

Governmental Advisory Committee

Background

At the June meeting the Coordinating Committee approved a motion to begin the process of empanelling the Governmental Advisory Committee. The Bylaws of the Coordinating Committee state that the Governmental Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the H-GAC Board of Directors. In order to assist in the appointment process, the following details need to be established:

- What is the charge of the Committee?
- What is the preferred composition of the Committee?
- What is the proposed target date for Committee appointment?

The following information about the Governmental Advisory Committee has already been established:

From the grant application:

The organizational structure can be generally compared to a building project. The Coordinating Committee should be thought of as a project manager, the Governmental Advisory Committee as the clients, and the Technical Advisory and Regional Transect groups as the sub-contractors. The Governmental Advisory Committee will consist of elected officials and will act with a limited power of veto but will not generate content. The Governmental Advisory Committee provides an important opportunity to expand cross-cutting policy knowledge among local elected officials. All reports, recommendations, and work products will be presented to the committee to ensure that local elected officials and decision-makers are included in the learning and feedback process. The Governmental Advisory Committee will vet and provide feedback on the feasibility of implementation strategies and monitor the progress of plan development and implementation. The Governmental Advisory Committee will encourage their respective governments to gain approval, adoption and coordinated implementation of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

From the Bylaws:

The Governmental Advisory Committee is comprised of elected officials throughout the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. The Governmental Advisory Committee is appointed by the Board of Directors of the Houston- Galveston Area Council. The Governmental Advisory Committee provides guidance to the Coordinating Committee about the likelihood of political support for the Plan. The Governmental Advisory Committee will provide advice about the products and strategies developed by the Coordinating Committee throughout the planning process. The Governmental Advisory Committee shall evaluate products of the Coordinating Committee through the livability principles developed by HUD and its federal partners and their local practicality. The H-GAC Board of Directors should appoint a Committee that is representative of the whole region with attention paid to the most populous city and most populous county in the 13 county region. The Governmental Advisory Committee should be no larger than 20 members.

Composition Considerations:

- Transect based, requiring a set or minimum number of representatives from each of the grant's transect areas (urban, suburban, rural, coastal)

June 13, 2011

Dear Sustainable Communities Grant Partners:

As part of the Sustainable Communities Grant funded by the Office of Housing and Urban Development, we are required to provide matching funds of 75 percent of the approved grant amount. The total contract amount is \$3,750,000 and the match amount is \$2,828,616 over a 3-year period. The contract period is from February 1, 2011 to February 2, 2013.

As one of our partners, you have agreed to supply us with in-kind match to meet our programmatic goals. Please submit to H-GAC by the 20th of the month, following the end of a quarter. We are asking you submit your match contributions on a quarterly basis with each quarter as follows:

Quarter	Months Included	Date Due
1st & 2nd ***	February – July 2011	20-Aug-11
3rd	August – October 2011	20-Nov-11
4th	November– January 2011	20-Feb-12
5th	February – April 2011	20-May-11
6th	May – July 2011	20-Aug-11
7th	August – October 2011	20-Nov-11
8th	November 2011– January 2012	20-Feb-12
9th	February – April 2012	20-May-12
10th	May – July 2012	20-Aug-12
11th	August – October 2012	20-Nov-12
Final	November 2012– January 2013	20-Feb-13

*** note this is a combined report

We have attached the partner match form and a set of guidelines describing the supporting documentation that will need to be submitted. The partner match form should contain a summary of all charges that have been calculated. Other forms of match that may be included are sign-in sheets from meetings, mileage to and from sustainable communities events and any associated travel.

If possible, we are asking each entity to setup a separate charge code to track match that will be reported to H-GAC. By doing this, an accounting or payroll report can be generated that will clearly show the reported match, including all costs associated with the earned salary (i.e. fringe, indirect, allocations).

We look forward to working closely with all of you. If there are any questions, please contact me, Cheryl Mergo, Sustainable Development Program Manager, at 713-993-4520 or at cheryl.mergo@h-gac.com.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Mergo

[Recipient Name]
July 25, 2011
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Sustainable Development Program Manager

7-26-2011

Aspirations

Transit (Access)

- World class transit.
- New transit.
- Full funding for METRO rail projects.
- We came to our senses and did not build the grand parkway but improved our existing infrastructure, improved our street networks, and greatly expanded our transit system.
- Felt good.
 - Regional mass transit system.
 - Greenspaces revitalization.

Change

- Used data.
- Sustainability.
- Changing the way jurisdictions/agencies do business.
- Didn't agree on all details but got consensus on big stuff.
- We turned 180 degrees to sustainability and will survive.
- Our community's future needs.
- Cleared a lasting framework for positive change through existing and new venues.
- Finally, all of our hard work paid off, but there more to go.

