

APPENDIX 15
Public Comment Process

The following announcement was posted to the H-GAC website on May 2, 2022.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

Public Comment Period and Public Meetings

Transportation Conformity Determination for amendments to the 2045 RTP and 2021-2024 TIP

- **Public Comment Period:**
~ Monday, May 2, 2022--Friday, June 3, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.
- **Virtual Public Meetings:**
~ Monday, May 9, 2022: 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
~ Location: Virtual meetings.

Written Comments:

- ~ Transportation Public Information, H-GAC, P.O. Box 22777, Houston, TX 77227-2777
- ~ Emailed to: publiccomments@h-gac.com
- ~ Faxed to 713-993-4508

More information: <https://www.h-gac.com/transportation-conformity/2022>

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, H-GAC will provide for reasonable accommodations for

Two virtual public air quality conformity meetings were held, at H-GACs 3555 Timmons Lane offices, on May 9, 2022 (1:30 pm and 5:30 pm); interpreters (Spanish, ASL) were available during both. The two meetings followed a similar format:

- Welcome by Chris van Slyke, Manager, Travel Demand Modeling, H-GAC
- Presentation by Graciela Lubertino, Principal Data Analyst, H-GAC
- Q/A and Exit Survey

During the presentation, Dr. Lubertino used a slide deck (attached) that included the following:

- H-GAC and her size
- The long-term (20-yr.) Transportation Plan for the region called Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Short-term (4-yr.) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Both plans need to be fiscally constrained
- Air Quality Status of our MPO region
- What's Conformity? Why Conformity?
- Emission budgets for our MPO region
- Reasons for Conformity Determination
- Amendments to 2045 RTP and 2021-2024 TIP (List of most significant roadway projects.)
- Conformity Requirements
- The years selected for this year Conformity calculation:
 - 2020 for attainment years 2008 and 2015 8-hr Ozone standard
 - 2030, 2040 intermediate years because according to the conformity rules, the conformity calculation cannot be more than 10-yrs. apart and

- 2045 which is the horizon year
- Air Quality Model used – EPA MOVES2014b
- Air Quality Conformity results
- Proposed Timeline
- How to submit public comments (email, phone)

While there were no questions or comments during the first public meeting, two questions were asked and answered during the second public meeting:

Questions (Melisa): For the data (the new planning assumptions) that are included in the model, is the average new traffic counts included?

Answer (H-GAC): Yes, the vehicle miles traveled is validated using the traffic counts.

Question (Melisa): I am a little new to the national air quality state implementation plan, do you know how to be a little more involved in it because I don't understand how we could be doing so many expansions and putting more cars on the roads and still conforming to the emission budgets. And also, why our emission budgets are so high?

Answer (H-GAC): The emission budgets used in this conformity are coming from the Reasonable Further Progress (RFP) State Implementation Plan (SIP). There are two air quality plans, the Attainment Demonstration (AD) SIP and RFP SIP. The AD plan needs to show attainment and as a consequence the emission budgets coming from it are more stringent. The RFP plan only needs to show progress in the right direction, and as a consequence its emission budgets are higher. EPA did not approve the AD plan because by the time of approval the readings in the air quality monitors were already showing that our region was not going to attain the air quality standard. Therefore, EPA only approved the emission budgets coming from the RFP SIP.

A total of 22 people attended the two virtual public meetings. At the first meeting there were nine (9) staff and four (4) public; at the second meeting there were seven (7) staff and two (2) public. No written comments were received during the comment period.