



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Transportation Committee Draft Minutes July 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 – Kane County, Mike Bolton – Pace, Darwin Burkhart – IEPA (via phone), Brian Carlson – IDOT District One, Bruce Carmitchel – IDOT OP&P, John Donovan – FHWA, Emily Karry – Lake County, Patrick Knapp - Kendall County, Scott Hennings – McHenry County, Vice Chair Sis Killen – Cook County, David Kralik – Metra, Christina Kupkowski – Will County, Aimee Lee – Illinois Tollway, Holly Ostdick – CMAP, Mark Pitstick – RTA, Keith Privett – CDOT, Mayor Leon Rockingham – Council of Mayors, P.S. Siraj – Academic & Research, Peter Skosey – MPC, Kyle Smith - CNT, Chris Snyder – DuPage County.

#### **Absent:**

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

#### **Others Present:**

Mike Albin, Donna Anderson, Garland Armstrong, Heather Armstrong, Yonah Freemark, Andrea Gomez, Jeff Griffen, Rick Harnish, Natashia Holmes, Janell Jensen, Mike Klemens, Ashley Lucas, Beth McCluskey, Kirsten Mellem, Shira Orlowek, Brian Pigeon, Chad Riddle, Adam Rod, Judy Shanley, Brian Umbright, Mike Walczak, Audrey Wennink, Barbara Zubek

#### **Staff Present:**

Erin Aleman, Alex Beata, Nora Beck, Teri Dixon, Kama Dobbs, Jesse Elam, Doug Ferguson, Kristin Ihnchak, Leroy Kos, Jennifer Maddux, Daniel Mason, Martin Menninger, Jacquelyn Murdock, Ross Patronskey, Matt Rogus, Liz Schuh, Ben Stromberg, Joe Szabo, Gordon Smith.

## **1.0 Call to Order and Introductions**

Committee Chair Michael Connelly called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

## **2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements**

Mr. Skosey announced that he was appointed to the CMAP Board by Mayor Emanuel to represent the City of Chicago. As such, he will no longer be representing Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) on the Transportation Committee. Beginning in September, Yonah Freemark will represent MPC.

## **3.0 Approval of Minutes – May 15, 2015**

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2015 meeting, as presented, made by Mayor Rockingham, seconded by Mr. Carmitchel, carried.

## **4.0 Executive Director**

Mr. Szabo, new CMAP Executive Director, introduced himself to the committee and discussed his background in municipal government and the railroad industry. The chairman, on behalf of the committee, welcomed Mr. Szabo aboard.

## **5.0 Coordinating Committee Reports**

Mr. Connelly reported that the Regional Coordinating Committee met on June 10, 2015 and received a presentation from staff about alternatives to the Illinois Motor Fuel Tax. The committee recommended approval of the Unified Work Program to the CMAP Board, which was approved. The committee also received an update on Federal legislative activities and discussed the timeline and overview of the next long range plan development.

Mr. Connelly noted that the Local Coordinating Committee has not met since the last Transportation Committee meeting and will meet next on August 12, 2015.

## **6.0 FFY 14-19 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

### **6.1 FFY 14-19 TIP Amendments and Administrative Modifications**

Mr. Kos reported that TIP revisions exceeding financial amendment thresholds have been requested. Administrative modifications, including line items that have been awarded, moved, or deleted, were provided for the committee's information. Ms. Killen made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carmitchel, to approve the FFY 2014-19 TIP Amendments. The motion carried.

### **6.2 Semi-Annual GO TO 2040/TIP Conformity Analysis and TIP Amendment**

Mr. Kos reported that the semi-annual GO TO 2040/TIP conformity analysis and TIP amendment have been completed and requested the committee release them for a 30 day public comment period. Mr. Carmitchel made a motion, seconded by Mr. Skosey, to release the semi-annual GO TO 2040/TIP conformity analysis and TIP

amendment for public comment from July 17 to August 17, 2015. The motion carried.

