

Attachment 1
Draft Meeting Notes
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

MEETING DATE: 08/13/08

MEETING LOCATION: CMAP Offices

CALLED TO ORDER: 2:00 pm

ATTENDANCE:

(Task Force Members)

Thomas Rickert, Kane County (Chair)
Keith Privett, Chicago Department of Transportation
Richard Bascomb, Village of Schaumburg (by phone)
Bruce Christensen, Lake County
Deborah Fagan, DuPage County (by phone)
Rae Keasler, City of Aurora
Allan Mellis, FPDCC
Mark Minor, Metra
Randy Neufeld, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
Craig Williams, T.Y. Lin
Ed Barsotti, LIB

(Staff)

Tom Murtha, CMAP
John O'Neal, CMAP
Don Kopec, CMAP
Kevin Luecke, CMAP

(Others)

Mike Sullivan, Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors
Marty Mueller, Knight E/A, Inc.
Leslie Phemister, CBF
Bev Moore, Illinois Trails Conservancy
Gin Kilgore, Logan Square Walks / Bike Winter
Jonathan Tremper, Metra
Andrea Hoyt, FPDDC
John Paul Jones, Friends of the Parks
Jon Zirkle, Office of the Lieutenant Governor

1.0 Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves

2.0 Approval of the Minutes: *Motion was made and seconded for approval of the meeting notes. The motion was unanimously approved.*

3.0 Data and Information

3.1 GO TO 2040 Plan and Regional Indicators

Mr. Murtha introduced Bob Dean and Andrew Williams-Clark, the CMAP staff responsible for the *GO TO 2040* Plan and the Regional Indicators Project, respectively. The latter is an ongoing part of the larger process of creating the former.

Mr. Dean spoke first. He introduced and outlined CMAP's long range planning process, called *GO TO 2040*. He stated that this effort is building on past plans, including the *2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* and the *2040 Regional Framework Plan*. Mr. Dean stated that the Task Force can expect future updates – and opportunities for input – on the process and its interim products. CMAP is just about a year and half into a process that will end with the *GO TO 2040* plan document in 2010.

Mr. Dean emphasized that – like the *2030 RTP* and the *2040 Regional Framework Plan* before it – the *GO TO 2040* Plan will likely make multi-modal transportation a strong focus, emphasizing the need to consider bicycle and pedestrian travel when planning and implementing transportation projects and programs.

Mr. Dean then introduced the Indicators Project. He defined an indicator as “a quantitative measure that describes an economic, environmental, social or cultural condition over time.” He added that tracking indicators will help the region “develop and evaluate strategies for implementing the *GO TO 2040* regional vision” and more generally “predict and measure economic, environmental, social, and cultural variables that affect quality of life.”

He then stated that the indicators will help us develop, accurately represent, and understand various possible scenarios for the future of the region. Mr. Dean then introduced Andrew Williams-Clark, who summarized the Indicators Project to date.

Mr. Williams-Clark described the three major steps in the Indicators Project process: the creation and ongoing maintenance of the “Data Warehouse”; the ongoing process of “Tracking Progress”; and use of indicators in “Scenario Development”. Mr. Williams-Clark referred Task Force members to a handout they received entitled “Staff Recommendation: Tracking Indicators by Vision Theme – Draft: 8/4/2008”, which lists, describes, and rates various possible indicators for the Vision Theme of ‘Transportation’. Mr. Williams-Clark then opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Mr. Mellis asked why ‘reduction in use of gasoline’ was not used as an indicator, and whether it might be possible and wise to add it. Mr. Williams replied that if it met the three criteria of an indicator – namely, that 1) the data be available as a regional aggregate; 2) that

the data can be reliably updated (preferably at a regular interval); and 3) that the indicator have broad stakeholder agreement around a positive trend line moving forward (i.e. increasing or decreasing is good or bad) – if it meets these three criteria, then it could certainly be considered as a possible indicator. Mr. Williams-Clark added that setting a hard and fast “target” – such as ‘a certain percentage reduction in the use of gas in the region’ – may be a double-edged sword. That is, if a target is set and not met, then a “depression effect” can set in and a good goal may be abandoned.

