



## MINUTES

### CMAQ Project Selection Committee

Thursday, August 21, 2014 2:00 p.m.  
CMAP Offices

**Committee Members Present:** Mike Rogers, Chair (IEPA), Doug Ferguson (CMAQ), Luann Hamilton (CDOT), Mark Pitstick (RTA), William Rodeghier (Council of Mayors), Chris Schmidt (IDOT), Chris Snyder (Counties)

**Staff Present:** Alex Beata, Patricia Berry, Randy Blankenhorn, Kama Dobbs, Jesse Elam, Jill Leary, Russell Pietrowiak

**Others Present:** Mike Albin, Samantha Bingham, Brian Carlson, Bruce Christensen, John Donovan, Peter Fahrenwald, Tony Greep, Terry Heffron, Tom Rickert, Kyle Smith, Brian Stepp, Susan Stitt, David Tomzik, Brian Urbaszewski, Tom Weaver, Michael Weiser, Tammy Wierciak (via phone)

#### 1.0 Call to Order

Committee Chairman Rogers called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

#### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

None

#### 3.0 Approval of Minutes – July 17, 2014

On a motion by President Rodeghier and a second by Mr. Pitstick, the minutes of the June 12, 2014 meeting were approved as presented.

#### 4.0 Program Monitoring

##### 4.1 Programming Project Status Sheets

Ms. Dobbs reported that the recurring reports on the programming status of active and deferred projects and the line item changes since the last meeting of the Project Selection Committee were included in the meeting packet.

##### 4.2 Obligation Goal

Ms. Dobbs reported that the update on CMAQ obligations for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 was included in the meeting packet. She stated that there have been \$51.6 million in obligations this fiscal year. Since the report was printed, another \$18 million has been obligated, and an FTA grant for \$4 million was executed. Several engineering agreements have been sent to IDOT Central Office for signature and FTA transfer requests are in for Union Station, which is awaiting FHWA approval, and Washington/Wabash. Additionally, three or four local projects are on target for the November state letting, which will seek federal authorization in September. Approximately \$1 million in deferred projects are also ready to go. Therefore of the \$105 million still programmed in FFY 14, about \$15 million will not be authorized within the fiscal year, but we know with reasonable certainty that \$88 million will be, which is just over the \$86.9 million needed to meet the obligation goal. Ms. Dobbs also reported that this is the time of year to consider the obligation goal for FFY 2015. Based on our ability to meet the FFY14 goal, and the total currently programmed in FFY 2015, staff suggests that the goal of \$145,988,364 remain unchanged for FFY 2015.

## 5.0 Project Changes

### 5.1 CDOT – Chicago Area Alternative Fuel Deployment Project, Phase 2 (TIP ID 01-12-0004)

Ms. Dobbs reported that as discussed in detail at the July meeting, the sponsor is requesting a scope change to modify the fleet mix and increase vouchers from 60 to 80% of the incremental cost. Due to the nature of the request a re-ranking was completed with the project ranking unchanged at 8th among the eight 2014-2018 Direct Emissions Reduction project proposals. The dollars per kg of VOC eliminated was reduced, while the dollars per kg of PM eliminated increased. Staff recommends approval of the requested scope change. Samantha Bingham is here for those that missed the meeting or have additional questions. In response to questions from Mr. Snyder, Ms. Bingham reported that the differential cost is determined in two ways. For the purchase of a new vehicle, the differential is the difference between the cost of an equivalent standard gasoline vehicle and the alternative fuel vehicle. For retrofits, the differential is the entire cost of the conversion. She stated that the program targets public, private and non-profit fleets through the Chicago Clean Cities initiative. At the beginning of the program, public fleets were targeted, but as the price of gas has increased more private and non-profit fleets are participating. She stated that incentive programs could be stacked, for example a participant in this program could also apply under the State's rebate program, however the Chicago program provides a point of sale voucher, which reduces the cost of the vehicle that would be eligible for a rebated in the State program. She stated that the increase from 60% to 80% of the differential cost is in part due to the recognition that battery operations are more costly in the harsh winter climate. Vehicles purchased through the program are required to be domiciled within the region and must operate at least 70% of the time within the region. Mr. Snyder asked if the change in voucher percentage would lead to a policy shift for private railroad projects that are currently matched at 65%. Ms. Hamilton stated that the policy is 65% of the incremental cost for purchase of a whole new locomotive and 80% for retrofits. On a motion by Mr.

Pitstick, seconded by President Rodeghier, the requested scope change was approved.

