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MPO Policy Committee

Meeting Minutes October 8, 2009

Cook County Conference Room CMAP Offices Chicago, Illinois

MPO Policy Committee Members:

Lawrence Walsh – Vice-Chairman, Will County, Thomas Cuculich – DuPage County, Joe Deal - Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Rupert Graham – Cook County (Representing Joseph Moreno), Jack Groner - Metra (Representing Philip A. Pagano), Henry Guerriero – Illinois Tollway (Representing Rocco Zucchero), Ken Koehler – McHenry County, John McCarthy - Private Transportation Providers, Arlene Mulder – Council of Mayors (Representing Jeffrey Schielke), Thomas Powers – Chicago Department of Transportation), Leanne Redden – RTA (Representing Steve Schlickman), Tom Rickert - Kane County (Representing Karen McConnaughay), T.J. Ross - Pace (Representing R. Kwasneski), David Simmons – CTA (Representing Richard Rodriguez), Dick Smith – Illinois Department of Transportation (Representing Gary Hannig), Norman Stoner – FHWA, Paula Trigg - Lake County (Representing Martin Buehler)

Absent: Bob Davidson - Kendall County, Elliott Hartstein - Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Michael Payette - Class I Railroads, Marisol Simon – Federal Transit Administration

Staff Present: Erin Aleman, Patricia Berry, Randy Blankenhorn, Janet Bright, Bob Dean, Doug Ferguson, Tom Murtha, Holly Ostdick, Ross Patronsky, Joy Schaad

Others Present: Bruce Christensen – Lake County, Chalen Daigle - McHenry County Council of Mayors, Kama Dobbs - DMMC, John Donovan - FHWA, Larry Froman – Village of Lincolnwood, Luann Hamilton – CDOT, Jon-Paul Kohler – FHWA, Adam Letendre – Village of Skokie, Sarah Lutz – McHenry County Department of Transportation, , Lawrence Montegue – MPC, Les Nunes – IDOT, Andy Plummer – RTA, David Seglin – CDOT, Peter Skosey – MPC, Tim Wiberg – Village of Lincolnwood, Kathleen Woodruff – MPC

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Vice-Chair Larry Walsh called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

An announcement of the upcoming event hosted by Mercy Housing, *Moving Forward Together*, to be held on October 27, 2009 was made. The work of the Regional ARRA Coordinating Council (RACC) will be recognized. The formation of RACC is a CMAP initiative to coordinate stimulus dollars across the region. A marketing flyer was available to meeting attendees.

3.0 Approval of Minutes – June 10, 2009

On a motion by Mr. Deal, seconded by Mr. Smith, the June 10, 2009 minutes were approved.

4.0 Agency Reports

4.1 Council of Mayors' Report

Mayor Mulder reported on the Council of Mayors September 15 meeting. The development of the *GO TO 2040* plan and the looming "end of SAFETEA-LU" rescission were the primary topics. The COM members took action to urge Congress to eliminate the rescission. Illinois stands to lose \$290 million. Mayor Mulder noted that the rescission will be discussed further under item 11. Additionally the COM Executive Committee approved a policy to assure that all locally programmed ARRA funds are used by the deadline, approved STP Marks, and approved advanced funding.

4.2 CMAP Report

Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn updated the committee on agency funding. IDOT matched the federal funds available to CMAP, but the comprehensive planning fund was not funded. The restoration of the fund will be addressed next year. IDOT's funding filled \$2.7 million out of \$3.5 million hole in CMAP's operating budget. However, the comprehensive planning fund is critical to assure the important non-transportation work at CMAP continues. CMAP is working with the Governor and will try to get money back into the state budget by next year. In response to the budget crisis, CMAP has made significant operational cuts to avoid staff layoffs.

