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MEMORANDUM

To: CMAQ Project Selection Committee

Date: February 20, 2009

From: Tom Murtha, Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Staff Liaison

Re: CMAQ Bicycle and Pedestrian Programming

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force requests your consideration of modifications to the project ranking methodologies now employed by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee. Over the past several selection cycles, concerns have been raised regarding the project selections of bicycle and pedestrian projects. Staff suggested that the best way to address concerns about project selection was to improve the ranking process to assure that project rankings used the best information available.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force selected a subcommittee to draft recommendations for project ranking improvements. At its February meeting, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force recommended CMAQ Project Selection Committee consideration of the attached recommendations.

If the CMAQ Project Selection Committee concurs with the Task Force recommendation, staff understands that the suggested changes would have to be approved by a number of committees. Ultimately, the MPO Policy Committee determines project ranking and selection procedures and selects CMAQ projects together with the Board of CMAP.

Staff recommends that implementation of these changes take place in stages, pending the availability of research and review by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee, as appropriate. At this time, staff recommends the following staging for implementation, following Policy Committee approval:

1. The following changes are recommended to be included in all rankings for FY 2010 and beyond:

I.B.1. Pedestrian Project Rankings: Improve Analytical Basis by Reducing Area Impacted to 0.5 Mile on Either Side of Proposed Facility

II.A.2. Bicycle Project Rankings: Principle to Review On-Street Alternatives

2. To address the following recommendations, 2010 project rankings will be conducted using current ranking procedures alongside rankings addressing the recommendations. Full implementation will occur in 2011 project selection:

I.A.1. Pedestrian Project Rankings: Principle to Include Transit Access in Ranking Methodology

I.A.2. Pedestrian Project Rankings: Principle to Serve the Greatest Number of People by Identifying Origins and Destinations

II.A.1. Bicycle Project Rankings: Principle to Prioritize the Development of a Bikeway Network

II.A.3. Bicycle Project Rankings: Principle to Serve the Greatest Number of People by Identifying Origins and Destinations (Including Transit Access).

3. To address the following recommendations, staff will modify the call for projects in for FY 2011, and implement the change for that project call and beyond:

I.A.3. Pedestrian Project Rankings: Principle to Target Arterials and Collectors for Pedestrian Projects

4. To address the following recommendations, CMAP staff will engage in further research and will implement improved ranking procedures as appropriate no sooner than FY 2011 project rankings:

I.B.2. Pedestrian Project Rankings: Improve Analytical Basis for Spot Projects

II.B.1. Bicycle Project Rankings: Improve Analytical Basis for Spot Projects

The full text and explanations of the recommendations follow. The recommendations reflect the fact that while walking and bicycling travel choices are important for all locations and trips, there is a greater regional interest in some classes of walking and bicycling projects, and that these greater interests should be reflected in project rankings used for regional programming decisions.

I. Considerations for Pedestrian Project Rankings

Reference	Recommendation	Commentary
I.A.1. Principle to Include Transit Access in Ranking Methodology	In programming for the FY 2010 call for projects and beyond, revise the pedestrian project ranking methodology to include transit access trips as part of the destinations served by a pedestrian project.	Concern has been expressed at many levels that a regional priority for CMAQ-funded pedestrian projects should be pedestrian access to transit services. The Methodology Work Group felt that the most equitable way to do this was to assure that the rankings reflected transit access. They do not now reflect transit access. CMAP has obtained the CTA bus stop file, is preparing a request for Pace Bus stops, and has station locations, all with boardings.
I.A.2 Principle to Serve the Greatest Number of People by Identifying Origins and Destinations.	In programming for the FY 2010 call for projects and beyond, include the origins and destinations for trips in ranking methodology, rather than just trip origins.	Concern has been expressed that the current CMAQ pedestrian ranking methodology favors local neighborhood sidewalk projects. Population is included in the rankings, but employees are not. Since trips require origins and destinations, ranking procedures should evaluate both ends. This will likely favor more balanced projects.
I.A.3. Principle to Target Arterials and Collectors for Pedestrian Projects	In programming for the FY 2011 call for projects and beyond, do not select projects primarily on local streets.	Concern has been expressed that the current CMAQ pedestrian ranking methodology favors local neighborhood sidewalk projects. This proposal addresses that issue directly. The intent is to focus primarily on travel along and across roads functionally classed as collector and above, where many travel destinations occur, but where there are many missing links in pedestrian infrastructure.

Reference	Recommendation	Commentary
I.B.1. Improve Analytical Basis by Reducing Area Impacted to 0.5 Mile on Either Side of Proposed Facility	Beginning with the analysis of FY 2010 projects, reduce the area considered in ranking pedestrian projects from 1 mile on either side of a proposed project to 0.5 miles on either side of a proposed facility.	The 1-mile buffer area now considered for pedestrian projects was adopted from the bike facility analysis used as the original model for project ranking. However, given what we now know about pedestrian behavior, a new facility is unlikely to affect trips more than a 10-minute walk away (½ mile). This is also consistent with rail transit access trips, which are typically up to ½ mile.
I.B.2. Improve Analytical Basis for Spot Projects	Establish an improved ranking mechanism for spot pedestrian improvements, e.g., bridges, signal improvements, new signalized crossings, etc. [requires research]	The current methodology was designed for corridor pedestrian improvements. Given the buffer of such projects, the current method may misrepresent the air quality and congestion mitigation benefits.

I. Considerations for Bicycle Project Rankings

Reference	Recommendation	Commentary
II.A.1. Principle to Prioritize the Development of a Bikeway Network	In programming for the FY 2010 call for projects and beyond, prioritize bicycle projects extending or connected to existing facilities or important bicycle destinations.	The region has been criticized for building “bike trails to nowhere.” We need to assure that the facilities we build enhance regional bikeway connectivity and facilitate trip-making.

Reference	Recommendation	Commentary
II.A.2. Principle to Review On-Street Alternatives	In programming bicycle facility projects for the FY 2010 call for projects and beyond, select (1) bicycle facilities where alternative on-street facilities with a "Bicycle Level of Service B" or higher (as defined in Soles and Spokes Existing Conditions Report) is not achievable, OR significant bicycle facilities meeting one of the following criteria: (a) more than one-mile in length, (b) included in the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan, or (c) included in a subregional bikeways plan.	The CMAQ staff is collecting information relative to alternatives to off-street bikeways. However, several regional and subregional plans have preferences for off-street facilities. The proposed principle establishes a balance between on-and off-street facilities, consistent with adopted plans.
II.A.3. Principle to Serve the Greatest Number of People by Identifying Origins and Destinations (Including Transit Access).	In programming for the FY 2010 call for projects and beyond, include the origins and destinations (including transit access) for trips in the ranking methodology, rather than just trip origins.	Concern has been expressed that the current CMAQ bicycle ranking methodology does not account for destinations, including transit services. Population is included in the rankings, but employees are not. Since trips require origins and destinations, ranking procedures should evaluate both ends. This will likely favor more balanced projects.
II.B.1. Improve Analytical Basis for Spot Projects	Establish an improved ranking mechanism for spot bicycle improvements, e.g., bridges, signal improvements, new signalized crossings, etc. [requires research]	The current methodology was designed for corridor bicycle improvements. Given the buffer of such projects, the current method may misrepresent the benefits.

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