## **5.2 Metra - Grayland Station Parking - Milwaukee North Line (TIP ID 18-04-0561)**

Ms. Dobbs reported that the sponsor is requesting a scope change for this project that was initially programmed in 2004. The original project was to acquire land and additional funds were programmed in 2006 to construct a new 130 space parking lot at the Metra Grayland station. The sponsor has stated that they will not be able to acquire the parcels to build the lot as originally planned and would like to construct a 75 space parking lot on land they already own. While there will be no land acquisition, the construction will involve removing part of an existing embankment, therefore the entire programmed funding will be utilized. As noted in the memo, when the project was initially proposed, the occupancy at this location was high – 50 out of 53 spaces at the station were occupied. The most recent parking utilization data indicate that 10 out of 21 spaces are occupied. This occupancy rate falls below the usual threshold for considering expansion of a commuter parking facility. However Metra has noted that most of the spaces counted in the utilization study are in fact unregulated on-street parking, and Metra cannot insure their availability. A re-ranking was completed with the project ranking changing from 5th to 6th among 2006 proposed commuter parking projects. Staff recommends approval of the scope change. It should also be noted as described in the memo, that the treatment of commuter parking spaces should be considered, particularly in urban areas where the need for parking should be less. Fees charged should strike a balance between recovering operating costs and encouraging balanced access. Parking at the proposed lot is proposed to be free. In response to a question from Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Weaver explained that the on-street spaces would remain free, but there will be a fee for parking in the lot. Ms. Hamilton added that the project was initially a CDOT project that would have provided a buffer between residential and industrial uses. CDOT continues to work with Metra and supports the change to the project scope. In response to a question from Mr. Snyder, Ms. Dobbs noted that at the time of the initial application there was a gravel lot along the tracks that is no longer used for parking, which is why there is a change from 53 available spaces in 2006 and 21 available spaces now. In response to a question from President Rodeghier, Mr. Weaver noted that about half of the passengers boarding at this station are inbound and about half are reverse commuting outbound. On a motion by Ms. Hamilton, seconded by Mr. Snyder, the requested scope change was approved.

## **5.3 Administrative Modifications**

Ms. Dobbs reported that staff completed two administrative modifications. The first was the voluntary deferral of construction funds for a project in Hillside and the second was reinstatement of deferred Phase 2 Engineering funds for a project in Melrose Park.

## **6.0 CMAQ Program Process Evaluation and Transformation**

### **6.1 Programming and Management Policies**

Mr. Elam reported that there have been ongoing conversations, including several at the last few meetings, on the policies and procedures for selecting CMAQ projects resulting

from the process review. Current policies were approved by the MPO Policy Committee in June 2012. Mr. Elam reviewed the most significant changes being proposed. He noted that project readiness requirements have been clarified, and bicycle projects must be included in a planning document. The policies have standardized the use of other criteria that were pioneered by the focus groups. Mr. Schmidt distributed a letter to the committee on process (attached). Mr. Rogers said an overriding concern is prioritizing all project categories under a single score. He noted that at a past meeting, Mr. Privett had suggested presenting the dollars per kilogram ranking by project category separately from transportation impact criteria factors. As Mr. Elam had suggested, Mr. Rogers reviewed the re-ranking spreadsheet and acknowledged that it shows that 90% of the same projects would have been included in the program the last round, but he said concerns remain. Ranking projects within categories and by traditional air quality cost per kilogram, with the information on transportation impacts, etc. listed next to the air quality benefit is preferable at this point.

Mr. Elam thanked Mr. Rogers and continued his review of the proposed policy changes, pointing out that the eligible portion of engineering costs for transit projects was being raised from 50% to 70%. There are two issues here: project readiness and the engineering costs that are eligible for CMAQ funding. Because there is no clear definition for when a transit project is "ready", a case by case determination is needed. Policies related to match have also been clarified. Mr. Rogers said the policies should indicate that emissions scores will be separate from transportation impact criteria scores, which should be secondary and that projects should still be ranked within separate categories. Mr. Pitstick stated that he appreciates the adjustments on the transit related issues. He stated that the CMAQ program should balance air quality benefits and congestion mitigation but that we've gone beyond this to include asset condition, safety, etc. He stated that FHWA and FTA are currently working to develop performance measures and questioned to what extent CMAQ funding should address those other criteria. He further questioned whether we are trying to use CMAQ to address too much. He supports a side-by-side presentation of emissions benefits and other scores and thinks the comfort level will increase for a future transition from a cost-benefit ranking to a composite score. Ms. Hamilton stated that historically the CMAQ program has been able to address quick hits as well as projects that produce long term behavioral changes. She expressed concern that a 100 point scale would cause those longer term projects to fall out of the program. It seems that we are quantifying for the sake of quantifying instead of getting a better program. She noted that MAP-21 calls for performance measures to first be developed at the federal level, followed by states and MPOs, with 2016 as the target for MPOs and wondered if we are getting too far ahead of this process.

