



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item No. 3.0

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MPO Policy Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2016

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

Members Present: Randy Blankenhorn-Chair, Frank Beal-representing the CMAP Board, Greg Bedalov-representing Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, Lynette Ciavarella-representing Metra, Mike Connelly-representing the CTA, Joe Gottemoller-representing McHenry County, Scott Gryder-representing Kendall County, Elliott Hartstein-representing the CMAP Board, Jennifer (Sis) Killen-representing Cook County, Aaron Lawlor-representing Lake County, Jill Leary-representing the RTA, John McCarthy-representing Private Providers, Tom Rickert-representing Kane County, T.J. Ross-representing PACE, Rebekah Scheinfeld-representing CDOT, Jeffery Schielke-representing the Council of Mayors, Chris Snyder-representing DuPage County, Liisa Stark-representing Class 1 Railroads, Paula Trigg-representing Lake County, and non-voting members Catherine (Kay) Batey-representing FHWA, and Tony Greep-representing the FTA.

Staff Present: Joe Szabo, Angela Manning-Hardimon, Bob Dean, Tom Garritano, Tom Kotarac, Elizabeth Schuh, Jesse Elam and Sherry Kane

Others Present: Mike Albin-DMMC, Erin Aleman-IDOT, Garland & Heather Armstrong-Access Living, Len Cannata-WCMC, Bruce Carmitchel-IDOT, John Donovan-FHWA, John Fortmann-IDOT, Scott Hennings-McHenry County DOT, Janell Jensen-McHenry County Council of Mayors, Mike Klemens-WCGL, Jon-Paul Kohler-FHWA, Aimee Lee-Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, Kevin O'Malley-CDOT, Mark Pitstick-RTA, Justine Reisinger-IDOT, David Seglin-CDOT, Mike Walczak-NWMC, Tammy Wierciak-WCMC, Laura Wilkison-Metro Strategies, and Rocco Zucchero-Illinois State Toll Highway Authority

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

IDOT Secretary, Policy Committee Chair Randy Blankenhorn called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m., and asked others to introduce themselves.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes or announcements.

3.0 Approval of Minutes-October 14, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2015 joint meeting of the MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board as presented was made by Mayor Jeffery Schielke and seconded by Paula Trigg. All in favor, the motion carried.

4.0 Agency Reports

CMAP Executive Director Joe Szabo gave an update on agency activities reporting that CMAP had reached agreement with IDOT, FHWA and the FTA, and was now receiving the 80% of its funding that comes from federal agencies, which removed the immediate crisis so the doors have stayed open and staff are functioning as normal. The lack of a 20% match has significant implications: Many contracts -- primarily related to the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program -- are being paused, travel is being restricted and new hires are being considered with an extra level of scrutiny. Szabo went on to say that the next plan launch event is scheduled for February 24, urging all to attend and the LTA update had been included in the packet. When queried, Szabo stated that not necessarily all the contracted LTA projects would pause, rather that all are being considered on a case-by-case basis.

On behalf of Leanne Redden, a non-voting member of the CMAP Board, Executive Director Joe Szabo also gave an update on the CMAP Board meeting held the previous day, reporting that the Board had covered many of the same items on the Policy Committee agenda, and the Board directed staff to continue move forward developing a proposal to diversify CMAP's funding both in terms of a legislative approach and a backup plan in the event the legislative approach fails. Finally, Szabo reported that the board discussed the next long-range plan, emphasizing their interest in being involved in the outreach.

For the Council of Mayors, Mayor Jeffrey Schielke reported that the Executive Committee met on Tuesday, January 12. The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority gave a presentation on the I-294 Central Tri-State Corridor Planning Council and the importance for municipal involvement in the Planning Council. The Executive Committee also approved its funding request for the FY 2017 Unified Work Program (UWP) that will be submitted to the UWP Committee and approved advance funding for seven projects totaling nearly \$6,000,000. Additionally, Schielke continued, the Committee engaged in a discussion about the growing unobligated balance of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, with the unobligated balance exceeding the amount of new money coming into the program which is not indicative of the need in northeastern Illinois. The Executive Committee, in coming months, will be working on a strategy to reduce the unobligated balance. The next meeting of the Council's Executive Committee is scheduled for April 12.

5.0 Unified Work Program (UWP)

CMAP Deputy Executive Director for Finance and Administration Angela Manning-Hardimon presented the FY 2017 Unified Work Program (UWP) process and reported that

the format for the current year would be similar to that of FY 2016. With FY 2017 funding allocation not available at this time, the program is based on FY 2016 federal funding levels at \$16.7 million, with matching funds totals just over \$21 million. Hardimon reviewed the schedule, with the Call for Proposals and submittal of proposals due in January, proposals presentation and funding allocation completed in February, UWP Program adoption in early March, with committee approvals planned for the months of April and June with the release of the final FY 2017 UWP document on June 30.

