



MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board and committees

From: Bob Dean, Deputy Executive Director for Local Planning
Hala Ahmed, Associate Planner

Date: January 5, 2011

Re: CMAP Partnership with RTA – Community Planning Program

As a first step in the implementation of the GO TO 2040 Plan, CMAP has partnered with the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) to expand their existing Community Planning Program to offer more opportunities for the integration of transportation and land use planning. This is a competitive grant program that provides funds for municipalities in the northeastern Illinois region to participate in the planning of local transportation, transit and transit-related development. The available funding for the CMAP contribution originates primarily from federal transportation planning funds, allocated annually through the Unified Work Program (UWP) and from supplementary state funds. Counties in the CMAP region already access UWP funds directly through application to the UWP committee.

The above program is distinct from the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) that staff will be conducting using the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant funding that CMAP received from HUD on October 2010. Under LTA, additional staff will be hired to work directly with communities to support local planning projects. The duration of LTA will be 3 years.

The partnership between the two agencies will provide additional funding to an expanded base of eligible applicants, facilitate inter-agency coordination and strive to provide assistance that attains results. While CMAP's grant program and the RTA's program will remain separate and distinct, they will share application materials and solicit projects during the same time frame. This is intended to reduce the burden on applicants, as they will only need to submit one application for both programs, rather than separate applications. CMAP has committed \$700,000 for this program with the expectation that individual grants will range from \$100,000 and \$150,000. In the past, total program funding from the RTA ranged totaled from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 annually. Following is a summary of the program guide and application process.

Eligible applicants

Municipalities located within the CMAP region are eligible to apply to the Community Planning Program. The program will strive to achieve geographic balance within the seven-county region (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will).

Eligible projects

CMAP's program will focus on the intersection between land use and transportation in general; the RTA's program is narrower and focuses on Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) projects and local transit improvements.

Match requirements

For the projects selected by CMAP, applicants will be asked to contribute up to 20% of the total project cost for each project either in cash or in kind contributions based on demonstrated need. For projects selected by RTA, this match is required in cash only.

Project selection process and timeline

A Call for Projects will be issued in April 2011, with applications due in June. Once applications are received, CMAP and the RTA will jointly review applications, and will determine which funding source is more appropriate for each project. Each agency will then work with applicants to fully scope projects and will follow its designated approval process. In CMAP's case, this will involve discussing a proposed program of projects with the working committees during summer 2011, and ultimately receiving formal approval from the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee in August 2011. In keeping with the goal of maintaining the same grant process to achieve seamless program integration and to reduce the burden on communities, staff recommends that applications be submitted to the RTA following their established submittal procedures. Applicants will be asked to submit no more than a 10-page document that describes the proposed projects and respond to questions related to how the projects address program goals.

| CMAP Project Selection Schedule | |
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| 2011 Date (s) | Action |
| April 6 | Call for Projects released |
| April / May | Outreach activities |
| June 9 | Applications due before 3:00pm CST |
| June | RTA and CMAP Staff call applicants to follow up on application |
| July | RTA and CMAP Staff review projects utilizing evaluation criteria |
| July | Review of recommended projects by CMAP committees |
| August | CMAP Board meeting – approval of recommended projects |
| August | Debrief for unsuccessful applicants upon request |
| November 2011- January 2012 | Projects launched |

Project evaluation criteria

A higher level of detail on evaluation criteria will be stipulated in the program application materials that will be released in April 2011. The following section summarizes the general criteria for screening and evaluating proposals. CMAP and RTA will jointly screen projects based on the level at which they address the following criteria:

1. Overall support of GO TO 2040 goals
2. Appropriate coordination with partners (including relevant transportation agencies)
3. Appropriate level of public participation
4. Quality and completeness of application

While the RTA will have separate ranking criteria for their programs, CMAP will select projects based on consistency with the goals of GO TO 2040 with primary focus on the principles of Livable Communities and Regional Mobility.

Livable Communities

- Support for infill and reinvestment
- Addresses density, mixing uses (vertical or horizontal), and walkability
- Addresses housing affordability, particularly near transit
- Incorporates environmental features such as water and energy efficiency, parks and open space, forestry programs, and green infrastructure for stormwater management
- Involves interjurisdictional coordination
- General consistency with “Livability Principles” of the federal Sustainable Communities Initiative

Regional Mobility:

- Support the maintenance and modernization of the existing transportation system
- Advance new transportation investments recommended in the plan (strategic expansions, Bus Rapid Transit or Arterial Rapid Transit, major capital projects)
- Support the use of alternative transportation including walking, biking, and transit
- Provide support for transit through small-scale infrastructure investments, supportive land use, or other policies
- Include innovative finance (parking pricing, value capture, etc.)
- Incorporate approach to freight

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion

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