At Mr. Rogers's request, Mr. Elam confirmed that policy changes need to go to the Transportation Committee for consideration in September. Mr. Rogers asked if the Project Selection Committee would be willing to adopt the policies with the following changes: change section A: 2) b) to read "Project applications will be initially evaluated on the cost effectiveness of emission reduction basis with projects ranked within each project eligibility category. Secondly projects will be evaluated and scored on other criteria including measures related to transportation impacts and regional priorities. Raw data for each criterion will be available for inspection." In response to a question from Mr. Rickert, Mr. Ferguson noted that the project categories are not listed in the

policies and would be discussed later in the agenda. Mr. Rogers stated that his intent is for the types to remain the same as in the past. In response to a question from Mr. Snyder, Mr. Rogers stated that scores would be provided for cost effectiveness and transportation impacts and other factors. Mr. Snyder said it seems as if 2) b) is the only policy needing adjustment and that he is comfortable with that. Mr. Weaver stated he agrees with the two tier scoring but remains concerned that policy 6) b) ties the definition of readiness for a transit project to inclusion in the RTA capital program. Mr. Ferguson clarified that the referenced policy is contained in the Active Program Management section of the policies and only applies to the readiness of projects which have had their funding deferred. Mr. Pitstick added that this criterion for deferred projects is okay.

Mr. Rickert stated that with Phase 1 engineering not eligible for CMAQ, highway projects receive about 40% of the total engineering costs, while transit is proposed to receive 70%. He noted that perhaps the phase 1/phase 2 aspect of highway projects should be revisited in the future. Ms. Hamilton noted that sponsors of transit projects are required to spend 30% of the engineering costs up front and noted that Chicago can choose to use STP funds for engineering, but that other municipalities have to compete for STP funds at the Council level. Mr. Rickert stated there has been an increase in the percentage of municipalities that are not participating in the CMAQ program and that he understands the reasons, but finds it sad that 80-90% of municipalities don't participate. Mr. Elam noted that most Councils choose not to fund phase 1 engineering with STP funds. Mr. Snyder stated that on the highway side there is a commitment made to projects that may or may not get funded and documentation must be submitted. On the transit side, a similar commitment, with proof of readiness and an initial invest is needed. Mr. Elam noted there is no bright line to define "ready" for transit projects. Mr. Weaver added that on commuter parking, for example, going from 0% to 100% engineering, the cost may change, but the scope doesn't and at the end, the project goes, doesn't go, or changes completely, such as the case with the Grayland parking project.

Ms. Hamilton stated that with transit station projects, there is no clear phase 1, but the NEPA process must be fulfilled and once that happens, a project can move forward. Mr. Snyder stated that phase 1 is simply a streamlined NEPA process and asked when a station project would request funding. Ms. Hamilton stated that in the past, funds were used for the NEPA process, but in the future they will have to use local funds to get to NEPA approval. Mr. Greep noted that different projects get to different levels of design before receiving NEPA approval, which takes time during which changes can occur. It is a good principle to have NEPA work completed but it may not be a good hard and fast rule. He added that the phrase "sufficient work" stood out in the proposed policy and that the benefit of this language is that it allows judgment of how far along a project is rather than a hard line. Mr. Snyder noted that state agencies should confirm that submittals are credible documents. Mr. Donovan stated that staff has historically done a good job at the time of applications with bringing projects forward for discussion if there are questions.

Mr. Rickert requested assurance that the committee will see the criteria and weighting system before being posted as referenced in policy 2)a). Mr. Elam stated that traditionally the committee releases the call for projects. Mr. Rogers and Ms. Hamilton requested that the application book be available for review by the PSC prior to posting as

the scoring system to be employed is a significant departure from tradition. Mr. Snyder stated that given the proposed changes to item 2)b), the words “rank” should be replaced by the word “score” throughout the policies. Based on discussion to date, the PSC would expect to see a spreadsheet showing the traditional air quality ranking by project category with the transportation impact criteria score and other information in an adjacent column with no combined score. He asked if there was a definition of “hardship” relative to applying for phase 1 funding during the last call, which Mr. Elam stated there was not.

