



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Transportation Committee Minutes April 17, 2015

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
Cook County Conference Room  
Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Michael Connelly – CTA, Charles Abraham - IDOT DPIT, Reggie Arkell – FTA, Jennifer Becker – Kendall County, Bruce Carmitchel – IDOT OP&P, John Donovan – FHWA, Luann Hamilton – CDOT, Terry Heffron – IDOT District One, Scott Hennings – McHenry County, Emily Karry – Lake County, Vice Chair Sis Killen – Cook County, David Kralik – Metra, Christina Kupkowski – Will County, Aimee Lee – Illinois Tollway, John Loper – DuPage County, Holly Ostdick – CMAP, Mark Pitstick – RTA, Mayor Leon Rockingham – Council of Mayors, Peter Skosey – MPC, Kyle Smith-CNT, Lorraine Snorden – Pace, Mike Sullivan - Kane County.

**Absent:** Robert Hann – Private Providers, Adrian Guerrero – Class 1 Railroads, Randy Neufeld – Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, Mike Rogers – IEPA, Steve Schlickman – Academic & Research, Joe Schofer – Academic & Research, Steve Strains – NIRPC, Ken Yunker – SEWRPC

**Others Present:** Mike Albin, Garland Armstrong, Heather Armstrong, Mitch Bright, Bruce Christensen, Michael Fitzsimons, Jessica Hector-Hsu, Janell Jensen (via phone), Beth McCluskey, Kirsten Mellem, Brian Pigeon, Chad Riddle, Adam Rod, Chris Schmidt, David Seglin, C. Scott Smith, Vicky Tan, Mike Walczak, Tammy Wierciak, Barbara Zubek

**Staff Present:** Erin Aleman, Alex Beata, Patricia Berry, Bob Dean, Teri Dixon, Kama Dobbs, Dolores Dowdle, Jesse Elam, Doug Ferguson, Tom Garritano, Lindsay Hollander, Leroy Kos, Tom Kotarac, Jill Leary, Tom Murtha, Liz Schuh, Joe Szabo, Andres Torres, Berenice Vallecillos, Simone Weil.

### 1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Committee Chair Michael Connelly called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

## **2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements**

Mr. Skosey distributed a flyer about the “Broke, Broken and Out of Time” event sponsored by MPC, the Brookings Institute, and the Union League Club to be held on May 15 to discuss infrastructure topics, including MPC’s Accelerate Illinois initiative.

Mr. Pitstick announced that updates to the RTAMS website were launched on April 16<sup>th</sup>. He also distributed a [Regional Transit Performance Highlights](#) brochure.

Ms. Aleman announced that applications for CMAP’s Future Leaders in Planning (FLIP) program were available. The format of the program has been changed to be a week long summer program. Members who are interested in participating in the program or who know students or teachers that would be interested should contact CMAP staff.

## **3.0 Approval of Minutes – March 6, 2015**

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2015 meeting, as presented, made by Mayor Rockingham, seconded by Ms. Killen, carried.

## **4.0 Coordinating Committee Reports**

Mr. Connelly reported that the Regional Coordinating Committee met on March 11, 2015 and recommended approval of the Semi-Annual GO TO 2040/TIP Conformity Analysis and TIP Amendment. The committee discussed the IL 53/120 Corridor Land Use Plan report, and received a report on the Economic Valuation of the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision

Mr. Connelly noted that the Local Coordinating Committee will meet next on May 13, 2015.

## **5.0 FFY 14-19 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Amendments and Administrative Modifications**

Mr. Kos reported that TIP revisions exceeding financial amendment thresholds have been requested. One CMAQ schedule change that was submitted after the most recent CMAQ Project Selection Committee meeting and needs approval prior to the next scheduled meeting has also been requested. Administrative modifications, including line items that have been awarded, moved, or deleted, were provided for the committee’s information.

Mr. Carmitchel made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, to approve the FFY 2014-19 TIP Amendments. The motion carried.

## **6.0 2016 Unified Work Program (UWP)**

Ms. Dowdle reported that development of the FY 2016 UWP was a challenge due to the uncertainty of the funding mark with MAP-21 set to expire on May 31. The proposed UWP is based on funding levels for FY 2015 and will be adjusted if needed when a final

FY 2016 mark is available. All nine core project applications are included; however the funding amounts were reduced from proposed amounts to the same level as FY 2015. Of the fourteen competitive proposals submitted, three were selected for funding: The joint CMAP and RTA Community Planning program, Chicago's south Lakefront and Museum Campus Access Alternatives and Feasibility Assessment, and CTA's Expand Brown Line Core Capacity planning. Ms. Hamilton noted that a rounding error in Figure 1 of the memo, showing Chicago receiving 7% of funding, rather than 6%. Ms. Dowdle stated that adjustments will be made to correct the chart. Mr. Carmitchel noted that as discussed by the UWP committee, unlike in past years, IDOT does not have adequate funds available to cover any delayed FTA funds in the UWP program, should FTA funds be delayed. On a motion by Ms. Snorden, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, with a vote of all ayes the Transportation Committee recommended approval of the FY 2016 proposed UWP.