Mr. Dean stated that, without setting precise ‘targets’, the relative movement of an indicator (e.g. less fuel used in the region, fewer cases of diabetes in the region, etc.) may, and almost certainly will, be used in tracking our progress in achieving the regional vision.

Mr. Neufeld stated that certain defined, objective targets are nonetheless useful because even if not met – or rather precisely by not being met – they can tell people that they must do more, or must have a fundamentally different approach to achieving the goals that their targets represent.

Mr. Williams-Clark clarified the meaning of the grey shading in the table of the handout entitled “Staff Recommendation: Tracking Indicators by Vision Theme – Draft: 8/4/2008”, stating that the shaded indicators represented a sort of “B list”, which, absent new evidence, would not be used in developing scenarios and evaluating progress.

Mr. Murtha noted that in order to further clarify the issues and promote discussion, he has provided additional materials (i.e. handouts): namely, a list of “Performance Measures” from the 2030 RTP (p. 70); and a “List of Tables” and a “List of Figures” from the Soles and Spokes Plan. These materials document past work to determine and track mobility, accessibility, multi-modality, and the overall walkability and bikeability of the region.

Mr. Murtha stated that the Indicators will be approved by the CMAP Board in October, before the Bike-Ped Task Force meets again, so any comments or suggestions should be submitted to Randy Neufeld in order that he may bring them up at the next Transportation Committee meeting (Friday, August 22, 2008), which can in turn pass them on to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Rickert observed that VMT was not listed as an indicator. He stated that he believes VMT would be a functional surrogate for (transportation-related) energy consumption, and that this is an important measure in understanding our progress toward achieving regional goals. Mr. Murtha stated that he did not feel confident enough in VMT numbers to use them. He added that recently completed Travel Tracker Survey may be the last household travel behavior survey for some time to come and thus the data it contains cannot be updated and tracked over time.

Mr. Neufeld raised a number of points: first, he stated that Trips to Work, which the U.S. Census’ American Community Survey (ACS) does a good job of tracking, is a very, very small piece of the travel picture in our and many other regions. We must have, Mr. Neufeld stated, good data on all kinds of trips, not just work trips, over time in order to make – and help our elected officials – informed, rational, intelligent decisions. He added that very bad travel data has been a major problem in planning and building transportation infrastructure and, more

generally, in understanding and achieving mobility, accessibility and a high quality of life in our communities.

Mr. Neufeld added that he believes that to rely on the data from the ACS for our transportation and land use planning and programming is folly. He stated that the MPO must and should commit to doing comprehensive travel surveys on a regular basis. Such surveys are an extremely important part of the mission and mandate of MPOs.

Mr. Neufeld stated that while it is true in general that we cannot go after and use untrackable data, we need to focus our efforts on acquiring and maintaining truly useful data. ***Mr. Neufeld made a motion, which was seconded and approved by the Task Force, to ask the Transportation Committee to ask the Policy Committee and the CMAP Board for a “firm commitment to CMAP’s and the MPO’s collection of good, ongoing travel data on all trips and for all modes.”*** After approval of the motion, Mr. Neufeld added that he believed this commitment is very important, because we need good data in order to make good decisions, and that good data means data on all trips for all purposes by all modes.

Mr. Rickert stated that the Task Force could at a future meeting discuss why the region and the country may be moving away from funding this type of data collection.

Mr. Privett stated that certain populations are very difficult to reach with surveys. Work trips or peak hour trips have a certain validity as a proxy for other trips, though he agreed that we do nonetheless need better, more comprehensive data. He added that with certain problems, such as safety, crash rates per VMT can result in pedestrian travel looking bad.

Mr. Neufeld stated that if, on the other hand, we have crashes per VMT together with crashes per capita, and we look at both, then we can get a truer picture of relative safety and need for improvement. He added that, at any rate, we should be comparing urban areas to other comparable urban areas, not urban areas to rural areas.

