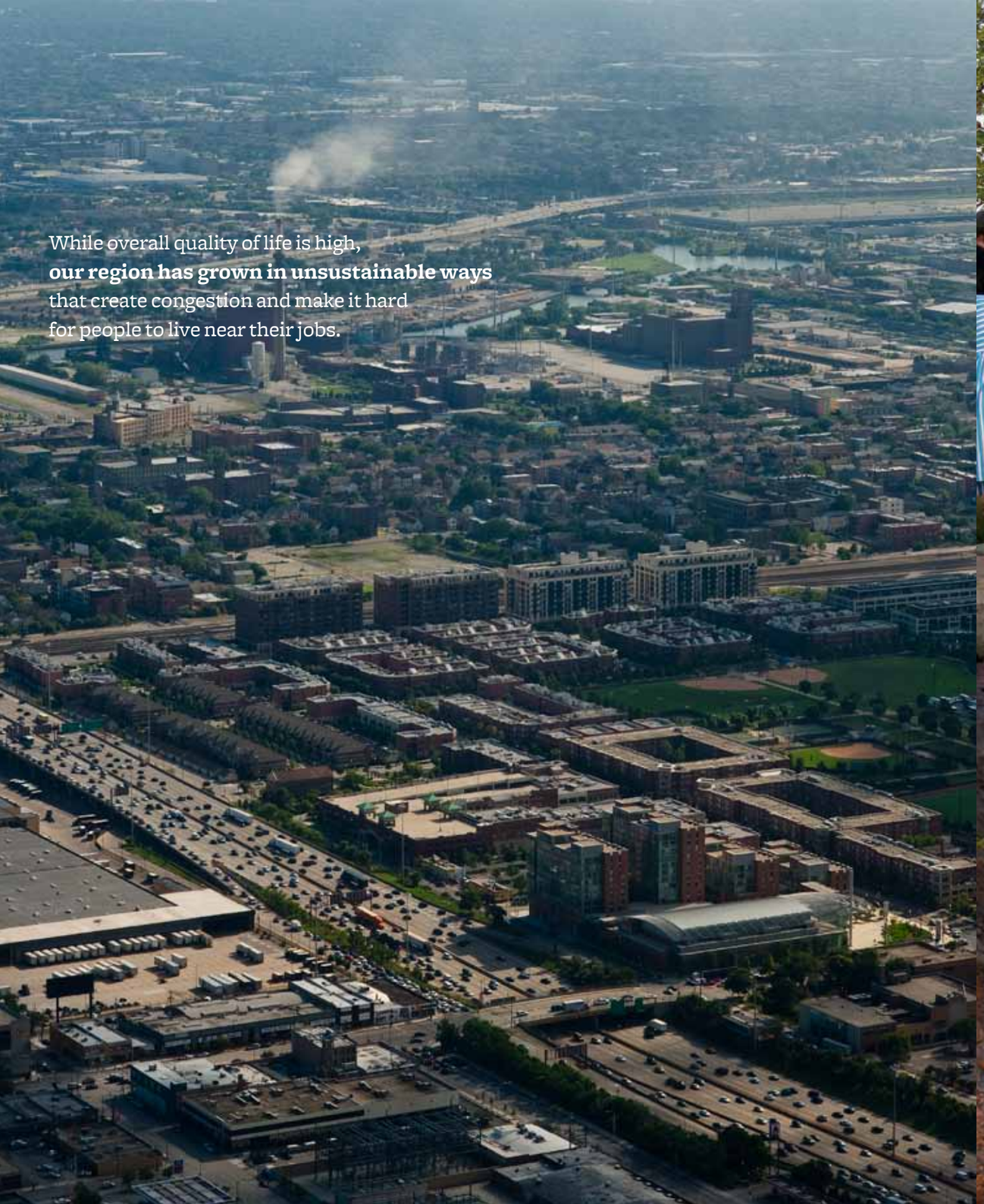
CMAP

GO TO 2040

2040

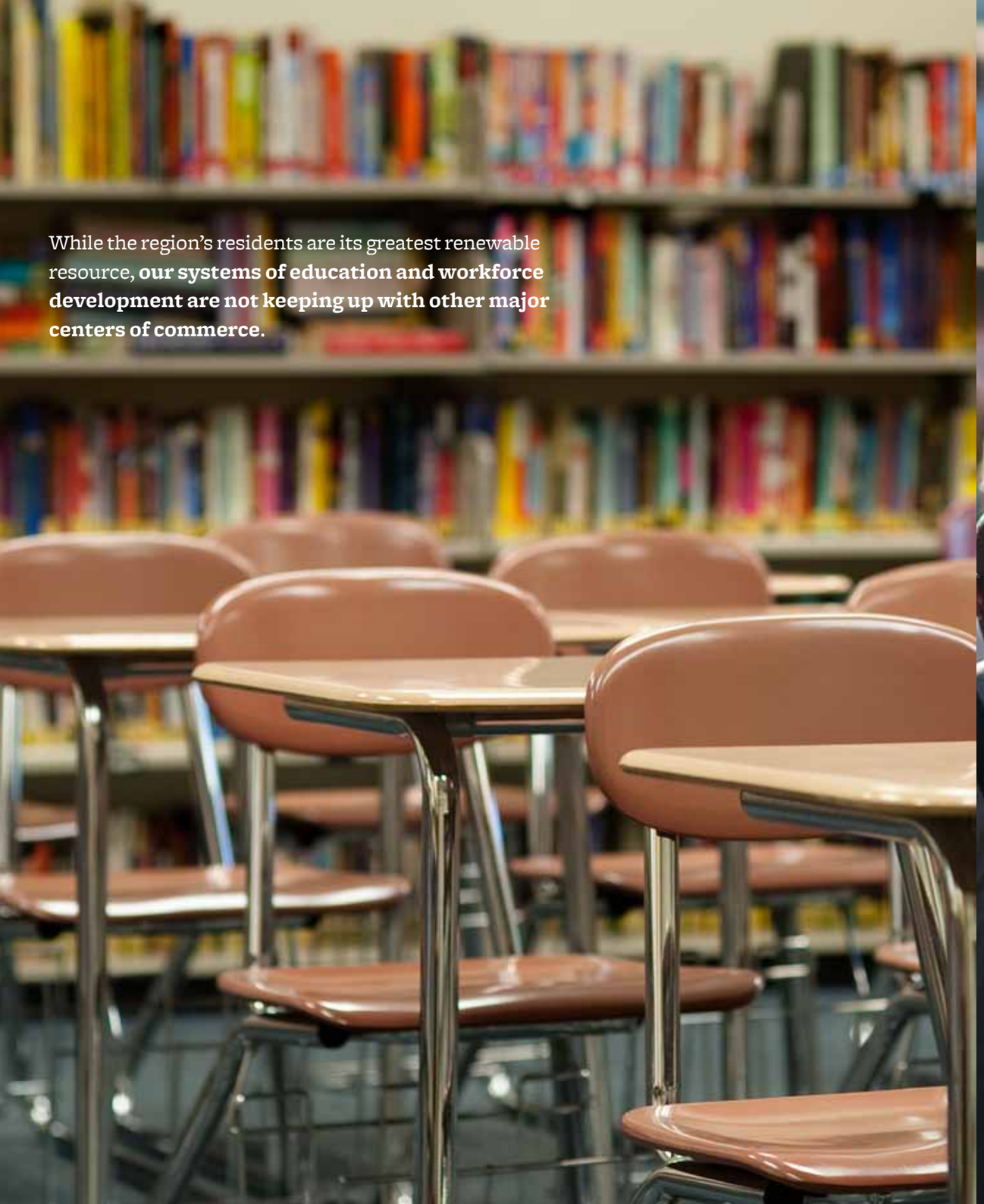
GO TO 2040
Comprehensive Regional Plan

CHICAGO METROPOLITAN AGENCY FOR PLANNING

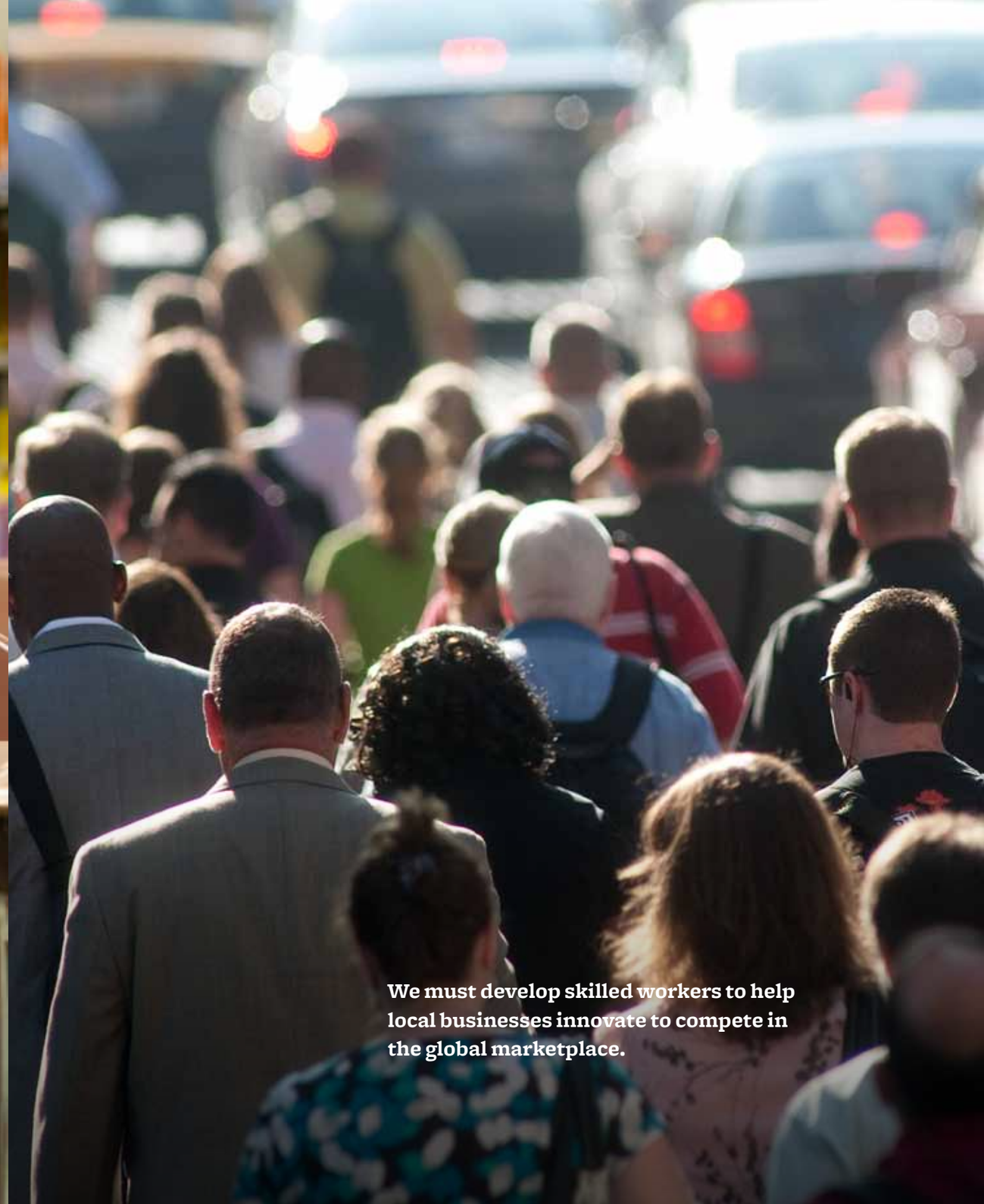


While overall quality of life is high, **our region has grown in unsustainable ways** that create congestion and make it hard for people to live near their jobs.

We need to invest in our existing communities while making wise development choices that make our communities great places to live.



While the region's residents are its greatest renewable resource, **our systems of education and workforce development are not keeping up with other major centers of commerce.**



We must develop skilled workers to help local businesses innovate to compete in the global marketplace.

While our region's units of government are numerous, **many residents believe they should be more responsive.**

Government agencies must work more closely together to coordinate investments and improve access to information, becoming more accountable to residents.

While our region's transportation infrastructure has been key to a century of progress, **it is aging rapidly.**

We need strategic investments that modernize and maintain these road and transit systems to meet the needs of our growing population.

While our economy has long been the envy of other metropolitan regions, **we cannot take it for granted**.

To achieve sustainable prosperity, our seven-county region needs to implement an aggressive but nuanced comprehensive plan that strategically aligns public policies and investments.

A Pivotal Moment for Metropolitan Chicago

Metropolitan Chicago is one of the world's great economic centers. We have abundant natural resources—including a magnificent system of parks, open spaces, trails, and waterways—with access to Lake Michigan for drinking water and recreation. We have a transportation system that moves people and goods, acting as an engine of jobs and prosperity. And the residents of the region themselves are perhaps our greatest renewable resource, constituting a diverse workforce that fuels economic development.

But we cannot take our quality of life for granted in the years to come. Stark new economic and environmental realities require the region and its communities to set priorities carefully.

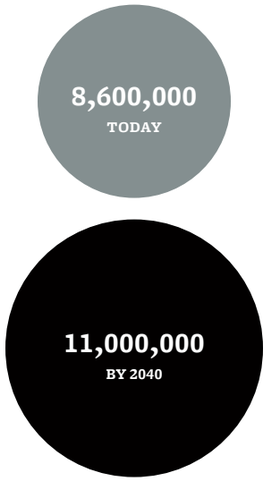
Residents of our region's seven counties—Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will—aspire to and deserve a high quality of life. The mission of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is to help the counties and 284 communities plan together for sustainable prosperity through mid-century and beyond.

Meeting Challenges Together

Our ability to respond to past challenges has made the Chicago area a great place to live and work. Meeting these tests head-on—including economic upheavals, social inequities, ecological harm, and even disasters like the Chicago Fire—made us stronger. Avoiding such challenges would have held our region back.

Each of us is forever indebted to the foresight of Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett and to the thousands of civic leaders, business people, and average citizens who helped implement so much of the 1909 *Plan of Chicago*.

By 2040, our region will need to accommodate over 25% more residents



This region's successes have always resulted from our willingness to set aside what separates us and work together to accomplish broader, shared goals. We need that spirit of community now as much as ever.

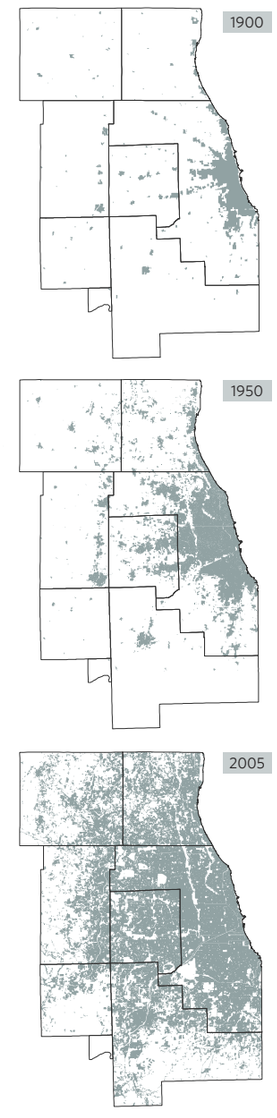
Building Sustainable Prosperity

Implementing the GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan is metropolitan Chicago's best chance to set the stage for economic growth in decades to come. The plan defines carefully coordinated policies to address the fundamental challenges that shape residents' daily lives. After nearly three years of research, public input, and deliberation, GO TO 2040 reflects the collective will of our region's leaders and residents. The region can no longer afford *not* to plan effectively. As we face new challenges and opportunities together, the GO TO 2040 plan can lead us to prosperity that is sustainable for generations to come.

