Agenda Item No. 5.0

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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MEMORANDUM

To: MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board

From: Dolores Dowdle
Deputy Executive Director, Finance and Administration

Date: January 5, 2012

Re: Fiscal Year 2013 Unified Work Program (UWP) Process

Unified Work Program (UWP) federal funding is available for transportation planning projects within a metropolitan area. For the CMAP area, there is an increase in federal funding from $15.7 million to $18 million for FY 2013. With matching funds, the total project cost available for UWP projects is $22.5 million.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has the primary responsibility for preparing the UWP for its metropolitan area. The federal guidelines state that all planning and implementing agencies must be an integral part of the planning process and participate in the development of the UWP. In the CMAP region, the UWP Committee serves as the project selection body for this process. The committee is chaired by IDOT, who votes in case of a tie. The membership is comprised of a representative from each of the transit service boards (CTA, Metra and Pace), the City of Chicago, RTA, CMAP, a representative from the counties, and a mayor representing the Council of Mayors. In addition, non-voting members are representatives from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The UWP Committee establishes program priorities and selects core and competitive proposals. Final selections are approved by the Transportation Committee and then forwarded to the Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee for approval.

Last year the UWP Committee, with concurrence of the Transportation Committee, Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee, approved the following FY 2012 UWP priorities aligned with the regional priorities described in the GO TO 2040 Plan. It is not anticipated that any changes will be necessary to these priorities until the update of the GO TO 2040 plan in 2015.

- *Modernization of the Public Transit System.* GO TO 2040 recommends an enhanced focus on prioritizing planning work for the modernization of the existing transit system. Actions include work on coordinating services and fares, including pursuit of a universal fare payment system, work on traveler information systems, and technological improvements including transit signal priority and ART. Project proposals, especially from the transit agencies, should feature these elements as a primary component.
- *Financial Planning Including Innovative Financing Strategies*. GO TO 2040 also stresses an array of recommendations related to transportation finance, including improved financial planning. Actions include strengthening transit financial oversight, planning for efficiencies that reduce transit operating costs, the identification of funding sources for CREATE, and continued planning/policy work on other important issues of fiscal policy to improve the transportation system.
- *Improving Decision-Making Models and Evaluation Criteria for Project Selection.* GO TO 2040 also emphasizes improving decision-making processes for transportation projects, as well as the overarching importance of prioritization for making investments given constrained funding. This includes constructing improved models for answering the most pressing questions about major projects and designing appropriate and regionally-vetted evaluation criteria for judging projects.
- *Planning Work Toward Implementation of* GO TO 2040 *Major Capital Projects, Including Supportive Land Use.* The continuation of near-term work to further GO TO 2040's short list of fiscally constrained major capital projects is also a high priority. Potential work includes planning for the inclusion of transit components as part of major highway projects, advancing recommended transit projects through the New Starts program or other discretionary funding programs, and planning for supportive land use around transportation, including active technical assistance to local governments.
- *Local Technical Assistance and the Formation of Collaborative Planning Efforts.* A major emphasis area of GO TO 2040 is providing targeted technical assistance to local governments, information sharing, and formal planning efforts that focus on transportation and other interconnected issues of livability.

The FY 2013 UWP process will be as follows:

- There will be one Call for Projects in January, with the grantees identifying the proposals as Core or Competitive. The Core and the Competitive proposals will be considered separately by the Committee.
- Similar to the CMAQ proposal selection process, CMAP staff will conduct an in-depth proposal review and develop a proposed program for the UWP Committee's consideration. The review and recommendation process is as follows:
    - <u>Proposal Selection – Core.</u> CMAP staff will review the Core proposals and make a proposed program recommendation to the UWP Committee for approval. The

proposal review will consider the following: federal requirements; alignment with the proposed priorities in GO TO 2040; the requested level of funding; and if applicable, previous years' expenditure level of Core projects. The contracts for the UWP activities will be for a period of one year for staff support and up to three years for contractual services.

- Proposal Selection – Competitive. The Competitive proposals will be ranked by the UWP Committee as in years past, based upon the alignment with the regional priorities listed above. Based on the available monies after the Core proposals have been funded, CMAP staff will incorporate the Committee's rankings and make a proposed program recommendation to the UWP Committee that follows the same considerations outlined above in the Core program. The contracts for the competitive activities will be for a period of up to three years for contractual services and related costs. The competitive activities normally do not support on-going staff time.

The schedule for the development and approval of the FY 2013 UWP process is as follows:

Development of Program Priorities and Selection Process	
UWP Meeting	November 8, 2011

Call for Proposals	
Call for Proposals	January 5, 2012
All Proposals Due (Core and Competitive)	February 1, 2012

Core Elements Selection Process	
UWP Meeting - Adopt Core Program	February 29, 2012

Competitive Elements Selection Process	
UWP Meeting - Discuss Competitive Proposals	March 7, 2012
UWP Meeting - Adopt Competitive Program	April 11, 2012

Committee Approval	
Transportation Committee considers approval of FY 2013 UWP to MPO Policy Committee	April 27, 2012
Regional Coordinating Committee considers approval of FY 2013 UWP to CMAP Board	June 13, 2012
CMAP Board considers approval of proposed FY 2013 UWP	June 13, 2012
MPO Policy Committee considers approval of proposed FY 2013 UWP	June 14, 2012
UWP Document Released	June 2012

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