

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AGENCY FOR PLANNING
AND
LAKE COUNTY**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an agreement between the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and Lake County. This agreement concerns the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant received from HUD by the Chicago metropolitan area to support the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program, for which CMAP is the lead agency.

INTRODUCTION

CMAP adopted GO TO 2040, the long-range comprehensive plan for the Chicago metropolitan area, in October 2010. This plan seeks to achieve sustainable prosperity for the region, seeking to build on the region's many assets and also address the challenges it faces in the short and long terms. GO TO 2040 involved several years of research, public engagement, and consensus-building among regional stakeholders, and was adopted unanimously by CMAP's governing boards.

In August 2010, on behalf of a broad regional consortium, CMAP applied for funding through the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant program. This program is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of the federal Sustainable Communities Initiative, a partnership between federal agencies including HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The purpose of the application was to provide assistance to local governments in taking actions that advance the implementation of GO TO 2040 through a program termed the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program. The application was successful, and work on the LTA program has begun.

The application featured CMAP as a lead applicant, but was submitted by a consortium that also involved many other government, nongovernmental, and philanthropic organizations. In total, more than 40 organizations were members of this broad regional consortium, and the size and breadth of the consortium was a factor in the application's success. Lake County was a member of the consortium submitting the application. Per HUD's requirements for the

Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant, members of the consortium are now asked to enter into an MOU concerning the LTA program; this MOU fills that requirement.

The remainder of this MOU describes the work plan for the LTA program, the organizational structure used to oversee and guide this work, the roles and responsibilities of CMAP and other consortium members, the need for project-specific agreements in some cases, and the process for changing consortium membership if necessary.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The overall goal of the LTA program is to accomplish a series of local projects that advance the implementation of the GO TO 2040 plan and the federal livability principles. Success will be measured in terms of the quality and quantity of local projects pursued. In terms of quality, the local projects pursued through the LTA program will increase the consistency of local planning documents with GO TO 2040 and the federal livability principles; this will be evaluated annually through reports on the progress of the LTA program. In terms of quantity, at least forty local projects will be undertaken primarily using the resources made available by the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant, and many more projects will be materially advanced through assistance from members of the consortium.

WORK PLAN

Local projects to be undertaken through the LTA program include comprehensive plans, subareas plans, revisions to zoning ordinances or other regulations, studies of specific topics like housing or transit oriented development, or other similar projects. Overall, the focus of the program is on projects which link land use, housing, and transportation. Each project will also have specific emphasis on public engagement, particularly reaching underrepresented groups and incorporating their perspectives within the local projects, as well as capacity building among local governments and community-based organizations.

The assistance offered is primarily staff assistance; the major use of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant funds is to hire ten experienced planners and outreach specialists to be assigned to local projects. A small amount of grant funding is also available, and will be used for small grants to complement staff assistance, rather than for large stand-alone grants to communities.

Local projects will be identified through a competitive application and prioritization process. Local governments, including municipalities and counties as well as interjurisdictional groups, are eligible applicants. Nonprofit organizations may also apply but require the support of the relevant local government to be eligible. Applications will be solicited through a call for projects which will be advertised regionally, and then prioritized using agreed-upon criteria.

From among the applications, a group of higher-priority projects will be identified, and the primary purpose of the LTA program is to advance these projects. A thorough scoping process for each project will be undertaken, for the purpose of determining the most appropriate way that CMAP and other consortium members can advance each project. In some cases, this may result in the extensive contribution of CMAP staff time; in others, it may result in CMAP assisting the community in securing funding from an external source to procure consulting assistance, or in CMAP supporting a project which is led by another organization.

The application process will be held at least once each calendar year for the three-year length of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant. Local projects will be initiated on a rolling basis following each application process; project completion dates will vary considerably based on project details.

There will be an opportunity to modify the project application and prioritization process before each call for projects. This will typically occur during the two-month period before a call for projects is scheduled. Discussions of this topic will occur at several of the committee levels described in the “Organizational Structure of the Consortium” section of this MOU, below.

