

Attachment 1
Draft Meeting Notes
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

MEETING DATE: 05/14/08

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

Dave Longo, IDNR

Allan Mellis, FPDCC

Mark Minor, Metra

Joseph Moriarty, RTA

Randy Neufeld, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

Craig Williams, T.Y. Lin

Les Nunes, IDOT-OPP (by phone)

Greg Piland, FHWA (by phone)

(Staff)

Tom Murtha, CMAP

John O'Neal, CMAP

(Others)

Tammy Wierciak, West Central Municipal Conference

Marty Mueller, Knight E/A, Inc.

Leslie Phemister, CBF

Katie Tully, CBF

Jessica Thompson, LIB

John Greenfield, Vote with Your Feet Blog

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 Regional Bikeway Planning

3.1 Central Region Council of Mayors Bike Plan Update

Ms. Wierciak gave the Task Force an account of the process involved in developing the WCMC's Bike Plan Update. Ms. Wierciak stated that the process began with a call for local plans to be submitted to WCMC. WCMC then convened a Bike Plan Task Force, which hired Chicagoland Bicycle Federation to, first, educate and inform the Council of Mayors; and second, in collaboration with WCMC, to develop the actual plan map. The team began by looking at major destinations and connections to existing facilities. This resulted in a draft map, which was presented to member communities and stakeholders in a public meeting in La Grange. This meeting resulted in some changes and adjustments based on input received. It also accomplished the goal of community and stakeholder interest and buy-in. The next step was to obtain media coverage, which Ms. Wierciak believes greatly increased community and stakeholder support for the plan and its goals. Finally, the Bikeways Plan Update was officially adopted by the Council of Mayors.

The next step is to hire a consultant to help member communities apply for funding grants in order to implement the facilities envisioned by the plan.

Mr. Privett pointed out that WCMC might, in developing sign designs for the Council's signed bike routes, want to look at the City of Chicago's signage designs, which is expected to be adopted as a national standard (in the forthcoming MUTCD).

Mr. Moriarty stated that he believed the WCMC plan map would benefit from the inclusion of transit stops. He also asked what the difference is between 'future' and 'planned' routes. Ms. Wierciak responded that it represented a difference in (probable) time frame and level of commitment.

Mr. Rickert asked what exactly was the 'buy in' that Ms. Wierciak referred to. Ms. Wierciak stated that some communities simply wrote letters of support, while others had adopted or planned to adopt their own plans, consistent with the Council's plan.

Mr. Longo asked whether WCMC had developed a prioritization for facilities. Ms. Wierciak said, no, they had not. Mr. Longo also pointed out that the plan did not show the proposed Route 66 trail. Ms. Wierciak stated that the Council had in fact spoken with persons involved in Route 66 plan development.

3.2 Other Regional Bikeway Plans

Staff informed the Task Force that two (2) subregional bikeways plans remained under contract and not yet completed: the DuPage County plan update, and the South Suburban plan update. Both plan updates are scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2008.

Ms. Fagan stated that the DuPage plan is in effect done. They are currently going through the process of approval for printing. Mr. Murtha stated that the Task Force looks forward to the completion of the DuPage plan and to Ms. Fagan reporting on the plan and the process of creating it at the next Bike Ped Task Force meeting.

3.3 Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan – Trails Element Update

Staff reported that work has continued on refining and improving the update of the Trails Element of the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan. He reported that the map, which is currently on the CMAP website, has been slightly changed since it was put online, and will likely be tweaked a bit more before official adoption, but that the basic alignments are substantially correct.

Mr. Murtha offered the Task Force a brief history of the Greenways and Trails Plan. He noted how the Greenways and Trails Plan is an opportunity to dovetail bikeway planning and open space planning. He pointed out that recent updates to CMAP's Bikeways Information System were an important resource in facilitating the recent map update. He pointed out that the Project Manager is Lori Heringa, and noted the work she still needs to do in completing the plan.

Staff then asked the Task Force to recommend inclusion of the Trails Element Update in the revised Greenways and Trails Plan to be released for public comment; and for approval of the integration of the Trails Element Update into the CMAP Bikeway Information System for use for planning purposes only, subject to further refinements.

Mr. Rickert asked Mr. Murtha to clarify what he meant by "public comment." Mr. Murtha explained that CMAP anticipates a public involvement and comment period when the Greenways Element of the Greenways and Trails Plan is at an equally advanced stage of development as the Trails Element is. At that point in time, the two elements will be integrated into a single Greenways and Trails Plan, and additional public input will be sought.

Some brief discussion ensued about the meaning of "for planning purposes only." Staff explained that they wanted to be able to use the Trails Element of the plan, as it moves toward adoption, to respond to requests for bicycle planning information requests by IDOT and other agencies.

