

7. CONFORMITY AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) 2045 PROJECT LISTING

BACKGROUND

H-GAC is required to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amendments are consistent with the region's air quality goals. This determination is referred to as Air Quality Conformity and involves the modeling of emissions produced by vehicles within the eight-county Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Nonattainment Area to comply with and conform to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Within the NAAQS, the metropolitan planning area is classified as "severe" for the 2008 8-hr ozone standard and as "serious" for the 2015 8-hr ozone standard. Due to these non-attainment designations, all regionally significant projects, regardless of funding source, must be considered in this analysis and found to conform before federal actions related to the projects can be made. These actions include but are not limited to funding obligations, releases for rights-of-way acquisition or final design, and approvals of environmental documents and permits.

In addition, recipients of federal-aid highway and federal transit funds, including local governments and other public agencies, are required to ensure that regionally significant projects which do not use federal funds also satisfy conformity requirements (40 CFR § 93.121).

To accommodate changes to project lists, project scopes, and project schedules, new conformity analyses are periodically performed as needed.

CURRENT SITUATION

MPO staff have prepared a new conformity determination to support project list updates for the 2045 RTP Update and 2025-2028 TIP. This conformity will demonstrate that this new project list is compliant with the latest emission budgets based as presented in the most recent Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plan submittals by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

The draft results of this conformity determination demonstrate that the *2045 RTP Update and the 2025-2028 TIP* meet the requirements of the air quality SIPs for the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria ozone non-attainment area and are in accordance with the Clean Air Act, as amended on November 15, 1990, and the final conformity rule (40 CFR Parts 51 and 93).

The draft conformity documentation can be found at the following link:

<https://www.h-gac.com/transportation-conformity/2025>. Additionally, MPO staff are accepting public comments on conformity documentation throughout September.

ACTION

Information only.