Action/Implementation

- Adopted locally. Policy changes that help make plan happen in each jurisdiction.
- Commitment (and excitement) for implementation.
- Plans being implemented for turning poorly used land into green space.
- Actionable plans for all stakeholders with clear path to implementation.
- Real plans and metrics to improve quality of life, especially for low-income.
- Built capacity to implement the plan among the stakeholders.
- Buy-in from jurisdictions/agencies and commitments to adopting implementation strategies.

Neighborhood/Mixed Urbanism

- Green building.
- Neighborhood villages.
- 2014. Happy that linking housing issues to economy and environment (a) improved rural economies with work force/housing and (b) reduced impacts of Hurricane Bob on low income households.
- Shops for the neighborhood and jobs for locals. People walking, meeting neighbors. Kids coming home from school on transit.
- **Plans for several mixed income/mix use projects within urban Houston.**

Housing

- Plans for several mixed income/mix use projects within urban Houston.
- Encouraging preservation of historic areas with infill to continue sustainable principles.
- Lifestyle balance.

Quality of Life

- Lifestyle balance.
- We decided to be the healthiest, happiest, most prosperous people in the nation.
- Sustainable health and education.
- Sustainable healthy food supply.
- Plan covers most basic needs up to “ideal outcomes”.

Economic Development

- Houston NASA leads nation in technology development.
- Leading technology sector.
- Gulf coast’s largest port facility.
- Local green entrepreneurship.
- Good/quality job opportunities for all segments of population.

Education

- Great school system.
- Context sensitivity.

Regionalism

- Why didn’t it say GREATER Houston?
- Region moves beyond collection of wealth and goods as primary focus. Region realizes inter-connectivity from urban to rural.
- Human scale regional collaboration.
- Now! Everyone in the region knows about this!
- Regional cooperation and understanding.
- Collective thinking not as individuals.
- Emphasize numerous collaboration.
- Grappled with tough issues. Re: turf and jurisdiction.
- Future connectedness. More connected? Less connected?

Environment

- Coastal management strategies.
- Preserved land.
- Gulf coast region finds balance between nature, quality of life, and economy.
 - Sustainability is not constant growth.
 - Pride in process.
- Houston region adopts environmentally friendly growth practices. I can stay here, we can stay here.

- Include disaster planning with sustainability principles.
- Address climate adaptation strategies.

Equity

- More choices.
- Plans and metrics for improved quality of life for all segments of population especially low income.
- Jobs, transit, services, education, opportunities for all in region (geography, race, income, language).

Pride

- Feels good to be positive sustainability model.
- We did it our way! (not government mandated).
- Connectivity – a strong sense of belonging pride!
- National and international recognition.
- Proud to be part of plan.
- Included in something bigger than the city.
- Progressive.
- Excitement that I was able to play a small role.
- Pride in my city/region somewhat surprised.
- Pleasure in accomplishing a long desired goal.
- Proud that Houston has received recognition.
- Relieved that it worked.
- Ready to make the project successful.

Diversity/Inclusivity

- Created plan that was inclusive, adaptable, replicable.
- Far reaching inclusive process. Specific goals and objectives. Proud to be a part.
- Grappled with and worked through the tough issues.
- Success of diverse public engagement strategies in region.
- Extensive engagement: residents, public sector, businesses, institutions, NPOs, political, etc.
- Many parties businesses, cities, non-profits, etc. have brought in and contributed resources to action plans.
- Focused on commonalities and connections.
- Happy that we set a record for the number and diversity of people who participated.
- We actually agreed (citizens, public officials, biz leaders) to embrace sustainability and not “greenwash” the plan.
- Policies and representatives actually represent the diversity of the area.
- There is a sense of community.
- All parts of community signed-on/bought in with real resources.

- Newspaper described a successful and inclusive process for developing the sustainability plan for the region. I am proud that I was part of the planning process and plan created.

