

Next Steps for Workgroups

The next major workplan item that the workgroups will be assisting with is the development of metrics. There will be two sets of meetings to cover this topic, the first, to be held in November 2011, will result in the development of draft metrics. The second meeting, to be held in February 2012, will result in a recommended list of metrics including evaluation methodologies that will then be presented for approval at the March 2012 Coordinating Committee meeting.

Proposed Approach:

The technical workgroups will meet two weeks prior to the transect groups. The target date for the technical workgroup meetings is Friday, November 4th. The targeted date for the transect group meetings is Thursday, November 17th. The intent of staggering the meetings is that the outputs of the technical workgroup meetings will be utilized by the transect groups to refine the proposed draft metrics for applicability to each transect area.

Prior to the workgroup meetings a webinar will be held that all of the workgroup participants would be invited to. This webinar will define metrics, discuss why are they important, and how will they be utilized in this plan. The intent of holding a webinar is that all of the workgroup participants will arrive at their respective November meeting with a clear understanding of the purpose of the metrics work they will be undertaking. The targeted date for this webinar is Thursday, October 27th. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the sustainability website so that any workgroup participant who was unable to participate in the live webinar would be able to access it prior to their workgroup meeting.

Prior to the meeting, each workgroup will be sent out the list of opportunities and challenges that came out of the kick-off meeting as well as the elements of sustainability and sustainability definition for their topic area. These will be utilized as a starting point for the creation of draft metrics (general ideas on what we want to measure, not methodology on how to measure, see example below) that have been researched by H-GAC staff and/or interested Coordinating Committee members. The task for the November meeting will be for the technical workgroups to come up with a list of draft metrics that will be refined at the February meeting.

The assignment for the workgroup members between the November and the February meeting (a deadline in January will be given) will be for a workgroup member to be assigned (based on their expertise) to each draft metric that the group came up with. They will be provided a template to complete that will have them research that metric and propose the specific methodology for measuring it.

At the February meeting each workgroup member that researched a metric will present their proposed methodology. The task for the February meeting will be to come up with a recommended final list of metrics for Coordinating Committee approval.

A simplified example of this process is illustrated below:

** Please note this is an EXAMPLE, intended to illustrate the process. The specifics in this example are from the Chicago area sustainability plan. The actual content and recommendations will be determined by the workgroups.

Workgroup: Transportation

- For November: Create list of potential metrics using workgroup kick-off materials as a starting point. For example, one transportation metric could be:
 - Increase commitment to public transit –
- For February: Generate specific targets to be used to evaluate the region's success in achieving the metric. For example, for the above metric targets could include:
 - Increase transit ridership per weekday (2.3m by 2015 and 4m by 2040),
 - Increase population and jobs with access to transit (walking distance of transit 69% by 2015 and 75% by 2040)

The recommendations for the specific targets will be generated by the workgroup members who will conduct research and complete a template.

JOINABILITY

Background

Joinability refers to the ability of additional entities to become members of the Coordinating Committee. The following is the language contained in the Bylaws of the Coordinating Committee and the MOA's signed by each Coordinating Committee that relate to the issue of joinability.

From the Bylaws

Additional Membership

The Coordinating Committee may invite additional entities to be represented on the Coordinating Committee after consideration and a vote of at least three-fifths of the representatives or alternates present and voting during an appropriately scheduled and noticed meeting.

From the MOA's

Joinability - The Coordinating Committee and H-GAC may add entities to the Coordinating Committee as circumstances and conditions warrant, and will monitor and reassess the composition of the Coordinating Committee to ensure that it adequately represents the diversity of perspectives necessary to complete a plan that fulfills the objectives of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program and can be implemented in the region upon adoption by regional policy makers and governmental authorities.

Current Situation

Items for discussion include:

- How to assess if the composition of the Coordinating Committee has gaps
- How to process requests for becoming Coordinating Committee members
 - Do we want to have an evaluation committee?
 - Do we want to have an application?
- Timing of joinability frequency

The desire is to have a policy in place regarding joinability prior to formal requests from entities are received so that requests will be handled in a consistent manner.

GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Background

Charge of the Committee:

The Governmental Advisory Committee will provide local government policy guidance for the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, including guidance on implementation strategies recommended during preparation of the Plan.

Appointment and Composition

This committee, to be comprised of elected City and County officials, will be appointed by the H-GAC Board of Directors; with membership that is representative of the 13-county region including appropriate representation from urban, suburban, rural and coastal areas. The Governmental Advisory Committee should be no larger than 20 members, with at least one representative from each county and one-half of the members representing cities. The City of Houston should have two representatives and two should be from Harris County.

Requested Action

Request approval of the preferred charge and composition for appointment of the Governmental Advisory Committee.

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