



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item No. 3.0

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Regional Transportation Operations Coalition

DRAFT Minutes

May 28, 2015

DuPage County Conference Room

233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800

Chicago, Illinois

Present: Chair – Claire Bozic – CMAP, Mike Tuman – DuPage County, Jon Nelson – Lake County, Chuck Sikaras – IDOT ITS Program Office, Matt Letourneau – AECOM, Christina Kupkowski – Will County DOT, Kevin Price – IDOT, Taqhi Mohammed– Pace, Austin Provost – TransSmart, Sagar Sonar – Stanley Consultants, Yadollah Montazery – CDOT, Daryle Drew – IDOT, John Loper – DuPage County, John Dillenburg – UIC, Jeff Hochmuth – CDM Smith, Mitch Bright – Traffic Control Corporation, John Donovan – FHWA, Yamilee Volcy – FHWA

Phone: David Tomzik – Pace, Gerri Tumbali – RTA, Chris Schmidt – IDOT, John Corbin - FHWA

Staff Present: Doug Ferguson, Jesse Elam, Tom Murtha, Todd Schmidt, Holly Ostdick, Ross Patronsky

1.0 Call to Order

Ms. Bozic, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Mr. Sikaras informed the group of the upcoming ITS Midwest Conference.

Ms. Bozic informed the group that Mr. John Benda is no longer with the Illinois Tollway.

Ms. Bozic also informed the group that Mr. David Zavattero recently retired from CDOT.

3.0 CMAQ Program Development

Mr. Ferguson provided an overview of the initial project ranking methodology and scoring for the proposed projects in the FFY 2016-2020 CMAQ program. Each project was scored on air quality cost-effectiveness and transportation impact criteria, with air quality cost-effectiveness being the primary score. The composite score for a project was the sum of the air quality cost-effectiveness score plus the transportation impact criteria scores plus the regional priority score.

The air quality cost-effectiveness for intersection improvements is based on the speed change caused by the project, with higher speeds associated with lower emissions rates

per mile travelled. For bottleneck elimination projects, the air quality cost-effectiveness is based on the reduction of delay related to the project.

The transportation impact criteria are composed of three scores including travel time reliability, system location, and safety. The travel time reliability score accounted for a total of 15 points and was evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative score was based on the planning time index and had a maximum of 10 points. The qualitative score was based on the project characteristics and had a maximum of 5 points. The system location score reflected whether the project was located on the Congestion Management Process (CMP) network, a set of regionally significant roadways. A score of 10 was given to projects located on the CMP. A project was awarded 5 points for safety if it addresses an IDOT 5 percent report location. Finally, a project received up to 10 points if it addressed a regional priority such as being a component of a GO TO 2040 major capital project.

Mr. Tuman expressed his support for the two Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH) projects, I-294 at IL 64/North Ave. and I-294 ramps to Franklin Ave./Green St. He stated that the true benefits of the two projects are not reflected in the rankings and asked what the qualitative points were based on. Mr. Ferguson responded that both projects got the max qualitative points (10 points) for being part of a major capital project. Mr. Tuman followed up by asking where is staff going with the qualitative measures, how much judgement is going into the process, and if the list represented the recommended CMAQ program. Mr. Ferguson responded that the list of projects is not the recommended program, only the rankings of the submitted highway projects. Mr. Tuman asked what the recommendation will be based on and Mr. Elam responded that CMAP staff will use the feedback gathered from the focus groups to refine the staff recommended program presented to the Project Selection Committee, which is the same process used for previous CMAQ programs.

Mr. Tuman noted that there is \$175 million in proposed projects and asked if staff had an idea of the amount of funding available for CMAQ. Mr. Elam said it was a moving mark, but somewhere in the range of \$260 million. Mr. Elam noted that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force will also be providing input into the staff recommended program. Mr. Schmidt asked if the Direct Emissions Focus Group and Transit Focus Group were meeting. Mr. Elam responded that staff was meeting individually with the transit agencies. There were only a few Direct Emission Reduction projects submitted for CMAQ funding and staff did not believe it necessary to call a meeting for so few projects.

Mr. Tuman commented that the Lake County Adaptive Signal Control Technologies (ASCT) project on Butterfield Road was already a signal interconnect and questioned how staff determined the benefits of an ASCT on top of a signal interconnect. He asked if staff could share the method used to score signal interconnects and ASCT projects. Mr. Ferguson said he has no problem sharing the methods used to score the proposed CMAQ projects. Mr. Murtha also commented that some corridors are good for ASCT and some are not, but agencies should use engineering principles to judge if the corridor will benefit

from ASCT. Mr. Nelson would also like more information on how ASCT projects were scored.