The requested motion was put forth, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Mr. Nunes asked whether a 'dollar figure' had been applied to the planned facilities as shown on the map. Mr. Murtha stated that, no, no dollar figure had been applied. While many facilities may cost \$1,000,000 per mile, plus structures, he added that in many cases facilities are being added through development exactions imposed by local authorities. He pointed out that having

the regional system planned would probably facilitate planning facilities and financing in advance of development in much of the region.

4.0 Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Programming

4.1 Rescissions

Mr. Nunes stated that he had some additional information on upcoming rescissions. He said that the total for the rescissions announced on April 2 was \$101,992,000. He added that the rescission amounts by program for northeastern Illinois were as follows:

Transportation Enhancement:	\$3,620,000
CMAQ:	\$11,894,000
Recreational Trails:	\$266,000

He pointed out the \$285 million sweep rescission that was planned at the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2009.

He noted that prior ability to overmatch the CMAQ program had returned.

4.2 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program

Staff reported that the CMAQ Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Selection Subcommittee had met and agreed that pedestrian standards and selection methods may need substantial revision. Mr. Murtha stated that CMAP will develop a proposal to adopt new standards for 2010 program, including factors/criteria such as access to transit and mobility to ‘key destinations’. He added that bikeway project ranking methods needs additional analysis of different methodologies.

Mr. Rickert asked whether Staff was looking for any action from the Bike-Ped Task Force at this time. Mr. Murtha responded, no, that action would be needed in 2009 for changes to go into effect for the 2010 program.

Mr. Privett stated that the CMAQ Committee of CMAP met yesterday, and that discussions took place around how stakeholders, funders, and programming agencies can make sure that smaller jurisdictions get projects started and moving on time. Mr. Neufeld asked what precisely was the cause of local projects being held up. Mr. Privett pointed out that very often small municipalities are not familiar with the federal grant process, so they projects have to back to city councils again and again. Mr. Christensen stated that he himself will be helping locals get their projects moving. Mr. Nunes stated that projects going back as far as 1999 are still unobligated. He emphasized that the reasons for slow implementation are extremely diverse – problems acquiring ROW, political buy-in, environmental issues, and engineering problems, to name a few.

Ms. Fagan expressed her belief that a ‘system of tracking’ in order to be able to keep track of unobligated projects and to find out from local agencies what the problems might be, would be a very useful procedure to adopt. Ms. Fagan stated that in her experience “milestone tracking” on STP projects helps to keep grant recipients accountable for moving their projects along.

Mr. Nunes asked whether it would be helpful to bring to the next Bike-Ped Task Force meeting a list of all unobligated Bike-Ped projects. There was general consensus that this would indeed be useful, though Mr. Rickert pointed out that in fact we and other committees need to be looking at all projects that are in danger of lapsing. Mr. Privett added that lists of projects in danger of lapsing should be sent to counties and Councils of Mayors.

Mr. Nunes reminded the Task Force of the coming \$285M rescission, and that generally we, as transportation project implementers, need to move these monies and the projects for which the monies have been programmed.

Mr. Neufeld asked whether, with the current authorization winding down, there was a “project readiness” screen in the works for the next round. Mr. Privett responded that that issue had indeed come up in yesterday’s CMAQ Committee meeting. Ms. Fagan stated that project readiness needs to be considered, but that other criteria need to be considered as well when programming; she added that good projects can be moved to a place where they can be implemented through multi-year programming.

Mr. Privett stated that, as he understands it, we need \$52M out the door this year. Mr. Christensen asked how long funds are good for? Mr. Nunes responded for 3 years from obligation.

Mr. Neufeld stated that he believes this issue should be on the next meeting’s agenda again. Mr. Moriarty voiced the sense of the Task Force in requesting that a list of projects be prepared.

4.3 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

Staff reported that we had received and logged a total of 115 applications for TE funds, totaling nearly \$365M (with a federal share of approximately \$304M). The majority of projects were streetscaping projects; the second most common were bike-ped projects.

Mr. Murtha added that staff at CMAP will be considering and proposing prioritization of projects seeking funding.

Mr. Nunes stated that, at this point, he guessed that the Chicago region would receive approximately \$10M - \$15M of Enhancement funds. He added that the total for the whole state would be roughly double that at \$25M - \$30M, based on historical figures.

4.4 Safe Routes to School Program

Staff reported that a list of SRTS grantees was announced by the Governor and approved by the MPO Policy Committee. Mr. Murtha added that the State is working toward regularization of the program.

Mr. Neufeld stated that while the program is great, it has a downside: namely, there are a lot of very small projects. This leads one to ask whether and how these small projects will get out the

door. Mr. Christensen stated that he, again, will be doing the ‘hand holding’ in Lake Co. in order to help grantees get started on their projects.

Mr. Murtha clarified that ‘non-capital’ projects will be handled and facilitated by Megan Holt herself, not requiring extensive District involvement. He added that CMAP staff has tried to facilitate streamlining the grant contract sign-offs with prompt adoption of the program by the MPO.