Mr. Blankenhorn then reported on the *GO TO 2040* public outreach process and relayed the successful activities that occurred over the summer. He concluded his report, noting that three US Secretaries (EPA, Transportation and HUD) talked about the future of urban regions at a recent luncheon in the region. Mr. Blankenhorn stressed that transportation is an essential component of the overall picture. Mr. Blankenhorn was pleased to have the representatives along with other White House staff at the discussion. CMAP's work is aligning with what is happening at the federal level. Mr. Groner asked Mr. Blankenhorn about the dollar amount of the total shortfall in the CMAP budget. Mr. Blankenhorn responded that the total amount is currently \$800,000 out of a \$14 million budget, which is not unmanageable. He thanked IDOT again for its support.

5.0 Approval of RTP/TIP Conformity and TIP Amendments

Mr. Patronsky reviewed the semi-annual amendments to the region's Transportation Improvement Program and the associated air quality conformity analysis. He noted that there were no updates to the region's long range plan. No public comments on the TIP amendments or the conformity analysis were received. The Transportation Committee has recommended approval of the TIP/RTP conformity determination and the TIP amendments. Mr. Patronsky said that staff is also requesting an amendment to the TIP to allow Metra to use \$6.3 million in ARRA funds for operating assistance in FFY 2010. That amendment does not require inclusion in the air quality conformity analysis. On a motion by Mayor Mulder, seconded by Mr. Groner, the RTP/TIP Conformity and the TIP amendments were approved.

6.0 Approval of multi-year FFY 2010-2011 CMAQ Program and MYB list

Ms. Ostdick reported on the proposed FFY 2010-11 CMAQ program. It fully commits FFY2010 and FFY2011 funds of \$94 million. Staff received comments on eleven CMAQ proposals. The comments and proposed responses were included in the packet as was CMAQ memo detailing the program and amounts of funding for future years. She noted that \$25.5 million is proposed for FFY2012, \$7 million for FFY2013 and \$1.6 million for FFY2014. The Multi-Year B list provides a possible pool of projects if the region faces lapsing funds, rescissions or losing state appropriation. MYB projects will be considered by the CMAQ PSC at its May meeting if any of these conditions occur. Transportation Committee recommends MPO Policy committee approval of the multiyear FFY 2010-2011 CMAQ program. Once approved, the program will be sent to USDOT for eligibility determination. Ms. Ostdick concluded her report, reminding the Policy Committee that there was no call for 2011 projects so the Project Selection Committee and CMAP staff can focus on active project management. The large unobligated balance of the CMAQ program must be addressed. Active Program Management policies adopted by in March restrict programmers to a one time move into another federal fiscal year prior to projects being considered for withdrawal. Mr. Rickert acknowledged that the end of SAFETEA-LU rescission will be addressed later in the agenda, but noted that there was some discussion at the CMAQ Project Selection Committee about whether they should be approving new projects when facing a large rescission. Mr. Blankenhorn said that one reason to move the program forward is to improve previous inefficiencies of project management. Programming funding only through 2011 allows the Project Selection Committee and staff more time to focus on making sure projects that are funded move forward and are getting obligated, so that the rescission and lapsing is not an issue in the future.

Mr. Ross asked about the amount of funding being directed to privately owned railroads for diesel retrofit projects in the CMAQ program. He reminded the committee that last year the Policy Committee asked to be told about these types of projects ahead of time. Mr. Ross said it looked like a lot of public money was going toward private diesel retrofits. Mr. Cuculich asked if policy guidelines had been developed. Ms. Ostdick noted the private railroads are required to provide a higher local match than the typical twenty

