

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Sustainable Communities Planning Grant**  
**Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium**  
**Tuesday, August 28, 2012 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm**  
**H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor**

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bay City Economic Development Corporation, D.C. Dunham  
Blueprint Houston, Joe Webb and Martha Murphree  
Center for Houston's Future, Sandra Wegmann  
City of Galveston, Lori Feild Schwarz  
City of Houston, Mike Kramer  
City of Huntsville, Chandra Steinback  
Fort Bend County, Ron Drachenberg  
HARC, Jennifer Ronk  
Harris County, Mayra Bontemps  
H-GAC, Jeff Taebel and Cheryl Mergo  
Houston Tomorrow, Jay Crossley  
LISC, Amanda Timm  
Houston Wilderness, Richard Cron  
METRO, Shaida Libhart  
Montgomery County, Joanne Ducharme  
NCI, Emiliano Herrera  
Waller County Economic Development Partnership, Harvey Laas

**Also in attendance (based upon sign-in sheet available at the meeting and meeting participation)**

Anna Sedillo, City of Houston; and Amy Boyers, Allison Carr, Meredith Dang, Andrea Tantillo, Amanda Thorin, Nicholas Williams, and Chelsea Young, H-GAC.

**1. Regular Business – Call to Order**

Amanda Timm, Coordinating Committee First Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**2. Certify Quorum**

At least 51% of the member entities were present, constituting a quorum.

**3. Public Comment**

No public comments were made.

**4. Approval of July 24, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

**Action:** Motion made by Ron Drachenberg, seconded by Mike Kramer, to approve the meeting minutes.

The Coordinating Committee approved the minutes as presented.

**5. Technical Assistance (Discussion)**

Meredith Dang presented information about upcoming technical assistance opportunities.

PolicyLink, one of the providers of technical assistance through the HUD grant, is assisting us in examining the metrics for the planning process to ensure we are setting ourselves up for equitable outcomes and offering any additional advice and recommendations for improving the metrics.

**Recap of Conference Call with PolicyLink:** The call covered two things: the metrics and PolicyLink's equity profile for the region.

The equity profile draft was distributed to Coordinating Committee. It covers demographics (racial/ethnic diversity, population growth, generation gap); economic vitalities (employment, income and equality, high opportunity occupations, educational attainment, health); and connectedness (auto dependence, auto ownership, residential segregation, jobs/housing balance, housing burden).

A concern that we have is that they did not use the same geographic area we are using for our plan. The equity profile reflects the MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area), including San Jacinto County, which is not in our plan region, but not Matagorda, Colorado, Walker or Wharton counties. PolicyLink agreed to try to get the equity profile aligned with our geography, when possible, so we can use it in our planning process. The new draft was anticipated as being available in three weeks. Once H-GAC receives the new draft, staff will forward it to the Coordinating Committee.

PolicyLink is also interested in producing a two-page executive summary or brochure summarizing the profile and highlighting some key takeaways from the region. They offered to let us have input in what data should be highlighted and shared with our policy leaders.

**Feedback on the Metrics:** PolicyLink provided the following feedback:

- We've identified the right issues to examine in the metrics
- We need to focus on identifying what level of geography the different metrics are available, recognizing that some metrics are only available for counties. The finest grain level of geography is the most useful from an equity perspective. Neighborhoods and neighborhood comparisons are the most helpful but can be the most challenging to obtain data for.
- We need to make sure to measure change over time. PolicyLink recommends setting up a system for monitoring progress beyond the grant period and incorporating it into the agency's regular processes. The Coordinating Committee would need to consider how we would formalize those processes over time.
- We need to make sure we have metrics that have outcomes and impacts for people. Many of our metrics account for resources expended or actions taken, which are appropriate for some situations, but we need to make sure we have evidence of outcomes and impacts on people and the conditions in their lives. PolicyLink offered to review our metrics and indicate which ones are measuring outcomes and impacts so we can get a better feel for the balance that they are recommending.
- Make note of which metrics can be disaggregated for population groups by race, ethnicity, age, gender or other relevant aspects.

#### *Discussion*

Will H-GAC add monitoring the progress of this as part of their regular procedures?

The Coordinating Committee will need to formalize that monitoring process, including how it will be done and by who.

Before we can make a recommendation, we'll need to know what is H-GAC's capacity to do this? Does it align with already ongoing activities?

## **6. Measuring Resiliency (Presentation)**

Lori Feild Schwarz, AICP, Interim Planning Director, City of Galveston, and Shannon Van Zandt, Ph.D., AICP, Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center, Texas A&M University, gave a presentation on measuring and assessing resiliency.