1-26-2011

Inspirations

- Stewardship
- Lifestyle
- Choice
- Balance
- Wellness
- Believes that the Houston region should have a plan that benefits equitable outcomes for everyone.
- This plan gives us a chance to tell our story.
- I hope it will create a lasting framework for the region to work together.
- We have a chance to truly forge a public consensus on the region's future path.
- The future
- Don't want Brazoria County left out of planning
- Grouping areas that were normally viewed as single problems into system wide problems.
- Housing needs transportation and vice versa.
- To participate in a larger region in smart growth plan
- Represent very rural area with huge high paying job opportunities. Need to plan for that impact.
- Sustainable communities are important to everyone.
- Opportunity for change and working together towards sustainability.
- Ensure "seat and table" and interests and considered.
- Ensure the non-profit community is at the table and involved in planning and implementing.
- Expand opportunity for low-income members of our community
- To ensure that rural areas are included in the regional plan.
- What is equity?
 - Who – social
 - Where – spatial
 - When – generational
 - What – quality of life, health, jobs, etc.
- Improve the region's quality of life for residents and demonstrate that sustainability is more than a catch phrase.
- A healthful place
- Opportunity for public engagement and community building
- Having the possibility that our region can be shaped by the people who live in this region.
- Community
- Building better relationship
- Superior quality of life
- Future generations

- Humanity
- Freedom and equality
- Holistic health
- The opportunity to encourage genuine diverse inclusion in the advancement of sustainability and prosperity for Houston.
- Community
- Chance to wave together all aspects of society
- Better future for my children and grandchildren. Healthy, happy, prosperous
- The future
- Don't want Brazoria County left out.
- Hoping for Houston to have a general plan
- All the people attending now. Showing commitment to the planning process and making Houston a better place.
- My inspirations are my great-niece and nephews, nature, kindness, sharing fairness, openness
- Working in numerous older communities, I want to preserve and encourage the components that make it livable, resilient and sustainable.
- Issues to be addressed in this effort represent my interest in the profession of planning and the most critical issues facing our region and nation.
- Inspired that our city is working with surrounding counties to develop/implement a long range plan to make our region a vibrant and healthy place in which to live.
- Potential of our region that can be achieved through better collaboration and coordination.
- Driving from Fort Bend County everyday to work and participate in sustainable activities.

Key Success Factors

Cluster 1

- Voting creates division among members
- Hybrid model: consensus of group, then vote for record.
- Who is doing the work? CCC or H-GAC?
- How to best utilize resources of each member?

Cluster 2

- Be deliberate about what we need to learn.
- FTP site to share new data about change/emerging.
- Evaluate and report back on successes and failures.

Cluster 3

- Identify community leaders to engage the community
- Define sustainability
- Build a common language

Cluster 4

- Develop committee goals
- Foster respect for entire committee and staff
- Defining responsibilities
- Beat the drum
- Spotlight synergies (on-going)

Cluster 5

- Global issues and where decisions will be made. Where they are being made.
- Defining work and roles. Administrative vs. process.
- H-GAC staff should be accountable to consortium not vice versa. Consortium should set direction. H-GAC should carry out with oversight.
- Global issues should be the focus of the consortium as a whole not discussed/decided by emails.
- Scoping the project
 - What are the roles?
 - Relationship between and the rest
 - H-GAC as organization vs.
 - H-GAC as one member of group
- Understanding incentives

Sustainability Peer Information Exchange

Common Projects and Priorities

Economic

- Use access to fresh food through grocery stores and farmers' markets as economic development
- Use of sustainable development which includes mixed use, infill, and green building as a profitable development model.
- Protect and create more open space in both developed areas and the urban fringe for both food and recreation
- Ensure a housing mix (both housing type and price points) for the viability and stability of communities.
- Create and support more financial incentives/mechanisms for businesses and green development.
- Increase support for local businesses and "buy local" initiatives.
- Increase capacity and partnerships with local communities.
- Create more attractive context-sensitive, livable centers and places that are inclusive, revitalize existing areas, enhance quality of life, create connections, and promote memorable places.
- Invest in more job training and outreach for at-risk populations.

Environmental

- Strive for better resource management through green energy, recycling, and the consideration of the "life-cycle" of items.
- Continue planning and associated initiatives to ensure a high quality and abundant water supply
- Increase quality of place and life through the creation healthy, context sensitive, place-making development, access to fresh food, and high quality exports (goods).
- Educate the public and leadership.
- Strive for well planned green development to avoid negative externalities such as the "heat island" effect and piecemeal infrastructure.
- Foster a development culture that considers and preserves the context for rural and urban areas
- Further preserve important natural areas that provide critical ecological services and habitat
- Further develop public/private/non-profit partnerships
- Ensure environmental justice for all

Healthy Communities

- Use the health assessments in rural counties to promote positive change
- Focus on substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Further development of infrastructure that promotes public wellness (complete streets, transit, trails, parks)
- Increase access to healthy food – urban gardening and local food
- Increase access and knowledge of health resources
- Continued promotion of green building and jobs
- Increase awareness about Veterans’ issues including challenges to housing
- Educate for youth on nature and healthy living

