



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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In Control: City Council B Session

DEPARTMENT: Office of Sustainability, San Antonio Metro Health District

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer AICP CNU-A
Colleen Bridger, Director, MPH, Ph.D.

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Air Quality nonattainment status

SUMMARY:

Briefing on implications and next steps regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's marginal nonattainment designation for ozone standards in Bexar County

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On July 18, 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated Bexar County in marginal nonattainment of federal ground-level ozone standards. EPA published the designation in the Federal Register on July 25, 2018, and the effective date will be September 24, 2018. Marginal nonattainment areas are those closest to meeting the standard and have fewer mandatory planning and control requirements. If the designated area does not reach the attainment standard within three years, the area will be moved to the Moderate classification, resulting in additional regulatory requirements.

Exceedance of ground-level ozone is a public health issue. The local economy may be affected by project delays and additional permitting related to air pollution mitigation requirements.

ISSUE:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a more stringent “health-based” air pollution standard of 70 parts per billion for ground level ozone on October 1, 2015, resulting in marginal nonattainment status for Bexar County as of September 24, 2018. A marginal nonattainment designation requires the following actions, overseen by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ):

- TCEQ will conduct a Baseline Emissions Inventory with periodic updates;
- The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) will oversee a Transportation Conformity process to ensure that new transportation projects do not negatively impact air quality;
- Major sources of emissions greater than 100 tons per year will be required to provide emissions statements to TCEQ;
- TCEQ will oversee New Source Review that requires new businesses or expansions that will increase emissions by more than 100 tons per year to complete additional TCEQ permitting.

In anticipation of this designation, the City of San Antonio has been working internally as well as with partner organizations such as the Alamo Area Council of Governments, CPS Energy and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to implement numerous pollution reduction measures, such as:

- City-wide mandatory and voluntary anti-idling regulations
- City-wide commuter trip reduction policies and programs
- Climate action and adaption planning
- Public information campaigns to promote behavior modifications
- Local ozone formation study

ALTERNATIVES:

This briefing is for informational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this presentation.

RECOMMENDATION:

This briefing is for informational purposes only.