

# **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT INITIATIVE (METSII)**

## **QUARTERLY REPORT**

for the quarter ending December 31, 2002

### **CURRENT QUARTER ACTIVITIES**

#### **GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

An Advisory Board meeting was held in December where recognition was given to outgoing Chairman Richard Bacigalupo and member Stephen Schindel. Rick is leaving the RTA to accept a position at Orange County Transportation and Steve is taking early retirement from IDOT-DPT. Phil Pagano, Executive Director of Metra was elected new Chair of the Advisory Board. There are several new members on the Advisory Board: Neil Ferarri, IDOT- DPT, John DeLaurentiis, RTA and Tom Ashby, recently elected President of the Illinois Public Transit Association (IPTA).

The Kane County Transit Opportunity Assessment was completed and adopted by the Kane County Board at their November meeting. Please note the entire report is available at the county's website at [www.co.kane.il.us](http://www.co.kane.il.us).

A major new project has begun in providing technical assistance to McHenry County as they undertake a county wide Transportation Study. At the request of CATS and the County Board Chairman, we are providing in-kind services to assist the county in developing an RFP and assisting them in obtaining and managing a consultant to undertake the Study.

Below is a progress report on the activities of the Research Program, Technical Assistance, Workshops and Training during the recent quarter.

#### **RESEARCH PROGRAM**

##### **Intermodal Freight**

The proposal to the NSF by Northwestern University and UIC has been selected for funding. The project will receive \$600,000 over three years to develop a decision support tool for freight infrastructure planning and operation. The UTC team will contribute in the areas of cost and benefit calculations and coordination of stakeholders. There is nothing new to report.

##### **Freight Impact Analysis Methodology – Impact of truck traffic on the Value of Land**

This project, started in September, 2002 will use hedonic pricing model to determine the effect of truck traffic on the land value. Since land value captures market's valuation of both negative and positive attributes, the findings from this research will be used in monetizing the perceived impact of truck traffic. The land value data at parcel level will be obtained from the Center for Urban Economic Development (CUED), a research unit in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at UIC.

##### **Job Access and Reverse Commute**

Staff is working cooperatively with various agencies in the state and the region to assist in the development of a plan, strategy and goals to address access to work and reverse commute issues

in the Chicago region and the state of Illinois. Staff is also participating with the CATS Community Mobility Task Force where a presentation was given at their December meeting of the national JARC evaluation, paratransit brokerage and information on types of local share that qualify as match for the federal JARC program.

### **Environmental Justice**

A preliminary report addressing Tier I measures has been submitted to CATS staff for review and Tier II measures are being developed. There is nothing new to report.

### **Kane County Transit Opportunity Assessment**

The Phase 1 Report was completed and officially accepted by the County Board. A copy of the plan is available at the Kane County website at [www.co.kane.il.us/dot/transit](http://www.co.kane.il.us/dot/transit). A meeting was held with Phil Pagano, Executive Director of Metra to discuss undertaking Phase 2, which will identify specific market demand and an implementation plan.

### **Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Collision Report**

Undertook an analysis of highway grade crossing accidents for CATS pertaining to the whistle ban issue in northeastern Illinois. A preliminary phase one report has been submitted to CATS for review and we are awaiting their comments. A phase two report is underway.

### **Asset Management**

Developed a proposal jointly with the University of Wisconsin, Madison titled the Evaluation of Transportation Private Sector Asset Management Practices. During the quarter, completed the report, which was approved by TRB for presentation at their Annual Conference in January.

### **Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery in Civil Infrastructure Systems**

Completed drafting case study analyzing the 1997 Commodity Flow survey and submitted a proposal to NCHRP for continued work. During the quarter, explored researching freight related data.

### **UIC Campus Shuttle Program**

Developing a real time traveler information system on the UIC Campus Shuttle service that would identify the current location of the shuttle bus via GPS location technology and map the progress of the vehicle on the University website. Several buses have the units installed and the demonstration can be viewed at [www.uic.edu/cuppa/utc](http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/utc). The University has committed funds to install units on all the vehicles and make the demonstration permanent.

### **Economic and Productivity Impacts of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)**

Developing a proposal to undertake this research project. Completed a literature review and developing the data needs for economic productivity analysis in the Chicago region.

### **Developing a Regional Focus for Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning**

Developed an outline of a scope of work to support the development of a strategic, regional transportation and land use plan in conjunction with IDOT, NIPC and the RTA. Work on the project has begun.

## **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Planning Process**

At the request of IDOT staff, developed a research proposal entitled Statewide Transportation Planning Process and NEPA: Its Effectiveness, Issues and Solutions for submission to IDOT staff for review, comment and approval. Literature review is underway.

## **McHenry County Transportation Study**

At the request of CATS and the County Board Chairman, agreed to assist the County in their effort to undertake a countywide transportation study funded by an Illinois Tomorrow grant. Our role would be to assist the county in drafting an RFP, selecting and managing a consultant and providing technical assistance to the county during the project.

## **Sprawl**

As an extension of our work on sprawl we are currently conducting three areas of research. At the request of IDOT, provided updated land consumption data showing the rate of sprawl declining since 1990 compared to the period 1970 to 1990.

**Sprawl and Pedestrian Safety:** Reports on sprawl suggest that pedestrians are at greater risk in low-density suburban areas than in high-density areas. We continue to examine this relationship by focusing on the number of pedestrian fatalities over an eleven-year period (1990-2000).

We noted last quarter that in Illinois, several of the Chicago suburban counties have the lowest fatality rates in the state—McHenry and DuPage Counties. National analysis supports this finding. There are approximately 150 counties in the nation that had over 75 pedestrian fatalities during the eleven-year study period. *DuPage County had the lowest rate* and the only county with an annual rate of less than 1 fatality per million residents. Hennepin County (Minneapolis) had the second lowest rate.

By contrast high-density counties such as San Francisco and Dade (Miami) had rates respectively four and five times higher. The final report will be ready this quarter.

**Census 2000:** We continue to map and analyze the data from the 200 Census. The focus is on the association between decentralization and travel behavior. We have mapped the median travel times to work by Chicago-area census tracts and have compared these maps with other metropolitan areas. In the city of Chicago, only tracts immediately north and northwest of the Chicago Loop have average travel times less than 25 minutes while most overage over 32 minutes. By contrast, most of the tracts in the city of Los Angeles have travel times less than 25 minutes. Much of Los Angeles is similar to DuPage County and other inner Chicago suburbs where most of the tracts have average travel times less than 25minutes. With increasing affluence time becomes an increasingly important factor and residential location is now sensitive to access travel times. The Census data provides useful information about why suburban living is so popular—low travel times. We are now anticipating the arrival this coming quarter of the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP). This will provide us with journey-to-work data by small area and we can further study changes in travel behavior as they relate to urban decentralization.

**Sprawl and Public Health -- Obesity:** We continue to seek data that are printed on driver's licenses. They include the critical information that would facilitate an analysis of the association between (a) degree of obesity (self declared by expressing their height and weight) and (b) the place of residence within the Chicago metropolitan area.

(With the assistance of IDOT we continue to be in communication with Chief Legal Council Robert Mueller (217-782-5356) but the final decision has apparently not yet been made. We have now pursued this matter for over a year. Two phone calls in the last two weeks have not yielded a response. Since there are perhaps no other comprehensive data on heights and weights of individuals we remain committed to the effort of obtaining these data.)

### **Intercity Bus Strategic Plan (IDOT-DPT)**

The addendum to the study which included a survey of an additional set of transportation providers is nearing completion. A final draft report is scheduled for release next quarter.

### **Computer Aided Scheduling and Dispatching (CASD) Systems (IDOT-DPT)**

The addendum to the study included the survey of the new paratransit operator in Peoria. The analysis of the results is underway with a projected completion next quarter.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Greater North Michigan Avenue Association (GNMAA)**

Staff continues its participation as a member of the GNMAA Traffic and Transportation Committee and Chair of the Traffic Mitigation Committee.

### **Commuter Choice**

Developing a program to market commuter choice benefit program jointly with RTA utilizing their Transit Check to facilitate the use of the tax free transit benefit for employers and employees through the use of payroll deduction. A marketing plan was prepared and submitted to RTA. At the request of CATS, assisted in giving a presentation to Abbott Labs in Lake County which subsequently agreed to implement RTA Transit Check as an employee benefit to their 17,000 employees in the region.

### **Regional Freight Planning**

Kazuya Kawamura continues to chair the Research and Planning Subcommittee and Sue McNeil continues to chair the Finance Subcommittee of the CATS Intermodal Advisory Task Force (IATF). During the period, provided background material on freight for the reauthorization of TEA 21 for the Committee. The report is attached.

### **CATS Rideshare Project**

Continuing to assist CATS jointly with the College of Engineering Computer Center at UIC in developing an improved rideshare matching program.

### **CATS Community Mobility Task Force**

Participating with and providing Job Access Reverse Commute related assistance to the CATS Task Force. Attended December meeting and gave presentations on local match to JARC, national evaluation and paratransit brokerage.

### **CATS Private Providers Task Force**

Participating with the Task Force and providing assistance in the areas of inventorying private transit providers and in JARC issues.

### **Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT)**

Participating as the vice president of ACT and in preparing a joint workshop on commuter choice.

### **Hillside Bottleneck**

Agreed to assist IDOT in funding approximately \$3,000 in expenses to undertake a traffic count in connection with the construction at the Hillside bottleneck.

## **WORKSHOPS, TRAINING AND VISITING SCHOLARS**

### **Abbott Labs**

Held a workshop with management personnel on ridesharing and Transit Check.

### **Illinois State University**

Presented state surface transportation issues on a panel as a part of presentation given to the Governor's Transition Team.

### **Visiting Scholars from Germany**

Planning a one day workshop on the region's transportation system for visiting graduate students and faculty from Trier University in Germany in October.