Housing

- Construct homes that meet needs, not desires
- Create a housing stock that last longer, higher quality materials (it doesn’t have to look affordable)
 - Sustainable and energy-efficient materials
 - Lowering home ownership costs
- Target and investment in deteriorated neighborhoods
- Use a collaborative approach to address issues beyond housing (other sustainable concepts)
- Steady the regulatory environment
- Strive for a mix of housing types and price points for a mix of people
- Lessen the difficulty in finding funding for transitional clients
- New housing should avoid flood plains and storm surge zones
- Revitalization should be for people representing a variety of demographic types
- Add allowances to support green building
- Further partnership amongst entities
- Address the transient nature of region does to provide more “social” sustainability

Transportation

- Examine the “Last Mile” of trips – how do you get from the bus to your office? What are the intermodal connections between the “last mile” of your trip (walking, biking, trucking, buses, etc)
- Strive for cleaner air
- Engage in building green streets
- Focus on efficient land use patterns/ transit oriented development
- Continue to increase the capacity of local groups
- More need for multi-modal transportation planning and complete streets

- Increase connectivity in the region
- Continue to develop best practices toolbox, and implementation efforts
- Need to work with developing communities on infrastructure and planning issues
- Shift the priorities of the region towards sustainable projects and outcomes
- Garner support from the community at large
- Plan for growth and development that is inclusive of all groups
- Coordinate efforts to avoid duplication
- Base public sector investments on long-term plans and vision vs. short-term cycles
- Increased education of elected officials

Overarching needs and common ties of all groups:

- Further information sharing
 - Specific data needs on: walkability, obesity, access to food, zoning, recycling, legislation
- Staff and resource sharing
- More funding
- More education of the public, officials, and other decision makers
- More communication between public, organizations, officials, and others
- More collaboration amongst groups, and individuals, and within the region at-large
- Shift the priorities of public and leadership for further policy changes and sustainable outcomes

Facilitator Instructions for Workgroup Kick-off Event

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup Kick-off event as a group facilitator on Friday, August 5th, 2011.

The workgroup exercises will begin after the break in the agenda, scheduled for 10:15 to 12:00. Please plan on attending the entire kick-off event to ensure you will be there for the workgroup exercises.

Each of the nine workgroups will have at a minimum one facilitator and one scribe. Scribes will document comments from the facilitated group on provided flip charts or whiteboard. Scribes will be responsible for transcribing the notes after the kick-off event and emailing them to sustainability@h-gac.com.

There is a total of 1 hour and 45 minutes allocated for the facilitated exercises, which are divided into two topics: ice-breaker exercises and planning exercises.

Ice Breaker

Begin with the ice-breaker exercises and make sure to complete by 11:00 am to leave enough time for the planning exercises.

Explain the purpose of the ice-breaker: that they're going to be working together for several years, want them to have a comfort level and feel open since it will be a collaborative process.

Start by introducing yourself, following the 3 bullets:

- What is your areas of expertise or interest that you focus on
- Why you wanted to get involved in the sustainable communities planning process
- What you hope the resulting plan and the planning process will accomplish

Tell participants to limit to one minute (depending on the size of your group). There is 45 minutes total for the ice-breaker exercise including the assessment of knowledge areas (to be completed following the introductions). If your group finishes this more quickly, you'll have more time for the assessment of knowledge areas. You do not need to wait to begin the next exercise if you finish the ice breaker early.

Assessment of knowledge area dot exercise

The assessment of knowledge areas is the large paper that will be posted in your room listing areas of expertise. Each participant will be given a small sheet of dot stickers to place next to their areas of expertise; this will provide a visual assessment of the breadth of expertise as well as potential gap areas. If you have extra time you can discuss the results with the group. This will probably take about 10 minutes.

Planning Exercise

This will be the transition to the next set of exercises which focus more on the planning items. You will need to be vigilant in time keeping to ensure you have enough time for the planning exercise. You should start the planning exercise no later than 11:00.

Explain the purpose of the planning exercises: to begin to discuss the topic or transect area in terms of sustainability and to highlight some of the key opportunities and challenges that may be encountered during the planning process.

Sustainability Definition

The goal is to have the group come to a definition of what sustainability means in terms of their workgroup area. For example, what are the elements of a sustainable transportation system, a sustainable environment, a sustainable economy, or a sustainable rural community? Allocate 20 minutes for this portion of the exercise.

Each group will have a blue piece of paper. Have the scribe write the group's definition, or top 3 elements, on the paper at the end of the 20 minute discussion.

