

Attachment 2
DRAFT MEETING NOTES
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

MEETING DATE: 7/23/04

MEETING LOCATION: CATS

CALLED TO ORDER: 9:40am

ATTENDANCE:

(Task Force Members)

Tom Rickert	Kane
Keith Privett	Chicago DOT
Catherine Kannenberg	Metra
Taqhi Mohammed	Pace
Craig Williams	Edwards and Kelcey
Jan Metzger	Center for Neighborhood Technology
Gordon Smith, Jr	Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

(Staff)

Steve Breese	Staff
Tom Murtha	Staff
Ross Patronsky	Staff
Doug Ferguson	Staff

(Others)

Maryann Romanelli	Walk & Bike to School Day
Ben Helphand	CNT
Dave Longo	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Bev Moore	Illinois Trails Conservancy
Matt Maloney	Chicagoland Bicycle Federation (CBF)
Heather Tabbert	Kane County

APPROVAL OF NOTES: Approval of notes was deferred.

PRESENTATIONS:

Proposed FY 2005 CMAQ Program

Mr. Patronsky announced that the proposed program for using FY 2005 CMAQ funds has been recommended to the Work Program Committee by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee. The Work Program Committee will consider it at their July 30th meeting. The Program totals \$91 million and contains 18 bicycle and pedestrian projects totaling \$17.4 million in federal funds. Last year, there were 11 bike/ped projects totaling \$5.7 million in federal funds. The City of Chicago has 4 projects

totaling \$4.2 million in federal funds. This is the first time a program for Safe Routes to Schools has been approved which consists of building improvements to sidewalk and street networks in the vicinity of schools to encourage students to walk and bike to school instead of driving. In addition, there are funds programmed for the Salt Creek Greenway in Cook County, part of a much larger project that includes CMAQ funded portions in DuPage County.

Mr. Patronsky gave a summary of the CMAQ selection process. The selection process begins with a ranking based on a cost efficiency measure or the cost per ton of volatile organic compounds removed. That criterion is used because the Chicago region is in non-attainment for the national air quality standards for ozone. The primary criteria pollutant is volatile organic compounds. For pedestrian and bicycle projects the emission rate is a function of the population and employment in the area in the immediate vicinity of the facility. For a given dollar cost, the higher the population and the more employment there is, the better the ranking. Projects in built-up areas generally rank higher than facilities in rural or recreation areas. The provision of a bicycle or pedestrian facility will eliminate the need for auto trips which will reduce congestion and air pollution. In addition to the rankings, the selection committee considers other factors that aren't quantifiable such as project readiness, prior CMAQ funding received, connectivity to other facilities, and other funding commitments.

Mr. Patronsky announced that the Work Program Committee will release the proposed Program for public comment through the month of August. The Comment period ends September 3rd. During that time, if people have comments about particular projects, send CATS a letter, call him, or e-mail to publiccomments@catsmpo.com. The projects are posted on the CATS website. After the public comment period, staff will review all the comments, take them to the Project Selection Committee for their consideration, revise the program as needed, go back to the Work Program Committee in September and the Policy Committee in October for approval of the program. Federal officials review the projects for eligibility under the program.

Ms. Metzger expressed her disappointment that only 8% of the funding goes to bike/ped projects. She cautions against skewing our CMAQ money in the direction of freer flowing traffic rather than alternatives to private vehicle use. Mr. Patronsky responded that this year the biggest chunk is going to the inspection and maintenance (I&M) program for operations and capital. Mr. Rickert added that the I&M program is the most beneficial to air quality than anything submitted.

Ms. Metzger cautioned that if we continue to encourage people to start their car in the morning but we reduce the amount of air pollution problems is a short-sighted way to get to where we want to go. Mr. Privett commented that we are one of the few regions that allocate our CMAQ money to all modes of transportation. Mr. Rickert appreciated Ms. Metzger's comment and added that we all have a difficulty in defending bicycle and pedestrian projects while under public scrutiny.