### **6.3 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

Mr. Ferguson reported that staff is recommending eighteen bicycle facility projects, totaling \$28 million for TAP funding in federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2015 through 2017. He noted that the initial call for projects was for FFYs 2015 and 2016; however many good project applications were received, so staff is proposing extending the funding through FFY 2017. He reported that the proposed program does include one project that did not submit an application. This project is the Cook County Forest Preserve District's North Branch Trail Extension project, which is currently funded with CMAQ funds. The project has been let for bid twice, and the most recent bids exceed the available CMAQ funds. One TAP funded project, sponsored by Bridgeview, has withdrawn from the current program, making it possible to use TAP funds to complete the North Branch Trail Extension.

Mr. Ferguson reported that the proposed FFY 2016 – 2020 CMAQ program, which is recommended for release for public comment by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC), contains 42 projects, totaling \$274 million. The proposed program is grouped by project type, and sorted by emissions cost/benefit ratio. Transportation impact criteria scores are also provided. If released today, the proposed program and comments received will be considered by the CMAQ PSC on September 3, followed by this committee on September 18, and the Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board, and MPO Policy Committee in October.

Mr. Carmitchel made a motion, seconded by Mayor Rockingham, to release the FFY 2015-2017 TAP and FFY 2016-2020 CMAQ programs for public comment from July 17 to August 17, 2015. Discussion followed.

Mr. Kyle Smith stated that Transit Supportive Land Use was a new evaluation criterion that worked pretty well. He stated fifteen projects were in RTA or LTA plans and are good examples of GO TO 2040 implementation.

Mr. Bolton read the staff notes for Pace's proposed vanpool project to the committee and stated that despite comments made at the June PSC meeting, those notes were not changed. He stated that the comments were inappropriate and inaccurate and questioned why staff seemed to be opposed to the Advantage program for providing assistance to disabled persons in need of rides. He stated Pace has a demonstrated history of success. He also noted that IDOT had been planning to develop a regional TDM strategy, but dropped that program due to budget concerns. Lacking this program, the Pace vanpools should still be continued. Mr. Bolton also noted that the staff notes for the Pulse Dempster Line ART project suggest that Pace should

complete the project on Milwaukee Avenue prior to starting the Dempster project, contrary to statements made during the last (2014) call for projects, when staff recommended funding for Milwaukee and suggested that Pace reapply for funding for Dempster in the next cycle.

Mr. Bolton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kralik, to amend the motion on the floor to strike the language regarding the Advantage program in the staff notes for the Pace Vanpools project. Discussion followed.

Mr. Skosey asked if Mr. Bolton's motion was to strike the language or to reconsider funding the project. Mr. Bolton stated the comment should be removed from consideration and the project should be re-scored. Mr. Donovan stated that notes about project funding have never been released to the public in the past. These comments should be used for discussions between applicants and staff. Mr. Carmitchel asked if the PSC needed to be re-involved in the discussion, since they, not staff, recommended the program for release for public comment. Mr. Donovan noted that the PSC agreed with the proposed program of funding not staff comments. Mr. Pitstick noted that for the project under discussion, Pace requested \$26 million, and the recommended program includes \$11.6 million for the project. Mr. Connelly added that the PSC stated that the public comment period is an appropriate time for applicants to discuss individual project recommendations with staff. Mr. Bolton stated that if the comments were stricken, the recommended funding could be used on vanpools and the Advantage program. Mr. Kralik, as the seconder of the motion agreed and suggested that keep notes language factual, rather than offering opinions. Mr. Privett added that the PSC had a lengthy discussion about the IEPA sponsored Partners for Clean Air project and concluded that changes to that project's ranking could occur during the comment period. He added that in past programming cycles, the public comment period has resulted in adjustments to the proposed program, including project additions after. Mr. Connelly suggested that the program for public comment be released without the notes column. Mr. Bolton and Mr. Kralik agreed to modify the motion to amend Mr. Carmitchel's motion. Mr. Connelly restated the amended motion to release the FFY 2015 – 2017 TAP and 2016-2020 CMAQ programs, without the notes column, for public comment from July 17 – August 17, 2015. The motion, as amended, carried.

## **7.0 Local Technical Assistance Program**

Ms. Aleman provided a summary of applications received. In July and August, staff will be talking to sponsors about project scopes and will be seeking input from committees and partner agencies. Transportation committee members should contact Erin Aleman or Bob Dean by August 21 to provide comments. A recommended program will be presented to the CMAP Board in October.