If the discussion is stalling, try some prompting questions (this is an example for transportation group, this could be tailored for any of the technical groups):

- What would an ideal transportation system look like to you?
- If you had a magic wand what would you change about the current transportation system?
- Pretend it's fifty years from now and we've achieved a sustainable transportation system, what does that look like? If you compare the transportation system in 2061 to in 2011, what differences are there?

Identify Opportunities and Challenges

The second planning exercise is identifying opportunities and challenges to achieving the sustainability definition from the first exercise. There is 40 minutes total for this exercise, this includes leaving time for the group to decide on the #1 opportunity and the #1 challenge, to be written on the green (opportunity) and red (challenge) papers.

- For opportunities: Given the definition they came up with, what currently exists (assets within the region) that can be built off of to achieve the definition?
- For challenges: What are the hurdles? Challenges can also be viewed as areas that we'll need to focus on during the grant.

- If the discussion is stalling you can use the areas of expertise listed on the assessment of knowledge areas to ask if each one is an area that is a challenge or an opportunity (or both).
- If they get bogged down on a particular sub-topic, push them towards the bigger picture.
- Make sure to leave time to discuss what is the #1 challenge and #1 opportunity.

For the transect groups:

Discussion of Uniqueness (Transect Groups only)

There is one additional exercise for the transect groups, which is a discussion of what makes that transect area unique. The purpose of this exercise is for the transect groups to start feeling some cohesion as a group and seeing the assets that the transect area has. Make sure to prod them into discussing as many of the topic areas as you can (housing, transportation, environment, etc, as it relates to their transect area) so that the discussion does not get too minutely focused.

There will most likely be overlap between this exercise and the other two exercises. As there are 3 planning exercises, allocate 20 minutes for each, keeping a close eye on the time to leave enough time to fill out the blue, green, and red papers.

For the other two exercises you will follow the instructions listed above, the only change being for the definition of sustainability, it will be how do we define a sustainable urban (or suburban, rural, or coastal) area? What are the elements that constitute a sustainable urban (or suburban, rural, or coastal) area? What are the opportunities and challenges?

The blue, green, and red papers will be read back to the full group after everyone reconvenes in the auditorium by the facilitator.

Workgroup Kick-Off Facilitator Sign-Up Sheet

Workgroup	Facilitator	Facilitator 2	Scribe
Transportation			
Housing	K. Opot		
Economic Dev			
Environment	J. Webb		
Healthy Communities			
Urban	D. Crossley		
Suburban			
Rural			
Coastal			

Agenda for August 5th Workgroup Kick-off

8:30 – 9:00 Registration and Breakfast

9:00 Welcome/Introduction

9:15 Background Presentation

- Overview of grant
- Role of workgroups
- Existing Conditions overview
- Instructions for break-out

10:00 – 10:15 Break

10:15 – 11:00 Break-out exercises

- Member Introductions
 - Area of expertise
 - Why got involved
 - What want Plan to achieve

11:00 – 12:00 Planning Exercise

- Sustainability definition for each topic/transect area
- Challenges and opportunities to achieving sustainability
- For transect groups: what makes your area unique/special

12:00 – 12:30 Wrap up

- Color coded priorities
- Next steps
- Evaluation/questionnaire
 - Plans for existing plan inventory

HUD Sustainable Communities Partner Match

1. **Reporting Period** From: _____ To: _____

2. **Contact Information**

Organization: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Contact Name: _____ Contact e-mail: _____

3. **Staff and/or Volunteer Time**

Name	Title	Staff (S) or Volunteer (V)	Task (such as meeting, peer review, research, etc.)	Hours	Rate	Total

Enter person's name and title. Describe the task(s) on which the person spent his/her time. If "Other Task" then please specify. Note the hours spent for all activities (not individual tasks, but all the tasks together, including overhead), the rate of pay per hour that a staff person charges, and the total amount (hours x rate = total).

4. **Meeting Expenses**

Description	Date	Cost

Please note any meeting expenses incurred by the community for public meetings or multi-community staff meetings.

5. **Travel Expenses**

Name	Description	Mileage	Rate	Total
			X	=

6. **Other Expenses**

Description	Date	Cost

Print Name

Title

Signature of Representative

Date

1-26-2011

- Population thresholds, requiring representatives from jurisdictions of differing population thresholds to ensure representation from small, medium, and large jurisdictions
- Geographic based, requiring a set or minimum number of representatives from each County, and/or supplementing with representative from cities.

For all of these options, they could be weighted by population (more populous areas receiving more representatives on the committee)

Recommended Action: Coordinating Committee members approve a charge and composition recommendation for the empanelling of the Governmental Advisory Committee.

7-26-2011