The CMAQ funding eligibility of the lighted crosswalk treatment, part of the proposed Berwyn signal interconnect project on 16th St. was questioned by Mr. Tuman; he thought only pedestrian signals were eligible. Mr. Ferguson responded that staff will look into the eligibility of that piece of the project. Mr. Tuman also commented on whether CMAQ funding should be used for the parts of projects which were clearly benefiting the railroad companies, which included the CDOT project at 71st St. Mr. Murtha responded that the CDOT project at 71st St. will be raising the tracks as part of a different CREATE project, but because of the near vicinity of a rail yard, cannot raise it high enough to provide for a grade separation with 71st St. Therefore, the crossing must be closed. This project would lower 71st under the railroad crossing to keep the roadway open. There was a question about whether railroad safety elements of the Lake Forest project at IL 43/Waukegan Rd. and Everett Rd. could be funded with CMAQ. Staff indicated they would take a second look at the project.

Mr. Tuman also inquired if a roundabout was considered for the Lake in the Hills project at Lakewood Rd. and asked if the committee should be pushing for a roundabout at that location. Mr. Ferguson responded that the community was requesting funding for phase I engineering under the hardship exemption and it is believed that a roundabout will be considered for the project. For the purpose of analysis and ranking, the project was evaluated with a traditional intersection design.

Mr. Drew asked why IDOT's ramp metering project did not qualify for any transportation impact criteria points. Mr. Ferguson responded that the project was evaluated as an "Other" project type, which are not evaluated for the Transportation Impact Criteria. Mr. Drew said that there were more than half-dozen IDOT 5 percent locations along the I-55 corridor where the ramp metering will be installed. CMAP staff agreed that it was a very important piece of information and will take it into consideration when developing a staff recommended list of projects. Mr. Drew also inquired if the new 5% locations were used for the analysis. Mr. Elam noted that CMAP used the most recent information they had on file and if anyone saw a location that is new and was not identified in the analysis as being a IDOT 5 percent location, they should inform staff and it will be added to the score. Mr. Drew and Ms. Kupkowski both voiced support for both Cook County DOTH projects.

Mr. Sikaras asked if Cook County considered applying for TIGER Grants. Mr. Loper replied that many of the projects associated with the Elgin O'Hare Western Access have applied for TIGER Grants, but as of yet have not been awarded any funding. Mr. Sikaras expressed concern that if RTOC supported both Cook County DOTH projects, the large total cost (\$70 million) would reduce the number of other highway projects receiving CMAQ funding.

Mr. Tomzik noticed that the Edens (I-94) bus on shoulder was not on the list of projects for RTOC to discuss. Mr. Elam responded that it was submitted as a transit project and the transit focus group will provide input on the project. Mr. Tomzik noted that it was a hybrid project that integrates both highway operations and transit. Mr. Ferguson informed the group that the proposed CMAQ transit projects are still being scored by staff and CMAP staff will share the scores when available and will accept comments offline.

Mr. Sikaras voiced his support of all ITS related parts included in proposed IDOT projects and commented that RTOC was originally created as a multimodal group. Mr. Price also noted that in the past, RTOC reviewed and supported many non-highway projects, especially projects like the Higgins Rd. bike project where adding a grade separation had a huge traffic impact. Ms. Bozic said CMAP staff would review submissions and provide to the committee information about proposed CMAQ projects that impact roadway operations.

Another project with a multi-modal focus is IDOT's I-90 project, according to Mr. Tomzik. This project will help support Pace's bus on shoulders project along the Jane Addams Tollway. The project will reduce congestion at the toll booth located on I-90 before the merge with I-190.

Mr. Montazery asked how the safety score was calculated and if it should be given more weight. Mr. Ferguson responded that only projects on IDOT's 5% locations were given 5 points as an all-or-nothing score. Mr. Tuman also noted that there was another funding program for safety related projects, the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Ms. Bozic opened comments up to the audience. Mr. Loper thanked FHWA and CMAP staff in all the work and assistance they provided in the application process for the Cook County DOTH projects, which he noted are both projects of national significance. The projects are part of the bigger Elgin O'Hare Western Access (EOWA) project and have a regional impact on travel. He also noted that this will be the last of the EOWA projects and could be CMAP's opportunity to support this major capital project through CMAQ funding. He would like to see RTOC support the Cook County DOTH projects.