Ms. Moore noted that more than half of all non-drivers age 65 and over stay at home on

a given day because of limited transportation opportunities. We may need these bike and pedestrian projects before too long.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Patronsky how the list of recommended projects compares to the applications. Is there anything that's over-represented? Mr. Patronsky responded that transit projects fared the best followed by bicycle/pedestrian projects. Signal projects fared the worst. He noted that CATS only works with projects proposed by local sponsors and added that people can go to their municipalities and ask for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Although bicycle and pedestrian projects tend to be less expensive, we try to attack air quality issues from all fronts. Mr. Rickert added that there's been a few instances where Kane County pulled their bicycle projects out of the federal process and funded them locally. It's usually the larger projects that benefit in the federal process. Mr. Patronsky said that it's an issue with all CMAQ projects.

Mr. Williams asked why Lombard's Great Western Trail bridge was not funded. It's a major trail that crosses a fairly major roadway. Mr. Patronsky replied that it was an expensive project. However, Lombard may resubmit the project and will have another chance of being funded.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Elements of 2030 Regional Transportation Plan

Mr. Murtha explained that the Shared Path 2030 process was the process to develop the regional transportation plan for northeastern Illinois. It's a plan we're required to develop in order for the region to receive federal funding for highway and transit projects. The process included developing the projects, systems, and strategies, compiling them within different groups for analysis, and finally the RTP Committee developing a recommended plan based on the technical analysis and the input they received. The plan is composed of goals and objectives, regional strategies, strategic systems, and major capital projects. The goals and objectives include the needs to maintain the system, improve how the system works, and sustain the region. Each one of those goals has different objectives. The RTP committee worked within those goals while placing the projects into different multimodal scenarios. Each scenario had different projects and strategies. We used our travel demand analysis to figure out what happens when you run these different scenarios. The System Additions alternative had the highest results at reducing work trip travel time but the Service Intensive had the highest measures overall. We learned that all four of the scenarios had their own advantages. Our plan in the end was to have a mix of all four of those scenarios so we take a variety of all approaches rather than putting all our eggs in one basket.

Among the recommendations that the RTP Committee made and the Policy Committee adopted were a series of bicycle and pedestrian related strategies. They are recommendations only. It's up to the implementing agencies to take these strategies and implement them. There are a series of community strategies that address transportation choice, compact land development, context sensitive solutions, environmental strategies, management & operations. The plan adopted a series of shared use principals including safety, small scale design consideration, and access to transit. The plan also developed a

Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic System. The key points of this System are routine accommodation to facilitate travel by foot and bicycle, emphasis on access to transit, travel information and promotion, and acknowledging the Soles and Spokes Plan that is under development. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic System is likely to be embodied by the Soles and Spokes Plan.

Mr. Murtha continued that CATS is currently developing some technical tools, including travel demand networks, new regional zone system, and socioeconomic data, to be used during the 2030 Plan update process. We have to do this every 3 years. The new legislation may or may not give us an extra year or two. He said that if the Task Force participants have comments about the different elements in the plan, they may review and mark up the materials and send them to Kermit Wies. Members of the RTP Committee are also key points of contact.

Highway Project Procedures – Subregional Plan Implementation and Public Involvement for Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Elements

Referring to the Tinley Park discussion we had at the last meeting, Mr. Murtha said he had a clarification with regard to the projected ADT on 183rd as quoted in the minutes. The actual CATS projection on 183rd at Harlem is 22,000 and not 14,000. The higher projection is more consistent with the design that we discussed. There had been complaints regarding the lack of response to the comments that were made about the project. Mr. Murtha said that he checked the public comment procedures specified by IDOT. Although the manual gives fairly specific guidance about what should happen, there aren't any "must's" in the response section. Although the project implementer has the responsibility for having public input, individual responses are not technically required. However, they are recommended and staff over at IDOT have a strong push to make sure that the "should's" are actually followed.

