

Meeting Minutes
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant
Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium
Tuesday, September 27, 2011 10 a.m. to Noon
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayra Bontemps, Harris County,
Sarah Cerrone, Chambers County,
David Crossley, Houston Tomorrow,
Ron Drachenberg, Fort Bend County,
Joanne Ducharme, Montgomery County
DC Dunham, Bay City Community Development Corporation
Lori Feild Schwarz, City of Galveston,
Emiliano Herrerra III, Neighborhood Centers Inc.
Victoria Herrin, Houston Wilderness
David Hitchcock, Houston Advance Research Center
Michael Kramer, City of Houston,
Sherry McKibben, City of Huntsville,
Curtis McMinn, United Way of Greater Houston
Jeff Taebel, Houston-Galveston Area Council
Amanda Timm, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Monique Ward, METRO,
Joe Webb, Blue Print Houston,
Chuck Wemple, Gulf Coast Economic Development District

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

Will Allen, The Conservation Fund; Amy Boyers, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Jared Briggs, Harris County; Toni Candis, Harris County; Richard Cron, Houston Wilderness; Meredith Dang, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Garrett Dolan, Rice University; Cheryl Mergo, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Gina Mitteco, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Martha Murphree, Blueprint Houston; Tulsi Patel, Local Initiatives Support Corporation; Diana Ponce De Leon, City of Houston; Anna Sedillo, City of Houston; Andrea Tantillo, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Amanda Thorin, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Shelley Whitworth, Houston-Galveston Area Council; and Nicholas Williams, Houston-Galveston Area Council

1. Regular Business – Call to Order

Chuck Wemple, Coordinating Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Certify Quorum

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

3. Public Comment

No public comments were provided.

4. Approval of August 23, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Action: Motion made by Joe Webb, seconded by Mike Kramer, to approve the meeting minutes.

The Coordinating Committee approved the minutes.

5. Joinability

Meredith Dang presented a report from the ad hoc committee temporarily established to discuss joinability (the need and method to be used to add members to the Coordinating Committee). The ad hoc committee met and conducted an initial brainstorm of existing gaps on the committee, including a major employer, foundation, health organization, umbrella education organization, rural non-government representative, representative from real estate or finance, and umbrella representative from management districts. The ad hoc committee agreed that the gap assessment should be used to identify specific organizations or individuals to send the application materials to. The call for new members would also be posted online. Interested groups/individuals would be required to complete the interest form and would receive a background paper on the role and function of the Coordinating Committee (Ms. Dang presented a draft of this background paper.) The ad hoc committee recommended a timeline to have new members on board by January:

- Follow-up meeting to identify targeted groups/individuals to send application materials to in early October
- Application materials published online November 4
- Applications due by December 5 to allow time for evaluation committee review
- New members voted on by Coordinating Committee on December 19 (would require a 3/5 majority vote from the Coordinating Committee to become a member)

Discussion:

Any organization that applies for membership and is approved will be a member of the Coordinating Committee, will have to complete an MOA and will have to bring match.

We need to keep this group manageable and balanced between government and non-government, as well as geography. The Coordinating Committee currently has 12 local government entities and 11 non-government entities as members.

Should we be dividing ourselves up into three categories: government, non-profit and private industry? Need to make sure business is represented on the list and on the Coordinating Committee. It would be beneficial to find an entity that could fill two category slots, such as a major employer who is also a health organization. Also would be good to find organizations that are tied to larger organizations, such as businesses who are members of Chambers of Commerce, who can serve as a conduit for information to and from the larger organizations.

Do we have or can we get an analysis of how other grant recipients across the region have structured their groups in terms of size and distribution? HUD held a summer webinar series for grantees and they completed a similar analysis, and H-GAC staff can provide that information to the Coordinating Committee.

The ad hoc committee did not discuss setting an upper limit to the number of members, and the bylaws also do not set a limit to the number of Coordinating Committee members.

We need to better vet and clarify some of the issues including potential for imbalance, number of members, process to retain the balance and defining the meaning of the gap assessment.

Some of the entities that could fill gaps include the Urban Land Institute and the Greater Houston Partnership. Greater Houston Builders Association should cover the real estate and finance industry.

Government entities will be implementing this plan.

Need to make sure we have a decision-maker (or someone who can speak for the organization) as the representative from entities on the Coordinating Committee.

How many opportunities would we have to open membership to the Coordinating Committee? We wouldn't want to open up membership in the third year of the process. Any member who joins now will be behind and will need to get caught up on the decisions that this group has already made. We will need an orientation meeting for new Coordinating Committee members.

The timeline for securing new members is important to get new members involved as soon as possible after the first of the year in conjunction with major grant milestones, including public engagement and metrics development.

Local governments should be added to the targeted list developed by the ad hoc committee.

Any member of the Coordinating Committee can participate on the ad hoc committee.

Action: Amanda Timm made a motion to defer requested action. The motion was seconded by Sherry McKibben. The Coordinating Committee approved the motion with David Crossley and Jeff Taebel voting no.

Action: Amanda Timm made a motion to send the draft back to staff and the ad hoc committee to conduct additional analysis on the membership distribution as well as to research the best management practices of other grant recipients and provide some clarification in terms of balance and size of the Coordinating Committee and the timeline in which applications for membership will be considered (as needed through a gap assessment at major milestones in the grant process). Joanne Ducharme seconded the motion.

