

Developments of Regional Importance Subcommittee of the Programming Committee
November 7, 2007

Meeting Notes

Staff presented a memo to the attendees describing CMAP internal discussions on the DRI process. Major points of this memo were:

- The legislation specifies that major developments, infrastructure investments and major policies (both public and private) need to be reviewed.
- The legislation is not prescriptive in laying out how the review process should be carried out.
- In order for there to be any value in this process, the analysis needs to be thorough and complete, which would necessitate limiting the number of reviews.
- Staff proposed a tiered approach to the analysis which would first eliminate projects obviously not regionally significant based upon some threshold criteria, with the remainder subjected to a preliminary analysis. That preliminary analysis would be presented to the Programming Committee which would determine whether a project warrants a further, complete analysis.

There was significant discussion covering the following topics:

- The type of projects and policies to be considered – the legislation provides broad categories, but there needs to be some greater definition agreed upon.
- The thresholds that might be used for an initial screening – these thresholds may vary geographically.
- The method used to identify projects potentially subject to the review – likely to use some action by or request of a governmental unit, such as a zoning change or the request or award of federal or state funds.
- The need to be able to analyze the project within a time frame where there is enough information about a project to analyze it yet before it is too late to influence the final design – this process needs to be timely and contained within the project development process.
- How the region could use the information from these analyses to influence final project implementation – while the review of CMAP will be only advisory, other funding and permitting agencies could use this information in making their decisions.
- Staffing could become an issue for CMAP to properly review the DRIs. It was noted that a regional economist would certainly be required – a skill set that CMAP currently lacks.

Next steps:

- Staff will research other metropolitan areas and identify their screening methods, thresholds and review criteria.
- Staff will identify a few potential pilot studies which will provide needed information
- This information will be forwarded to the subcommittee which will meet in early December.