Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Advanced Technology Task Force

Meeting Notes – June 26, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM at the CMAP Offices, 233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois. Those present at the meeting were:

Attendees **Co-Chairs David Zavattero (Chicago OEMC) & Gerry Tumbali (RTA)**

Members:

	Chuck Sikaras	*IDOT, ITS*	Dean Mentjes	*FHWA*
	Steve Wojtkiewicz	*Metra*	Jeff Galas	*IDOT*
	Ruth Myers	*DuPage ED&P*	Steve Peters	*IDOT*
	Tony Khawaja	*Lake County DOT*	Taqhi Mohammed	*Pace*
	Andy Hynes	*City of Naperville*	Ellen Partridge	*CTA*
Interested Parties:	Chalen Daigle	*McHenry COM*	Joseph Brahm	*Delcan*
	Matt Letourneau	*Jacobs Engr.*	Syd Bowcott	*URS*
	Jon Nelson	*Lake County DOT*	Tom Kness	*City of Chicago*
	Ken Glassman	*Jacobs Engr.*	Chris DiPalma	*FHWA*
	Ian White	*Urban Mapping*	Jeff Hochmuth	*Wilbur Smith*
	Belen Marcos	*Chicago Skyway Concession Company*	Tom Kness	*City of Chicago*
CMAP Staff:	Claire Bozic	Dan Rice		

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS:

1. **Introductions**
2. **Approval of meeting notes from March 20th, 2008 Task Force meeting.** The notes were approved with corrections.
3. **Introduction to Public Private Partnerships and Discussion of ITS Related Issues** *(Claire Bozic,CMAP Staff)*

   Ms. Bozic reviewed some key points from the summary memo prepared for the meeting. From her review of the existing information, she found that most documented PPP projects involved major capital investments such as roads, bridges, tunnels, railway and rail stations. ITS projects didn't really appear, except in the case of sharing communication equipment in roadway right-of-ways with telecom industry partners.

   She stated that for many of the public-private partnership activities, the state must enact enabling legislation. At this time, the Illinois has PPP enabling legislation for maglev rail

and high-speed rail. For other projects, legislation allowing IDOT, RTA and the service boards to undertake PPP projects has been making its way through the legislative process and is now in the rules committee.

She continued by saying that some of the benefits of PPP in transportation project delivery, are to attract private sector resources. However, she did not find that attracting private sector funding was listed as the best reason to pursue PPP. PPP can also accelerate project delivery by combining various steps of the implementation of a project. Certain PPP arrangements promote life cycle asset management. This is based on the delivery of perhaps a more expensive project but whose higher quality will reduce the need for maintenance and reconstruction later on, resulting in less cost and more profit for the private partner. This is also better for the traveling public who is impacted by less construction in the long run. There are also concerns associated with PPP's. Lack of public agency in-house expertise in developing and monitoring the agreements is a concern. Especially for large projects, the possible close relationships between those valuing the project and those participating in the partnership can lead to concerns about undervaluation. The public is also concerned the private partner may be more interested in the profitability of the particular project and not the public good. The private partners are answerable to boards and stockholders, not to the public. The public good is a secondary consideration within such a business arrangement.

Further, the contract itself has areas which incite concern among the public. A few of the prominent areas are pricing policy. Will profit be the only consideration when setting up pricing structures? Noncompete clauses can impact the ability to implement other desired projects and make it look as if the private entity has been sold a monopoly. Also, some of the very long term contracts (75 – 99 years) can take the infrastructure out of the public's hands for a long time.

They key differences Ms. Bozic observed between documented PPP projects and ITS projects is the capital intensive nature of the PPP projects and the relative longevity of the PPP infrastructure. ITS projects are likely less capital intensive and the technology evolves rapidly. ITS technology is "change intensive" because the technology evolves relatively and is expected to be replaced over time. ITS projects probably provide more opportunities for public-private partnerships because the size of the investment is smaller and so opens up the competition to more private partners. Much PPP activity in the ITS area is probably going on "under the radar" because the projects are smaller.

4. **CTA and Google Trip Planner** (Kevin O'Malley, CTA)

Unfortunately, Mr. O'Malley was unable to attend. His presentation will be scheduled for a later date. He did provide a comment saying that one of the key issues he sees in the ITS-PPP project is "who owns the data?" We think of ITS as the sensors and communication network, but the real product is information collected.

