

10. PROGRAMMED PROJECT MILESTONE POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) directs the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to monitor, track and report to the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) and Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) the delivery status of projects included in the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). As such, H-GAC conducts quarterly meetings with all local government sponsors with projects included in the TIP.

For the past 3 years, H-GAC staff has conducted quarterly meetings with local government sponsors in which projects* programmed in the 4-year TIP are monitored for critical path milestones throughout the project development (engineering and environmental) process.

In 2023, H-GAC staff focused the TIP quarterly meetings on projects programmed in the near-term years (FYs 2023 and 2024). Of the \$525M (34 projects) programmed in FY 2023, H-GAC staff recommended (and TAC/TPC approved) \$350M (12 projects) shift to more realistic let dates. This effort allowed H-GAC staff to better understand the carryover balances in Category 5 (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Funds) and Category 7 (Surface Transportation Block Grant Program) Funds. Additionally, this effort assisted H-GAC to more acutely assess available balances in the MPO's planning and programming documents (TIP, 10-Year Plan and Regional Transportation Plan).

In 2024 and 2025, H-GAC staff focused the TIP quarterly meetings on projects programmed between FY 2024-2028. In October 2024, H-GAC staff recommended (and TAC/TPC approved) \$625M (16 projects) programmed between 2024-2028 shift to more realistic let dates. In February 2025 H-GAC staff presented (to be brought back in the coming months for TAC/TPC action) another \$350M (7 of projects) shift to more realistic FYs. This effort continued to assist H-GAC staff in assessing available balances in the MPO's planning and programming documents.

With the project "shifts" over the past 3 years (as described above), the TIP will be accurately programmed. H-GAC will continue to monitor project development milestones of all projects in the TIP closely (through detailed quarterly meetings) and recommend additional shifts and amendments as determined needed.

CURRENT SITUATION

At the February meeting, the TPC directed H-GAC staff to work with the TAC to create a policy to prevent projects from becoming stagnant within the MPO's planning and programming documents. The stagnation of projects creates high carryover balances, inability to estimate upcoming carryover balances (resulting from projects not letting on time), inability to accurately program projects (because there is not a clear understanding of the available balances per FY) as well extra work for H-GAC staff, TxDOT, TAC and TPC members (due to the continual "rolling" the projects from one year to the next via amendments). H-GAC staff will discuss options for this policy at the March TAC meeting for feedback.

ACTION REQUESTED

For information only.

[†] Cat 5 (CMAQ), Cat 7 (STBG), Cat 9 (TASA) and Cat 10 (CRP)

[†] Federal amount only hereinafter

* Costs hereinafter are estimated