



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item No. 12.0

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MEMORANDUM

To: UWP Committee
CMAP Board
MPO Policy Committee

From: Dolores Dowdle
Deputy Executive Director, Finance and Administration

Date: December 31, 2013

Re: FY 2015 UWP Process

At the UWP Committee meeting in October, the FY 2015 UWP process was discussed regarding how the next fiscal year's project proposals will be submitted and selected, and specifically if the committee should reconsider the proposals that are submitted as "core". The committee delayed approving the FY 2015 process and the call for projects until further discussion could be scheduled. The committee is scheduled to meet on January 8 and the call for projects will be issued on January 10.

The Unified Work Program (UWP) federal funding is available for transportation planning projects within a metropolitan area. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has the primary responsibility for preparing the UWP for its metropolitan area. The federal guidelines state that all planning and implementing agencies must be an integral part of the planning process and participate in the development of the UWP.

In the CMAP region, the UWP Committee serves as the project selection body for this process. The committee is chaired by IDOT, who votes in case of a tie. The membership is comprised of a representative from each of the transit service boards (CTA, Metra and Pace), the City of Chicago, RTA, CMAP, a representative from the counties, and a mayor representing the Council of Mayors. In addition, non-voting members are representatives from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The UWP Committee establishes program priorities and selects the funded proposals. Final selections are approved by the Transportation Committee and then forwarded to the Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee for approval.

For a number of years, the annual process has had two proposal groups-- core and discretionary elements:

1. Core Element - The core elements are primarily the work central to the MPO's primary functions under federal law. First, the core program funds the CMAP core functions of long range planning, the transportation improvement program (TIP), the congestion management process, public participation, policy development, information technology management and regional information and data analysis. The CMAP proposal includes staff time, related expenses and consulting services required for these core activities. Second, the core program supports the staff time and related expenses of recipient agencies, including the transit boards, the City of Chicago and the Regional Council of Mayors, for activities that contribute directly to the MPO process. Activities which require consultant services for this second group is considered only in the Discretionary Element. Third, for the last couple years, the seven counties have selected one of the counties to submit a proposal for the preparation of a long range transportation plan. All the funds are for consulting services.
2. Discretionary Element – The discretionary element programs other projects which align with the regional priorities described in the GO TO 2040 Plan. These are primarily for activities that require consultant services and not intended to fund staff time and expenses. The level of funding is determined after the core elements have been selected for funding.

The approved priorities are:

- *Modernization of the Public Transit System.* GO TO 2040 recommends an enhanced focus on prioritizing planning work for the modernization of the existing transit system. Actions include work on coordinating services and fares, including pursuit of a universal fare payment system, work on traveler information systems, and technological improvements including transit signal priority and ART. Project proposals, especially from the transit agencies, should feature these elements as a primary component.
- *Financial Planning Including Innovative Financing Strategies.* GO TO 2040 also stresses an array of recommendations related to transportation finance, including improved financial planning. Actions include strengthening transit financial oversight, planning for efficiencies that reduce transit operating costs, the identification of funding sources for CREATE, and continued planning/policy work on other important issues of fiscal policy to improve the transportation system.
- *Improving Decision-Making Models and Evaluation Criteria for Project Selection.* GO TO 2040 also emphasizes improving decision-making processes for transportation projects, as well as the overarching importance of prioritization for making investments given constrained funding. This includes constructing improved models for answering the most pressing questions about major projects and designing appropriate and regionally-vetted evaluation criteria for judging projects.
- *Planning Work Toward Implementation of GO TO 2040 Major Capital Projects, Including Supportive Land Use.* The continuation of near-term work to further GO TO 2040's short list of fiscally constrained major capital projects is also a high priority. Potential work includes planning for the inclusion of transit components as part of major highway projects, advancing recommended transit projects

through the New Starts program or other discretionary funding programs, and planning for supportive land use around transportation, including active technical assistance to local governments.

- *Local Technical Assistance and the Formation of Collaborative Planning Efforts.* A major emphasis area of GO TO 2040 is providing targeted technical assistance to local governments, information sharing, and formal planning efforts that focus on transportation and other interconnected issues of livability.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that UWP Committee, CMAP Board and MPO Policy committee consider the following:

1. The two-step review process is consistent with assuring that the available UWP funds are allocated according to the priorities of the region and the requirements of FHWA and FTA. Even though FHWA and FTA do not refer the projects as “core” or “competitive”, these are terms that have assisted the region with prioritizing the UWP proposals.
2. The funding priorities are first to support the required MPO responsibilities of CMAP and then the other regional agencies who have on-going planning responsibilities.
3. The requests that are for one-time projects and will primarily support consultant services will be considered as “competitive”.
4. The FY 2015 UWP process follow the same format as the FY 2014 UWP process:
 - The Call for Projects will be made in January and will include both the Core and the Competitive proposals. The Core and the Competitive proposals will be considered separately by the Committee.
 - CMAP staff will conduct an in-depth proposal review and develop a proposed program for the UWP Committee’s consideration. The review and recommendation process will be as follows:
 - Proposal Selection – Core. CMAP staff will review the Core proposals and make a proposed program recommendation to the UWP Committee for approval. The proposal review will consider the following: federal requirements; alignment with the proposed priorities in GO TO 2040; the requested level of funding; and if applicable, previous years’ expenditure level of Core projects.
 - Proposal Selection – Competitive. The Competitive proposals will be scored by the UWP Committee as in years past, based upon the alignment with the regional priorities listed above. Based on the available monies after the Core proposals have been funded, CMAP staff will incorporate the Committee’s rankings and make a proposed program recommendation to the UWP Committee that follows the same considerations outlined above in the Core program.

The revised schedule for the development and approval of the FY 2015 UWP process is as follows:

Development of Program Priorities and Selection Process

UWP Meeting	October 10, 2013
UWP Meeting	January 8, 2014

Call for Proposals

Call for Proposals	January 13, 2014
All Proposals Due (Core and Competitive)	January 31, 2014

Core Elements Selection Process

CMAP review and recommend program	February 13, 2014
UWP Meeting- Adopt Core Program	February 20, 2014

Competitive Elements Selection Process

UWP Meeting - Presentation of Competitive Proposals	February 27, 2014
UWP Committee members rank proposals	Due to CMAP March 7, 2014
CMAP prepares committee ranked proposals with funding allocation	March 13, 2014
UWP Meeting - Adopt Competitive Program	March 20, 2014

Committee Approval

Transportation Committee considers approval of FY 2015 UWP to MPO Policy Committee	April 25, 2014
Regional Coordinating Committee considers approval of FY 2015 UWP to CMAP Board	May or June 2014
CMAP Board considers approval of proposed FY 2015 UWP	June 11, 2014
MPO Policy Committee considers approval of proposed FY 2015 UWP	June 12, 2014
UWP Document Released	June 2014

ACTION REQUESTED: Informational

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