Mr. Privett expressed support for crashes per capita as a means of measurement, and added that it occurs to him that perhaps energy use could be seen as a proxy for bad or unobtainable 24-hr mode split data.

Mr. Mellis pointed out that you can have fewer people travelling or you could have double capacity, so you don’t really learn why what is happening is happening – i.e. you observe a fact but not the cause.

Mr. Murtha pointed out that in the case of the first group of indicators (i.e. Highway Operations), 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 are data tracked by the federal government. He said they intentionally dropped the other measure tracked by the federal government – namely VMT – because it did not seem reliable.

Mr. Dean added that no one indicator alone will tell you the “whole story”, but rather that the interplay of indicators is designed to give an accurate picture of state of things – for example increasing capacity of roads would move other indicators.

Mr. Minor asked why – or if there was a reason behind the fact that most indicators were ratios or relationships, but numbers 2.2 and 8.1 were simple whole numbers.

Mr. Rickert questioned the reasoning and wisdom of putting in number 6 of the table, “Maintenance” and “Investment” together as one category

Mr. Mellis wondered why number 7 was called “Aviation” and not “Intercity Travel”, which would make room, so to speak, for high speed rail. He pointed out that there was little or nothing as regards rail travel.

Mr. Murtha stated that any other thoughts, ideas, or suggestions should be sent not only to Mr. Williams and Mr. Dean but also to Randy Neufeld, since he is the Bike Ped Task Force representative to the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Rickert pointed out that the Transportation Committee will meet next Friday, August 22, 2008, and so comments should be made before then.

Mr. Neufeld stated that it is important to remember that ultimately, the point of this committee’s work – and indeed of all CMAP’s work – is to improve the quality of life in the region. Mr. Neufeld stated that transportation is just one part of, or one means to, a better quality of life, not an end in and of itself. We must choose indicators that point us towards and thus promote, a higher quality, more sustainable way of life, not that simply measure the speed or size of a transportation system.

[Note: The indicators that resulted from this and other discussions are posted at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=11028>. Transportation indicators are shown beginning on the 20th page of the pdf document. Most of the points raised during this meeting were addressed in the final document. – Ed.]

3.2 Travel Tracker Survey

Mr. Murtha gave the Task Force a general introduction to the Travel Tracker Household Travel Survey, which was recently completed by CMAP. He stated that CMAP was just beginning to use data from this survey, and referred to two handouts distributed to the Task Force: one, outlining the project (from CMAP website, <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/TravelTrackerData.aspx>), and another showing a table showing travel mode for various geographies (City of Chicago, Suburban Cook County, Collar Counties) for school trips, in morning peak hours, ages 5-17. Mr. Murtha noted the relatively percentage of walk trips, varying by location.

3.3 TIP Visualization

Mr. Murtha introduced and demonstrated the new web-based, interactive TIP visualization tool. See: http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/tip_map.aspx .

Mr. Barsotti expressed his congratulations to CMAP for creating this tool. He pointed out that LIB had a number of years ago created a very similar tool, and that based on his experience using and

working with users of that tool, he strongly recommends that CMAP add a “Submit Comment” to the interface design.

4.0 Regional Bikeway Planning

4.1 DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan

Ms. Fagan introduced and described the recently adopted DuPage County Bikeways Plan, emphasizing the collaboration behind its creation between the County, the municipalities, the Council of Mayors, Park Districts, and the Forest Preserve District. She explained that the first DuPage County Bikeways Plan was made in 1984. It was updated in 1996. She added that the coordination needed to create this plan is extensive – ninety different organizations can implement bike projects in the county.

Ms. Fagan stated that a large part of the plan consists of existing facilities, which create a network of facilities in a hierarchy of local and regional levels. She stated that there are approximately 298 miles of regional facilities (with 190 miles, or 60%, in existence) and 471 miles on the local network (with 271 miles in existence).