With regard to public input and bike/ped issues, there are points in the state manual that indicate where regional and local information can influence the process. Opportunities include providing information and encouraging the agencies to implement adopted plans. However, there are a couple opportunities where we have to gather information and give people a heads up and one is the STP project scoping document. This isn't an IDOT form per se but rather a CATS form. The form was developed to keep project costs under control by identifying potential expenses early in the project development process, so funds could be properly programmed and cost over-runs avoided. If we ensure that bicycle and pedestrian accommodations included in adopted plans and programs are considered, projects within those plans and programs would have a better chance of implementation. Qualified staff, political support, and information are all necessary to make bike/ped plans work. There isn't anything that CATS can do about staff and political support; however, we can provide information. We could also include a mechanism within the CMAQ process so that both CATS and the implementers are aware of the impact of a highway project would have on the bicycling and pedestrian environment.

Mr. Rickert commented that there's nothing in the STP and CMAQ applications that

states that project planners should check local plans. It makes a lot of sense to have CATS require the scoping agency to inquire whether the municipal, county and park districts have plans adopted. The agencies would not be required to put the improvements in, but at least it ensures the adopted plan is considered.

Mr. Murtha added that for the STP program doesn't have any enforcement mechanism. Mr. Rickert said that most of the STP methodologies give extra points if you do accommodate. There is a benefit to it. Mr. Rickert doesn't believe approval would be necessary to make changes to the STP scoping document. He asked what efforts would have to be taken to make changes to the CMAQ application process. Mr. Murtha responded that the CMAQ project selection committee would have to make the change. Mr. Rickert gained the consensus of the Task Force that staff should move forward with making those changes.

Upon a request for clarification, Mr. Rickert summarized that both the CMAQ and STP applications currently only ask "are you including pedestrian and bicycle accommodation". We need to include additional information that actually requires the agency that's putting together the application or the scoping document to acquire and review the adopted plans by the forest preserve districts, park districts, municipalities, etc, and make determinations if there are adopted plans relative to those types of accommodations. This would avoid instances where an agency proceeds forward with a project without looking at approved plans.

Mr. Williams commented that the project notification letters sent out to organizations to solicit a response to bicycle and pedestrian travel in relation to the project are rarely returned. The project planners assume that if they don't get anything back that must mean there's no interest. IDOT is providing the opportunity for people to request bicycle accommodation in that area but responses are not received. Mr. Rickert added that they send out letters to every agency at the local level and they get no response. However, he said he was working on an IDOT project on Route 31 where there was a response and it is being looked at and considered.

Ms. Metzger questioned if the request is intended for those who care about bike/peds issues, how come CNT has never gotten a letter. Mr. Williams replied that the issue falls under the bike policy which only lists bicycling organizations. Ms. Metzger said that no one is being asked about pedestrian policies. Mr. Williams suggested that IDOT be told that there are other pedestrian organizations that ought to be contacted. Requesting comment from organizations is an IDOT statewide policy and added that it's difficult for the districts to keep up with the organizations. Ms. Metzger noted that only two non-governmental organizations received letters requesting comment with regards to the proposed Prairie Parkway corridor. Someone needs to help IDOT expand there list. Mr. Smith pointed out that when IDOT holds public meetings, they publish it in the paper and their on their Internet site provide the public with an opportunity to comment. He acknowledged that there are some improvements that need to be made on their long list of groups. But after considering the amount of staff time it takes to accumulate and maintain those lists, the Department has decided to just use public forums. However, as

part of the adoption of the CSS, the lists are being worked on and will again be put to use. Ms. Metzger cautioned that a lack of response does not necessarily indicate disinterest. Individuals within the group are still interested.

Mr. Murtha provided an example of when CATS received a letter in which they responded and requested some form of bicycle accommodation. IDOT is now set to provide a level of bicycle accommodation that is far ahead of what the municipalities have planned for. The problem occurs when the municipality fails to respond. CATS responds to every letter it receives. We contact the municipalities and try to provide fairly comprehensive information. Mr. Williams noted that the coordination with the bike community for that project was better than most.

