



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Council of Mayors Executive Committee Meeting Draft Minutes

January 28, 2020

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

**Members Present:** Mayor Jeffery Schielke, Chairman, President Len Austin, President Karen Darch, President Mike Einhorn, President Alice Gallagher, President Lawrence Levin, Mayor Leon Rockingham, President Glenn Ryback, Mayor Jeffrey Sherwin, President Erik Spande, President Mary Werner

**Staff Present:** Erin Aleman, Teri Dixon, Kama Dobbs, Jesse Elam, Tina Fasset-Smith, Doug Ferguson, James Gross, Ben Krochmal, Stephanie Levine, Jen Maddux, Tony Manno, Amy McEwan, Tim McMahon, Tom Murtha, Art Nicholas, Stephane Phifer, Russell Pietrowiak, Jeff Schnobrich, Gordon Smith, Matthew Stern, Laura Wilkison

**Others Present:** Holly Bieneman, Elaine Bottomley, Emily Daucher, Adrian Diaz, John Donovan, Jackie Forbes, Kendra Johnson, Emily Karry, Mike Klemens, Daniel Knickelbein, Matthew Pasquini, Kelsey Passi, Ryan Peterson, Leslie Phemister, Troy Simpson, Joe Surdam

### 1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Chairman Schielke.

### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes or announcements.

### 3.0 Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2019 meeting, as presented, made by President Levin, and seconded by Mayor Rockingham, carried.

#### **4.0 STP Project Selection Committee Update**

Ms. Dobbs reported that at their November 21st meeting, the STP Project Selection Committee concurred with staff's recommendation to not implement rolling focus for the 2021 shared fund call for projects. The committee also determined that for the 2021 call for projects cycle, the deadline for projects to have Phase 1 Engineering or equivalent substantially complete will be the same date as the application deadline in March of 2021, as opposed to June 1, 2021. To help facilitate a consistently applied definition of substantially complete, additional application materials will be developed. She also reported that the committee meets next this Thursday at 9:30 am to discuss an agenda including potential additional eligible project types, requiring project applicants to provide categories of projects, and shifting "Inclusion in Plans" from a scoring criterion to an eligibility requirement. The agenda also includes program status reports, based on the December Quarterly Status Updates submitted by project sponsors.

Chairman Schielke noted that it may be wise to begin rotating the Council of Mayors members who attend STP Project Selection Committee meetings. He added that this was the original intent of the Council of Mayors. He also noted that it is important to have geographical representation from the northern, southern, and central or western portions of the region. President Spande asked about the charge of the committee, number of meetings, and other details and suggested having a description of the STP Project Selection Committee in the next packet. Ms. Dobbs stated that the committee meets six to eight times annually, typically on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Cook County conference room at CMAP. Because the CMAQ Project Selection Committee meets immediately following, STP Project Selection Committees are scheduled to be 90 minutes long. Mayor Schielke stated that he will reach out to all members of the Executive Committee to seek interested members for consideration in April.

#### **5.0 Transportation Programming Updates**

##### **5.1 Surface Transportation Program – Locally Programmed (STP-L)**

Mr. Pietrowiak reported that current FFY 2020 STP-L obligations are at around \$32 million, including projects on the March letting, and that obligations last year and the year before at the same time were around \$45 million. He stated that at this time, it appears that the region does not have enough funding available to program any projects targeting an IDOT letting after March 2020. The region has faced similar situations in past years, that have been overcome with assistance from IDOT. However, IDOT is unable to assist at this time. Therefore, he advised that projects targeting an IDOT letting after March will be moved to FFY 2021 in the TIP and encouraged councils to consider grandfathering these projects into their new programs. Staff will continue to seek additional funding. He also encouraged project sponsors to continue with their projects in order to

keep them ready for letting in the event that funding becomes available. He also noted that at the end of FFY 2020, the regional STP balance for the local program will be at zero, with no funds carried over from past years, and that all councils will transition back to individual council allotments for 2021 and beyond. Those allotments were presented in October.

President Spande asked whether the City of Chicago also had a zero balance, and requested more details as to why the STP balance was at zero. Mr. Pietrowiak responded that CDOT has its own process for working with IDOT, and follows a slightly different letting schedule due to letting their projects locally. CMAP met with CDOT and IDOT staff last week, and based on that process, all CDOT projects programmed in FFY 2020 are on track to be obligated. He explained that when determining the funding available, staff takes things such as engineering, right-of-way and CDOT's program off the top because the specific date that obligations will occur is unknown. For the rest of the program, the IDOT letting schedule is used, with projects on track for earlier lettings being allocated funding first. President Spande noted the optics of CDOT projects going to construction this year and suburban projects not being able to. Mr. Pietrowiak reminded the committee that the suburbs have obligated two to three times more funding than CDOT during this transition period.

Mayor Sherwin stated that there would be a domino effect from carrying projects into later years without also carrying funding into those years. Mayor Einhorn expressed a concern whether or not councils will be able to count on the amounts they are allotted in the future and noted that councils are not getting back what they didn't spend. Mr. Pietrowiak noted that since 2017 there have been no individual council balances due to the transition to implement the new programming agreement, and that this situation is unique to this year. Ms. Aleman added that CMAP had previously received a finding from the Federal Highway Administration that funding could no longer be allocated by population and must shift to a performance-based process. This three year transition is what the region agreed to she added, to spend down the balance of funds and then allocate future funds in the new way, including establishing the Shared Fund. She then emphasized the importance of proactively thinking about how to program funds. Mr. Pietrowiak added that the region has been able to obligate more funds than typical, and so we knew we'd get to this point, but had hoped we be able to make it longer before getting here. Mayor Rockingham stated that while some sponsors may be disappointed, it bodes well for the region that so many projects have been completed. He also noted the additional costs to projects when delayed, as well as the difficulty in relaying to cities that

their projects would not be completed. Mr. Pietrowiak noted that it is unlikely there would be more funding in the rest of the fiscal year and Ms. Aleman reiterated that the programming process is dynamic and staff will continuously monitor the situation. Ms. Bieneman stated that IDOT has been working with CMAP but at this time, the Secretary has let CMAP staff know that there are no additional federal funds or state appropriation available from IDOT, as all old money has been spent down.

