

**Draft Meeting Notes
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force**

MEETING DATE: 07/11/07

MEETING LOCATION: CMAP Offices

CALLED TO ORDER: 2:00 pm

ATTENDANCE:

(Task Force Members)

Tom Rickert, Chair

Ed Barsotti, League of Illinois Bicyclists (via telephone)

Bruce Christensen, Lake County

Deborah Fagan, DuPage County

Stephan Hunt (for Richard Bascomb), Village of Schaumburg

Dave Longo, IDNR

Amy Malick, Chicago Transit Authority

Allan Mellis, Cook County Forest Preserve District

Mark Minor, Metra

Barbara Moore, Local communities (Village of Northfield)

Joseph Moriarty, RTA

Randy Neufeld, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

Les Nunes, IDOT-OPP

Keith Privett, Chicago Department of Transportation

Craig Williams, T.Y. Lin Intl.

(Staff)

Tom Murtha, CMAP

John O'Neal, CMAP

Don Kopec, CMAP

(Others)

John LaPlante, T.Y. Lin Intl.

Tim Gustafson, T.Y. Lin Intl.

Erin Willrett, Kane and Kendall Counties Council of Mayors

Matt Bogusz, Office of State Rep. Elain Nekritz

Kristy Stone, Village of Bartlett

Erin Sammon, Northwest Municipal Conference

Chris DiPalma, FHWA

Ivar Vilcins, Globetrotters Engineering Corp.

Erma Tranter, Friends of the Parks

Carolee Kokola, EDAW

David Landeweer, URS Corp.

Patrick Foley, Victor's Crossing

1.0 Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves

2.0 Approval of the Minutes: After three small changes to the minutes of the 11/30/06 Task Force meeting, motion was made and seconded for approval of the meeting notes. The motion was unanimously approved.

3.0 Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Programming:

3.1 Rescissions

Mr. Murtha gave a brief on rescissions, stating that there has been one rescission in FY07 for over \$120M. He stated that this rescission was apportioned among various programs in a fair way for local communities. Programs like CMAQ and Enhancements faced rescissions primarily on outstanding balances or expiring funds. He stressed that this was moving in the right direction, given the expressed opinions and objectives of the Task Force.

He stated that IDOT will face a substantial challenge in the form of rescissions in excess of \$100M in FY08, and in excess of \$300M as SAFETEA-LU comes to a close. These rescissions, Mr. Murtha continued, will translate into challenges for all transportation programs, including programs which support bicycle and pedestrian projects. However, we should be encouraged, he reiterated, by IDOT's recent fair distributions of funding cuts due to federal rescissions.

Les Nunes informed the Task Force that IDOT was in the process of rescission number two for this year, and that it was in the neighborhood of \$30M. He added that he wasn't sure of the exact date by which IDOT must respond with their approach to rescission, but that he believed IDOT would be taking the same approach as in the last rescission and that it would impact CMAQ to the tune of approximately, \$2.5-\$3M.

3.2 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program

Mr. Murtha stated that CMAP's CMAQ Program staff is currently working on developing the CMAQ FY08 program. It will be, he added, a multi-year program with the goal of reducing outstanding balances and getting a more rational programming process in place.

Mr. Murtha reported that CMAQ staff has asked whether the Bike-Ped Task Force had any comments or input on bicycle and pedestrian projects seeking funding under the CMAQ program. Mr. Murtha stated that he had contacted Task Force members and received input as regards prioritizing CMAQ project proposals, which he followed and incorporated in preparing the table of ranked CMAQ projects. He stated that the key issues Task Force members identified and proposed for consideration were 1) inclusion in the regional system/network (defined as NIPC's Greenways and Trails Plan); 2) existing or funded connections to other facilities; 3) relationship to existing gaps (which was discussed in a Chicago Tribune article a couple of weeks earlier); and 4) access to transit and impacts in terms of environmental justice (i.e. location of a project in a low-income area).

Mr. Murtha stated that the information provided in the table would serve as additional information supplementing the primary factors used in ranking proposed projects. He then asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Barsotti asked what the level of funding was expected, for CMAQ as a whole and, if possible, for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Mr. Murtha said he was not sure, but that he thought it was in the \$50M range. Mr. Nunes noted that there were complications, given rescissions and prior commitments. Mr. Privett stated that the total for new projects was, he believed, around \$55M.

Mr. Neufeld then commented that while he would concur that the existing regional system and gaps in it are important considerations, he believes that the ranking committee must also take into consideration local connections. Mr. Neufeld explained that he believes that local circulation is, in bike and pedestrian projects, equally – if not more – important than travel across the region and, insofar as they result in increased non-motorized travel, can have even bigger air quality impacts than regional projects.