#### **7.0 Early Considerations for the Next Long-Range Plan**

Mr. Elam stated that although it seems the GO TO 2040 update was just approved, we are preparing for the next long range plan, which is due in 2018. Since this plan will be a new plan, not an update, collaboration and discussion of major issues is starting now. He continued that the memo included in the packet provides a starting point for collaboration and discussions, based on topics discussed during the last update and during the recent federal certification review. The first topic addresses engagement of CMAP's committees and stakeholders. One recommendation is to hold forums/discussions after TC meetings to provide in-depth input into the long range plan. The committee was supportive of forums but concerned about scheduling, timeframe, and the role of other committees, stakeholders, and subject matter experts.

Mr. Carmitchel indicated that committee engagement was very important and said he felt that the CMAQ Project Selection Committee was a good model of engagement. Mr. Connelly raised a concern that the Planning Liaisons (PLs) meet immediately following the Transportation Committee. Mayor Rockingham expressed concern that holding forums after the Transportation Committee would inhibit the PLs from participating in the forums. Ms. Ostdick said that the PL meeting schedule could potentially be changed. Mr. Loper suggested that subject matter experts could make presentations at the forums. Ms. Snorden stated that monthly forums might be too intensive. Mr. Connelly suggested having quarterly meetings. Ms. Hamilton stated that quarterly may not be enough involvement. Mr. Elam said that the CMAP staff work plan for FY 2016 is currently under development and when that is completed and approved, a schedule for forum meetings will be easier to create. He stated that at the next TC meeting the CMAP FY 2016 work plan will be presented to receive feedback from the committee. Ms. Hamilton noted that there was not a single committee in charge of plan development for GO TO 2040 and but asked whether the proposed approach was similar to the process used for the last plan. Mr. Elam said that each of the working committees were involved in developing recommendations in their own functional areas and that what was called the Planning

Committee was closely involved in developing the regional comprehensive plan; he noted that the Local Coordinating Committee could possibly take a larger role in the upcoming regional plan development cycle.

Mr. Elam continued to the next topic: the financial plan. Mr. Elam stated that this would be discussed further over the next year, but some initial thoughts are welcome. He continued that during the last plan update staff heard concerns regarding the flexibility of funding. The committee will be asked to consider tying the available funding to targets for performance and whether the targets are attainable given the funding available. Mr. Loper stated that the regional freight funding should be considered during plan development. Mr. Kralik stated that staff should research how other MPO's create their financial plans. Ms. Hamilton stated that we should work closely with U.S. DOT on reasonably expected revenues. Mr. Donovan stated that there is flexibility in the process and the process is designed to force the region to make decisions and identify priorities with the goal of having realistic priorities and implementing the region's priorities.

The consideration of performance targets, which are required by MAP-21, is the next topic. Mr. Elam stated that FHWA rule-making is in progress. Following rule-making, state DOTs will set performance targets, followed by MPOs setting targets. Mr. Elam stated the committee should consider setting realistic and financially achievable targets – he noted that the transit ridership targets in GO TO 2040 have been seen as aspirational. Mr. Carmitchel noted that the development of statewide targets could experience some difficulties and since it would be likely that CMAP's targets would be more stringent than the statewide targets, CMAP should not wait on the state to start development. Mr. Skosey noted that the plan update presents an opportunity for CMAP to help guide the statewide targets. Mr. Pitstick indicated that he saw the issue with the transit ridership targets and that the region will need to consider how to balance aspirational goals with realistic targets that can be accomplished with the resources available. Mr. Connelly said that the agencies could develop practical targets for ridership without too much effort. Mr. Skosey referred to some work being undertaken in the Minneapolis area and suggested that the regional benefits of population growth should be highlighted.

Mr. Elam stated that the definition of regionally significant projects is something that likely needs to change, based on feedback from the U.S. DOT during CMAP's certification review. The review suggested that the definition of regionally significant projects should be based on impact, not scope. Mr. Elam suggested that some project categories to consider adding could be Bus Rapid Transit/Arterial Rapid Transit (BRT/ART) or arterial expansion. He stated that we will need to discuss this further and any initial ideas would be welcomed. Mr. Skosey suggested that the definition should not turn on whether capacity is being added, saying that a significant project is not just "new stuff" but "important stuff and expensive stuff." Ms. Hamilton said that it would not be appropriate to identify specific corridors for BRT/ART in the plan. Ms. Snorden said that the transit

agencies should get together themselves to decide what they considered regionally significant.

