Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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# CMAQ Project Selection Committee Meeting

**Annotated Agenda**
**Tuesday December 14, 2010 - 10:00 a.m.**
**Cook County Conference Room**
**CMAP Offices**

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Members Present:** Chair - Ross Patronsky – CMAP, Marty Buehler – Counties, Larry Keller – Council of Mayors, Luann Hamilton— City of Chicago, Mark Pitstick - RTA, Mike Rogers – IEPA (via phone), and Susan Stitt, IDOT (via phone)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Ed Barsotti (via phone), Joseph Bornstein, Leonard Cannata, Maria Choca Urban, Ashley Collins, Chalen Daigle, Jonathon Doster, Kama Dobbs, John Donovan, Deborah Fagan (via phone), Laura Fedak, Jim Fiorito, Bill Lenski, Keith Privett, Tom Rickert, Briget Schwab, Chris Staron, David Tomzik, Jan Ward, Thomas Weaver, David Werner and Tammy Wierciak

**Staff Present:** Patricia Berry, Don Kopec, Tom Murtha, John O'Neal, Holly Ostdick, Joy Schaad, Todd Schmidt

### 1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Chairman Patronsky opened the meeting at 10:02. Attendees introduced themselves.

### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes or announcements.

### 3.0 Approval of November 30, 2010 Minutes

The November 30, 2010 meeting minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Mr. Buehler and a second by Mr. Pitstick.

### 4.0 Project Changes

#### 4.1 RTA - Park and Ride Transit for the Northeastern Region TIP ID 13-06-0001

Ms. Ostdick reported that the RTA had requested approval to clarify the scope and transfer the sponsorship of the "Bus on Shoulder" on I-55 from I-355 to Kedzie Avenue project to IDOT for

implementation. The project would allow Pace's 755 and 855 commuter express routes to ride on the shoulders of I-55 between I-355 and Kedzie Avenue when it is under congested conditions. IDOT has concurred with the request and requested the CMAQ funding be moved into TIP ID 01-09-0034, the current IDOT project for resurfacing of I-55. The capital improvements are scheduled for a March 2011 letting. Staff recommended approval. On a motion by Ms. Hamilton and a second by Mr. Buehler, the committee voted to approve the scope clarification and sponsor change.

4.2 **Arlington Heights - McDonald Creek Bike Path Improvements TIP ID 03-10-0001**

Ms. Ostdick reported that the Village requested the limits be extended to include the side path from the pedestrian bridge on Brookwood Drive to Brighton Place and the park path from Brighton Place to Windsor Drive because the entire path is in need of reconstruction. The project length increased from 0.417 to 0.775 miles. With the increased scope the project sponsor is requesting a cost increase of $159,854 total ($141,884 federal). The project was original programmed for $312,000 total ($242,000 federal). A re-ranking was completed and the rank remained the same. Staff recommended approval. Ms. Brigit Schwab from the Village answered questions. On a motion Ms. Hamilton and a second by Mayor Keller, the committee voted to approve the scope and cost changes.

4.3 **Chicago Park District (CPD) - Jackson Park/59th St Bicycle Path - 01-05-0005**

Ms. Ostdick reported that the Park District requested retention in the CMAQ project with an adjustment into FFY2011 for construction. The appropriate staff for the CPD was unaware of the availability of funding until recently. Now that the sponsor understands the funding availability, they have met with IDOT and plan on completing Phase I engineering with local funds to expedite project accomplishment. The project was originally programmed in 2005 for $795,000 total ($578,000 federal). In the recent October status updates they reported the funds as obligated but were referencing the wrong project. She said that staff recommended retention. Mr. Bornstein of CPD offered to answer questions, but there were none. On a motion Ms. Hamilton and a second by Mayor Keller, the committee voted to approve the schedule change.

4.4 **IDOT - IL 47 from IL 176 South Junction to IL 176 North Junction – TIP ID 11-09-0008**

IDOT requested all funds be moved to construction: Engineering-I at $40,000 total ($32,000 federal), Engineering-II at $45,000 total ($36,000 federal), and ROW at $90,000 total ($72,000 federal). The Construction phase is currently at $450,000 total ($360,000 federal) and would become $625,000 total ($500,000 federal) with construction anticipated in 2011. Staff undertook this as an administrative modification.