Ms. Fagan handed out copies of the poster-sized plan to Task Force members, and informed them that the obverse side outlined the Plan goals and objectives, and its priorities. She added that over time, the County has seen a tremendous increase in the use of and demand for facilities – and that the County and its partners have strove to meet that demand, pointing out that in 1996, there were 198 miles of planned and existing bikeways; in 2008, there were 462 miles.

She acknowledged that, while the County and its partners have made very good progress on off-road multi-use facilities (paths/trails), they have only 11 miles of on-road facilities. She stated that the County must therefore focus on the development of such on-road facilities.

Ms. Fagan ended by informing the Task Force that the County would publish a “user’s map” for bikeways within the next couple of months.

In response to Ms. Fagan’s statement about the relatively little progress that the County had made on on-road facilities, Mr. Neufeld asked whether there was anything the Task Force or its members could do to promote bike lanes and other on-road facilities. He reminded the Task Force of CBF’s PowerPoint presentation showing where and why sidepaths could be more dangerous than on-road facilities.

Mr. Privett asked Ms. Fagan whether the Boub v. Wayne Township case was an issue in deterring local communities from adding on-road bike facilities. Ms. Fagan replied that no, it was not liability concerns as much as perceptions about viability, function, and safety of on-road facilities.

Mr. Neufeld congratulated Ms. Fagan and DuPage County on the work they have done to plan for, promote, and create bikeways. He said the County continues to “set the bar”, among Chicago-area Counties and communities, for good bikeways planning and implementation.

Ms. Hoyt added that Ms. Fagan, in her work on the bikeways plan, went far above and beyond the norm in the number of meetings she organized and attended, and overall in her skills in organizing and coordinating many different parties.

Mr. Murtha thanks Ms. Fagan for her work and stated that he was very happy to see facilities on the current map that had been discussed at a 2001 Walkable Communities Workshop in Northlake, proposing to link Northlake and Elmhurst.

4.2 Other Regional Bikeway Plans

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the last outstanding sub-regional bikeways plan (South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association) has essentially been completed – all the data in the form required had been compiled – and that what remained was for the update to be officially adopted, which was expected to occur within the next month or two. He added that he had asked the SSMMA Planning Liaison to present at the next Task Force meeting.

Mr. Murtha said that he had heard from the Project Manager, Lori Heringa, that CMAP's Regional Trails and Greenways Plan was in a final draft form and that it would be circulated to Counties and Forest Preserve Districts next week.

5.0 Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Programming

5.1 Rescissions

Mr. Murtha stated that there was no new information on this topic. He added that the IDOT representative, Les Nunes, was not able to attend the meeting.

Mr. Neufeld stated that the Task Force should be aware that there was a large, 'automatic' rescission coming up at the expiration of SAFETEA-LU – a so-called "sweep" rescission – and he asked if CMAP or another Task Force member might report on it at the next meeting.

Mr. Murtha reminded the Task Force that the region has not only official "rescissions" to consider and plan for, but also "lapsing funds" generally. Mr. Privett stated that the irregularity of a number of programs has been the cause of much of the concern regarding "lapsing funds."

Mr. Neufeld stated that he believed more discussion of this topic was needed at the next meeting.

Mr. Murtha referred the Task Force to handouts, which listed all Bike and all Pedestrian projects in the TIP. He stated that we need to find ways to move these projects along toward construction. Mr. Neufeld asked whose fault was it that these projects were in danger of lapsing? Was it local agencies or IDOT District 1 staff, taking much too long to process and sign off on applications and designs? He added that the amount of time that bicycle and pedestrian (and other) projects sit at IDOT District 1 could in fact be a Tracking Indicator.

Mr. Mellis stated that he believed the plan/project review process was in serious trouble and needed to be fixed. He offered a number of examples from the Forest Preserve of Cook County where communication and IDOT approval took inordinate lengths of time.

