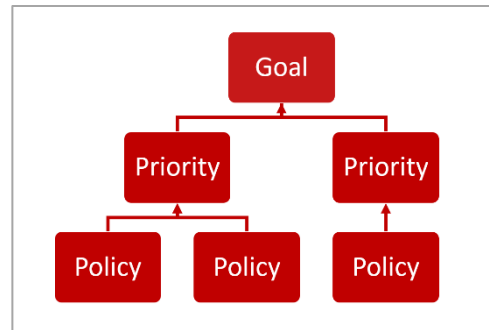


# DRAFT GOALS, INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND POLICIES TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL

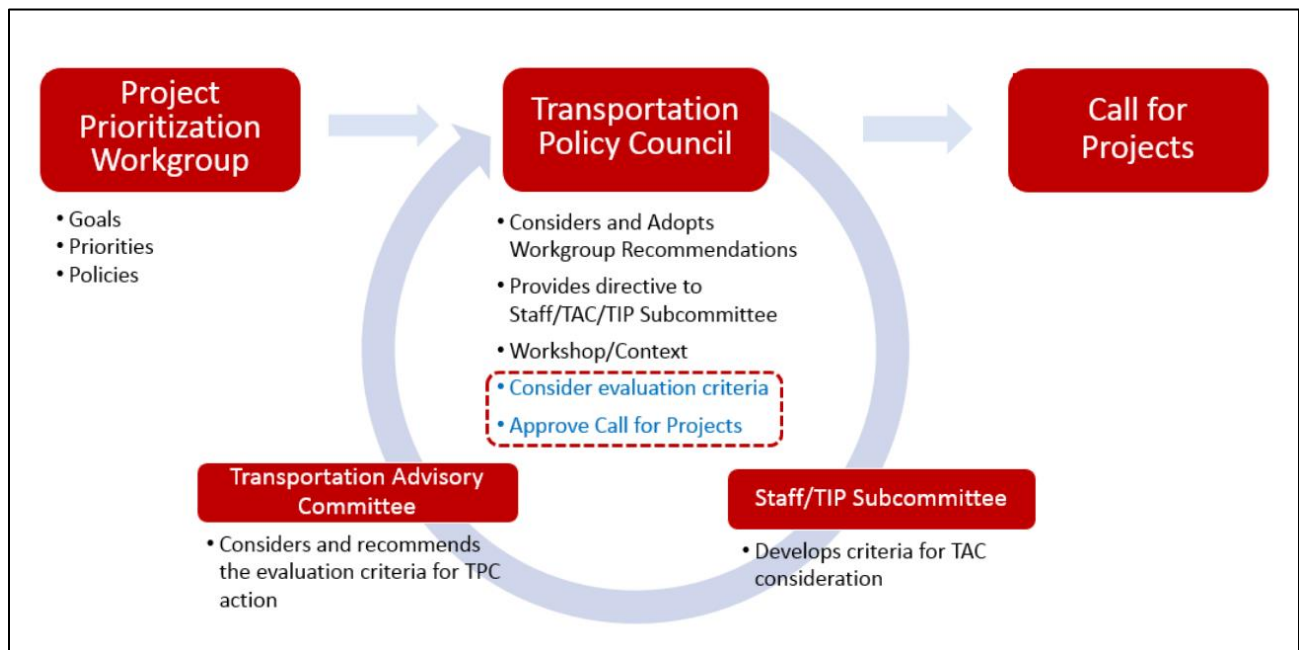
## Background

In May 2019, the Transportation Policy Council (TPC) created a 15-member Workgroup to provide recommendations to the TPC on goals and priorities for future investment of federal and state funds in the eight-county region. Members of the Workgroup reviewed current guidelines, and processes for evaluating and ranking candidate transportation projects considering comments received from TPC members and the public. The Workgroup met three times (in September and October of last year and in January 2020) to review results of the previous call for projects in light of past and new investment priorities.

The recommendations provided are structured into goals, priorities and policies. The goals presented in this report will improve alignment with the long-range regional transportation plan as well as federal requirements detailed in the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act*. Priorities were identified to highlight which outcomes are most important. And finally, policies were developed to provide additional guidance on achieving the goals.



As shown in the chart below, direction provided by the TPC will guide H-GAC staff, the Transportation Advisory Committee and its Transportation Improvement Program Subcommittee in the consideration of project selection criteria and evaluation methodologies. Following an opportunity for public comment, the TPC will review, modify if necessary and adopt final project selection criteria.



# **DRAFT GOALS, INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND POLICIES** **TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL**

## **Mission Statement**

To sustain safe, resilient and accessible multi-modal transportation services and facilities that equitably support the travel needs of our current and future residents, businesses and visitors.