## **PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER**

### **RESEARCH PROGRAM**

**Intermodal Freight**- ongoing project with Northwestern University and NSF.

**Freight Impact Analysis Methodology-Impact of Truck Traffic on the Value of Land**-

identify data sources for truck traffic volumes and the functional form and the variables used for the hedonic price models.

**Job Access and Reverse Commute**- continue communications with project partners and continue seeking local match to federal JARC grant.

**Environmental Justice**- Awaiting CATS comments.

**Kane County Transit Opportunity Study**- assist the county in developing scope of Phase 2 of the project.

**Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Report**- awaiting review of report by CATS.

**Intercity Bus Strategic Plan**- anticipated completion of the addendum to the study during the quarter.

**Computer Aided Scheduling and Dispatching Systems-** anticipated completion of the addendum to the study during the quarter.

**Asset Management-** present final report at TRB Annual Meeting in January.

**Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery in Civil Infrastructure Systems-** continue exploration of freight-related data.

**UIC Campus Shuttle Bus Program-** undertake demonstration during the Spring Semester with hopes of implementing the full system by mid-year.

**Economic and Productivity Impacts on ITS-** develop data needs to estimate economic productivity due to ITS in Illinois.

**Developing a Regional Focus for Integrating Transportation and Land Use Planning-** begin work on the two year project.

**Planning and the NEPA Process-** complete literature review and develop survey of other state transportation departments.

**McHenry County Transportation Study-** Have kick-off meeting with the county, define roles and develop scope of work for the RFP.

**Sprawl-** Complete the Sprawl and Public Safety portion of the study and continue research in the areas of Census 2000 and Sprawl and Public Health-Obesity.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

**Regional Freight Planning-** ongoing meetings with CATS.

**GNMAA-** ongoing assistance with GNMAA and the Traffic Mitigation Committee.

**Commuter Choice-** continue to develop marketing plan for pre tax RTA Transit Check and for Commuter Choice statewide and assist CATS in given presentations and workshops.

**CATS Rideshare Project-** ongoing assistance to CATS.

**CATS Community Mobility Task Force-** ongoing assistance to CATS.

**CATS Private Providers Task Force-** ongoing assistance to CATS

**Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT)-** ongoing assistance to ACT and participation on the ACT Board of Directors.

**Hillside Bottleneck-** fund traffic survey upon receipt of grant agreement from IDOT. .

## **WORKSHOPS, TRAINING AND VISITING SCHOLARS**

**Commuter Choice Workshop-** planning to be held jointly with ACT in spring, 2003.

### **State of the Region Conference**

Assisting the Workforce Board of North Cook County and the Northwest Suburban Association of Commerce and Industry (NSACI) in presenting a transit update in February, 2003.

## **PROJECTS COMPLETED**

**Downtown Pedestrian Activities Analysis**

**South Central MTD Technical Assistance**

**Lake Cook Road TMA Technical Assistance**

**Bus Rapid Transit Workshop**

**ITS Systems for Transit: Solving Real Problems Workshop**

**Visiting Scholar from Netherlands**

**Reinventing Transit: Planning Information-Based Transit Service Workshop**

**Metropolitan Conference on Public Transportation Research**

**Managing the Cost of ADA Paratransit Pilot Workshop**

**Peoria Study**

**The Future of Public Transit in Chicago Discussion Panel**

**First Urban Sprawl Conference**

**CATS Transit Workshop**

**CTA Transit Workshop**

**Pace Management Symposium**

**Economic Importance of Transportation**

**Greater North Michigan Avenue Association Workshop For Employers**

**Travel Time Activity And Time Use Analysis**

**Cook County TCSP Grant Application**

**Rural Transportation Brokerage Project**

**Visiting MIT Students**

**Springfield Mass Transit Appreciation Day**

**Visiting Delegation from China**

**Visiting Scholars from Saudi Arabia**

**ITS Presentation**

**Rural Transportation Assistance Program Presentation**

**I-55 Growth Corridor Study**

**GIS Mapping of Traffic Signals**

**Visiting Scholars from Norway**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Urban Sprawl Symposium, Transportation and Housing Symposium**

**Suburban Job Link**

**DuPage Area Transit Plan**

**Atlanta Leadership Delegation**

**1<sup>st</sup> Upper Midwest Regional Freight Transportation Workshop**

**Big Ten Universities Transportation Conference**

**80,000 lb. Truck Weight Study**  
**Travel Time Projections**  
**Suburban Job-Link Corp.**  
**Commuter Rail Station Vanpools**  
**Visiting Scholars from China (2)**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Sprawl Symposium, Fortuitous Failures or Missed Opportunities**  
**Public-Private Partnerships in Transit Workshop**  
**Jennifer L. Dorn, FTA Administrator Luncheon**  
**Visiting Scholars from Germany**  
**Illinois State University**  
**Abbott Labs**  
**Asset Management**  
**Kane County Transit Opportunity Assessment, Phase 1**

01/03