



MEMORANDUM

To: UWP Committee

From: Matt Maloney, Deputy Chief of Staff

Date: December 1, 2010

Re: UWP Prioritization Exercise- Emerging Themes

This memo briefly summarizes some of the overarching themes from the UWP prioritization exercise and suggests some next steps to gear up for the upcoming FY 2012 project selection process.

Overarching Themes

- *Modernization of the Public Transit System.* The four top scoring *GO TO 2040* implementation action areas (in terms of short-term priority) reflect a strong focus on prioritizing planning work that seeks to modernize 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. It is clear that FY '12 project proposals, especially from the transit agencies, should feature these elements as a primary component.
- *Financial Planning Including Innovative Financing Strategies.* The top tier of responses includes several actions related to transportation finance, especially financial planning. Actions include strengthening transit financial oversight, planning for efficiencies that reduce transit operating costs, conducting innovative studies on value capture techniques for transit, 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.* The scoring results also suggest an emphasis on improving decision-making processes for transportation projects, as well as the overarching importance of prioritization. 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 top tier of responses also reflects the importance of continuing near-term work on furthering GO TO 2040's short list of fiscally constrained major capital projects. 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.* Also included in the top tier of responses were several actions related to providing targeted technical assistance to local governments, information sharing, and formal planning efforts that focus on transportation and other interconnected issues of livability. CMAP is currently engaged in implementing many of these types of efforts through the UWP Livability grant as well as the HUD-funded Sustainable Communities Initiative, and the responses indicate that the UWP Committee continues to view these elements as high near-term priorities.

Next Steps

The above themes are “overarching” and thus do not present the full universe of what should be considered for the FY 2012 UWP- however these should hopefully offer an initial sense of how to prioritize project submissions, particularly in the discretionary part of the program. The UWP Committee should discuss the above bullet points and whether they accurately capture the spirit of what emerged in the near-term vs long-term scoring process. The Committee may also choose to “unbundle” some of these priorities and suggest more specific project directions than what is included here. The Committee should also discuss how the above priorities might be factored into the scoring process for the upcoming year.

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion