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Agency for Planning

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MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board
MPO Policy Committee

From: Bob Dean, Deputy Executive Director for Local Planning

Date: October 3, 2012

Re: Project Evaluation and Selection

Attached to this memo is a report that describes staff recommendations for the selection of projects for CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) and Community Planning programs. This report is identical to the draft that was circulated earlier in September.

The projects recommended for selection will be brought to the CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee at their joint meeting on October 10. The Local Coordinating Committee will meet immediately prior to the Board/MPO meeting for a final discussion of recommended projects, and will be asked to recommend approval of the LTA and Community Planning programs.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval of the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) and Community Planning programs



Local Technical Assistance and Community Planning Programs:
Recommendations for Selection
October 3, 2012

Since the adoption of GO TO 2040, CMAP has established two programs, the Community Planning program and the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program, to direct resources to communities to pursue planning work that helps to implement GO TO 2040. The Community Planning program provides grants and consultant assistance, and the LTA program provides staff assistance and small grants, both for the purpose of assisting local governments with planning activities. During the most recent call for projects, which ended on August 1, over 100 applications were received from 88 different applicants. A list of all applications received, and some basic statistics concerning the applications, is available in this [August 8 memo](#) to the CMAP Board and committees.

The CMAP Board will be asked to approve the staff recommendations for both the Community Planning and the LTA programs at their meeting on October 10. The MPO Policy Committee, which meets concurrently with the Board, will also be asked to recommend approval of the Community Planning program; the LTA program does not require a formal MPO Policy Committee vote to be approved. Prior to the Board and MPO Policy Committee meeting, the Local Coordinating Committee will be asked to recommend approval by these groups.

The purpose of this memo is to present CMAP staff recommendations for the treatment of each application received. It is divided into four sections:

- Staff recommendations for projects to be funded through the Community Planning program.
- Staff recommendations for projects to be undertaken through the LTA program.
- Basic statistics concerning the projects recommended for selection.
- Full lists of projects that are recommended and not recommended.

COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends funding seven projects that submitted Community Planning program applications. These projects are of two major types. First, four projects are integrated land use and transportation plans. These include comprehensive plans in *Calumet City*, *North Aurora*, and *Prospect Heights*, as well as a community plan for the Garfield Park neighborhood submitted by the *Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development (DHED)*. The other three recommended projects are focused on bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and include

plans in *Evanston* and *Niles*, as well as a multi-jurisdictional project submitted by the *Northwest Municipal Conference*. (Please note that the *Niles* plan will be linked with another project in the same community that was selected for technical assistance during an earlier round but has not yet begun.)

Two projects that submitted applications to the Community Planning program also submitted identical applications to the LTA program. These projects, submitted by the NAACP and the University of Illinois at Chicago, are better fits in the LTA program and have been considered for technical assistance within that program. The disposition of these projects is described in the section on LTA staff recommendations.

Four other projects that submitted Community Planning program applications are not recommended for funding. These include applications from Chicago DHED, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), Glenwood, and Midlothian. Brief reasons for not recommending these for funding are below:

- Chicago Back of the Yards Corridor Plan. Chicago DHED also submitted a neighborhood plan for the Back of the Yards neighborhood, but indicated that their priority was the Garfield Park project. In order to provide opportunities to additional municipalities, the Back of the Yards project is not recommended for funding.
- Garfield Ridge Community Plan. This land use plan examines the impacts of a transportation project that is primarily in the communities of Bedford Park and Burbank, but CDOT did not demonstrate coordination with these municipalities.
- Glenwood Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Plan. The community recently completed a TOD plan funded by the RTA. The application frequently references SouthEast Service, but CMAP's priority is investment in the existing transit system.
- Midlothian Streetscape and Implementation Plan. It does not appear that further planning work in the community is necessary, but rather that the recommendations of previous plans should be implemented through engineering and capital investment.

The total cost of the projects recommended for funding is estimated at approximately \$600,000. This leaves approximately \$250,000 unexpended from the FY 13 budget for grants for local projects. Staff recommends that this funding be reserved and allocated to suitable LTA projects as the year progresses and projects become more fully scoped. Any project funded in this way will have significant transportation components and be eligible for UWP funds.

LTA RECOMMENDATIONS

In total, 40 new projects are recommended to be pursued through the LTA program. These projects have one or more of the following characteristics: they involve multijurisdictional coordination; they involve partnerships with external organizations; they are in communities that have limited resources for planning; and/or they address specific CMAP priorities like

parking or water resources. Some recommended projects have several of these characteristics, and all have at least one. The following narrative describes the recommended LTA projects, organized by these characteristics.

MULTIJURISDICTIONAL PROJECTS

CMAP was clear in the application process that multijurisdictional projects would be prioritized during the selection process, and applicants responded by submitting many good proposals that crossed municipal boundaries. Five multijurisdictional groups submitted applications for “Homes for a Changing Region” housing studies, and four of these are recommended to be pursued. These include one in DuPage, including *Addison, Bensenville, Villa Park, and Wood Dale*; two in Kane, including *Carpentersville, East Dundee, Elgin, and West Dundee* as well as *Batavia, Geneva, North Aurora, and St. Charles*; and one in Lake, including *North Chicago, Park City, Waukegan, and Zion*. A fifth “Homes” project was submitted by the Lake County Community Foundation, but did not demonstrate the full buy-in of the six communities that it represented.

One of the largest projects submitted was from the *Lake County Department of Transportation*, and involved a corridor land use plan for the proposed IL 53/120 improvements in central Lake County. Approximately 20 municipalities are part of this project. CMAP’s role in this project would be to manage a major consultant contract to conduct this land use plan, rather than to do so entirely through the LTA program; this project is contingent on identifying funding for the consultant contract. Several other applications for land use planning were submitted by communities in the IL 53/120 corridor, but these are more appropriate in future years, after the corridor-wide land use plan has been completed. These projects, which are not recommended to be pursued at the present time, include applications from Hawthorn Woods, Long Grove, and Libertyville and Mundelein (in a joint application). While not specifically referencing the IL 53/120 project, a joint application from Gurnee and Waukegan is also not recommended due to the inclusion of these communities in the IL 53/120 corridor and other projects already ongoing in Waukegan.

Two applicants – the *Ferson-Otter Creek Watershed Coalition* and the *Silver and Sleepy Hollow Creeks Watershed Coalition* – submitted proposals to implement multijurisdictional watershed plans that were completed by CMAP last year. These are both recommended to be pursued, as is the drought preparedness plan submitted by the *Northwest Water Planning Alliance*, which includes many counties and municipalities in the groundwater-dependent western part of the region.

Several other projects with multijurisdictional elements are also recommended. Staff assistance is recommended for *Hoffman Estates*, which led a broad coalition of applicants to request assistance with workforce development in the I-90 corridor. *Lincolnwood* submitted a proposal to address retail vacancy on a stretch of Devon Avenue that separates Lincolnwood from Chicago; this will involve both municipalities. Finally, the *Cook County Forest Preserve District* proposal involves trail counts within the forest preserves and an examination of connections to nearby municipalities, and is recommended to be pursued.

PROJECTS WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

In the first year of the LTA program, CMAP has learned that projects that involve partnerships with external groups – whether government or nongovernmental – are often the most successful. Therefore, selecting projects with strong partnerships was a priority in developing LTA project recommendations. The projects below are not a full list of those involving partners; many other emerge as projects are further developed.

A number of projects in Chicago involve innovative partnerships between government and nongovernmental groups. These include the Pilsen-Little Village Land Use Strategy, proposed by the *Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development*; a quality of life plan for Chinatown sponsored by the *Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community*; and a multimodal transportation plan submitted by the *University of Illinois at Chicago*, which will be pursued by enlisting the university's planning students and staff as active partners. There were a number of other projects in Chicago that are not recommended to be pursued, because they did not demonstrate as much support from the City as these recommended projects.

Through the recently-formed Kane County Planning Cooperative, a number of projects will be receiving staff support from the county's planning department. In addition to some already named above (the "Homes" projects in Kane and the Ferson-Otter Creek watershed plan implementation), recommended projects include a comprehensive plan for *Big Rock* and a bicycle and pedestrian plan for *South Elgin*. These projects will require less staff time on CMAP's part because of Kane County's commitment of resources.

Finally, two regional projects submitted by nonprofit partners are recommended; these are the *Metropolitan Mayors Caucus* proposal involving immigrant integration in suburban communities, and the *Openlands* proposal to address local food issues.

PROJECTS IN HIGH-NEED COMMUNITIES

The LTA program is meant to provide resources to communities that have few resources to devote to planning, so "need" – defined as an index that combines median income, property and sales tax base, and size – is used in the project selection recommendations. The highest-need communities in the region are typically small, lower-income suburbs with small tax bases. Applicants with higher levels of need are typically good candidates for products like comprehensive plans, zoning ordinance revisions, or other basic planning documents.

