



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## **DRAFT** **Freight Committee Meeting Minutes** February 25, 2009

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
DuPage County Conference Room  
Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Sears Tower, Chicago, Illinois

**Committee Members:** Joe Alonzo-CDOT, George Billows-Illinois Trucking Association, David Chandler-CNT, Gregory Dreyer-ISTHA, Doug Grane-Central States Trucking, Reggie Greenwood-SSMMA, David Grewe-CTCO, Rob Hoffman-Chicago Workforce Board, Dr. J. Lee Hutchins-AECOM, Kazuya Kawamura-UIC, Jim LaBelle-Chicago Metropolis 2020, Dean Mentjes-FHWA, Floyd Miras-USDOT-Maritime Admin, Libby Ogard-Prime Focus, Laurence Rohter-IIT

**Absent:** Steve Lazarra-Will County Land Use Dept, Gary Perry-Walgreens, Norm West-USEPA, Larry Wilson-IDOT, Tom Zapler-UPRR

**Staff Present:** Roseann O’Laughlin, Todd Schmidt, Tom Murtha, Don Kopec, John O’Neal, Shana Alford, Jacob Hannan, Jim Giblin, Ryan Ames

**Others Present:** Kristen Anderson-Metra, Kristen Bennett-Metro Strategies, Bernardo Bustamante-FHWA, Chris DiPalma-FHWA, Jim Ford-CTCO-BRC, Colleen Gannun-ISTHA, Jim Kvedaras-CN, Jim Messmore-Hanson, Gerald Rawling, Mark Rinnan-Jacobs, Bill Thompson-AAR, Earl Wacker-URS, Audrey Wennick-Cambridge Systematics

### **1.0 Call to Order and Introductions**

Co-chair George Billows called the meeting to order at 10:05a.m. Other committee members introduced themselves.

### **2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements**

There were no agenda changes.

### **3.0 Approval of Minutes – January 29, 2008**

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, as presented, was made by Jim LaBelle and seconded by George Billows. All in favor, the motion carried.

### **4.0 Discussion: Freight Trends**

George Billows presented recent trucking trends. He reported that the industry has seen serious downturn, leaving capacity high and rate levels dropping. Fuel costs have dropped but volumes have declined as well. Mr. Billows stated that December tonnage was down 11% nationally – the largest decrease since April 1994. Mr. Billows reminded everyone that one lost truck on the road equals the loss of numerous jobs. The trucking industry lost 73,000 jobs in 2008 and 25,000 in January 2009. Credit ratings are also being negatively impacted. Roadway, for example, saw its rating drop from AAA to CCC. Many trucking companies have stopped training drivers as there is now a surplus of qualified drivers. Also, a large number of trucking industry businesses have recently gone out of business. Finally, storage of containers, trailers and equipment has become a major issue as a result of the economic downturn.

David Grewe reported that the railroads have experienced similar trends and problems recently. Cumulative volumes were down 16% in the first 6 weeks of 2009. Levels of service have been reduced and trains are carrying mixed freight. Mr. Grewe stated that the railroads are working hard to prepare for economy upturn and using the downturn time to complete maintenance. This helps keep workers employed enough to maintain benefits.

### **5.0 Discussion: Freight Component of *GO TO 2040 Plan* (Regional Transportation Plan)**

CMAP staff Tom Murtha explained an upcoming contract between CMAP and a consultant to complete a freight component of the *GO TO 2040 Plan* and another contract for software that will evaluate the economic impact of transportation investments and decisions. The first contract will help CMAP determine what freight systems and investments we want for the region and how we can get them. It will also help make the case for future investments to other partners and legislative bodies. Investment will be evaluated by low and high levels of investment. The goal is to complete this contract by the first quarter of 2010.

Additionally, CMAP has moved forward on the contract with Global Insight to obtain freight data and forecast information. As soon as STB Waybill Sample data arrives, Global Insight will progress on the work.

### **6.0 Update: *Freight Snapshot***

Roseann O’Laughlin gave a brief update on Freight Regional Snapshot progress. CMAP is in the process of assembling data from multiple sources. This data will be combined and compared with Global Insight data and used to offer a “snapshot” of existing systems in the region. The Snapshot report will inform the *GO TO 2040 Plan*.

## **7.0 Discussion: CMAP GO TO 2040 Plan**

CMAP staff Bob Dean updated the committee on progress on the *GO TO 2040 Plan*. CMAP is currently putting together several alternate scenarios. Additionally, CMAP is considering major capital projects for freight in addition to transit ones. The economic impact software will assist the process as well. Mr. Dean will return to the committee at a future meeting for more updates and input.

## **8.0 Project and Issue Updates**

CREATE – Bill Thompson, AAR gave an update on CREATE project status. He stated that a number of projects are underway and the next priorities will be those projects with direct passenger benefits. He recommended that committee members join the email list for future updates.

Other – Dean Mentjes, FHWA presented information about the economic recovery package. Mr. Mentjes explained that there will be an apportionment to the states and some discretionary funds. This will be about a one-time doubling of the Illinois budget for transportation projects. The state will sponsor CREATE projects for stimulus projects.

## **9.0 Public Comment**

Lee Hutchins announced that the IPANA conference will be in Chicago March 2-4.

Reggie Greenwood informed the group about an upcoming meeting of the SSMMA Freight Committee on March 20 at 9am. The group will discuss the freight traffic study around a CN intermodal facility in the south suburbs and other activities.

## **10.0 Meeting Schedule – Next meeting, *March 25*.**

Future meeting dates:

April 29

June 3

## **11.0 Adjournment**

At 11:55 p.m., a motion to adjourn was seconded by Jim LaBelle. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Roseann O'Laughlin  
Staff Liaison

03-5-09