The Urgency of Long-Range Planning

Most of our region's near-term challenges are the direct result of choices made—or too often deferred—in the past. Urgent challenges have often been an excuse to avoid planning, but they actually reinforce the need to plan more effectively. We need to act now, before today's opportunities become tomorrow's crises.

During decades of rapid but largely uncoordinated expansion, the region grew in patterns that were not sustainable. New homes cropped up in areas that were difficult to reach by automobile and virtually impossible by public transit. Jobs created were often far from the region's residential centers, keeping commuters tied up in traffic and wasting billions of dollars in lost time and fuel.



DEVELOPED AREA, 1900–2005

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and CMAP

Patterns of development consumed land at a rapid rate, with serious implications for natural resources—including less open space, potential water shortages, and diminished air quality.

Now is our best chance to begin reversing long-range trends like these, which are barriers to the prosperity and livability of this region and its communities.

Communities Collaborating for Success

CMAP was created at a turning point for the region, as the business community, civic leaders, and local elected officials recognized that many of our most pressing issues are best addressed comprehensively and regionally. Wanting to break with "business as usual," our region's decision makers, residents, and other stakeholders have collaborated to formulate a response: GO TO 2040.

While the region is prosperous by many measures, sustaining residents' quality of life depends on our ability to address these problems. GO TO 2040's main purpose is to grow our region's economy by building on its strengths and overcoming its challenges.

This version of the plan builds on the much more detailed GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan, available at www.cmap.illinois.gov/2040. It articulates policy reforms that are carefully targeted to enhance the region's economy by setting clear priorities, including improved efficiency of investments and transparency of public decision making. Within local control over zoning and land decisions, communities have many opportunities to work both together and independently toward the common goal of sustainable prosperity.

GO TO 2040 calls for investment in existing communities and emphasizes development that is more compact and "livable." By implementing GO TO 2040, residents will have more options for getting around, more options for housing, more jobs nearer to where they live, more parks and open space, more plentiful and cleaner water, healthier air, and better quality of life.

GO TO 2040 is about sustainable prosperity

The GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan seeks to maintain and strengthen our region's position as one of the nation's few global economic centers.

Prosperity is driven largely by a combination of infrastructure, overall business environment, workforce, and amenities. To remain an attractive place for workers and businesses, our region needs:

Global connections that link us to international trade and information networks, providing economic opportunities and a broad range of jobs.

A robust, diverse business community, skilled labor force, and excellent higher education system.

Modern, well-maintained infrastructure, including transportation, energy, telecommunications, and water.

A healthy environment with ample open space and parks for recreation.

Active institutions for arts and culture, along with other amenities for a high overall quality of life.

Government that is transparent and highly accountable.

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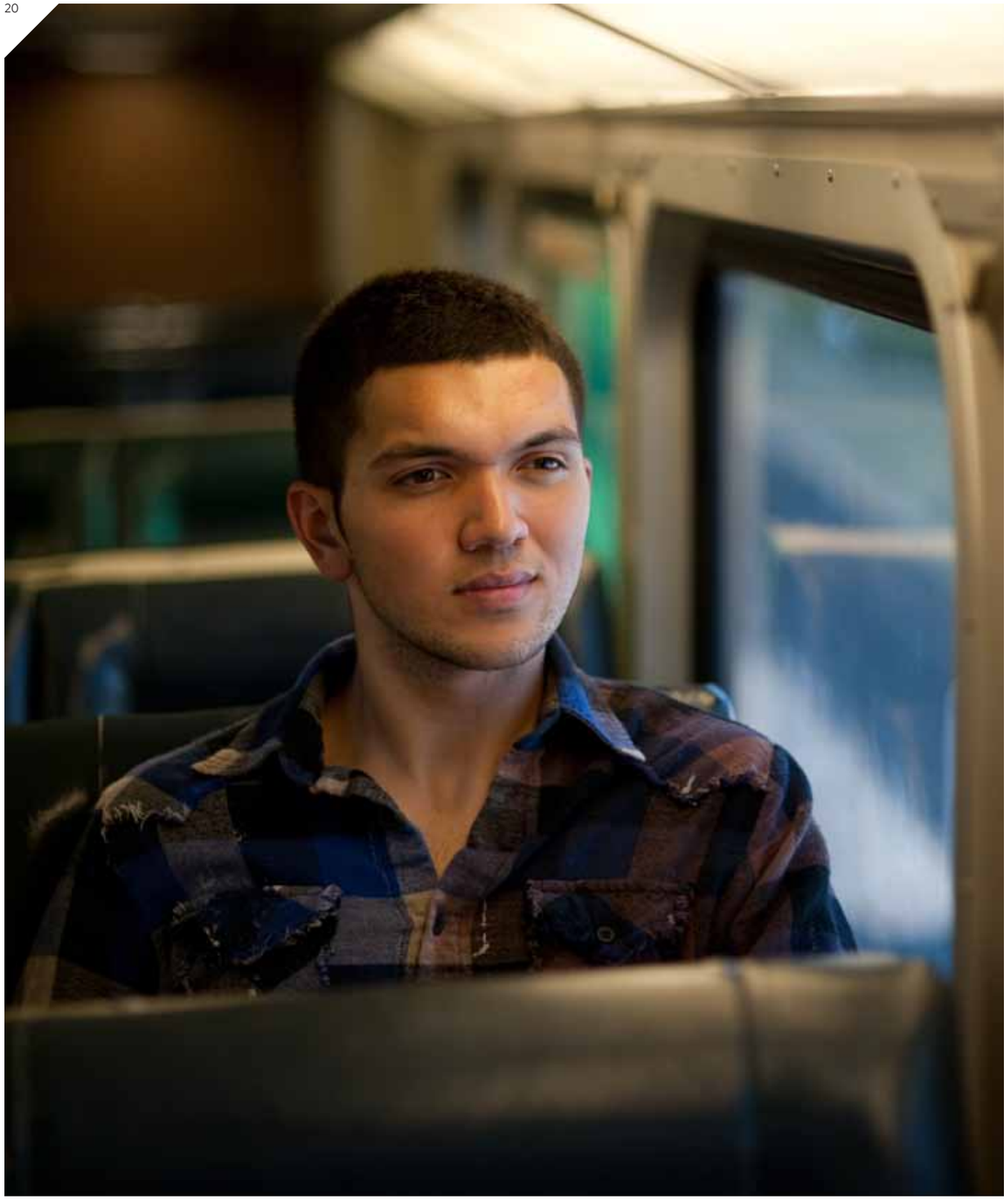

At 14, **ORLANDO GOMEZ** faced a life-changing decision. Should he spend three hours commuting daily to a top-rated magnet high school? Or avoid the arduous trip and attend his local school despite a hostile environment that had touched two older brothers who preceded him there?

"It was a no-brainer," Orlando says. Compared to safety concerns at his brothers' school, "it's better to be on a train for three hours a day."

Four years later, upon graduation from Whitney Young High School, he again had to choose between convenience and education. On an average day, 20-year-old Orlando now spends four hours commuting from his home far south near the Indiana border to attend classes at Robert Morris University in Chicago. Each morning he gets driven to a Metra train that takes him downtown. After classes, he takes a CTA train to get to his two jobs on the north side of the city, before finally heading home again.

With such a long trip home from his downtown college, he doesn't have much of an option to work near where he lives, because it would mean a graveyard shift. "There are no good public transit options where I live," Orlando says.

The Metra station is too far to walk from where he lives, and no other train lines are close. The one bus that runs downtown from his neighborhood operates only on limited hours in the morning and early evening—not very useful for someone with a long day like Orlando's.

During the day, he feels his neighborhood is pretty safe. He enjoys the tight-knit feeling that everyone knows each other. There are local diners and restaurants, with four parks in the neighborhood where Little League baseball is a point of pride for locals. Without much else to do in terms of entertainment, Orlando and his friends travel over the border to Indiana for shopping and movies.

Most adults in his neighborhood also have to drive to Indiana for work, unless they have jobs in downtown Chicago. **"I'd say most people in my community have to travel far for their jobs," Orlando says. "I see a lot of people from my community on the Metra."**

Orlando will soon graduate with his bachelor's degree in business management. Wherever he chooses to live, he hopes it will have access to public transportation. "I am not making any plans to buy a car, so public transportation would still be my main way to get around," he says.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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34	Manage and Conserve Water and Energy Resources
40	Expand and Improve Parks and Open Space
46	Promote Sustainable Local Food

4

Livable Communities
Creating a Sense of Place

Though opinions differ on what makes a community appealing, livable communities tend to share some common traits. They are healthy, safe, and walkable. They offer choices for timely transportation to schools, jobs, services, and basic needs. They are more cost-effective for individuals and local governments. They make the region more economically competitive.

Whether we choose to live and work in a newer community or one that has been around for decades, a community's unique "sense of place" draws people and makes us feel at home and welcome there. Though that sense may seem intangible, livability is seldom an accident. Livable communities are created through effective planning and decisions by local officials, developers, and individual residents.

Livability's Barriers and Benefits

Our region faces significant obstacles to achieving livable communities now and for future generations. At present, many of us have no choice but to drive because our communities were designed primarily for car travel. Often residents live long distances from where they work because jobs and housing in our region are far apart. Too many communities lack access to parks and healthy food. And rapid consumption of land and other natural resources contributes to environmental problems across the region.

But working together as a region, we can make our communities more livable. When residents are able to live near their jobs, it helps to reduce travel costs, pollution, and congestion. Efficient use of land that supports walking, bicycling, and access to transit also reduces energy consumption—saving money for individuals, communities, and the region. When energy is conserved, it reduces greenhouse gas emissions and their negative effects on our economy and lifestyles. By improving water and energy efficiency, we can help avoid potential shortages and the impacts of climate change.

A century ago, Daniel Burnham understood that parks and open space are central to the region's quality of life and environment, which led to the network of parks, forest preserves, and lakefront areas that we now enjoy. Today, that network must grow along with our region through planned investments in a regional network of "green" infrastructure corridors that connect our parks and open spaces.

Local Autonomy... and Responsibility

The cumulative choices of 284 municipalities and seven counties determine quality of life and economic prosperity across our region. With local autonomy over land use comes the responsibility to consider how those decisions shape a community's livability, including how they affect neighboring communities and the region as a whole. As a region, we need to implement policies and investments that make livability the highest priority.

LIVABILITY MATTERS

In addition to their quality-of-life benefits, livability and compact growth make good economic sense for our region and its residents as well. Developing our existing communities and improving their livability is more cost-effective and resource-efficient than rapidly developing in areas that don't have adequate infrastructure. Some of the tangible benefits of livable communities are:

55% of income TODAY
45% of income GO TO 2040

The Center for Neighborhood Technology created the H+T index, an improved measure of housing affordability that also includes transportation costs.

In 2040, both moderate- and low-income residents will spend 10% less of their incomes on housing and transportation.

Lower Household Costs for Residents

Housing and transportation together make up the largest portion of costs in most households. And the affordability of housing is strongly linked with available options for transit, walking, and bicycling—which all cost less than owning, maintaining, and driving a car. By supporting transportation alternatives and shortening trips, our region can reduce the costs of congestion and travel for all residents.

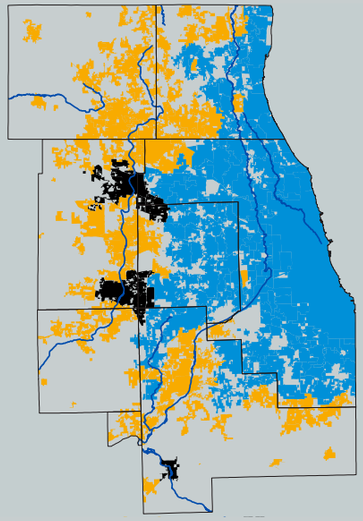
More Options for Transportation

By providing residents with safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices, more people will be able to walk, bike, and use public transit to get around—making driving a choice rather than a necessity. Having transportation options allows older residents to stay in their homes (called "aging in place"), improves mobility for disabled residents, and leads to better health overall.

Reduced Cost to Taxpayers

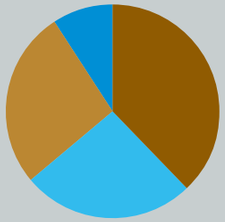
Developing in new areas is far more costly than compact development in the long run. Spread-out development requires significant spending on new infrastructure (including roads, sewer, water, and utilities) and services (such as fire, police, and waste disposal). Compact development in existing communities can save our region costs that local governments or developers—and ultimately residents—would otherwise pay.

REGIONAL WATER SOURCES



- LAKE MICHIGAN
- INLAND SURFACE WATER
- GROUNDWATER
- RIVERS

REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS SOURCES
Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2005 (excludes aviation)



- 38% ELECTRICITY
- 27% TRANSPORTATION
- 26% NATURAL GAS
- 9% MISC

Increased Water Efficiency

Water is increasingly scarce, especially where communities rely on groundwater. Even in communities that get water from Lake Michigan, its use is limited by law. By reducing commercial and residential water consumption and improving the management and protection of our water resources, we can avoid potential shortages in our seven-county area. Our region can also manage stormwater more effectively by investing in the infrastructure of existing, fully developed communities where flooding creates serious safety and economic problems.

More Parks and Open Space

By increasing our parks, open spaces, and other natural areas—including water trails, forest preserves, and conservation lands—our region will protect environmental quality, improve public health, enhance property values, strengthen the economy, and improve residents' overall quality of life. Preserving and connecting our parks, open spaces, and other large natural areas will not only improve our recreation options, it will also improve the overall health and biodiversity of our region's ecosystems.

Improved Health and Availability of Local Food

Despite the good health of our region's residents compared to national averages, the lack of walkability and the inadequate recreational and open spaces in some communities create unacceptable health disparities. Some areas—often correlated to race and income—lack grocery stores with fresh produce, which negatively impacts the health of the residents in those communities. By increasing access to healthy food and facilitating local food production, our region will enhance health, grow our economy, and preserve agricultural land.

