

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Subcommittee Meeting**
Houston-Galveston Area Council Online
Meeting/Conference Call
Wednesday March 3, 2021
1:30 PM

AGENDA

1. Introductions/Roll Call

2. Previous Meeting Summary (Online)

3. Project Evaluation Criteria Development

Staff will provide a brief update on the development of the call for projects

4. Announcements

- TAC Meeting – March 17, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
- TPC Meeting – March 26, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
- TIP Subcommittee Meeting – April 7, 2021, 1:30 p.m., Teleconference (Teams)

5. Adjourn

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 03, 2021 – 1:30pm
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Online Meeting (Teams Platform)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Monique Johnson – City of Sugarland
Stacy Slawinski – Fort Bend County
Adam France – City of Conroe
Loyd Smith – Harris County
Frank Simoneaux – City of Baytown
Maureen Crocker – City of Houston
Andy Mao – TxDOT-HOU
Scott Ayres – TxDOT-BMT
Ken Fickes – Harris County
Ruthanne Haut – The Woodlands Township
Bruce Mann – Port Houston
Mike Wilson – Port Freeport
Oni Blair – Link Houston

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Krystal Lastrape – City of Sugarland
Perri D'Armond – Fort Bend County
Francisco Carrillo – City of Mont Belvieu
David Wurdlow – City of Houston
Catherine McCreight – TxDOT-HOU
Priya Zachariah – METRO
Vernon Chambers – Harris County
Nicole Ware-Barnett – Houston ISD

BRIEFING

The meeting started with a roll call to determine the members and/or alternatives present

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were presented to the subcommittee.

ACTION ITEMS

No action items were presented to the subcommittee.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Item 3 – Development of the Project Evaluation Criteria (Vishu Lingala)

The entire meeting was devoted to this item. Vishu Lingala discussed the project evaluation criteria for the ten (10) planning factors for roadway projects, continuing from where he left off during the February 2, 2021 meeting. He then went on to talk about the planning factors applicable to the transit system.

1. **Safety:** [Discussed during February meeting]
2. **Multimodal Improvements:** [Discussed during February meeting]
3. **Congestion Management:** [Discussed during February meeting]
4. **Resiliency:** [Discussed during February meeting].
5. **Connectivity [Update]:** Whether a project eliminates an at-grade railroad crossing will be separated from the consideration of accessibility to activity centers. The assessment of accessibility to activity centers will be based on connection to jobs. Projects within cities or densely built-up areas will have to demonstrate access to twice as many jobs as projects within rural areas. Projects that eliminate or obviate a railroad crossing will be scored higher for that benefit. Comparing two projects that eliminate at-grade railroad crossings, the project that involves greater ADTs and daytime train traffic will be scored higher than the project with lower ADTs and/or daytime train traffic.
6. **Equity [Update]:** To obtain a more wholesome look at the disadvantaged population, the Equity question will be based on the Liveable Centers Needs Index which includes metrics for the low–moderate income (LMI) population. Also, projects with high and adverse impacts that disproportionately affect the disadvantaged population will receive no points for transportation equity rather than receive a negative score as was previously proposed.
7. **Planning Coordination:** This measure asks whether a proposed project went through the planning review prior to requesting funding in the Call. Prior planning review would include consideration in the RTP or else local/subregional plans such as thoroughfare plans, city-wide plans, HCT plans, livable centers initiatives, or asset management studies. Furthermore, if a project intersects or would impact the operations of another asset that is controlled by a different agency, the project sponsor will be required to obtain a letter of support from the affected agency.

8. **Urban Rural Transitioning:** Applies only to Expand category projects and considers whether a roadway expansion or extension will provide connectivity or improve access to the small towns outside the urban centers (rural areas), planned developments, and/or newly developed areas.
9. **Environmental/Ecological:** Based on the regional planning goal to conserve and protect natural and cultural resources, this measure will consider how many historical or archeological sites are within a ¼ mile buffer around an Expand category project. The measure will also consider how many acres of wetlands or floodways are within a ¼ mile buffer of the proposed project. These environmental queries will be based on the H-GAC Eco-Logical tool.
10. **Functional Class/Freight Networks:** Projects on roadways with a high functional classification (following the FHWA roadway classification system) will receive a higher score than projects on roadways with a lower functional classification. Similarly, projects on a State-designated evacuation route or on a critical freight network will receive a higher score than projects that are not on either network.
 - **Maintenance:** Introduced for the first time, project sponsors will be asked if they have a written maintenance or asset management plan and whether maintenance costs are included in the proposed project budget. Maintenance costs will not be evaluated in the Benefit/Cost Analysis.

PLANNING FACTORS – TRANSIT

Planning factors for the Transit system will apply variably to Expand, Manage, and Maintain project categories.

1. **Safety:** Applies to all three project categories. Safety will look at the estimated number of crashes the transit project would reduce, deduced from the anticipated VMT reduction for the pertinent roadway classification.
2. **Connectivity:** Concerns (a) Access to points of interest such as employment, schools, medical facilities, shopping etc. (b) Multi-Jurisdictional connectivity – whether a project serves or connects more than one transit district.
3. **Equity:** Considers whether a project will improve access and connectivity for members of the disadvantaged/underserved population, measured by the Liveable Centers Needs Index. Where a project disproportionately impacts the underserved communities, the project will not score any points for transportation equity.
4. **Planning Coordination:** Considers whether a project had prior review or was recommended in a regional or local transportation/mobility plan before submission for funding in the Call. Also, if a project interacts with or intersects an asset operated by a different agency, the project sponsor will be required to produce a letter of support from the affected agency.
5. **Improves Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Considers (1) whether a transit project brings improvement to the pedestrian/bicyclist modes; (2) how much the transit project reduces estimated average delay and/or contributes to congestion mitigation (estimated through projected reductions in VMT); and (3) whether a transit expansion project increases

urban–rural connectivity, identified by improved connections to small towns, rural areas, planned developments and/or newly developed areas.

6. **Improves Transit Reliability:** Applies to Manage category projects and considers how a transit project improves transit travel time and the frequency of service. This measure also considers a projects’ contribution to congestion management.
7. **Current and Estimated Ridership:** Applies to Manage and Maintain category projects. This measure evaluates potential gains in the number of people a facility/asset would serve after the proposed improvements are completed.

Because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on ridership, existing ridership will be construed as pre-covid numbers.

8. **ADA Compliant Improvements:** Applies to Manage and Maintain category projects. Considers whether a project will improve or provide new ADA accommodations.
9. **Improves Useful Life of Asset/Facility:** Applies to Manage and Maintain category projects. Considers whether a project will increase the useful life of a transit asset or facility. Further consideration is necessary to decide whether transit vehicles should be eligible for this score.
10. **Maintenance Plan:** Considers whether the project sponsor has a written maintenance plan covering their transit assets/facilities.

Timeline: It is envisaged that the Project Evaluation Criteria Development will be completed by May 2021 and be taken to the TAC and TPC for information in June 2021, and for action in July 2021. This would facilitate the commencement of the Call for Projects about October, 2021.

Item 4 – Announcements

Upcoming events.

- TAC Meeting – February 17, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
- TPC Meeting – February 26, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Teleconference (Zoom)
- TIP Subcommittee Meeting – April 7, 2021, 1:30 p.m., Teleconference (Teams)

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.