

# MEETING MINUTES

Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation Infrastructure  
Funding and Policy  
Commission Meeting | June 17, 2025 | 10:00am – 12:00pm

| Commission Members Present       | Commission Members Absent       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chair – Secretary Gia Biagi      | Commissioner Romaine Brown      |
| Commissioner Laura Calderon      | Senator Don DeWitte             |
| Commissioner Eileen Chin         | Representative Marcus Evans Jr. |
| Representative C.D. Davidsmeyer  | Senator Dale Fowler             |
| Commissioner Jacquelyne Grimshaw | Representative Michael Kelly    |
| Commissioner Thomas Kotarac      |                                 |
| Commissioner Duana Love          |                                 |
| Senator Laura Murphy             |                                 |
| Commissioner Marc Poulos         |                                 |
| Representative Ryan Spain        |                                 |
| Senator Ram Villivalam           |                                 |

| Staff Attendees Present | Representing                          |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Aaron Gold-Stein        | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Holly Bieneman          | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Sophie Blumenstein      | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| John Donovan            | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Terrence Glavin         | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Elizabeth Irvin         | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Jeremey LaMarche        | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Brandy Phillips         | Illinois Department of Transportation |
| Margaret Smith          | Illinois Department of Transportation |

| Other Attendees Present   | Representing                  |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Lanyea Griffin            | Acclaim Collier Engineering   |
| Mozella Richardson Kamara | Acclaim Collier Engineering   |
| Mujeeb Basha              | American Veteran Engineering  |
| Tracey Bailey             | B Squared Consulting          |
| Daniel Comeaux            | CDM Smith                     |
| Travis Dunn               | CDM Smith                     |
| Jacki Murdock             | CDM Smith                     |
| Alex Beata                | CMAP                          |
| Ashlyn Deakin-Sodowski    | DBP Team                      |
| Aaron Weatherholt         | Hanson Professional Services  |
| Jason Carbee              | HDR                           |
| Libby Braband             | HNTB                          |
| Jamy Lyne                 | Kaskaskia Engineering         |
| Bryan Bungo               | KPMG                          |
| Ted Hamer                 | KPMG                          |
| Brandon Niday             | KPMG                          |
| Alex Rothman              | KPMG                          |
| Michael Stacey            | KPMG                          |
| Desiree Matel             | Marine Tiger Technologies     |
| Marcia Shapiro            | Marine Tiger Technologies     |
| Michael Steinle           | Marine Tiger Technologies     |
| Josh Wagner               | Marine Tiger Technologies     |
| Thomas Bamonte            | Metropolitan Planning Council |

| Other Attendees Present | Representing                  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Audrey Wennink          | Metropolitan Planning Council |
| Katharine McSteen       | Metro Strategies Group        |
| Rocco Zuccherro         | Metro Strategies Group        |

## Overview of Meeting

### I. Introductions

Commission Chair Secretary Gia Biagi called the meeting to order. Following Chair Biagi's introduction, a roll call was conducted. Quorum was met at the start of the meeting, with 11 Commissioners present.

### II. Approval of Minutes – April 28, 2025

Secretary Biagi introduced the meeting minutes for approval and there were no comments regarding the minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Representative Spain and seconded by Commissioner Calderon. All voted in favor, and the motion was passed with no objections.

### III. Update from Secretary Biagi

Secretary Biagi welcomed and thanked the Commissioners for their participation in the Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC). She expressed her appreciation for the commitment of the Commissioners and shared several recent Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) accomplishments from the last six months. The Department recently issued the largest PTB in agency history with 71 items, streamlined the hiring process from over 100 steps to just 16, released \$400 million for local initiatives and announced 67 ITEP projects totaling over \$135 million. The Department also adopted a performance-based recruitment strategy, launched an employee retention committee, cleared a backlog of 5,000 invoices, and released a Construction Manager / General Contractor RFP.

### IV. Update on Recent BRC Activity

Mr. Bryan Bungo, with KPMG, provided a summary of recent and upcoming activity including the meeting of all six BRC working groups and an updated overall timeline of the BRC's work.

Mr. Bungo shared that in June Commissioners identified and are now reviewing preliminary recommendations. In the coming months, the

Commissioners and IDOT staff will refine the recommendations and review the final report in October.

There were no comments.

## **V. Additional Emerging Opportunities for IDOT**

### **Discussion: Emerging Opportunities for Funding**

Ms. Jacki Murdock, with CDM Smith, reviewed opportunities for IDOT's sources and funding allocations. The two main components of funding being focused on are funding allocation and funding sources and amounts. She provided a high-level overview of IDOT's funding allocation and programming process with the six-year Multi-Year Program.

Ms. Murdock then reviewed IDOT's revenue sources including sales tax, motor fuel tax, motor vehicle registration, federal funding, local funding, and bond proceeds. She noted that the State is likely to face long-term funding challenges due to declining MFT revenues associated with improved fuel efficiency and EV adoption coupled with increasing costs.

She also noted that there are similar pressures at the federal level and the challenges in Illinois are happening in other states as well related to the viability of various funding streams. The team also mentioned that allocation of funds intersects with project delivery, and this is being looked at holistically.

There were no comments.