Comprehensive plans are recommended in the high-need communities of *Chicago Heights*, *Cicero*, *Dixmoor*, *Lyons*, *Markham*, and *Summit*. Other high-need communities receiving assistance include *Park Forest*, for a zoning update; the *Lan-Oak Park District*, for a parks master plan; *Worth*, for a planning priorities report (which will help to define an LTA project for a future application); and *Berwyn*, for a downtown parking study.

Other high-need communities have already been described earlier in this summary, including those projects in Chicago and the "Homes" project in Waukegan and its neighbors.

OTHER PROJECTS THAT ALIGN WITH CMAP PRIORITIES

A fourth category of projects includes those that are in topical areas that align well with GO TO 2040 and CMAP's interests. Many of the sponsors of these projects are lower in the spectrum of community need, but have innovative or unique ideas expressed in their proposals.

Several projects involve water, which has been a priority for CMAP since the adoption of Water 2050. Recommended water-related projects include those submitted by the *DuPage Water Commission*, *Illinois Department of Natural Resources*, and *Lake Zurich*, in addition to the watershed implementation projects and the Northwest Water Planning Alliance proposal already mentioned.

CMAP recently produced a model toolkit on parking, and solicited parking-related LTA projects this year; those recommended to be pursued include projects submitted by *Hinsdale* and *Wicker Park-Bucktown Special Service Area*, in addition to the Berwyn project noted earlier. Also in the area of transportation, LTA proposals that support major capital projects are priorities, and the comprehensive plan for *Bensenville* is recommended for this reason.

Several communities submitted interesting projects in the area of economic development or infill, and are recommended. These include *Oswego*, with an economic development plan; *Franklin Park*, for an industrial areas plan; *Will County*, for an inventory of brownfield sites; and others already noted.

Finally, several projects on other topics align well with CMAP's interests and are recommended. The *Cook County Department of Planning* requested assistance with preparing an update to their Consolidated Plan to make this document both more useful and more consistent with GO TO 2040. A request for assistance from *Seven Generations Ahead* related to sustainability data aligns well with CMAP's priorities in improving access to information. Finally, the proposal from the *Lake County Forest Preserve District* regarding local food is recommended to be pursued as a continuation of the ongoing LTA project in that area, rather than as a stand-alone new project.

PROJECTS THAT ARE NOT RECOMMENDED

Projects were considered lower priority for LTA assistance for a number of reasons, described further below.

- Priority for assistance was given to communities that had lower incomes or were smaller in size, meaning that more prosperous or larger communities were less likely to receive assistance. In particular, lower-need communities that requested basic planning assistance, like comprehensive plans or zoning ordinances, were not likely to be recommended; lower-need communities generally had to present an innovative project or one that aligned well with a specific CMAP priority in order to be recommended. This is the single most common factor that separated recommended projects from those that are not recommended.

- A number of applicants that are currently receiving assistance asked for additional projects; these include DuPage County, Kane County, and the Chicago Housing Authority. These current projects are in their early stages, and should be advanced further before a second phase is begun. Similarly, several projects that are logical next steps of the IL 53/120 corridor plan should be reconsidered in a future year.
- Some projects were good concepts but would benefit from further development by the project sponsor. Most of the unsuccessful applicants within Chicago are encouraged to expand the geographic scope of their projects and work more closely with City staff on project development.
- Several applicants requested assistance with stormwater planning activities. These are clearly important, but CMAP currently does not have stormwater planning expertise on staff and is not able to use its grant-related funding sources for stormwater projects. Where possible, these applicants will be directed to other groups that might be able to help them.
- One project, in Palos Heights, was related to the implementation of a previously-adopted plan funded by the RTA; this type of activity is a priority of the RTA and these projects will be referred to them for consideration in a future year.
- In general, applicants that submitted multiple projects had only one project recommended to be pursued. The additional projects will be suggested to be reconsidered as later phases. (In exceptions to this, two projects sponsored by Chicago DHED and Cook County have been recommended.)
- Finally, some projects were simply not a good fit for the local technical assistance program, as they focused on regional-level research, were focused on unconstrained major capital projects, did not demonstrate the full support of affected local governments, or did not demonstrate alignment with the recommendations of GO TO 2040.

A full list of applicants that are not recommended to receive assistance is included at the end of this document.