Mr. Patronsky asked the group to comment on some of the smaller scale local projects. Mr. Tuman said that the Aurora Signal Interconnect project is a good project because it will connect and extend the DuPage County centrally controlled system of traffic signals while improving Aurora's signal system. Mr. Nelson supported the Lake Forest project, as long as there was coordination with IDOT and ICC. The project would relieve congestion experienced during peak periods. Mr. Montazery supported the Skokie project at the Old Orchard interchange with I-94. He mentioned that the project will really improve operations in the area and help with the queue backing up onto the Edens expressway at that location, which is a safety issue.

Mr. Sonar asked what the total dollar amount is for all proposed CMAQ projects. Looking at committee documents, other members answered that about \$630 million was requested. Mr. Elam noted that there were fewer than the usual number of submissions for the FFY 16-20 CMAQ, which a member said could be due to the requirement of having Phase I engineering complete. Mr. Nelson asked if CMAP staff had any rough percentages of funding that would go toward highway projects or any other project types. Mr. Elam responded that there is no percentage guidance on how the CMAQ funds are distributed, but instead the best projects are funded. Mr. Elam also mentioned that there was a new federal requirement that 25% of CMAQ funds go towards reducing fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Mr. Ferguson added that staff is still finalizing its analysis of projects.

Mr. Ferguson reviewed the next steps to develop the FFY 2016-2020 CMAQ program. The staff recommended FFY 16-20 CMAQ program will be released on June 18th and reviewed by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) on June 25th. The Transportation Committee will then release the proposed program for a public comment period on July 17th. After the comment period, staff will address the comments and the proposed program will go back to the CMAQ PSC and the Transportation Committee for approvals and then finally to the MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board for final approval in October.

Mr. Sonar expressed concern that many of the municipalities in the region find it hard to apply for CMAQ funding due to the Phase I completion requirement. Mr. Elam responded that staff understands that it is more difficult for municipalities, but properly scoping and costing out a project usually requires that Phase I be completed. Mr. Donovan mentioned that not having the phase I requirement caused many projects to be delayed or stalled and which in turn caused the program to develop a large unobligated fund balance. The active program management that CMAP staff implemented has shown positive results. Mr. Patronsky said that the region lost CMAQ money due to federal rescissions. CMAQ funding contributed more to those rescissions because of its unobligated fund balance. Mr. Ferguson mentioned that this requirement is a programming policy discussion for the CMAQ PSC and MPO Policy Committee.

4.0 RTOC Role in Next Long-Range Plan Development

Mr. Elam provided a high level overview of the projects that focus on transportation operations included in the CMAP Draft FY 2016 Work Plan. The RTOC related materials are found on pages 33-38 of the draft work plan and the majority of the projects are based on development of the next long range plan. The work plan also calls on the RTOC to assist in the development of a white paper ("strategy paper") on highway operations and help to further refine the highway needs analysis which was previously presented to RTOC at its March 2015 meeting.

The projects listed under the Performance-Based Programming (PBP) Program in the draft work plan have an underlying theme of supporting the development of the next long range plan. The projects will support the plan by developing a set of tools that help

create a relationship between investment and performance, identify deficiencies in the transportation system, estimate travel time reliability, estimate economic and environmental impacts of capital projects, and transit ridership. TAP/CMAQ program development along with performance monitoring is also under the PBP program.

RTOC's role in the initial year of developing the upcoming long range transportation plan is to assist in the development of a highway operations white paper and help refine the highway needs analysis tool. Ms. Bozic will be the project manager for both projects.

Ms. Bozic sees this white paper as an opportunity to really get transportation operations incorporated into the next long range plan. The effort will include both the RTOC and the Advanced Technology Task Force (ATTF). This will provide a chance for RTOC and ATTF to be engaged in the long range planning process and get strategies and policies in the next plan that support and advance transportation operations in the region. She would like for the white paper to function as an update to much of the Strategic Early Deployment Plan. Ms. Bozic will work with RTOC members to develop a draft scope of the highway operations white paper for the next joint RTOC and ATTF meeting.

