



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item No. 6.0

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MEMORANDUM

To: Local Coordinating Committee

From: Bob Dean, Deputy Executive Director for Local Planning

Date: November 2, 2011

Re: Grants and Procurements

In August, the Local Coordinating Committee discussed future options for grants to support technical assistance work, and concurred with the approach recommended by staff. At the November meeting, staff will provide an update on progress in these areas.

The overall philosophy of the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program has been to identify projects that are priorities to accomplish, and then use a variety of methods to accomplish them, including staff assistance as well as grants. Two major types of grants are being used to FY 12 to support the LTA program. The first type includes larger grants which are used to hire a contractor, typically a consulting firm, to manage a project. The second includes smaller grants that are used to hire a contractor, sometimes a consulting firm but often a nonprofit partner, to contribute to a project. Progress in making grants in both categories is explained below.

Larger grants for project management

These are grants in which the contractor is expected to perform most activities on a certain project. These grants are typically made directly to project sponsors (most often local governments). Contractors are procured through a competitive selection involving a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, and typically consist of for-profit planning consulting firms. As part of their response to the RFP and subsequent negotiations, contractors provide a full scope of services and schedule for the project, which they are then responsible for implementing. Contracts for most planning projects of the type of interest to CMAP (comprehensive plans, transportation plans, subarea plans, ordinance updates, and similar activities) typically exceed \$50,000 in cost, reaching \$150,000 or more for large, complex projects.

The chief example of this type of grant is the Community Planning Program, through which \$740,000 in grants to eight projects was approved at the Board meeting in August. An additional \$240,000 in grants to three projects – a comprehensive plan for the Village of Elburn, a sub-area plan for McHenry County, and a corridor plan for the Village of New Lenox – was approved at the Board meeting in October. All three of these projects had previously been submitted through the LTA program, meaning that the staff resources that had been reserved for these projects can now be redirected to others.

As discussed in August, grants are better suited for sponsor communities that have a high level of staff capacity and are expected to be able to effectively manage and expend the grant in an efficient and timely manner. Each of the three new grantees fit this standard. Additionally, for each of these three projects, CMAP and the sponsor were able to quickly reach a mutual understanding concerning the scope, schedule, and approximate budget for the project; projects with clear scopes are better candidates for grants than those that are new, unusual, or otherwise undefined.

At past meetings, the Local Coordinating Committee also discussed the DCEO Ike Planning Program. Discussions with DCEO are now underway, and staff will give an update at the November meeting on current status. It is likely that any grants awarded through the Ike Planning Program will also fit within this "large grant" category.

Smaller grants for contributions to projects

In addition to the large grants described above, there is often a need for small-scale assistance with specific projects. In these cases, the project is led by CMAP, and CMAP staff conduct most of the work on the project, but small contracts are necessary to "fill gaps" in CMAP staff's expertise. Contracts of this type are typically in a cost range of \$10,000 to \$20,000, though they may be as high as \$50,000 for significant activities that are part of particularly large projects.

In August, staff discussed plans to identify contractors to assist with ongoing LTA projects using RFPs and similar methods. Please note that the identified contractors include a mixture of nonprofit and for-profit organizations, as the committee discussed in August; also please note that only expenditures of over \$25,000 are brought to the Board for approval. Most of the work on contractor procurement is complete or ongoing, and is summarized below:

- The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) received a contract of \$50,000 to lead community engagement for the Green Healthy Neighborhoods project sponsored by the City of Chicago and focused on the Greater Englewood, Washington Park, and Woodlawn community areas. The Board approved this grant in March.
- The Urban Land Institute (ULI) will work with the City of Joliet on a site redevelopment project. CMAP has provided the City with a \$15,000 grant, which the City will use to contract with ULI.
- The Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance (CAFHA) will assist CMAP with meeting the grant requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) related to fair housing. The Board approved a \$25,000 contract in October, and contract processing is underway.
- Seven organizations were selected to assist with ongoing or planned LTA projects at a rate of approximately \$20,000 per contract. The selected contractors include:
 - Camiros, a planning firm, to assist with development of an arts and culture toolkit.
 - T.Y. Lin, an engineering firm, to assist with planning of a greenway and surrounding land use in Antioch.

- The Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) at Loyola University Chicago, to assist with participatory community research for the Red Line South Extension livability project.
- The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), to assist with the Park Forest Sustainability Plan.
- The Delta Institute and Openlands, to assist with the Lake County Sustainability Plan.
- The Chicago Jobs Council, to assist with incorporating workforce development recommendations into a number of LTA projects.
- An ongoing procurement is seeking design and illustration assistance. Communication of complex planning issues is often difficult, and preparing illustrations of how planning decisions can affect a specific site is a proven way to effectively communicate with the public. A recommendation to select a firm to assist with this activity will be brought to the Board for approval at its November meeting, immediately following the Local Coordinating Committee.
- A future procurement will seek assistance from a firm specializing in conducting market and economic analysis, which will supplement existing CMAP staff experience in this topic. The procurement process for this has not yet begun, but Board action is expected to be requested in February 2012.
- Further small grants to local governments to support the involvement of ULI in site redevelopment projects are also expected.

Summary

Staff continue to follow the direction indicated by the Local Coordinating Committee at their August meeting. Grants and procurements over \$25,000 will continue to be brought to the CMAP Board for approval, and updates on external involvement in projects will be regularly provided through the monthly LTA update report.

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion.

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