5. Partnering with Transit Agencies (Ian White, Urban Mapping)

Mr. White gave a presentation on the activities of his company, Urban Mapping. Urban Mapping collects information about communities from multiple sources, normalizes it, assembles it into standard formats and sells it to companies who distribute it. The end result is the ability to do local searches for detailed information on local communities. They do not have a direct relationship with end users. This work means that they do have

the need to assemble data from government agencies. The ease of doing this varies, but the experience with public transportation agencies has been painful. Urban Mapping is collecting local transit information across service providers as a part of the community information. There is considerable disagreement about who owns the transit data, what data can be provided and what can be done with it. This is a relatively new issue area; so much of this is currently being sorted out through the court system. One thing that is nobody can own "facts." For example, that a rail station is at this x,y coordinate is an indisputable fact and doesn't belong to anyone. Similarly, the fact that a bus departs from this location at this time is also a fact that can't be owned. Even when agencies are agreeable to providing information, transit agencies currently don't have "data distribution" as a part of their regular work stream, and may not have staff to do this. Since many agencies are currently unwilling or unable to provide this information, private companies are collecting the information themselves, which leaves open the opportunity to sell it back. The ITS PPP activities are bound to increase, because "ITS is data-heavy (infrastructure-lite): an ideal test bed for PPP's."

6. **ISTHA Experience WMAQ with Traffic.com and PPPs (Ken Glassman, Jacobs Engineering)**

Mr. Glassman first disclosed that he is currently with Jacobs Engineering, but at the time of the beginning of the PPP with Traffic.com and WMAQ channel 5, he worked for the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority. The impetus for the WMAQ partnership was the implementation of electronic toll collection. The ISTHA needed 80-85% participation in electronic toll collection program in order to implement open road tolling. They needed to market the program, which was very expensive. The tollway proposed a sort of barter program whereby they would provide exclusive access to the tollway camera images in exchange for a private party marketing the electronic toll collection program. The tollway initiated an RFP/bid process and WMAQ presented the best proposal. Part of the partnership involved the installation of a "tollway computer workstation" at WMAQ, so they could control the cameras and capture images within certain parameters. The program was very successful in encouraging participation. The contract is 3-5 years long. Since the goal of market penetration of transponders was met, a continuation of the contract with WMAQ may mean ISTHA has to find a new need so they are getting an appropriate level of benefit from the contract. Mr. Galas asked whether the contract prohibited distribution of the images on the ISTHA or GCM websites. Mr. Glassman did not think this was prohibited. Later, a partnership was formed with Jewel to distribute the toll transponders. This was also a successful partnership.

The partnership with Traffic.com started out quite differently. Five years ago (2002 or 2003) ISTHA and IDOT were interested in a partnership with Mobility Technologies (before they were Traffic.com). Mobility Technologies would fulfill a need for a larger amount of "granular" data to assist in traffic management decisions. In the past, travel times were calculated from data collected between toll plazas. This method was not very responsive to local areas of congestion. The tollway also wanted to improve methods of incident detection. Around the same time, USDOT did a RFP for a national program of traffic data collection and selected Traffic.com as the vendor for the FHWA ITIP Program. This program allowed urban areas to apply for ITIP, and successful applicants would have Traffic.com install detectors and collect data in their area. Traffic.com installed 105 tollway sensors. Traffic.com was subsidized with federal funds but still

negotiated a contract with the tollway. They collected the data, provided it to the tollway and were also able to sell the data to other parties. The tollway was successful in getting a revenue sharing clause in the contract, and they receive part of the profit. The tollway was not statutorily allowed to receive the shared profits, but they were able to work out a sort of "escrow account" where the funds would be deposited. For the first 5 years, the funds in this account must be spent on more detection equipment. After that, they can be spent on any ITS projects. This has been an overall positive experience, and the data collected can be shared with public agencies. On the other hand, there have been some difficulties in a number of areas. First, the tollway also collects data from its own sensors, and that information is mixed with the Traffic.com information. All data can be provided to other public agencies, but only the tollway data can be provided or distributed to other entities. Unfortunately, the software used to house the data is not set up for two classes of data – those that can be distributed universally and those that can't. Also, Traffic.com has a very good archive of the data combined with data from other agencies. Traffic.com believes it owns the archived data as well as the real-time information, while others believe that the restrictions on the data were really only intended to apply to the real time and not to the archived data. Also, because of the different ways travel times are calculated, travel times on the GCM website differ from what is shown on Traffic.com, a very undesirable situation because it reduces peoples' faith in the information that is being provided.

