

Meeting Minutes
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant
Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium
Tuesday, April 24, 2012 10 a.m. to Noon
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:

Blueprint Houston, Martha Murphree
Center for Houston's Future, Donna Rybiski
City of Galveston, Lori Field Schwarz
City of Houston, Amar Mohite
City of Huntsville, Chandra Steinback
Fort Bend County, Ron Drachenberg
Gulf Coast Economic Development Corporation, Chuck Wemple
Harris County, Christy Lambright
H-GAC, Cheryl Mergo
Houston Wilderness, Victoria Herrin
LISC, Katy Atkiss
METRO, Shaida Libhart
NCI, Emiliano Herrera
Sam Houston State University, Cheryl Hudec
UTMB, Alexandra Nolen

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

Liz Drake and Ellen Heath, AECOM; M. Barthelemy, J. Donna Konda, Sungmin Lee, B.M. Reyes, MD, and Anna Sedillo, City of Houston; Mayra Bontemps, Jared Briggs, and Kelly Opot, Harris County; Amy Boyers, Meredith Dang, Erin Livingston, Kelly Porter, Andrea Tantillo, Amanda Thorin, and Nicholas Williams, H-GAC; and Richard Cron, Houston Wilderness.

1. Regular Business – Call to Order

Chuck Wemple, Coordinating Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:08 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 March 27, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Action: Motion made by Donna Rybiski, seconded by Ron Drachenberg, to approve the meeting minutes.

The Coordinating Committee approved the minutes.

5. Goals (Information)

Meredith Dang presented an overview of the April 13 Metrics symposium and offered a proposed timeline for the next steps.

During the April 13 meeting, workgroup members discussed goals, including the new proposed goals, and developed draft objectives. Workgroup members also discussed metrics, what type of information is available, how the metrics may match the objectives and any gaps that may be present in the metrics and objectives.

The proposed timeline presented is as follows:

Transcribe all notes from the April 13 meeting and send copies to the Coordinating Committee and workgroup members the week of May 7.

H-GAC staff members and Coordinating Committee members meet to compare the metrics against other published indicators locally, regionally and nationally and to review new goals wording during the weeks of May 7-14.

Data availability review on metrics (spatial, non-spatial, source, etc.) the week of May 14 and document metrics evolution for workgroups the week of May 21.

Coordinating Committee will review goals, metrics and objectives for the May 23 meeting.

Prepare for the goals and metrics open house event the week of May 28.

Hold open house event for workgroups the week of June 7.

The Coordinating Committee will approve goals and metrics for use in the planning process (subject to revision) during the June Coordinating Committee meeting.

Discussion

Did we spend enough time on developing objectives? Are they being vetted enough? Are we spending as much time on the objectives as we did on the goals?

For every broad goal, the workgroups brainstormed objectives. H-GAC staff welcomes additional feedback for achieving a robust dialog on objectives.

Will work on the scenarios help us identify which objectives help us meet our goals?

Scenarios will help people to compare possible futures, but there will be a finite number of scenarios. The goal prioritization during public meetings will help us know which goals to build scenarios around.

We still have a lot of work to do on the objectives before they are acceptable and relatable to the Governmental Advisory Committee and the public. We shouldn't slow down on the metrics, but we need to work more on the objectives too.

We need to include refining and polishing the objectives in the timeline.

H-GAC staff will update the timeline to include reviewing and refining objectives.

When you are asking the Coordinating Committee to approve the metrics (at the June meeting) are you also asking us to approve the objectives?

Yes

Meredith Dang offered a discussion on the proposed new goals, based on input gathered during public meetings. The three common themes for goals that should be included in the plan but weren't included in the initial draft goals included resiliency, community structure and personal freedoms. H-GAC staff developed preliminary language for the new goals and presented them to the workgroups during the April 13 symposium and requested feedback.

Discussion

What is a metric for measuring individual freedom?

Voter participation is one metric.

During the community meetings, the tone seemed to be more about local government autonomy and less about individuals.