STATISTICS OF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

In the following section, basic statistics are provided for the distribution of projects by geography and community need.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

In the design of the local technical assistance program, an effort was made to identify projects to be pursued in many different parts of the region. In the following table, the distribution of higher priority projects by geography is summarized. Projects may be reported in multiple geographies, and these are noted below the table. A map showing the distribution of projects is included later in this document.

	Chicago	Cook total	N and NW Cook	W Cook	SW Cook	S Cook	Collar total	DuPage	Kane	Kendall	Lake	McHenry	Will	No specific geography	Total
Selected applicants	5	21	7	6	1	6	20	4	8	2	6	3	2	2	45
Total applicants	11	33	11	8	3	10	46	10	14	4	13	8	4	3	88

Recommended projects included in multiple geographies are:

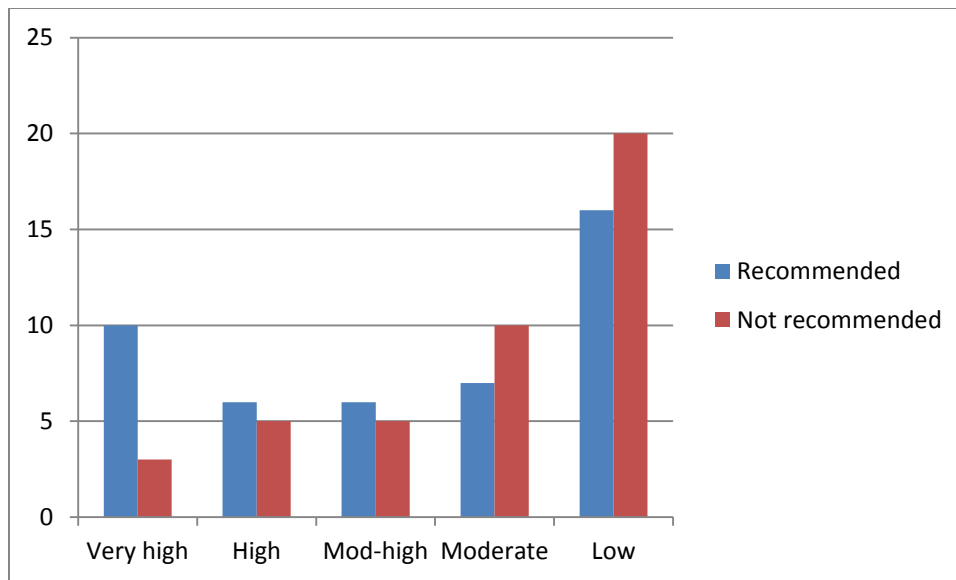
- Lincolnwood Devon Avenue corridor study (Chicago and NW Cook)
- Northwest Water Planning Alliance (NW Cook, Kane, Kendall, Lake, and McHenry)
- Openlands local food project (Kane, Lake, and McHenry)
- Park Forest zoning update (S Cook and Will)
- Cook County projects are only shown in the “Cook total” column

COMMUNITY NEED

An important factor in the review process was the need of the community for assistance. The program is meant to prioritize projects in communities that have limited resources and would not have the ability to undertake the project without CMAP’s assistance. This is also consistent with the stated goal of HUD’s grant to focus on providing assistance to disadvantaged groups, including lower-income residents, residents of public housing, and minorities, among others.

Communities were divided into five categories based on these factors, ranging from “very high” to “low” need. Many communities in the “low” need category submitted excellent projects and could still certainly benefit from assistance, but priority was given to communities with lower median incomes and tax bases, as well as to smaller municipalities. The following table and chart summarize the distribution of recommended projects by community need.

	Very high need	High need	Moderately high need	Moderate need	Low need	Total
Selected applicants	10	6	6	7	16	45
Total applicants	13	11	11	17	36	88



Beyond raw numbers of projects selected, average project size is also important to consider. Projects in higher-need communities tend to be larger planning projects, such as comprehensive plans or zoning ordinance updates. In lower need communities, projects are often more specialized and lower in size. Based on initial estimates of size, selected projects in communities with high or very high need average \$100,000 in value; those in communities with moderate or moderately high need are around \$70,000 in value; and those in low-need communities are valued at an average of \$40,000.

As this demonstrates, recommended projects were identified from communities of all types, but those from higher need communities were more likely to be selected, and also include a greater average commitment of resources than lower need communities.

