



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Freight Committee Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2019

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
DuPage County Conference Room  
233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

**Members Present:** Joe Alonzo (CDOT), Mike Burton (C&K Trucking), Maria Choca Urban (Cook County DOT), Eric Gallien (Illinois Trucking), Dr. J. Lee Hutchins, Jr. (Consultant), Aimee Lee (ISTHA), John Loper (DuPage DOT), Libby Ogard (Consultant), Adam Rod (CDA), DeAnna Smith (IDOT), Herbert Smith (Class I Railroad)

**Staff Present:** Aidan Dixon, Teri Dixon, Stephanie Levine, Patty Mangano, Tom Murtha, Jeff Schnobrich, Aseal Tineh

**Others Present:** Garland Armstrong (Access Living), Heather Armstrong (Access Living), Alex Beata (Cook County DOT), Joe Bryan (WSP), Chad Buch (JLL), Allison Buchwach (Metra), Sheng Chen (IDOT), Cecilia Diaz (Cook County DOT), Bill Eisele (Texas A&M Transportation Institute), Meisha Holmes (Cook County), Chris Lamm (Cambridge Systematics), Jamy Lyne (WSP), Marygrace Parker (I-95 Corridor Coalition), Ryan Peterson (KKCOM), Jessica Schumacher (Cook County), Betsy Tracy (FHWA)

### 1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Mr. Gallien, co-chair of the Freight Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and members introduced themselves.

### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes or announcements.

### 3.0 Approval of Minutes – April 15, 2019

The minutes from the April 15, 2019 meeting were approved by the Committee.

### 4.0 Freight Fluidity Monitoring Program

Marygrace Parker of the I-95 Corridor Coalition discussed a project to develop a tool to monitor freight performance. The effort aims to understand the end-to-end performance

of an individual freight trip or shipment moving across multiple modes and jurisdictions by focusing on supply chains and adding the perspectives of shippers, carriers, and receivers. The project is sponsored by FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations. The tool tracks travel time, travel time reliability, and cost. In addition to a national monitoring tool, two state/regional pilots in Chicago and New York/New Jersey are being explored. Parker noted that one of the most difficult parts of the project was recruiting private companies willing to share information about their supply chains.

Joe Bryan of WSP provided further detail on the tool, which measures a representative sample of important domestic supply chains. One goal of the program is to provide information to public sector entities on the metrics that are most important to private industry. He explained how specific industry sectors and companies were selected for the national program, as well as how Chicago-specific analysis was conducted. The identified supply chains were combined with existing data sets for highway performance and shipping costs to produce a monitoring dashboard that provides quarterly scores for each metric. Bryan explained how the information could be used to monitor performance in specific industries, regions, and modes, and inform operational or policy responses.

In response to a question about representativeness of the supply chains obtained from specific companies, Bryan noted that it was not a major concern at the federal level. At the local level, a region could obtain data from additional companies to increase it. Availability of performance data is less of an issue. In response to a question about length of data collection, Bryan stated that performance data is available on an ongoing basis, but collection of supply chains from specific companies has taken well over a year. Parker noted that being upfront and transparent with companies about the time commitment and information requested is important in getting successful responses.

## **5.0 Lincoln Highway Logistics Corridor Strategic Plan**

Alex Beata provided an overview of the plan, which resulted in a list of six top priority and four second priority industrial development sites in the disinvested communities of Chicago Heights, Ford Heights, and Sauk Village. For each of the prioritized sites, pre-development costs were estimated. Beata explained that the plan originally focused on transportation issues such as road and rail access, but become a multidisciplinary effort.

Jessica Schumacher of the Cook County Department of Environment and Sustainability discussed efforts taken to support and implement the study, including development of a marketing brochure. The County has received federal environmental grants, and is pursuing transportation and utility improvements.

Meisha Holmes of the Cook County Department of Planning and Development discussed the property tax analysis conducted as part of the study. Many industrial property tax rates in the corridor are not competitive with surrounding areas, and tax relief legislation has been pursued but not enacted to date. Holmes discussed other economic development tools currently available as well as marketing and outreach

efforts. Ongoing efforts include refining tax relief proposals and securing funding for infrastructure improvements.