## 7. Updates

**Alternatives:** Jeff Taebel gave an update on the alternatives analysis. We will bring completed alternatives and survey questions at a later meeting. The alternatives we are considering are:

- Current Course, which is the H-GAC 2040 baseline forecast
- Less Time on the Road, where we put about half that anticipated growth into existing towns, cities, livable centers and other more walkable and transit-oriented environments
- Greener Region, where we assume that the top priority natural areas identified in the Eco-Logical tool and the Conservation Fund's Greenprint for the five counties outside of the transportation area are preserved and makes some assumptions about other behavior changes with respect to air quality and water quality
- Competitive Workforce, where we peg the entire region's educational attainment to 95% of the population above age 25 having a high school diploma and 45% of a people above age 25 having a bachelor's degree. This will include a calculation of the GDP of the region if the higher educational attainment is achieved.

Recent H-GAC Board Discussion: One of the Board members had asked for an agenda item to take an up/down vote on the project, but the Board officers voted not to put that on the agenda but to have an information item about the project. Several of the members expressed concerns about the plan. Several spoke strongly in favor of the project. Jack Steele, H-GAC's Executive Director, offered to share the alternatives descriptions and draft survey questions with the entire H-GAC Board, not just the Governmental Advisory Committee. We are hoping to get those questions out to them in the next couple of weeks for review. Having the elected officials have a chance to look at these descriptions and the survey questions about some of the tradeoffs that would be involved will be valuable. The Coordinating Committee may be reviewing the questions at the same time as the elected officials.

### *Discussion*

Was the proposed vote to concerning the entire project or just the alternatives?

The entire project. Generally speaking there has been more skepticism from county officials rather than city officials. Something we'll need to consider when we start to develop strategies is "what's in this for the counties." A lot of the things they are familiar with in the sustainability realm are things that the counties have not been as involved in. As county officials recognize more of the things they do among the strategies we are talking about, we will have more positive outcomes. Some county officials are also supportive of the project.

What is the county representation on the Governmental Advisory Committee:?

About half and half. On the H-GAC Board, all of the counties are represented. There is some overlap between the Board and the GAC.

What pieces of the Public Engagement Plan were shared with the Governmental Advisory Committee?

We shared with them the summary of the overall report. Some of the GAC members attended meetings where we had a vocal opposition to the plan, and may have developed lasting opinions based on that experience that may not be representative. Even though we have over 5,000 generally positive responses, the meeting they went to may not have looked like that.

We counted about 120 local projects that we've come across during this planning process and we are going to get started on case studies soon. It's important to keep stressing that these are not

ideas coming from Washington or Austin or the Coordinating Committee, but ideas that are coming as a result of trying to synergize with ideas that started in local communities years ago.

Will the H-GAC Board select which case studies will be funded?

The case studies will be recommended by the Coordinating Committee. As the fiscal agency for the plan, the Board will need to consider and ratify that recommendation.

Amy Boyers presented the Fair Housing Equity Assessment update. Work on the assessment began this summer, and we are currently pulling together demographic information. Over the next month we will put together a Fair Housing Stakeholder Advisory Committee. This advisory committee will come together to provide input on what the larger fair housing issues and challenges are in the region and recommend what to include in the best practices and help note any equity gaps in those best practices. We are recommending the committee include a mix of local governments and academia, as well as urban, rural, suburban and coastal representatives.

Amanda Thorin presented the public engagement update. The video project is under way. Imagine Video in Sugar Land will begin shooting video for the six different vignettes after Labor Day. We had originally planned to work with Ttweak, but they could not participate in this process because they did not have the staff or time to complete it within our time frame. We hosted six community training sessions. The turnout was good, with 191 participants. The entire tool kit is available online. The summer event schedule is in full swing. We have attended 10 events and have two more planned. We have spoken to and made 1,006 impressions, of those, 587 people have completed “Our Region is My Region” signs.

Meredith Dang presented the monthly financial report, showing expenditures, balance and match and reminded Coordinating Committee members to complete their match forms and send them to Cheryl Mergo.

## **8. Other Business and Announcements**

No other business was presented.

## **9. Announcements**

Sam Houston State University is dropping out of the consortium due to their time commitments.

PolicyLink is hosting the Achieving Prosperity Through Equity event at Ripley House Neighborhood Center on Navigation on August 29.

PolicyLink is available to specifically discuss economic strategies from the plan, in person or on the phone on August 30 at 4 p.m.

A repeat of the Community Training sessions will be held for Coordinating Committee and Workgroup members from 2 to 4:30 p.m. at H-GAC on September 19.

## **10. Future Meeting Dates**

September 25, 10AM  
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

October 23, 10AM  
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor  
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

November 27, 10AM  
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor  
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

## **11. Adjourn**

Following a motion by Joe Web, seconded by Ron Drachenberg, the Coordinating Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:**

Please contact Meredith Dang, H-GAC  
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[meredith.dang@h-gac.com](mailto:meredith.dang@h-gac.com)