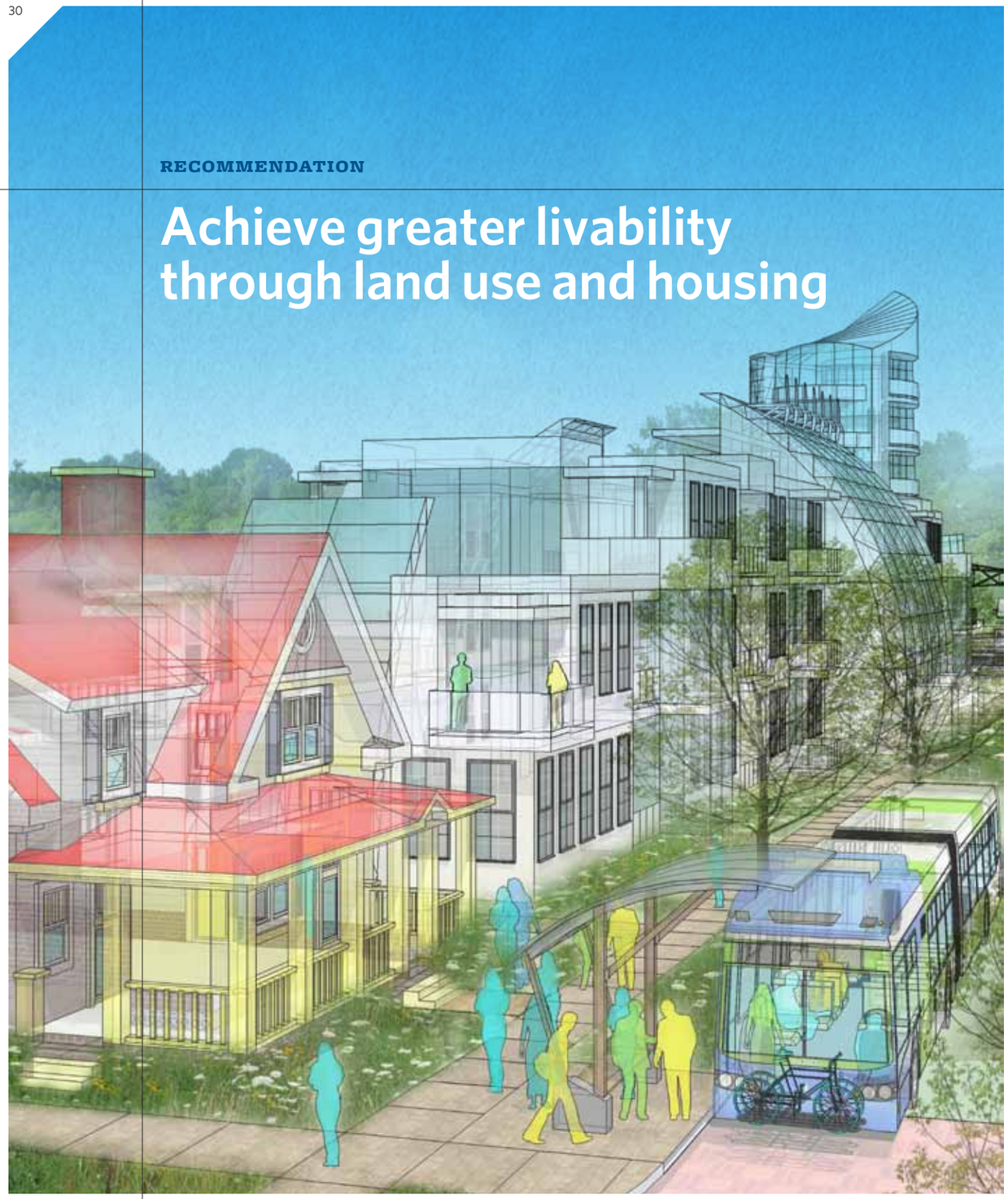
Increased Energy Efficiency

Energy used by our region's buildings and cars is the leading source of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. By improving energy efficiency, our region will reduce emissions, help residents and businesses save on energy costs, and create opportunities in the "green" economy.

TOWN HALL
VIBRANT

RECOMMENDATION

Achieve greater livability through land use and housing



Wise local decisions about land use and housing make our communities, and our region as a whole, more livable for residents. When local decision makers consider the broader implications of their choices, we all benefit.

GO TO 2040 supports investment in existing communities to create opportunities for more compact, walkable, and mixed-use development, with a range of housing options. For example, growth that emphasizes access to transit and other transportation alternatives can reduce our reliance on cars, helping to reduce congestion and transportation costs for everyone.

One Size Does Not Fit All

The GO TO 2040 plan strives to balance the need for local autonomy and regional cooperation. It provides principles that municipalities and counties can apply when they decide how and where development should happen or which infrastructure investments to make in their communities. To support more compact development and redevelopment, the plan targets investment in existing communities, but even development in new areas can and should support livability.

Our region draws strength from the diversity of its communities. While development should fit the local context, community choices about land use and housing should also emphasize principles that improve livability, such as:

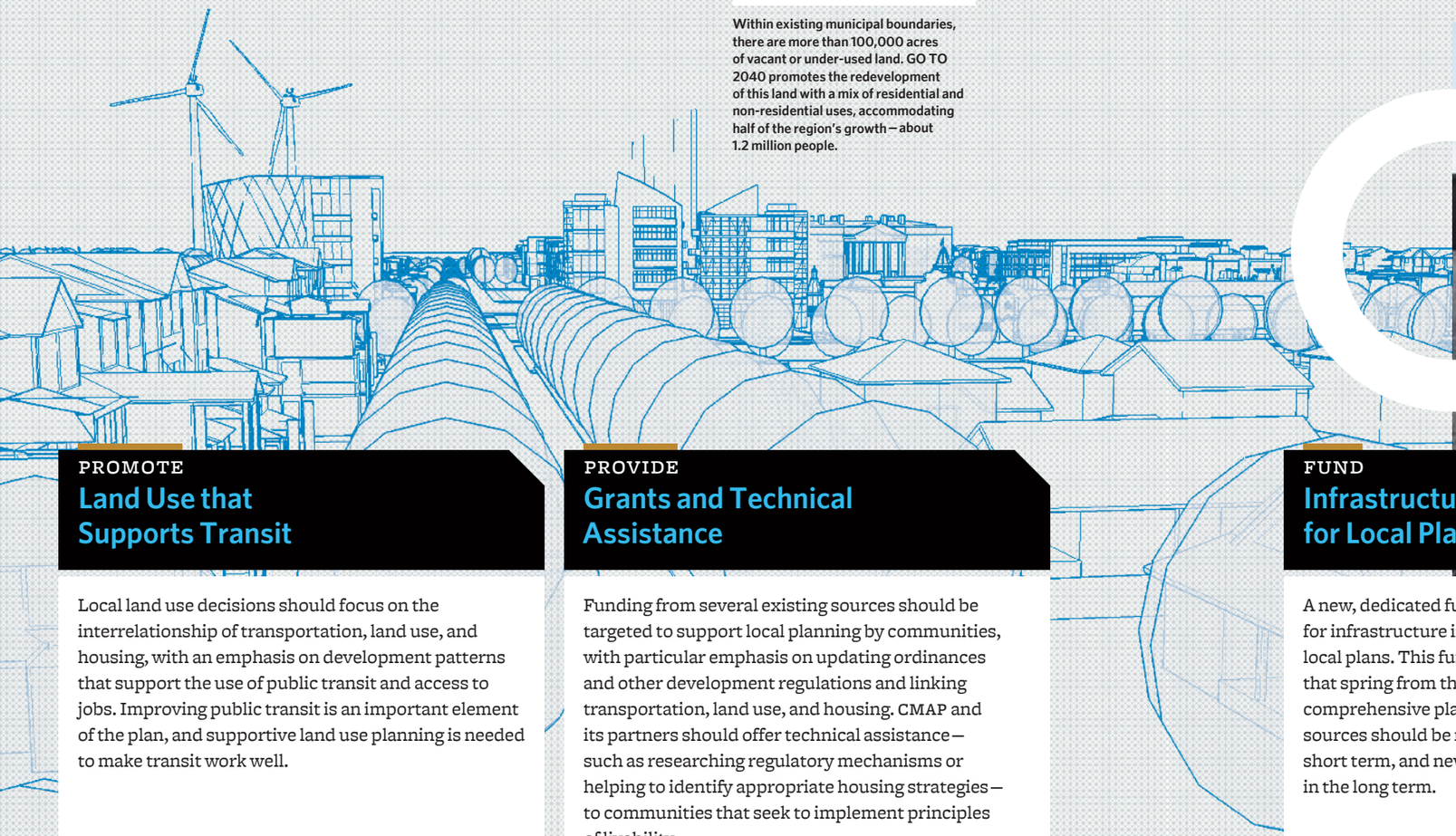
- Support for transit, walking, and bicycling
- A range of housing options
- Environmental protection
- Access to green space
- Design, aesthetics, and local historic character

The implementation of these principles will vary across our region's unique communities, each of which will have its own approach to compact development. For example, methods of providing a range of housing options must be carefully tailored to meet a particular community's needs.

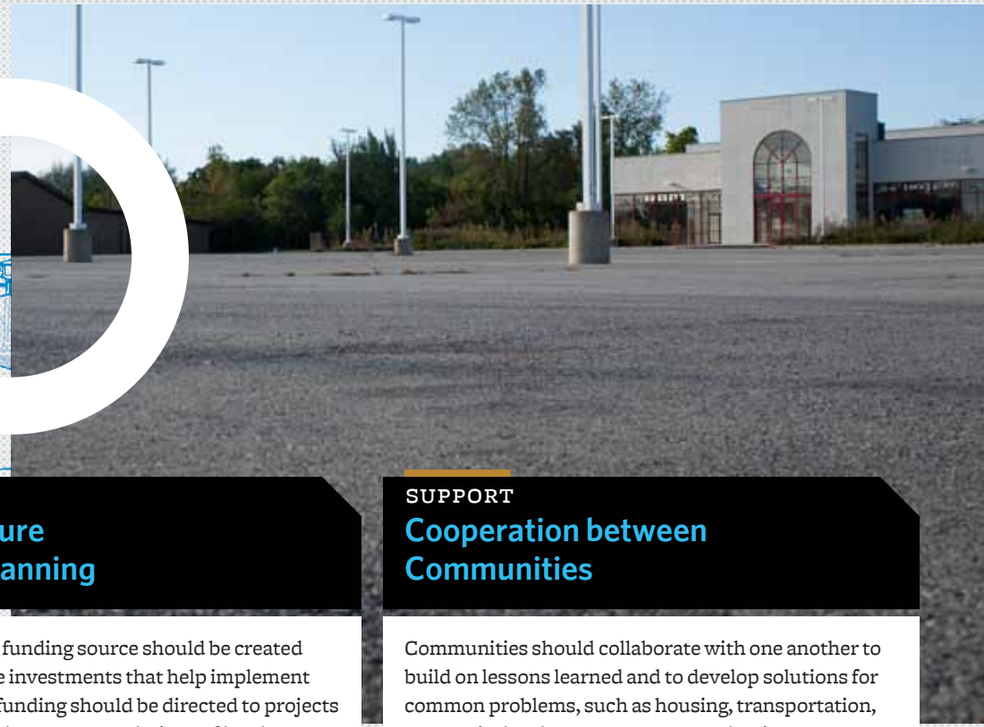
Local Planning as a High Priority

Achieving livability will take proactive planning by local governments that recognize the potential regional impacts of even seemingly small local decisions. The public sector cannot create a market for redevelopment where none exists, but it can invest in infrastructure and institute regulatory changes to make redevelopment more viable.

One of GO TO 2040's highest priorities is to promote comprehensive planning in communities across our seven counties—including the development of comprehensive plans, consistent ordinances and regulations, and trained decision makers. The plan recommends supporting local planning through grant programs, infrastructure investments to implement plans, technical assistance, and collaboration between municipalities on shared priorities.



Within existing municipal boundaries, there are more than 100,000 acres of vacant or under-used land. GO TO 2040 promotes the redevelopment of this land with a mix of residential and non-residential uses, accommodating half of the region's growth—about 1.2 million people.



PROMOTE

Land Use that Supports Transit

Local land use decisions should focus on the interrelationship of transportation, land use, and housing, with an emphasis on development patterns that support the use of public transit and access to jobs. Improving public transit is an important element of the plan, and supportive land use planning is needed to make transit work well.

PROVIDE

Grants and Technical Assistance

Funding from several existing sources should be targeted to support local planning by communities, with particular emphasis on updating ordinances and other development regulations and linking transportation, land use, and housing. CMAP and its partners should offer technical assistance—such as researching regulatory mechanisms or helping to identify appropriate housing strategies—to communities that seek to implement principles of livability.

FUND

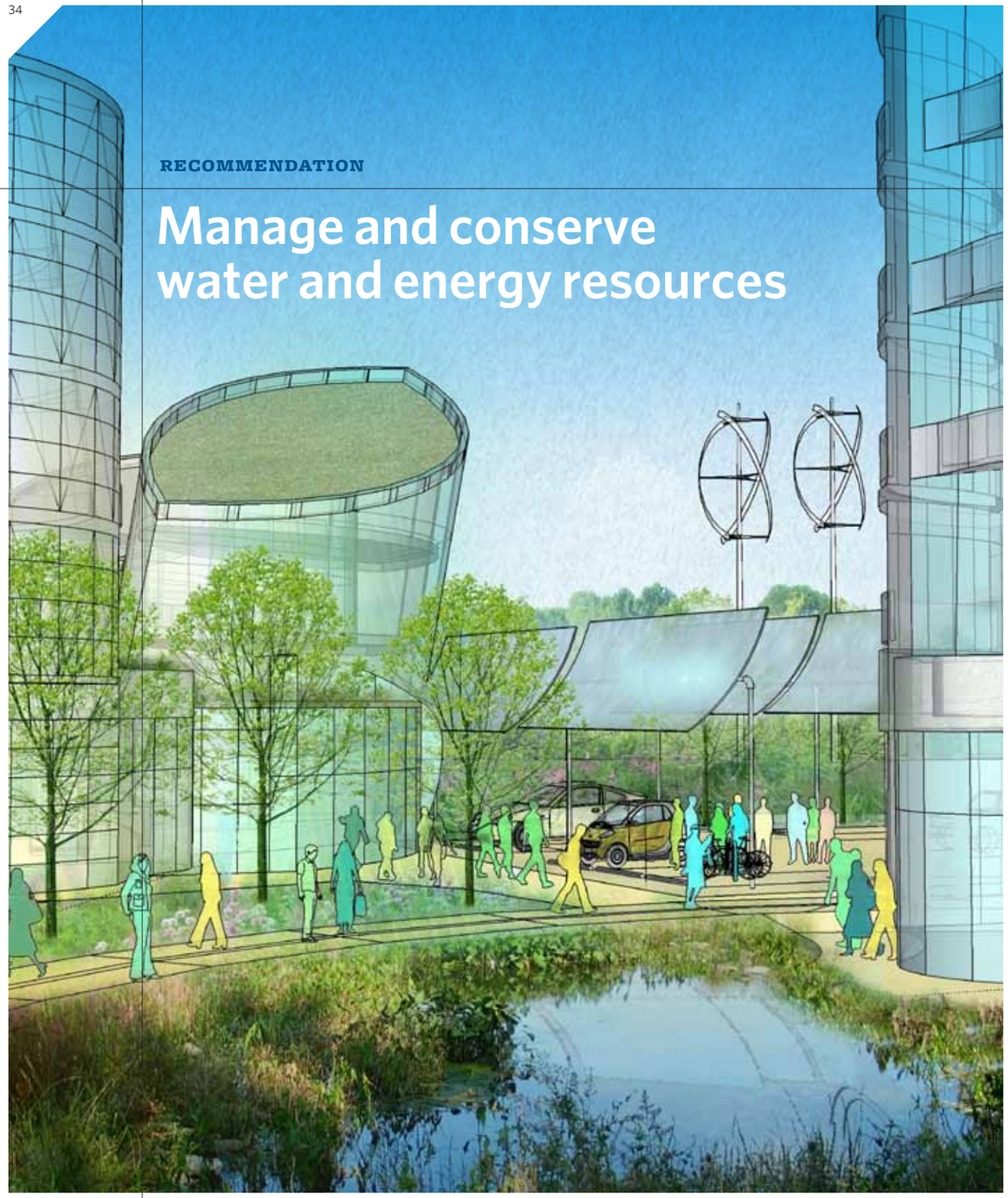
Infrastructure for Local Planning

A new, dedicated funding source should be created for infrastructure investments that help implement local plans. This funding should be directed to projects that spring from the recommendations of local comprehensive planning efforts. Current funding sources should be redirected for this purpose in the short term, and new programs should be established in the long term.

SUPPORT

Cooperation between Communities

Communities should collaborate with one another to build on lessons learned and to develop solutions for common problems, such as housing, transportation, economic development, water, or other issues. Counties and Councils of Government (COGs) should play a significant role in encouraging and facilitating collaboration between municipalities.



RECOMMENDATION

Manage and conserve water and energy resources

Our future prosperity depends on the availability of water and energy. If we manage and conserve these finite natural resources, the region and its communities will thrive in a new, greener economy.

Over the next 30 years, water and energy resources will likely become more limited, affecting residents, businesses, and local governments alike. Improving our water and energy efficiency will save money and head off shortages that could profoundly affect our quality of life.

Water Supply and Conservation

Though we live in an area where fresh water seems abundant, our water is not a limitless resource. Legal constraints limit our use of Lake Michigan, and the parts of our region that depend on groundwater face increasing expenses and environmental side effects.

Water 2050, the region's long-range plan for managing water, calls for a number of conservation measures, such as shifting toward full-cost pricing for drinking water to encourage conservation and pay for water treatment and delivery. By improving how we manage demand, the water plan will help ensure that clean water is available for household and commercial use in decades to come. Flooding, a significant problem in many parts of the region, can be reduced by following best practices for stormwater management.

Energy Efficiency is Cost Effective

Improving energy efficiency saves money long after the upfront investment is recouped. It also reduces our region's output of greenhouse gases tied to climate change.

Consumption of electricity and natural gas for heating, cooling, and appliances at home and at work contributes nearly two-thirds of our region's greenhouse gas emissions. Despite availability of state and federal funds, less than one percent of eligible buildings in the region have undergone a "retrofit" to save energy (for example, installation of more-efficient heating and cooling systems, insulation and lighting, weather sealing, and windows or doors). CMAP, the City of Chicago, and other stakeholders have begun the Chicago Region Retrofit Ramp-up (CR3) project to create regional efficiencies that will nurture the market for retrofits, which improve buildings' energy efficiency by an average of 30 percent.

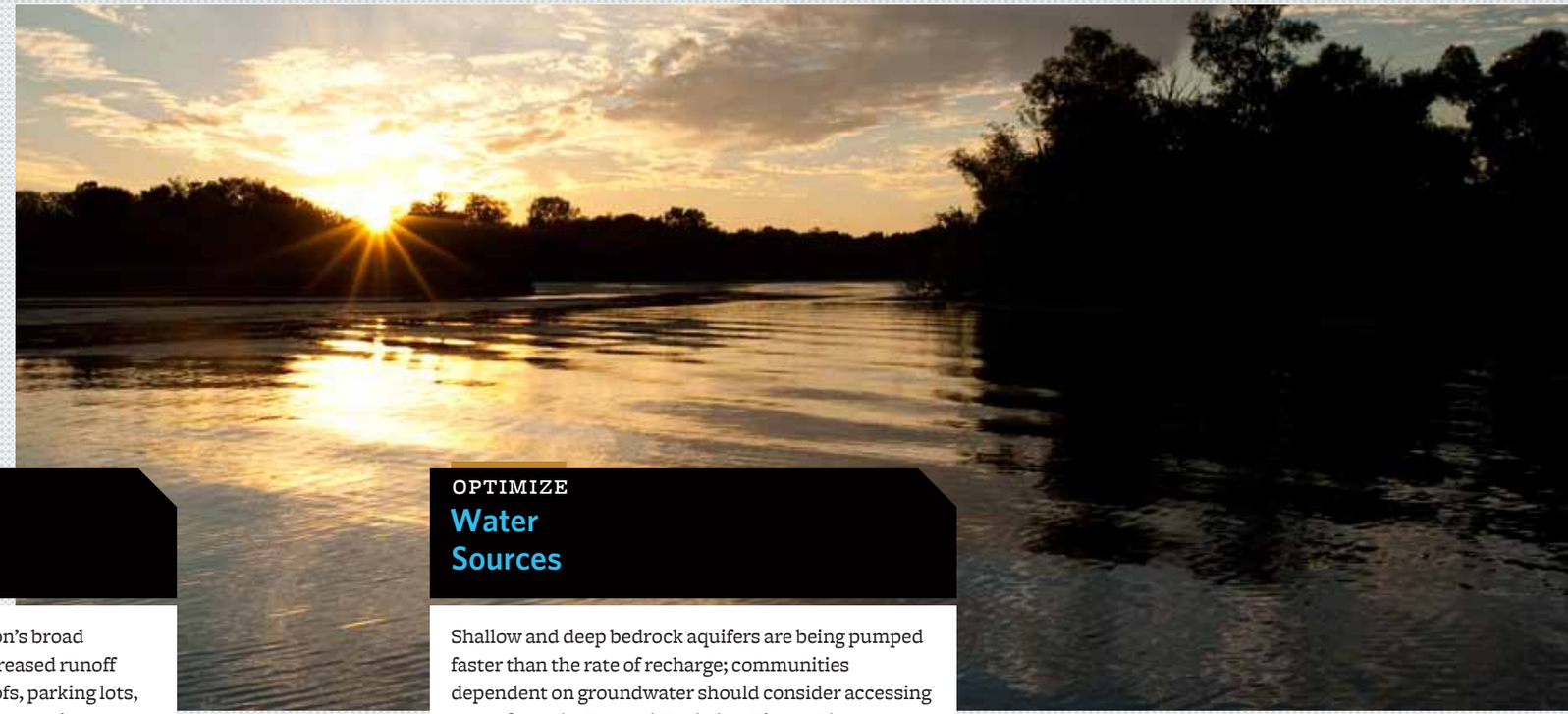
As part of its emphasis on livable communities, GO TO 2040 recommends the use of green techniques for new development and redevelopment to improve energy efficiency, while also helping to reduce water consumption and improve stormwater management. Residents in livable communities tend to make fewer automobile trips, which will reduce fuel consumption and pollution from transportation, our region's second greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions—mostly from cars and trucks.

If 50% of our region put these three water conservation measures into place, we could reduce our daily water use by almost 20 gallons per person.

UPDATE FIXTURES
↓ 86,200,000 gals/day

UPDATE TOILETS
↓ 74,800,000 gals/day

CONSERVE USAGE
↓ 60,300,000 gals/day



ADOPT Water Conservation

Water 2050 identifies 13 conservation measures that promote efficiency and can reduce or defer the need for a utility to increase its capacity. Local governments can do this by adopting sensible water conservation ordinances, which can result in an average of 20 percent savings in water use. Current water prices often do not reflect the entire cost of supplying water. Full-cost pricing for drinking water is recommended to encourage residents to conserve and to provide adequate revenues.

MANAGE Stormwater

Flooding is a problem due to the region's broad flood plains, clay-based soils, and increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and streets. Throughout the region, a commitment to using green infrastructure should be made. Among many benefits, using green infrastructure such as rain gardens and permeable pavement to manage stormwater can be more cost-effective compared to gray infrastructure.

OPTIMIZE Water Sources

Shallow and deep bedrock aquifers are being pumped faster than the rate of recharge; communities dependent on groundwater should consider accessing water from the Fox and Kankakee Rivers. There may also be opportunities to coordinate or consolidate service by water utilities, over 300 of which provide water for the region. Consolidation on the basis of water source can achieve cost efficiencies and improve operations. Water utilities should also consider renewable electricity generation.

DAILY WATER USAGE: TODAY 172 gals/person ↓ GO TO 2040 139 gals/person

CREATE

Livable Communities

Emphasis on compact, mixed use, walkable development served by transit will improve the region's energy efficiency. Energy savings in new buildings can be significant when local and state codes, ordinances, plans, and programs support green development and practices. Zoning codes and permitting policies should also allow and promote renewable energy generation from businesses, institutions, and residences. Livable communities also promote lower-energy modes of travel, such as transit, walking, and bicycling.

Whether in new or existing homes, the use of efficient appliances, better insulation and windows, and programmable thermostats can cut energy consumption in half.
Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology

Overall Energy Consumption

TRADITIONAL HOME

GREEN HOME

PROMOTE

Retrofit Programs

Retrofit programs that provide assistance to property owners to install energy conservation measures in existing buildings exist at the local, state, and federal levels but are under-utilized. The CMAP-led Chicago Region Retrofit Ramp-up (CR3) program will be an important first step in streamlining access to information, financing mechanisms, and skilled labor to transform the retrofit market.

FOSTER

Sustainable Practices

Communities should take the opportunity to pilot their own projects to promote small-scale renewable energy generation, which could include wind and solar power as well as strategies like waste-to-energy generation. Local governments should also make a commitment to lead, for example, by reviewing procurement processes to ensure the inclusion of green materials for governmental equipment and a higher commitment to waste reduction and recycling.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS
IN METRIC TONS

TODAY **132,000,000 tons** ↓ GO TO 2040 **47,000,000 tons**

RECOMMENDATION

Expand and improve parks and open space

Green spaces contribute to our personal well-being and regional economy. Access to parks and open space improves the health of our region's residents and the value of their homes.

Abundant natural areas make our seven-county region a more desirable place to live and work, and without green spaces, our economic competitiveness would suffer.

Parks and open space were central to the 1909 *Plan of Chicago*. Daniel Burnham helped to preserve open corridors of land—our parks, forest preserves, and the lakefront—contributing immeasurably to the welfare of our region and its residents.

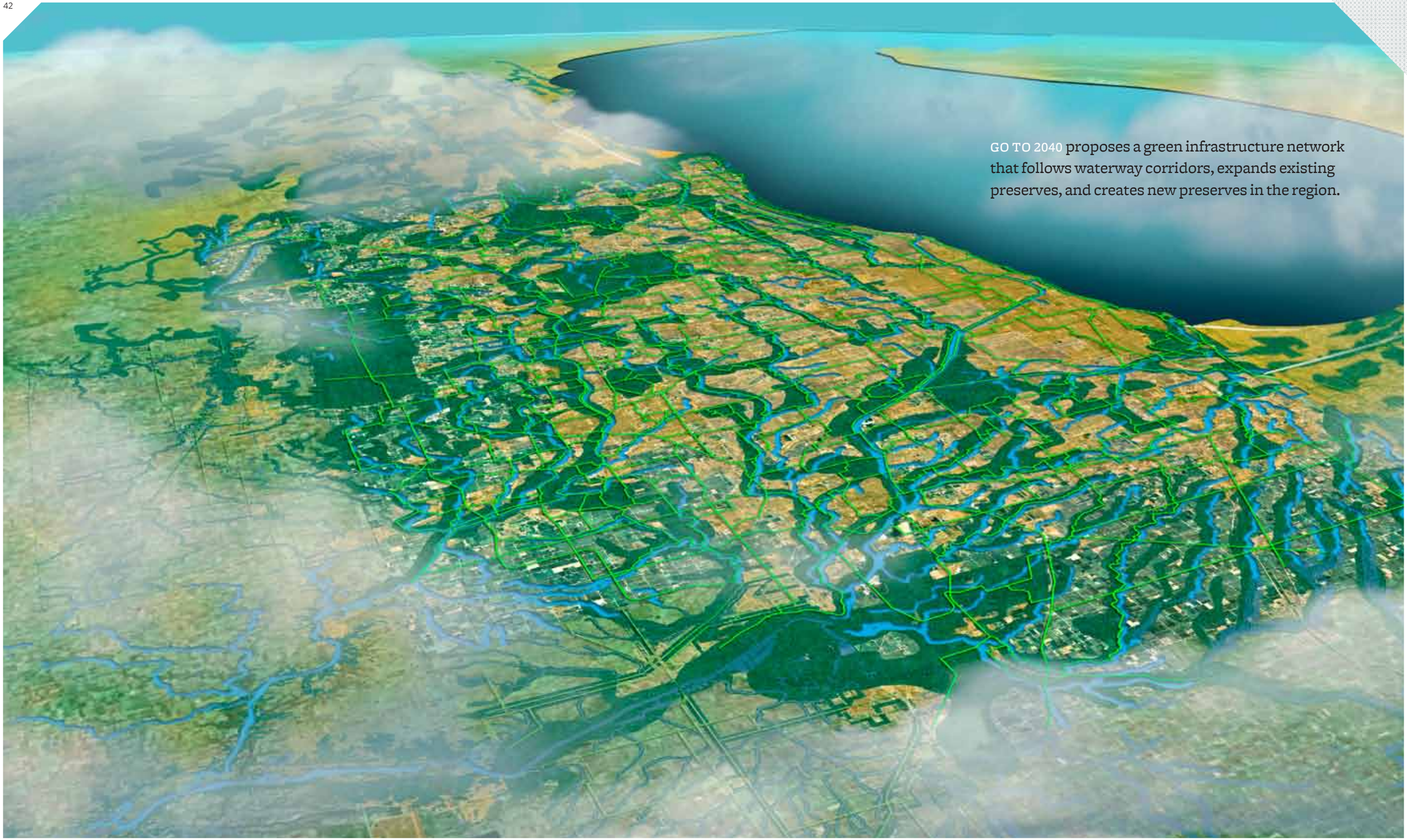
Yet Burnham's network of open space remains a work in progress. Less than half of our region's residents have adequate parks nearby. Despite well-documented benefits like flood protection and biodiversity, much of our region's natural open space remains unprotected.

The region's network of parks and open space is our "green" infrastructure—no less essential to prosperity and livability than any other infrastructure. But as with systems for transportation, water treatment, and other needs, our green infrastructure must be managed, restored, and expanded.

Through coordinated investments, we should preserve a network of land and water corridors by increasing current preserves and creating new ones. The region should provide functional connections (known as greenways) between parks and preserves to support recreation and ecosystems.

