



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## **CMAQ Project Selection Committee Meeting**

**Thursday June 2, 2011**

**Draft Minutes**

**Cook County Conference Room**

**CMAP Offices**

**Members Present:** Marty Buehler – Counties, Arlene Mulder – Council of Mayors, Mark Pitstick - RTA, Keith Privett – Representing Luann Hamilton of the City of Chicago, Mike Rogers – IEPA, Susan Stitt - IDOT

**Members Absent:** Ross Patronsky

**Others Present:** Bruce Carmitchel, John Donovan, Laura Fedak, Jim Fiorito, Tom Rickert, Chris Staron, David Tomzik (via phone), Mike Walczak, Jan Ward, Tom Weaver

**Staff Present:** Randy Blankenhorn, Patricia Berry, Doug Ferguson, Tom Murtha, Holly Ostdick, Russell Pietrowiak, Jose Rodriquez, Joy Schaad

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

The Committee voted to name Marty Buehler acting Chairman in Ross Patronsky's absence. Mr. Buehler called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

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

There were no changes or announcements.

### **3.0 Approval of April 14, 2011 Minutes**

Changes to the April minutes were requested: the deletion of Dave Tomzik as an attendee, the clarification that "non-CMAQ projects" meant "non-CMAQ funded projects" in two locations under *Program Management Status* and the correction that the "central segment combined with the northern segment" of the Lakefront Trail/ Navy Pier Flyover over has independent utility, not the "central segment" alone. On a motion by Mayor Mulder and a second by Ms. Stitt, the draft minutes for the April 14, 2011 meeting were approved with those revisions.

### **4.0 Project Changes**

**4.1 Rolling Meadows – Plum Grove Rd from Bryant Ave to Kirchoff Rd (TIP ID 03-06-0034)**

The sponsor requested a cost increase of \$63,400 total (\$50,720 federal) for total project cost of \$355,300 (\$284,240 federal) due to increased costs for right of way acquisition. A re-ranking had been completed and the rank remained the same. On a motion from Mayor Mulder and a second from Mr. Privett, the Committee approved the requested increase.

**4.2 CDOT – Cicero Ave Smart Corridor (TIP ID 01-02-0027)**

The sponsor’s request to move funding (\$219,198 total/\$175,358 federal) from Phase II engineering into construction was undertaken as an administrative modification.

**4.3 CTA - Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) Retrofit for CTA Buses (TIP ID 01-10-0004)**

The sponsor’s request to purchase 13 additional diesel particulate filters as spares without increasing the cost of this project was undertaken as an administrative modification.

**4.4 University Park - Cicero Ave Shared Use Path (TIP ID 07-06-0002)**

The sponsor’s request to move funding from Phase II engineering and construction to Phase I engineering and construction engineering. The moves requested were: transferring \$43,333 total (\$25,000 federal) from Phase II engineering to Phase I engineering and \$29,000 total (\$16,000 federal) from Phase II engineering and construction to construction engineering (Phase III engineering). Total project cost would remain unchanged at \$432,000 (\$258,800 federal). The change was undertaken as an administrative modification.

**4.5 Bensenville - Jefferson St Sidewalk Improvements, Evergreen St to York Rd (TIP ID 08-10-0002)**

The sponsor requested to move \$21,600 from Phase II engineering to construction and to extend the project limits from Evergreen St to the sidewalk path at the Redmond Recreational Complex. The total cost for this project remains unchanged at \$324,000 (\$259,200 federal). The change was undertaken as an administrative modification.

**4.6 Round Lake Park - IL 134/Main Street Sidewalk Project, from west village limit to east village limit (TIP ID 10-10-0005).**

The sponsor’s request to expand the western limits of this project to MacGillis Dr. in the Village of Round Lake without increasing the project’s cost was undertaken as an administrative modification.

