

Transportation Policy Council

November 21, 2025

Good morning Chair and members of the TPC. My name is Alexander Spike, I am with Air Alliance Houston. Air Alliance Houston is committed to one mission: reducing the public health harms of air pollution. I'm speaking today to express deep concern over the removal of Environmental, Planning, and Citizen stakeholder representation from the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Environmental, planning, and citizen representatives provide critical insight into how transportation decisions affect driving, biking, walking, transit access, municipal/regional solvency, safety, and air quality across our region. Their work has directly strengthened HGAC initiatives. For example, partnerships between community groups, AARP, and the Bike/Ped Subcommittee produced automated walk-audit tools used along Washington Avenue, Montrose Boulevard, Richmond Avenue, and most recently in Fort Bend County. These efforts have improved sidewalk documentation, accessibility assessments, and public engagement, and they have even attracted interest from other MPOs wishing to replicate this model.

Excluding these perspectives risks weaker project design, reduced safety for children, seniors, and people with disabilities, and potential misdirection of public funds. Billions of dollars in funding to our MPO were held up in 2024-2025 due to this region's inability to attain/meet EPA air quality standards (Ozone and PM 2.5 Particulate Matter). The poor air quality is a result of inadequate transportation/traffic planning, resulting in greater pollution from vehicles. If these seats cannot be restored, I urge you to at least consider establishing a dedicated committee for Citizen, Planning, and Environmental interests, or adding voting representatives from TAC subcommittees. I strongly recommend reinstating these stakeholder positions. If resident interests are not at the table, they will be on the menu. Thank you,

Alexander Spike
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November 20th, 2025
Transportation Policy Council (TPC)
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Ln #100
Houston, TX 77027

**Re: TAC Bylaws must preserve roles that bring technical expertise
Honorable Members of the Transportation Policy Council:**

The Coalition for Environment, Equity, and Resilience (CEER) is a coalition of organizations working to advance equitable, transparent, and climate-resilient decision-making across our region. Our work centers on protecting communities from environmental harm, improving public health, and ensuring that public investments benefit those most impacted by pollution, flooding, and displacement. Because transportation planning intersects with all of these issues, CEER places strong value on the role of the Transportation Advisory Committee.

The TAC's work directly influences how transportation projects shape air quality, watershed health, land use patterns, and neighborhood safety. For this reason, it is essential that the committee continue to include a wide range of technical expertise. Our region is facing complex, overlapping challenges from worsening air pollution, to major flood events, to rapid infrastructure expansion, and the decisions made at TAC will determine whether these challenges are addressed or amplified. Insights from environmental practitioners, transit experts, resilience specialists, and community-focused professionals are necessary for planning that truly reflects the realities people are experiencing on the ground.

As metropolitan planning organizations are required to evaluate transportation decisions holistically, it is more important than ever that TAC membership reflects expertise in areas such as clean air compliance, watershed protection, sustainable land use, climate preparedness, and community health. These perspectives are especially critical in a region still grappling with the long-term impacts of disasters like Hurricane Harvey and the ongoing pressures facing frontline neighborhoods.

Historically, diverse representation on the TAC has strengthened continuity, improved transparency, and ensured that regional planning is informed by technical knowledge beyond municipal boundaries. Preserving and formalizing this diversity is vital to building a transportation system that supports a healthier, safer, and more resilient region.

For these reasons, CEER urges that the Transportation Advisory Committee bylaws preserve dedicated seats for experts in public transit, active transportation, environmental protection, resilience, and community impact. Ensuring these perspectives remain at the table will strengthen regional planning and help the committee make decisions that reflect the real needs and risks our communities face.

Sincerely,
Stephany A. Valdez
Water Justice Organizer

November 19, 2025

Transportation Policy Council (TPC)
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Ln #100
Houston, TX 77027

Re: TAC Bylaws must preserve roles that bring technical expertise

Honorable Members of the Transportation Policy Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed bylaws for the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

The TAC has a formidable charge: to make technical recommendations for effective transportation policy and funding for our massive and diverse region. The challenges we face demand we recruit and leverage all of the help we can get. For decades, the TAC has benefited from the expertise of its diverse membership – not only staff from public agencies, but also subject matter leaders who represent the broad spectrum of users and stakeholders of our region's transportation system. In fact, this body was previously known as the *Technical* Advisory Committee, and with good reason.

We urge you to ensure the TAC bylaws preserve inclusion of a wide range of technical expertise. H-GAC – like all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) – was created with a federal mandate to ensure that transportation policy decisions are considered holistically. As our transportation systems grew more complex, federal law required MPOs to consider additional factors like air quality, safety, accessibility for people with disabilities, and the interplay of all modes including walking, biking, and public transit. Additionally, in the wake of environmental challenges like catastrophic flooding, this body can benefit from the insights of resilience advocates, as well. H-GAC depends on all of the technical expertise provided by the diverse membership of the TAC to carry out its mandated responsibilities. Historically, these members of the TAC sometimes provide essential continuity of leadership when turnover changes local agency staff roles, as well. We urge the Transportation Policy Council to ensure the TAC bylaws include dedicated seats for active transportation, public transportation, environmental, citizen, and business interests who bring much-needed expertise and perspective.

Finally, on a personal note, over 20+ years as a multimodal transportation advocate, I have observed many TAC and TPC meetings. I have observed the wide variety of leaders who have held these roles over the years, and I appreciate the insights and wisdom they bring. Just as local project sponsors bring unique insights rooted in project development, advocates can bring a regional perspective that complements and balances local agency interests. This perspective is vital to our region's future.

Thanks for your consideration,
Robin Holzer
Executive Director