The GO TO 2040 plan recommends that the region make significant, criteria-based investments in parks and open space—providing more parks in developed areas, preserving the region's most important natural areas, and providing functional connections between parks and preserves by using the green infrastructure network as a design concept.

Our region has expanded over the last 100 years, and the corridors of open space Burnham envisioned must expand as well. We owe it to future generations and to ourselves.

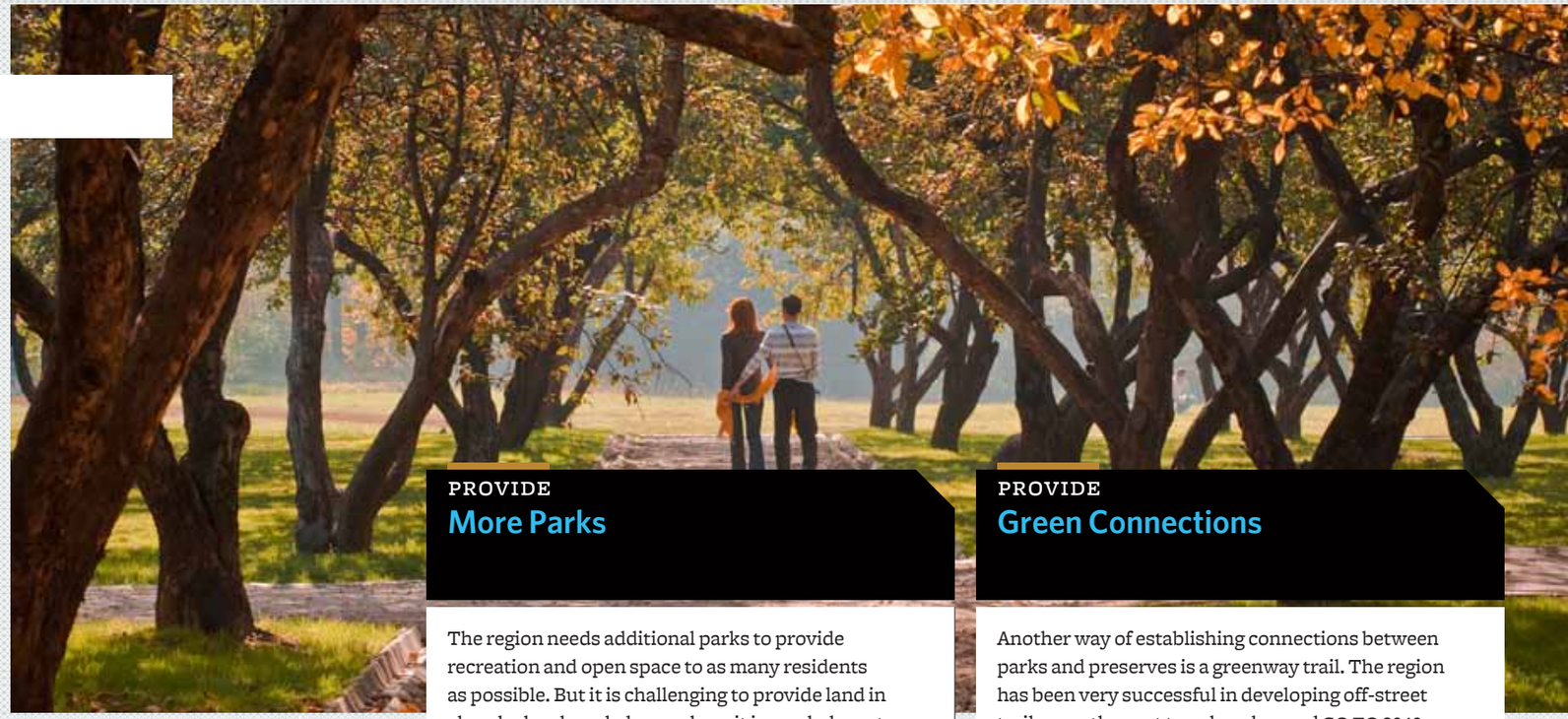


GO TO 2040 proposes a green infrastructure network that follows waterway corridors, expands existing preserves, and creates new preserves in the region.

CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE

250,000 Acres TODAY

400,000 Acres GO TO 2040



PRESERVE

The Most Important Natural Areas

Over the next 30 years, an additional 150,000 acres of land across the seven counties should be preserved through a collaborative, multi-organizational, public-private approach. Most of this should conserve a network of land and water—the green infrastructure network—that follows waterway corridors, expands existing preserves, and creates new preserves in the region. Forest preserve and conservation districts, the state, private funders, and others should all prioritize land preservation within the green infrastructure network.

PROVIDE

More Parks

The region needs additional parks to provide recreation and open space to as many residents as possible. But it is challenging to provide land in already developed places where it is needed most, even though the total acreage required for new parks is not high. Local governments should collaborate to provide additional parks in the areas least served by them, and municipalities in particular should look on redevelopment as an opportunity to provide additional park space even in the context of moderate increases in residential density.

PROVIDE

Green Connections

Another way of establishing connections between parks and preserves is a greenway trail. The region has been very successful in developing off-street trails over the past two decades, and GO TO 2040 envisions organizations in the region continuing to use the *Greenways and Trails Plan* to establish connections between preserves and parks, as well as to support walking and bicycling alternatives. The region's objective should be to double existing greenway trail mileage by 2040.

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH ADEQUATE ACCESS TO PARKS: 10 ACRES/1,000 PEOPLE

TODAY **49%**

GO TO 2040 **70%**

RECOMMENDATION

Promote sustainable local food

Like air, water, and other basic human needs, food is easy to take for granted when it is abundant. Three times each day, we decide what to eat, often without consideration of how that food was produced or where it came from.

While patterns of consumption depend significantly on personal choices, the public policies for land use, transportation, and many other issues in the GO TO 2040 plan influence the effectiveness and sustainability of our food systems. To benefit the region's economy and the health of its residents, GO TO 2040 addresses the separate but related factors of food production and access.

Food Production

"Local" food—which is grown, processed, packaged, and distributed on land in or adjacent to our seven counties—can contribute to a sense of community and regional identity. Farming practices, food distribution, and waste disposal should all be sustainable, meeting our present needs without compromising the future.

Local production of and equitable access to fresh, nutritious, and affordable food can benefit our economy, environment, public health, equity, and overall quality of life. From commercial farms to community co-ops and even backyard gardens, emphasizing local food production and access can help to preserve farmland in traditionally agricultural communities or to revitalize neighborhoods by bringing agriculture to vacant, unused parcels in urban settings where it is usually absent.

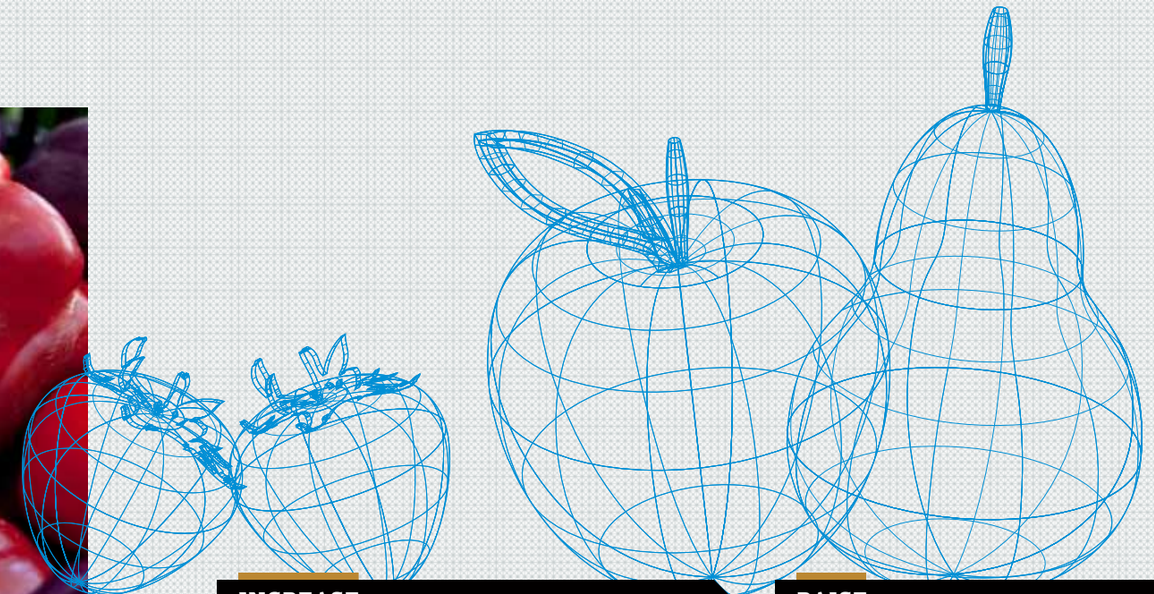
Food Access

In most of our region, residents can buy food in large full-service groceries, smaller specialty shops, or even corner fruit stands. Increasingly prevalent neighborhood farmers' markets are becoming social gathering spots where consumers can meet the people who grow their food.

Yet in parts of our seven counties, too many people lack access to nutritious food—putting them at increased risk for obesity, diabetes, and other nutrition-related conditions. Nine percent of our region's residents live in "food deserts" without a nearby grocery. Instead of eating fresh, affordable food, they may depend on the closest convenience store where prices are high and nutrition is low. Distance to the nearest grocer has been correlated to increases in cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and liver disease, especially in African American communities.

The region should pursue strategies that increase access to fresh food and that build public awareness of good nutrition, especially in food deserts. For example, expanding arrangements between local food producers and food banks would make fresh products more accessible to low-income people. So would permitting farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture, and nontraditional retail food outlets to accept hunger assistance benefits.

Often, addressing food production and access requires different policy solutions—for example, people need access to fresh, nutritious, affordable food no matter where it is produced. But some policies, such as urban agriculture projects in food deserts, can address both production and access.



FACILITATE

Local Food Production

Urban agriculture—converting under-used urban land to food production, such as by creating community gardens—should be pursued in developed areas across the region. Farmland preservation in rural parts of the region can also support local food production, and counties should continue to pursue these programs. By promoting local food in federal agricultural policy and establishing procurement processes at the state level that favor local food, we can provide additional institutional support to local production.

INCREASE

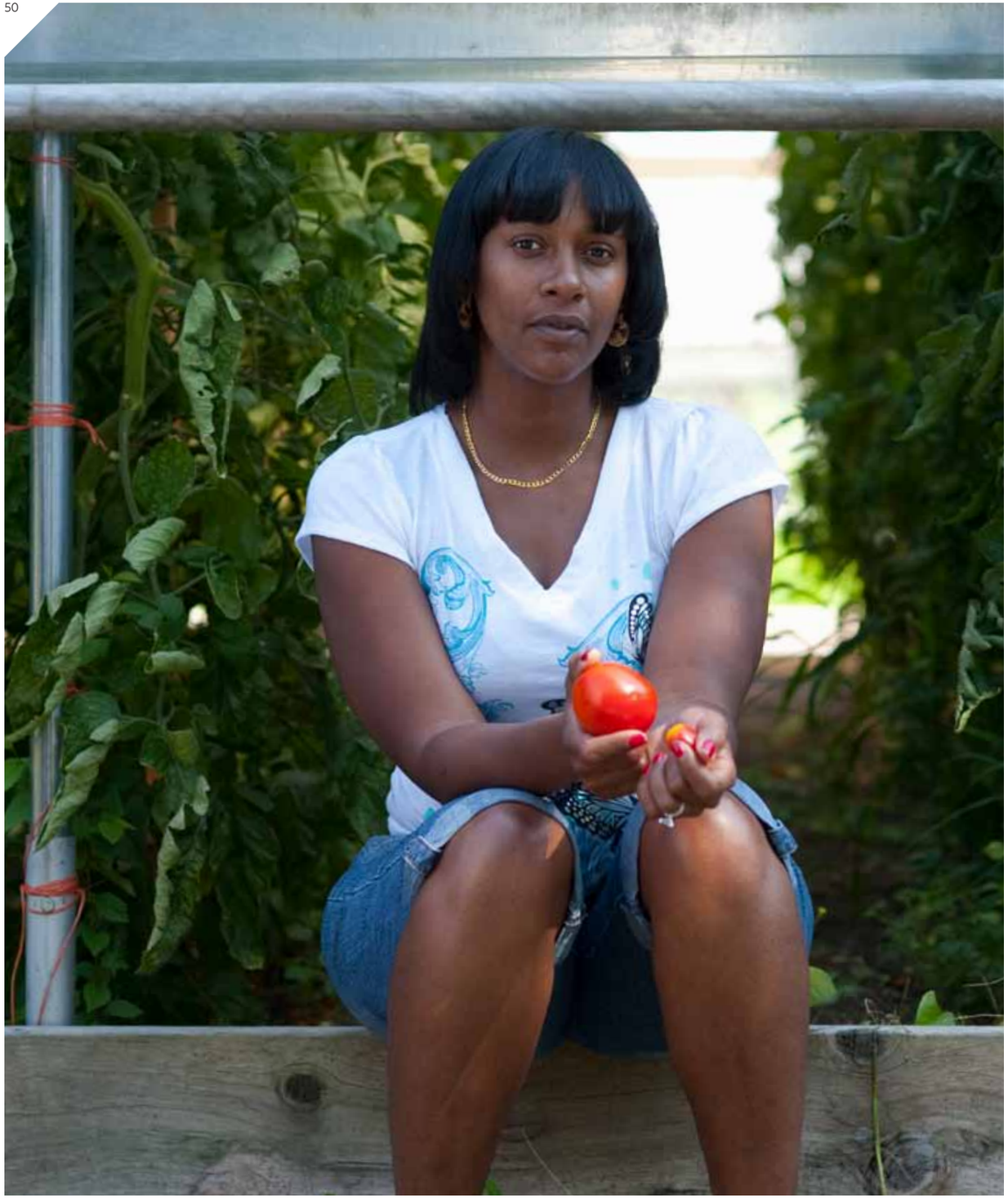
Access to Healthy Food

Our region can ensure that all residents have access to healthy food by providing financing for grocery stores to reinvest in "food deserts" or by experimenting with demonstration programs such as farm stands, food cooperatives, direct sales from community gardens, and other examples. Hunger assistance programs and local food policy should be addressed as well—for example, by linking urban agriculture with food pantries.

RAISE

Understanding and Awareness

A regional nonprofit group to coordinate food policy should be identified or created to help understand the emerging issue of local food. Responsibilities should include collecting and analyzing data, providing training, sharing information, and helping local governments to incorporate food issues into their planning.



For most of us, farming is not an occupation we'd associate with the south side of Chicago. But for 37-year-old **JASMINE EASTER**, a small farm in her urban neighborhood was the leg up she needed for a better career.

Getting involved with agriculture was also an opportunity to help bring healthy, fresh produce to one of our region's "food deserts," where residents have little or no access to groceries that sell fresh, nutritious food.