4.5 **CDOT - BIKE FAC-CHICAGO-STREETS FOR CYCLING/BIKE 2015 Plan Implementation TIP ID 01-94-0092**

The City of Chicago requested to move $740,000 federal from construction into engineering. Staff undertook this as an administrative modification. Mr. Buehler asked the representatives if they expected to return for increased funding for the construction phase and Keith Privett explained that they would not ask for more funding for the current segments, but they may apply for further funding to expand the program in the future.

## 5.0 Plan Focused Program Approach

Chairman Patronsky drew the Committee's attention to the new draft proposal that was posted with the agenda and two new handouts: one on potential goals and the other on alternative treatments of the CMAQ project categories. He asked Mr. Pitstick to brief the Committee on the RTA's suggested treatment of the project types into four categories: bottleneck relief, coordinated operations, mode shift and emissions reduction. Mr. Pitstick explained that he felt consolidating the initial six groups of project types in to four categories based on what the projects aim to accomplish, rather than strictly on work type, would make it easier to see the projects' benefits, focus attention on CMAQ goals, and encourage more coordination.

Upon questioning, Mr. Pitstick clarified that he did not envision that these categories had to be assigned to a specific group that would be making recommendations of potential projects; but that we can use the same groups that have been talked about the last few meetings. It was also clarified that the air quality rankings would still be done in comparison of projects of like work types, because historically some types are just more expensive per kilogram of VOC eliminated. Mr. Pitstick explained that he felt trips eliminated (VMT) should be considered for the work types in mode shift for instance; pointing out that some good CMAQ projects may not rank well on the cost per kilogram of VOC eliminated.

Several members expressed appreciation for the concept of viewing proposed projects by type of benefit as RTA had laid out, but were concerned about the level of complication in implementing the grouping as a structure for the project identification process. It was suggested that these could be very effective if supplied to the focus groups as goals of the program, instead. Mr. Pitstick said he had no problem with calling them goals. It was pointed out that one project type might show benefits in two or more of these goal areas. Because of the RTA's wording of the first goal *(bottleneck relief)* there was a question about a past controversy over the term bottleneck. It was explained that many years ago FHWA clarified that any widening of a non-trivial length was a capacity improvement and was not eligible for CMAQ funding. The practice within the state was to consider any road-widening project of less than a mile to be a bottleneck.

The Committee then looked at where the RTA goals fit in with the potential goals that staff had supplied as a starting point for discussion. Chairman Patronsky explained that the first two listed, improve air quality and reduce congestion, are overarching goals of the CMAQ program, but the other seven potential goals are based on action items found in GO TO 2040. There was considerable discussion on how they fit with the RTA's four. Mr. Rickert expressed his concern about the appropriateness of a goal of "implementing the major capital projects" with CMAQ funding and it was clarified that only discreet, appropriate aspects of a major capital project could be funded with CMAQ money. It was agreed that wording that clarifies such would be helpful, in the same way that the CREATE program is shown in the freight goal (*Create a more efficient freight network, such as implementing the CREATE program*). Ms. Hamilton expressed concern with the goal worded: "*Establish seamless coordination between modes"* because other non-auto goals could be lost, such as increasing capacity of non-motorized and transit, better connections, and implementing the trails plan.

Mr. Buehler asked if someone could express a vision of how to capture what has been said on goals so far, and Chairman Patronsky expressed his thoughts of a hierarchy:

1. Improve air quality and reduce congestion as overarching goals

2. RTA's four categories: bottleneck relief, coordinated operations, mode shift and emissions reduction would be the objectives
3. GO TO 2040 recommendations and Action Areas that can guide CMAQ's role in supporting implementation of GO TO 2040

Chairman Patronsky said that he would prepare another draft of the proposal to send to the committee for review and comment. He said he planned to continue to use the historical categories for analysis of CMAQ benefits which is also a good fit for the program focus groups. He said that he would include language that clarified that we want to encourage multi-modal projects.

