

Greater Houston Clean Cities Coalition Development Plan

June 25, 2008

1.0 Background

The Greater Houston Clean Cities Coalition (GHCCC) is a DOE-designated organization functioning as a local chapter of the National Clean Cities program. Though staffed and supported by the H-GAC air quality group, the mission, goals, and general directives of Clean Cities are defined by the DOE as follows:

Clean Cities is a government-industry partnership sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Vehicle Technologies Program. With almost 90 local coalitions and more than 5,400 stakeholders, Clean Cities' mission is to reduce petroleum consumption in the transportation sector.

-DOE Clean Cities website:

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/about.html>

Goals

The goal of Clean Cities is to expand and stimulate alternative fuel and advanced technology markets to reduce petroleum consumption by 2.5 billion gallons by 2020. Clean Cities is focusing on three primary methods to achieve this goal:

- **Replacement:** Replacing petroleum used in the transportation sector with alternative fuels and low-level blends of non-petroleum replacement fuels.
- **Reduction:** Reducing petroleum use by promoting energy efficiency in vehicles through advanced technology and efficient vehicles.
- **Elimination:** Eliminating petroleum or other fuel use by promoting advanced technologies and greater use of mass transit systems, trip elimination measures, and other congestion mitigation approaches.

The five Clean Cities technologies are:

- Alternative fuels and vehicles
- Hybrid electric vehicles
- Idle reduction technologies
- Fuel economy measures
- Low-level fuel blends

-DOE Clean Cities website: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/mission.html>

In order to receive DOE funding and to retain our Clean Cities designation, twice each year we are required to submit a checklist and documentation describing our progress in advancing the Clean Cities mission. These requirements include:

- Completion of the annual Clean Cities Survey. Metrics for progress include:
 - o gallons of gasoline reduced
 - o AFV fleet and infrastructure penetration
 - o number of people reached during events
- Quarterly reporting of alternative fuel prices within our region

- Participation in 4 regional Coordinator Council conference calls each year to report on development, success stories, etc.
- Maintain and submit up-to-date information on alternative fueling stations throughout the region
- Submit a written report/update on development, success stories, fleet profiles, coalition awards/recognition, etc twice per year.
- Hold a minimum of four stakeholder events/meetings per year.
- Attend at least one DOE or industry conference per year that is pertinent to Clean Cities.

2.0 Program Overview

The GHCCC was officially established in 1996 and serves nearly 5 million people in Harris, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller counties in southeast Texas. Its primary goal is to maximize the use of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) and advanced vehicle technologies operating within the Houston-Galveston nonattainment area to improve air quality, achieve energy independence and stimulate economic growth. The GHCCC was redesignated in 2006.

The GHCCC is housed within the Houston-Galveston Area Council, which serves as the region's MPO and COG. The GHCCC works closely with and participates alongside H-GAC's other air quality programs including Clean School Bus, Commute Solutions, and especially Clean Vehicles. The Coordinator is a member of the Air Quality Group, and staffs the GHCCC on a part-time basis. No membership dues are requested from stakeholders or supporters. The GHCCC's regular efforts include quarterly stakeholder meetings, a quarterly e-Newsletter, and an annual Advancing the Choice conference. GHCCC brochures are also distributed at annual H-GAC events such as Fresh Air Friday, and Coalition information can be found at the website www.houston-cleancities.org.

3.0 Development Recommendations

In the most recent stakeholder meeting of the GHCCC (March 26, 2008), participants identified 4 priority areas which present a challenge to furthering alternative fuel and technology usage. These were:

- Infrastructure
- Education
- Grants
- Calculations (of emissions)

These priorities are further discussed in Section 5.0. In order to tackle these challenges more effectively however, the Clean Cities Coordinator believes it would be advantageous for the GHCCC to establish a stronger organizational foundation upon which projects and participation can be structured and better supported. To this end, the Clean Cities Coordinator recommends that the following steps be undertaken by the GHCCC:

Organizational Roles:

1. Make the terms "supporter" and "stakeholder" meaningful. At this time, anyone can join the Coalition simply by filling out a form. There are no set expectations or requirements for stakeholders to meet, nor do stakeholders receive any particular benefits for joining. This does not encourage active participation in the organization. To remedy this, the term "stakeholder" should refer to individuals or organizations which commit to the following:
 - Volunteer in at least one Clean Cities event annually
 - Attend at least 75% of the regularly scheduled stakeholder meetings
 - Submission of the annual Clean Cities Survey and fleet inventory information

- Forward items of interest (regulatory news, success stories, etc.) to the Clean Cities leadership for inclusion in outreach materials and/or Clean Cities reports

Specific “member” benefits should include the following:

- Eligibility to vote on all matters brought before the Clean Cities Stakeholder Group
- Eligibility to serve on the Clean Cities Advisory Panel (see #2 below)
- Access to an on-line, limited access stakeholder directory and information
- Listing on the Clean Cities website (with links to organizational websites) and in the stakeholder directory
- Discounted products and services with local businesses (to be developed).
- Provision of and/or help securing speakers for stakeholder-sponsored events
- Opportunity to attend stakeholder-only development events (Clean Cities organized training seminars, field trips, etc. See #5 below)

The term “supporter” would then refer to interested parties who wish to remain involved in the Coalition (i.e. receive newsletters, attend meetings, etc.), but who do not wish to make any type of formal commitment.