After enduring months of unemployment, Jasmine was accepted into the job training program at Growing Home, Inc. This community-supported agriculture project operates an urban garden and farm—which grew 10,000 pounds of crops last year—along with a larger farm southwest of Joliet. The nonprofit enterprise provides locally grown food to residents and job training for a seven-month growing season to people facing significant employment hurdles.

Jasmine took full advantage of the opportunity, volunteering to use her bicycle to deliver the produce to shareholders throughout her neighborhood. She performed so well on the farm that Growing Home hired her. That opened the door to Jasmine's current job as a team leader training new participants at the Enterprising Kitchen, another nonprofit that provides work experience for low-income women as they create and sell soap and spa products.

"It's good for people to see that there are individuals who come through these [workforce training] programs that are willing to step up and apply themselves and to try to learn different skills and move up in the workforce," Jasmine says. "We are employable people."

With little access to healthy foods, residents of neighborhoods like hers benefit from the nutritious produce that Growing Home sells at a reasonable price. Participants in the co-op learn how to plant, cultivate, and harvest organic produce. Résumé writing classes and mock interviews help them find employment after the training program.

"I really learned how to speak up and let people know that you're ready to get back into the workforce," Jasmine says.

RECOMMENDATIONS

58 Improve Education and Workforce Development

62 Support Economic Innovation

2

Human Capital
Learning, Working, and Innovating

The quality of our region's labor force is crucial for sustaining economic prosperity. Increasingly, job growth relies on the availability of well-educated, skilled workers for knowledge-based industries. We can gain a significant advantage by ensuring that businesses and residents here have the skills necessary to compete with other global economic centers.

Providing equitable opportunities to gain those critical skills is among our region's most complicated challenges. Disparities in educational attainment, health, and other measures—often based on income levels, race, or ethnicity—put the entire region's economy at risk.

Developing a Skilled Workforce

More than half of our job pool will continue to be middle-skill positions that require more than a high school diploma but less than a college degree. Residents without adequate education will struggle to find productive employment, which could undermine our economic future.

Workforce development programs are intended to help those workers who need to gain marketable skills, but the system needs improvement to meet the needs of workers and businesses alike. Too often, the system is difficult for workers to navigate and fails to meet employers' needs. To prosper as the global economy rebounds, our region must help workers at all levels of education and skill to succeed. Our workforce programs have great potential that could be tapped, beginning with better coordination among training agencies.

Innovating for a Prosperous Future

Our long-term prosperity also hinges on the ability of our region and its business community to adapt when new circumstances require creative solutions. Though economic innovation must come primarily from the private sector, government has an important supporting role. With our excellent universities and laboratories, the region should do more to connect researchers and entrepreneurs.

Strategic investments by the public sector should be targeted to leverage private venture capital, emphasizing specialized "clusters" of strong industries that create good jobs and spur innovation in our region. Even as they compete against one another, companies in these clusters need to collaborate to compete against other regions across the world. We should rally behind such clusters by helping to ensure that our workforce meets these industries' needs.

SKILLED

RECOMMENDATION

Improve education and workforce development

A well-educated, highly skilled workforce may be the most important ingredient to strengthen our economy and ensure a high quality of life in our region.

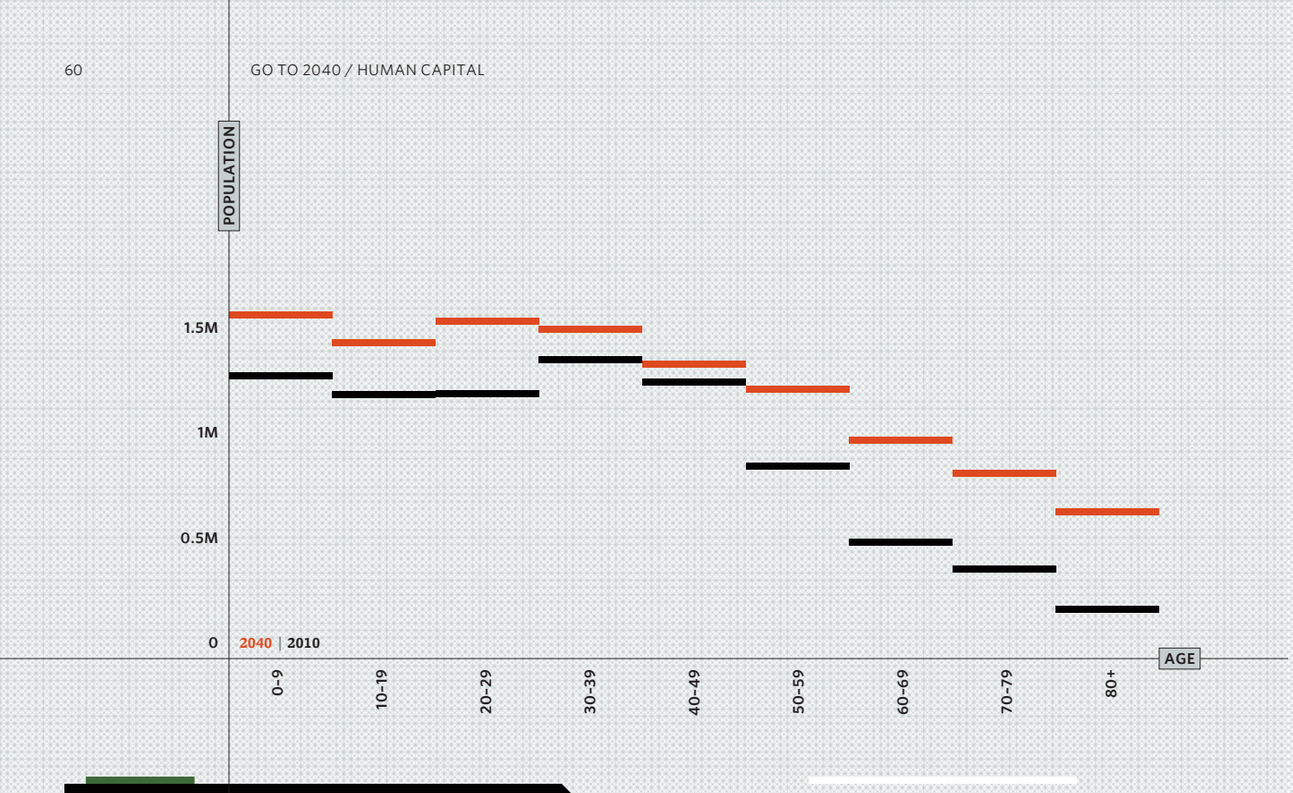
Education not only builds a skilled workforce, it also provides social, civic, and personal development. Inequitable access to high-quality education contributes to achievement gaps across racial, ethnic, and economic lines and to the decline of student achievement across the U.S. compared to other industrialized nations. Creating skilled workers for an economy that is constantly changing will require strategic investments and better education and workforce development programs, which must be coordinated and aligned with employers' needs.

While providing access to college should remain a high priority, the majority of jobs will continue to require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree, making education beyond high school increasingly essential. With labor shortages in critical industries like health care and freight, our community colleges, workforce boards, and occupational training institutions must provide specialized workforce training.

As the economy and technology rapidly evolve, many workers will need to learn new skills and match those skills to jobs—often retraining multiple times throughout their careers. But our workforce development system is often difficult for workers to navigate with its numerous programs, initiatives, and funding sources.

Too often graduates find their skills do not match job requirements because education and workforce training don't adapt quickly enough, especially for fast-growing industries. The lack of coordination between these systems often leaves employers' needs unmet as well.

We need an effective, adaptable, and coordinated education and workforce development system to keep workers' skills current. And to ensure that workers gain skills that match employers' needs, the business community should have a larger role in developing workforce programs.



While our population will increase across all age groups by 2040, the number of residents over age 50 will increase dramatically. People will tend to change jobs more often throughout their careers, requiring improvements to our workforce development system.

HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES CONFERRED REGIONWIDE, 2007
Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

20,987
Associate Degrees

38,774
Bachelor Degrees

30,207
Master Degrees

IMPROVE
Workforce Services

Inflexible funding programs pose a particular barrier to improving workforce development systems. Making services more flexible will help ensure responsiveness to the needs of workers and employers alike. Our region should monitor and evaluate the impact of new programs and strengthen community-focused workforce development programs.

IMPROVE
Data and Information

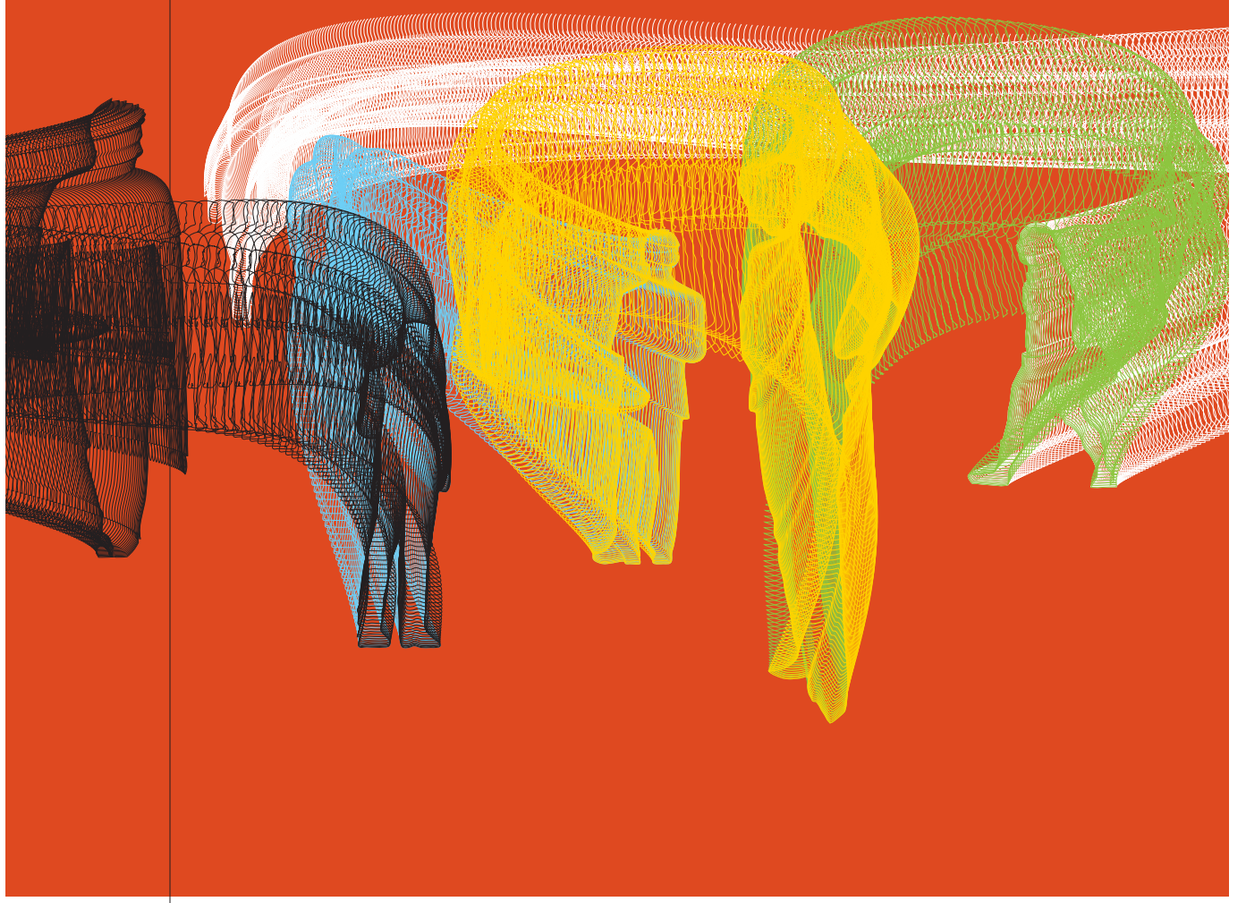
Limited availability of information and data impedes education and workforce development. Tracking progress, assessing program effectiveness, and planning for future needs all require better data sources. As a first step, CMAP and The Chicago Community Trust are partnering to launch the Regional Indicators Project's "MetroPulse" website (www.metropulsechicago.org), which will aggregate current data in a centralized and interactive system. Additional data must also be collected and analyzed for both workforce development and education.

COORDINATE
Education with Employers

We need to better coordinate education, workforce development, and economic development and to strengthen the role of local service providers — including community colleges, Workforce Investment Boards, and other workforce organizations. Workforce providers should assess current efforts to improve coordination and expand programs that are proven to be successful.

RECOMMENDATION

Support economic innovation



Whether it's an astounding breakthrough or a subtle shift in efficiency, innovation keeps our region prosperous and competitive in a worldwide economy.

Economic innovation—the process by which ideas become new goods and services—saves us money and time, enhances our quality of life, and improves our health and life expectancy. Businesses that excel at turning ideas into new technologies and processes gain a competitive advantage that translates into better jobs for our region's residents.

Our research laboratories, technology parks, universities, and advanced manufacturing firms are assets that create high-paying jobs that attract and retain the human capital our region needs to compete with other global centers of commerce. While we have the world-class research institutions, diverse industry mix, and strong civic organizations and foundations needed to support innovation, our region has not been keeping up with other metro areas' pace of commercializing technology—a trend that must be reversed to ensure future prosperity.

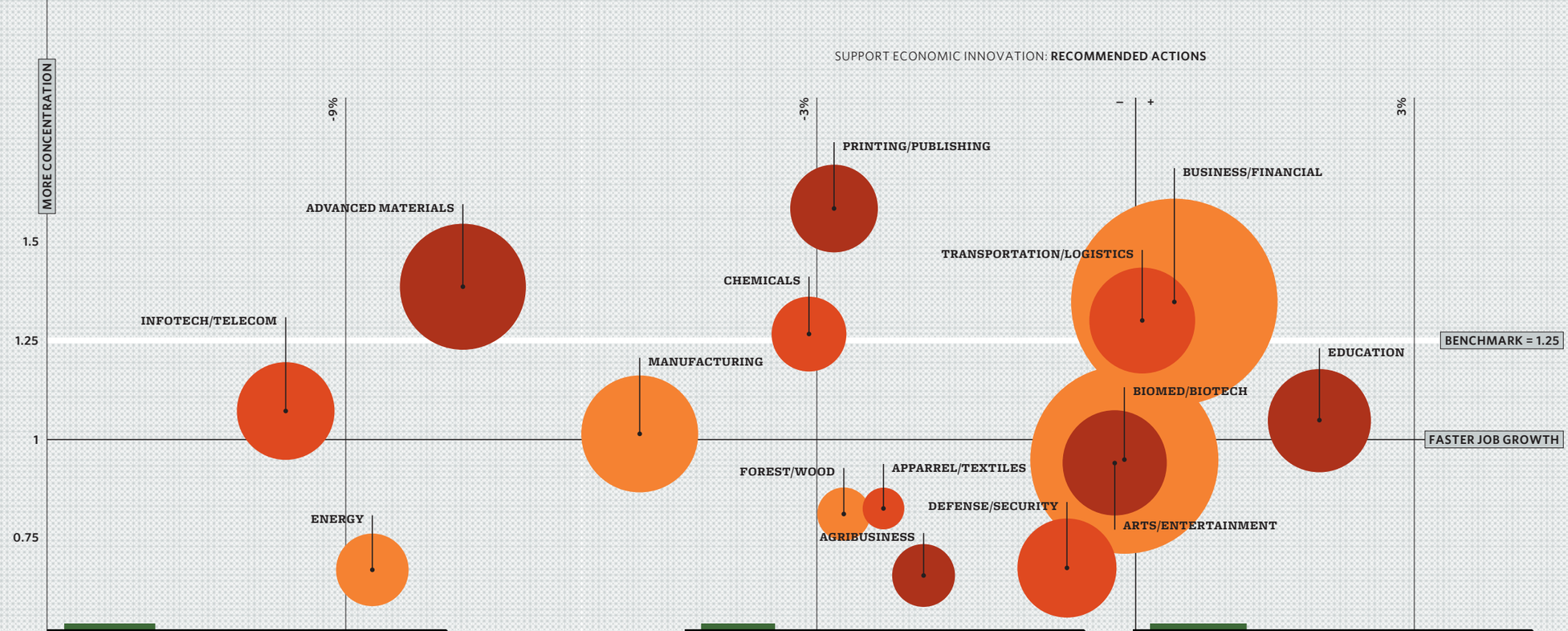
The public sector must support individuals and private institutions that can spur innovation, especially by connecting our researchers with entrepreneurs. Government can also improve the data systems needed to measure innovation, which will help guide decisions about infrastructure and other public investments to more effectively promote innovation.

By strategically encouraging "industry clusters"—among them biomedical/biotechnical, advanced materials, and transportation/logistics, as well as emerging clusters like green energy and technology—we can reduce duplication of workforce training and other efforts. And by supporting the experimentation and creativity necessary to produce commercial breakthroughs in these industries, we will create a culture that encourages innovation in our region.

Industry clusters consist of specialized yet interdependent firms that rely on similar labor pools, institutions, technologies, and infrastructure.

In the chart, circle size indicates the number of jobs. The horizontal axis indicates employment change from 2000–2007. The vertical axis indicates how concentrated each cluster is, with any bubble above the 1.25 benchmark being much more concentrated in the region than the U.S. as a whole.

Sources: CMAP, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Purdue Center of Regional Development



IMPROVE

Data and Information Systems

The region should pursue better systems for collecting, tracking, and analyzing important measures of innovation. This includes outcome indicators such as number of businesses and jobs in key sectors, in addition to the success of past and current programs and financial incentives, which should make public sector investment decisions more efficient.

NURTURE

Regional Industry Clusters

Strategically organizing the region around its existing and emerging clusters of regional specialization can help target investment decisions (such as training and infrastructure) and reduce duplication of effort. Forming regional coalitions that focus research and initiatives around clusters will help these industries grow and prosper to compete better nationally and internationally.

CREATE

A Culture of Innovation

To become a leader in innovation, our region needs to cultivate attitudes that support the experimentation and creativity necessary to produce commercial innovations. Publicizing innovative success stories would encourage the region to value experimentation. The State of Illinois and local governments should identify and reform regulations or ordinances that might be creating barriers to innovation.

INCREASE

Research Commercialization

Linking diverse groups, fostering awareness about local research, providing better training for researchers and entrepreneurs, and targeting public sector investment will help turn research into marketable products. Increasing venture capital investment in the region will enable entrepreneurs and start-up firms to locate and thrive here.

When **MIKE ABT** started recycling cardboard 20 years ago to help his family business become "more green," it wasn't just the eco-friendliness that appealed to him.

"It made financial sense. Most people do it today, but back then that wasn't the case," says Mike, age 47. "I'd always wanted us to be green, and I love saving money."

Since then, their family-owned electronics and appliance store has instituted numerous green initiatives, with no plans to stop anytime soon. The company has an onsite recycling center for its own and its customers' waste. They recycle cardboard, plastic, batteries, old electronics, and even Styrofoam, which is particularly difficult to recycle. To operate "off the grid" during the day, Abt's facility uses a generator that runs on natural gas. On a smaller scale, they also use solar and wind technology to help meet energy needs.

To save paper, Abt does not print paper catalogs, instead relying on web marketing. "That was a tough decision since we might have been able to sell more products, but green-wise it's better to not have a print catalog and to not waste hundreds of trees," Mike says.

He is among the third generation of Abts running the business, and he works alongside his three brothers and father. In 1936 Mike's grandmother loaned his grandfather $800 to open Abt Radios in Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood, and the family moved the store to the northern suburbs in 1975.

"The best part about a family business is that if anyone thinks of an idea, we can implement it right away," he says.

The company now has more than 1,000 employees who benefit from green initiatives, too. The store's campus includes a restaurant and gym so employees don't have to drive during the day, and bicycles are provided for any staff member who does need to leave work. Car pooling is encouraged, and many employees take advantage of a shuttle from the nearby Metra station to the Abt campus. Even the company's truck drivers will "truck in together" to save trips, and the company trucks use biodiesel during the summer months.

For Mike, there will always be new ways for the company to become more eco-friendly. He hopes to spread his ideas to other businesses, speaking to retailers about the cost efficiencies and other benefits of Abt's green initiatives.

"This is my religion," he says. "My goal is to get other businesses to be green."

RECOMMENDATIONS

74	Reform State and Local Tax Policy
78	Improve Access to Information
82	Pursue Coordinated Investments

Efficient Governance
Achieving Transparency

Now more than ever, taxpayers expect efficiency and transparency when governments invest their limited resources. To maximize the benefits that residents of our seven counties see from these public investments, government agencies across our region need to coordinate decisions and investments strategically. Better access to information will help us reach these goals by putting essential data at the fingertips of not only our local decision makers but also the residents they serve.

Efficient, Transparent, and Fair Tax Policies
State and local taxes have a profound impact on development patterns and the ability of government to provide necessary public services. Current tax policy too often unintentionally encourages choices that undermine the long-term interests of our region and its communities. Sales tax revenues are an incentive for municipalities to seek out retail development that creates fewer high-wage jobs and economic benefits compared to office or industrial development.

The unnecessary complexity of our property tax system—the revenue stream local governments depend upon most—puts stress on households, businesses, and governments themselves. School districts in Illinois rely more on property taxes than almost any other state, creating wide disparities between schools across communities due to divergent property values. Our tax policies should be simplified to support local control and to become more transparent and predictable for taxpayers and businesses.

Better Access to Information and More Coordination

To guide important local decisions, we need better access to information in our region. Open sharing of public information improves services, leads to better decisions, and helps residents understand how their tax dollars are spent. Open access to data also increases accountability and confidence in government, and companies are more likely to choose a location where they trust that government actions are predictable and transparent.

To share information across our region, CMAP and The Chicago Community Trust—partners in the Regional Indicators Project—have created MetroPulse, an advanced web resource to help leaders across the region make more informed decisions. Visit www.metropulsechicago.org for more information.

In addition to sharing information, our region must work together to provide more coordinated delivery of services and to remove the barriers that prevent coordination of programs at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. By efficiently targeting and coordinating investments, our region can streamline programs and services to avoid duplication at all levels of government.

Together, we can make government in our region more effective, which will help make our communities more economically competitive and more livable for all residents.

ACCOUNTABLE

56
Average number of services taxed in all states

12
Number of services taxed in Illinois

RECOMMENDATION

Reform state and local tax policy

$318,000
Highest municipal tax base per capita
(Retail sales + Equalized Assessed Value for municipalities over 5,000 population)

$8,000
Lowest municipal tax base per capita
(Retail sales + Equalized Assessed Value for municipalities over 5,000 population)

↑ **27%**
Change in annual state sales tax revenues
(adjusted for inflation)
1992–2008

↓ **-15%**
Change in annual state gas tax revenues
(adjusted for inflation)

7
Jobs per acre: Auto Dealership

$107,500
Local net tax revenue per acre: Auto Dealership

61
Jobs per acre: Corporate Office

$45,900
Local net tax revenue per acre: Corporate Office

$12,000,000,000
Amount of property tax revenue collected by school districts in northeastern Illinois

$5,000,000,000
Amount of state tax revenue disbursed to local governments in northeastern Illinois

Taxes have an impact beyond the public revenue they raise—intentionally or unintentionally, they result in incentives that shape our communities.

To create livable communities and keep our region economically competitive, state and local tax systems should encourage effective land use, generate good jobs, and trigger sustainable economic activity. Our tax policies should avoid causing large inequities between households, businesses, and local governments and should be transparent and predictable for taxpayers.

Taxes Influence Key Decisions
Illinois governments rely more on sales and property taxes than other states, which can cause inefficiencies (such as high local tax rates, a host of exemptions and limitations, or counterproductive competition for residential and commercial development) and inequities (such as the widely varying local government tax bases across our region and the regressive nature of the tax system overall). These taxes influence where businesses locate and where housing is built, often distorting land use decisions that could be better shaped by market forces.

Our current sales tax system pushes communities into intense competition to attract retail businesses that generate sales. Such developments, including "big box" stores and auto dealerships, offer fewer economic benefits compared to the high-wage jobs and economic impacts of office developments and industry. An over-reliance on sales taxes can also leave municipalities short of funds when retail sales slump in economic downturns.

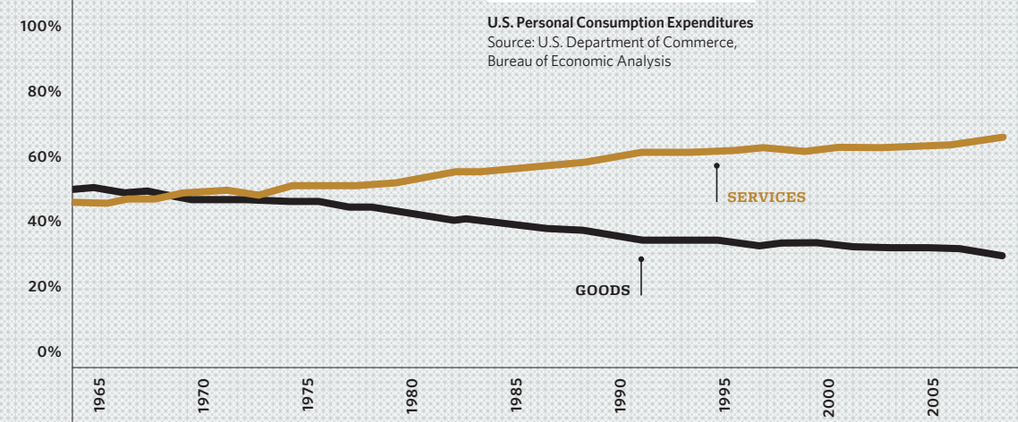
Though they are the most important revenue source for local governments, property taxes vary greatly from community to community. If well designed, they can match local service needs with the value of residential and commercial properties and provide a stable source of local revenue that does not dramatically change from year to year. But in other cases, property taxes can create confusion for taxpayers and local governments alike. For example, assessment levels often differ by county, special exemptions apply to some property types but not others, and state-imposed local tax caps set arbitrary limitations on annual local tax levies—all of which can create instability and unpredictability. And our dependence on the property tax for public education creates wide disparities in school funding throughout the region.

Tax Polices to Make Our Region More Competitive
Reforming our tax policies will improve the livability of our region and enhance our business climate by broadening the tax base, limiting land use distortions, and making the system more predictable, transparent, and fair. To guide these needed reforms, GO TO 2040 establishes a task force of local governments, businesses, and tax policy experts reporting to the CMAP Board to recommend action on a small set of state and local tax policy issues.

The GO TO 2040 recommendations intentionally do not focus on raising tax rates or increasing overall revenues for state and local governments. Reforms can be structured to keep taxes level overall. But even without adding new revenue, reforming state and local tax policies will help our region stay economically competitive for the long term.

Local Net Tax Revenues per Acre	Regional Economic Output per Acre	
$45,900	$31,165,000	OFFICES
$3,200	$7,892,400	INDUSTRY
$75,700	$2,649,500	BIG BOX RETAIL
$107,500	$1,736,600	AUTO RETAIL

Big box retail and auto dealerships in metropolitan Chicago generate more local tax dollars but lower-paying jobs and less regional economic output than the office and industrial options. The revenue disparity is driven largely by the sales tax. Sources: Minnesota IMPLAN Group, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and S.B. Friedman and Co.



U.S. Personal Consumption Expenditures
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

ADDRESS

Existing State and Local Revenue Sharing Systems

More than $5 billion in state tax revenue, much of it from sales tax, is disbursed annually to our region's local governments. This system of state and local sales tax sharing creates an incentive for local governments to emphasize retail land use (such as auto dealerships and big box stores) at the expense of uses potentially more beneficial to the regional economy (such as offices or industrial development). These revenue sharing structures should be adjusted to support economic efficiency and fairness and to reduce competition among local governments for tax dollars.

ADDRESS

Property Tax Caps, Classification, and Exemptions

Property taxes provide revenues vital to local government services, yet sometimes their complexities and incentives distort economic decision making and place undue stress on households, businesses, and local governments. Property tax processes need to be simplified and made more transparent and fair through the elimination of some special exemptions, differing assessment classifications, and state-imposed caps on the property tax.

ADDRESS

Expanding Sales Tax to Services

Though services make up a much larger and growing portion of the economy, the State of Illinois taxes many goods but only a few services. Services now make up 70 percent of all personal expenditures, while goods make up just 30 percent compared to an even split about 40 years ago. Extending the sales tax to some services will expand the tax base, allow lower sales tax rates without reducing overall revenue, and make the sales tax more progressive because low-income earners consume more goods relative to their incomes than higher earners do.

ADDRESS

Local Tax Capacity

Some areas within the region have a much larger economic base of property and retail sales than others, which gives them a greater "tax capacity." Extreme divergences make it hard for many local governments to provide essential services and attract new residents and businesses. Even worse, this gap increases over time, as municipalities with strong revenues can keep property tax rates lower while also providing high-quality services and infrastructure. The region must address how tax policies hinder the economic well-being of many of its communities.

RECOMMENDATION

Improve access to information

↑	↓
TRANSPORTATION **2,000,000** Public transit trips per weekday	ENVIRONMENT **139,800,000** Metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT **40.8%** Residents age 25+ who have at least an associate degree	HOUSING **42.3%** Households spending at least 30% of income on housing
CIVIC INVOLVEMENT **56%** Eligible voters who cast ballots	EMPLOYMENT **10.5%** Residents who are unemployed
CULTURE **29,783** People employed in the arts	INFANT MORTALITY **7.17** Deaths per 1,000 live births
COORDINATED PLANNING **41.3%** Municipalities that report having considered recommendations of regional plans prior to GO TO 2040	ECONOMY **11.7%** Residents below federal poverty level
	SAFETY **564** Violent crimes per 100,000 residents
	LAND USE **100,000** Acres of under-utilized land

These are among more than 200 measures being tracked by the MetroPulse website created by the Regional Indicators Project (a partnership of CMAP and The Chicago Community Trust). The arrows represent the direction that we want to move these top-level indicators.