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant will expire on January 15, 2014.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF CONSORTIUM

The consortium was organized around CMAP’s organizational structure, which was established in 2006 in a deliberate effort to create broad-based involvement in the agency’s activities, and was modified in 2011 to refocus on implementation of GO TO 2040. This tiered organizational structure helps to manage the number and diversity of consortium members involved. Each committee level is described below.

- Working committees. The first level of the organizational structure is a series of issue-specific “working committees.” There are six working committees, each focusing on a different issue: economic and community development, environment and natural

resources, housing, human and community development, land use, and transportation. These groups each contain a variety of stakeholders representing many levels of government – local, county, state, and federal – as well as relevant nongovernmental organizations and the business community. The working committees also provide a clear method for the engagement of underrepresented groups, and are broadly open to organizations that wish to engage in the implementation of GO TO 2040 and the LTA program in particular. Most consortium members are already members of one or more working committees, and the membership of the working committees will be expanded to include those organizations which have not been represented in the past. The term “working committees” is used deliberately, as these committees are asked to meet frequently, provide detailed reviews of programs, and overall be involved in the day-to-day details of the consortium’s work. Each working committee has two co-chairs, selected by the committee membership.

- **Coordinating committees.** The subject-area expertise of the working committees is brought together on “coordinating committees.” There are two coordinating committees, one focused on local planning support and one on regional programming and policy; the local committee is more relevant for the purposes of the LTA program. Each coordinating committee includes one of the co-chairs from each of the six working committees and seven representatives from CMAP’s Board of Directors, which is described further below. This structure ensures that the perspectives of the working committees are brought to the attention of the Board of Directors. Recommendations for allocations of resources through the LTA program will be discussed at the coordinating committee level.
- **Advisory committees.** Three existing “advisory committees” provide general input on CMAP’s programs and processes. These include one advisory committee made up of local mayors; one made up of County Board chairs; and one made up of citizens interested in regional planning.
- **Policy committees.** Two “policy committees” have final approval over allocation of CMAP resources. One of these is the CMAP Board of Directors, which has 15 members, divided geographically to represent population distribution across the region, and requiring a supermajority to approve any action. The second is the MPO Policy Committee, which meets federal requirements for the governance of an MPO. The approval of both of these groups is needed for CMAP to approve formal planning documents.

- Other committees and task forces. CMAP also participates in other committees, task forces, working groups, and other ad hoc groups on various topics. These are not a formal part of the agency's organizational structure but do contribute to its activities and will help to ensure broad involvement in the LTA program.

Consensus from all consortium members will be sought on the direction and management of the LTA program, and deliberations on this topic will be encouraged at all levels of the organizational structure. Discussions of most issues will take place at the working committee level and also at other committees and task forces as appropriate. Particularly challenging issues will be brought to the coordinating committee level, if necessary, in an effort to gain consensus among consortium members. In cases where consensus is not possible, the authority to make decisions concerning this program rests with the CMAP Board of Directors or its designees.

CMAP staffs each of the committees in this organizational structure. As staff, CMAP's role involves coordinating with the chairs of each committee to develop agendas and bring relevant items to the committee's attention. Also, it is the mutual responsibility of CMAP and the committee chairs to continually review committee membership and add new organizations to committees as appropriate.

Lake County is currently represented within this governance structure, and is invited to continue, and if appropriate to expand, its participation. The working committees are broadly open to any organization to participate, and Lake County is encouraged to attend any of these it finds to be of interest. Lake County also has formal representation on the CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee. The organizational structure provides multiple opportunities for participation, and consortium members are encouraged to participate in as many committees as they judge to be appropriate.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As the lead applicant for the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant, CMAP has significant responsibilities in the management and administration of the grant. These are described below:

- CMAP is responsible for staffing each of the committees in the organizational structure, as described in the preceding section.

- Guided by the participation of the consortium members within the organizational structure, CMAP is responsible for developing and implementing the LTA program. CMAP will have the day-to-day responsibilities of managing the LTA program, and the CMAP Board of Directors has given this responsibility to CMAP staff.
- CMAP is responsible for working with communities interested in advancing the implementation of GO TO 2040 to guide them through the various technical assistance opportunities available through government and nongovernmental sources, aligning community needs with regional resources.
- Providing direct technical assistance to priority projects is also a responsibility of CMAP. As noted above, each project undertaken will include significant emphases on local capacity building and public engagement that specifically reaches underrepresented groups.
- CMAP is responsible for the administration of the grant, including hiring staff and disbursing grant and contract funds. CMAP has overall accountability to HUD for all required work products. Also, all local match contributed to the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant comes from CMAP sources.

