

7. UPDATE ON TRANSPORTATION AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS

Background

H-GAC is required to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amendments thereto 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 8-county Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Nonattainment Area.

All regionally significant projects, regardless of funding source, must be considered in this analysis and found to conform to these air quality targets before federal actions related to the projects can be taken. 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 regionally significant projects which do not use federal funds satisfy conformity requirements (40 CFR § 93.121).

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

Current Situation

The transportation conformity determination for the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and 2019-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) received federal approval on August 2, 2019. Since that time H-GAC has taken action to amend the 2045 RTP and 2021-2024 (TIP). These significant project changes will require a new demonstration of air quality conformity. TxDOT is requesting the following amendments to the RTP:

- a. Reconstruct and widen San Jacinto river bridge on IH 10 E
- b. Reconstruct Houston Ship Channel Bridge on IH 610 E
- c. Reconstruct IH 610 S between SH 35 (Mykawa Rd/SS 5) and SH 288 and IH 610 direct connectors at SH 35 (Mykawa Rd/SS 5)
- d. Widen Grand Parkway (SH 99) by adding Segments E and F.
- e. Reconstruct and Widen Beltway 8 (BW 8) frontage roads between E of Hardy Toll Rd to E of Aldine Westfield Rd
- f. Convert SH 288 to Freeway between future SH 99 to FM 1452
- g. Advance the IH 45 N interchange change at IH 10 W reconstruction and addition of IH 10 express lanes and IH 45 managed lanes part of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) Segment 3 project to FY 2024.

In accordance with 23 CFR§450.324 all projects are constrained by the financial resources estimated to be reasonably available within the RTP timeframe. A complete listing of the

projects in the RTP and TIP that affect this conformity analysis will be included in Appendix 3 of the conformity report.

Currently, our region is in non-attainment for two ozone standards:

- 2008 8-hr ozone standard (75 ppb) with classification of “serious”
- 2015 8-hr ozone standard (70 ppb) with classification of “marginal”

This conformity will demonstrate compliance to the latest emission budgets based on the revision to the air quality State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the 2008 8-hr Ozone Standard due to the reclassification from moderate to serious with attainment year 2020. The Reasonable Further Progress (RFP) SIP budget was found adequate by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with an approval and effective date of June 9, 2021.

Air Quality Analysis Results

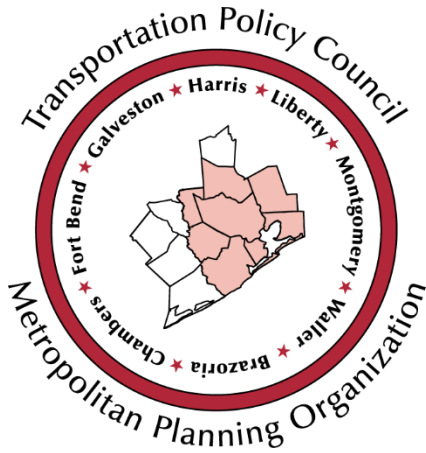
Year	NOx Budget (tons/day)	NOx Emissions (tons/day)	VOC Budget (tons/day)	VOC Emissions (tons/day)	VMT (Daily)
2020	87.69	77.00 ✓	57.70	51.59 ✓	187.7M
2030	87.69	43.71 ✓	57.70	33.41 ✓	228.9M
2040	87.69	38.15 ✓	57.70	25.05 ✓	268.6M
2045	87.69	40.42 ✓	57.70	25.63 ✓	286.7M

Conformity Timeline

- November 17, 2021: Pre-Consensus Conference Call/TAC and TPC announcement to continue Conformity
- November/December 2021: Model Network review (H-GAC/TxDOT/METRO)
- November/December 2021: Pre-Analysis Consensus document review
- February 2022: Travel Demand Model Runs
- March 2022: Air Quality Conformity Model Runs
- April 2022: TAC/TPC Conformity Preview for Amendments to the RTP and TIP
- May 2022: Public comment period – May 2nd-June 3rd, 2022
- May 2022: Public meetings – May 9th, 2022
- May/June 2022: No Public Comments Received
- June 2022: TAC Recommend Conformity approval to TPC
- June 2022: TPC Approves Conformity
- End of June 2022: Request Partner Review/Approval -- Approval will usually be 3 months after.

Action Requested

Request TPC approval of resolution 2022-24.



Resolution

No. 2022-24

ADOPTING THE 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND CERTIFYING ITS CONFORMITY WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND FEDERAL PLANNING AND AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS.

WHEREAS, the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the eight-county Houston-Galveston Metropolitan Planning Area by the Governor of Texas in accordance with federal law; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Area includes all of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller Counties; and,

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Council (TPC), comprised primarily of local elected officials, is the regional transportation policy body associated with the H-GAC and continues to be the regional forum for cooperative decisions on transportation; and,

WHEREAS, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) assigns the MPO the responsibility for developing and maintaining the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program and their periodic updates; and,

WHEREAS, the IIJA requires the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program include a financial plan to demonstrate the consistency of proposed transportation investments with available and projected sources of revenue; and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program were developed using the most recent federal guidance and applicable regulations; and,

WHEREAS, the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was developed in cooperation with local governments, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), and other transportation agencies; and,

WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898 mandate nondiscrimination and analysis of impacts to protected populations for all federally funded projects; and,

WHEREAS, the IJA assigns the MPO the responsibility for carrying out the transportation conformity process, in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services; and,

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated an eight-county area coterminous with the Metropolitan Planning Area as serious nonattainment under the 2008 8-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for the pollutant ozone, effective June 9, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the EPA has designated a six-county area coterminous with the Metropolitan Planning Area as marginal nonattainment under the 2015 8-hour NAAQS for the pollutant ozone, effective August 3, 2018; and,

WHEREAS, technical analysis has determined the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan conforms to motor vehicle emissions budgets contained in *Revisions to the State Implementation Plan for the Control of Ozone Air Pollution, Houston/Galveston/Brazoria Ozone Nonattainment Area*; and,

WHEREAS, expeditious implementation of the transportation control measures identified in the applicable State Implementation Plan has been accomplished and documented; and

WHEREAS, the IJA and Clean Air Act regulations require information regarding the development of the RTP and the transportation conformity analysis be available for public comment according to the adopted MPO public participation plan; and,

WHEREAS, the transportation facilities, services and projects recommended in the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan have been made available to the public in compliance with H-GAC's *Public Participation Plan*.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA ADOPTS THE 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENTS; AND


THE 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN IS IN CONFORMITY WITH THE 1990 U.S. CLEAN AIR ACT AS AMENDED; AND

THE 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN SATISFIES PLANNING REQUIREMENTS OF THE FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT INCLUDING APPLICABLE PROVISIONS WITHIN THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 12898.

**TPC Agenda Item 7
Mailout – 6/24/22**

PASSED AND APPROVED this 24th day of June 2022, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Transportation Policy Council for the Houston-Galveston Transportation Management Area.

APPROVED:


David Robinson (Jun 28, 2022 17:31 CDT)

Hon. David Robinson, Chairman
Transportation Policy Council

David Robinson

E-signed 2022-06-28 05:31PM CDT
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ATTEST:



Hon. Nancy Arnold, Secretary
Transportation Policy Council

Nancy Arnold

E-signed 2022-06-28 06:02PM CDT
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