

6. REQUESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE 2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND THE AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINATION

Background

Staff presented the proposed amendments to the 2045 RTP and draft air quality conformity determination during the past TPC meetings including the outcomes from the public comment process. Proposed amendments and the draft conformity determination document can be viewed at <http://www.2045rtp.com/>

The public involvement process for the requested amendments was conducted in two phases. The first public comment period was opened in December 2020 with virtual public meetings held on December 3, 2020. The second public comment period was open between March 26, 2021 and April 28, 2021. A total 141 comments were submitted in both public comment periods and received responses from TxDOT and H-GAC staff.

TPC approved administrative and minor amendments to the 2045 RTP in June. In July, TPC approved 19 major amendments (new projects or major updates to existing projects) totaling \$7.8 billion for 12 facilities. At the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting in July, staff presented recommendations on the remaining requested major amendments to the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan on the four facilities shown in Table 1 on the following page.

Current Situation

Staff reviewed the requested amendments with following goals:

- Ensure that the requested amendment is consistent with and approving the amendment will not substantially alter the vision established in 2045 RTP.
- Approval of major new projects to the 2045 RTP is not automatic.

To achieve these goals all requested amendments were evaluated with the following criteria:

- MPO Urgency: Assessment of the new developments that create unforeseen urgency for the requested amendment. (Given the established regularity of RTP development, establishment of a new implementation timeline by the sponsor does not itself make an amendment urgent.)
- Recent MPO Study or Plan: Whether and how the requested amendment was recommended in any recent local, subregional, or regional study or plan.
- Jurisdiction Support/Request: Level of support for the requested amendment from local jurisdictions where the project is located or is crossing a jurisdictional boundary.
- Previous Reviews and Evaluations: Assessments of previous reviews or evaluation of the requested amendment for inclusion in the TIP, RTP, or 10-year plan.

- If it was previously considered and included in the RTP or was not programmed in the TIP or 10-Year Plan, investigate why it was not included if the issues that were raised previously were resolved.
- RTP Consistency: How consistent the requested amendment is with the current RTP.
- Environmental Justice or Environmental Impact Risks: Assessment of the potential risks for adverse impacts on the environment or environmental justice population groups.

After evaluating requested amendments with above criteria and reviewing the public comments responses, staff made recommendations on four corridors included in Table 1 to TAC at the meeting in July. During this TAC meeting, TxDOT withdrew the request for amendment on the Hempstead Road project and those projects were not considered by TAC and are no longer requested by the sponsor or under consideration. The existing Hempstead Road projects remain in the adopted 2045 RTP (MPOIDs 11372, 11373, 11547, 11565, 13829).

The TAC recommended TPC action on SH 35, IH610, and IH 10W as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Requested major amendments to the 2045 RTP

Facility	MPOIDs	Description	Request	Estimated Total Project Cost	TAC recommendation
SH35	18718; 309; 310; 18717	Construct New Freeway and Interchange	ADD	\$600M	Study and consider projects for 2050 RTP
<i>Hempstead Rd</i>	<i>18701; 18702; 18703; 18704; 18705; 18706</i>	<i>WITHDRAWN BY SPONSOR; NOT UNDER CONSIDERATION (Staff recommended to TAC to study and consider it for 2050 RTP. TxDOT withdrew the request for amendment at the TAC meeting in July.)</i>			
IH 610W	18730	Construct 4 (elevated?) Express Lanes	ADD	\$558M	Study and consider project for 2050 RTP
IH 10W	18708; 18709	(Inner Katy); Reconstruct & add managed lanes	ADD	\$1,923.2M	Study and consider projects for 2050 RTP
Total				\$3,081M	

Attachment A on the following pages includes additional details by MPOID for the above projects still under consideration.

Along with the above recommendations TAC also recommended Transportation Policy Council instruct staff to develop a new Planning and Readiness Predevelopment Program. This new program will be funded with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funds and led by H-GAC to conduct planning studies on the three corridors listed in Table 1 (SH 35, IH 610W, and IH 10W). These studies will identify the purpose and need for the three corridors and consider alternatives included in the Congestion Management Process. The studies will then

establish future vision and potential improvements by evaluating each project proposed by TxDOT for potential benefits and impacts on H-GAC's performance measures, federal planning factors, and other desired outcomes. All stakeholders, including TxDOT, will be invited to participate in the development of these plans. Staff anticipates a 6-12-month process to complete this effort and consider the recommendations of the planning studies for inclusion in the 2050 RTP which will be presented to the TPC for adoption no later than May 2023.

Action Requested

- Approval of TAC recommendation to study the three requested major amendments to the 2045 RTP for inclusion in the 2050 RTP and instruct staff to develop the Planning and Readiness Predevelopment Program and then expedite and pilot the program with facilities included in the requested amendments.

ATTACHMENT A - REQUESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE 2045 RTP

New projects added to draft 2045 RTP amendment					Project information being amended in 2045 RTP									
MPOID	CSJ#	COUNTY	SPONSOR	FACILITY	FROM	TO	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH (mi)	MAIN LANES	FRONTAGE LANES	FISCAL YEAR	ANALYSIS YEAR*	TOTAL PROJECT COST (M, YOE)	HGAC RECOMMENDATION
18718	0178-10-003	BRAZORIA	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	SH 35	HARRIS C/L	BS 35C NORTH	CONSTRUCT 4 LANE FREEWAY ON NEW LOCATION	10.00	(0,4)	(0,0)	2040	2045	\$239.00	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
18708	0271-07-327	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	IH 10 W	IH 610 W	IH 45	RECONSTRUCT 10 MAIN LANES AND TWO 2-LANE FRONTAGE ROADS AND CONSTRUCT 4 NEW NON-TOLL MANAGED LANES	5.00	(10,14)	(0,0)	2026	2030	\$1,800.00	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
18709	0271-07-326	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	IH 10 W	STUDEMONT ST	HOUSTON AVE	RECONSTRUCT TO RAISE THE EXISTING 10 MAINLANES OUT OF THE WHITE OAK BAYOU FLOODWAY, FOR RECONSTRUCTING 2 LANE CBD CONNECTORS TO 4 MANAGED LANES	1.20	(10,14)	(0,0)	2026	2030	\$423.20	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
18730	0271-17-162	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	IH 610 W	IH 10 W	IH 69 S	CONSTRUCT 4 EXPRESS LANES	3.60	(8,12)	(4,4)	2026	2030	\$558.35	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
309	0178-09-024	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	SH 35	N OF ALMEDA-GENOA RD	BRAZORIA C/L	CONSTRUCT NEW 6 LANE FREEWAY WITH TWO NEW 2-LANE FRONTAGE ROADS	1.70	(0,6)	(0,4)	2040	2045	\$51.00	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
310	0178-09-016	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	SH 35	DIXIE DR	N OF ALMEDA-GENOA RD	CONSTRUCT NEW 6 LANE FREEWAY WITH TWO NEW 2-LANE FRONTAGE ROADS	3.30	(0,6)	(0,4)	2040	2045	\$110.00	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP
18717	0178-09-023	HARRIS	TXDOT HOUSTON DISTRICT	SH 35	AT SL 8		CONSTRUCT INTERCHANGE ON A NEW LOCATION	0.20	(0,0)	(0,0)	2040	2045	\$200.00	Study and consider for inclusion in 2050 RTP