

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Subcommittee Meeting**

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Online Meeting\Conference Call

Wednesday January 12, 2022

1:30 PM

AGENDA

1. **Subcommittee Roll Call**
2. **Previous Meeting Summary** (*A summary of the December 2021 Meeting is Posted on H-GAC Website*)
4. **2022 TIP\RTP Amendment Schedule**
Staff will highlight the 2022 TIP\RTP amendment schedule and highlight critical deadlines for amendment requests
5. **Congestion Management Process (CMP) Update**
Staff will provide an update on the development of the next Congestion Management Process update effort.
6. **Approval of the Rural Funding Allocation and Call for Project Development Update**
Staff will seek the Subcommittee's recommendation on the Rural Funding Allocation and present the final elements of the next call for projects.
7. **Comments and Discussion.**
Open comment and discussion from TIP Subcommittee members and the general audience.
8. **Announcements**
 - TAC Meeting – January 19, 2022, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
 - TPC Meeting – January 28, 2022, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
 - TIP Subcommittee Meeting – February 2, 2022, 1:30 p.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
9. **Adjourn**

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, January 12, 2022 – 1:30pm
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Online Meeting (Teams Platform)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christopher Sims – City of League City
Frank Simoneaux – City of Baytown
Loyd Smith – Harris County
Monique Johnson – City of Sugarland
Shashi Kumar – City of Missouri City
Yancy Scott – Waller County
Sherry Weesner – TIRZ 5/Memorial Heights
Bruce Mann – Port Houston
Andy Mao – TxDOT-HOU
Scott Ayres – TxDOT-BMT
Clint Herbert – METRO
Ken Fickes – Harris County

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Natalie G. Lopez – Chambers County
Ricardo Villagrand– City of Mont Belvieu
Krystal Lastrape – City of Sugarland
Trent Epperson – City of Pearland
Todd Hoover – City of Missouri City
Perri D'Armond– Fort Bend County
David Wurdlow – City of Houston-PW
Jon Branson – City of Texas City
Alan Clark – METRO
Vernon Chambers – Harris County

Item 1: Subcommittee Roll Call

The meeting started with a roll call to determine the members and/or alternatives present.

Item 2: Previous Meeting Summary

Members were encouraged to review the December 2021 meeting summary posted on the H-GAC Website and to forward any revisions to staff.

Item 4: 2022 TIP\RTP Amendment Schedule

Adam Beckom previewed the 2022 TIP\RTP amendment schedule, emphasizing that the schedule was created to manage the amendment process on a monthly basis. He described the requirements and timelines for administrative amendments, amendments requiring TAC\TPC action, TXDOT STIP revisions, and for FHWA\FTA approval. Adam advised project sponsors to be cognizant of the request deadlines to ensure their proposed amendments were submitted in a timely fashion. The 2022 TIP\RTP Amendment Schedule is available on the H-GAC website at:

<https://www.h-gac.com/getmedia/8f35eae2-4595-478e-9b8e-7a404fb3b01b/H-GAC-TIP-Schedule>

Item 5: Congestion Management Process (CMP) Update

Jamila Owens provided an update on the Congestion Management Process (CMP), describing it as an integral part of the transportation planning process that is aligned with the Regional Transportation Plan and tied into the development of the Transportation Improvement Plan. The last CMP update for the H-GAC region was recently completed in FY 2021. Jamila's presentation covered the fundamentals of the CMP development process and highlighted the strategies selected to address congestion within the Houston metropolitan region. Notably, the FY 2021 CMP update was the first time that Freight issues were considered as a strategy to manage congestion.

Continuous updates will be made to the CMP in FY 2022 with the upcoming assessments of the status of troubled corridors, the evaluation of the success of the congestion management strategies currently being employed, and an examination of the performance measures across the entire CMP network.

Item 6: Approval of the Rural Funding Allocation and Call for Project Development Update

Vishu Lingala gave the presentation on these agenda items:

a. Approval of the Rural Funding Allocation [Action Item]:

The lack of geographic equity in the projects selected for federal funding during the 2018 Call for Projects has been identified as a concern. To encourage geographic equity going forward, staff are advocating the institution of a "Rural Funding Allocation" plan based on the adjusted urbanized area map. Under this proposal, at least 9% of the total available federal funds will be devoted solely to projects within the rural areas. The floor of 9% is not arbitrary but represents the funding allocations to rural areas in the 2018 call for projects.