4.5 Project Updates

Staff asked Bike-Ped Task Force members whether they had any project news to share, and more specifically whether there were any problems or issues with projects which they would like to bring up.

Mr. Privett reported that the Valley Line Trail had a ribbon-cutting date of June 21. He stated that, while the Chicago Trails Plan has still not been officially approved, it is functioning as such.

Mr. Piland stated that the SRTS program has met a few bumps in the road with smaller projects trying to get under contract. He reported that one issue has been insuring that all the projects are in appropriate TIPs and in the STIP. Mr. Murtha added that CMAP has added all SRTS projects into its TIP. Mr. Piland added that non-infrastructure projects must also be authorized by FHWA and that this is the first time that agency has done this, so there was a bit of a learning curve and some confusion there.

5.0 Policy Planning

5.1 Pedestrian Safety Initiative

Staff gave the Task Force an update on the Pedestrian Safety Initiative (PSI), reporting on each of the three large elements of the Initiative. First, the work with four communities. Here, CMAP and its consultants, in partnership with three of the four communities (the City of Chicago, Berwyn, and Waukegan) were in the process of submitting Safety Funding grants. As regards the fourth community, Chicago Heights, it was determined that there was not sufficient support at the community level for making the kinds of changes the Initiative had proposed. Staff believes that more work is required to inform and engage the community and its leadership in Chicago Heights. Secondly, staff reported on the aspect of the Initiative addressing policy and procedure for project scoping and engineering at IDOT. Here, staff asked their consultant, Craig Williams from TY Lin, to briefly summarize their work.

Before Mr. Williams did so, however, staff reported that the third element of the Initiative – the regional aspect of the program – would be deferred and funds would be reallocated to the first two elements.

Mr. Williams then described the context and substance of the work he and colleagues had done in reviewing and recommending changes to the parts of the Bureau of Design and Environment Manual (BDE) dealing with pedestrian and bicycle facilities and accommodation. Reviewing and rewriting Chapter 17 represents the lion’s share of this work. Mr. Williams pointed out that

he and his colleagues were using AASHTO's "Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, (1st Edition)" as the primary source of their proposed revisions and recommendations. Mr. Williams stressed that the section or text in the BDE Manual dealing with pedestrian accommodation was much smaller and weaker than that dealing with bicycle accommodation. He reported that Chapter 5 deals with sidewalk participation projects, and that here, the consultants were recommending substantial changes or reforms to the funding policy.

Mr. Murtha expressed his hope that since the proposed policies and policy guidance was based on AASHTO, IDOT engineers and administrators would look favorably on these changes. He added that SRTS projects were to be addressed in the draft revisions to the BDE Manual.

5.2 Regional Comprehensive Plan, Planning Strategy Development Bicycling White Paper

Staff reported on the regional comprehensive plan process and the role of both the GO TO 2040 website and the Strategy Papers posted on that website. Mr. O'Neal added that CMAP strongly encourages Bike-Ped Task Force members to register and post comments in response to the Bicycling Strategy Paper. Mr. O'Neal explained that the Strategy Papers are being posted on the GO TO 2040 website in a format which includes specific questions, to which CMAP seeks readers' comments. Mr. O'Neal emphasized the need for expert, well-informed, and enthusiastic individuals, such as the members and participants of the Bike-Ped Task Force to respond to these questions.

5.3 Soles and Spokes Plan

Staff gave the Task Force an update on work for the Soles and Spokes Plan. Mr. Murtha presented and discussed maps showing pedestrian exposure and pedestrian risk. These maps were made for both the region as a whole and for the City of Chicago. Mr. Murtha reminded the Task Force that using a Level of Service measure as a performance measure for walking and bicycling accommodation was a primary focus of the proposed Soles and Spokes Plan. He pointed out, however, that the relationship between the proposed level of service measure and safety was unknown. Mr. Murtha stated that these maps show early that the Pedestrian Level of Service developed for the Soles and Spokes Plan is correlated with pedestrian crash risk – namely, that better LOS indicates a (probable) lower level of pedestrian crash risk. However, more study is necessary.

6.0 Soles and Spokes Workshop

Staff announced the upcoming FHWA-developed, 1.5 day, ADA Accessible Public Rights of Way Workshop, entitled 'Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility'. Mr. Murtha stated that this workshop provides an overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Rehabilitation Act and teaches participants how to apply guidelines and policies to the public rights-of-way. Mr. Williams stated that the course is indeed very well done and worth the time of engineers, designers and planners working on projects involving public rights of way. Mr. Murtha added that Chicago hosted this workshop about 3-4 years ago.

7.0 Public Comment

Ms. Fagan asked whether the exact dates for upcoming SRTS training were known. Mr. Neufeld said he would get back to all members with those dates.

8.0 Next Meeting

Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 13, 2008 at 2:00 pm.

Adjournment: 3:30 PM