**5.0 Call for Projects**

Mr. Ferguson reported that as of the call for projects deadline April 1, staff has received 350 applications requesting over \$1.8 billion in total dollars and over \$930 million in federal funds. He noted that the analysis of the project applications is currently underway and that the Program Focus Groups are working hard at developing cohesive sets of projects. He said that preliminary air quality rankings will be available for the July 7 CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) meeting and on July 21 the PSC will meet to develop a recommended program. He noted that the process started two months later than usual because of the development and approval of the GO TO 2040 focused programming approach (approved in January 2011). He said that the process is being accelerated so that the CMAP Board and MPO Committee can consider approval of the proposed 2012-2016 program at their October meetings.

**6.0 Program Focus Group Update**

Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Murtha reported that the four program focus groups have each met two to three times since the April 14 CMAQ PSC meeting and are evaluating projects and identifying priority projects in order to supply recommendations to the PSC for the July 7th meeting. Mr. Ferguson explained that the Regional Transportation Operations Coalition (RTOC) has developed evaluation measures based on encouraging investment at congested locations on the region's critical line-haul roadway and transit systems, which is referred to as the "congestion management process" system or CMP. This system includes expressways, tollways, the SRA system, other principal arterials, planned TSP routes and arterial buses. The RTOC has undertaken a division of projects into on CMP system and off CMP system. He said that additional criteria measuring congestion and travel times will be applied to identify the on-system projects at the most congested locations. Finally, a review of mapped projects will be undertaken to identify any projects which may work together for a greater operational impact on the identified systems.

He reported that the Bike/Ped Task Force based their project evaluation measures on work that the Task Force undertook in 2009 and on the GO TO 2040 Focused Programming Approach. Three types of evaluation are under way: descriptive evaluations, adherence to principles, and plan/program consistency. Mr. Ferguson reported that the ad hoc Transit Focus Group has developed evaluation criteria based upon GO TO 2040 action area adherence; quantitative measurement, plan basis, and project readiness. He also reported that the ad hoc Direct Emissions Reduction Focus Group has developed evaluation criteria based upon emissions reductions, energy conservation, effects on vulnerable populations and increased modernization of fleets. Mr. Ferguson reported on next meeting dates of each: the Regional Transportation Operations Coalition - June 9, the Bike/Ped Task Force - June 17 and 29, the Transit Focus Group - June 16 and the Direct Emission Reductions Group - June 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **7.0 Active Program Management**

### **7.1 Lapse Potential**

Ms. Ostdick reminded the Committee that the current estimate for the potential lapse at the end of FFY 2013 is approximately \$140 million lapse. The accomplishment rate of the CMAQ program will have to substantially improve to spend down to avoid this lapse. She said that while the active program management efforts of the last few years are helping to change the trend, it is not enough. Ms. Ostdick said one option would be to identify ready-to-go projects that are eligible for CMAQ funding (i.e. provide air quality and/or congestion benefits and have been processed and designed to FHWA standards) and when the time is right, switch the existing funding to use CMAQ funds. While this does not further the accomplishment of programmed CMAQ projects it would keep the funding within the region versus turning it back to Washington and the funding freed up by the switch can be used by the projects' sponsors on their project backlogs to further address improving the region's mobility.

Ms. Ostdick provided two different approaches for the option. In the first, the Committee would focus solely on avoiding the lapse by identifying projects to be obligated in FFY 13. In the second, the Committee would set an annual goal for obligation, say \$100 million, which will spend the new funding every year and spend down a portion of the unobligated balance. For either approach, a list of projects ready to use the CMAQ funding must be identified and approved by the MPO Policy Committee. To avoid the potential lapse the

projects must be ready for summer/fall 2013 lettings and the program changes could be made in late spring 2013. For a yearly approach, in the spring/summer of each year that the obligations are not anticipated to reach the goal, the Committee would switch out funding to utilize CMAQ funds in an amount that keeps the region on track for spending the identified goal. Mr. Pitstick said that the yearly approach helps avoid rescission as well as lapse. There was discussion on how any new rescissions might be handled in Illinois, pros and cons of the two approaches and on how to identify eligible, ready, large projects. There was some discussion on whether programming more projects would really help and it was agreed that the CMAQ A List and B List will serve to bring forward ready projects from years 2012 to 2016. The CMAQ A List allows the region to employ a "first ready-first funded" process. Programming additional projects does not assure the readiness of the projects. Mr. Donovan reminded the PSC that a lack of good projects is not the issue and that the region has over \$300 million in programmed CMAQ projects. All agreed that expeditiously implementing the programmed projects is the preferred mechanism for spending down the unobligated balance. The region is poised to program five years' worth of anticipated CMAQ funds for the first time ever and the option of identifying additional large projects to utilize CMAQ funds was referred to as back up "in case of emergency, break glass" approach.

