



CHICAGO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

MEETING OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

to be held at the

CHICAGO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
300 West Adams Street, Chicago, Illinois

Cunningham-Williams Conference Room

Thursday, January 8, 2004

10:00 A.M.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. OLD BUSINESS

**A. Approval of Minutes for
October 9, 2003 Meeting**
ACTION REQUESTED
Approval by Policy Committee

The minutes were previously mailed.

B. Council of Mayors' Report

C. Executive Director's Report

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Swift Rail Act

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has published Interim Final Rules for implementing the Routine Horn Sounding provisions of the Act in response to nearly 3,000 comments on FRA's January 2000 proposed rules. The regulations will go into effect on December 18, 2004. There is some loosening of requirements for crossings in northeastern Illinois that are already "quiet" - but early indications are that many will still require an investment to remain "quiet". Also, the new regulations provide 5 years from December 2003 to make those changes (8 years under some conditions). FRA is taking comments until February 17th - but have indicated that they do not expect to make additional changes. Staff at the City, Metra, CATS and municipal conferences are assessing the 422 page document - it appears that most of the concerns raised in this region in May 2000 were not fully addressed.

B. 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update

Since adoption by the Policy Committee of the 2030 RTP in October 2003, staff have been preparing detailed responses to public comments as well a "fold-up" version of the RTP for popular consumption. Many data requests for 2030 travel demand data have been received indicating a high interest in moving forward with the plan's recommendations. The RTP Committee will meet early in 2004 to "debrief" on Shared Path 2030 and begin preparing a work plan for the 2030 RTP update (due in 2006).

C. United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Proposed Rule to Implement the 8 Hour Ozone Standard

The USEPA issued a proposed rule on November 5, 2003 implementing the 8-hour ozone and PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Comments were sought by December 22, 2003. The Work Program Committee authorized staff to prepare comments and forward them to the USEPA comment docket. Staff will review the proposed guidance and comments provided

D. Implications of the 2000 Census in Northeastern Illinois

In 2002, the US Bureau of the Census issued the designations of urbanized areas based on the 2000 Census. Several actions will be under consideration in the next few months as a result of the new designations. The federal-aid urban boundary for northeastern Illinois will be updated. A decision will be made on disposition of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the Wisconsin portion of the new Round Lake Beach-McHenry-Grayslake UZA (urbanized area). Since the area has a population of over 200,000, it qualifies for an FTA allocation, which could be split between Illinois and Wisconsin. The Illinois portion of the funds, by state law, go to the RTA. Wisconsin must decide whether to give RTA its portion of the funds as well, or to use them on transit projects within Kenosha County. A decision will be made by the Round Lake Beach-McHenry-Grayslake urbanized area to begin the process necessary to form their own MPO or to decide to continue to have CATS serve in that capacity. The CATS Metropolitan Planning Area boundary must be updated. Finally, an agreement between CATS and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) on coordinating planning efforts between the two regions will be considered. It is hoped that discussions will proceed so that action may be taken at the June Policy Committee meeting

E. Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Project

CREATE is a joint public/private partnership among the City of Chicago, the Illinois Department of Transportation, and the Association of American Railroads representing the major passenger and freight railroads. The project is designed to improve passenger rail service, reduce motorist delay, ease traffic congestion, increase safety and provide economic and environmental benefits for the Chicago region. Proposed are a mix of rail / highway grade crossing separations, rail / rail flyovers, extensive track and switch replacements and improved train control systems. The committee will be briefed on the plan, and discuss potential funding sources for individual elements of the plan.

F. Regional Transportation Task Force

Most of the members have been named to the task force. Although there has been no meeting of the task force, several other activities have taken place related to the legislation creating the task force. The Committee will be briefed on these activities.

G. FY2004-2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was approved on October 20. The TIP includes reduced versions of the latest generation of project maps developed by CATS staff. Distribution of 36" by 60" copies of these maps has been ongoing. The larger size tremendously increases the readability of the maps. Many of the projects in the approved TIP are dependent on the upcoming federal transportation reauthorization for funding. Under current federal regulations, the TIP must be updated by October 2005. With each federal authorization there are some changes to TIP requirements. The TIP Procedures Committee will meet to review what reauthorization holds for the TIP once the legislation moves forward. On a procedural note, staff is currently converting the TIP Database from Microsoft Access 97 to Access 2000. The conversion should be completed in early 2004. The Access 2000 version will be distributed on CD and posted on the CATS Web site as soon as the conversion is complete.

H. Interactive Internet Applications – Expressway Atlas – Transportation Improvement Program GIS

Staff recently finished updating the 2001 Highway Atlas. The atlas presents average annual daily traffic and vehicle miles traveled as well as a variety of information on the history and operation of the expressway system for northeastern Illinois. Data is now available in both PDF format and through an interactive web application. CATS is also developing an interactive map to display TIP data from the CATS MPO website.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

V. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting is March 11, 2004.

VI. ADJOURNMENT