

Chapter 8: Implementation and Performance Analysis

As with most plans, the proof is in the implementation, actions taken pursuant to the plan and the results achieved. With the use of performance measures now a mandated step in the plan implementation, we have established phases for the implementation through the strategies and tasks defined in Chapter 6.

As previously discussed, this LRTP is designed to initiate a new course for transportation planning at MCRPC, taking full advantage of the remarkable expansion in data availability from multiple sources across multiple disciplines. Plans must be grounded in the best available information obtainable, which has been tested, compared with other information sources and validated as accurate and timely.

Phase I of the plan consists of executing the strategies and tasks that detail the data aggregation process, and the organization of the collected data. As of autumn 2017, MCRPC has begun development of a database “dashboard,” intended as an intergovernmental resource and eventually a publically accessible resource as well. The data relates to a number of planning disciplines, including transportation, housing, demographics, economic indicators, local business, education and others. Datasets are being acquired, tested and added to the growing collection. MCRPC intends to leverage this material to expand its analysis capabilities and correlate analysis from other sources.

Several of the standing MCRPC committees will assist in prioritizing the execution of strategies and tasks related to data collection and management, including consideration of data needs in the context of near-term projects and planning efforts. First priority for metrics will be assigned in part on the project-level priorities for which the data is required to proceed.

MCRPC is preparing for the initial phase of data collection and priority setting by correlating the goals, objectives, strategies and tasks in the transportation plan with their work program and scheduling requirements for specific tasks. For example, MCRPC staff and the Transportation Technical and Policy committees must develop a project scoring system for use in preparation of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Although local staff members have always felt that the collaborative approach used over the last twenty years has served the community well, and has produced excellent and needed projects, they concede that it is difficult to quantify the process. In the interest of transparency the Technical Committee will begin this process in December 2017, for an approved document by mid-March of 2018.

As is noted each year in the TIP, MCRPC does not limit the 5-year program to the required projects, those using Federal funds for some portion of the project budget. The TIP also includes projects funded entirely with local dollars. This has been done to properly reflect the degree to which transportation infrastructure is created and paid for within the community. These projects will continue to be reported in the TIP, and will not subject to the project scoring system. The TIP will continue to serve as a reference on the share of overall program costs taken on by the participating entities.

As noted earlier, this plan does not begin with a “preferred scenario.” Too little is known with respect to future resources to express a preference. As MCRPC’s data resources and analytic options broaden, it may be possible to formulate a preference based in real information, applying the priorities established in the Implementation of this plan and the municipal comprehensive plans.

For transportation, MCRPC will both acquire new materials and make existing resources more available for general use. Much of the new material will augment existing information to aid in authenticating data. This process will take advantage of government datasets now available, such as the Illinois Department of Transportation data announced for distribution at the 2017 IDOT Fall Planning Conference. The IDOT data and that from other sources sometimes exist as GIS-based files. Use of this material in concert with the McGIS system will be further investigated.

A major component of the MCRPC transportation data project is the acquisition of mobility and access assessment platform and relevant data for McLean County and the remaining four counties of the Region 6 Human Services Transportation planning area. This tool and McGIS are expected to radically improve analysis of mobility scenarios for the public rural transit and non-profit agencies in Region 6, which offer a range of transportation options to the general public and agency clients. This platform will play a central role in analyzing data and creating scenarios for scheduled and paratransit service in the rural Region 6 area, and in the updating of Human Services Transportation plans for Region 6 and the McLean County-Bloomington-Normal urbanized area MPO.

While Phase 1 of implementation is centered on the development and testing of a broad array of information resources and tools, Phase 2 focuses on the use of these capabilities in fulfilling the strategies and tasks outlined in the plan, often in cooperation with local governments, participant agencies and transit providers. Strategies in this phase of the process emphasize collaborative efforts to implement major policies such as Vision Zero, and to formalize intergovernmental and inter-agency cooperation and joint project management and funding.

This phase also includes the execution of alternative and innovative funding structures, such as options put forth by the FHWA Office of Innovative Program Delivery and the funding programs of the Federal Transit Administration. Of particular interest is the exploration and participation in Federal programs, including interagency programs, which the MPO participants have not previously utilized.

Implementation of the plan requires the capacity to make adjustments to its content and conclusions as new information or events may suggest. The MCRPC Transportation Technical Committee will take the place of the Steering Committee in adjudicating these revisions. Amendments to the plan will be processed in the same fashion as amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program, and will be submitted to the Transportation Policy Committee for final approval and adoption. Action taken by the Transportation committees to formalize this process will be included in the minutes of the committees.

As the MPO participants move through implementation of the strategies, MCRPC will track performance using the measurements discussed in Chapter 6. Beginning in 2018, each December 1st MCRPC will publish the annual report on the progress of the plan, including the status of the strategies and tasks, and amendments to the plan or the performance measures, and discussion of any events of noted or obstacles encountered. This document will solicit

public comment on the plan status, and incorporate comments into the report as the Transportation Technical Committee deems warranted.

Federal Project Finance Tools

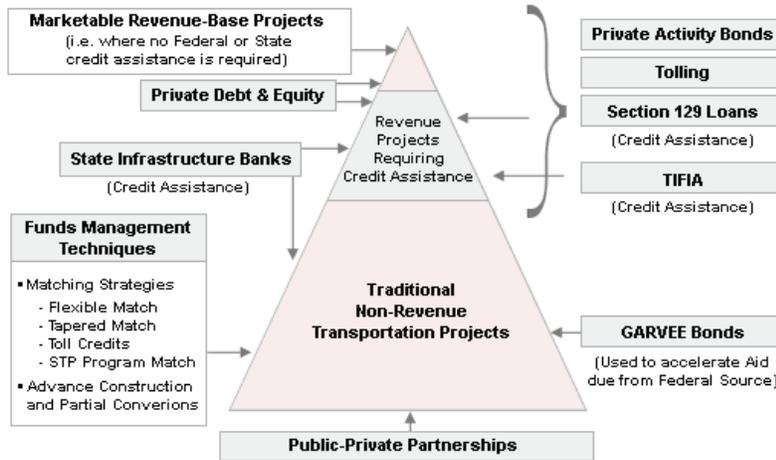


Figure 8.1, FHWA Office of Innovative Program Delivery, Center for Innovative Finance Support

Another aspect of Phase 2 implementation is the consideration of future projects which are currently defined as illustrative. There remains the possibility that during the term of this plan, a current need will be established and work will resume on the proposed East Side Highway. This may also be true of other illustrative projects discussed in Chapter 5, §1.10f,

such as a possible Oakland Avenue interchange on the I-55/74 loop in West Bloomington, or developing a regional hub at Uptown Station as the core facility in a regional commuter rail system across Central Illinois. In any of these instances, significant levels of project funding would be required to proceed. Given the existing and likely future funding instabilities, we cannot reasonably foresee circumstances in which these projects can be sustainably supported.

As noted in the context of our prime directive for system preservation over expansion, large-scale projects on the community's edge are inconsistent not only with this plan, but also the recent Bloomington and Normal comprehensive plans. Broad implementation of the comprehensive plans will reduce the likelihood of need for such facilities, but the possibility should not be ruled out. At its core, and like the municipal plans with which it is integrated, this transportation plan envisions a future Bloomington-Normal and McLean County in which restraint in development policy, respect for the extraordinary natural and agricultural resources that surround them and a receptive and responsive approach to emerging technology combine in a community which values its past and looks eagerly to its future at mid-century.



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