List was presented to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) on November 4, 2026, for a recommendation of approval. TAC recommended approval of the list. Since that time, seven additional regionally significant projects have been added. These projects are identified in red and marked with an asterisk on the updated list.

All submitted projects were evaluated for consistency with the RTP 2050 vision, goals, performance objectives, and public input received throughout the planning process. Federal regulations require the RTP to be fiscally constrained, meaning projects must be supported by revenues reasonably expected to be available through the plan's horizon. The RTP financial model serves as the basis for determining fiscal constraint by analyzing projected revenues, project costs, inflation, operating needs, and implementation schedules. This analysis establishes the level of transportation investment the region can reasonably afford through 2050 and ensures that projects have a realistic path to implementation.

Consistent with federal requirements (23 CFR § 450.324), the final RTP 2050 project list will be developed within identified financial limitations and according to established regional priorities.

The project team has developed a new financial model to inform the RTP's Financial Plan. The model will provide updated figures to the following revenue sources: Federal and State, Toll, US DOT Discretionary, Transit agencies, and Counties and Cities. The model will also update our maintenance and operations and debt service costs, which are federally required to be addressed in the Financial

Plan. The financial model was built through publicly available data and confirmed through coordination with regional partners.

Below is a table that captures the proposed 2050 Financial Model in comparison with the current 2045 Financial Model:

Revenue Source	2045 Financial Model	2050 Financial Model (Proposed)
Capital	$142.50	$112.80*
M + O**	$22.20	$52.80
Debt Service**	$4.20	$17.60
Total	**$142.50**	**$183.20**

*2050 Proposed figures subject to change after further consultation with METRO regarding their financial forecast
**Maintenance + Operations and debt service are included within the capital costs of the current 2045 Financial Model. These are separate line items in the proposed 2050 Financial Model.

The proposed financial model has projected $63.5 billion worth of projects to be funded in categories 1 through 12, excluding Category 1 (Preventative Maintenance and Rehabilitation), and Category 3 (Toll).

The MPO receives funding allocation for Category 2 (On-System), Category 5 (CMAQ), Category 7 (STBG), and Category 9 (TASA). The model had developed forecast funding for each category through 2050 using UTP historical allocation for H-GAC categories, as well as the TTI Trends model forecast as a base for funding assumptions. Below is a table that shows the estimate for each funding category from 2027 through 2050.

Funding Category	Forecast Allocation %	Forecast Total (in billions)
Category 2 – On System	52%	$10.70
Category 5 – CMAQ	10%	$2.10
Category 7 – STBG	34%	$7.00
Category 9 – TASA	4%	$0.80
Total	**100%**	**$20.60**

During the Call for RTP Projects, staff requested that local sponsors submit new projects and resubmit existing projects, to start the development of a comprehensive, updated RTP Projects Listing. From these submittals, staff have identified **$70.3 billion of Regionally Significant for Air Quality Conformity projects** that can be funded through Categories 1 through 12, FTA funds/local transit funds, and tollway funds. These projects are listed on the RTP 2050 Regionally Significant Project List for Air Quality Conformity Analysis, available here: https://engage.h-gac.com/27493/widgets/123184/documents/87382.

Staff will seek approval to initiate the transportation conformity analysis using the RTP 2050 Regionally Significant Project List for Air Quality Conformity at the November Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and Transportation Policy Council (TPC) meetings.

ACTION REQUESTED

TAC Recommendation for TPC approval of the RTP 2050 Regionally Significant Project List for Air Quality Conformity Analysis.

Definition of Regionally Significant Projects for Air Quality Conformity

Regionally Significant Roadway Projects:

Projects determined to be regionally significant, except as specifically exempted under 40 CFR 93.126 and 40 CFR 93.127, must come from a conforming RTP and TIP, or be individually found to conform prior to the issuance of federal approvals and other actions. H-GAC has developed the following definition to classify projects as regionally significant for conformity purposes:

Regionally Significant Roadway Projects Non-exempt[1] projects on regionally significant roadways will be treated as regionally significant projects if they:

a. Provide additional through traffic lanes greater than 1 mile in length.

b. Construct a bypass to a principal arterial/interstate along a new alignment.

c. Add or extend freeway auxiliary/weaving lanes from one interchange to a point beyond the next interchange.

d. Construct a new interchange that provides access from or allows movement between facilities that was not previously possible; and/or

e. Remove an existing interchange and result in the elimination of access from or movement between facilities which previously existed.

Regionally significant roadways are limited to:

1. All freeways, tollways and other highways classified as principal arterial or higher; and

2. Selected highways as identified in Figure 3.1, currently designated as minor arterials that serve significant interregional and intraregional travel and connect rural population centers not already served by a principal arterial or connect with intermodal transportation terminals not already served by a principal arterial.

