Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Regional Clean Air Dialogue

Chicago Metropolitan Area, Illinois

Community Profile

Jurisdictions
A regional coalition of municipalities in the six-county Chicago Metropolitan area (including Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties)

Population
7.6 Million

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I. Program Background

The six-county Chicago metropolitan area is currently designated as a severe nonattainment area for ozone under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA). The CAA requires the state of Illinois to institute programs to improve air quality in the region. Until the region's air quality improves, communities there face restrictions on the amounts and types of development that can occur in the nonattainment area.

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC), an organization of the chief elected officials from the 269 communities in the Chicago metropolitan area, became concerned that federal rules and policies governing the nonattainment area would hamper the region's environmental and economic development goals. To address those concerns, the MMC created the Regional Clean Air Dialogue in 1998 in partnership with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). The Regional Dialogue, facilitated by the Delta Institute, convenes a broad range of key public and private stakeholders working together to define regional strategies that communities in the Chicago area can implement to simultaneously attain CAA standards and achieve economic development goals.

This regional policy discussion fosters an understanding among divergent interests of the interplay between clean air goals and economic development goals. The process serves as an opportunity to assess the products and results of two other air quality programs that the city of Chicago is undertaking: (1) the Clean Air Task Force (see related case study on page 85) and (2) the Clean Air/Brownfields Partnership Pilot, a joint project of U.S. EPA and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM). The Regional Dialogue's work will also provide additional information as Illinois develops revisions to its state implementation plan.

II. Program Description

The MMC convened the Regional Dialogue to bring together stakeholders from federal, state, regional, and local governments, as well as the private sector, to create strategies for attaining federal air standards related to ozone while simultaneously supporting economic development—especially redevelop-

ment—in the region. The MMC developed an ambitious schedule for the Regional Dialogue, which is described below:

November 1998: Convening Group
The MMC designated a convening group of stakeholders to identify issues for discussion at the Regional Dialogue meetings, finalize the list of participants, and establish a process for the Regional Dialogue's activities.

March 1999: Workshop
The one-day Redevelopment and Clean Air Workshop created a shared understanding among stakeholders of the effects of air quality standards and generated creative approaches to both achieving clean air and promoting economic development in the region. Topics covered in the first workshop included (1) "Smog 101," (2) requirements of the 1990 amendments to the CAA, (3) trends in air quality, (4) tools for achieving attainment, (5) new standards and new approaches, and (6) linkages of air policy to other regional issues.

March–December 1999: Work Groups
Five work groups were formed at the March 1999 workshop to identify and develop the actions necessary to create a regional strategy. These groups met for six-months to discuss a number of topics. Their discussions led to strategies that were shared with, and reviewed by, all participants at the final Regional Dialogue meeting held in December 1999. The work group topics are described below:

Development. This work group focused on identifying opportunities for maintaining economic growth while attaining CAA standards. It identified both major development-related policies that affect air quality and clean air policies that affect economic growth.

Energy. This work group developed strategies to ensure that supplies of clean, affordable, and reliable energy remain available to the region. Additionally, it considered opportunities related to energy conservation and efficiency.

Clean Air Technologies. This work group evaluated current regulatory approaches and considered future options for pollution prevention.

Aggregation Opportunities. This work group created strategies for reducing emissions from industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential uses, and it explored options for aggregating the benefits of such reductions. For example, the work group addressed the issue of emissions from institutional printing operations.

Incentives and Credits for Innovative Emission Reduction Strategies. This work group evaluated the most appropriate tools for crediting innovative strategies, and it determined which of these will best stimulate economic development.

III. Resources Used

Staffing

The MMC convened the Regional Dialogue, which is being facilitated by the Delta Institute, a nonprofit organization, in cooperation with U.S. EPA, IEPA, and the Chicago Department of Environment (CDOE). Three full-time CDOE employees staffed the Regional Dialogue and its activities. Also contributing time and staff resources were more than 150 participants representing federal, state, regional, and local governments, as well as the business community, environmental organizations, civic organizations, and academic institutions.

Funding and Expenditures

The Regional Dialogue had a budget of $200,000 and was funded through grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the USCM, the National Association of Counties, the Joint Center for Sustainability, and Chicago's Environmental Fund.

Technical Assistance

IEPA, with assistance from U.S. EPA's Region 5 office, provided the primary technical assistance for the work groups. IEPA provided staff and resources necessary to estimate what affect the work group's ideas would have on emissions. In addition, each work group participant brought specific expertise to

the discussions, which was invaluable in developing workable approaches to emissions reduction.

IV. Lessons Learned

The Regional Dialogue process yielded several important lessons. First, a broad cross section of participants is important to achieving a well-informed and balanced outcome. Both the public and private sector must be involved. The participant pool must be as broad as possible, extending beyond those within the environmental community. Further, to ensure that all stakeholders will believe in the process, the facilitators must be completely neutral and not possess any hidden agendas. Finally, this type of process must be streamlined to maintain interest levels and to prevent declines in attendance.

The Regional Dialogue will face further challenges as it proceeds. Implementing the goals outlined by the group will require a firm commitment to regional cooperation from a broad range of interests. Governments, institutions, and the commercial sector must be willing to work jointly to identify new strategies that will effectively improve air quality, promote development, and create incentives for implementing those strategies. A methodology for quantifying and tracking the benefits of those strategies must be developed. Additionally, federal and state regulators must: be willing to accept that methodology and to incorporate it into the state's plan for achieving compliance with the federal air quality requirements.