6.0 Interim Products for Long-Range Plan

CMAP staff Liz Schuh, co-project leader for the new plan, covered key points of engagement and voting for the plan's development. As a reminder, this is the beginning of a 3-year process concluding in October 2018. At three times, major reports will be brought to the Policy Committee and the CMAP Board, each of which will be presented for approval at the joint meeting with the CMAP Board in October. The first in October 2016 will be an interim report on regional priorities, and builds on initial engagement activities such as the kick-off event for the plan, a series of workshops to look at challenges and opportunities to move the region forward, and a series of topical forums. A second product submitted in October 2017 will focus on plan direction and include the scenario planning process, financial plan, and performance measures to assess regionally significant projects. The draft plan will be released for public comment in the summer of 2018, then presented for approval in October 2018.

Asked about a new definition for regionally significant projects, CMAP staff Jesse Elam reported that meetings were being scheduled with project implementers to determine how many and which types of projects would meet the proposed thresholds for regionally significant projects. Elam went on to say that this information would be reported back to the Transportation Committee in May 2016 with a recommendation on how to proceed.

Policy Committee Chair Blankenhorn urged attendance at the plan launch event and asked that members become a part of the plan update early on and see that their staffs are fully engaged.

7.0 Updates on Regionally Significant Projects

Policy Committee Chair Randy Blankenhorn asked for this item on the agenda to allow members to report on all that is happening in the region.

Beginning with IDOT, John Fortmann talked about the I-55 managed lanes project. The existing roadway has wide shoulders through much of the corridor, and the intent in the 1990s was to preserve opportunity for a future HOV lane. In 2011 bus on shoulder was implemented and has been very successful, carrying roughly 1000 passengers a day. Under the direction of the new secretary, the managed lanes project has become a priority. The total cost at the high end is about \$525 million which includes Phase 3 construction oversight as well as Phase 2 engineering. Three alternatives were considered: HOV lanes, HOT lanes, and express toll lanes, with express toll lanes appearing to be the most beneficial. The price would be variable thus limiting the number of users, and the other lanes would also realize improved reliability. Public hearings on the draft EIS will begin

soon. A noise analysis is in the process of being refined, with IDOT working with the tollway and FHWA regarding the new policy.

Regarding North Lake Shore Drive, Fortmann continued, this is a project in partnership with the City with the goal to improve bridge and roadway condition, improve safety, and increase mobility. It is a much needed project with high use by all modes of transportation. There have been 2 public meetings and 4 task force meetings to evaluate a number of alternatives, anywhere from replacing in kind to a tunnel under the lake. Alternatives are being modelled, public meetings and completion of the study is expected in 2018. It's an interesting study with a lot of partners, including Chicago Park District and CTA.

Next, Rocco Zuccherro for the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, reported on the Tollway's 2015 Move Illinois capital program. A few months after adoption of GO TO 2040, the Tollway adopted its 15-year, \$12 billion program to increase mobility, relieve congestion, reduce pollution and produce jobs. Over the 4 year period, \$4.2 billion has been committed towards the program. Completed first, the 294/57 interchange project gives new access to Posen, Midlothian, Harvey and other south suburban communities. Zuccherro called out CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program which provided an insight as to how the investment in the interchange could help those south suburban communities.

The I-90 (62-mile) corridor continues to be a major initiative, from concept to construction completion in a 5-year period, Zuccherro reported. A lot of work has been completed to date on the western 37 miles from Elgin to Rockford. Efforts are now focused on the eastern portion from Elgin to the Kennedy, working with IDOT, Pace and many others. The \$2.5 billion project is expected to be complete, with all lanes open, near the end of 2016. Widening of I-90 will accommodate some dedicated transit facilities and lanes on the inside shoulder, and the Tollway is working with Pace on a whole new corridor with park and ride facilities and creating active transit management. The Elgin O'Hare project, Zuccherro continued, now known as Illinois Route 390, was widened from I-290 to US 20 in 2015, and new fly-over ramp connected I-290 to westbound 390. The east-west portion from Lake Street to Route 83 is expected to be complete in 2017. This is a \$3.4 billion project, 90% of which is committed by the Tollway. About half the funding gap was closed by local partnerships through CMAQ funding and other in-kind (e.g., land) donations.

