

Standard Operating Procedure

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for all Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), 10-Year Plan, and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) projects. The purpose of an SOP is to standardize project descriptions listed in our core documents to ensure consistency, transparency, and smooth delivery. Project descriptions that are clear decreases the probability of Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) approval delays, and, ultimately, letting delays. The SOP is focused on submitting project descriptions that concisely convey the following:

1. Work being delivered (the transportation product)
2. Funding eligibility
3. Conformity determination (Non-exempt, Exempt, Exempt from Regional Emissions Analysis (EREA), or Not Regionally Significant (NRS)).

The goals outlined above are based on previous staff experience. As federal funding guidance evolves, staff will amend the SOP to ensure project sponsors receive the best instruction. Staff has provided the following guidelines to ensure project description consistency:

- Submit concise project descriptions (abbreviations used if necessary).
 - If over 255 characters, staff will be required to amend description.
- Exclude design, such as roadway material or sidewalk width.
- Identify segments or phases of project within project description.
 - Segment G, Phase 2, etc.
- Limits should provide logical termini.
 - W of Main Street, rather than 0.5 miles of Main Street.
- If a facility has multiple names, identify them in facility field
 - Example: FM 518/Broadway St., etc.

This listing is not an all-encompassing list of project types. The Project Programming team will develop new SOP guidelines for each new type of project submitted to the Regional Transportation Plan/10-Year Plan/Transportation Improvement Program. Staff understands that projects outside the TIP/STIP window may not have all project details identified. Staff will periodically request updated project information to ensure project details are up to date and consistent with the SOP. Sponsors should contact staff with updated project information as it becomes available and follow the most up to date amendment procedures.

“VA” Terminology

Some projects can be submitted with a facility or limits that denotes “VA” or various. This term is used for projects within a sponsor’s boundary that cannot fit within a “from” and “to” format. Staff proposes that “VA” be used conservatively in project descriptions going

forward due to STIP approval delays. If a sponsor has a question if “VA” usage is appropriate, please consult staff. Below are three successful examples of VA usage:

- Add new fiber and new ITS equipment where none currently exist.
- Countywide striping
- Construct new wireless traffic signal communication system

<u>Roadway Standard Operating Procedure Recommendations</u>		
Project Type	Recommendation	Explanation
Added Capacity	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes	Indicate widening, state the current number of lanes, and the resulting number of lanes.
Road Diet	Reconstruct from 3 to 2 lanes Restripe from 3 to 2 lanes	Indicate reconstruction, state the current number of lanes, and the resulting number of lanes (road diet).
Reconstruction	Reconstruct from 2 to 2 lanes	Indicate reconstruction and number of reconstructed lanes. Number of lanes should not change.
New Location	Construct 2 lane roadway on new location	Indicate construction on a new location. There is no reconstruction component to a new location project.
Extension	Construct 2 lane extension on a new location	Indicate construction on a new location. There is no reconstruction component of an extension project.
Direct Connectors	Construct 2 direct connectors (SB-WB, NB-EB)	Indicate construction and direction (to-from). Facility and limits should be clear.
Interchanges	Construct interchange	Ensure facility and limits are clear and encompass scope. Many interchange projects include added capacity projects.
Auxiliary Lanes	Construct auxiliary lanes	Examples include right turn bay or exit lane.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements	Construct sidewalks on both sides (NB and SB) Construct hike and bike trail	Construction of sidewalks, shared use paths, and bikeways should indicate direction.

Intersection Improvements	Intersection improvements including left turn lanes, right turn lanes, raised medians, and traffic signal replacement.	Include all specific improvements. If along a corridor, detail where improvement is located within boundary.
Safety Improvements	Safety improvements including crosswalks, signage, pavement marking, rumble strips, and street lighting.	Include all specific improvements. If along a corridor, detail where improvement is located within boundary.
Access Management Improvements	Access management improvements including raised medians, driveway consolidation, and closure of turn lanes.	Include all specific improvements. If along a corridor, detail where improvement is located within boundary.
Frontage Roads	Construct 2 lane NB frontage roads	Indicate construction and direction(s).
Ferry Vessels	Purchase new ferry vessel Replace ferry vessel	Indicate if it is a new purchase or replacement.
Facilities	Construct new traffic management center	Indicate construction or reconstruction, and describe its purpose (TMC, P&R, Maintenance facility, etc).
Port Improvements	Construct intermodal railyard	Port improvements include railyards, intersection improvements, grade separations, etc.
Grade Separation	Construct railroad grade separation	Indicate construction, and desired location in description.

Tollway/HOV/Managed Lanes	<p>Construct 4 lane tollway</p> <p>Widen from 4 to 6 lanes tollway</p> <p>Construct 2 HOV lanes on new location</p>	Identify if a project is a tollway, HOV, or managed lanes in the project description. If managed lanes, indicate what kind within description.
Bridges	<p>Construct new location bridge</p> <p>Construct bridge replacement</p>	Indicate new construction or replacement.
Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	Install new ITS equipment and infrastructure where none currently exists, including fiber, cameras, and DMS signs. The new equipment does not replace existing equipment.	Describe what equipment will be implemented, and signify whether the equipment is replacement/upgrade, or in new locations.
Truck Parking	Construct truck parking lot for truck rest stop with approximately 20 parking spaces.	Indicate construction, describe how many parking spaces will be implemented, and signify its location compared to a commercial truck stop.
MULTIPLE: Added capacity and access management improvements	Reconstruct and widen from 2 to 4 lanes with access management including raised median along corridor, dedicated right turns, and NB shared use path.	Include all improvements within limits of project, including direction of SUP.
MULTIPLE: Reconstruction and Intersection Improvements	Reconstruct from 4 to 4 lanes and intersection improvements including left turn lanes at Cemetery Rd, signal replacement at Coale Rd, and sidewalks on both sides	Include all improvements within limits of projects, including sidewalks, left turn lane location, and traffic signal replacement location.