

Christine Sagstetter Sierra Club o (713) 521-3981 m (713) 725-9421	Robin Holzer 59Gridlock m (713) 301-5716 h (713) 526-2283	Polly Ledvina Katy Corridor Coalition h (713) 524-4578 m (713) 524-8352
---	--	--

**Houston Citizens To Challenge Proposed Transportation Plan For Houston Region**

Tuesday Evening Public Hearing Will Include Houston City Council Members and Experts On The Regional Transportation Plan’s Impact On Flooding, Transit, and Air Quality

(Houston) - Several experts, Houston City Council members and local citizens groups will participate in a public hearing regarding the proposed 2025 Regional Transportation Plan. Several community groups that have pressed for major changes to the plan will present specific concerns, including the resulting increase to potential flooding, worsening air quality, a decrease in funding for transit, and a huge amount of condemned land necessary for right of way.

**What: Public Hearing (sponsored by Blueprint Houston) On The 2025 Regional Transportation Plan**

**When: Tuesday, April 27, 2004 at 7:00pm**

**Where: H-GAC, 3555 Timmons, Second Floor Room A**

**Maps of proposed projects in Harris County will be available.**

“The proposed regional transportation plan fails to provide the basic mobility needs for the people of Houston,” said Polly Ledvina, a community activist and member of the Katy Corridor Coalition. “Our elected officials should write a plan that provides more transportation choices, but this plan fails to deliver. We must have a balanced plan that gives adequate funds for transit and other alternatives.”

The 2025 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a federally-required plan for the greater Houston area and surrounding counties. Two members of Houston City Council, Harris County Judge Eckels, other elected officials, and agency heads who sit on the Transportation Policy Council of the Houston-Galveston Area Council are responsible for reviewing and approving the plan. The RTP which prioritizes \$77 billion in transportation spending faces approval, disapproval, or delay on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

“The current draft RTP will worsen flooding, reduces funding for transit, does little or nothing to address air quality problems and that is all we can tell so far,” said Christine Sagstetter of the Sierra Club. “We are still pressing H-GAC for a lot more details. Houstonians deserve better from our transportation officials.”

The draft RTP provides visibility to the thousands of individual projects proposed across the 8-county region. “While the Transportation Policy Council did not create the projects in the draft plan, they do have the explicit responsibility to prioritize which projects will receive state and federal funds,” said citizen activist Robin Holzer of 59Gridlock. “The elected officials on the TPC are in charge of deciding whether the projects in the draft plan will meet our needs without worsening flooding or air quality. If not, it’s time to come up with new projects.”

"This plan takes Houston in the wrong direction," said Tom McKittrick, architect and professor emeritus at Texas A&M. "How can Mayor White support a plan that paves over 90 square miles of land just for new roadways and parking lots, that will increase the potential for flooding, and that gives the public no information about the number of homes and business to be condemned for right of way? The City of Houston should fight for better transportation planning that involves the public, not just a few consultants."