percent. Mr. Cuculich asked if the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) had wrestled with the policy issues involved. Ms. Berry said the capacity for pollution reduction for these types of projects is the largest single factor the CMAQ PSC considered. A secondary consideration was the large unobligated balance in the program and the fact that these projects can be implemented quickly. She discussed the move to multi-year programming adopted by the Policy Committee in 2006 for the FFY 2007 program. She also noted that there are many public sector projects programmed that are not moving forward expeditiously. Mr. Cuculich said that while he respected the answer and is aware that the rescission of federal funds is a complicating factor, he has serious concerns if the reason these projects were selected is that the privates are ready to move forward and the public agencies are not. He said we need to wrestle with who gets first priority. Mr. Ross agreed, noting that the public agencies are facing service cuts, fare increases and a lack of capital and should get priority. Mayor Mulder concurred, noting that a municipally sponsored solar panel project did not qualify for the program. Ms. Berry noted that the particular project Mayor Mulder indicated was not eligible for CMAQ funding and that the PSC would not knowingly recommend ineligible projects, but that the point was well taken that there are many public sector proposals that were not included in the proposed program.

Mr. Blankenhorn said the discussion should start at the Policy Committee. The PSC works for the Policy Committee and the Policy Committee should provide direction about what is appropriate and what is not. He assured the Committee that this item would be included on a future agenda with information on why staff and the PSC think these projects have significant benefits in addressing pollutants in the region so the Policy Committee can provide them with direction. Ms. Redden agreed, saying that a summary of the justification for these projects should be brought to the Policy Committee. Mr. Smith emphasized that it is important that the Committee look at the actual affect these projects have on the region's air quality. Mr. Ross asked how we could assure that these switch engines will continue to operate in the metropolitan area and whether the railroads had moved more modern equipment out of the region because they knew they could access public funds to improve their older equipment. Mr. Patronsky explained that there are contractual arrangements with the railroad that require that the engines stay in the region for at least ten years.

Mr. Rickert noted that there were many public comments submitted in support of these projects and that all projects require a public sponsor. He further stated that he also has concerns about the shortage of funding on the public side. Mr. McCarthy said he was picking up a distinctly anti-private sector tone in the conversation and said the Committee's goals should be for CMAQ funding to be used for the types of projects that help the region meet the objectives of the program. Mr. Blankenhorn wrapped up the discussion, reiterating that this item will be on a future Policy Committee agenda for discussion. On a motion by Vice-Chair Walsh, seconded by Mr. Smith, the multi-year FFY 2010-2011 CMAQ program and MYB list were approved.

7.0 Naming of Transportation Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Ms. Berry noted that the Policy Committee appoints the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Transportation Committee. The proposed Chair for calendar year 2010 is DuPage County, represented by current Transportation Committee Vice-Chair Chris Snyder. The proposed Vice-Chair for calendar year 2010 is RTA, represented by Sid Weseman. The Transportation Committee has asked that CDOT's representative, Luann Hamilton, continue to serve as their liaison to the Planning Coordinating Committee. Ms. Hamilton has served as the liaison during her last two years as Transportation Committee chair, and all agreed that continuity of representation is important as we move toward the adoption of *GO TO 2040* in October, 2010. On a motion by Mayor Mulder, seconded by Mr. Groner, the Chair and Vice-Chair were named as proposed, with Ms. Hamilton continuing in her role as liaison through October 2010. Mr. Snyder will continue to serve as the Transportation Committee's liaison to the Programming Coordinating Committee.

8.0 Nominating Committee for the office of MPO Policy Committee Vice-chairman

Mr. Groner reported that the nominating committee comprised of himself and Mr. Cuculich, Mayor Schielke, Mr. Buehler and Mr. Deal nominate Mr. Richard Rodriguez of the CTA as Vice Chair of the MPO Policy Committee. On a motion by Mr. Cuculich, seconded by Mr. Smith, Mr. Rodriquez was elected Vice Chair of the MPO Policy Committee.