## **Goals**

- Align with Regional Transportation Plan goals:
  - Improving traveler safety
  - Efficient movement of people and goods
  - Maintenance of a state of good repair
  - Strengthening regional economic competitiveness
  - Conserving and protecting natural and cultural resources while reducing vehicle generated air pollutants
  
- Align with Regional Transportation Plan public comments:
  - Create a truly, multimodal transportation network that supports the appropriate use by transit, bicycle, pedestrian, active transportation and freight.
  - Support greater investment in the management and maintenance of current transportation facilities and services
  - Be responsive to community/neighborhood quality of life concerns (e.g., environmental quality, health, housing availability and affordability, parks, libraries, and other unique cultural qualities of our neighborhoods and communities)
  
- Create a resilient transportation network by reducing inoperability for significant time periods due to:
  - Flooding, erosion, or damage from severe weather events
  - Infrastructure damaged by collisions with vehicles such as trucks, ships and barges
  - Vehicle crash rates and crash clearance times
  
- Increase the resources available to implement the Regional Transportation Plan with public and private funding partnerships.

## **Priorities**

- The reduction and elimination of severe injuries due to vehicle crashes.
- Improve safe and reliable goods movement within and through the region:
  - identify and mitigate congestion and crash hot spots for commercial trucks
  - accelerate freight delivery by autonomous vehicles,
  - promote off peak and overnight freight delivery including off peak use of exclusive freight lanes

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- Focusing on operational improvements and congestion management, including projects that address railroad/roadway safety and delays.
- Promote public/private, coordinated planning in high growth areas (areas with high population and/or commercial development growth) to reserve right of way and development of facilities that will avoid future congestion and support continued economic development.
- Recognize the benefit of regional, multijurisdictional projects to the larger transportation network.
- Improve access and affordable transportation choices to communities with high concentration of low income, disabled, elderly, or minority households.
- Develop a multi-modal transportation network that provides
  - connectivity between modes
  - transit access to more destinations
  - facilities that serve pedestrian, bicycle, and other active transportation modes
  - reduce the delay created by the delay at rail/highway crossings

**Policies**

- Consider the larger, complete project if proposed implementation will be a phased multi-jurisdictional project, parts of which may be developed separately with or without future federal funding. Evaluation of potential transportation investments should include:
  - Multi-modal transportation needs (auto, freight, transit, active transportation) to alleviate congestion and improve mobility
  - Travel impact of existing and announced economic development/redevelopment
  - Impact on natural and cultural resources
  - Connectivity to other transportation projects
  - Potential for crash reduction, particularly those causing serious and severe bodily injury and death.
  - Crash rates
  - Hurricane evacuation and disaster preparedness
- Enhance environmental benefits through the addition of alternative transportation modes, the provision of low or no emission vehicles and the conservation of natural and cultural resources.
- All highway-funded pedestrian, bicycle, and other active transportation investments should facilitate essential trip-making.

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- Proposed projects should document the extent to which they provide essential network access, connectivity and continuity.
  - Candidate projects should describe how the proposed project supports critical connectivity to jobs, education, medical facilities, and other travel needs.
  - Projects in high density areas should not be prioritized based simply on their location.
- Project sponsors are encouraged to consider non-federal highway funding sources for aesthetic considerations beyond those normally accommodated by the State. This could include more expansive landscaping, special decorative lighting, street furniture, and other amenities.
- Balance qualitative benefits of a project with quantitative benefits.
  - Consider quality of life improvements (narrative benefits) for projects such as active transportation and local transit expansion projects.
  - Major investment projects should describe potential economic benefits resulting from project implementation.
- If Benefit Cost analysis is used, evaluate using total project cost (include all required costs such as environmental determination, right of way acquisition, design, construction, etc.).
  - Additional benefits will not be given to projects that provide more than the required local match.
  - Useful life of projects by type must be established and published along with the evaluation criteria. As such, forecasted travel demand for the useful life of a proposed project should be considered for calculating potential benefits.
- Selected projects should be supported by local communities and affected agencies/jurisdictions.
  - Multijurisdictional projects (projects crossing multiple city/county boundaries) should provide support letters from all jurisdictions (cities and counties).
  - Projects sponsored by special districts such as management districts, redevelopment authorities should be supported by governmental entity(ies) in which they are located.
  - Proposed projects should provide support letters for the on-going maintenance of the investment
- Creative financing (tax abatements, funding partnerships, 380 agreements, TIRZs, etc.) should be considered as potential tools for private participation or new source for local match requirements.
- Consider projects proposing to implement automated and connected vehicle technologies and infrastructure based on expected benefits.
- Advance projects that have demonstrated project readiness for earlier implementation when possible.