Mr. Rickert stated that the review process seems to be getting better than it was in the past. Mr. Kopec stated that the review process is not solely to blame. Mr. Neufeld asked whether there was anything we as a region could do to make it better. Mr. Kopec responded that we have a lot of money that is unobligated in the CMAQ program, and emphasized the importance of timely obligations and project readiness.

Mr. Rickert stated that we will try to pull together more information on this issue for the next meeting.

5.2 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the methodology review has not made progress. He added that one of the initial reasons for methodology review – namely, bike projects in relatively unpopulated areas, which nonetheless make very important connections – are still an issue.

5.3 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that IDOT staff, in discussions with CMAP, had indicated that suballocation of ITEP funds was highly unlikely. He added, however, that discussions will continue and review of all options will be pursued.

Mr. Neufeld stated that MPOs have the some legal authority to control Transportation Enhancement funds – that we in effect can say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to projects, but that we cannot allocate the funds. He added that some state DOTs have, nonetheless, handed over the allocation to MPOs, and he suggested that the Task Force ask the Transportation Committee to request that IDOT allow allocation of regional ITEP funds to CMAP.

Mr. Kopec stated that the State of Illinois granted control of CMAQ funds to the MPOs.

Mr. Neufeld made a motion to request that the Transportation Committee (through the Policy Committee) request from IDOT that ITEP funds be suballocated to CMAP and the MPO to program. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Mr. Barsotti added that LIB had worked to propose and pass legislation designed to “clean up” the ITEP program – building in transparency and regularity to the program – and that in recent discussions, and in fact in a counter-proposal by IDOT, it was looking as if the ITEP program would be designed to look more like the OSLAD program.

Mr. Neufeld stated that our region’s track record with the CMAQ program ought to inspire confidence and give reflect favorable on our ability to do the job well.

5.4 Safe Routes to School Program

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the call for projects was currently underway; that school travel plans needed to be completed first and then full applications could be done.

5.5 Project Update

Mr. Privett informed the Task Force of the completion of the Sauganash Trail.

Ms. Fagan announced that a section of the Prairie Path had been nominated to the Rails-to-Trails Hall of Fame.

6.0 Policy Planning

6.1 Pedestrian Safety Initiative

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that this project was largely done. He stated that the technical analysis and evaluation had been completed and that recommendations had been submitted, in the form primarily of applications for Safety funding. He added that ADA issues needed to be further addressed in the project. He referred to the U.S. DOT memorandum (excerpted as a handout for the Task Force), recommending medians/refuges and sidewalks/pathways as proven ways of increasing safety.

Ms. Fagan thanked staff for providing this “ammunition” is seeking funding and approval for pedestrian and bicycle projects.

Mr. Rickert asked whether the recommended changes to IDOT Bureau of Design Engineering had been published/made public. Mr. Murtha responded that it was at present on CMAP’s FTP server and that anyone who wanted to look at the recommendations could contact him for the FTP password. [These materials are now posted at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/bikeped/pedsafety.aspx> - Ed.]

6.2 Soles and Spokes Plan

Mr. Murtha stated that there was nothing specific to report but that work was continuing, in the form of data collection, analysis, and policy research.

7.0 Soles and Spokes Workshop

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the ADA workshop was held at CMAP in June and that the next workshop was being planned for a suburban location.

8.0 Public Comment

Attendee asked whether one could sort the Google-based TIP Projects Map (see: http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/tip_map.aspx) by project type. Mr. Murtha stated that he did not believe such a sorting were possible, but that you could see a PDF spreadsheet of all projects on CMAP’s TIP website. Mr. O’Neal added that the color-coding of the projects on the map does in fact indicate project type.

Mr. Barsotti asked whether a ‘narrative’ description of the projects were available on the website. Mr. Murtha said ‘no’. Mr. Barsotti stated that he thought this would add a great deal to its usefulness, and recommended that such a function/field be incorporated in the future.

9.0 Next Meeting

Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2008 at 2:00 pm.

10.0 Adjournment: 4:10 PM