Autonomy and individual freedoms is open to different interpretations.

There was some concern that cities and counties would be required to do something. People want the ability to define their own future.

There may be regional strategies proposed in the plan, but it's up to the local governments to decide what they want to do.

Property rights are dictated by the state.

We need a goal to inform governments and people about what sustainability is.

Can we add "social capital" to the civic goal ("social capital" means community networking)

Can we keep the language in layman's terms? That's something we need to do as a Coordinating Committee – make sure we use language that's understandable.

"Social capital," like "local autonomy" is a buzzword.

How is the new resiliency goal different from prosperity goal #1?

The original goal doesn't include environmental resiliency.

Would climate change and sea level change be topics for objectives? Are they considered natural disasters?

The Foresight Panel on Environmental Effects includes metrics and objectives for resiliency. This document has been approved by the H-GAC Board of Directors.

Did the notion of resiliency in our systems come up?

We have discussed all sorts of resiliency – recovery, preparedness, working together, systems.

Meredith Dang offered a discussion on the existing conditions report. This report is a deliverable required by HUD. It will provide a snapshot of where we are in relation to the sustainability goals. It refers to big picture items and will be 15 to 20 pages long. HUD requires grantees to show the connection between the goals of the plan and the livability principles. This will be a stand-alone document we can use for education and will be added to as we get new maps and data. It will be a living document. The template is being designed, and it will look nice.

Meredith Dang also reported that H-GAC, on behalf of the Coordinating Committee, made a formal request for technical assistance from Policy Link.

6. Public Engagement (Information)

Draft public engagement reports were distributed with the meeting materials. Any comments should be returned to the H-GAC staff by April 27.

Liz Drake with AECOM provided a community engagement update:

- 23 community meetings have been scheduled, with 5 more in the works
- We have already had 180 new meeting participants
- New participants include joint outreach through H-GAC's Regional Transportation Plan efforts
- Community partners include super neighborhoods and international groups.

Discussion

Is there any outreach to university students?

H-GAC has participated in more than a dozen events, as requested including at universities.

What does our participation in a Rotary Club meeting look like?

It's a 15-20 minute overview, followed by survey distribution.

Is there a cut-off date for distributing surveys?

May 10 is the cut-off date for surveys to be included in the report. After that we want to transition to a new topic.

Two members have requested that H-GAC facilitate presentations to meetings that they organized. While H-GAC staff is always willing to help, all Coordinating Committee members are encouraged to facilitate at meetings whenever possible.

The Public Engagement Subcommittee will convene to develop a scope for the next phase. They subcommittee will propose this scope at the May Coordinating Committee meeting.

7. Healthy Housing (Presentation)

Dr. Brenda Reyes with the Houston Department of Health and Human Services provided a presentation on healthy housing.

8. GAC (Discussion)

During the April Coordinating Committee meeting, members asked for an upcoming schedule of events for the Governmental Advisory Committee. It is as follows:

- June 19 – review and refine objectives and metrics and provide input on scenarios
- September 18 – discuss scenario modeling
- December 18 – implementation strategies

All of the meetings are open meeting and Coordinating Committee members are encouraged to attend. Note that these dates are tentative.

9. Updates

Financial Report: Meredith Dang presented the financial report.

Fair Housing Equity Assessment: H-GAC staff will lead the effort for this HUD-required deliverable; however a working committee is needed to help craft a scope of work and RFP for a consultant. Christy Lambright, Amar Mohite and Lexi Nolen volunteered to serve on the working committee. Chuck Wemple also noted he would reach out to Joanne Ducharme as a possible member.

10. Other Business and Announcements

No other business was presented.

11. Future Meeting Dates

No announcements were made.

12. Future Meeting Dates

May 23, 2012, 2 PM

H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

June 26, 2012, 10 AM

H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

July 24, 2012, 10 AM

H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

13. Adjourn

Chuck Wemple announced that the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 PM

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Please contact Meredith Dang, H-GAC

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