The Coordinating Committee approved the motion.

6. Public Engagement Consultant Scope of Work

Meredith Dang presented the process for the public engagement consultant's scope of work review. The Public Engagement Subcommittee met and reviewed AECOM's proposal and made comments. The comments were provided to AECOM to provide a draft scope of work for the public engagement process for the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. This draft was provided to H-GAC and the

Coordinating Committee the day before the Coordinating Committee meeting, so staff is recommending that Committee members review the draft by the end of the week and provide comments and questions to help further refine the document.

Document Overview

- It is a proposed scope of work for the first four tasks in the workplan, through metric development.
- It is a higher-level document, laying out roles and responsibilities and the general process. It is not the engagement action plan.

Discussion:

The idea that H-GAC staff will do all the profiling doesn't seem proper. There should be more entities involved. Some of what Houston Tomorrow has done over the years has struggled with the profiles that H-GAC has produced.

The scope indicates that the consultant will meet with H-GAC staff, but should meet with and work with the Coordinating Committee.

The first activity listed is a kick-off meeting to find out what governments' priorities are, but everyone should be involved and not just governments.

Concerns were voiced about the level of involvement and role of the Governmental Advisory Committee during the public engagement process. Are they an advisory committee to the Coordinating Committee?

In the draft, which is a response to comments from the Public Engagement Subcommittee on the original proposal, AECOM may not have a clear understanding of the distinction of all the committees we have formed.

The document is a draft and will not be right throughout. This gives the Coordinating Committee the opportunity to guide AECOM through the process.

The data used for this process will be the 2010 US Census data as it is available.

The Coordinating Committee needs to develop processes for working with the Governmental Advisory Committee.

Language in the proposal sounds exclusive that only people who are underserved will be involved in the public engagement process.

The Coordinating Committee should meet with AECOM and the Public Engagement Subcommittee to clarify goals and priorities.

We are going to need to get to the point where we specifically lay out the public engagement plan which will include information such as planning public meetings and leader training and deciding where they will be held. Both data (identifying underserved and not underserved, or transect balance) and budget will affect these decisions.

AECOM is not yet under contract with H-GAC; it is pending the approval of the scope of work.

Community Ambassador Team is referenced throughout the scope. AECOM will not select the members of these groups. The Coordinating Committee members will make those selections. This is the “train the trainer” piece of the engagement.

It’s time for this Committee to look at growing our budget. We need to look at leveraging our in-kind resources strategically and make sure AECOM knows what they are and how to use them and get the most done with who we have at the table.

At the end of the day, AECOM will do the scope that we design for them, and they will do it the way we instruct them to do it. We have a duty to provide them with all the tools that they need to do the job way we want them to do it. The only things they know are the things we tell them, and the only information they have is the information we give them.

AECOM will contract with H-GAC. It will be a contract between two organizations for federal money that H-GAC is managing.

AECOM needs to hear from the Coordinating Committee to put together a document that the Committee is comfortable with to go forward. Staff requested that Coordinating Committee members provide their comments by the end of the day Friday, September 30, 2011. Staff would compile the comments and distribute them to AECOM and the Coordinating Committee the following Monday and follow up with conference call with interested Coordinating Committee members and AECOM.

Possible Next steps: If Coordinating Committee and AECOM get to a place where everyone is comfortable with the priorities and goals following the comments and conference calls, AECOM should provide a revised draft of the scope by the end of the first week of October. H-GAC will complete the contract the second week of October, which takes about a week. So, AECOM could be under contract by the third week of October. If AECOM provides the revised scope by the end of the first week in October, the Coordinating Committee members would have until Monday or Tuesday of the following week to vote electronically on the revised scope.

7. Updates

The H-GAC Board of Directors has approved the recommended processes for empanelling the Governmental Advisory Committee. They will move forward with populating the GAC and ratify it at the November H-GAC Board of Directors meeting.

Dr. Garrett Dolan at Rice University will lead a metrics webinar for workgroup participants on October 26. Workgroup members can sign up for the webinar or can attend it live. The workgroups will meet on November 4 (technical advisory groups) and November 18 (transect groups) to go through metrics exercises.

After the October Coordinating Committee meeting, the Conservation Fund will be holding a session to get input on their methodology for mapping green infrastructure in the 13-county region.

We will have a Houston delegation that will be attending the National Policy Link Equity Summit in Detroit in November. Coordinating Committee members of the delegation include METRO, H-GAC and Neighborhood Centers Inc.

You may have received some e-mails about Senate appropriations and funding for the Partnership for Sustainable Development. To clarify, that vote was not going to affect our funding since we were in the previous funding cycle. The Senate did vote to continue to fund the program.

Nicholas Williams, H-GAC staff, announced that the following entities need to provide their letters designating representatives and alternates to the Coordinating Committee: Brazoria County, Chambers County, Fort Bend County, City of Galveston, City of Huntsville, LISC, Neighborhood Centers Inc., Port of Houston, United Way of Greater Houston and Waller County Economic Development.

We need something on file as simple as a signed letter on letterhead designating Person A as the representative and Person B as the alternate.

8. Announcement

None.

9. Other Business

None.

10. Next Meeting Dates

Tuesday, October 25, 2011, 10 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

November 29, 2011, 10 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

December 19, 2011, 10 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

11. Adjourn

Action: The meeting adjourned at 11:57 AM

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Please contact Meredith Dang, H-GAC

713-993-2443

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