V. Outcome and Accomplishments

The Regional Dialogue has been successful in creating a forum where regional stakeholders can discuss how to balance CAA compliance with increased economic development. More than 150 diverse participants from industry, government, environmental groups, civil organizations, developers, and regional leaders worked together to identify strategies and to implement emissions reduction activities within the region.

The final meeting of the Regional Dialogue was held in December 1999, at which time the results of the working groups were reported. Additionally, a plan was proposed to implement the ideas and strategies that had been generated. The ideas from the work groups have been organized into five campaigns targeted at different categories of emissions sources, which are described below:

Clean Air Communities

The 1,246 local government units in the Chicago region share many of the same characteristics as businesses and other institutions. Municipalities and counties often have many employees, and they own, maintain, or improve multiple buildings and properties. By implementing strategies to improve air quality, local governments can lead by example and act as models for their communities.

Additionally, they can broaden their impact through regulating, enforcing, and influencing economic development and land use decisions. Thus, municipalities and counties can use strategies relating to their own facilities and employees, and, through legislation, ordinances, and other policies, they can enable additional strategies that will significantly reduce current and future emission-generating activities. This campaign will focus on educating municipal and county governments about the actions they can take to positively affect air quality through their physical development, transportation, operations and maintenance, energy, and legislative and regulatory activities.

Clean Air Businesses. Industries, and Institutions

The Chicago region is home to more than 4 million employees, is headquarters to 34 *Fortune 500* companies, and is the site of 38 colleges and universities. The region's broad range of businesses, industries, and institutions provides an excellent venue for reaching emissions sources and for affecting numerous emissions-generating activities. Those activities provide an opportunity for achieving reductions from employers, employees, customers or visitors, private contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and other neighboring facilities. Emissions would be reduced either directly, by modifying activities at the participating facility, or indirectly by affecting the activities of those using or doing business with it.

In addition to the options available to all businesses, regulated industries (i.e., those already subject to nonattainment-related regulation) can use comprehensive pollution-prevention strategies and can participate in emissions trading programs.

The audience for this campaign includes nonregulated businesses and institutions, commercial enterprises, and regulated industries. The MMC is considering a series of "subcampaigns" to target similar institutions or entities with special characteristics such as education facilities, hospitals, shopping areas, suburban office complexes, school boards, transit authorities, and park districts.

Clean Air Development

Builders, developers, architects, and planners—who are the parties responsible for many of the investment, location, use, and design decisions for development projects—are in a special position to influence emissions associated with the development project itself, as well as the future emissions resulting from travel to, and use of, the development.

The primary focus of the campaign will be on physical development through location decisions, site design, building materials and systems, and development criteria. This campaign will overlap with many other campaigns because the decision makers (businesses and institutions, regulated industries, municipalities, etc.) must work with their builders, developers, architects, and planners to ensure that their projects do not degrade air quality.

Clean Air Households

Day-to-day household activities account for a major portion of the volatile organic compound (VOC) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) inventories. Though the general public is indirectly addressed in most of the campaigns—through employee- and customer-oriented approaches—there is a need for a more direct, comprehensive program that is focused on households.

The campaign will include not only the occupants of homes and apartments, but also the homes and properties themselves. The focus will be on individuals' behavior that, in the aggregate, can significantly improve air quality, including (1) transportation choices such as increasing the use of public transportation and other alternative modes of transport, (2) operation and maintenance choices for landscaping, housekeeping, and technology replacement, and (3) energy conservation and generation.

Clean Air Illinois

Like municipalities and counties, the state and federal governments share many characteristics with businesses and other institutions. Government agencies such as the U.S. General Services Administration and Illinois Department of Central Management Services employ many individuals and own, maintain, and improve multiple buildings and properties. Those government entities also have the opportunity to broaden their effect by leading through example, by regulating and enforcing standards, and by influencing economic development and land use decisions. Thus, the state and federal governments can use all of the applicable strategies embodied in the Clean Air Business, Industries, and Institutions campaign, as well as those arising from legislation and other policies. Further, this campaign can stimulate more intergovernmental partnerships and regional cooperation.

Each campaign will be led by members of the target audience and will focus on implementing clean air strategies within the target area. A steering committee composed of each campaign's leadership will oversee and guide the effort for the region. Table 1 summarizes the emissions savings goals from each of the campaigns.

During the implementation phase, the original participants in the Regional Dialogue, as well as in the region as a whole, will participate in the recommended strategies so that the Chicago metropolitan area will reach attainment. The final report of the Regional Dialogue is scheduled for release in early 2000.

Table 1: Emissions Reductions Potential from MMC Clean Air Campaigns

Campaign Name	Initial Goal			Estimated Likely Potential			Estimated Maximum Potential		
	VOC (tons/ day)	NO_x (tons/ day)	Energy (million MW hr/ yr)	VOC (tons/ day	NO_x (tons/ day	Energy (million MW hr/ yr)	VOC (tons/ day	NO_x (tons/ day	Energy (million MW hr/ yr)
Clean Air Communities	3.49	2.59	0.26	19.20	14.25	1.43	34.90	25.90	2.60
Clean Air Businesses, Industries, and Institutions	2.06	4.47	0.51	11.33	24.59	2.81	20.60	44.70	5.10
Clean Air Development	0.30	1.42	0.20	1.65	7.81	1.10	3.00	14.20	2.00
Clean Air Households	5.80	1.53	0.10	31.90	8.42	0.55	58.00	16.30	1.00
Clean Air Illinois	1.35	0.89	0.04	7.43	4.90	0.22	13.50	8.90	0.40
TOTALS	13.00	10.90	1.11	71.51	59.97	6.11	130.00	110.00	11.10