## **8.0 The Next Long-Range Plan**

## 8.1 Options for Defining Regionally Significant Projects

Mr. Elam reviewed the need for developing a definition of regionally significant projects for the next long range plan and presented five potential definitions, that could be used individually or in combination, to form a definition appropriate to the CMAP region. He noted that variations on the first three definitions are common at other MPOs. In response to a question from Mr. Connelly, Mr. Elam stated there are currently seventeen Major Capital Projects in GO TO 2040. Mr. Connelly noted that, to set a framework for comparing possibilities, the San Francisco area MPO has 700 regionally significant projects in their plan. Mr. Carmitchel asked Mr. Donovan if the intent of FHWA's comments during the last MPO certification review was to develop a numerical system for identifying projects. Mr. Donovan stated that the intent was not to mandate any particular method, but to ensure that project impact is an option or component of the definition.

Mr. Carmitchel stated that IDOT OP&P likes the idea of using a hybrid of staff options one through three and sees no advantages of options four or five. He stated economic impact should be a part of the definition. He stated that having fewer projects is probably better. Mr. Carlson added that in addition to economic impact, a safety value should be included. Mr. Kralik stated he would like to see more research on what other MPOs are doing to ensure that CMAP isn't proposing things that nobody else is doing. He stated that staff's first idea, to set a specific cost threshold, is the same as FTA's threshold of \$100 million for projects that receive special attention and thought this was a good connection for transit. For the second idea, basing significance on corridor significance, he asked what staff thoughts were for transit – would ART and/or BRT be included? He stated that the third idea, identifying projects based on work types, appears to be what was used during the development of GO TO 2040. Mr. Elam stated that GO TO 2040 was a hybrid of two and three, where two defines the network as expressways and three sets the work types as adding capacity. Mr. Kralik stated that the fourth idea, identifying projects based on anticipated effects, would require a lot of resources, from implementers and staff and the fifth, identifying projects based on NEPA status, would require a lot of resources from our federal partners. Mr. Snyder asked if there was a particular project type or group being targeted for inclusion in the plan, or if the seventeen projects included is too few, asking why the major capital project definition which had been used for decades needed to be changed.

Mr. Pitstick answered that the request to amend the plan to add the Circle Interchange project came from nowhere and BRT projects need to be included in the plan to receive New Starts or Small Starts funding. He stated a hybrid of criteria is good and major reconstruction projects should be included in the plan. Mr. Snyder stated that locals should be setting local priorities that follow the strategies of the plan but that regional networks like the SRA system and CREATE dictate where to spend resources. He expressed concern that locally identified priorities would not be

able to proceed if they did not make the cut as regionally significant. Mr. Bolton expressed concern that the region would not be able to establish a presence in programs for projects of regional and national significance if individual ART projects, rather than a program of projects, are not identified.

Mr. Kyle Smith stated that CNT favors the fourth idea, alone or in combination with others, and would like to see more active consideration of economic impacts, access to jobs, redevelopment, and similar factors. He stated that a strategy paper is planned and he is interested to see how that could affect the definition. He noted that when considering plan amendments for the Circle Interchange and Illiana Expressway, there was a lot of conversation about economic impact.

In response to a question from Mr. Skosey, Mr. Arkell stated that FTA requires projects seeking New Starts and Small Starts funding to be included in the region's plan. Mr. Skosey noted that there are a lot of local projects that are high dollar, such as the Bloomindale Trail at over \$100 million. Mr. Connelly added that CTA will be spending \$1 billion for 700 new rail cars. Of those, 75 are new cars, and could be considered to be expanding capacity, while the rest are replacements. He asked if the capacity enhancing components of BRT and ART would be what defines those projects as regionally significant or whether such routine system preservation expenditures would be included if they are large. Mr. Bolton suggested that CMAP look to MPOs in Dallas, Houston, Phoenix or elsewhere in the Sunbelt where transit systems are being expanded for thoughts on how to define major projects. Ms. Lee said that the region needed to account for how to rehabilitate old infrastructure and that the better comparators for CMAP would be older regions. Mr. Connelly suggested some research on what other MPOs are doing should focus on the definitions used by small MPOs as well.

Ms. Ostdick stated that there are currently 93 projects in the TIP database that are over \$100 million in total cost, and 152 projects that are over \$50 million.

