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Memorandum

To: UWP Committee

From: Matt Maloney

Subject: Role of Transportation Committee in Establishing Regional Priorities for UWP

Date: September 25, 2007

As you know, over the last several years the UWP Committee has worked to establish a set of regional priorities to guide the allocation of federal metropolitan planning dollars. The UWP Development Process is now subdivided into a “Core Program” (federally required MPO products), a “Supplemental Core” (staff work from other member agencies in support of the Core), and a “Discretionary Program” (planning projects supporting the attainment of a set of predetermined “focus areas”).

In the interest of building a more efficient and effective program, the UWP Committee may consider seeking further policy guidance from the Transportation Committee. I have identified at least three potential areas where the Transportation Committee can help drive policy for this program:

1) Establish an Annual List of Regional Focus Areas for the Discretionary Program Element. While keeping in mind the federally required elements funded under the Core Program, how should the UWP Committee prioritize the types of projects to be funded under the discretionary portion of the UWP? Last year, the UWP Committee developed a preliminary list of ten Regional Focus Areas to help organize this process. For this and subsequent years, should the UWP Committee seek additional guidance in refining these focus areas and using them to drive project selection? \$5.4 million was allocated under the discretionary element for FY '08, making up roughly 30% of the UWP.

2) Provide Guidance on Transitioning the UWP Into a More Project-Oriented Program. Without dramatically altering historical allocations for the UWP recipient agencies, should the UWP Committee seek guidance on how to shift the focus of the UWP toward the funding of projects with clearer timelines and deliverables? While quarterly progress reports, instituted this year, should enable this Committee to better understand what has been produced with these funds, the Committee might consider seeking more robust policy direction in terms of how to best integrate all of our recipient agencies' work to help inform the overall regional planning process.

3) Consider Revising the UWP Program Categories. The UWP is currently divided into six major program categories. They are:

- Regional Transportation Planning
- Transportation Improvement Program

- Public Involvement and Information
- Transportation Planning Data/Model Development
- Special Studies
- Sub-Regional and Project Specific Studies

These categories were last endorsed by the Work Program Committee in 2001. In accordance with an increased emphasis on regional priorities and projects, should the UWP Committee seek guidance from the Transportation Committee in revising these categories to illuminate the types of planning projects undertaken under this program? As it currently stands, these categories are rarely used to guide project selection or regional priorities. Instead, projects are typically slotted into these categories after the project selection process is complete.

Past Recommendations

The last federal certification of CATS' planning process was completed in October 2005. The Certification Review produced the following recommendation:

- “CATS should consider explicitly identifying the planning factors in the UWP and articulate the linkages between annual priorities and the planning factors.”

A recent Chicago Metropolis 2020 report gives a similar finding:

- “On an annual basis, develop a clear set of planning priorities for the region to be supported by the UWP. These priorities should be clearly articulated for the public.
 - In the near-term, priorities should be drawn from the CATS *Shared Path 2030* and the NIPC *2040 Regional Framework Plan*.
 - Once CMAP has prepared the comprehensive plan that integrates land use and transportation, the planning priorities can be drawn from this plan.”

Additional Guidance

SAFETEA-LU Planning Factors

The SAFETEA-LU planning rules call for consideration of eight planning factors:

- (1) Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- (2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (4) Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- (5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- (6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- (7) Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- (8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Shared Path 2030 Goals (3) and Objectives (12)

1. Maintain the integrity of the existing transportation system.
 - a. Repair

- b. Rebuild
 - c. Manage and Operate
2. Improve transportation system performance.
 - a. Better efficiency
 - b. Compatibility with local land uses
 - c. Affordable transportation choices
 - d. Better freight movement
 3. Employ transportation to sustain the region's vision and values.
 - a. Natural environment
 - b. Economic development
 - c. Social equity
 - d. Community development
 - e. Public health and safety

Common Ground Core Themes (Based on 52 Goals)

1. NE Illinois will be globally competitive.
2. NE Illinois will be a region of livable communities.
3. NE Illinois will be known for its healthy natural environment.
4. NE Illinois will build on the diversity of its people.
5. NE Illinois will be governed collaboratively.

Last Year's (FY '08) UWP Program Development Process

Core Program

Shall consist of the five federally required products of the MPO

- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Unified Work Program
- Establishment and Oversight of the Public Participation Process
- Maintenance of Transportation Models and Data Resources to Support Air Quality Conformity Determinations as well as Long-Range and Short-Range Planning Efforts

Supplemental Core Program

Shall consist of the staff work that the member agencies perform that lead into the five MPO products.

Discretionary Program Element (Competitive Selection)

Shall consist of projects that support the attainment of the Region's Focus Areas.

- Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning
- Congestion Relief (Multi-Modal) (Management, Research and Analysis)
- Environmental Impacts of Transportation Decisions
- Development of Comprehensive Regional Plan
- Transportation's Role in Economic and Community Development
- Jobs-Housing-Transportation Planning
- Transportation Issues for Seniors and People with Disabilities
- Financing the Transportation System
- Public Involvement in Transportation and Comprehensive Planning
- Providing Technical Assistance