



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Freight Committee

Minutes

September 24, 2015

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

Members Present: Joe Alonzo, Ben Brockschmidt, Mike Burton, David Chandler, Maria Choca Urban (for John Yonan), Kevin Donahue, Lee Hutchins, Kazuya Kawamura, Mike Klemens, Jim LaBelle, Adam Lomasney (for Doug Whitley), John Loper, Steve Lazzara, Dean Mentjes, Adam Rod, Herbert Smith, Randy Thomas

Staff Present: Alex Beata, Craig Heither, Elizabeth Irvin, Kara Komp, Jacki Murdock, Tom Murtha, Elizabeth Oo, Brian Peterson, Todd Schmidt, Elizabeth Schuh, Gordon Smith, Simone Weil

Others Present: Kristen Andersen (Metra), Garland Armstrong (Access Living), Heather Armstrong (Access Living), Jennifer Becker (Kane County DOT), Jackie Forbes (Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors), Mary Elisabeth Pitz (MEP&A), Tammy Wierciak (West Central Municipal Conference, by phone), Erika Witzke (Cambridge Systematics)

1.0 Call to Order

Randy Thomas, co-chair of the Freight Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2.0 Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2015

The minutes from June 15, 2015 were approved by the committee as amended, adding one name to the list of others present at the meeting.

3.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes, but there was one announcement. Mr. Smith provided the committee with a synopsis of a CREATE program tour held earlier in the week. The main stops on the tour included the Englewood Flyover, the 130th/Torrence Avenue grade separation project, various viaduct improvements, and the site of the planned 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project.

4.0 CMAP Freight Model Update

Mr. Heither introduced CMAP's mesoscale freight model. He provided a history of the model development, an overview of how the model functions, examples of outputs from the model, and a discussion of future extensions to the model and other next steps.

The Committee discussed the model at length, asking several questions related to the model's assumptions and sensitivity, connection to economic impact models, relationship to CMAP's longstanding travel demand model, and potential applications to scenario planning. Mr.

Heither provided additional technical details in response to these questions, and also offered to make available more detailed technical resources to the Committee.

5.0 Extent and Use of the Freight System

Mr. Beata provided a brief overview of two recent Policy Updates, the first reviewing the status of the region's air cargo network and the second reviewing the status of the region's waterborne commerce.

The Committee engaged in substantial discussion on these two points. Related to air cargo, Mr. Rod provided more background on recent developments at O'Hare, noting the need for better communication and coordination between shippers and carriers. Mr. Donahue addressed questions related to landside access at O'Hare, specifically the proposed Lee Street interchange improvements and related funding issues. Ms. Choca Urban noted the broader benefits of access improvements at O'Hare. Mr. Chandler asked whether the staff research considered a potential third airport at Peotone; Mr. Beata responded that it did not. Some members asked if staff had considered the impacts of individual industries' supply chains on the transportation system; Mr. Beata responded that these research questions are being pursued through CMAP's supply chain research.

Related to waterborne commerce, Mr. Smith noted the recent successes at Burns Harbor in northwest Indiana and suggested that location as a case study. Some members suggested setting up conversations with freight-related property developers and brokers. Ms. Schuh responded that the supply chain research has involved numerous conversations with private-sector stakeholders.

6.0 Supply Chain Research

Mr. Peterson presented the findings from CMAP staff's report on regional supply chains. This research effort investigated the region's main trading partners, the commodities traded and modes used for these shipments, and overall industry trends in modern supply chains and logistics.

Several Committee members commended the quality of staff research at CMAP. Mr. Lomasney asked about the factors that make Chicago an attractive location for third-party logistics firms. Mr. Peterson responded that historic trends appear to play a role. Mr. Chandler asked about any potential plans to connect the supply chain research to CMAP's freight modeling efforts. Mr. Peterson responded that the research process is iterative, with both policy and modeling staff learning more about freight datasets as the projects unfold. Mr. Smith suggested connecting the supply chain research with northwest Indiana and southeast Wisconsin. Mr. Peterson noted that the Milwaukee region is the main trading partner for the Chicago area, exchanging particularly large flows of mixed freight.

7.0 Federal Updates

Mr. Beata gave an update on federal legislative activities. He reported that Congress extended MAP-21 through October 29, 2015. Additionally, the Senate passed its Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act, a six-year bill authorizing \$360 billion in federal transportation funding; however, the bill provides sufficient funds for only the first three years.

Mr. Beata reported that the DRIVE Act is the first federal transportation bill to provide funding specifically for freight projects. It builds out planning provisions to include multimodal networks and facilities, and also requires state freight plans and advisory committees. The DRIVE Act contains formula funding from the Highway Trust Fund, largely to be spent on the highway system. In addition, the DRIVE Act also contains two competitive grant funding programs for multimodal freight projects.

Mr. LaBelle asked about the December 31, 2015 deadline for implementation of positive train control. Mr. Beata responded that there is broad understanding that the railroad industry is incapable of meeting the end-of-year deadline and that previous legislative initiatives this year proposed various extensions. Other Committee members noted the significant negative consequences should Congress fail to extend the deadline.

8.0 Other Business

Ms. Witzke informed the Committee that the Natural Resources Defense Council recently released a report on the Chicago Area Waterway System, calling for better integration of maritime transportation with the surface transportation system. She recommended the technical appendix as a resource for interested parties.

9.0 Public Comment

There was a public comment from Ms. Heather Armstrong regarding a highway-railroad grade crossing with limited safety improvements near the intersection of Belmont Avenue and Mannheim Road in Franklin Park. Mr. Smith responded that that rail line might have very low volumes, and that he would follow up with colleagues from the appropriate railroad.

There was a public comment from Mr. Garland Armstrong regarding delay for Pace Paratransit vehicles at highway-rail grade crossings located near rail yards. Mr. Smith responded that he would follow up with colleagues from the appropriate railroad.

10.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be November 16, 2015.

11.0 Adjournment

The Task Force adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Beata, CMAP Staff