

7. APPROVAL OF THE 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

BACKGROUND

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a required document describing all anticipated planning activities for the Metropolitan Planning Organization; It includes a description of tasks and budgets for the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 to September 30). The UPWP describes the regional transportation plans and programs carried out in the 8-county Metropolitan Planning Area:

- Development of all required planning products or activities (primarily the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Congestion Management Process, etc.);
- Continuous and one-time planning activities related to safety, freight, transit, subregional areas, corridors, active transportation, air quality, data and modeling, and livable centers; and
- Special planning activities (e.g. Safe Streets and Roads for All, PROTECT resiliency planning, and development of grant-funded plan development).

The UPWP includes descriptions of major planning activities, responsible parties, expected products, and a summary of the funding to be used. The UPWP includes five priority areas as described below:

- TASK I – Administration and Management; which are activities that provide administrative support to the transportation planning process for the region.
- TASK II - Data Development and Maintenance; which has the purpose to collect, update, model, and maintain basic data and tools for executing planning activities.
- TASK III - Short Range Planning; are efforts that focus on continued coordination and development of transit and travel demand management projects, maintenance of intelligent transportation systems, improvement of traffic safety in the region, the development of the Transportation Improvement Plan, sub-regional or county-level mobility studies, transit feasibility studies, and operations planning.
- TASK IV - Metropolitan Transportation Planning; activities include the development and maintenance of the Regional Transportation Plan, activities related to air quality planning, regional bicycle and pedestrian planning, and transportation performance management.
- TASK V - Special Studies; are ongoing planning activities relating to safety and congestion management, livable centers, air quality, resiliency, and one-time planning studies for corridors and individual projects.

CURRENT SITUATION

The 2024 UPWP needs to be completed, adopted, and initiated to start on October 1, 2023. Staff is proposing a one-year UPWP rather than the typical two-year. Multiple projects in the current 2022-2023 UPWP are still underway or will start in the next few months. Developing a one-year UPWP will allow these projects to carryover into 2024 and facilitate better workload management for existing staff to complete them. Similarly, the new UPWP will only add a few new activities; primarily new grant-funded activities or new planning requirements from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Once

projects are underway and the MPO's staffing levels are restored, development of the 2025 UPWP will return to a two-year format. Staff also anticipates a significant number of new corridor- or project-level studies that will be identified as part of the Project Selection Process, and those will need to be included in the UPWP as they are identified.

The Draft 2024 UPWP is available for review online (<https://www.h-gac.com/unified-planning-work-program>). The public comment period is August 3rd through September 2nd 2023. Comments can be submitted by email (PublicComments@h-gac.com), mail (Unified Planning Work Program Comments, P.O. Box 22777, Houston, TX 77227-2777), or through an online form (<https://www.h-gac.com/unified-planning-work-program/comment>).

Because public comments will be accepted until September 2nd, 2023, TPC's approval of the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (Resolution 2024-00) will be contingent on a final review by the TPC Officers of public comments and staff responses or modifications to the document. Staff will convene the officers following the conclusion of the public comment period.

ACTION REQUESTED

TPC approval of Resolution No. UPWP 2024-00 in support of the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program approval, pending final review of public comments by the TPC Officers.



Resolution

NO. UPWP 2024-00

ADOPTING THE 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA AND CERTIFYING COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL PLANNING REQUIREMENTS.

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

WHEREAS, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a federally required document documenting all anticipated transportation and air quality planning activities that the Metropolitan Planning Organization and partner agencies will perform in the 2024 Federal Fiscal Year, and;

WHEREAS, all tasks and work activities described in the UPWP shall be limited to transportation planning and air quality activities affecting the transportation system within the boundaries of the eight-county designated metropolitan planning area, and;

WHEREAS, the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program addresses the needs for planning Administration/Management, Data Development and Maintenance, Short Range Planning, Long Range Planning, and Special Studies and identifies agency responsibilities by work task and anticipated funding requirements, and;

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Council certifies its compliance with federal planning requirements as outlined in the introduction of the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program and in accordance with 23 CFR Part 450.334 and 450.220.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COUNCIL FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA THAT:

- The 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is hereby adopted; and
- Cost overruns of up to 25 percent at the activities task level are allowable, provided that the total as shown in the Funding Summary for the 2024 UPWP are not exceeded.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 25th day of August 2023 at a regularly called meeting of the Transportation Policy Council.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Hon. David Robinson, Chairman
Transportation Policy Council

Hon. Nancy Arnold, Secretary
Transportation Policy Council