

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, April 30, 2026 – 10:00 A. M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Virtual Teams Meeting

<p><u>MEMBER'S PRESENT</u> Harris County – Winifred Hamilton Harris County – Doug Peterson Environmental Defense Fund– Grace Lewis City of Houston–Nguyen Ly TXDOT–Qing Li HARC–Carlos Gamarra Waller County–Brooke Bacuetes American Lung Association–Charlie Gagen</p>	<p><u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> Harris County Pollution Control–Stuart Mueller City of LaPorte–Johnny Morales EDF–Philip Martin City of Houston–Darryl Tate</p>
<p><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> Hannah Kochen</p>	<p><u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vinny Polignano Houston-Galveston Area Council –Ebrahim Eslami Houston-Galveston Area Council –Andrew DeCandis Houston-Galveston Area Council –Madeline Statkewicz Houston-Galveston Area Council –Kechren Baah Houston-Galveston Area Council –Jamila Owens Houston-Galveston Area Council –Sara Delroshan Houston-Galveston Area Council –Robyn Egbert Houston-Galveston Area Council –Celeria Washington Houston-Galveston Area Council –Florence Buaku Houston-Galveston Area Council –Kareem Heshmat Houston-Galveston Area Council –Bennie Chambers Houston-Galveston Area Council –Mary Schneider Houston-Galveston Area Council –Rosa Steptoe Houston-Galveston Area Council –Catherine Gray TERP– Ron Heiser TCEQ – Vanessa De Arman TCEQ – Rachel Melton TCEQ – Emily Wagoner TCEQ – Alison Stokes</p>

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA Update, TCEQ Update, and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with information items and no announcements.
- b. Go to <http://www.h-gac.com/board-of-directors/advisory-committees/regional-air-quality-planning-advisory-committee/meeting-material.aspx> to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM 1A. Introduction

Grace Lewis called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

ITEM 2A. Approval of Meeting Summary (1/29/2026, 02/26/2026,03/26/2026, and 04/30/2026)

Meeting summaries held for quorum.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 3A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley, EPA)

A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee:

An EPA update was delivered on the 2024 PM2.5 NAAQS reconsideration, including the administrator's March deregulatory announcement and the status of related litigation and agency filings. The update also covered the rescission of the 2009 greenhouse gas endangerment finding and repeal of greenhouse gas vehicle standards and noted subsequent petitions for review.

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update – (Vanessa DeArman, TCEQ)

TCEQ staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

Senate Bill (SB) 2102 and SB 1729 Implementation and Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program Updates; I/M SIP Revision and Public Hearing

On April 1, 2026, the commission approved proposal of the SB 2102 and SB 1729 Implementation SIP and corresponding 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 114 rule revision.

The public comment period opened April 3, 2026, and closes on May 19, 2026. The virtual public hearing will be held on May 14, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. To register for the hearing, please email SIPRules@tceq.texas.gov by May 7, 2026.

- For additional information, please visit the [Vehicle I/M Program](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html>).

Both the Rule and SIP are anticipated to go before the commission for adoption in September 2026.

TCEQ Comment Period for the Draft 2026 Annual Monitoring Network Plan

In accordance with federal regulations, the TCEQ conducts an annual analysis of the Texas ambient air monitoring network to determine the state's compliance with federal monitoring requirements and whether monitors within the network should be added, moved, or decommissioned.

TCEQ is accepting comments on the draft *2026 Annual Monitoring Network Plan*. Copies of the draft plan can be obtained from the [TCEQ Air Monitoring Network Plans](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/network_review.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/network_review.html). The comment period closes on May 11, 2026.

Any comments pertaining to the 2026 Annual Monitoring Network Plan can be submitted to: TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Attention: Holly Landuyt, MC-165, Austin, Texas 78711-3087 or sent via email to: tceqamnp@tceq.texas.gov.

Air Permits Updates

TCEQ has released New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) OOOO-series Implementation Guidance for facilities which are potentially affected under 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 60 subparts for Oil and Natural Gas Industry Sectors. More information and copies of the memorandum can be found on the [Air Permit's New Source Review Announcements](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/announcements/nsr-news) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/announcements/nsr-news>).