PROJECT LISTING

Recommended projects:

Sponsor	Project
Addison	Homes for a Changing Region
Bensenville	comprehensive plan (additional request for zoning update is not recommended)
Berwyn	parking study
Big Rock	comprehensive plan
Calumet City	comprehensive plan (additional request for stormwater plan is not recommended)
Carpentersville	Homes for a Changing Region
Chicago Heights	comprehensive plan (additional request for water conservation is not recommended)
Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development	Pilsen-Little Village plan
Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development	Garfield Park plan (additional request for neighborhood plan in Back of the Yards is not recommended)

Sponsor	Project
Cicero	comprehensive plan (additional request for sewer system plan is not recommended)
Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community	Chinatown community plan
Cook County	two projects: consolidated plan; trails plan (additional requests for sustainability plan and comprehensive plan are not recommended)
Dixmoor	comprehensive plan (additional various requests are not recommended)
DuPage Water Commission	water conservation
Evanston	bicycle and pedestrian plan
Ferson-Otter Creek Watershed Coalition	watershed plan implementation
Franklin Park	industrial areas plan
Geneva	Homes for a Changing Region
Hinsdale	parking study
Hoffman Estates	workforce development plan
Illinois Department of Natural Resources	water loss reduction strategy
Lake County Department of Transportation	IL 53 corridor plan
Lake County Forest Preserve District	public land local food plan**
Lake Zurich	water conservation
Lan-Oak Park District	parks master plan
Lincolnwood	Devon Avenue corridor plan (additional request for comprehensive plan is not recommended)
Lyons	comprehensive plan
Markham	comprehensive plan (additional request for parks plan is not recommended)
Metropolitan Mayors Caucus	immigrant integration study
Niles	bicycle and pedestrian plan**
North Aurora	comprehensive plan
Northwest Water Planning Alliance	water conservation
Northwest Municipal Conference	bicycle and pedestrian plan
Openlands	local food policy
Oswego	economic development plan
Park Forest	zoning update
Prospect Heights	comprehensive plan
Seven Generations Ahead	sustainability data
Silver and Sleepy Hollow Creeks Watershed Coalition	watershed plan implementation
South Elgin	bicycle and pedestrian plan
Summit	comprehensive plan
University of Illinois at Chicago	multimodal transportation plan
Waukegan	Homes for a Changing Region
Wicker Park-Bucktown Special Service Area	parking study
Will County	brownfield inventory
Worth	planning priorities report

Shaded cells indicate grant or consultant assistance through Community Planning program

** Request will be pursued as part of current LTA program, rather than stand-alone project.

Not recommended:

Sponsor	Project
Barrington Hills	environmental data
Bartlett	zoning update
Broadview	parking study
Bull Valley	zoning update; strategic plan
Campton Hills	zoning update; bicycle-pedestrian plan
Carol Stream	comprehensive plan
Chicago Department of Transportation	Garfield Ridge plan; public space use policy
Chicago Housing Authority	Altgeld Gardens plan; Washington Park plan
City of Homes	Cermak corridor plan
Crete	comprehensive plan
DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning	unincorporated corridor plan
Frankfort Park District	parks master plan
Gilberts	comprehensive plan
Glen Ellyn	bicycle-pedestrian plan
Glencoe Park District	parks master plan
Glenview	environmental planning
Glenwood	transportation plan; stormwater plan
Gurnee and Waukegan*	Grand Avenue corridor plan
Hawthorn Woods*	comprehensive plan
Huntley	form-based code
Kane County Department of Transportation	Randall Road multimodal plan
Lake County Community Foundation	Homes for a Changing Region
Lake Forest Consortium	sustainability plan
Lakeside Development Corporation	green infrastructure plan
Lakewood	comprehensive plan
Libertyville and Mundelein*	unincorporated area plan
Long Grove*	IL 53 impact analysis
Matteson	comprehensive plan; zoning update
McHenry County Stormwater Management Commission	stormwater plan
Midlothian	subarea plan
Montgomery	comprehensive plan
Morton Arboretum	regional trees initiative
NAACP	local food and land use plan
Oak Brook	housing plan
Palos Heights	Harlem Avenue overlay district
Palos Park	water conservation and rate study
Schaumburg	sustainability plan
St. Charles*	watershed plan
Sustainable Englewood	cultural plan

Sponsor	Project
Victory Heights Community Organization	neighborhood plan
Villa Park*	corridor plan
Winthrop Harbor	comprehensive plan
Yorkville	zoning update

Shaded cells indicate request for grant or consultant assistance through Community Planning program

* Indicates that the project sponsor was also a participant in a successful multi-jurisdictional application