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## Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Transportation Committee Minutes Friday October 23, 2009

Cook County Conference Room 233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Willis Tower Chicago, Illinois

Members Present: Vice Chair Chris Snyder-DuPage County, Chuck Abraham-IDOT

DPIT, Maria Choca-Urban–CNT, Bruce Christensen–Lake County, John Donovan–FHWA, John Fortmann-IDOT District One, Rupert Graham, Jr.–Cook County, Robert Haan–Private Providers, Don Kopec-CMAP, Jamy Lyne–Will County, Arlene J. Mulder–Council of Mayors, Les Nunes–IDOT OP&P, Jason Osborn-McHenry County, Randy Neufeld-Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, Leanne Redden–RTA, David Seglin-CDOT, David Simmons–CTA, Peter Skosey–MPC, Mike Sullivan–Kendall County, Jan Ward-Kane

County, David Werner-FTA, Tom Zapler-Class 1 Railroads

**Members Online:** Bill Brown-NIPRC, Joseph Schofer-Northwestern University, Rocco

Zucchero-Tollway

Members Absent: Rocky Donahue-Pace, Jack Groner-Metra, Mike Rogers-IEPA,

Vonu Thakuriah-UIC-UTC, Ken Yunker–SEWRPC

**Attendees Online**: Jeff Busby, Steve Coffinbargar, Heidi Files, Christina Kupkowski,

Lake County Division of Transportation, Sarah Lutz, Jim Ofcarcik

(IDOT Budget & Fiscal Mgmt)

Others Present: Abhijit Banerjee, Kristen Bennett, Brian Carlson, Rob Cole, Chalen

Daigle, Stephanie Devenny, Paisly DiBianca, Jason Dobeau, Kama Dobbs, Rebekah Dommel, Bud Fleming, Adolph Foggins, Monica Garcia, Ibazar Ihz, Paula Levin, Paul Metaxatos, Brian Plum, Chad Riddle, Chris Staron, Emily Tapia, Tammy Wierciak, Nathan

Ziccarelli

Staff:

Erin Aleman, Shana Alford, Patricia Berry, Janet Bright, Bob Dean, Teri Dixon, Matt Maloney, Holly Ostdick, Ross Patronsky, Joy Schaad, Matt Stratton, Gordon Smith, Diana Torres

#### 1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

9:30 AM

Chris Snyder, Committee Vice Chair called the meeting to order.

### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no changes or announcements

### 3.0 2010 Meeting Schedule

A revised proposed meeting schedule for 2010 was included in the packet. This revision reflects comments received from members. Committee member were asked again to review the schedule and to call or e-mail Secretary Teri Dixon with any further concerns or conflicts. No action was requested at this meeting. The committee will be asked to approve the schedule at its November 20, 2009 meeting.

#### 4.0 Preferred Scenarios

Bob Dean described the recommended features of the "preferred regional scenario," which will be used to guide the key policy directions of *GO TO 2040*. He stated that a draft of the preferred regional scenario report had been included with the meeting materials, and summarized its contents. The discussion of the preferred regional scenario touched on the following issues:

- It was asked whether the integration of the transportation elements of *GO TO 2040* with other non-transportation elements would create a problem with federal certification of the plan. John Donovan (FHWA) responded that it would not.
- The committee noted several points of the preferred scenario that could be strengthened, including the contribution of freight to the regional economy, the opportunity for "greening" to occur as part of redevelopment, and the links between land use and transportation. The importance of investment in public transit was also strongly reinforced.
- The concept of "unsiloing" was discussed at length. Several committee members stated
  that the federal government appeared to have embraced this concept, in particular in the
  sustainable communities partnership of DOT, HUD, and EPA. The committee also
  noted that considerable flexibility was already available through some existing funding
  sources.

- The importance of quantifying the benefits of the preferred scenario was emphasized. Staff explained that this was not included in the current draft, but that this section would be expanded in future drafts to communicate the benefits of the preferred scenario clearly.
- Staff also clarified that the Transportation Committee would be asked to recommend endorsement of the preferred scenario at their January 6 meeting, with the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee expected to take action the following week.

### 5.0 Financial Plan

Joy Schaad described the methods used for the preliminary calculations of the cost of maintaining and operating the region's current system of transportation infrastructure. She explained that highway costs had been estimated using unit costs for different work types and then combining this with expected frequencies of these different work types. Transit costs, on the other hand, were estimated from the RTA's *Moving Beyond Congestion* report, and updates to these costs are reliant on receiving additional information from the RTA and the service boards. She concluded that the "core revenues" discussed at the previous meeting appeared barely adequate to cover the costs of basic maintenance and operation of the current transportation system. The discussion of the cost section of the financial plan touched on the following issues:

