

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

## **QUARTERLY REPORT**

for the quarter ending June 30, 2005

### **CURRENT QUARTER ACTIVITIES**

#### **GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE**

The following are highlights from the recent quarter:

Sue McNeil is leaving UIC to join the University of Delaware in August. The Dean has named Vonu Thakariah Acting Director of the UTC during the absence of a Director. A national search will begin during the summer and the Search Committee will be Chaired by Tim Johnson, the Director of the Survey Research Lab. "A Guide to UTC" was prepared to describe the Center to assist in the recruiting effort. A copy of the guide is attached to this report.

An Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for August 3 where the CUPPA Dean will present the interim plans and search committee procedures to find a new Director. A reception honoring Sue McNeil will be held immediately after the Advisory Board meeting.

The McHenry County Transit Plan held an open house, which was well attended, to publicize the results of their project. The County indicated they would seek a planning grant in order to implement the plan recommendations. The UTC committed to continue assisting the County in the next phase.

Metra completed installation of new signage at the Halsted St./UIC station at Halsted and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets. The station was renamed by adding "UIC". The Campus shuttle will reroute on all trips to serve the station. Incidentally, visual and audio announcements are being made at selected stops indicating the time that the last bus passed the stop thereby giving an indication of potential wait time. This was enabled by the real time bus locator installed by UTC staff.

Below is a description of progress during the quarter.

#### **RESEARCH PROGRAM**

##### **Regional Intermodal Freight Planning**

Kazuya Kawamura continues to chair the Research and Planning Subcommittee of CATS Intermodal Advisory Task Force (IATF). Dr. Kawamura also continues to serve on the editorial board of the IATF e-newsletter available at [www.catsmpo.com](http://www.catsmpo.com) and is a regular contributor. Staff participated in the IATF meeting on June 2.

##### **Business and Site Specific Trip Generation Methodology for Truck Trips**

This project is funded from the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center (MRUTC) with a match provided by METSI. The project, which will develop a disaggregated truck trip generation model for use in planning and engineering applications, is in its final stage. A paper describing the project was presented by H. Shin, a Research Assistant, at the Transport Chicago Conference held on June 3 and received the 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the student paper competition. In addition, Dr. Kawamura's paper "The Comparison of Different Truck Trip Generation Techniques at the Disaggregate Level: A Case Study of Retail Stores" has been accepted for presentation at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Annual Conference in October.

##### **Cargo Oriented Development**

The study, conducted jointly with the Center of Neighborhood Technology (CNT), aims to apply the knowledge from the past rail freight research efforts to the proposed economic development plan for Blue Island. As advisory panel members, project staff are providing insight into the intermodal rail terminal design. A paper describing the project was presented at the Transport Chicago Conference held in June and a paper titled “A Model Planning Process for Cargo Oriented Development- A Case Study in Chicago” has been accepted for presentation at Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Annual Conference in October.

### **Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)**

Staff continues 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 has developed a phase 3 project to the JARC funded Transportation Information Clearinghouse project for consideration by RTA. During the quarter, contracts for the first two phases are being addressed with RTA paving the way to begin phase 3.

### **Exploration of Tools for Regional Transportation and Land Use Modeling**

As the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) continues with the Common Ground project, we are providing technical support and developing a framework for evaluating the project. A review of existing plans of municipalities and counties in the region and the development of the role of transportation measures in the stakeholder input software have been completed.

### **McHenry County Transportation Study**

Meetings of the Paratransit Steering Committee and the Public Transit Advisory Committee were held on May 9 and 10 to review progress on the project. A day long Open House was held on May 24 to present the final report to the public and elected officials and obtain input. The final report and meeting will be held next quarter and staff has been requested by McHenry County officials to assist in the implementation phase.

### **Sprawl**

Our current sprawl-related work continues in two primary areas:

#### **Census 2000 and ACS:**

We are continuing our work with the 2000 Census and American Community Survey (ACS). In May, we participated at the TRB sponsored Conference, Census Data for Transportation Planning: Preparing for the Future in Irvine, California. A poster was prepared on the use of ACS data for transportation analysis. It illustrated the value of survey data, although the Census imposed confidentiality restrictions pose a serious threat to the value of journey-to-work data. After presenting our analysis of commuting trends in the Chicago area at the TRF Conference last quarter, we are preparing a paper “Emerging Commuting Trends: Evidence from the Chicago Area” for publication in the Journal of the Transportation Research Forum. The article, co-authored by Soot, DiJohn and Berman identifies demographic changes that account for the fact that despite large population increases in the region, for the first time in several decades, the number of commuters (and likely congestion) is growing modestly.