Mr. Murtha noted that early outdated plans may or may not have support anymore. The project staff is being told that the jurisdiction is not pursuing the plan recommendations. He suggested that we institutionalize some kind of subset or request for renewal that inquires whether a plan is still the adopted plan for this region so we are not distributing information off of discontinued plans. Mr. Rickert explained that under the Kane county statute, plans and their 5-year TIP are reaffirmed or readopted on a yearly basis. Kane county tries to cycle their long term planning process closely with the three year federal process. Mr. Privett said that CDOT has been updating their 1997 off-street bike/ped plan and will be completed by the end of this year. The elected officials are involved in that process by providing direction and guidance. It's difficult to force a local agency to reaffirm their plans every 2 or three years. If there is a way we could try to encourage it we should pursue it. CDOT doesn't submit their bike and ped plans to the plan commission. Instead, a commissioner writes a letter releasing it and we just start using our bike plans. The state bike plans don't go to the state legislature. Mr. Smith said that to a certain degree the states plan does go before the members of the general assembly in the form of their proposed improvement plan.

Ms. Metzger asked if there are comprehensive pedestrian plans for municipalities. Mr. Murtha replied that Naperville has a comprehensive bike and pedestrian plan. Several communities have short term facility plans where there is a plan to fill in gaps in sidewalks. Ms. Metzger suggested that rather discussing the need for a subset of bike plans we should talk about the lack of pedestrian plans and what our role could be in encouraging more municipalities to create pedestrian plans. She asked if the City of Chicago has a pedestrian plan. Mr. Privett responded that they don't have a pedestrian plan but have incorporated pedestrian related elements in the Streetscape Plan and the new zoning ordinance. They also now have a pedestrian coordinator on staff who will be starting on a plan soon. Mr. Rickert said that from working with the municipalities he has learned that pedestrian accommodation is an important issue. The council members and trustees of those municipalities are dealing with these issues on a regular basis at their meetings. Ms. Metzger stated that the system is not working if we need a whole separate Safe Routes to School program. We are acknowledging that our communities don't work for pedestrians so let's at least improve the areas around schools. Mr. Murtha noted that even areas that do not support bicycle transportation have an interest in walkable communities. Ms. Romanelli commented that every

municipality has their own policy for sidewalk implementation. After Walk & Bike to School Day, village personnel walked the community. A lot of interest was generated and her efforts led to a policy change. Ms. Metzger said she doesn't think we can solve the problems of the individual municipalities but there's a regional connectivity issue and there is need for a regional plan to address those issues.

Walkable Communities Workshops

Mr. Tom Murtha said that there is a call for round three Walkable Communities Workshops. We had held ten Walkable Community Workshops throughout the region back in 2001. Those were generally viewed as a success. Staff had planned to apply specifically for project mitigation along Palatine-Willow Road in the northwest and northshore communities with the results of those activities being the final product. We received a lot of useful feedback from the three Chicago workshops and there is interest to hold more. Discussion resulted in general direction that staff should see how many communities are interested along Palatine-Willow Road. Mr. Murtha questioned if the City was seeking these workshops for 2005. Mr. Privett said CDOT hasn't put out a broad call, but there are a few neighborhoods that would benefit and others could follow. Mr. Murtha cautioned that the number of Workshops is dependent on our ability to get funding which is not necessarily resolved yet. There is money in our UWP Palatine-Willow Corridor project.