Mr. Privett stated that while the existing program measures and ranks air quality benefits, this process hopes to add social and planning factors in addition to the air quality benefits.

Mr. Murtha stated that bicycle and pedestrian side-path issues came up as another criteria which, due to lack of information, he could not effectively address.

Ms. Fagan then addressed the Task Force as regards a project in which DuPage County is involved and which received a relatively low ranking among CMAQ projects (BP12082888, I-355 Corridor Trail). Ms. Fagan stated that she was seeking additional support from the Task Force for this particular project, which could then be relayed up to the project selection committee.

Ms. Fagan gave a brief overview of the project (handout, Attachment 2), stressing the unique quality and nature of the project. She stated that while the population is relatively low in the immediate area of the project (a fact which she believes caused the current relatively low ranking), the corridor the project creates connects a population, at either end, of nearly 1.5M people.

Mr. Williams asked what form the support Ms. Fagan sought should take. Ms. Fagan asked that a simple motion be made which would be in the Task Force meeting minutes and which would then be conveyed by staff to the CMAQ project selection committee at its next meeting.

Discussion among various Task Force members ensued regarding the limitations of CMAQ project ranking formula and the ways in which that formula might be augmented by other considerations and information. Mr. Barsotti stated that the Task Force's acknowledgement of the difficult and problematic nature of adjusting the CMAQ formula is exactly why – and strong evidence for – the need to have a better, annual or suballocated Transportation Enhancements program. Task Force members expressed strong agreement.

Mr. Privett asked Mr. Nunes whether he knew when the next call for Enhancements projects would be. Mr. Nunes stated he did not know.

Discussion continued on possible courses of action for support both of the I-355 project and, more generally, for bicycle and pedestrian projects which qualify for CMAQ funding but, given special circumstances, may not rank high, despite their acknowledged importance and contribution to the goals and objectives of the CMAQ program.

Mr. Rickert, and Mr. Privett expressed concern over setting a precedent in asking for adjustment to the CMAQ formula. Instead they proposed that the table outlining project contributions to the factors the Task Force considered important be forwarded to the CMAQ project selection committee as “additional information” to take into consideration.

Mr. Rickert made a motion to this effect and it was seconded and approved.

Mr. Hunt then asked if sponsors could submit information that might, given the headings and contents of the table, lend additional support to their projects. Mr. Rickert said that while CMAP staff might not be able to process that information, sponsors could go before the selection committee to speak in support of their projects.

Ms. Fagan asked, in regards to the table’s notes on a project’s “inclusion in regional network”, what comprised the “regional network”. Mr. Murtha answered that NIPC’s Greenways and Trails Plan, the Grand Illinois Trail, and sub-regional council’s plans were the regional network for which we looked for inclusion in.

Mr. Murtha then asked for any other comments.

Mr. Neufeld stated that CBF had asked that the traffic flow improvements submitted for CMAQ be required to include a Bicycle and Pedestrian Level of Service analysis (B/PLOS), in order to show that the projects will not make the situation worse for non-motorized travel in the project vicinity. Mr. Neufeld also stated that the Task Force should explicitly plan to discuss CMAQ project ranking methodology at the next Task Force meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding the difficulty of balancing the traffic flow objectives in the CMAQ program with bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly roads. Mr. Neufeld stated that all modes of travel must be considered in order to arrive at a full and accurate air quality benefit.

Mr. LaPlante suggested convening an ad-hoc committee to address CMAQ methodology, a part of which would be a consideration of including B/PLOS analysis in traffic flow improvement projects. Mr. Rickert expressed concern that requiring B/PLOS analysis might create impediments to project’s receiving CMAQ funding, insofar as it would limit their ability to create conditions that lower automobile pollution.

A motion, seconded and approved to create an informal ad-hoc committee to look into CMAQ methodology and B/PLOS analysis in traffic flow improvement projects.

Mr. Rickert asked the Mr. Murtha and the Task Force if there were any other comments regarding the ranking of the CMAQ projects. Mr. Nunes asked what, historically, is the

percentage of the available funding bicycle facilities have received. Mr. Murtha responded that it has been approximately in the 5% to 10% range, but somewhat higher recently. Mr. Nunes pointed out that that amount of money would not fund many of the long list of projects on the proposed project list.

3.3 Project Update

Mr. Murtha asked for any information from sponsors/implementers on any projects that are making notable progress, or lack thereof, or any problems that staff should be aware of.