- The use of a "safe and adequate" level of maintenance as a floor, rather than "state of good repair", was discussed. In the case of transit, it was noted that achieving a state of good repair was a goal or target that should be worked toward, rather than a floor. While achieving a state of good repair is a high priority, there is also a need for strategic improvements or expansions beyond reaching a state of good repair.
- The assumptions used for estimating construction cost increases were discussed at length. It was noted that construction costs had been low recently, due to the overall slow economy. The committee also discussed whether more advanced maintenance or construction methods could lower costs, and staff clarified that continuation of standard maintenance practices was assumed in these costs.
- The impact of future fluctuations in gasoline prices was also identified as an issue. The financial plan assumes that gasoline prices and other factors influencing travel behavior remain relatively consistent, but it is acknowledged that this cannot accurately be predicted. Staff noted that *GO TO 2040* could be tested for "robustness", or its effectiveness at dealing with alternative future conditions, to address this issue.
- The committee reinforced the finding that projects had to be carefully prioritized in an environment where limited funding for new or expanded projects will be available.

Matt Maloney then described "reasonably expected revenues", which are funding sources that may be available between now and 2040 but which go beyond the "core revenue"

funding sources that have already been projected. He stated that the federal government allowed regions some latitude in defining reasonably expected revenues, and that several potential revenue sources had been identified (including state or federal gas tax increase, VMT fee, congestion pricing, variable parking pricing, or public-private partnerships) that could be considered for inclusion in the plan. Discussion of this topic, as well as the summary of core revenues that was also included with the meeting materials, included the following issues:

- The committee asked whether increasing vehicle efficiency was assumed in calculating gas tax revenues. Staff responded that the gas tax was not keeping pace with inflation for this reason, and this trend was projected to continue. Indexing of the gas tax, rather than a flat increase, was recommended as an option. Potential gas tax increases were discussed in some depth, and there seemed to be agreement that this could be reasonably expected within the plan timeframe at the federal, state, or local levels.
- Parking pricing was identified a potentially useful source of funding, though it was noted that many areas do not necessarily use parking revenues for transportation improvements.
- The committee noted that there were different types of public-private partnerships, ranging from monetizing existing assets to constructing new infrastructure. It was also observed that there was no guarantee that monetizing assets would actually lead to increased revenues for transportation.
- Other potential revenue sources suggested included federal cap-and-trade revenues,
   value capture measures, additional transit fare increases, and others.
- The definition of "reasonably expected" was discussed. Staff stated that some revenue sources might be supported by the plan, but if they appeared unlikely, might not be included in the financial constraint calculations. Detailed federal guidance on defining "reasonable" is not available.
- The committee also discussed the benefits of projecting specific revenue sources, as
  compared to projecting transportation funding as a share of the regional economy or
  some other non-specific measure. While both are reasonable, the federal government
  supports efforts to examine specific funding sources, because the accompanying
  discussions of policy and priorities can strengthen the planning process.

### 6.0 Major Capital Project Evaluation

Ross Patronsky updated the committee on the process and status of evaluating major capital projects. He stated that preliminary results from the evaluation of several projects were included with the meeting materials. Discussion issues included:

• The committee asked for more detail concerning the measurement of infill and natural resource impacts. Staff responded that these identified the areas of the region that were most affected by a project, and then calculated the percentage of these areas that were

- within municipal boundaries (infill) or were primarily made up of open space or farmland, or near to a high-quality river or stream (natural resources).
- Robert Cole, representing the Village of Oak Park, expressed concerns about the treatment of the I-290 managed lanes project, and requested additional information concerning the assumptions behind the project evaluations. The committee advised that an individual discussion of this project occur between IDOT, CMAP, and the Village after the meeting. The Village also stated that the Inner Circumferential project should have enough information available to allow it to be quantitatively analyzed, as it had undergone detailed studies. (Staff has confirmed this and will be analyzing the project.)
- A request was made for a summary table that would allow easier comparison between projects.
- Staff requested that all project sponsors or supporters who were not satisfied with the
  treatment of their project contact CMAP to provide new or improved information. The
  committee asked whether there was a deadline for this, and staff responded that this
  information was needed as soon as possible.

### 7.0 Public Comment

Robert Cole of the Village of Oak Park commented about the I-290 managed lanes project and the Village's concerns about how the project will be evaluated, since IDOT is starting a new study of the project. He asked for specifics on the inputs for the analysis. Staff provided Mr. Cole information to address his concerns.

#### 8.0 Other Business

There was no other business

### 9.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Cook County Room.

### Adjournment

# **Transportation Committee Members**

Charles Abraham	Jan Metzger	Steve Strains
Rocky Donahue	Arlene J. Mulder	Chris Snyder**
John Donovan***	Randy Neufeld	Vonu Thakuriah
John Fortmann	Jason Osborn	Paula Trigg
Bruce Gould	Leanne Redden	David Werner***
Rupert Graham, Jr	Tom Rickert	Ken Yunker
Jack Groner	Mike Rogers	Tom Zapler
Luann Hamilton*	Joe Schofer	Rocco Zucchero
Robert Hann	Peter Skosey	
Fran Klaas	Dick Smith	
Don Kopec	David Simmons	
*Chair	**Vice-Chair	***Non-voting