#### **Sprawl and Public Health -- Obesity:**

We continue to process driver's license data that we received from the Secretary of State's office to compute Body Mass Index (BMI). This quarter, several new variables have been added describing urban form (the walking environment). This was done in anticipation of critics implying that only population density was considered as a descriptor of urban form. With the new variables we find that ZIP-coded level variables most highly related to BMI are, in order (with their respective correlation coefficients in parentheses): percent completing college (-0.80), median household income (-0.66), percent Black (+0.60), median house value (-0.54), percent Hispanic (+0.25), percent under age 18 (+0.24), percent home owners (-0.23), and distance to downtown (+0.17). All of the relationships are statistically significant at 0.01 (e.g.99%). Variables not statistically significant include population density, percent that walk to work, percent using transit to work, road density and auto ownership. Transportation and the urban form variables appear to be largely unrelated to BMI. Our preliminary findings were summarized in the Chicago Tribune Chicago Magazine Supplement on Sunday April 3.

### **Routine Use of Locomotive Horns**

The work has been completed. The study contributed to the Chicago region's temporary exemption from the FRA's Final Rule (49CFR Parts 222 and 229). A paper titled "Accident Trends and Safety Devices At Rail-Highway Grade Crossings" was presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the International Cooperation on Theories and Concepts of Traffic Safety on October 28.

### **Midwest Regional University Transportation Center Proposals**

Two proposals using METSI as match have been submitted to MRUTC; "Measuring the Benefits of Implementing Asset Management Tools" and "Impact of Increased Freight Traffic on Pavement Maintenance Costs". The first project was approved and is described below.

### **Measuring the Benefits of Implementing Asset Management Systems and Tools**

The goal of the research is to develop a generic methodology for measuring the benefits, both financial benefits to the agency and performance benefits to the users. A Research Assistant is undertaking a literature review and preparing a paper for presentation to the First Annual Inter-University Symposium on Infrastructure Management.

### **CATS Household Travel Survey**

Staff completed its project to assist CATS in the development of the Household Travel Survey by reviewing the trip generation model documentation and model code and identify information needed to calibrate the model. Attached is the final draft task report "Trip Generation Review".

### **Emergency Ride Home (ERH)**

Held meetings with the CATS ERH Task Force to develop demonstration program components. Developed and submitted a CMAQ application for consideration by CATS for a region-wide ERH demonstration project and obtained RTA, Metra and Pace support for the project.

### **Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)**

Mary Kaufman continues work on CSS projects, but is interning at Pace Suburban Bus during the summer. Staff has assisted by providing a bibliography and research support for the internal cadre. Ongoing efforts continue to develop the program and coordinate efforts. In addition, other CSS activities include:

-Staff continues to supply support for Route 53 in DuPage County. An improved design for stakeholder input has resulted in a better perspective for both the stakeholders and IDOT.

-Staff is participating in CSS Forum, a Context Sensitive Design/Solutions Yahoo Group. Issues and questions from around the country are discussed.

### **Guide to the Urban Transportation Center**

A nine page description of the UTC was prepared for the Dean of CUPPA to be used as a recruitment tool for obtaining a new Director of the UTC. A copy of the report is attached.

### **TMA of Lake County**

At the request of officials in the city of Waukegan, assisting in the development of a Transportation Management Association of north Lake County. A meeting was held on June 30 to pursue the organization.

### **Universal Design Proposal**

Joined with four other units at UIC to prepare a proposal to track wheelchair users mobility and the relationship of accessible design. Our role is to instal GPS units and track individuals' movements before and after improved accessibility design.

### **Coordination Activities**

Preparing a report documenting the UTC's activities in transportation coordination. This includes regional, state and federal activities.

### **Data Library**

Staff is developing a data library of UTC and METSI as a project-level resource. In addition, the UTC website is being updated.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Special Committee on Mass Transit**

Completed data analysis for the Committee chaired by Rep. Julie Hamos.