Ms. Fagan stated that DuPage Co. has made significant progress on their southern trail, and that at the end of this round, the County should be about 85% constructed of the planned 46-mile trail system.

Mr. Barsotti mentioned that the City of Aurora is putting together a “Bike to Metra” brochure, which will be a template that other cities or communities might use by just changing the names and logos.

Mr. Privett stated that on June 2, 2007, the City officially opened the Major Taylor Trail. He added that, though opened, the Trail still needs some work. He then sketched the biography of Major Taylor. He also informed the Task Force that the Valley Trail was cleared to break ground on construction next month.

Mr. LaPlante stated that Evanston would begin installing their 40-mile bikeway system this autumn.

Mr. Rickert stated that Kane County has asked CMAP to help resolve problems with the South Street Trail extension. Ms. Willrett stated that IDOT has asked Kane Co. to resubmit their design for this project. Mr. Rickert stated that work has begun on the Randall Road pedestrian planning project in order to identify significant gaps in pedestrian access, mobility and convenience along the primary corridor in Kane County.

4.0 Subregional Bicycle Planning

4.1 General

Mr. Murtha discussed the status of the six contracts for sub-regional bikeways planning awarded to Councils of Mayors in 2006. He referred to a handout (Attachment 3) and stated that two contracts have been completed, one partially completed (anticipated to be complete later this month), while the remaining three have been extended until December 2007. (SSMMA expects to complete their plan by next month.)

Mr. Murtha then reviewed the dates of the most recent plans/updates of the Councils which did not receive grants in 2006 – Lake, Will, North Central, and Southwest. He added that given development activity, Will and Southwest would probably be the next in line for updates to their plans.

4.2 Northwest Municipal Conference Bike Map and Report

Mr. Gustafson (introduced by his colleague at T.Y. Lin Intl., Mr. LaPlante) presented to the Task Force an overview of the NWMC bikeways planning effort and results.

4.3 Implementation of Subregional Bikeway Plans

Mr. Murtha stated that this opportunity for discussion was borne from a suggestion at the last Task Force meeting. The question was, “What is the mechanism for implementing subregional bike plans?” and, “How might we facilitate implementation?”

Mr. Neufeld praised DuPage County as being a leader in implementing bike plans.

Ms. Fagan stated that the County’s success has been in large part due to really good record – keeping, updating of information, and above all progress reporting. The later, especially, works as an ongoing benchmark, as well as inspiration in terms of pride over accomplishment, proof of success, and as a catalyst, encouragement, and motivation to overcome barriers and failures.

Mr. Murtha asked if DuPage County’s monthly updates/progress reports on bikeways, bikeway planning, and bikeway construction dealt just with County/Council projects. Ms. Fagan said, “No. All efforts, activities, and facilities, of all implementing agencies and organizations were included.

Ms. Moore expressed agreement and admiration for DuPage County’s bikeway planning and implementation approach and accomplishments, stressing the PR function of such efforts and the ways in which such efforts can reach grass roots. Ms. Fagan stated that the Progress Report is a one-page 11”x17” document, updating everyone on the priority projects of the region (DuPage County). She offered to provide samples to any interested parties.

Ms. Fagan then asked whether the Task Force might find ways to help communities struggling with “How do we get started?” or to provide technical assistance to such communities. Or perhaps a structured way to spend time with leaders (elected or citizen) to find ways to get started with implementation after plan adoption.

Mr. Neufeld stated that in addition to such technical assistance and outreach, we need a Transportation Enhancements program that is reliable, noting that the Task Force has called for two ways to improve the implementation of bike/ped projects: 1) an annual, regular program with solicitation of projects each year, and 2) a sub-allocation of Enhancements funds to the region. Then, ITEP would be reliable in the way that CMAQ is reliable. Ms. Fagan said she is at present looking to the Safe Routes to School program to fund bike/ped projects, and that she hopes that will become an annual program.

Mr. Rickert said that he while agreed with Mr. Neufeld, he also believes that local agencies and governments must also step up to the plate and contribute funds to such projects.

Mr. Barsotti stated that he believes that Councils of Mayors, when they have adopted a bikeways plan, should factor that into the STP money they allocate to road projects. He pointed out that Peoria gives 10 out of 100 points, when ranking STP project proposals, for bicycle/pedestrian accommodation, as their plan defines and specifies such accommodation. Mr. Murtha pointed out that both Kane and DuPage Counties have a suballocation for TCMs.

