

**THE ILLINOIS STATE TOLL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF THE  
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING  
July 20, 2011**

The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority held a Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on Wednesday, July 20, 2011 at approximately 8:00 a.m. at the Central Administration Building in Downers Grove, Illinois.

Directors on the Committee in attendance were as follows:

Committee Chair Tom Weisner

Director Maria Saldaña

Director Tom Canham (teleconference)

Committee Chair Weisner called the meeting to order. Director Weisner requested a motion to approve the participation of Director Canham via teleconference. Director Saldaña made a motion to approve his participation; seconded by Committee Chair Weisner. The motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Chair Weisner reviewed the Strategic Planning Committee charter including the purpose, responsibilities and role of committee [\[see attached\]](#).

**CAPITAL PLANNING FORUM UPDATE**

Director Weisner called on Kristi Lafleur, Executive Director, to give an overview of the feedback received at five Capital Planning Forums held in July. She indicated that the Board created a tentative list of priorities at the last Board meeting which included: first and foremost the existing needs of the Tollway such as the reconstruction and widening of the

Jane Addams I-90; near term regional projects e.g. Elgin-O'Hare West Bypass and interchanges and the I-294/I-57 interchange; and feasibility, planning and environmental studies for longer term projects e.g. the Route 53 North Extension and Illiana highway. She indicated that there were nearly 250 attendees at the 5 forums comprised of community leaders, elected officials and the general public. There was also an opportunity for electronic feedback provided through the Tollway website. Ms. Lafleur reported that, overall, the forum participants expressed support for a comprehensive, long-term capital program for the Tollway system.

Forum attendees generally indicated that they were pleased with the Tollway's capital planning efforts, which included input from various regional planning and advisory groups. Attendees also indicated that long-term capital planning was important and should be considered beyond 10 years. The Board's list of priority projects was generally well-received.

General comments from the forum attendees included praise for: the congestion-relief program because it has delivered steady improvements to the system; open road tolling because it resulted in the Tollway becoming a leader in innovation of traffic management; and the Tollway's regional approach to prioritizing projects and investments. Attendees also emphasized: the need to include funding for comprehensive planning for local interchanges; and a strong focus on congestion relief, economic development, environmental concerns and return on investment.

Regarding financing, Ms. Lafleur indicated that in several corridors there was general support by a broad range of elected officials, economic development groups and other stakeholders for: toll increases; development of a tool for indexing tolls; and congestion pricing/

managed lanes. Forum attendees also indicated that local participation in project cost-sharing is ideal but consideration should be given to each local community's ability to finance. Attendees also agreed that transportation agencies must work collaboratively to finance these projects and use multiple sources of funding.

As outlined in the attached presentation, there was strong support for transit and bus service planning along various corridors and the importance of these transportation projects to economic development in the region was also emphasized.

Director Weisner indicated that he was heartened to hear that forum attendees emphasized transit as important, viewed the Tollway as a leader in regional transportation and placed a lot of hope and confidence in the Tollway to implement a capital plan with regional impact. He also indicated that he heard support from leaders to raise tolls if necessary. He encouraged them to educate their constituents about the project benefits and he emphasized the need for community leaders to garner grassroots support to ensure Board support for the capital plan.

Director Canham asked whether Ms. Lafleur received feedback from the capital forums that indicated that any of the projects on the Tollway's priority list did not have value. Ms. Lafleur indicated that generally all of the projects on the list were deemed valuable by the attendees.

Director Saldaña expressed her appreciation to the staff for their internal and external (outreach) efforts to develop a comprehensive plan. She indicated that the economic growth in the Chicago metropolitan area is below the national average and that addressing traffic congestion is important to economic development in this region. Director Weisner added that the interstate highway system was a major factor in placing the U.S. in front of other nations during President Eisenhower's

administration. He indicated that to remain competitive globally it is crucial for continued investment in the region's infrastructure. Ms. Lafleur commented that the positive feedback for managed lanes and transit options along the corridor is a clear indication that people understand that we cannot build our way out of the congestion problem.

### CORRIDOR COUNCIL STATUS – I-90

Committee Chair Weisner introduced Rocco Zuccherro, Deputy Chief of Engineering, to give an update on various planning councils focused on projects incorporated in the proposed capital plan. The I-90 Corridor Planning Council was formed to make recommendations for transportation development along the I-90 Corridor defined by this Council as I-90 from the Illinois-Wisconsin state line to the Chicago central business district, including, but not limited to, adjacent arterials and transit networks. He indicated that the Earth Day Transportation Summit held in April 2011 was an important kick-off to the formation of the I-90 Corridor Planning Council in May 2011 due to unprecedented cooperation among several state and local agencies and advocacy, business and elected officials.

Mr. Zuccherro indicated that the Council recently adopted the Guiding Principles to: define the overall corridor; improve performance of the I-90 Corridor to support economic vitality across Northern Illinois; require cooperative planning amongst all of the agencies; improve the traffic throughput on the corridors with construction and transit options; minimize environmental impacts through sound investments; support financially viable solutions; and maximize the life cycles of the infrastructure assets.

An I-90 Working Group was created in partnership with the Regional Transportation Agency to develop and evaluate transit options on the Tollway's portion of I-90. This group will refine and finalize transit

options, develop cost estimates, and report back to the I-90 Corridor Planning Council. Mr. Zuccherro reviewed the short-term and long-term options for adding a lane as discussed by the I-90 Working Group.

The working group is currently reviewing a short term option - adding a shared use or managed lane with a slightly wider inside shoulder to accommodate bus and/or transit in the future. The goal is to accommodate transit while minimizing the expansion of the current right-of-way.

Director Weisner asked whether expanding the right-of-way is part of the capital plan. Ms. Lafleur indicated that the capital plan includes costs associated with the short and mid-term project scenarios described in the attached presentation. Paul Kovacs, Chief Engineer, confirmed that minimal right-of-way expansion is needed in the short-term and mid-term. Mr. Zuccherro added that expansion of right-of-way beyond the 4 feet described in the presentation would necessitate increased coordination with utility companies to plan utility relocation.

Mr. Zuccherro indicated that he expects that the information needed from the Council/Working Group to move forward with the Tollway's portion of the I-90 should be completed by August/September 2011. Beyond that timeframe, the I-90 Council will focus on other areas of the I-90 corridor.

#### CORRIDOR COUNCIL STATUS - EOWB

Mr. Zuccherro gave a brief update on the Elgin O'Hare Western Bypass Advisory Council's (EOWB) work to date, its recently submitted report and continued work on financing options. He indicated that the report included four areas of concentration: Diversity, Sustainability, Economic Development and Financing. The final report will include recommendations from the Council on each of these topics.

A report from the Council to the Co-Chairs and the Governor will be submitted later this year.

The Diversity Working Group, chaired by Jorge Perez of the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA), was formed to develop a strategy to ensure the project supports a diverse workforce and opportunities for small- and medium-sized businesses and under-represented groups. This group looked at opportunities to incorporate and support diversity throughout project development and implementation. This report from this group included in the following recommendations: modifying guidelines for D/W/MBE procurement, developing support services early to prepare firms for upcoming contract bids and unbundling contracts to ensure opportunity for smaller and mid-size firms and expansion of the ECP program; enhancing workforce development and compliance by supporting a protégé program; and contracting with an independent entity for compliance monitoring and reporting.

The Sustainability Working Group, chaired by Jackie Grimshaw of CNT (also CTA Board), was formed to make recommendations on reducing environmental impacts while also creating financial and operational benefits for the project, as well as social benefits for the community at large. This group identified seven categories for study and consideration including: Planning, Design, Environmental, Energy Reduction, Water Quality, Material and Resources and Construction Practices. They also recommended appointing a Sustainability “Czar”.