9.0 GO TO 2040 Update

Ms. Aleman referenced the *GO TO 2040* public involvement memo and attachments included in the mailing which summarized the summer's public outreach activities. She noted that there were a total of 57 workshops which 1500 people attended. Attendees gave feedback on policy tradeoffs that they were willing to make. Ms. Aleman reminded members that in the summary there is more detail on policy choices. Approximately 2200 people used the online tool, which was created by MetroQuest. Residents supported moderately compact growth and there was strong support for transit expansion. Residents also expressed a desire for enhanced environmental policies. Ms. Aleman told the committee that there a full formal report is forthcoming. The final report is available at: http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/news/invent_charts_12-8-09/

Mr. Dean updated the committee on the schedule for the *GO TO 2040* Plan, which must be completed in October 2010. He referred to the *GO TO 2040* endorsement schedule memo which was included in the meeting packet. The schedule calls for Policy committee review and endorsement of the preferred regional scenario in January 2010 and a priority list of capital projects that meet fiscal constraint in March 2010. A full draft of the comprehensive plan will be released in May 2010 and approval for the entire final plan will occur in October 2010. Mr. Dean informed the committee that a special transportation committee meeting has been scheduled for October 23 to discuss the

preferred regional scenario, financial plan, and evaluation results of capital projects in more detail. Mr. Dean asked that MPO Policy Committee members attend the meeting or make sure that staff representing their agencies participate. Finally, Mr. Dean mentioned that an online meeting function (webinar) would be available for this special meeting, so agencies may have multiple representatives participate without travel.

10.0 Legislative Outlook

Mr. Ferguson updated the committee on the SAFETEA-LU bill which is expiring and the one month extension. Congress may or may not pass a longer term extension. The current debate is over the length of the extension. Secretary LaHood is supporting an eighteen month extension and Congressman Oberstar is supporting a three month extension and pushing for earlier action on reauthorization. The total rescinded amount will be \$8.7 billion nationwide and Congress has not acted to stop the rescission. Mr. Ferguson reviewed the transportation policy brief, which includes objectives and goals for the next transportation bill and to direct staff on how to provide information to further regional goals. Mr. Ferguson reviewed the five goals included in the memo and further stated that the memo brief includes background information on developing goals. Mr. Cuculich said that the Transportation for Illinois Coalition (TFIC) has done excellent work on this topic and requested that their work be included in the review. He also commented on the Government Accountability Office report on Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Options Exist to Enhance Transportation Planning Capacity and Federal Oversight that should be reviewed by the MPO Policy committee members. The report gives an idea of the current federal thinking on the future of MPOs and how MPOs are funded. Mr. Cuculich said the overall tone of the report is to question the effectiveness of MPOs and it is important that CMAP demonstrates effectiveness. The report cited was included in Executive Director Blankenhorn's October 2 weekly email.

Mr. Cuculich also noted that the first point and last point on the policy memo are inconsistent when pertaining to High Speed Rail. He emphasized that if CMAP is endorsing mode agnostic investments then it may be inconsistent to say we need High Speed Rail. Mr. Blankenhorn stated that there is a constant tension between freight and high speed rail. He acknowledged that high speed rail has become highly politicized and that funding has already been identified. Mr. Blankenhorn said staff had struggled with that inconsistency and recognized that there is a problem and a need to clear freight tie ups in the region. It is important to stress the importance of funding for freight as well as other needs.

Mr. Ferguson briefly discussed the climate change legislation being debated in the Senate. The House passed the Climate Change bill in June. The Senate introduced a version of the bill at the Environment and Public Works committee. The bill includes measurements that reduce greenhouse gas, and improvements on sustainability and livability. Since there is an overreliance on oil, the bill sets an aggressive path for carbon dioxide cuts. The Senate bill calls for a 20% cut by 2020. The House has set the target at 17%. The White House

Administration calls for a 14% target so the issue is deciding on what the reduction should be.

11.0 Rescissions

Mr. Stoner started the discussion, saying that FHWA has been put in the uncomfortable position of administering the end of SAFETEA-LU rescissions. The rescission is the result of seeds planted in last few reauthorizations. It is a reality and we have to deal with the fact that the funding coming out of Washington is not at the level authorized under SAFETEA-LU. The latest rescission was a compromise between the White House and Congress. It is a mandate and we have to follow rules. Congress chose not to rescind the rescissions and fiscal constraint of the TIP will need to be addressed.