Mr. Donovan stated that the discussion taking place is exactly what FHWA wants. He recalled the efforts made to ensure that the Circle Interchange was considered a plan amendment, noting the dissonance between that project being considered nationally significant yet not regionally significant. He also noted that a significant project is place-specific: what is significant in Springfield is not the same as in this region. Fiscal responsibility is also important and he cautioned that the funding application for a \$100 million trail expresses a huge need for the project, and yet odd that that project would not be identified as a need in the regional plan. He stated that the discussion in GO TO 2040 makes sense for the region and allowed resources to be focused, but moving forward, it is appropriate for the definition of significance to evolve. Discussion of the individual staff ideas continued, and Mr. Elam stated

that staff will be talking with committee members and partners and will come back to the Transportation Committee to discuss further in September.

## **8.2 Strategy Paper Development Process**

Mr. Elam reviewed the process and comments received to date on strategy papers and requested additional feedback. Mr. Pitstick stated that the RTA is working on an updated transit strategic plan and wants the results to be available to affect the regional comprehensive plan. He stated that TDM and ridesharing tie together into strategy papers. Mr. Skosey agreed regarding TDM and noted that MPC is also about to start a white paper on vehicle technologies. Mr. Arkell suggested including VMT benefit/cost and an evaluation of CTA express track and reduced urban highway mileage. Mr. Kyle Smith stated that Priority Development Areas should be a paper topic, and should not be exclusively a land use related topic.

## **9.0 Legislative Update**

### **9.1 Federal**

Mr. Beata stated that the House passed a five-month short-term extension of MAP-21 that would be funded via an \$8 billion transfer from the general fund to the Highway Trust Fund. The Senate is continuing to work on a long term extension through several committees. Environment and Public Works introduced the DRIVE Act, a six-year \$260 billion program, which includes more robust freight programs. The Commerce Committee introduced a comprehensive Amtrak reauthorization including extensions of PTC requirements and some freight language. The Banking Committee, responsible for transit legislation, and the Finance Committee have taken no action. Mr. Beata noted that the current MAP-21 extension expires July 31, and Congress will be in recess in August.

### **9.2 State**

Mr. Gordon Smith reported that there is nothing to report due to ongoing budget discussions.

## **10.0 Status of the Local Technical Assistance Program**

Mr. Connelly stated that a current status report on the LTA program was included in the meeting materials.

## **11.0 Other Business**

Ms. Lee stated that the Tollway will be spending \$1.7 billion to reconstruct the Tri-State Tollway, with master planning beginning this fall for 2020 construction. A corridor committee is currently being formed.

Mr. Bolton stated that the region needs to look at grade crossing delay impacts, particularly to the south. Ms. Killen stated that Cook County is looking at this issue as part of their long range plan development.

## **12.0 Public Comment**

Mr. Rick Harnish of Midwest High Speed Rail stated that he is surprised to learn that developing a strategic plan and project list is a balancing of funding and agency projects, and that projects with no sponsor, such as CrossRail are not considered. He added that a new project in Toronto has opened that is a good example of a premium express train, similar to the concept for travel from the Loop to O'Hare. Toronto invested \$500 million (Canadian) for a Metra-like service called "Go Transit" that makes a 15 mile trip in 25 minutes at a cost of \$27 (Canadian) per ride. If Metra were to offer a similar service, it would take 20 minutes to get to O'Hare, and seven Metra lines serving Cook, DuPage, and Lake Counties would be improved.

Ms. Heather Armstrong complimented Metra Conductor Jim Berry of the North Central line for accommodating passengers when a train on the Milwaukee District West line experienced mechanical issues, causing extensive delays on that line.

Mr. Garland Armstrong stated that ABC channel 7 reported on a transit center at O'Hare. He also commended Mr. Bolton for his comments regarding the CMAQ program and stated that the disabled want to be a part of society, but need help to do so. He noted that July 26<sup>th</sup> is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ADA. He asked when construction of the Harrison bridge portion of the Circle Interchange project, which is causing detours on the #2 and #60 bus routes would be complete. Mr. Connelly stated that he would find out and email a response to Mr. Armstrong.

## **13.0 Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for September 18, 2015.

## **13.0 Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn at 11:25 a.m., made by Mr. Snyder, seconded by Mr. Carmitchel, carried.