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

Participated with the Task Force meeting held on May 3 and June 21 where reports were presented on the UIC's JARC projects.

### **CATS Intermodal Advisory Task Force (IATF)**

Continued participation with the Task Force and Subcommittees. Attended IATF meeting held on June 2.

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

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

### **CATS Task Force on Seniors and Persons with Disabilities**

Attended and participated in joint meetings with the CMTF on May 3 and June 21.

### **CATS TDM Annex**

There were no meetings during the quarter.

### **CATS Transportation Management and Operations (TM&O) Work Group**

At the request of CATS, participating in the Work Group and attended a meeting on June 29.

### **Commuter Choice**

Continuing efforts with RTA, CATS and ACT to market Commuter Choice benefit program and the RTA Transit Check to facilitate the use of the tax-free transit benefit program. A proposal was made to RTA to develop workshops marketing Transit Check.

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

Staff continues its participation as a member of the GNMAA Traffic and Transportation Committee meetings held on May 5 and June 23.

### **Statewide Funding Database**

See the description below for the ICCT.

### **Interagency Coordinating Committee on Transportation (ICCT)**

Participating as a member of the committee and attended meetings on April 7 and June 2. The Committee is developing four basic objectives and planning for giving a final report to the General Assembly in the fall. Participating in several of the Sub-committees dealing with two of the objectives. Provided statewide data base information to NIPC who mapped statewide recipients on their web site at [www.chicagoclearinghouse.org/gisdynamic1/map.asp](http://www.chicagoclearinghouse.org/gisdynamic1/map.asp).

### **Information Coordination Advisory Committee**

At the request of the MPC, have been asked to participate in a committee to advise the RTA in the development of regional design standards for transit passenger information. Attended the first meeting on April 14.

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

### **What Every Employer Should Know About Commuter Choice Pre-Tax Benefits**

Gave presentation to workshop with the Matteson Area Chamber of Commerce on April 5.

### **Webinar- Commuter Benefit Programs**

Jointly sponsored a Netconference with Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) on the effects of Commuter Choice Benefit Programs on transit systems on April 7.

### **Transport Chicago Conference**

Attended Conference on June 3 and presented several papers referred to previously.

### **TRB Planning Conference**

Presented a paper at Census Data for Transportation Planning: Preparing for the Future in May.

### **Webinar- Best Workplaces for Commuters**

Jointly sponsored a Netconference with ACT promoting commuter choice programs to Colleges and Universities on June 8.

**Getting to Work: Employee Transportation Forum**

Participated in a workshop held in Waukegan on June 13 jointly sponsored by Work Welfare and Families and the Community Action Partnership of Lake County.

**Webinar For Campus Communities**

Jointly sponsored a Netconference with ACT presenting new approaches for reducing car use for campus communities on June 29.

**Transportation Research Forum (TRF)**

The first local chapter meeting was held on April 14 at CATS. Presentations were given by Joe Schwieterman, DePaul University and Siim Soot and Kazuya Kawamura, UIC. The topics were freight and regional demographics. An officers meeting was held on May 18 to plan for the next local chapter meeting to be held on July 20.

**Regional Freight Summit**

At IDOT's request, assisting in the development of a Regional Freight Summit. Awaiting direction in order to proceed.

**Sixth Annual Symposium**- Plans are underway for the Annual Symposium to be held on October 21, 2005 at UIC. The topic is "Technology Impacts on Regional Mobility". We have confirmed speakers from IDOT ITS Office, United Parcel Service (UPS), Chicago Department of Aviation, Chicago (rail freight) Transportation Coordination Office (CTCO), Yellow Freight and Jason Tai, IDOT-DIPT as keynote.

**PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER**

**RESEARCH PROGRAM**

**Regional Intermodal Freight Planning-** Continued participation with the CATS IATF.

**Business and Site Specific Trip Generation Methodology for Truck Trips-** Prepare final report and prepare for presentation at ACSPA conference in October.

**Cargo Oriented Development-** Continue work and prepare for presentation at ASCPA conference in October.

**Job Access Reverse Commute-** Continue communications with project partners and pursue the next phases of the Transportation Information Clearinghouse project.

**Exploration of Tools for Regional Transportation and Land Use Modeling-** The project will be completed next quarter when the doctoral student completes her thesis on the project.