President Darch requested that staff prepare a list of the projects that have been obligated, along with the STP apportionments, match, and balances. Chairman Schielke requested that projects which were scheduled for lettings in 2020 after March also be included in the list. He additionally recommended that council members contact their local representatives about funding, and suggested sending a letter from the Council of Mayors Executive Committee to the Governor. Chairman Schielke praised CMAP and IDOT staff for their fair and straightforward handling of the process. The committee discussed the gap between promised and actual funding from the increased gas tax, license fees, etc. by the state.

Mayor Gallagher noted the importance of advance notice when funding will become unavailable, and expressed concern that in October council staff had advised that funding would be available, and now it is not. She speculated that with earlier notice projects may have been able to be obligated before funds became unavailable. She also recommended a simple bar chart detailing where STP funding has been allocated to accompany the list requested earlier in the discussion. A motion to send a letter to the governor concerning transportation funding made by President Ryback, seconded by Mayor Einhorn, carried. In response to a question from Mayor Gallagher, Mr. Donovan noted that there is not anything the FHWA can do to put pressure on IDOT. Mayor Spande recommended that an example of a project which is not able to move forward be included in the letter. Mayor Levin suggested members contact their General Assembly members suggesting a need to help IDOT, who is stuck in the middle due to underestimated revenues and taxes, and needs more funding to get the job done. Ms. Bieneman added that the local program is based on federal formula funds and IDOT is doing all they can. In response to questions from Mayor Einhorn regarding how downstate areas receive these federal funds, Ms. Bieneman explained that funds are allotted to urban areas by an agreed upon method, which she would be happy to provide a presentation on at a future meeting, but that the metropolitan transportation planning process is applied nationwide.

## **5.2 IDOT Bureau of Local Roads Update**

Mr. Riddle was not available to report, however Mr. Pietrowiak stated that the January letting had already been published, and the March letting bulletin would be published soon. Most projects should be moving along without issue.

## **6.0 Unified Work Program (UWP)**

Mr. Klemens presented an overview of the Council of Mayors' Unified Work Program (UWP) application prepared by the planning liaisons, stating that the funding requested for FY 2021 will remain the same as 2020. He noted that the proposed scope of services for the planning liaison program remained largely the same, with some clarifications on deliverables. A motion to approve the UWP application for the planning liaison program for fiscal year 2021 made by President Darch, seconded by President Ryback, carried.

## **7.0 Grade Crossing Prioritization Studies**

Mr. Murtha presented an overview of the grade crossing delay and prioritization work completed by CMAP. He highlighted the safety impact on pedestrians, length and frequency of crossing delays observed in the study, and lack of federal action to prevent delays. He also presented the priority-designated crossings. He then suggested solutions including high-cost investments such as grade separation and lower-cost investments such as reduction of deadheads or operations coordination. He noted upcoming feasibility studies in Berwyn, Riverside, and Joliet. President Darch expressed gratitude for the STP Shared Funds allocated for a grade separation of US 14 in Barrington. She also noted concern that crossings on IL 59 and Lake Cook Rd may not have made the priority list due to a discrepancy in crossing data. She further noted that both stopped and slow moving trains can cause blockages, and suggested that a letter be sent to the Federal Railroad Administration requesting that private rail companies share all crossing blockage data including delays due to both stopped and moving trains, rather than the relying on members of the public to report delays through the FRA's new website. Mr. Murtha noted that much of the crossing equipment is publicly funded and includes technology for automated data collection, but the data is not available to public agencies. Mayor Einhorn added that many blockages are caused by railroad company operating procedures and by the implementation of Positive Train Control. A motion to send a letter to the STB encouraging a requirement for railroads to provide crossing delays due to both stopped or slow-moving trains, made by President Darch, seconded by President Ryback, carried.

## **8.0 Local Technical Assistance (LTA) Program**

Mr Manno reported that there were applications received for the CMAP and RTA joint call for projects, and 28 projects are currently identified as having the highest potential

to be funded. These projects will be recommended to the coordinating committee and CMAP Board in March and will be incorporated into the draft FY 2021 UWP and CMAP Budget.

**9.0 Legislative Discussion/Update**

Mr. Smith gave an update on legislative activities, noting the retirement of Senator Cullerton and his replacement by Senator Harmon as the President of the Senate at the start of the spring session. He noted the upcoming State of the State address by the Governor, which will give some clarity on the fair tax amendment. He reported that last month the CMAP Board approved legislative agendas and staff will monitor legislative activity and provide reports at subsequent meetings of any legislation which relates to ON TO 2050. He noted the necessity of additional funding for transportation in the region, as well as the recommendation for a pilot road usage charge program and increased data sharing.

**10.0 Other Business**

There was no other business.

**11.0 Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**12.0 Next Meeting**

The next Council of Mayors Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2020.

**13.0 Adjournment**

On a motion by President Ryback, seconded by President Levin, the meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Gross