Effective September 1, 2026, TCEQ may not accept certain Permit by Rule and Standard Permits applications that are determined to be incomplete. For more information, please visit the [Air Permit's New Source Review Announcements](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/announcements/nsr-news) webpage.

TCEQ has posted Electronic Modeling Evaluation Workbook (EMEW) v3.1 that includes updates to fix formatting bugs and align with recent TCEQ and EPA guidance. These new versions and more information are available on the [New Source Review Application Tools](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/guidance/newsourcereview/nsrapp-tools.html#emew) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/guidance/newsourcereview/nsrapp-tools.html#emew>). For questions, please contact ADMod@tceq.texas.gov.

For additional information, please visit the [Air Permitting](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/air_permits.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/air_permits.html), or contact the Air Permits Division at airperm@tceq.texas.gov or at 512-239-1250.

2026 Environmental Trade Fair and Conference (ETFC)

The ETFC will be held May 19 - 20, 2026, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. During the two-day ETFC, TCEQ will lead over 100 courses and discussions covering topics ranging from air and water permitting, oil and gas, industrial and solid waste management, compliance and enforcement, remediation programs and new initiatives happening in Texas.

The Henry B. Gonzalez Exhibit Hall will showcase over 300 companies excited to share their goods and services. TCEQ and Take Care of Texas booths will also be on the exhibitor floor.

For more information about ETFC, and to register, please visit the [ETFC](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html>).

Texas Environmental Excellence Awards (TEEA) and Banquet

TEEA is an annual awards program that honors achievements in environmental preservation and protection. There are ten diverse award categories that provide citizens, communities, businesses, and organizations an opportunity to obtain the state's highest environmental honor and be recognized for their environmental projects.

1. For information on TEEA winners and finalists or how to apply for next year, please visit the [TEEA](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/about-teea) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/about-teea>).

TCEQ is honored to host the TEEA on June 9, 2026, at the Bullock Texas State History Museum to recognize the TEEA winners and finalists. For more information, please visit the [TEEA Banquet](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/texas-environmental-excellence-awards-banquet) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/texas-environmental-excellence-awards-banquet>).

ITEM 2C. TERP Update (Ron Heiser, TERP)

An EPA update was delivered on the 2024 PM2.5 NAAQS reconsideration, including the administrator's March deregulatory announcement and the status of related litigation and agency filings. The update also covered the rescission of the 2009 greenhouse gas endangerment finding and repeal of greenhouse gas vehicle standards, and noted subsequent petitions for review. EPA is reconsidering the 2024 PM2.5 NAAQS following an administration announcement and subsequent litigation actions. Litigation has been filed challenging implementation and seeking vacatur of the 2024 PM2.5 NAAQS. EPA finalized rescission of the 2009 greenhouse gas endangerment finding and repealed greenhouse gas vehicle standards. Ron summarized TERP's recent program activity, noting the successful opening and closing of three grant programs this biennium and that the Clean School Bus program had closed. He reported unusually high registration for the Rebate Grants webinars, hitting Teams' 1,000-participant limit and prompting a second webinar, yielding over 1,800 registrants' total.

TERP has opened and closed three grant programs this biennium and recently held highly attended webinars for the Rebate Grants and eRig programs. Ron reported that both the Rebate Grants and eRig programs opened for online applications on April 29 and that the portal saw an overwhelming volume of applicants in the first hours, causing memory-related server failures that were resolved with IT support the same evening. He clarified program mechanics: the Rebate Grants Program is first-come, first-served for diesel equipment replacement in non-attainment and affected counties, while eRig is a smaller, competitive program for locomotives, marine vessels, and select stationary equipment. The Rebate Grants Program and eRig Program went live in the new online application portal on April 29 and experienced server overload from ~550-600 simultaneous applicants, requiring an IT memory increase to restore service.

The Rebate Grants Program is first-come, first-served for diesel equipment replacement in non-attainment and affected counties. The eRig program is a smaller competitive grant focused on locomotives, marine vessels, and select stationary equipment. Ron will follow up with the correct contact and details for the Regional Air Quality Research Support Program under the Regional Air Monitoring Program.

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update— (Vinny Polignano, H-GAC)

Vinny presented April monitoring results, explaining his method of using the mean of daily maximum eight-hour ozone concentrations across regulatory monitors and noting no ozone exceedance days YTD but that the season for exceedances was approaching. He highlighted Galveston 99th Street and Finnegan Park as high-value monitors, showed percent-

change and design-value trend charts, observed some upward PM2.5 trends especially at recently added monitors, and reported fewer “good” AQI days in April versus March. Vinny’s April monitoring report showed no ozone exceedances yet, identified Galveston 99th Street and Finnegan Park as high-value monitors, and noted some upward PM2.5 trends at newer monitors. Vinny will post monitoring presentations to the RACPAC webpage and is exploring inclusion of non-regulatory monitors in future updates.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. Clean Air Action Plan Update- (Pharr Andrews, H-GAC)

Pharr Andrews presented HGAC's Clean Air Action Plan, reviewed the launch activities and public-facing materials, and described the plan structure including an executive summary, ten sections, and a technical appendix. She outlined the plan's three central themes—health, environmental benefits, and economic benefits—and explained how prioritization focused on vulnerable populations to guide strategy selection. The presentation covered the expanded emissions inventories across 13 counties and the five sector opportunity menus aligned to the inventory plus the three-tier action levels for implementers. The Clean Air Action Plan was presented as a newly released regional plan, and resources were shared with attendees. The plan was officially released on Earth Day and launch materials included a press release, newsletter, social media, video, and a website. The project was funded through EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant with \$1 million awarded to HGAC. The plan emphasizes health, environmental, and economic benefits to justify emissions reductions. The plan includes expanded inventories covering greenhouse gases and additional pollutants across 13 counties. Community outreach informed the plan, yielding hundreds of survey responses and multiple engagement events. Strategies are organized into five sector-based opportunity menus to enable local adaptation. The framework defines three action levels—foundational, moderate, and high-impact—to help implementers scale over time. Regional emissions reduction targets were set at 8% by 2030, 24% by 2040, and 40% by 2050 for a voluntary plan. Progress will be tracked with ClearPath and public website updates, and the plan is intended to be a living document. An EPA status report is due in 2027 as part of the project's deliverables.

ITEM 4B. World Cup Commute Reduction Efforts- (Robyn Egbert, H-GAC)

Robyn Egbert presented on how the 2026 FIFA World Cup will intensify Houston’s already severe traffic congestion and air quality challenges, particularly with seven matches, Fan Fest activities, concerts, conferences, and other concurrent events occurring over a 39-day period. She explained that regional congestion now exceeds prepandemic levels, with traffic spreading into nontraditional peak hours, contributing significantly to ozone pollution. Drawing on lessons from past mega-events such as the 1996 Summer Olympics and recent FIFA tournaments, she emphasized the importance of travel demand management strategies such as telework, transit, vanpools, park and ride services, and flexible work schedules to reduce emissions and minimize business disruption. The presentation highlighted traffic modeling data identifying major bottlenecks and key corridors expected to experience substantial increases in congestion, while also outlining H-GAC’s employer toolkits, transit resources, commuter planning website, and expanded shuttle partnerships designed to help residents, employers, and visitors navigate Houston efficiently and participate in World Cup activities sustainably.

ITEM 4C. Regional Transit Projects Update- (Kareem Heshmat, H-GAC)

The meeting reviewed progress on regional transit coordination and municipal microtransit pilots, focusing on ridership recovery, service gaps, and preliminary emissions analysis for a local on-demand service. The team presented ridership recovery across 11 agencies and detailed the Sugar Land curb-to-curb electric microtransit pilot, including the pilot-to-expansion approach and results from an emissions-reduction analysis that used a CMAQ calculator post-processor combining carpool and vanpool modules to produce pollutant totals. Attendees noted coordination with counties and TxDOT to align regional recommendations with county strategic plans and flagged an upcoming briefing with the Texas Transportation Institute on the plan.

H-GAC INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A. H-GAC Update (Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC)

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Andrew Shared that he is proud of the air quality work they've accomplished this year and noted that he will provide a more detailed overview during his presentation next month. Also, he highlighted that several exciting developments and initiatives are currently underway, with more updates to come as progress continues.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A. Updates from Members

Participants shared thanks and brief updates, including a preview of the air quality program planned for a future meeting, as well as a membership update regarding Dr. Babin's retirement and interim representation.

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: May 28, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 A.M.