The Economic Development Working Group, chaired by Bob Schillerstrom, was formed to identify and quantify the opportunities and impacts of the EOWB project. This group also performed detailed analysis to quantify the overall economic impact and job growth associated with the EOWB. This group determined that the EOWB

project would generate the following: 41,000 long term jobs; 13,000 jobs annually during construction; \$16 million in tax benefits to the local government annually; and \$750 million in tax revenue for the state and federal governments annually during construction. Ms. Lafleur added that the EOWB project will stem the tide of job loss in that area.

The Financing Working Group, chaired by Chris Meister, IFA Executive Director and Dan Cronin, DuPage County Chair, was formed to evaluate a wide range of financing options - from traditional federal funding of projects up to the more innovative practices of value capture, congestion pricing, indexing of tolls, cordon tolling and tolling existing interstates and freeways. The group reached consensus on the following: constructing the EOWB as a toll road; modifying the project design to accommodate a \$2.2 billion cost instead of the initially proposed \$3.6 billion cost; considering transit and other modal choices in the project design; and seeking financial support from the federal government and local stakeholders. Ms. Lafleur added that this Working Group also agreed to continue meeting to discuss financing options under the leadership of the DuPage County representatives.

Mr. Zucchero indicated that the next steps for the EOWB includes: working with the Illinois Department of Transportation to understand project costs; continuing Finance Committee coordination of Federal, State, Local and Private Financing Options; and coordinating with the Federal Highway Administration.

Director Weisner asked whether local participation will be the primary focus of the Finance Working Group going forward. Ms. Lafleur indicated that federal funding and value capture scenarios will also be a focus of this group.

### CORRIDOR COUNCIL STATUS – ROUTE 53

Mr. Zucchero shared that the formation of the Route 53 Blue Ribbon Advisory Council was announced on July 15 and includes a diverse membership – transportation agencies, environmental advocacy groups, business and social service advocacy groups, local chambers of commerce, elected officials in ex-officio roles on the council. The goal of the Council is to gain regional consensus to move forward with this project and to make recommendations on project design concepts and financing strategies. The initial meeting will be held in August. One year has been allocated for the completion of the Council's full report.

### CORRIDOR COUNCIL STATUS – I-294/I-57

Regarding the I-294/I-57 project, Ms. Lafleur indicated that although no advisory council was created for this project, there have been extensive meetings with the lead agency on this project - IDOT, FHWA, the Tollway Oversight Committee and other stakeholders. Ms. Lafleur indicated that the challenge on the I-294/I-57 project is that multiple interchanges and stakeholders who are affected by this change.

Director Weisner asked whether there was increased opportunity for financial collaboration with IDOT and FHWA with the I-294/I-57 interchange compared to the other projects. Ms. Lafleur indicated that there is significant benefit to the Tollway to alleviate congestion on its road and the arterial roads. Mr. Zucchero indicated that IDOT has already started work on this project with state only funding.

Director Weisner asked whether there is any research that shows the economic impact of creating this interchange. Mr. Zucchero indicated that the Center for Neighborhood Technology has done analysis indicating that this project will have a positive impact on the economic redevelopment of Blue Island. Similar impact is expected in other cities

situated along the 8-10 mile stretch on I-294 that currently has no local access such as Markham.

Director Canham asked whether a cost breakdown was available for delivering the project in parts instead of the whole project. Ms. Lafleur indicated that the full economic development benefit to the affected communities is realized when the whole project is funded. Director Canham asked whether local participation had been considered in the cost to building. Ms. Lafleur indicated that the financial capacity for cost-sharing with affected communities is minimal because the communities are financially distressed. Mr. Kovacs reiterated that this is an interstate to interstate connection compared to cost sharing projects that funded ramps for specific communities.

Director Weisner opened the floor to public comment. No comment was offered.

**Director Weisner indicated that he will work with staff to define possible projects for the committee to consider going forward.**

There being no further business Committee Chair Weisner requested a motion to adjourn. Director Canham moved to adjourn; seconded by Director Weisner. The motion was approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 a.m.

Minutes taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

Tranece Artis  
Board Secretary  
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority