

---

## SUMMARY

### TWG Meeting

June 7, 2023

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Microsoft Teams

## Follow-up Actions from THIS MEETING

- **Anna Fildes** will prepare a summary of this meeting.
- **Madhu Venugopal** will work with **Jamie Zech** on getting a legislative update for the TWG group.
- **Venugopal** will follow up with **Vivek Thimmavajhala** on either presenting or sharing an email update on the registration analysis.
- **Andrew DeCandis** will share ITS MOSERS workgroup needs with **Venugopal**.
- **Fildes** will send calendar invites for FY24 advisory and quarterly meetings (tentative dates).

## Next Meeting

- TWG Advisory Meeting - Thursday, **July 6, 2023** (tentative)
- TWG Quarterly Meeting - Thursday, **September 7, 2023** (tentative)

## Participants

About 40 TWG participants attended via Microsoft Teams.

**Madhu Venugopal** led the meeting and began by welcoming the attendees.

## Updates and Introductions

**Venugopal** stated that on April 12<sup>th</sup>, TWG hosted a presentation by Michael Chamberlain on The Texas EV Plan. A copy of the training can be found via the [TX AQ Portal](#). A copy of the FY24 tentative meeting schedule was shared with the group and participants were encouraged to reach out about any major industry event conflicts.

## Primary Discussion Item

**Venugopal and Chaoyi Gu** presented on the [Year-end 2021 Vehicle Registration Data Assessment](#).

**Venugopal** presented on the [Energy Demand Modeling](#) (a CARTEEH Project).

The group discussed the following topics:

- PROTECT Program
- Resilience Improvement Plan
- DMV Registration Update from TxDOT and TTI

# Agency Information & Updates

## EPA, Jeff Riley

### **Reconsideration of the EPA's December 2020 Decision to Retain 2012 Particulate Matter (PM) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**

On January 6, 2023, EPA Administrator Regan signed the Agency's proposed decision to strengthen the primary (health-based) annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard from the current level of 12.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup> to within a range of 9.0 to 10.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. (soliciting comment low as 8 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, high as 11 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). EPA also proposed not to change the current:

- The secondary (or welfare-based) annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard,
- The primary and secondary 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards (current level 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, EPA is soliciting comments on revising the level to as low as 25 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), and
- The primary and secondary PM<sub>10</sub> standards.

In addition, EPA proposed revisions to other key aspects related to the PM NAAQS, including revisions to the Air Quality Index (AQI) to improve public communications about PM risks (revised breakpoints of good, moderate, unhealthy for sensitive groups, etc. based on proposed revised levels), and revisions to monitoring network design criteria to require monitoring in at-risk communities with anticipated effects from sources in the area contributing to poor air quality.

EPA's [informational webpage](#) contains the [signed & published proposed decision](#), as well as:

- Fact sheets detailing the proposed revisions;
- [Maps of counties](#) not currently meeting lower annual NAAQS values (at 9 & 10 µg/m<sup>3</sup> based on 2019-2021 monitoring data), and;
- An [overview presentation](#) providing a summary of the proposal and other PM information.

The proposed decision was published in the Federal Register on January 27, 2023, with a 60-day public comment period that ended on March 28. EPA will now work to respond to comments and issue a final rulemaking which would determine if & how the PM NAAQS would be revised. Final rulemaking is anticipated in late 2023/early 2024. In the event of a revised PM NAAQS, the final rulemaking begins a 2-year process of designating areas nonattainment (1 year for state recommendations, 2<sup>nd</sup> year for EPA evaluation & designations).

### **Heavy-Duty & Light/Medium-Duty Vehicle Emissions Standards**

On April 12, 2023, EPA announced new proposed federal vehicle emissions standards that will accelerate the ongoing transition to a clean vehicle future and tackle the climate crisis.

EPA's April 12 [press release](#)

- Proposed Rule: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Standards for Heavy-Duty Vehicles – Phase 3 ([more info](#))
  - The Heavy-Duty (HD) Phase 3 GHG standards are the third step of the Clean Trucks Plan & build upon the Heavy-Duty nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)/criteria pollutant standards for model year (MY) 2027 & beyond that were finalized in December 2022. These new and stronger GHG standards phase-in over MYs 2027 through 2032 and apply to HD vocational vehicles (such as delivery trucks, refuse haulers, public utility trucks, transit, shuttle, school buses, etc.) and tractors (such as day cabs and sleeper cabs on tractor-trailer trucks). The proposal is projected to avoid 1.8 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> through 2055.
- Proposed Rule: Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles ([more info](#))
  - The proposed Light & Medium-Duty multi-pollutant emissions standards build upon EPA’s final standards for federal GHG standards for passenger cars and light trucks for MY 2023 through 2026. The proposed standards would significantly reduce passenger car, light truck, and medium-duty vehicle emissions of GHGs, hydrocarbons, NO<sub>x</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, which would result in widespread reductions in air pollution. The standards as proposed would phase in over MYs 2027 through 2032, and they align with commitments made by automakers and U.S. states as they plan to accelerate clean vehicle technologies in the light- and medium-duty fleets in the next 10 to 15 years.

**Clean School Bus Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity**

On April 24, 2023, EPA announced the 2023 Clean School Bus (CSB) Grants Notice of funding opportunity (NOFO). Incorporating stakeholder feedback on the 2022 CSB Rebate program, EPA is providing two separate competitions under this single NOFO to address the unique needs and concerns of diverse recipients. EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$400 million in CSB funding. ([more info](#))

**TCEQ, Jamie Zech**

**Jamie Zech** shared the following updates:

2015 ozone NAAQS SIP revision proposals and rulemaking approved for publication, comment, and public hearing:

- Bexar County AD and RFP SIP revisions
- HGB and DFW AD SIP revisions
- HGB-DFW RFP SIP revision
- I/M SIP revision

- Chapter 114 Bexar County I/M and DFW RVP rulemaking

The comment period opens tomorrow, June 2, 2023, and closes July 17, 2023.

Public hearings will be in person:

DFW in Arlington	July 6, 2023	7:00 PM	Arlington City Council Chambers of Arlington City Hall located at 101 West Abrams Street  Spanish language interpretation provided
HGB in Houston	July 11, 2023	7:00 PM	Houston-Galveston Area Council located at 3555 Timmons Lane #100  Spanish language interpretation provided
BEX in San Antonio	July 13, 2023	7:00 PM	Alamo Area Council of Governments board room located at 2700 Northeast Loop 410, Suite 101  Spanish language interpretation provided

All the projects are accessible from the SIP Hot Topics webpage:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/Hottop.html>

A Houston area ozone Exceptional Events Demonstration was posted on the agency's website on May 24, 2023, for public comment from May 24 through June 24, 2023. The demonstration was developed to establish that ozone concentrations were not reasonably controllable or preventable on certain dates in 2022 at the Houston Bayland Park and Houston Harvard Street monitoring sites. For access to the demonstration and commenting instructions, visit TCEQ's Ozone Data Exceptional Event Flag Demonstrations:

<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/airmod/docs/ozone-data-exceptional-event-flag-demonstrations>.

## MPOs (For those in attendance) – Status & Updates

**Clifton Hall** stated the Resiliency study is underway, and once it's complete, they will determine any potential applications for the PROTECT program. They are working on responding to Conformity comments from TCEQ, TPP, and FHWA, and on some changes to correct MTP errors.

**Claudia Valles** El Paso MPO met with FHWA on May 25<sup>th</sup> to request guidance on the current MTP and TDM.

**Andrew DeCandis** had no additional comments.

**Graciela Lubertino** was out but provided **Venugopal** with the following updates.

Lubertino's last day with H-GAC is June 2<sup>nd</sup>. She thanked everyone for their time and help working on Conformities and SIPs over the years.

The Policy Board approved the Conformity, and the documents were sent to the review partners. Right now, they are waiting for comments and feedback on the conformity package she shared with others.

**Vivek Thimmavajhala** stated the EPA climate pollution reduction grant (CPRG) application was submitted, and NCTCOG is the presumed lead for the DFW MSA.

The EPA deemed the 2020 motor vehicle emission budgets (MVEB) adequate, which were part of the 2008 ozone standard serious RFP SIP. This started a 2-year clock to demonstrate transportation conformity for the 2020 MVEB (i.e., before April 2025).

There has been an initial high-level internal discussion regarding this next conformity with multiple program areas, including NCTCOG's plan team and the TIP team. Once the timeline is finalized, the details will be shared to update the AQMS.

**Bob Dickinson** stated we continue to work on the development of our Metropolitan Transportation Plan-2050.

## TxDOT TPP

**Field representative updates: Raymond Sanchez (El Paso, HGAC, and Beaumont), Phillip Tindall (NCTCOG), Brigida Gonzalez (AAMPO)**

**Raymond Sanchez** had no additional comments.

**Phillip Tindall** was unable to attend the meeting.

**Brigida Gonzalez** said they are working on preparing the Conformity letter and having it ready to help things move forward expeditiously.

## FHWA, Jose Campos

**Barbara Maley** provided the following FHWA Texas Division updates:

1. 2023 Regional Transportation Conformity Training was held May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - Thanked TPP Traffic Analysis and TPP System Planning for bringing the course to the State.
  - Thanked attendees for taking the time out to attend.
2. FHWA Texas Division Office Regional Transportation Conformity (internal) Streamlining Initiative
  - Kicked off with Alamo Area Regional Transportation Conformity.
  - Will use with Houston-Galveston Regional Transportation Conformity.
3. FHWA AQ Discipline
  - The Discipline has offered the Texas Division the opportunity to showcase the TWG website, as a best practice.

4. Regional Transportation Conformity Consistency
  - FHWA, TPP (Systems Planning, STIP), and TPP-PL Reps will gather during June-July for discussions on regional transportation conformity consistency.

## TxDOT Updates

**Laura Norton** had no additional comments.

**Tim Wood** had no additional comments.

## TTI, Madhu Venugopal

**Tara Ramani** shared that Dr. Richard Baldauf who has a joint appointment with EPA's Office of Research Development and the Office of Transportation Air Quality held a seminar at TTI on May 23rd. He presented on Emissions and Exposure Mitigation Strategies for Non-Tailpipe Contaminants from Motor Vehicles. Due to EPA restrictions, we were unable to webcast the seminar, but we have approval to share the slides. Participants are encouraged to contact **Fildes** if interested in receiving a copy of Dr. Baldauf's presentation.

**Venugopal** shared that the Conformity workgroup is going strong. The pre analysis consensus document will be out soon and then TTI will review the documentation structure. The ITS workgroup is underway and work on the strategies (regional vs project) has begun. The Registration Data Analysis for 2021 is finished. Anyone interested in testing out their region with the new datasets should reach out. The next Advisory meeting is July 6<sup>th</sup> and the next quarterly meeting is September 7<sup>th</sup>. **Jamie Zech** has agreed to update the TWG group on the bills that went through the legislative session. **Thimmavajjhala** will work on presenting or sharing an email blast on the registration analysis. **Fildes** will send out tentative meeting invites for advisory and quarterly meetings. Let us know of any major industry conflicts on those dates.

Finally, participants are encouraged to reach out to **Fildes** or **Venugopal** if they have something to present or share that would benefit the TWG participants.

**(Meeting Concluded)**