In response to a question about cooperation among participating municipalities, Holmes stated that cooperation was strong. In response to a question about programs such as 6B, she stated that existing programs often are not enough. In response to a question about legislative efforts, Holmes and Maria Choca Urban noted that there were many competing tax relief proposals, and consensus was difficult to achieve. Choca Urban noted that the study area is very reliant on industrial property taxes, and development of industrial property can help put the communities on a more sustainable footing. Transportation assets in the area are generally in good shape, but issues of taxes, environmental risk, and financing need to be addressed.

In response to a question about workforce development, Holmes and Beata noted that existing entities and programs are in place and will be ready to respond when development occurs and workforce services are needed. In response to a question about residential property taxes, Choca Urban noted that many residential properties in the area are in default on their taxes, which is not common for industrial properties.

## **6.0 Responding to the Growth of E-commerce**

Jeff Schnobrich provided an overview of upcoming research regarding the impacts that growing e-commerce may have on transportation, land use, fiscal condition, and the environment. Transportation impacts that may be studied include VMT, congestion, and curb conflicts. Community impacts include effects on traditional brick and mortar retail facilities, location of distribution facilities, and impacts on sales and property taxes. Environmental impacts may include emissions and land consumption. Schnobrich discussed ways that e-commerce is changing, as well as data resources that may be used for the project. He requested feedback from the committee on what trends and impacts are most critical to further understand, any impact issues that CMAP has not considered, and what resources could help with analysis of the issues.

A committee member noted that understanding business models will be important to understanding impacts of e-commerce. Another member raised questions about whether “free deliveries” are a sustainable business model, as well as the potential increase in truck trips that results from one-off purchases made for delivery as opposed to shopping for multiple items in a trip to a traditional brick and mortar retailer.

In response to a question about whether the project would consider potential future delivery methods that could include drones and autonomous vehicles, Schnobrich responded that staff would consider them to the extent that information is available.

Committee members mentioned the growth of alternative drop off locations and changes in industry to reduce re-deliveries. Members also suggested considering what data might be needed in the future to better understand the issue. Aimee Lee contemplated the extent to which trucks carrying high-priority shipments might play in creating demand for managed lanes on the Tollway. She stated that it would be helpful

to understand if there may be an appetite for a premium toll within an existing tolled facility. Members also discussed the possibility of better understand how willing consumers would be to accept slower or off-peak deliveries.

#### **7.0 Grade Crossing Prioritization**

Tom Murtha presented results of a project to prioritize the region's at-grade railroad crossings for grade separation or crossing improvements. He noted that it will be a living document subject to changes as a result of new information. The next steps are to conduct early feasibility studies and gather community feedback to get selected projects ready for Phase I studies.

Herbert Smith noted that the recently passed capital bill contains funding for grade crossing improvements, including separations. Murtha noted that while the solution in many areas will be separation, working with railroads to identify new sidings, crossovers, etc. may be the more cost effective way to reduce delay in certain situations. He cited CREATE project WA-11 as an example.

Maria Choca Urban stated that Cook County had supported additional funding for grade crossing improvements in the capital bill. In response to a question about updating the list, Murtha stated that it is CMAP's intent to keep the list updated, perhaps on an annual basis.

#### **8.0 Other Business**

There was no other business presented.

#### **9.0 Public Comment**

Heather Armstrong thanked committee members for supporting passage of the capital bill, and raised safety concerns for the grade crossing at Touhy Ave. and Mannheim Rd.

Garland Armstrong stated concerns with trucks entering railroad crossings as the gates are lowering and suggested that outreach efforts to truckers should be improved, including in different languages.

#### **10.0 Next Meeting – September 16, 2019**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 16, 2019.

#### **11.0 Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Schnobrich, Committee liaison

*Approved as presented, by unanimous vote, September 16, 2019*