



## Environment and Natural Resources Committee

### Revised DRAFT Minutes

August 6, 2013

**Members Present:** Jack Darin-Illinois Sierra Club, Jon Grosshans-U.S. EPA Region 5, Pete Harmet-IDOT Division 1, Martin Jaffe-UIC, Anne McKibben-CNT Energy, Stacy Meyers-Openlands, Joe Schuessler-Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Wallace Van Buren-IAWA, Sean Weidel-Chicago Department of Transportation, Patricia Werner-Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, Vincent Waller (for Deborah Stone)-Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Nancy Williamson-IDNR

**Staff Present:** Jesse Elam, Matt Maloney, Jason Navota, Nora Beck, Elizabeth Schuh, Drew Williams-Clark

**Others Present:** Mark Copeland-IDOT, Bruce Carmitchel-IDOT, Chris Schmidt-IDOT, John Bartman-IDOT, Renee Bruntley-Cook County, Andrew Armstrong-ELPC, James Schmelzer-GSA

### 1.0 Call to Order

Jack Darin called the meeting to order at 9:32.

### 2.0 Approval of Minutes—July 3, 2013

The minutes were approved with a clarification in the last paragraph of section 5, related to a recommendation made by an individual member to target outreach on the value of stormwater utilities to communities with combined sewer systems.

### 3.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

An announcement was made regarding the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program. Staff is seeking input on LTA project selection. A summary of the most recent round of applications is posted [here](#). Committee members were asked to forward any information they have on ongoing or past work in communities that submitted applications, offer insights on project history, suggest questions to ask applicants, and give overall reactions and feedback to the project concepts. Written comments, to [nbeck@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:nbeck@cmap.illinois.gov) are due by August 23.

### 4.0 GO TO 2040 Update Process

Referring to the [memo](#) that had been included in the committee packet, CMAP staff, Andrew Williams-Clark explained that Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP 21) requires that GO TO 2040 be updated by October of 2014. The update involves several projects and Williams-Clark outlined the process and deadlines for completing the update.

Williams-Clark reported that staff does not anticipate changing the text plan chapters or recommendations as part of the update. Regular updates will be given and staff will continue to seek input from the ENR committee throughout the process. Five major components of the project, include:

- *Financial Plan.* CMAP will update revenue and expenditure information and the overall fiscal constraint of the plan, to be confirmed by January 2014.
- *Major Capital Projects.* Using the projects identified in GO TO 2040 as the baseline, CMAP will re-evaluate these and other projects that are currently considered fiscally unconstrained, using the updated financial plan and updated socioeconomic forecasts. The list of projects to be evaluated will be identified by November 2013, measures used to evaluate the list will be finalized by January 2014, and the final list of both fiscally constrained and unconstrained major capital projects will be complete by April 2014.
- *Implementation Actions.* While the text of the plan will not change, the implementation action areas that describe how the recommendations will be implemented will be updated in coordination with the annual implementation reports by January 2014.
- *Indicator Updates.* The set of indicators used to track the plan's progress will be updated based on the Year 2 implementation report. CMAP anticipates that a report on the section of new indicators or confirmation of initial indicators will be final by November 2013. An updated set of indicators and long-term and short-term targets will be done by March 2014.
- *Plan Preparation.* The updated materials will be released for public comment in June 2014 for 2 months. Approvals by the various committees in the fall, final by October 2014.

## **5.0 Proposed amendment to GO TO 2040 - Illiana Corridor**

CMAP staff person Jesse Elam explained that CMAP received a formal request from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to consider inclusion of the proposed Illiana Expressway as a fiscally constrained major capital project in GO TO 2040. Under federal regulation, this proposed new highway facility must be included in GO TO 2040 in order to complete the upcoming Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement. Referring to the [memo](#) included in the committee packet, Elam's reporting covered CMAP's evaluation of the proposal within the context of GO TO 2040's socioeconomic forecasts and local land use planning in the corridor. Elam also reported the basics of the project, the project costs and potential financing options, and scenario definitions and assumptions, as well as population and employment forecasts, transportation performance, and economic impacts. Related to environmental indicators, Elam explained that there is a lot of information in the Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and that more is expected in the Tier II EIS; that the focus of this analysis is to use several indicators from GO TO 2040 that include the impervious, green infrastructure, and water use impacts. Finally, Elam reported the status of local planning in this area and the public comment process that remains open until September 3, 2013. Following the public comment period, Elam concluded, CMAP staff will make its recommendation to CMAP's Transportation Committee, Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board, and MPO Policy Committee in October.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Committee members had several comments and questions. In addition to CMAP staff Jesse Elam and Matt Maloney, Pete Harmet from IDOT (also an ENR Committee member) was able to respond to specific questions related to the following.

