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Memorandum

To: CMAQ Project Selection Committee
From: Ross Patronsky, Senior Planner
Doug Ferguson, Associate Planner
Subject: Public Comments on proposed FY 2009 CMAQ Program
Date: September 4, 2008

The following is a summary of comments received on the proposed FY 2009 CMAQ program and staff notes on those comments. Ten comments were received on specific proposals. One comment also referred to the CMAQ program in general. Copies of the individual comments are attached.

TI01093175 – CTA – Express Bus #X9 Ashland Express-Year 3
TI01093177 – CTA – #X49 Western Express Bus-Weekend Service
TI01093174 – CTA – Bus Route Improvements
OT13093189 – Pace – Expand I-GO Car Sharing Regionwide
CMAQ Proposed Program

Garrett Phillips sent an email supporting the above projects and recommending more funding for ITS projects, projects on the I-90 corridor and in Cook County, BRT projects, congestion pricing initiatives, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and against funding for any project that would ease present congestion but facilitate increased auto use in the long run.

- The Ashland Express, Western Ave Express Weekend Service and I-Go Regionwide Expansion projects were included in the proposed program. The Bus Route Improvements project was not included in the proposed program; the prior year funding for the project had not been obligated, and it ranked relatively low among transit service and equipment proposals.

PD03093184 – Barrington – North Commuter Parking Structure

Michael Walczak, Program Manager for Transportation, Northwest Municipal Conference, sent a letter supporting the project for funding.

Denise Pieroni, Village Manager, Village of Barrington, sent a letter supporting the project for funding.

- This proposal was not included in the proposed program. As noted in the July 10 cover memorandum to the staff recommendation, the parking deck category had two proposals, requesting \$22 million federal dollars. Neither proposal was recommended since the funding needed was too high in light of the expected impact and the opportunities for benefits in other proposal categories.

In particular, the Barrington proposal requested a total of \$8,300,000 in CMAQ federal funds. Aside from CMAQ funds and local match, the only other funds being applied to this project are STP funds programmed by the Northwest Council of Mayors. The lack of other fund sources, or other development efforts in conjunction with the project, results in a project that does not leverage the CMAQ funds. This was taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to include this project in the staff recommendation.

BP11093071 – Lake in the Hills Parks & Recreation – Harvest Gate Bike Path

Krista and Kevin McDunn sent a letter in opposition to the project.

George Brennan and seven other signatories sent a letter in opposition to the project.

- This proposal is included in the proposed program. It ranked 13th among bicycle facility proposals; the top fifteen proposals are in the proposed program. The comment letters make several assertions, among them that the existing road network is sufficient for cyclists, that the Village's project development process has been flawed, that there is significant opposition to the project, and that there will be a special hardship on one family living adjacent to the proposed facility. The comments were forwarded to the proposal contact, whose response is attached.

Support or opposition letters by themselves are given only modest consideration in recommending proposals for the CMAQ program. In this case however, one of the points raised warrants consideration, both for this specific proposal as well as for future CMAQ funding cycles.

In this case, the commenters point out that there is an existing road that parallels the proposed off-street facility and connects the two paths that terminate it. This road can be seen on the attached aerial photographs; it is a standard residential street in a subdivision. The commenters assert that the road has low volumes of automobile traffic, and does not present a barrier to bicyclists.

The sponsor's contact has responded that the road has high traffic volumes, is narrow, and has significant parking, making it unsuitable as a bicycle facility.

Staff is still seeking more information to verify the suitability of the road for bicycle use. However, if the street is suitable for bicyclists, then it is

recommended that CMAQ funds should not be used to build the proposed facility. In any case, staff recommends that future CMAQ bicycle facility application materials include questions to clarify whether or not there are existing adequate facilities.

Thirteen Diesel Emission Reduction Proposals

Twelve groups submitted a comment supporting full funding for all thirteen diesel emission reduction proposals that showed benefits.

- Eleven of these proposals are included in the proposed program. The proposed CMAQ funding level submitted for public comment is approximately \$18.8 million. This funding level is the largest one-year commitment of CMAQ funds to diesel emission reduction projects in the six-state US EPA Region 5, and quite possibly, the country. If all thirteen proposals were fully funded, the FY 2009 CMAQ funding level would be just under \$46 million. While this funding level could in theory be achieved, many other useful transportation proposals would need to be omitted. Full funding of all thirteen diesel emission reduction proposals is not recommended.

DR13093150 – IEPA – Chicago Area Diesel Retrofit Program

DR01093125 – CDOE – Chicago Diesel Emissions Reduction Project

DR13093182 – IDOT – IDOT Maintenance Fleet Emissions Reduction

DR01093127 – IEPA – Retrofit of Amtrak Switcher Engines

IEPA sent a letter supporting the inclusion of these proposals in the program, and the proposed 20% match for the Amtrak proposal.

- These proposals are included in the proposed program; the Amtrak proposal calls for a 20% local match.

DR04093133 – Berkeley – Union Pacific Proviso Railyard Switcher Engine Retrofit

Union Pacific sent a letter indicating their inability to move forward with the project at the proposed 50 percent local match. They indicated that a 35% local match would be acceptable

- This proposal is included in the proposed program for \$1,600,000 in federal funds to retrofit two switcher units.

DR01093126 – IEPA – Norfolk Southern Railway Co Switchyard Diesel Locomotive Retrofit Project

IEPA forwarded a letter from the Norfolk Southern indicating that they cannot commit to the project at the proposed 50 percent local match. They indicated that they require the 20% local match, but offered to extend the time the switch engines are guaranteed to be in the region, and to keep an existing Genset-equipped locomotive in the region for an additional 30 months.

- This proposal is included in the proposed program for \$1,500,000 in federal funds to retrofit two switcher units.

DR069093132 – Bedford Park – BRC Clearing Yard Switcher Retrofit

The Belt Railway sent a letter indicating their inability to move forward with the project at the proposed 50 percent local match. They indicated that a 35% local match would be acceptable

- This proposal is included in the proposed program for \$2,250,000 in federal funds to retrofit three switcher units.

All told, five private railroads are recommended for funding in the FY 2009 CMAQ program. At the fifty percent local match level, \$8,875,500 in federal funds is recommended. Each of the sponsors was informed that the local match was recommended at fifty percent. Staff had specific contact with four of the railroads. One did not respond specifically to the recommended local match. Two railroads said they could accept a thirty-five percent local match, and one stated that it required the minimum twenty percent local match.

Funding each railroad at the local match level it agrees to could be considered, but would create inequities that could disrupt programming in future cycles. Staff recommends that all proposals be funded at the same local match.

Funding the five proposals at a twenty percent local match would require \$16,460,800 in federal funds. At a thirty-five percent local match, \$11,538,150 in federal funds would be required. Assuming that the Norfolk Southern is in fact unable to provide more than a twenty percent local match, then deleting that proposal from the program results in \$9,588,150 in federal funds required for the remaining four proposals. There is an increase of \$712,650 in federal funds required compared to the proposed program released for public comment. After accounting for the three previously-programmed projects recommended for withdrawal, the total program is still within the estimated mark.

Staff recommends that DR01093126 – IEPA – Norfolk Southern Railway Co Switchyard Diesel Locomotive Retrofit Project be removed from the proposed program and that these proposals be funded at a thirty-five percent local match:

- DR04093133 – Berkeley – Union Pacific Proviso Railyard Switcher Engine Retrofit
- DR069093132 – Bedford Park – BRC Clearing Yard Switcher Retrofit
- DR05093134 – Cicero – Cicero Rail Yard Locomotive Diesel Retrofit
- DR13093142 – Franklin Park – Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Switcher Engine Retrofit

A revised proposed program, incorporating the changes recommended in this summary is attached.