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DRAFT

Freight Committee Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2010

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

Committee Members: Tom Zapler – UPRR (Co-Chairman), George Billows – Illinois Trucking Association (Co-Chairman), Joe Alonzo – City of Chicago, David Grewe – CTCO, Rob Hoffman – IIT, Jim LaBelle – Chicago Metropolis 2020, Dean Mentjes – FHWA, Laurence Rohter – IIT, Earl Wacker – Consultant, Larry Wilson – IDOT, Rocco Zuccherro (for Gregory Dreyer) – Illinois Tollway

Absent: David Chandler – CNT, Reggie Greenwood – SSMMA, Jeff Harris - NS/CTCO, Lee Hutchins – AECOM, Steve Lazarra – Will County Land Use Dept., Kazuya Kawamura – UIC, Pat Killinger – Will County Highway Department, Floyd Miras – USDOT Maritime Admin, Libby Ogard – Prime Focus, Norm West – USEPA

Staff Present: Tom Murtha, Lindsay Hollander, Holly Ostdick, Dan Rice, Diana Torres

Others Present: Mark Berndt – Wilbur Smith, Bernardo Bustamante – FHWA, Kristen Bennett – Metro Strategies, Alicia Hanlon – Will County Center for Economic Development, Eric Holeman, Wes Lujan – Union Pacific Railroad, Ryan Richter – Metra, DeAnna Smith – IDOT, Audrey Wennink – Cambridge Systematics, David Zavattero - CDOT

1.0 Call to Order

Co-chair Tom Zapler called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2.0 Introductions

Mr. Zapler announced that he had retired from the Union Pacific Railroad. Mr. Zapler had been Chairman of the Freight Committee and its predecessor Intermodal Advisory Task Force since its formation in 1994. Committee members and other attendees introduced themselves.

3.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

None

4.0 Approval of Minutes – June

Revised draft minutes were distributed. Owing to their late availability, approval was delayed until the next meeting.

5.0 Presentation: Truck Transportation

Mr. Mark Berndt, Vice President of freight planning services at Wilbur Smith and Associates, provided an overview of trends in truck transport, policy and safety. Mr. Berndt began by discussing

findings from on-going Wilbur Smith studies relating to vehicle safety, including the “District-wide Truck Safety and Enforcement Plan” in Washington, D.C., and the “Large Truck Safety and Enforcement Study” in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin study’s objective was to perform a system-wide review of existing large truck and oversize/overweight (OS/OW) commercial vehicle safety concerns. The study found that truck crash measures were generally improving, with fatal crash rates declining 35% from 2000 to 2008. Among the crashes in Wisconsin, single-unit trucks were over-represented. For large trucks, 70% of crashes took place in rural areas.

Like the Wisconsin study, the District of Columbia study focused on truck safety. However, the Washington study also addressed enforcement issues, including an assessment of the impact of overweight trucks (the analysis showed that 15-20% of bridge damage is attributable to overweight axles; about 20-25% was due to legal load trucks and buses. The District of Columbia project recommended a comprehensive approach to truck enforcement. Also, among other issues that D.C. shares with metropolitan Chicago discussed by Mr. Berndt, truck route identification is an issue now being taken up by the District.

Mr. Berndt discussed a “Commercial Vehicle Center” to handle truck issues as a one-stop shop. Issues include the permit system, education and outreach, e-screening technologies, truck safety, virtual weigh stations, enforcement, and interagency cooperation.

Mr. Berndt also discussed two urban truck studies compiled by Wilbur Smith, in the Twin Cities and in Metropolitan Atlanta. According to Mr. Berndt, the Twin Cities study developed specific goals for freight connector performance, identified a process for freight connector evaluation, defined freight connector adequacy measures, and proposed freight connector investment criteria. The process was completed for three candidate freight cluster types. Clusters were identified using industrial, socioeconomic, traffic and crash information. The adequacy review included roadway geometric and operational features, including bridge and pavement conditions, turning radii, clearances, roadway widths, weight capacity, crashes, and exposure to railroad interference. Likewise, Mr. Berndt discussed Atlanta’s efforts, which included a freight-priority highway network and the *Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan*. Again, this plan analyzed geometric and crash information, substantial stakeholder review (including trucking companies), and successive feedback, to arrive at a draft system map. With this map, several capital projects were identified, including several capital projects, with costs exceeding \$20 million each.

Mr. Berndt wrapped up with a discussion of New York City initiatives. Among the most interesting was a program of off-hours deliveries.