### **Funding Working Group Updates**

Commissioner Kotarac provided an overview of the working group's initial recommendations that fall within the four major categories of efficiently using funding, the allocation of funding across program categories, the allocation of funding to different levels of government, and the allocation of funding across modes and geographies.

He shared that the working group would also be evaluating potential additional funding sources for IDOT across usage-based fees, vehicle-based fees, and other fees. He also noted that there may be opportunities to incentivize local communities that are delivering on the transportation goals set out by the state.

There were no comments.

## **Discussion: Emerging Opportunities for Equity**

Ms. Tracey Bailey, with B-Squared Consulting, provided an overview of key components of equity in transportation and IDOT's workforce development programs including the Mentor / Protégé Program, Small Business Initiative, Workforce Development Programs, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

(DBE) Program. Ms. Bailey also shared legal impacts these programs are currently facing including several recent executive orders and injunctions.

There were no comments.

## **Equity Working Group Update**

Commissioner Grimshaw provided an overview of the working group's initial discussion. She shared that the working group has been focused on equity relating to the external workforce and industry. This includes business and external workforce development initiatives such as increasing the scale of workforce development programs and expanding the small business initiative. The working group is also reviewing contracting and policy requirements such as bonding requirements and the prequalification process.

Commissioner Poulos asked if IDOT has considered any of the impacts associated with the US DOT comments regarding disbursement of funds to sanctuary cities.

Secretary Biagi noted that IDOT is currently sifting through this information, and the team is looking at this issue in its entirety. Information will be provided when the issues are clear and there is more substance coming from the federal government.

Commissioner Kotarac asked if the equity group considered partnerships with colleges or universities to address some of the equity issues. He also wanted to know if there was any data regarding geographic trends with respect to where funds are being spent. The goal would be to figure out where funding is spent to better informed recommendations.

Commissioner Grimshaw noted that these items are good topics to discuss with the Working Group and will be addressed at future working group meetings.

## **VI. Preliminary Recommendations From Other Working Groups**

### **Governance Working Group Update**

Commissioner Calderon shared that the Governance Working Group has developed initial recommendations that fall into two main categories of speed and transparency of processes to collaborate with local agencies and delegation to local authorities.

She shared that this first category includes recommendations to explore expanding funding options like flexible federal match and STP/MFT swaps, as well as bundling routine service agreements.

Commissioner Chin noted the importance of improving the flow between intrastate agencies. The recommendations need to look at how to control workflows and put more into IDOT's control to assist with project implementation.

Commissioner Calderon agreed that this is an important issue that will be discussed with the work group to assess what controls can be assigned back to IDOT.

Commissioner Kotarac noted that another goal of Governance would be to make transportation mode neutral and to eliminate silos between IDOT and local agencies.

### **Sustainability Working Group Update**

Commissioner Love provided an overview of the initial Sustainability Working Group Meeting. Their initial recommendations included establishing Green House Gas (GHG) targets, implementing low-carbon construction practices, electric vehicle expansion, environmental justice, bike/ped reporting, and statewide goals/incentives. She shared that climate mitigation measures and improving data sharing are additional opportunities that will be explored.

There were no comments.

### **Project Delivery Working Group Update**

Commissioner Chin opened by complementing the efforts of IDOT and the internal work group for their efforts. She noted that the industry is starting to see and realize the impacts of these changes and appreciates the effort of the Secretary and staff.

Commissioner Chin provided an overview of the current recommendations and their three focus areas of process improvement, project controls and policies, and data and technology, being discussed with Project Delivery Working Group and noted the crossover with the Governance Working Group recommendations. These recommendations include embedding IDOT and other agency staff together to enhance collaboration, establishing a cradle to

grave project management process, using project management tools, and creating dashboards to track project progress.

Commissioner Love asked about the cradle to grave concept noted in the recommendations. Commissioner Chin detailed that the goal is to track progress across all phases of a project.

Commissioner Murphy asked for clarification regarding the recommendation of removing General Assembly approvals for Public Private Partnerships (P3).

The KPMG team clarified that the intent of the statement is to provide IDOT the flexibility to allow a P3 project to be implemented more effectively.

Commissioner Murphy commented that more information about this recommendation would be needed if it is to move forward.

### **Workforce Working Group Update**

Commissioner Poulos provided an overview of the workforce recommendations that focus on recruiting, hiring, retention, employee development and deployment, and workforce management. He noted that IDOT went from a peak number of employees several years ago to about half of that today. The focus should be to balance replacing staff and planning for future retirements. Potential recommendations include moving to skills-based hiring to expand candidate pools, expanding legacy workforce programs, and completing the implementation of Success Factors.

He also mentioned the Working Group will be looking at broader workforce opportunities such as opportunities for partnerships, training, and knowledge management.

There were no comments.

## **VII. Next Steps**

Commissioner Kotarac asked if information about IDOT's accomplishments mentioned by Secretary Biagi could be shared with the BRC Commissioners so they may share with their peers.

Mr. Hamer stated that the information will be shared with the Commissioners.

## **VIII. New Business**

The meeting was opened to new business. No new business was discussed.

**IX. Public Comment**

The meeting was opened to public comment. No public comments were made.

**X. Next meeting**

The next Commission meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, August 12th.

**XI. Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Chin and seconded by Commissioner Poulos. The motion passed.

*The meeting adjourned at 11:37am.*