Ms. Berry noted that there has been discussion with some of the members about the most appropriate way to address the rescissions of locally programmed STP and CMAQ funding. The staff recommendation is for the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) to recommend a method for addressing the CMAQ rescission and to active the Policy Committee's SAFETEA-LU subcommittee to address the other rescission. Ms. Redden said the Policy Committee may want to provide guidelines to the PSC. She said that from the RTA's perspective the cuts should be focused on projects that have been on the books for a long time, that haven't moved and are unlikely to move. Mr. Blankenhorn emphasized that we need to take a long look at how to implement the rescissions since there will be serious impacts on STP and CMAQ programs. The process needs to be fair and equitable and make sense. Mr. Blankenhorn stated that there will need to be further conversation with staff and committees. Although CMAP and the region fought hard to fix this issue the fix didn't happen and will not happen. We are going to need to be realistic and thoughtful. The best case scenario is that some projects are delayed, worst case is some projects must be dropped.

Mr. Smith stated that it will not be easy and there is no immediate solution. Cumulatively, rescissions have cut almost \$800 million statewide. All of the flexibility built into the program is gone. Sustainable revenue for transportation is not going to happen in the next eighteen months. Mr. Smith said IDOT will work with CMAP and we need to work together across the country. Funding has been redirected to Katrina relief and fighting the wars our nation is engaged in. Mr. Blankenhorn agreed, saying all need to work together on a long term solution. One goal is to work together in order to make sure the rescission doesn't creep into the next transportation authorizing legislation. Mr. Blankenhorn explained that continuing resolution hurts us financially and further pain will be felt if continuing resolutions are used long term to keep the programs going.

Mr. Smith agreed, noting that the continuing resolutions are costing \$1 billion monthly from transportation programs. An extension to transportation authorizing legislation is critical for not losing current year funding. Congress is key to fixing this issue and the rescissions of FFY 2010 will quickly approach the effect of transportation funds provided

in ARRA. Mr. Blankenhorn agreed, noting that all need to focus on getting our congressional delegation on board to encourage an extension.

Mr. Smith said the rescission issue has gotten to the highest levels; Senator Durbin is still interested in repealing the rescission. The Senate is much closer to agreement than the House. The House is using budget rules as reasons for not fixing the rescission. The argument is that rescissions don't need to happen and but Congress is using the rescission to stick to budget rules. The positive thing is that there are people working on a fix and reauthorizations and extensions are on the radar screen.

Mr. Walsh asked Mr. Smith if, in his opinion, the fact that there is no resolution is coming from a lack of a groundswell argument against the rescission. Mr. Smith said he did not think that was the case. For FFY 10 the necessary offset would have been \$490 million, which is a small number relative to the federal budget and that all but two or three states contacted their congressional members in support of fixing the rescission. All agreed that sustainable revenue sources for transportation is the key.

12.0 ARRA Update

12.1 ARRA Formula Programs - Transportation

Ms. Berry referred to the one page summary on ARRA formula funds for transportation included in the meeting packet. Ms. Berry described the content of the memo and emphasized that the adopted policy was created to assure that no local funds would be left on the table. Ms. Berry told the committee that the region is in good shape to spend all of the formula funds for transportation that has been received.