Mr. Rickert said Kane Co., in ranking STP projects, gives weight to bike/ped accommodation following BLOS. Kane Co., he added, requires all highway projects to consider bike/ped plans and needs. Mr. Privett reminded the TF of the City's Complete Streets policy. Mr. Neufeld reported that Cook County's highway department is also considering adopting such a policy.

5.0 South Lakefront Parks – Trail Connections

Erma Tranter, Executive Director of the Friends of the Parks (FOP), gave the Task Force an overview of their work to encourage and plan for the completion of the Lakefront Park system, an FOP initiative called "The Last Four Miles".

Mr. Privett informed the Task Force that the FOP's initiative follows and supports many of the findings and recommendations of City's South Lakefront Access Study, pointing out that City's efforts here at present focus on providing continuous bicycle facilities (through-route) along the south lakefront. He added that upon completion of the US41 project near the USX site, the City will be adding bike lanes to complete the route. Mr. Murtha asked whether it were possible to get the South Lakefront Access Study posted on the City's website. Mr. Privett stated he would check into that.

6.0 Status Reports

(a) Pedestrian Safety Initiative

Mr. Murtha stated that little progress has been made since the last meeting, but that he hopes it will start moving again soon. Mr. LaPlante added that his firm, TY Lin, has pulled together research and ideas on how it may be possible to make Phase 1 engineering on road projects more "friendly" to bike/ped travel, though this work has not been finalized. He also announced that Craig Williams, a new employee at TY Lin, will be working on the project. He added that TY Lin is having difficulty obtaining necessary data (crash reports) for the next stage of analysis. Mr. Murtha stated that the IDOT/CMAP effort to geocode crashes has been delayed.

(b) Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

No progress. Mr. Murtha added that the TF is being reoriented and expanded, from reporting to the Transportation Committee and the Work Program Committee to being a resource to all the committees at CMAP, as well as the communities of the region. Mr. Murtha expressed his belief that this reorientation will allow the Bike/Ped Plan (Soles and Spokes) to achieve broader influence and impact.

(c) 2030 Regional Transportation Plan

Mr. Murtha stated that this update was completed. He added that substantial changes were made on safety issues and policy guidance. He informed the TF that the approved plan is online at www.sp2030.com.

(d) Greenways and Trails Plan

No progress. Mr. Murtha informed the TF that he believed CMAP's Board and Planning Committee intend to carry forward the update of this plan. Mr. Longo asked if there was a timeframe for the update. Mr. Murtha responded that the intent is to move on the update. Mr. Longo said he had informed Lori Heringa that they would have to extend their contract again and that it has been over a year since the last meeting as regards the Trails and Greenways Plan.

A motion was made and approved to have a report on the status of this project at the next TF meeting, stating where the planning for this update is at.

(e) Graham Foundation DuPage County Pedestrian Study

Staff (Mr. O'Neal) gave the TF brief overview of this project, presenting maps analyzing physical barriers in four communities in DuPage County to pedestrian travel to and around newly planned transit routes.

(f) Other Funding Programs

No information. Mr. Murtha stated that while the ink was not yet dry on the RTP, when work began on the new one.

7.0 Representation on CMAP Transportation Committee

Mr. Rickert announced that Mr. Neufeld has begun serving as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force representative to the Transportation Committee.

8.0 Membership

Mr. Murtha stated that, given the broader role of the TF in the future, he wondered whether it might be appropriate to review the membership of the task force. He proposed to contact members who have not been attending, and find out if they want to continue. He also suggested that some groups or individuals may want to become members, such as representation from State Representative Elain Nekritz's office. Mr. Murtha asked that staff be authorized to come back with some proposals regarding membership at the next TF meeting.

Mr. Mellis pointed out that we should not kick people off, but rather ask them if they want to continue or not. He also asked whether the TF should seek more representation from elected officials.

Discussion continued regarding membership.

Ms. Moore expressed her belief that new members would bring fresh ideas and support, which in her experience has been important in communicating and assuaging community fears about bike facilities.

Mr. Rickert suggested staff contact members who have not been attending to find out if they would like to continue as members.

Mr. Privett suggested that membership might include more organizations and communities from the south side of the region.

Other Business

Mr. Nunes announced that US House Resolution 2701 passed through the Transportation Infrastructure Committee. He stated the two provisions may be of particular interest the TF: Section 251, calling for the CMAQ program to be 100% federally funded for federal FY08-09; and Section 252, calling for rescissions in the future to be passed by apportionments, taking some decisions about the apportionment of rescissions away from the states DOTs.

Next Meeting: Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, October 10, 2007 at 2:00 pm.

Adjournment: 4:00 pm