The committee was generally supportive of working to define impacts to determine regional significance. Mr. Heffron asked what was meant by project impact versus scope. Mr. Elam said that the distinction came from the MPO certification review, but that one alternative definition of a regionally significant project would be a project that would require development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Mr. Elam characterized this as a possible approach, but not necessarily a good idea. Ms. Hamilton noted that project sponsors would prefer to prepare an Environmental Assessment, not an EIS. Mr. Donovan indicated that a good regional planning process should inform the development of Purpose and Need under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Mr. Elam introduced the idea of using a benefit/cost analysis to supplement modeling information for evaluating potential projects. Mr. Connelly stated that consideration must be made for evaluating different types of projects against one another rather than merely reducing projects to a benefit/cost ratio. Lastly, Mr. Elam stated that staff, with the assistance of stakeholders, will be drafting strategy papers and would like input on the topics at the May 2015 TC meeting.

Mr. Connelly reminded the committee that this is the beginning of a long process encouraged members to share their ideas with the committee and with staff.

## **8.0 Local Technical Assistance Program – Upcoming Call for Projects and Local Match Requirements**

Mr. Dean reported that the fifth call for LTA projects would be open from May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 25<sup>th</sup>, would again be a joint call with the RTA, and will include a new partner in the call, the Cook County Department of Public Health. He mentioned that there will be a new category for stormwater and resilience projects this year. He also stated that the Cook County Department of Public Health will be providing technical assistance for suburban Cook County jurisdictions who would like to create active transportation plans. The most significant change to the program is a local match requirement. From the recently-completed evaluation of the LTA program, it was clear that local commitment to projects is one of the keys to their success. Willingness to provide local match is a good indicator and demonstrates local commitment by communities. The match requirement will be from 5% to 20%, on a sliding scale based on need which is defined by tax base, median household income, and population size. There is also the possibility of waiving the contribution entirely for communities that cannot afford a match but have demonstrated commitment in other ways. In the cases of larger LTA project sponsors like Counties or the City of Chicago, match requirements will be based

on economic and demographic conditions of the area which the project serves, instead of the entire jurisdiction.

In response to a question from Mr. Carmitchel, Mr. Dean stated that the MacArthur Foundation and Cook County Department of Planning and Development through CDBG-DR are providing the funds for the stormwater projects. Mr. Connelly stated that this attempt to strengthen the program and not leave any community behind is logical and good. Ms. Killen stated that the memo mentioned giving credit for overmatching and asked if that would be considered only as a tie breaker. Mr. Dean stated that hasn't been fully thought out yet, as staff wants to spread the funding to as many projects as possible without allowing a situation where wealthier communities could "buy out" the needier communities with overmatch. Mr. Skosey stated that as the LTA program has evolved, it has taken off and is showing great results. Mr. Kralik suggested that overmatch should be looked at in relative terms. If a community that requires a 5% match can provide 10% that would be the same as a community required to provide a 20% match providing 40%. Mr. Smith thanked staff for their work on developing the sliding scale and asked if it would be apparent to applicants what their requirements would be. Mr. Dean stated that some communities may not want the data posted publicly; therefore staff and planning liaisons would have the information to provide on request to individual applicants.

#### **9.0 Service Boards (Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace) – Capital Program Development**

CTA, Metra, and Pace presented overviews of their FY 2015 capital programs and FY 2015–2019 programs. Following the presentations, Mr. Pitstick added that these presentations were an extra effort to bring the Transportation Committee more information about the budget process, to inform the decisions that the committee makes annually when approving funding splits and when approving TIP amendments. In response to a question from Mr. Skosey, Mr. Pitstick stated, and Mr. Connelly confirmed, that the RTA works continuously with the service boards to develop budgets, learn what each agency's priorities are, and what other funding sources each agency can bring to the table to meet state of good repair goals.

#### **10.0 State Legislative Update**

Mr. Connelly noted the General Assembly has not been in session for two weeks, and therefore there is no action to report.

#### **11.0 Status of the Local Technical Assistance Program and the Major Capital Projects**

Mr. Connelly stated that current status reports on the LTA program and the GO TO 2040 Major Capital Projects were included in the meeting materials.

**12.0 Other Business**

None.

**13.0 Public Comment**

Mr. Garland Armstrong requested follow-up on his prior comments regarding directional signs at O'Hare and Midway Airports for persons with disabilities, including the visually impaired. Mr. Connelly stated that CTA's ADA staff has begun working with both airports to make improvements.

**14.0 Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for May 15, 2015.

**13.0 Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn at 11:17 a.m., made by Mr. Carmitchel, seconded by Mayor Rockingham, carried.