To qualify for the rural funding program, candidate projects must meet minimum point requirements (details yet to be decided). Eligible agencies will be permitted to assign "boost" points to one or more high priority projects to improve their chances of being selected for funding. In the interest of fairness, rural projects will be compared only against other rural projects in the selection process.

Action Requested: That the TIP Subcommittee authorize a recommendation to TAC and TPC to allocate 9% of the total funding to projects in the rural areas and approve the use of "boost" points by eligible stakeholders.

[Motion Passes]

b. Call for Projects Update:

The update on the Call for Projects touched upon the US DOT guidance memorandum on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, a summary of the Proposed Funding Allocation across the different investment categories, and a breakdown of the roadway/freight projects planning factor scores.

- A December 16, 2021 memorandum from the US DOT offers preliminary guidance on provisions of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and describes a policy framework for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and State Transportation Departments (SDOTs) towards building a better America; utilizing resources that will be made available by the BIL. To this end, the BIL creates additional funding streams by: (1) expanding the list of roadways eligible for legacy programs such as STBG, CMAQ, and TASA, and (2) instituting new formula-based and discretionary grant programs. Notably, the new policy prioritizes projects that move more people and freight by modernizing and increasing the operational efficiency of existing roads and highways over projects that expand the general-purpose capacity of roads and highways.

The DOT guidance encourages MPOs and SDOTs to focus on investments that can be delivered rapidly (especially through a streamlined NEPA process) and promote safety. The guidance also instructs MPOs and SDOTs to consider transportation investments based on asset condition and need for modernization; improve network accessibility for disabled users; expand multi-modal choice; accommodate new and emerging technologies; prioritize a sustainable transportation system that is resilient to climate change; and embrace equity in their transportation decision making – all of which are in keeping with the objectives of building a better America.

The US DOT memorandum is available online at: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/building_a_better_america-policy_framework.cfm

- Vishu also described the proposed funding allocation for the list of investment categories consisting of:
 - The Rural Funding Allocation;
 - Major Investments;
 - Expand (Roadway\Freight & Transit);
 - Manage (Roadway\Freight & Transit);
 - Maintain (Roadway\Freight & Transit);
 - Active Transportation; and
 - Remainder (allocated among rural, manage, maintain, and active transportation - floor).

The presentation noted the proposed BCA/Planning scoring and discussed an analysis of the allocation of scored points and the relative distribution of the total available funds for each investment category.

- Vishu ended the Call for Projects update by presenting a table of proposed planning factor scores for the different evaluation criteria of roadway/freight projects grouped by investment category. A project scoring example will be provided to the subcommittee at a future meeting.

Item 7: Comments and Discussion

Questions\Comments raised for consideration:

- If exceptions are being carved out for specific programs, freight should be given consideration as an important driver of the regional economy. Some priority freight projects have not been selected in the past. We should take a look at how we could improve the outcome of some of the freight projects in this process.
- Will there be an opportunity to further discuss the planning criteria for urban-suburban and rural areas once the boundaries for those areas are approved?
- Who are the “eligible local agencies”? Is this based on size or TPC membership?
- What are the pros and cons of using “Floors” and “Caps” in the allocation of funding, and could ranges be a possible alternative?
- What would be the sequence for distributing available funds in light of the floors and caps?
- “Target percentages” may be a preferred solution as they would be less problematic than caps and floors and would grant more flexibility. Reference to the decisions from previous calls would be instructive in deciding the new targets.
- How do we treat or fund a major investment project that is located within a rural area?
- The US DOT is encouraging multi-modal service but have historically resisted mixing and matching federal funds from different sources.
- Thought should be given to the impact of greenhouse gases in the planning process considering that climate change is one of the concerns of the Biden administration.

Item 8: Announcements

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- TPC Meeting – January 28, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
- TIP Subcommittee Meeting – February 2, 2022, 1:30 p.m., Teleconference (Zoom)

Item 9 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.