Regionally Significant Transit Projects:

Any transit facility within an exclusive right-of-way ("fixed guideway") that offers an alternative to regional highway travel including light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit, and barrier separated High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) lanes shall be considered regionally significant.

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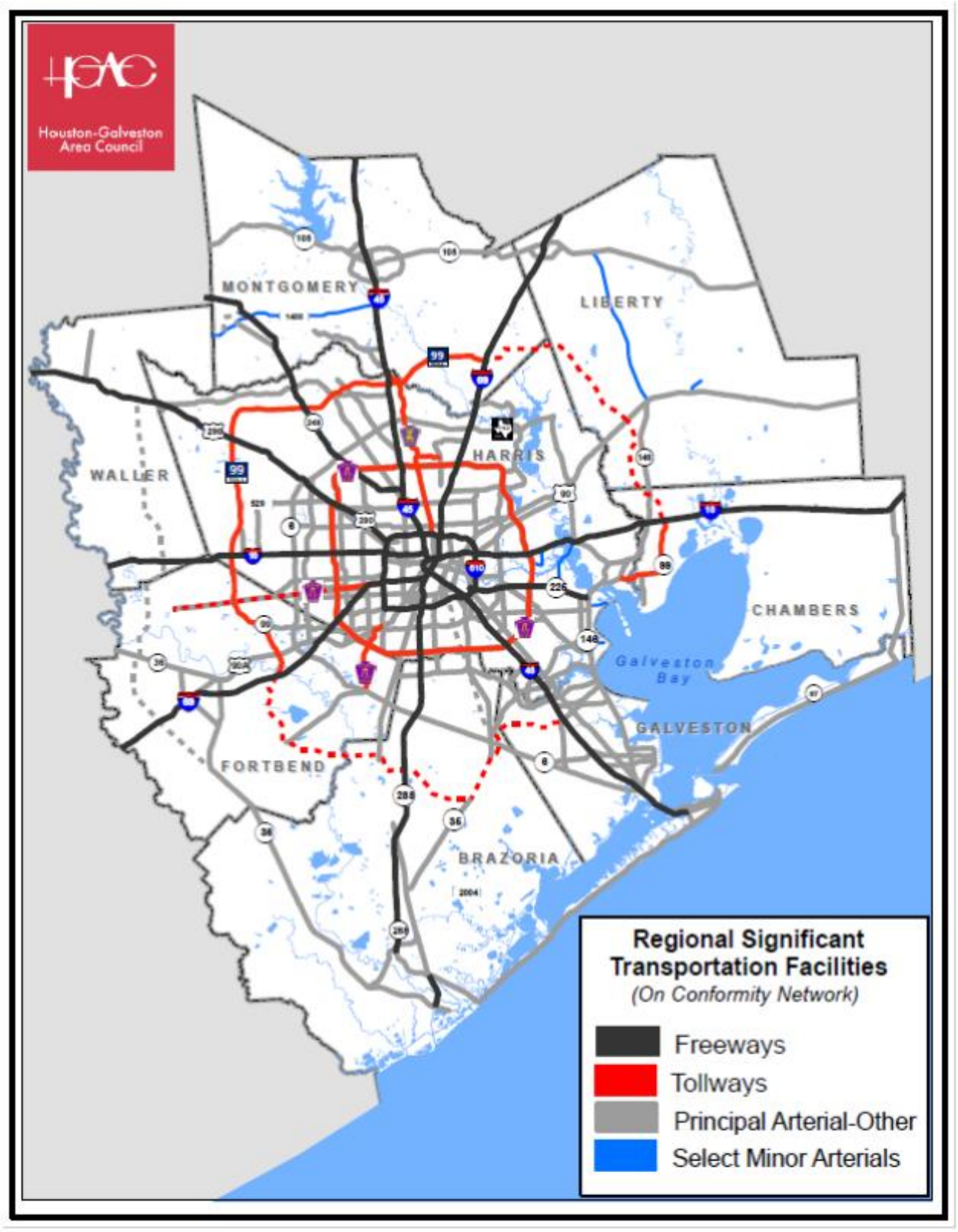
1 Non-exempt projects include all projects that are not identified under 40 CFR 93.126 or 40 CFR 93.127 as exempt or exempt from regional emissions analysis

Other Projects:

The regional significance of non-exempt projects[1] not addressed in the statements above will be decided on a case-by-case basis through the interagency consultation process. The consultation will occur before the plan is taken to the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) (either plan or TIP revision), and prior to the environmental determination.

1 Non-exempt projects include all projects that are not identified under 40 CFR 93.126 or 40 CFR 93.127 as exempt or exempt from regional emissions analysis

Regionally Significant Transportation Facilities Map



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