

TRANSPORTATION AIR QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, August 12, 2020 – 10:00 A. M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council of Government Offices
Virtual Teams Meeting

MEMBER PRESENT

Fort Bend Transit – Perri D’ Armond
Air Alliance Houston – Bakeyah Nelson
CEE&R– Delia Gonzalez
The Woodlands Township – Todd Stephens
TCEQ – Jamie Zech
Greater Cleveland Chamber of Commerce– Melissa Lanier
City of Houston – Maureen Crocker
EVolue Houston – Chris George
TAG Houston – Andrea French
Houston ISD – John M. Wilcots
TXDOT – Charles Airiohuodion
Metro – David McMaster
Harris County Transit – Ken Fickes
H-GAC – Andrew DeCandis
H-GAC – Susan Jaworski

ALTERNATE PRESENT

City of Sugarland – Shahid Ali
Harris County Transit – Vernon Chambers
Houston ISD – Nicole S. Ware
TCEQ – Michael Regan
Houston Advance Research Center – Mustapha Beydoun
CenterPoint Energy – Michael Conklin
Port Houston – Kelli Gallagher
H-GAC – Veronica Green

STAFF PRESENT

Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carrie Evans
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Adam Beckom
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Christopher Whaley
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Jamila Owens
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Thomas Gray
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Patrick Mandapaka
Houston-Galveston Area Council – Deborah Mayfield

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. The TAQ Subcommittee Members and Alternates were presented with actions items; discussion items were presented; and the meeting concluded with no agency reports or member announcements.
- b. Visit <http://www.h-gac.com/taq/transportation-committees/TAC/transportation-air-quality-subcommittee/agendas.aspx> to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM 1A. Introductions

Perri D’ Armond, Chair, called the meeting to order members and alternates introduced themselves.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summaries (04-16-2020)

Meeting minutes were approved.

ITEM 2A. Introduction to the Transportation & Air Quality Subcommittee (Andrew DeCandis)

Andrew DeCandis gave an overview for the subcommittee members to understand how Transportation Air Quality assist TAC on air quality related issues that may be important for their work. With regards to Houston region being a non-attainment region for ozone and has been for quite a long time. This is a very important subject and there are a lot of issues that come up. To mention a few, TAQ assist with identification analysis and development of cost effective emission reduction strategies within the region, idle reduction CMAQ funded projects, projects that we acquire for the improvement of air quality, as well as in house projects that are funded and handled by H-GAC, TAC, and TPC. Typically, these projects are dependent on transportation control measures and voluntary mobile source and emission control CMAQ. Currently, there are no commitments. Should that change, the TAQ subcommittee would be involved with those efforts.

Additionally, TAQ, join forces with Travel Demand Management to implement new or existing projects. As well as, provide TIP better understanding of the cost effectiveness of our program within the region. Each group will give a presentation today for the members to have a better understanding of their involvement.

ACTIONS ITEMS

ITEM 3A. Election of Officers (Chairman Perri D’ Armond)

The committee members voted and approved the new TAQ officers:

TITLE	2020-21 MEMBER
Chair	David McMaster
Vice-Chair	Andrea French

ITEM 3B. CMAQ on Road Mobile Emissions Performance Measure: Biennial Performance Report (Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC)

Andrew gave an update on the CMAQ performance measure report to the committee. This has been an ongoing discussion with TAC and TPC for several months. A lot of work has been done on this with hopes of the committee approval to move this forward to TAC. Performance measures is a task that was assigned to the MPO’s as part of the last transportation act in 2015. It was intended to facilitate performance based planning using federal funds and there are a lot of these performance measures. To name a few, CMAQ emission reduction, pavement and ridge conditions safety.

The discussion continued with the process that begin two years ago that involved working with partners at TXDOT and MPO’s with in the state to put together two- and four-year targets for emission reduction as a result of CMAQ funding. In 2018, a joint procedure was put together with TXDOT, NCTCOG, and MPO’S. The plan that was initiated allowed a four-year average of CMAQ emission reduction to take past performance to predict future performance going out to 2019 through 2022 and use this to level out any fluctuation in projects and charges. A lot of this, was exercised to make sure everything in the federal system matched what we had. In the same way, those four years of data from 2014 through 2017 to develop a two and four estimate moving forward. This was the plan. But based on internal exceptions, we opted for alternative procedures. After carefully reviewing TIP from 2019 through 2022, everything met the necessary qualifications and not a lot of change needed. Therefore, the decision was made to use our actual TIP emission estimates for the next four-year targets. In doing so, it didn’t quite work out.