Ms. Hamilton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snyder, to recommend the CMAQ Programming and Management Policies, as revised with Mr. Rogers’ proposed language, to the Transportation Committee. The motion carried.

## **6.2 Project Type Changes for the CMAQ Program**

Mr. Ferguson provided an overview of work done to review the effectiveness of select project types. The review concentrated on the appropriateness of projects for federal funding, whether benefits are measurable and the region’s success with these project types. It is recommended that funding for new standalone TDM marketing/outreach efforts be discontinued until a coordinated regional strategy is put in place and clear performance measures are established. In response to questions from Mr. Weaver and Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Ferguson stated that the proposed moratorium on TDM projects is for CMAQ funding only and projects currently in progress would continue and are included in the table at the end of the memo. Mr. Tomzik noted that the figures in the table for the Regional Rideshare program don’t match Pace’s records and he would work with staff to determine why. He also noted that about \$1 million per year is small in comparison to a program that is \$100 million per year and wondered if it makes sense to stop considering these projects with IDOT pursuing a regional strategy for TDM. Mr. Schmidt stated that based on the MPC white paper, IDOT, MPC, CDOT and the RTA have come to an agreement to pursue a regional strategy and IDOT has advertised for consulting services. The idea is to move towards a coordinated effort in the region and to work with the collar counties to develop a program that would be applied on a statewide level. He also stated that he agrees that the number of projects and the funding received historically does not place a burden on the region’s CMAQ program.

Mr. Elam noted that the IDOT project includes developing methods for prioritization and asked if it would be worth waiting on those before developing criteria of our own. Mr. Ferguson suggested taking a break for this programming cycle so that criteria can be developed. Ms. Hamilton stated that it is okay to take a break, but the decision may need to be revisited in order to assist with the IDOT effort. Mr. Elam stated the intention is to shift away from marketing and outreach efforts, not all TDM. In response to a question from Mr. Pitstick, Mr. Elam stated that programs like ridesharing are more operational in nature. Mr. Tomzik pointed out that we program five years of funding each cycle. Mr. Ferguson noted that every two years we extend the five year period. Mr. Snyder stated that with such a small number of projects over the history of the program, he would be surprised if there are a bunch of applications and doesn’t think it is necessary to remove the category.

Mr. Ferguson moved on to recommend that the pedestrian facility project type be eliminated and that pedestrian projects that connect to transit facilities should be

considered as part of a new project subtype called Access to Transit. This subtype would be for projects that remove barriers and improve connections for bicycles and pedestrians with existing transit facilities provide bicycle parking and provide commuter parking at transit stations. Ms. Hamilton noted that Chicago is developing a major project that would provide a soft surface walking trail that would not qualify for CMAQ under this revised policy, nor for TAP, is for bicycle projects only. Mr. Pitstick and Mr. Weaver expressed support for the Access to Transit category. In response to a question from Mr. Smith of CNT, Mr. Ferguson stated that applications within this category would not be limited to projects that resulted from the RTA's community planning program, but that those projects could certainly apply for implementation funding within this category.

Mr. Ferguson recommended that the bicycle parking project type be eliminated due to the relatively small size of the projects and the inadequacy of the current analysis methods used to develop emissions benefits for these projects. Ms. Hamilton stated that Chicago objects to the elimination of this project type and noted that CDOT has received funding since the beginning of the CMAQ program for bicycle parking projects. She suggested that instead of eliminating the project type, a minimum project size should be set and that perhaps smaller communities could apply together to meet the minimum. Mr. Ferguson noted that one previous multi-community project failed and the funds ended up being transferred to Chicago.

Ms. Hamilton suggested that the recommended changes to eliminate pedestrian as a project type and to create the Access to Transit project type be accepted, but that the TDM and bicycle parking projects types should be kept. Mr. Elam clarified that the recommendation was not to eliminate TDM marketing, but to hold off on funding these projects this cycle. Ms. Hamilton suggested that it doesn't hurt to accept applications prior to making the decisions.

### **6.3 Update on CMAQ Scoring Process**

Mr. Elam provided an overview of known remaining concerns with the proposed scoring process. Staff is still seeking an approach to the treatment of new versus existing transit facilities. The Congestion Management Process network is the result of planning documents that identifies priority roadways. Responding to questions about adding an ADT threshold, Mr. Elam suggested that if the CMP network isn't representative of the region's priorities, the CMP should be updated. Mr. Snyder requested a map of the CMP network be sent to committee members and Mr. Elam agreed to do so. Mr. Elam continued, reviewing the remaining concerns as described in the memo.