Zuccherro also reported on two additional projects. For the Tollway Central Tri-State Corridor project with \$1.7 billion committed in the Move Illinois program, a master plan is expected in 2017 which construction planned for the corridor in 2020. And, finally in Lake County, the Tollway has been working with Lake County, CMAP, IDOT on the last part of the 53/120 project and at the Tollway Board meeting on December 15, the Tollway voted to initiate the preparation of an EIS. This is expected to be a 3-5 year process. Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov added that the Tollway is working with the Chicago Departments of Transportation and Aviation in the acquisition of land for further work in the O'Hare area.

CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld highlighted some city projects that wrapped up in 2015 or are underway in 2016. Under Mayor Emanuel's leadership, Scheinfeld

reported, Chicago moved forward on the CREATE-related realignment of 130th and Torrence with improvements for all modes including commuter rail, freight rail, cyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicles. Also in 2015 and continuing into 2016 is the reconstruction of the Damen, Elston and Fullerton intersection, a project a long time coming and one of the most dangerous intersections in the city of Chicago. Next month will see removal of the viaduct along Western Avenue over Belmont and Clybourn, one of the last remaining car-centered viaducts from the 1950s and 1960s. 2015 also saw significant investments in bike lane infrastructure, surpassing the goal of building out more than 100 miles of protected bike lanes. The Divvy bike share program is seeing expansion by another 175 stations, and the City is partnering with Evanston and Oak Park to bring Divvy into those municipalities.

Loop Link has been opened for service on Washington and Madison, a major innovative redesign geared toward increasing capacity while reducing congestion in east-west movements across the loop. On the east side of the loop, a new L station is being constructed at Washington and Wabash that is replacing two 100-year old elevated stations that were not ADA accessible, made possible with CMAQ dollars. On the west side of the loop and under construction is the Union Station transit center, an off-street bus facility that will support CTA buses, provide a weather-protected connection through the pedway that links to the existing concourse into Union Station, and address congestion around Union Station. The City is also seeing continued momentum in long-term planning for investments in Union Station. An RFI has also been issued for a master developer for the larger scale partnership for redevelopment, a capstone on the other major regional foundational pieces for investment in downtown.

Briefly Mike Connelly reported that Loop Link has improved travel times in the downtown area and that the sorting out of a bus lane, bike lane and automobile lane has actually worked, giving a much more reliable travel time in the area. Connelly offered a quick update on two major projects in the CTA capital program: RPM Phase I is moving very rapidly into its engineering stage and during 2015 the environmental work was completed. It is approved now to move into engineering phase and it is expected to be listed in the 2017 budget as a core capacity project. The second project seeing continued environment work and long-term planning is the Red Line extension on the south side, Connelly continued, expecting to publish and hold public hearings on both the environmental work in the latter part of 2016. Other major projects include the 95th terminal rebuild, doubling the size of the bus terminal space. This is a \$280 million project, underway now and constructed over the next two years. Another regionally significant project is the rail car replacement program, and this year out to bid for another 800 cars, about a \$900 million project. Connelly was asked to give a little more information about the 95th Street project now underway, and added that it's not a line extension or a major enhancement to capacity in the sense of the old definition, but will increase capacity at the bus terminal and meets the proposed \$250 million cost threshold.

In response to a question raised about a marketing campaign for Loop Link, Commissioner Scheinfeld described outreach efforts through a volunteer program handing out informational brochures. Marketing is also taking place at the Metra stations for commuters, Scheinfeld added.

Finally, related to Longmeadow Tom Rickert reported that the Kane County project has seen about \$35 million over the past 20 years in environmental studies and traffic demand modelling. It is a huge partnership in the development of an EIS as well as IDOT's assistance over the past 20 years in meeting the 50% local match for the project and the MPO's assistance with travel demand studies. The original bridge study, Rickert continued, included Kane County and a portion of Kendall County, and led to recent construction of Stearns Road bridge corridor at about \$180 million. Longmeadow is next in the process, with construction and construction engineering costs estimated at about \$115 million. Phase I engineering approval was received in 2013, and the County is now about 90% complete on the Phase II engineering. The first letting came in under estimate and the first stage (out of 5) has a 2016-19 construction schedule. Funding was unique in a joint effort through the county, IDOT, municipalities, federal funds and in order to close the funding gap, the County will move forward with toll bridges, so the \$35 million bridge portion of the project will be support by tolling.

Chairman Blankenhorn concluded by asking if others wanted to mention any projects and suggested that the Policy Committee try to highlight a couple projects at future meetings to let others know what is happening in the region.