As a member of the regional consortium, Lake County also has responsibilities in the successful use of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant. These include:

- Lake County is responsible for participating within the organizational structure at a level that it judges to be appropriate, and for contributing to the development and continual refinement of the LTA program through this participation. Through its committee participation, the County will be responsible for representing the interests of its constituents and identifying opportunities for collaboration on local projects, particularly those within Lake County.
- Lake County will be provided the opportunity to advise CMAP on geographically relevant local projects, and to participate in these projects as appropriate. CMAP will coordinate with the County on all local projects within Lake County; the County is responsible for identifying its ongoing or upcoming activities in these communities so that coordination may occur. Lake County will also have an opportunity to assist in the identification of stakeholders that should be included in local projects, and to contribute to the development of project-specific public engagement strategies.
- Lake County will be eligible to submit applications for staff assistance, or to support applications submitted by other groups. If a project submitted by the County is identified as a priority, a separate agreement related to that project will be required, as described in the following section.

- Lake County will not need to provide a local match or perform any administrative duties beyond those described in this MOU. In-kind contributions from consortium members are welcomed but not required; if any contributions are made by Lake County, overall estimation of the value of such contributions would be welcomed but is not required.

Other consortium members also have roles and responsibilities, described below.

- Local project sponsors will develop and implement comprehensive projects that align with the federal livability principles, implement GO TO 2040, and include diverse stakeholders and innovative processes.
- Technical assistance providers will coordinate their activities with the LTA program, adding resources to leverage the federal grant. They will assist in project development, ensuring that local projects use their mix of expertise most effectively. Technical assistance providers will coordinate their activities regularly at scheduled Technical Assistance Providers Committee meetings.
- Membership organizations and educational organizations will use their communication methods to ensure that there is diverse local participation in projects and that knowledge gained through the projects is shared.
- Funders will contribute to the development of local projects, aligning elements of their grantmaking to leverage the federal grant.

The LTA program is designed to bring benefits to the region as a whole, and is likely to directly or indirectly affect each member of the consortium. Direct benefits will be received by organizations that receive direct technical assistance from CMAP or other consortium members in undertaking local planning projects. For consortium members not receiving direct assistance, the benefits of consortium membership include involvement in the decision-making processes for the LTA program, which provides an opportunity to advance their organization's goals through this regional deliberative process. Finally, the implementation of the GO TO 2040 plan, which is the ultimate goal of the LTA program, benefits the entire region.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS

CMAP will enter into project-specific agreements with the sponsors of projects that receive staff assistance through the LTA program. These will be developed and approved separately from this MOU, and the timelines and specific contents will vary based on project details. These agreements will be designed to be clear and simple and to minimize administrative burden on both CMAP and project sponsors.

CHANGES TO CONSORTIUM MEMBERSHIP

The composition of the membership of the working committees is flexible. If new organizations are interested in joining the consortium, they will be given the opportunity to participate on appropriate working committees. In general, consortium members will be expected to support the advancement of GO TO 2040 and the LTA program through their participation in the consortium. Through coordination with CMAP and the working committee chairs, new members can be added at any time. Also, all consortium members are welcome to suggest new members for working committees.

Existing consortium members may withdraw from the consortium upon written notice to CMAP. However, CMAP and Lake County view this as an option of last resort, and agree to work together to the extent possible to resolve any disagreements that arise while keeping the consortium intact.

CMAP and Lake County understand and agree that this memorandum represents a desire to cooperate to achieve the express purposes of this memorandum and is not intended to be binding or contractual in nature.

SIGNATURES

The undersigned parties agree to the contents of this MOU.

CMAP Representative:

Randall S. Blankenhorn, Executive Director

Date:_____

Lake County Representative:

David Stolman, County Board Chairman

Date:_____