Ms. Metzger said that there is a project in the TIP for a big pedestrian project along 159th St. Rather than concentrating five workshops in one area, she suggested using the opportunity to test the new process in the South Suburbs. Mr. Murtha said that for the first set of Walkable Communities Workshops, all were south of Irving Park Road, including Riverdale, Lemont, Orland Park, and Batavia. Mr. Privett noted that the three Chicago Workshops in the previous round had an impact and resulted in changes in streetscape projects including the 2600 N. Clark block. Mr. Murtha asked if he should pursue workshops in Chicago. Mr. Rickert suggested that local staff could use some of the materials and hold their own workshops. One of the things they did in the last workshop was train local coordinators, including Heather Tabbert. Mr. Smith asked if there was the possibility to group several communities together. Mr. Rickert replied that the workshops are focused on the community infrastructure. Mr. Murtha added that all traffic is local and the conditions in one place aren't necessarily similar in other locations. We did encourage regional entities to come out to the workshops to get information, but were not very successful. The strength of the Workshops is that they are tailored to the communities. Mr. Privett added that each workshop in the city covered a quarter or half mile segments which we studied intensively. Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Murtha has identified which of the 8 communities would hold the workshops in the Palatine-Willow Road Corridor. Mr. Murtha responded that that's the next step. If we fill the quota up at Palatine-Willow Road, he suggested that CDOT lend to the process their new pedestrian coordinator who could be trained as a trainer.

Ms. Metzger suggested that the sub-regional councils hold workshops on an ongoing basis rather than just once every one or two years. Mr. Rickert said the last round helped Kane County and Heather Tabbert is now able to hold the workshops. The

concern is finding the time. Kane County is adopting a process called Priority Places which will be looking at 16 key areas to look at walkability and other components. Ms. Tabbert will have the opportunity to utilize some of the things that she's used over the last few years. Mr. Rickert added that the Task Force will keep that in mind and will look at it in the future. We do have a consensus to keep the walkability aspect of communities in the forefront.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Updates from Around the Region

Mr. Privett announced that CDOT recently opened their first bike station in the region. It's located at the northeast corner of Millennium Park and includes parking for 300+ bikes, showers & lockers for bike commuters. Also, within the new zoning ordinance that the city passed there is a specific requirement for bicycle parking for most uses where there is new construction. Most commercial uses will require one bike space per ten cars, while residential development will require as much as one space per two cars. Also the streetscape oriented guidelines includes the statement that developments must consider all modes of transportation including pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and transit access.

Task Force Membership

Mr. Murtha reported that we've had some vacancies in the business groups and public health categories. He noted that some of the categories would need to be change so that people who are interested would be able to participate and eliminate the categories where there was no interest. Mr. Murtha suggested expanding the public involvement categories to two members, changing the business category to include consulting firms, and combining user advocate and public interest groups categories. He asked whether the category for municipal planning staff should be eliminated because that would duplicate representation by the Council of Mayors. The CATS process in general is to go through the council of mayors. Mr. Rickert said that it would be worthwhile to open up the membership to other entities interested in the process. Memos and newsletters concerning all the planning activities are sent to all the council of mayors. The municipalities are getting the updates and those that want to be involved can come and participate. Mr. Smith cautioned against allowing consultants within the business category and suggested that other groups such as Metropolis could be a resource. Mr. Murtha noted that Mr. Williams is listed as "citizen groups or individual citizens" as opposed to user advocate. Mr. Privett noted that the main business representative on the Mayor's bike and ped advisory task force is the president of a messenger firm. He suggested changing the category to "business/chamber of commerce". Mr. Murtha questioned whether the regional issues the Task Force addresses are relevant to local businesses. Ms. Metzger suggested recruiting a staff member of a chamber of commerce as opposed to an individual business owner. Mr. Privett recommended CDOT's local coordinator for Hyde Park Walkable Communities Workshop and a staff member from the downtown Evanston Merchants Association.

Mr. Rickert asked which public health agencies have expressed interest in joining the Task Force. Mr. Murtha responded that both the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children expressed interest. Mr. Privett said that he'd provide the contact information for a doctor from University of Illinois-Chicago who is interested in air quality issues.

Mr. Rickert suggested that the Task Force expand the public health category to two or three positions and eliminating the municipal staff positions. Mr. Privett said that there is value in having municipal staff on the Task Force because of their interest in best practices and suggested finding people to fill in those spots. Mr. Rickert asked Ms. Tabbert to coordinate with the other Council of Mayors to recruit two municipal staff members.

Other Business:

There was no other business.

Adjournment: 12:00pm

Next Meeting Date/Location: To be determined

Notes Submitted By: SRB