A discussion took place regarding some of the issues raised by Mr. Berndt. Mr. Zapler said that many local jurisdictions had multiple layers of truck weight enforcement. Mr. Berndt responded that, in Minnesota, only the state enforces such regulations. Raising weight limits was also discussed. Mr. Berndt stated that some states were overdesigning bridges at this time anticipating that weight limits would eventually increase. However, Mr. Billows noted that there was not agreement within the trucking industry that higher weight limits was a good idea. Berndt agreed, but noted that the impetus for the higher weight limits was from industry groups, such as agriculture, natural resource, and steel manufacturers.

The Committee thanked Mr. Berndt for his presentation.

6.0 Regional Transportation Operations Coalition

Diana Torrez noted that the launch for GO TO 2040 will be held at Millennium Park on October 13. She solicited members to sign up as GO TO 2040 Partners and to attend the launch. Mr. Murtha noted that the task force members should be familiar with the 2040 freight chapter that was based on CS freight planning recommendations. The plan has much to support for freight system improvements, such as CREATE and the initiative to rationalize the regional truck route system. By Oct 13 the freight recommendations will be posted on website. Jim LaBelle reiterated that that it had been critical to include improved treatment for freight issues, and pointed out that the work of everyone resulted in a separate chapter for freight improvements.

7.0 CMAQ Program

Mr. Murtha noted there will soon be a CMAQ call for projects in Jan for the next two years, 2012 and 2013. He stated that this was an opportunity to move forward freight-oriented projects. He also stated that future CMAQ program may include focus areas. The Freight Committee discussed possibilities, including emissions, traffic flow improvements, and truck VMT reduction. Mr. Zapler asked about grades separation. Mr. Murtha responded that there may be a set of CREATE projects ready to begin engineering, and fewer still ready for construction. Mr. Murtha added that these were expensive projects. Mr. Wilson, Mr. LaBelle, and Mr. Billows all supported Freight Committee involvement in the process. Mr. Wilson suggested looking at grade crossings, with truck percent of ADT and traffic speed. Mr. Rohter suggested looking at secure parking near facility gates to reduce need to park remotely, then travel in the morning peak period.

8.0 Regional Transportation Operations Coalition.

Mr. Murtha noted that CMAP had purchased the software that was demonstrated at the last task force meeting to assist with regional analysis. However, CMAP is waiting for the accompanying IDOT NAVTEQ road system to develop a fully functional system. Mr. Murtha noted similarities with findings described by Mr. Berndt's: discontinuous truck routes, local and state truck route systems that do not necessarily match up, and some industrial areas are not covered by any truck route. Mr. Murtha noted that CMAP will improve the map coverage, but added that the lesson from the work over the summer was that the full region is too big a project to take on all at once. As a result, CMAP will focus on a few sub-regions at a time, and will work with local councils to focus on getting things right. CMAP needs to get partners on board, and it was noted that some communities do not see the value in this work. Mr. Billows added that it was critical to get the current routes correct and then to determine that the right routes are included.

Mr. LaBelle asked what was in the database. Mr. Murtha responded that CMAP has mapped land use, access routes such as Class 2 truck routes (where 53 foot trucks can operate legally). He stated that we need to determine we have (1) the right route, and (2) the right infrastructure in place. It is a complicated puzzle.

Ms. Hanlon asked which subregion we would focus on first? Mr. Murtha stated that CMAP intends to work with the City of Chicago first, as well as a selected suburban council. The Committee responded that an area with substantial freight activity would make sense.

Mr. Billows reiterated that this work was important, and asked how long the process would take region-wide. Mr. Murtha responded that the project was detail-oriented, and may take several years.

9.0 Freight System Snapshot.

Mr. Murtha stated that this work was progressing.

10.0. Project and Issue Updates

10.1 CMAQ Diesel Emissions Reductions Projects.

Mr. Murtha noted that the project was facing challenges. As noted at the earlier freight air quality meeting, some railroads were not enthusiastic about a program that only left them a small number of locomotives of a particular technology. BNSF was interested in purchasing traditional locomotives, rather than gensets. Mr. LaBelle responded that the locomotives purchased should meet the initial air quality goals, since there had been some questions about funding such private-sector activities.

10.2 National Highway System Intermodal Connectors

Mr. Murtha reported that the 167th Street intermodal connector was approved as an FAU route, a necessary step for federal construction assistance.

10.3 Chicago Area Waterway System

Mr. Murtha reported that an RFP had been issued regarding this issue. CMAP was involved with the project.

10.4 Advanced Freight System Modeling RFP

Mr. Murtha reported that CMAP had executed a contract for advanced freight modeling with Cambridge Systematics. A peer exchange was expected in February.

11.0 Other Business

None.

12.0 Next Meetings

The next meeting was rescheduled for October 28.

10.0 Adjournment

At 11:45 a.m., a motion to adjourn was made and approved by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted by Tom Murtha