8.0 Federal Legislative Framework and Agenda

Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programming, Tom Kotarac, reported that a long-term transportation bill passed overwhelmingly by Congress (359-65 in the House; 83-16 in the Senate) supported by almost all of the Illinois delegation (save one member, Congressman Roskam) became law in December. The bill continues its tradition of plugging the Highway Trust Fund with general fund transfers and there were no new user fees related to transportation used to offset the \$70 billion the transfers in the bill. Kotarac detailed what funding levels will be under the new bill for Illinois statewide with about a 10% increase in funding for highways and transit statewide from (\$1.37 billion to \$1.5 billion for Illinois highways and on the transit side, from about \$537 million to about \$600 million). New Starts will be able to compete much like that they had in the past, which is good for the region, Kotarac continued, and positive train control sees its first dedicated highway trust fund money, at \$199 million. Rail safety is also covered as well as Amtrak's reauthorization making the legislation truly multi-modal. Additional rail provisions in the bill include stronger rail tank car safety regulations, and changes to the RRIF program through the Federal Railroad Administration which may help the Union Station project.

The new freight program in the bill is the first new federal highway program since 1992 and is a huge win to the region. The new program will dedicate \$10.7 billion nationwide for freight projects over 5 years in two different types of programs, one of which is a formula-based program that will provide Illinois with \$45 million in freight funding annually, the second is a competitive grant program with about \$900 million per year up for competition. Until now, rail projects had never been eligible for highway trust fund money, but the new freight programs allow for rail projects to be funded with a 10% annual cap on rail projects in the formula program and a \$500 million cap for rail projects in the competitive program over the life of the bill. It is expected that within the next few months, the competitive program will likely be open for proposals by DOT with \$800 million available this year to a host of stakeholders. CMAP is interested in playing a

central role in ensuring the Northeastern Illinois region is successful in this upcoming grant competition. Congress also passed an appropriations bill that includes another TIGER round at \$500 million which should be available concurrently with the new freight program. Kotarac was asked to clarify that \$1.3 billion in competitive grant funding (\$500 TIGER, and \$800 freight), might be available as early as March, and cautioned that this is a new competitive program and may take some time to work out.

Kotarac moved on to present the Federal Agenda adopted by the CMAP board. This is a document that guides us as to what we advocate with Congress and our federal partners. The law creating the new federal freight program, Kotarac explained, has a lot of specific direction but the important details will be determined by DOT and those details and decisions will matter greatly for us as federal highways and DOT figures out how to interpret the law. For instance, the statute states that rail and inter modal projects need to have a significant impact on the highway network, how DOT defines this statutory requirement could help or hurt the region. We want to be sure we are engaged in the discussion with the Congressional delegation, DOT and FHWA and make sure the regulations implementing the law work for us. The remainder of the Agenda has not changed, rooted deeply in GO TO 2040 recommendations and meant to guide us in comprehensive planning and policy.

Thanks was expressed to those in the region that supported the PTC legislation that will see over \$350 million to do what is needed, and the push for legislation to meet the 2018 deadline. A presentation on PTC will be scheduled for a future meeting.

Pace representatives asked a question related to the potential use of fines or court settlement awards related to the Volkswagen diesel emissions cheating cases being discussed now. Pace argued these funds may present an opportunity to bring funding to bus programs that could reduce diesel emissions in our region. Kotarac explained the future use of those funds may be dictated by law, courts, or settlement agreements and it is important to engage the Illinois Congressional Delegation with any ideas stakeholders have for any funding that may come about from the current Volkswagen dispute.

8.0 Alternative Long-Term Funding Options

Executive Director Joe Szabo reiterated that with the help of IDOT, FHWA, and FTA, CMAP remains fiscally solvent for the current fiscal year due to receiving 80% of its federal planning funds. However, Szabo continued, the new fiscal year will present challenges, with so many contracts (especially in the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program) ineligible for payment from the funding we are receiving. Staff has begun working on a number of alternative solutions for a sustainable approach to funding CMAP operations.

Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programming Tom Kotarac reported on a solution requiring legislative action where the state honors a commitment it made in the enabling legislation that created CMAP. In CMAP's authorizing legislation, Kotarac continued, the legislation did contain a non-binding commitment to fund CMAP's new comprehensive planning mission which was honored in 2007 through what was known as the Comprehensive Regional Planning Fund (CRPF). CMAP received funding in 2007, 2008, and 2009. From the \$5,000,000 general fund appropriation, shared throughout the

state with all the MPOs, 70% came here, which gave CMAP the flexibility to plan comprehensively without the more stringent requirements of road fund appropriations. The fund was dissolved and IDOT has since provided the agency's match with state road fund dollars that comes with restrictions to transportation related projects. Three basic problems to try to solve, Kotarac explained, are: (1) the risk of a shut down; (2) the risk of losing federal formula dollars; and (3) not meeting our mission to comprehensively plan. For consideration will be a state proposal to revive the regional comprehensive planning fund with \$5,000,000 and to request a continuing appropriation of that funding so that it comes regardless of any budget impasse while having the federal funds pass through directly to the MPOs.

CMAP has had an over reliance on transportation dollars, which is not the best for agency's mission. Questioned about the broad-based support from other MPOs, Szabo suggested that others have much more diverse sources of funding than those of CMAP.

Deputy Executive Director for Planning Bob Dean stated that the legislative approach is the priority moving forward, but the likelihood of that being uncertain, we have also begun to develop a back-up plan to keep the agency solvent. There is no cash flow crisis at the moment, but if there is no state budget by the end of the fiscal year, over the summer we would face a potential shutdown. Dean went on to say that the topic was discussed the day before at the CMAP Board meeting. CMAP reviewed peer agencies across the country and CMAP's predecessor agencies, finding that the cash flow issues that we facing are unusual. Dean scrolled through a power point presentation comparing CMAP's overall budget to that of other similar MPOs; budget source comparisons, i.e., federal and state transportation funding, local dues, fees-for-service and other grants; comparisons to other Illinois MPOs; and historical funding levels. He concluded that the continuing financial problems we face are due in large part of an over-reliance on the state as the sole source of the local match and the lack of diversification in terms of where the funding comes from. Dean went on to say that the state legislative solution is the top priority, but should that not succeed we need a backup plan that the Board and Policy Committee could implement without legislation. Three elements of this backup plan would include an increase in local contributions, an increase of fee-for-service arrangements and external grants. Dean explained the structure for each element, suggesting that the discussion would guide the development of a full proposal in the coming months. Dean also presented supporting arguments for each of the elements and concluded that the current funding situation is not sustainable, that the top priority is a legislative solution, and that a backup plan is recommended to be implemented by July 1 if a legislative solution is not successful.

Chairman Blankenhorn opened the discussion stating that this is a serious conversation, not just a CMAP Board problem, but also an MPO Policy Committee problem that needs to be solved and that the Policy Committee also needs to invest in the agency, through dues or fees for service. Until recently CMAP was the only agency in the state that didn't supply all its federal match through local funds. Blankenhorn emphasized the value CMAP brings, and the simple fact that without CMAP, there are not federal funds. Since transportation is the biggest portion of CMAP's work, the Policy Committee needs to be part of the conversation. A revenue source that allows execution of CMAP's full mission is critical. Members weighed in on topics related to: assessment of dues between counties

and municipalities; how dues might be distributed among local governments; and a concern that requiring high local matches may restrict access to some programs (i.e., CMAQ). Members emphasized that reestablishing the Regional Comprehensive Planning Fund should be considered before placing pressure on the local dues structure, but also accepted the need for a backup plan.

Dean concluded the discussion, stating that a more complete proposal would be presented to the Policy Committee at its meeting in March, and that timing warrants a back-up plan to be put in place by July 1, if the legislative efforts in the spring are not successful.

9.0 Other Business

McHenry County Chair Joe Gottemoller announced that he had met with a number of counties to the west of McHenry which has caused a rumor that McHenry may leave the region. Not true, Gottemoller continued, but that McHenry County along with Boone and Winnebago counties are working together on comprehensive economic development.

10.0 Public Comment

Heather Armstrong suggested that 390 to O'Hare is a great idea and asked how one might use public transportation to get the airport. Rocco Zuccherro responded. Garland Armstrong suggested that state lawmakers do not fully understand the value of CMAP.

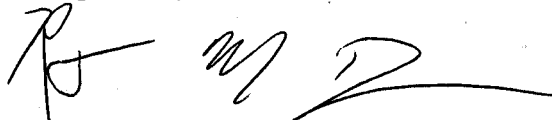
11.0 Next Meeting

The MPO Policy Committee meets next on March 10, 2016.

12.0 Adjournment

At 11:30 a.m., a motion to adjourn by Mayor Jeffery Schielke was seconded by Lynette Ciavarella. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Dean', written over a horizontal line.

Bob Dean, Deputy Executive Director for
Planning

02-22-2016

/stk

Approved as presented, by unanimous vote, March 10, 2016