2. Organize a Clean Cities Advisory Panel to cultivate leadership among stakeholders and to provide support and assistance to stakeholders and the Clean Cities Coordinator. The Clean Cities Advisory Panel would consist of 5 members (stakeholders in good standing for at least 6 months) elected to staggered 3-year terms. Panel membership would include a representative for each of the following sectors:

- Gaseous fuels (Natural gas, propane, etc.)
- Liquid Biofuels (ethanol, biodiesel, methanol, etc.)
- Fuel Conservation (Anti-Idling, Aerodynamics, ICE Optimization, etc.)
- Battery Powered Vehicles (traditional hybrids, electric, etc.)
- Fuel-cell Powered Vehicles (hydrogen, etc.)

Panel members would have the following responsibilities:

- Provision of (~1 page) updates for their sector at each regularly scheduled Clean Cities Stakeholder meeting
- Willingness to be a contact person/resource for stakeholder & Coordinator questions
- Working with other panel members to guide an organizational visioning, project development, and prioritization process (see #4 below)
- Development and administration of an annual “Clean Cities Stakeholder of the Year” award (see #6 below).

3. The role of the Clean Cities Coordinator should be defined/clarified as follows:

- Reporting – The Clean Cities Coordinator will provide H-GAC, regulatory, and grant opportunity updates during regularly scheduled Clean Cities Stakeholder meetings. The Coordinator will also be responsible for ensuring compliance with DOE designation requirements.
- Grant Consultation & Coordination – the Clean Cities Coordinator will seek grant funds to assist the Greater Houston Clean Cities Coalition in attaining their goals. Grant awards will be fed into H-GAC’s Clean Vehicles program, Clean School Bus program, and/or utilized for the development of the Clean Cities program, as appropriate. The Clean Cities Coordinator will also act in a consultative capacity for individuals/organizations wishing to obtain funding for a proposed project by highlighting the Clean Vehicles and Clean School Bus programs as options and coordinating with them to secure other funding as needed.
- Outreach Activities – the Clean Cities Coordinator will be the primary individual in charge of coordinating outreach activities. This will include developing the outreach/information packet in cooperation with stakeholders, organizing the

annual outreach mail-out (see #6 below), continuing the Clean Cities e-Newsletter, maintaining the website, and working with others to organize events.

- Administration – the Clean Cities Coordinator will be in charge of organizing Clean Cities Stakeholder meetings, tracking membership, tracking Clean Cities financial information, developing and maintaining a stakeholder directory, maintaining the general interest email list, and other administrative tasks as needed.

Organizational Activities/Development:

4. Implement a visioning process to select annual goals for the group that they will work to achieve. This visioning process would include the following elements:
 - Identification of regional needs in terms of alternative fuels, advanced technologies, and related infrastructure
 - Identification of obstacles that prevent those needs from being fulfilled
 - Identification of potential solutions that would overcome the obstacles and help meet the region’s needs
 - Identification of potential partners and resources that could be engaged in the process
 - Formulation of a plan which prioritizes the proposed solutions
 - Development of specific project proposals that will lead to implementation efforts
5. As stakeholders will become more involved in volunteering for events (see stakeholder requirements in #1 above), it is important that they invest time in educating themselves on the latest in the field of alternative fuels and advanced technologies. To facilitate this, the Clean Cities coalition should periodically (about every 3-6 months) organize/host training seminars, field trips and tours, etc. for stakeholders.
6. To generate interest in becoming a supporter or stakeholder, the Clean Cities Coalition should develop, maintain, and periodically update an outreach/information packet, which will include program goals, plans, project examples, and application information. This information can be distributed to individuals wanting to know more about Clean Cities (beyond the brochure), can be posted on the website, and can be mailed out annually to targeted potential stakeholders.
7. To recognize stakeholders for their work and participation, the Coalition should present certificates, plaques, etc. upon the achievement of member milestone years (1 year, 5 year, 10 year, etc.). Also, the Clean Cities Advisory Panel should develop and oversee an annual “Clean Cities Stakeholder of the Year” award process that will highlight the work of particularly outstanding stakeholders in the areas of outreach, education, commitment, innovation, and/or project implementation.

