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MEMORANDUM

To: Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Date: August 25, 2010

From: Jesse Elam

Re: Summary of changes to environment sections of *GO TO 2040*

The public comment period for *GO TO 2040* ended on August 6. CMAP received numerous comments from environmental advocacy groups, municipalities, and natural resource agencies on the environment-related recommendations in the Livable Communities section of the *GO TO 2040* plan. Staff reviewed these comments and made the changes summarized below. Many more minor changes were made to the text in response to comments, but the following represent more significant edits. The text of the Livable Communities chapter is to be finalized ahead of the CMAP Board meeting scheduled for September 6.

Expand and Improve Parks and Open Space — significant changes

- Noted the importance of a continuous trail along the lakefront and the objective of a completely public and accessible lakefront.
- Discussed land/water connection more and voiced importance of water trails, as well as need to address water quality declines and poor stream conditions.
- Placed additional emphasis on restoration and management needs and fact that existing protected lands may not be adequately maintained, noting that additional funding needs to be generated for this purpose.
- Stressed potential economic development benefits of parks and greenways projects.
- Stressed importance of community involvement in urban open space initiatives and described how parks build community; also further discussion of parks as urban design element.

- Noted issues regarding liability protection for landowners who allow public access to their property for outdoor recreation and need for additional tax incentives to encourage private conservation activity.

Manage and Conserve Water and Energy Resources — significant changes

- Reorganized so that energy and water are discussed separately, bringing together at end in nexus section.
- Energy: Clarified efficiency vs. conservation question by noting that the overall purpose is demand reduction.
- Energy: Clarified that the main thrust of the energy recommendations is the need for demand reduction, but that the region must begin a shift toward renewable energy production. Provided brief discussion of some of the investments, such as smart grid technologies, needed to do so.
- Energy: Noted importance of improved O&M and individual behavior change encouraged by public education initiatives.
- Water: In framing paragraphs, strengthened the discussion of water quality and integrated resources management and relationship between water quality and quantity. Made *Water 2050* a more central part of the chapter.
- Water: Emphasized need to develop watershed plans throughout the region that promote conservation and reduce point and non-point source pollution. Also provided additional discussion of water quality impairments.
- Water: Corrected certain aspects of the discussion on emerging contaminants.
- Water: Emphasized infrastructure investment needs and provided more discussion of system inefficiencies and calculation of water loss.
- Water: Clarified discussion of the availability of Fox River water.
- Water: Emphasized importance of considering water supply needs in local comprehensive planning.
- Water: Underlined importance of managing stormwater in urban areas and reducing flooding risk
- Nexus: provided more emphasis on urban forestry programs.