Ms. Ostdick said if back up projects are used to avoid lapse and/or spend down the unobligated balance it is likely that CMAQ projects programmed through the regular process will not have sufficient funding available. Funding may remain available depending on how many dormant regularly selected projects are removed from the program through the one-time move policy, are withdrawn from the program of sponsor's own accord, or bids continue to come in below programmed amounts. If projects do begin to be delayed and there is a strong competition for CMAQ funds (because numerous projects have spent down the unobligated balance and continue to move forward) the mark for the future year may be decreased to allow for those projects.

The Committee directed staff to hold a forum to see what response is received as potential "in case of emergency, break glass" projects. It was decided to use \$20 million as a suggested size, but to remain flexible since this is a fact finding forum. It was agreed that CMAP staff would find a suitable date in June and advertise the forum. Acting Chairman Buehler recapped that the point of the forum would be to see what projects are out there that fit the description above and to review the readiness and eligibility of those projects. This information will be useful to the CMAQ PSC in their deliberations regarding whether or not to recommend the use of "in case of emergency, break glass" projects.

## **7.2 Quarterly Transit Expenditure Updates**

Joy Schaad reported that the analysis of the March 31 quarterly transit expenditure updates is complete and drew the Committee's attention to the memo and table provided with the agenda. She reported that of the 71 projects reported on, 33 were complete, 29 are active and 9 are dropped or on hold. Of those nine, the four that had been dropped had their funds re-directed in previous Committee actions. The process identified five CTA projects that are on hold due to lack of local match or other issues. CMAP staff has been in touch with CTA and CTA is currently assessing options to move the projects forward and/or to identify suitable active projects to substitute. Because the CMAQ funding for these projects

has already been obligated in FTA grants, unless suitable substitutes are found the CMAQ funds will be lost to the region. CTA is hoping to submit a formal request to re-direct funds for the Committee's consideration at the July 21 meeting.

### **7.3 May Status Updates**

Ms. Ostdick reported that 188 project phase status update reports were requested; i.e. all of the project phases that are scheduled for FFY 2011 obligation. Of the 188 reports expected, 81% of them were submitted correctly, sponsors of another 11% of project phases did provide the information requested, but it was in with a report on a different phase, and 8% of project phase reports were missed altogether. Of the eleven new projects that needed to initiate by May 31, 9 have submitted the required paperwork and the other two have not reported. Ms. Ostdick reported that the Council of Mayors' planning liaisons are still reaching out to the sponsors of the 8% that did not report.

She noted that based on the rate of obligations evident in the May status reports, she expects about half of the phases targeted for FFY 2011 obligation to be awarded by September 30, so there may not be much progress in spending down the CMAQ program's unspent balance. The most common reason cited for delays was "other", with the second being "coordination with IDOT and other agencies". Ms. Ostdick said that staff is still analyzing the data and a summary report and any staff recommendations for project removals resulting from the May status updates will be brought to the Committee on July 7 for consideration.

### **8.0 Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

### **9.0 Other Business**

Mayor Mulder brought up the problem on extended legal proceedings that are necessary for right of way (ROW) acquisition on projects where a private property owner believes they will get more money by delaying the process. She has seen the same problem with utility and railroad companies. She asked if other agencies are experiencing the same thing and if jointly a solution could be pursued. After discussion it was pointed out that municipalities never had "quick take" authority as IDOT has, and that the IL House of Representatives has a procedure whereby local governments can have a bill passed to expedite the ROW taking for a given parcel, but that procedure can also be time consuming.

### **10.0 Next Meeting**

The next meeting is July 7, 2011 at 2:00. There is a meeting scheduled for July 21, as well.

### **11.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.