

APPENDIX 15
Public Comment Process

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL
Public Comment Period and Public Meetings
Transportation Conformity Determination for the 2045 RTP Update and amendments to
the 2023-2026 TIP

- **Public Comment Period:**
~ Wednesday, March 15, 2023--Monday, April 17, 2023 at 5:00 pm.
- **Virtual Public Meeting:**
~ Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 1pm.
~ Location: Virtual meetings.
- **Written Comments:**
~ Transportation Public Information, H-GAC, P.O. Box 22777, Houston, TX 77227-2777
~ Emailed to: publiccomments@h-gac.com
~ Faxed to: 713-993-4508

More information: <https://www.h-gac.com/transportation-conformity/2023>

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, H-GAC will provide for reasonable accommodations for persons attending H-GAC functions. Requests from persons needing special accommodations should be received by H-GAC staff 24 hours prior to a function. The public meetings will be conducted in English, and requests for language interpreters or other special communication needs should be made at least two working days prior to a function. Please call 713-993-2471 for assistance.

The virtual public meeting for the 2045 RTP Update and Conformity was held on March 21, 2023. Interpreters for Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, and sign language were available during the meeting. There were 40 attendees. The meeting had the following format:

- Welcome by Anita Hollmann
- 2045 RTP Update Presentation by Anita Hollmann
- Air Quality Conformity presentation by Dr. Graciela Lubertino
- Q/A

During the presentation, Dr. Lubertino used a slide deck that included the following:

- The long-term (20-yr.) Transportation Plan for the region called Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Short-term (4-yr.) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Both plans need to be fiscally constrained
- Air Quality Status of our MPO region
- Plot of ozone concentration versus time
- What's Conformity? Why Conformity?
- Emission budgets for our MPO region
- All sources emission inventories
- Reasons for Conformity Determination
- Conformity Requirements
- The years selected for this year Conformity calculation:
 - 2023 attainment year for the 2015 8-hr Ozone standard
 - 2026 attainment year for the 2008 8-hr Ozone standard
 - 2030, 2040 intermediate years because according to the conformity rule, the conformity calculation cannot be more than 10-yrs. apart and
 - 2045 which is the horizon year of the transportation plan

- Air Quality Model used – EPA MOVES3.1
- Air Quality Conformity results
- Proposed Timeline

There were no questions or comments during the public meeting.

Following is the public comment that we got from a private citizen:

As for air quality on page 41, how do we expect VMT in 2045 to increase by almost 50% but NOx and VOC emissions to both decrease? I understand new cars presumably will emit less or nothing if they are electric, but hoping for everyone to get rich enough to buy a newer car with better emissions seems unrealistic. The only surefire way to decrease NOx and VOC emissions is to have people walking, biking, or taking public transit (ideally electric rail).

H-GAC answer:

Thank you for your comment regarding air quality conformity. In our air quality model we have assumed for the future years an average of a 6% fleet turn over, since those are the numbers coming from the current vehicle registration data. As VMT goes up the emissions from vehicles come down due to new vehicles being more efficient and polluting less. However, you can see that after 2040 the emissions go up since the emission reductions coming from the new vehicles are not enough to counteract the increase in VMT. Please see Appendix L from the RTP for more information.