**Forecasts:** Differences between the CMAP and IDOT forecasts were outlined in the memo. Questions were raised regarding collaboration between CMAP and IDOT related to forecasting. Harmet noted that IDOT's forecasting methodology was approved by CMAP staff earlier in the planning process, as also noted in the memo. Harmet said that IDOT is using its "market based" forecast in order to satisfy federal requirements for preparing an environmental impact statement, and is also using forecasts different from the CMAP forecasts in other project studies. Harmet said that, during the Tier One process, IDOT was not made aware that differences between the forecasts would be a significant issue for the Illiana project. Staff noted that they had requested in letters to the Department that the Tier I EIS show travel performance and other project impacts based on CMAP forecasts side-by-side with the IDOT assumptions. Staff also said that concurring with the forecast methodology was not the same as approving the assumptions behind the forecasts, and that these needed to be in line with GO TO 2040. With respect to the Illiana, Harmet said that IDOT's and CMAP's analysis is similar in terms of the impact of building the project. Both sets of analyses show that the Illiana has a relatively small impact upon urbanization in the region. The main difference is in the no-build assumptions.

- **Costs and financing.** Harmet indicated that IDOT needs to keep some information confidential depending on the type of P3 procurement. One member asked that since the public is being asked to make a decision, they should know what the costs are. Harmet responded that Appendix G of the Tier I EIS has costs for the project. The memo includes a link to this explanation of the methods and unit costs used to estimate the project cost. Harmet suggested that some confidentiality is a typical part of private sector involvement -- IDOT does not release its "engineer's estimate" when opening a conventional construction project up for bid. A member then asked whether the engineers estimate has been higher or lower than final bids. Harmet responded that it varies, because bids are also affected by other factors such as fluctuations in materials costs. P3 models and the different risks involved were also discussed. There was also a question about whether Indiana would cover cost overruns. Harmet responded that the project costs for engineering are being split 75/25, and IDOT assumes that each state will cover costs related to matters in their states. Another issue raised was the additional \$1.5 billion for the added lanes to I-80 and I-55, which were part of the Tier 1 EIS analysis. These are road expansions that are not in GO TO 2040 and are not part of the proposed amendment.

**Fiscally constrained projects.** CMAP staff responded to a question regarding the original list of fiscally constrained projects in GO TO 2040, explaining that GO TO 2040 has two lists, unconstrained and fiscally constrained projects and that not all phases of a project will fall in the same list. Staff also reported that during the creation of GO TO 2040, not much had been determined about the Illiana corridor; that costs related to engineering were all that had been identified. Harmet added that the Illiana discussions occurred during the summer of 2010 and the timing was off for considering this project in GO TO 2040. The potential outcome of a decision by CMAP was also discussed. Harmet reported that if the Illiana Corridor is not included in the plan, because of federal requirements, the Tier 2 EIS cannot be completed. CMAP staff confirmed this outcome, adding that if the plan is amended to include the project, more work will need to be done and that CMAP will have to assess whether other projects on the fiscally-constrained list will have to be modified or removed in order to include the corridor.

- **Environmental impacts and development.** The potential impacts to natural features, including the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie were discussed, as were local planning efforts in the area. Referring to the \$500,000 planning grant, comprehensive plan updates were also considered. Asked were other modes of travel considered, concepts for freight rail were considered, but the proposal is for an expressway. Trails are included with a local cost sharing mechanism.
- **NIRPC and surrounding counties.** The impact to neighboring counties that are outside of the CMAP region were questioned with Harmet reporting that the Tier I EIS covers those counties and that IDOT is working with NIRPC and the Kankakee County Area Transportation Study (KATS). CMAP staff added that the CMAP modeling region includes surrounding counties, that CMAP maintains an open line of communication with NIRPC, who are going through a similar amendment process but with a slightly different timeline. Having received a copy of CMAP's evaluation, NIRPC had also expressed concerns about the forecasts used by IDOT.
- **Overall.** One serious concern with the proposal is that it is believed it will undermine GO TO 2040 right as the plan is getting off the ground.
- **Next steps.** Jack Darin stated that the committee will be discussing this again at the September meeting, that if additional evaluation is necessary, a smaller working group could be named. Stacy Meyers suggested that the ENR committee could use GIV principles to evaluate the impacts of the project. Consensus should be reach so that the ENR committee representative on the Regional Coordinating Committee, Jack Darin, will have direction in the October vote. Harmet stated that IDOT provided the Transportation Committee and the CMAP Board with a presentation that focused on the project's consistency with the four broad goals of GO TO 2040. CMAP staff reminded the committee that the public comment period is now open and that CMAP takes the comments very seriously.

## 6.0 Public Comment

Andrew Armstrong, from the Environmental Law and Policy Center, stated that the forecast is critical issue and that IDOT has planned a project with radically different assumptions. Armstrong also stated that GO TO 2040 calls for infill and raised concerns related to sprawl; that the regional process that created the GO TO 2040 principles should be respected. Andrew stated that the proposed corridor is 10 miles south of existing development. IDOT rejected a route further south due to low performance. This project will have unknown effects on public funds.

## 7.0 Next Meeting

The committee meets next on September 4, 2013, at 9:30 am.

## 8.0 Adjournment

At 11:05 a.m., a motion to adjourn by Nancy Williamson was seconded by Martin Jaffe. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Nora June Beck, CMAP staff liaison