There was a comment that we need to lay out where the indicators and other measures of benefits fit in so that we do not get ambiguous responses on benefits in the project applications. It was pointed out that some aspects of the indicators brought up are actually irrelevant in a CMAQ decisions, such as bridge condition and infill. Mr. Kopec responded that the focus groups can hone in on that kind of problem; it may be best to just to provide guidance to these groups that references the indicators and let them work out a full set of measures to use for each work type. Chairman Patronsky pointed out that many GO TO 2040-related benefits may not be quantifiable.

Mr. Buehler said that he thought it would be too confusing to give the focus groups the indicators. Others expressed reluctance to send the indicators to the focus groups both because of potential confusion, the irrelevance of some of indicators, and the expectation that is raised that CMAP staff will be doing a lot of analysis on each project idea. It was agreed that the indicators would be removed from the recommendation. It was agreed to let the focus groups decide which indicators, if any, they would like to evaluate when it pertains to specific projects.
Chairman Patronsky recapped previous discussions on using a broadcast call for projects and using the program focus groups for direct identification of projects. While there was acceptance that the program focus groups could bring in excellent project ideas related to GO TO 2040, there was wide concern that without a full call for projects some better air quality/congestion projects and some smaller communities could be left out. It was agreed that a hybrid including both methods would cover all bases. Mayor Keller commented that only the call for projects really is a bottom up process whereby the communities' interest in pursuing CMAQ funding is the driving factor. He felt this would encourage better "ownership" of the projects, than if a regional group asks a community to sponsor a project.

There was a question on the structure and longevity of the four suggested program focus groups and it was pointed out that the Bicycle-Pedestrian Task Force has been around since the early 1990s and the ROTC is new, but is a standing committee, not a single purpose group; the transit group will be staff who have worked together both as their agencies routinely coordinate and as members of the CMAP Transportation Committee; and the ad hoc committee on diesel retrofits could well find value in meeting together over the longer term. Also, all of the groups will be supported by CMAP staff that will provide continuity and a repository for and decisions and records. Mr. Kopec commented that the hope is that these program focus groups will add value, although if that turns out not to be the case, we can still move on; the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) has the main role. Also, it is through the PSC that the air quality information gets fully considered in the programming process.

Chairman Patronsky recapped that he heard most committee members looking for a process that includes both a broadcast call for projects and an opportunity for the focus groups to developed

good projects. Mr. Rogers remarked that he felt the former needs to be emphasized over the latter. There was some discussion on the mechanics of using both and the possibility that there will not be enough good to excellent projects to fill a 5 year program. Mayor Keller asked if there wasn't some wisdom in only programming part of the funds for each year to accommodate last minute additions and cost increases.

Chairman Patronsky suggested doing so could leave us in a bad position for getting our obligation rate up and that we should try for 100 percent, but if we don't fill all five years in this round we can pick them up in the next round. Mr. Tomzik suggested that there may be some more complex projects that are good ideas but do not have all the pieces together for the full set of project applications in this round. It was pointed out that such a project could be added in the next round and with the A List procedures in place such a project could move to an early year for implementation.

Mr. Rickert commented that taking ready projects from the four out years of the program to move into the TIP for early implementation makes the CMAQ B List unnecessary and could cause unrealistic expectations. Mr. Murtha pointed out that the B List was helpful in doing agency reviews of ITEP projects and Chairman Patronsky noted that it may help keep the pressure on sponsors for making timely progress on projects, but if the CMAQ B list proves unnecessary, it can be dropped in the future.

Chairman Patronsky said that staff would re-write the proposal to reflect the day's discussion and send it out for review and comment. Once the committee members review and accept it, the proposal will be presented to the MPO Policy Committee on January 13th for approval.

**6.0 Public Comment**

Deborah Fagan asked if she could get a copy of the new draft proposal on Go To 2040 Plan Focused Programming when it is available. Chairman Patronsky said yes and told the audience members to let him know if they wanted a copy also.

**7.0 Other Business**

There was no other business.

**8.0 Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on call.

**9.0 Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Buehler and a second by Ms. Hamilton, the committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Holly Ostdick*
*CMAQ Program Manager*
*/JMS* **DRAFT version**