Moving forward, for two-year target 2019 through 2020 state added NOX reductions as well as VOC. Then the four-year target everything was added from 2019 through 2022 and reviewed. It was approved by TPC in September 2018. Then sent to TXDOT by the deadline of October 1, 2018. Once reviewed, recommendation was made for additional guidance. Based on the changes from the guidance, indication was noted, instead of using 2019-2022, we should have used 2018 -2021 as our tax year. Moreover, the decision was made to move forward with the four-year progress and use the 2018-2021 timeframe, this will show a reflection of our initial calculations for the two years.

Continued discussions on the issues surrounding using direct accounting left us open for problems. As well as changes in the CMAQ category seven funding and SEP timing change.

Finally, we intend to report progress towards meeting the two-year target, which we will come short of meeting our initial two-year target. Because of this, the four-year target will be revised to meet both what we expect, and the new

methodology standard is a better method than we had before. The goal is to send all of this to TXDOT by October 1, 2020.

After careful discussion the committee members voted and approved to send the report to TAC.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. Project Programming & Delivery Group Update (Adam Beckom)

Adam Beckom gave an overview to the members on transportation development credits (TDC'S) which are credits not dollars. These are earned when the state or toll authority within that jurisdiction spends money on the public highway system. The credits are housed at the state and the MPO'S are awarded a portion of TDC'S. Currently, our region has one million TDC'S. This will allow our region to forgo a local cash match. Therefore, as projects are funded through an 80/20 split. Eighty percent comes from federal funds and twenty percent comes from the local project sponsor. TDC's allows the project to be 100% covered federally. This way is very cost effective especially when funds are limited.

Discussion continued that TDC'S can assist to advance TPC strategies and programs. Back in 2013, the last policy was completed. Currently, we are proposing to update that policy to better reflect the way we are using TDC'S. Primarily, TDC'S are used for transit programs & projects, and studies. With that being said, we want to include in the policy be exchanged for cash to create a regional transportation fund to help fund projects that don't meet the federal requirement.

Within this process, we are also trying to introduce to TAC & TPC the creation of Regional Strategic Transportation fund. The purpose would be to assist with projects that are in rural areas, as well as maintenance and presentation type projects in the small urban areas. This fund would essentially be created if the sponsors are willing to participate in a funding swap. A portion is swapped out of the local match and placed into a regional strategic transportation fund and then the project is 100% federally funded.

ITEM 4B. Overview: Development of Project Evaluation Criteria (Adam Beckom)

The committee discussed calls for project that started in 2018 and completed in March of 2019 projects to be funded with federal funds within the region. During this time, TPC established a project authority work group. The group met over the fall of 2019 and established some guidance that we are now using to develop our project development criteria.

The proposed guidance for the TIP Subcommittee to minimize the thirteen categories into five categories. Then the next factor to be considered, benefit cost analysis of the project scoring 2018 call we had a 50 percent setup, which looked at safety benefits, emission reduction, and congestion delay/delay reductions. This makes up half your score, the other half is based on planning factor, and connectivity environmental justice.

Discussion continued with proposing a better line up with the priorities of the TPC. They would like to add a gradient in the benefit cost analysis. For this, everything except for the active transportation. For the major investment manage category, maintain and expand categories of projects, because safety is such a big factor. With the fifty percent which would be mainly on the safety benefit. With delay and emission reduction going in at thirty percent. Also, add twenty percent to get you to that score. Which that would be combined with your planning factors and bring you to a total score.

Some other factors to consider, health impacts of active transportation and how can we combine this into benefit cost analysis. For starters, reaching out to the work group for how we can incorporate the ideas into this. Also, specifically looking at how we can maximize our efforts to finalize the categories down to five. In order to do so, we have to continue or benefits cost analysis review. As well as, soliciting comments from all sub-committees.

ITEM 4C. Travel Demand Management (Deborah Mayfield)

Deborah gave an overview to the committee how commute solutions build partnerships with agencies and employers within the region to better educate and reach out about choosing clean options for transportation. As well as, assist businesses with options to get their commuters to work and school in a smarter way. The components that put the factors into existence are:

- Active Transportation-bike & pedestrian
- Transit Planning-bus/rail
- Commute Solution-education outreach plus vanpool, carpool, & telework services/alternate work hours

Within these factors, people are able to alternate their modes of travel in order to minimize congestion on our highways and to improve air quality. Also, other factors are being considered now that COVID has happened. To mention a few, compressed work week and staggered work hours. This will reduce vehicle miles traveled so people are driving fewer days within the week and maybe working longer hours.

Discussion continued with other efforts made from commute solution to conduct educational webinars and events for commuters. This is put together to assist agencies and employers with their site-based travel demand planning, site based telework and training. Also, the training will include commuter surveys, employer surveys and based on the performances of the employer, we can provide a customized plan to see if we can shift commuter behavior at that work site.

Commute solution partnership is absolutely free. It cost nothing to gain a whole lot.

OTHER BUSINESS

no announcements

Next meeting: October 07, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:43 A.M.