**McHenry County Transportation Study-** Review the Final Report, attend a Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting on July 12 for the purpose of making

comments, attend the final PTAC meeting in August, present the results to the County Board in September and participate in developing the next steps to implement the recommendations.

**Sprawl-** Research continues in the areas of Census 2000 and ACS and Sprawl and Public Health-Obesity. A paper titled “Emerging Trends: Evidence from the Chicago Area” which examines the Census 2000 and ACS data, will be presented to the Journal of the Transportation Research Forum for publication. A draft report on Sprawl and Obesity will be completed, including the addition of new variables on urban form.

**Measuring the Benefits of Implementing Asset Management Systems and Tools-** Continue analysis and prepare paper for presentation.

**Emergency Ride Home (ERH)-** Assist in the CMAQ process to develop a region-wide demonstration project.

**Context Sensitive Solutions-** Continued development of seminars.

**TMA of Lake County-** Assist Lake County officials in the development of a TMA.

**Coordination Activities-** Complete report documenting the Centers coordination activities.

**Data Library-** Continue development of library and associated website.

#### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

**Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT)-** Continued activity on Board of Directors and seek to co-sponsoring workshops.

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

**CATS Intermodal Advisory Task Force (IATF)-** Ongoing assistance to CATS and attend meeting scheduled for September 21.

**CATS Private Providers Task Force-** Ongoing assistance to CATS.

**CATS Task Force with Seniors and Persons with Disabilities-** Ongoing assistance to CATS.

**CATS TDM Annex-** Ongoing assistance to CATS.

**CATS TM&O-** Ongoing assistance to CATS and attend meeting on September 21.

**Commuter Choice-** Continue to develop marketing plan statewide and assist CATS in giving presentations and workshops.

**GNMAA-** Ongoing assistance with GNMAA and attend a Planning and Advocacy Committee meeting on July 8.

**Special Committee on Mass Transit for Northeastern Illinois-** No additional work anticipated.

**Work Welfare and Families-** Attend workshop in Waukegan on July 18.

**ICCT-** Attend next Committee meeting on August 4 and subcommittee meeting on July 21.

**Information Coordination Advisory Committee-** Continued participation with MPC and RTA.

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

**Chicago Chapter of TRF-** The second local chapter meeting will be held on July 20 at DePaul University and additional meetings and events will be planned. The July 20 meeting will feature Larry Wilson, Consultant presenting his freight work for Metropolis 2020 and Mary Wells, ISTHA presenting impacts of the new Tollway rate structure.

**Ticket to Ride: Meeting the Region's Transit Needs-** Registered to attend roundtable sponsored by MPC on July 21.

**Regional Freight Summit-** Continue to assist IDOT in developing program. Awaiting direction in order to proceed.

**Webinar- Work Life Forum-** Jointly sponsoring a Netconference on July 12 with Association of Work Life Professionals (AWLP) for promoting transportation for Fortune 500 Companies.

**DuPage Public Transit Discovery Conference-** Invited to attend conference on September 9.

**Sixth Annual Symposium-** Staff will continue plans for Symposium to be held on October 21.

### **PROJECTS COMPLETED DURING CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR**

**Routine Use of Locomotive Horns**

**Rural Public Transportation Brokerage Research Project**

**NEPA and the Planning Process**

**Economic and Productivity Impacts of Intelligent Transportation Systems**

**Traffic Impacts of In-fill Development**

**City of North Chicago**

**City of Waukegan**

**Olive Harvey College**

**GNMAA Annual Meeting**

**TRB Annual Meeting**

**TRF Annual Meeting**

**Batavia Transportation Committee**

**CATS Household Travel Survey**

**Clean Air Counts**

**ACT Net Conference**

**Transportation Research Forum Annual Meeting**

**Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting**  
**CATS Household Travel Survey**  
**Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting**  
**Location, Design and Operation of Future Intermodal Rail Yards**  
**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**  
**Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission**  
**Guide to the Urban Transportation Center**  
**Getting to Work: Employee Transportation Forum**  
**What Every Employer Should Know About Commuter Choice Pre-Tax Benefits**  
**Transport Chicago Conference**  
**TRB Planning Conference**  
**Webinar- Commuter Benefit Programs**  
**Webinar- Best Workplaces for Commuters**  
**Webinar for Campus Communities**

7/06/05