4.0 Proposed Timeline for Development

In order to implement these ideas in the most efficient and logical manner, the following timeline of development is proposed:

Timeframe	Target Dates & Milestones
June 2008	25 th – (Meeting date) Growth plan presented and discussed.
July 2008	16 th – Acceptance of revised stakeholder requirements. Development of provisional guidelines/by-laws
August 2008	7 th – Formation of Clean Cities Advisory Panel 28 th – Development of application/outreach packet
September 2008	24 th – (Meeting date) Provisional guidelines/by-laws and application/outreach packet approved
October 2008	Oct. 31 st – Coordinator submits annual report to DOE
November 2008	Dec. 17 th – (Meeting date) Development of Stakeholder
December 2008	Recognition guidelines. Stakeholder directory and website listings

	created. First stakeholder and outreach event(s) scheduled. Begin implementation of projects selected in the visioning process.
January 2009	Feb. 28th – Annual surveys submitted
February 2009	
March 2009	TBD – (Meeting date) Stakeholder of the Year and stakeholder milestones honored.
April 2009	May 30th – Annual Outreach mail-out
May 2009	
June 2009	TBD – (Meeting date) Panel elections. New visioning process initiated. TBD – Advancing the Choice Conference

This proposed timeline is intended to be a working draft, subject to modification as needed.

5.0 Priority Focus Areas

As mentioned in Section 3.0, participants in the March 26, 2008 identified 4 priority areas which present a challenge to advancing the goals of alternative fuel and technology deployment.

These were:

- Infrastructure
- Education
- Grants
- Calculations (of emissions)

Infrastructure: Presently, the Clean Cities Coordinator is in the process of updating a database of alternative fuel & technology sources within 100 miles of Houston, and using GIS to map these facilities. As infrastructure availability changes frequently, it is important that Clean Cities members forward infrastructure information and changes as they hear of them, so the Coordinator can keep this database up-to-date and accurate. Having a full inventory of such facilities in the region is a good first step to establishing a baseline for our region, and looking for opportunities to further develop these capacities. The Clean Cities Coordinator recommends that the development of this tool be the top priority for the Coalition at this time, prior to the Coalition embarking on other infrastructure development projects. This would be particularly beneficial in light of efforts to initiate the I-10 Corridor Project, in cooperation with other Coalitions.

Education: During the previous stakeholder meeting, participants identified education as another key area for Coalition activities. In particular, participants suggested the development of a brief alternative fuels & technologies guide or pocket-sized reference containing basic, current information about each fuel/technology, fuel/technology prices, and/or local availability of infrastructure. The Clean Cities Coordinator concurs with this idea, and will begin work on this project shortly. Volunteers to assist in providing and/or reviewing this information would be more than welcome in this regard.

The Clean Cities Coordinator also suggests the use of strategic outreach to support both the infrastructure and educational goals of the Coalition. This tactic would involve the creation of 1-page Fact Sheets on specific fuels/technology types, vehicles, and cost/grant information, and sending them to residents living within ~5 miles of existing supporting infrastructure. This idea has been successfully employed by other Coalitions to support infrastructure development and vehicle deployment, as well as enhancing general education and awareness. The Clean Cities Coordinator recommends that the Coalition consider implementing this type of project following the update of the infrastructure database tool.

Grants: Currently, the GHCCC has a small budget consisting of annual DOE grants and the one-time General Motors grant that the Coalition was awarded in 2007. The funds are retained in the H-GAC 501(c3) affiliate Corporation for Regional Excellence, and tracked by staff. As the Coalition has had little experience with organizing or managing large grants in the past, the Clean Cities Coordinator recommends that the GHCCC begin by targeting small grants, building on its successes over time. This would align well with the pace of the Coalition's development, as projects in other priority areas are relatively modest at this time. Once the other projects are preliminarily underway, the Clean Cities Coordinator will begin searching and applying for small grants to support these efforts, and to supplement these grants with existing funds as needed.

The Clean Cities Coordinator additionally recommends that, in conjunction with or as part of the Coalition's efforts to develop an alternative fuels & technologies guide for the region, the Coalition should also compile a comprehensive listing and description of all available tax credits, incentives, loans, and other grants opportunities pertaining to these fuels/technologies.

Calculations (of emissions): Participants of the last stakeholder meeting also highlighted the need to develop or acquire more accurate information regarding emission calculations from alternative fuels/technologies. Some participants specifically highlighted hybrid technologies in this regard. As funding is often tied to these calculations, doing so would assist the achievement of priorities in grant funding. The Clean Cities Coordinator recommends that the Coordinator and any other interested stakeholders begin engaging the EPA in its development of the MOVES model, which is anticipated to include more features relating to alternative fuels and technologies. Additionally, the Coalition could explore the idea of conducting or supporting emission rate and/or emissions-oriented life-cycle studies.

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