Mr. Sikaras asked CMAP staff to give a little context to the alternative transportation system funding concepts white paper. Mr. Elam replied that the paper will refine and develop system funding concepts through additional core revenues and possibly light scenario testing. Mr. Sikaras commented that there was not a freight white paper listed. Mr. Murtha responded that the freight committee will be involved in a special freight subsection to the plan. Data collection for that project will be starting in the upcoming year. Mr. Sikaras requested that CMAP staff keep RTOC informed on the freight project and the transit modernization white paper because of the deep inner relationships between the different modes and operations concepts. Ms. Bozic agreed that CMAP staff will keep RTOC in the loop regarding the other projects. Mr. Tomzik asked if staff wanted input on the draft scope before the next meeting or was CMAP expecting the committee to wait and respond to the draft scope. Ms. Bozic replied that staff would prefer input on the draft scope before the next meeting and to direct all comments and suggestions to her.

Ms. Bozic reintroduced the highway needs analysis which was introduced at the last RTOC meeting (March 2015). The highway needs analysis tool could potentially be used in the next long range plan to prioritize a planning strategy or assist in the evaluation of a major capital project. Because the tool will most likely be used in the next long range plan, staff would like for the tool to be intuitive enough for non-technical people to understand how the score was calculated. A suggestion was made at the last RTOC meeting to form a subcommittee to help develop the scoring method, but staff would prefer not to form another group if RTOC would be willing to provide technical feedback on the network scoring.

Ms. Bozic reviewed questions that have been identified to help guide the discussion of the highway needs analysis tool. Mr. Mohammed indicated that he would like to see

person throughput and modal split incorporated into the analysis because it provides a better picture of the system. Ms. Bozic responded that staff will look into those measures and then asked the group if geometric deficiencies should be included in the analysis. Mr. Montazery said that it will be difficult to measure for this analysis and Mr. Mohammed said that it would definitely affect the transit readiness of a location, especially along expressways or arterials where buses run on the shoulders or have to stop along the arterial.

Ms. Bozic then posed the question if it would be better to use thresholds, like “acceptable” versus “non-acceptable.” Mr. Tuman responded that it will vary by location and facility type. Mr. Montazery followed up by mentioning that urban and suburban are very different and that the ranking are not on an equal basis. Ms. Bozic said that staff will look into adding area types into the analysis. Mr. Mohammed followed up by saying that the question could pertain not only to performance measurement but also to infrastructure maintenance needs. Mr. Tuman agreed and asked how agencies were funding infrastructure maintenance needs. He thinks that there should be more focus on identifying a maintenance improvement program. Staff followed up by asking what would be a good source to quantify and identify agencies maintenance funding needs and if agencies would be willing to share this information. The group agreed that it would be a daunting task to get all the information required for measuring infrastructure maintenance needs in the region.

Ms. Bozic asked the group if the analysis should only focus on facilities eligible for federal funding. Mr. Hochmuth responded that it depends on the intent of the analysis and it should focus on what is agreed upon regionally.

5.0 Expressway Crash Scans

Mr. Murtha gave a presentation on the crash scans created by CMAP staff. He briefly discussed the background of the crash scans and previous work completed by staff relating to congestion and crashes. The data behind the crash scans comes from the IDOT crash database and only included crashes that occurred on expressways. The analysis included all crashes within a five-year period from 2008 – 2012, regardless of time of day. The crash scans were produced for all northeastern Illinois expressways and tollways, including Lake Shore Drive. The unit of analysis was 1/10 mile and the total crashes were normalized to a crash rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The crash scans provide a graphical representation of the scale of the crash problem by location and are intended for traffic operations and planning purposes. The crash scans are not intended for use in safety programming focused on fatalities or serious injuries.

Mr. Sikaras asked where he could access the crash scans and Mr. Murtha replied that they are posted on the performance measurement/scans page (the same page as the congestion scans). Mr. Murtha also noted that not all crash scans are posted yet. Mr. Loper asked if the scans could be used as an incident management tool. Mr. Murtha responded that they could be used for that purpose. Mr. Dillenburg asked if staff had

plans to overlay the safety scan with the congestion scan. Mr. Murtha responded that the plan was to keep them separate at this time.

6.0 Agency Updates

Due to the discussion of the previous agenda items and time, Ms. Bozic tabled the agency updates until the next meeting.

7.0 Other Business

There was no other business before the Regional Transportation Operations Committee.

8.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 23, 2015.

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Todd Schmidt

Todd Schmidt, Committee Liaison