7. Chicago Skyway (Belen Marcos, SCC, and Tom Kness City of Chicago)

Ms. Marcos COO on the Chicago Skyway Concession Company spoke about this public-private partnership. Cintra, a Spanish company, and Macquarie Investment Group, an Australian company, each own 55% and 45% of the Skyway Concession Holdings company, respectively. Cintra operates a number of tollways worldwide. When they first considered the Skyway contract, they believed that they could operate it more efficiently than the city of Chicago was doing. They found that there was the potential for adding capacity within the current footprint because there were three eastbound lanes available that were never used and 3 westbound reversible lanes that were operated manually. There was also only manual toll collection.

After Cintra & Macquarie acquired the lease, which runs for 99 years, they implemented electronic tolling within 2 months. They were able to do this quickly because they piggybacked on the system that ISTHA already had in place. They also reconfigured the manual toll collection to be more efficient, and reconfigured the McDonald's parking that exists in the middle of the expressway. The only revenue available to SCC is the tolls collected and the McDonald's lease (which ends in 2012). The City of Chicago retains ownership of the facility, naming rights, advertising rights, etc. In the future, SCC plans to implement open road tolling. SCC currently has a tow operation to clear up breakdowns, but is working on an agreement that would allow them to also provide traffic enforcement on the Skyway.

An audience member asked whether any of the work done on the Skyway required an RFP procurement process. Ms. Marcos responded that they aren't required to do an RFP but they feel that having multiple bids for work does in fact benefit them. For smaller emergency type work, they will just pick up a telephone and call someone to do the job.

Mr. Kness spoke about the parking concession arrangement the City of Chicago is currently considering. When this is completed, people ought to see standardized parking equipment and information. Right now, the equipment differs around the city and on-street parking information is not readily available. With the new technology, the public ought to be able to get current information on street parking and parking pricing. This is a very complicated part of the system, because there are so many parking meters and the information will be dynamic because the new equipment will easily allow changes to parking price, which may be implemented under the proposed congestion pricing program.

8. ITS Status Reports

Mr. Khawaja (Lake County DOT) told the group that their various brands of signal controllers are working together as desired now. Response plans for how signals will operate after incidents are also almost complete. Hometown Electric will also start looking at wireless cameras for isolated areas which do not have access to the fiber communication system. The DOT is also now providing roadway information on the county's public access cable channel.

Mr. Sikaras said that the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) is in the final stage of hiring a Gateway Coordinator. A number of Gateway enhancements are planned depending on the interagency agreement being executed between IDOT and UIC, and this will allow the Gateway to operate 24/7, 365 days per year. LMIGA members provided flooding condition information on signs and on websites. This turned out to be critical this year, with all the rain. Flooding information was provided on the highway signs in a number of IDOT districts, as well as directly to trucking organizations who in turn provided it to their members. One two-mile closure of I-80 in Iowa actually resulted in a reroute of 110 miles.

Dean Mentjes (FHWA) announced a restructuring in his office. Chris DiPalma will now be the primary contact for ITS related activities.

Taqhi Mohammed (Pace) announced that they have identified locations for the Pace queue-jump program and will be meeting with IDOT regarding these projects. Also, procurement fort he Pace TSP program is underway. TSP will be implemented on 31 intersections along, Halsted Street, Sibley Boulevard, and 159th Street.

At their last meeting, the CTA Board approved an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Chicago for the Western Avenue demonstration project.

The City of Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communication is working on the specifications for the Traffic Management Center. When this is complete, they should be able to go forward with the RFP for its implementation.

Steve Peters (IDOT) also announced that additional cameras will be installed along the Dan Ryan Expressway. These images will ultimately be available to the public.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will be at the end of September, but a meeting date was not set.