### **7.0 MAP-21**

Mr. Donovan reported that Revised Interim Guidance on CMAQ Operating Assistance under MAP-21 was issued in July to clarify that projects funded or obligated in 2012 are not subject to a time limitation for eligibility. He reported that a Notice of Proposed Rule Making was also issued that would pro-rate the required 25% spending for PM<sub>2.5</sub> reductions to the amount of population within a PM<sub>2.5</sub> non-attainment area versus an ozone non-attainment area. In the Chicago area, the populations are the same, so the entire program is subject to the 25% requirement. In response to a question from Mr. Snyder, Mr. Donovan stated that there are no definitions for the types of projects that reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions.

## **8.0 Other Business**

None.

## **9.0 Public Comment**

Mr. Brian Urbaszewski of the Respiratory Health Association stated that he had concerns, but is relieved about where the committee is heading with project rankings. Direct emissions reduction and congestion relief projects result in hundreds of thousands of dollars being invested in projects that reduce lung disease. He was concerned that only 60% of project scoring was proposed to be allocated for emissions reduction and supports the use of dollars per kilogram as the main ranking criteria as in past cycles. Regarding particulate matter, it is responsible for about ten times as many deaths as ozone. He thanked the committee for their work and for spending funds efficiently in a way that benefits the public.

Mr. Michael Weiser of Commuter Cars stated that one winter he was driving from Buffalo Grove to Chicago during a snow storm. When he arrived in Chicago he was incensed to see two CTA buses completely empty...the roads were being utilized to transport empty seats. On further reflection, he realized that he also transported empty seats in his vehicle and thought that narrower cars would be a solution. He stated there is a company in Seattle that manufactures a narrow car called the Tango. He stated the use of Tango cars could significantly reduce congestion by allowing more cars to travel within the same space and they could also be used to plow bike paths.

## **10.0 Next Meeting**

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

## **11.0 Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Schmidt, and a second by Ms. Hamilton, the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.





# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of Planning and Programming  
2300 South Dirksen Parkway / Springfield, Illinois / 62764

August 20, 2014

CMAQ Project Selection Committee  
Chicago Metropolitan Agency of Planning  
233 South Wacker Drive  
Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Project Selection Committee:

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) upon review of the staff recommended changes to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Project Evaluation Process respectfully disagrees with the staff's recommendation as set forth in the June 2014 memorandum entitled, [Documentation on methods used for proposed CMAQ scoring process](#). IDOT's position relies exclusively on the guidance given by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). IDOT sees these funds (roughly 100 million in FY13) as the only transportation federal set aside exclusively used for the reduction of mobile emissions and congestion. Any deviation from the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) mission objective would seriously dilute the fund's cost-effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gasses and congestion. According to, [The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality \(CMAQ\) Improvement Program Under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act Interim Program Guidance](#):

"The CMAQ program supports two important goals of the U.S. Department of Transportation (Department): improving air quality and relieving congestion. While these goals are not new elements of the program, they were strengthened in the SAFETEA-LU and further bolstered in provisions added to the MAP-21."

In July 2014 the US DOT released "Chicago, Illinois TMA Certification Review". This review gave praise to the current performance-based selection process of the CMAQ Program for the NE Illinois non-attainment area.

"The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program in particular has enacted policies that reduce project delay that ensures the timely advancement of air quality improvements and also assists in spending down a high unobligated balance of Federal funds....The CMAQ program successfully reflects the concepts of performance based programming and is commended for enacting and implementing policies that challenge entrenched but inefficient programming practices."

The idea of scoring any part of a CMAQ projects to meet goals outside of air pollutant reduction or congestion relief is in IDOT's opinion a departure from a cost-effective project selection outlined by the MAP-21 Interim Guidance. As the transportation community awaits the official MAP-21 rulemaking on performance measures from the US DOT, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Standing Committee on Performance Management (SCOPM) released its suggested performance measures for CMAQ Funds. According to the SCOPM Task Force Findings on MAP-21 Performance Measure Target-Setting, "Criteria Pollutant Emissions and Annual Hours of Delay (AHD)," are the only two that should be considered for inclusion in the final MAP-21 guidance on performance measures. This again is consistent with the US DOT mission to reduce congestions and improve air quality through the CMAQ Fund.

Further given the timeframe for the next call for projects it is IDOT's recommendation that these changes are at the very least excluded from use in this call for projects and time is given to the federal government to finalize its rulemaking on performance measures before enacting such fundamental changes to the meaning of the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher D. Schmidt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and "S".

Christopher D. Schmidt  
Air Quality Manager