12.2 ARRA Discretionary Programs - Transportation

Mr. Ferguson discussed the discretionary funds (TIGER, TIGGER, High Speed Inter-city passenger rail) and mentioned that the deadline has passed for TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) applications. Mr. Ferguson gave an overview of project proposals received by USDOT with a total of 49 applications from Illinois requesting \$2.3 billion. However, each state has a cap of \$300 million. Secretary Lahood will select final projects to be announced in the New Year. On September 21 the FTA announced the recipients of TIGGER (Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction) grants. There were two grants for recipients in Illinois. IDOT was awarded a \$4 million grant for the purchase of 31 paratransit hybrid buses which includes 10 vehicles for Pace in the amount of \$1.3 million. The CTA was awarded a \$1.5 million grant to construct electrified stalls for approximately 80 buses which will help reduce idling. The last high speed passenger rail application deadline was October 2, 2009. There was a summary of the applications included in the meeting packet. The awards for high speed rail will be made during the winter.

Mr. Smith alerted the committee that the chart shared in the packet was outdated and he would make sure that it is updated and redistributed to CMAP. He said Illinois has

applied for \$5 billion of the \$8 billion allotted for high speed rail. Also, project #5 on the list included a joint application by Iowa and Illinois; the total increases to \$5 billion if including Iowa. Updated information is available at www.dot.state.il.us/stimulus/hspr.html

12.3 ARRA Formula Programs – Non- Transportation

Mr. Ferguson continued, turning to the non-transportation projects. He referred to the memo which included a description of the regional coordinating council for ARRA. The non-transportation projects focus on programs in housing, weatherization, workforce development and energy efficiency. These four project areas were part of the NSP 1 application and were not ARRA funds. On the NSP2 application CMAP was the lead on a pending application for regional partners. CNT is taking the lead on energy and Chicago Jobs Council is taking the lead on workforce development. CMAP will provide quarterly updates and bi-weekly newsletters about ARRA. Major stimulus activities going on in the region were collected as part of a needs assessment survey of 38 recipients of potential ARRA funds. CMAP is responding with the newsletter, best practices, templates and webinars to support the region. Mr. Ferguson referenced the upcoming October 27 event hosted by Mercy Housing and focusing on partnerships to leverage ARRA funds.

13.0 Greenways and Trails Plan

Mr. Murtha reported that the Transportation Committee recommended MPO Policy committee approval of the 2009 Update to the region's Greenways and Trails Plan at its last meeting. The Trails Plan was originally adopted by NIPC in 1992 and updated in 1997. The Plan Update presents a vision with an anticipated horizon year of 2040. Subsequent to the Transportation Committee meeting, draft text was developed to clarify language suggested by the RTA at the Programming Coordinating Committee. Staff recommends approval with the clarifying language to assure future transportation plans are addressed in the greenway process. On a motion by Ms. Redden, seconded by Mr. Powers, the Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trail Plan 2009 Update was approved. The Plan is available at http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/greenwaysandtrails.aspx

14.0 Other Business

Mr. Blankenhorn reminded members and attendees that IDOT's fall planning conference will be held at the Allerton Hotel starting on Wednesday, October 14th. Mr. Stoner applauded the CMAP MPO members for their swift implementation of the ARRA formula funds and the good work that is going on to demonstrate accountability. He also announced that Mr. John Donovan is now the official Metropolitan Planning Specialist. Mr. Donovan has been working with CMAP for some time and all welcomed his formal designation.

15.0 Public Comment

Vice-Chair Larry Walsh stated that it has been a pleasure for him to serve as Vice-Chair of the MPO Policy Committee. He went on to applaud Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn, Deputy Director Don Kopec and the CMAP staff for all of their hard work.

15.0 Next Meeting – January 14, 2010

16.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was at 11:07 a.m.

MPO Policy Committee Members:

Martin G. Buehler	R. A. Kwasneski	Richard Rodriguez
Tom Cuculich	John McCarthy	Steve Schlickman
Bob Davidson	Karen McConnaughay	Jeffery Schielke
Joseph Deal	Joseph Moreno	Marisol Simon
Gary Hannig	Philip A. Pagano	Norman R. Stoner
Elliott Hartstein	Michael Payette	Larry Walsh
Kenneth Koehler	Thomas Powers	Rocco Zucchero