As communities across our region—and across the world—become more interconnected, the importance of information access keeps rising.

The public increasingly relies on data and information from business and government alike to understand their options and make important decisions. But even in our digital age, good information can be hard to find. Most of the policy and planning challenges we face are exacerbated by the difficulty of finding high-quality, relevant data. To achieve the efficiency our region requires to stay competitive, we need better access to comprehensive, current, and accurate data resources, and we need to cooperate across jurisdictions.

Metropolitan Chicago's prominent position as a hub for transportation, communications, and tourism draws skilled people from all over the world, to the benefit of our collective capacity for innovation. With such capacity, our seven-county region can stay at the forefront of information technology if we pool our public and private data resources to create advanced information systems that increase both our economic competitiveness and our governmental transparency.

Better Data Sharing Leads to Better Choices

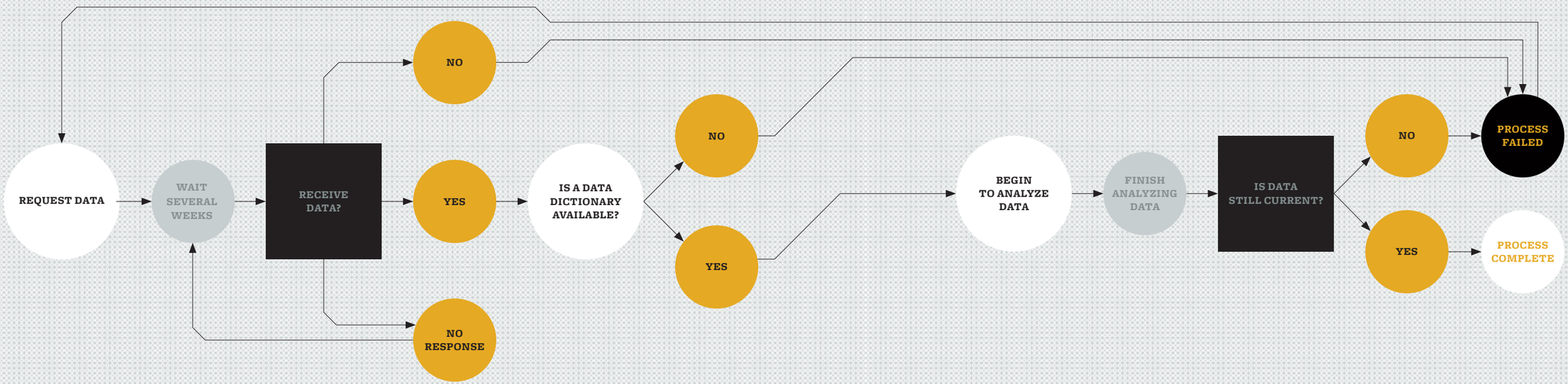
Residents are served best when government information is freely accessible to all. When public bodies have access to complete, accurate, and timely information, leaders can make decisions that are better for our communities and region. Every government action or decision should be based on high-quality information so all costs, benefits, and alternatives can be considered.

Open sharing of information between public entities will also make it easier to coordinate policies and operations, improving their efficiency. Since its inception, CMAP has been committed to sharing information and analysis to facilitate regional decision making. GO TO 2040 likewise calls for a new region-wide commitment to improving the availability of public information.

Benefits of Access to Information Outweigh the Costs

Local governments have good reason to increase the availability of their data, despite legitimate concerns about cost, staff capacity, liability, privacy, and security. The inefficiency of seeking hard-to-reach data far outweighs the expense of providing data effectively. CMAP's technical assistance will help governments and other organizations across the seven counties openly share their data with each other and with the public.

One way public bodies can share and use data will be through the Regional Indicators Project's new MetroPulse website (www.metropulsechicago.org), a powerful, innovative system for tracking economic, environmental, social, and cultural variables that are essential measures of sustainable prosperity. CMAP and The Chicago Community Trust are partners in the project, which develops tools to help understand how investment decisions affect the region, even at the community level. This new website will allow our region to carefully gauge its progress in implementing GO TO 2040.



At present, gathering public data is time consuming and inefficient. Here is a step-by-step example that is all too common among governments.

DEVELOP

A Regional Web Portal

The Regional Indicators Project's new MetroPulse website (www.metropulsechicago.org) will be a hub for data about the region. This portal will allow public officials, business people, and residents to get the best available real-time regional and local data—and to measure progress—across more than 200 quality-of-life variables addressed by GO TO 2040.

PROVIDE

Technical Assistance

CMAP will help local governments post data online and will host a regional online warehouse to provide access to municipalities' information as an expansion of the Regional Indicators Project. CMAP will also seek opportunities to form partnerships around data-sharing pilot projects with other interested regional partners, such as transportation agencies, workforce development agencies, and municipal water suppliers to make this data more accessible.

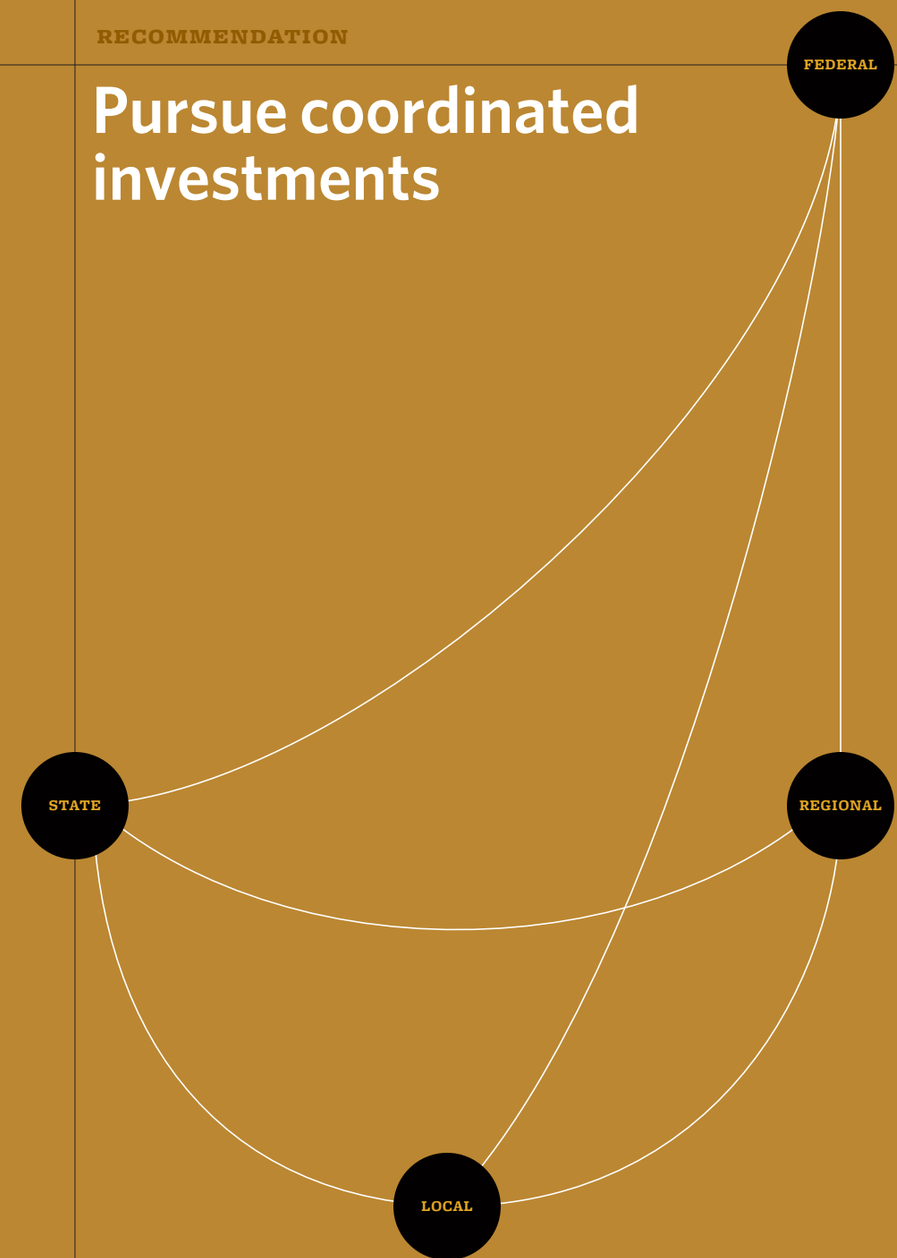
DEFINE

Best Practices for Data Sharing

By understanding how communities here and across the world address similar data challenges, our state and region can put these best practices to work for residents. CMAP will work with the State of Illinois, counties, municipalities, and other governmental bodies that possess data to implement technical improvements that facilitate open exchange of data.

RECOMMENDATION

Pursue coordinated investments



The issues addressed by GO TO 2040 literally transcend boundaries. They require collaboration, particularly in changing the way major investment decisions are made and coordinated across all levels of government.

One community, or even a single level of government, cannot solve our most pressing problems alone. Though northeastern Illinois is a large and diverse region, our communities are interdependent and our leaders will have to work across geographic borders to create sustainable prosperity.

A Regional Approach

Metropolitan regions drive the U.S. economy, yet state governments make most of the decisions about investing federal dollars. States too often spread those resources around too thinly, which undermines the ability of regions to implement plans no matter how well-conceived.

To harness the economic power of regions like ours, the federal government should invest more in metropolitan areas and give them more authority to decide how to use those funds. Such a regional approach could focus federal investments to maximize their economic impact.

Guiding Investment Decisions

GO TO 2040 connects policy areas that have long existed in separate "silos." To implement the plan, the barriers between federal and state programs must be dismantled to help ensure they respond to the needs of communities instead of bureaucratic systems. Agencies should work together to streamline grant requirements and to align their goals, performance criteria, and funding.

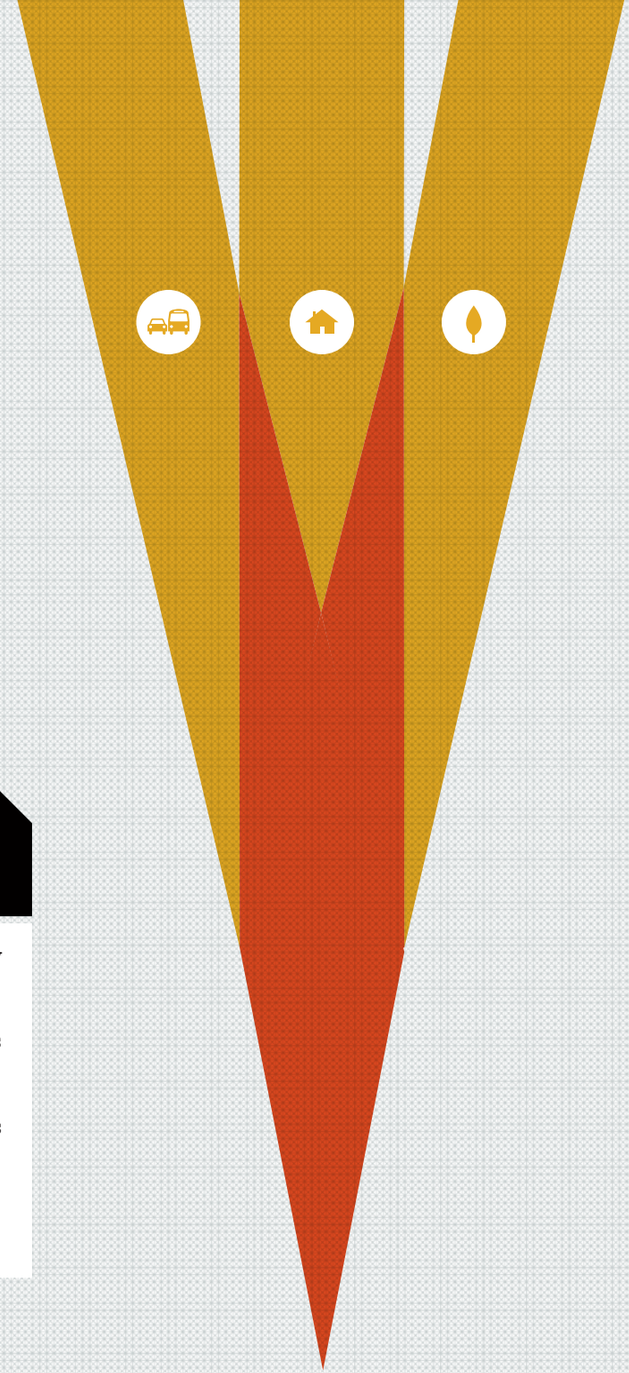
By making collaboration across federal and state programs routine, agencies can help regions to more effectively implement comprehensive solutions to their problems.

Increasing Efficiencies

Government agencies also need to operate more efficiently. Accounts of wasteful and duplicative government spending, whether real or perceived, are common. The unintended consequences of outdated policies and bureaucracies include higher government costs and less accountability.

To avoid these unwanted outcomes, local governments in our region should rethink and realign their policies, programs, funding, and regulations. With over 1,200 different units of government providing services to residents, businesses, and visitors of our seven-county region, increasing efficiency depends on better coordination, communication, and where appropriate, consolidation of services.

By removing "silos" to improve coordination of programs such as Transportation, Housing, and Environment at all levels – federal, state, regional, and local – we can make better use of public resources and maximize benefits to achieve desired outcomes.



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

	Government Units in Metropolitan Chicago
7	Counties
284	Municipalities
123	Townships
307	School Districts
136	Fire Districts
173	Park Districts
108	Library Districts
88	Miscellaneous
1,226	TOTAL

REFORM

State and Federal Policies

Federal and state agencies must collaborate to modify funding formulas, project selection criteria, and grant requirements that may be causing unintended outcomes. Innovative and comprehensive approaches to policy decisions and capital investments can increase efficiency while showcasing the benefits of more coordinated governance. Achieving GO TO 2040's goal of "livable communities" requires making substantial inter-agency investments in capital improvements like brownfield remediation and providing for affordable housing near transit.

TAKE

A Regional Approach

The federal and state governments should use GO TO 2040 to align their investment decisions, incentivize and empower regional decision making, and support more comprehensive planning. As the region's planning agency, CMAP should foster inter-jurisdictional collaboration, lead regional responses to funding opportunities, and help drive more efficient, effective, and collaborative programming decisions.

SUPPORT

Consolidation of Local Services

Local governments should explore ways to coordinate or in some cases consolidate services, and these decisions should be made collaboratively and responsibly. In cooperation with their Councils of Government (COGs) and counties, local governments should analyze the fiscal impacts, efficiencies, and other consequences of sharing or consolidating local services.

Grocery shopping, getting to work, and taking kids to school can be a hassle for anyone. But when 56-year-old **CINDI SWANSON** lost her vision 15 years ago, she learned just how difficult these everyday tasks can be.

"When I started looking for transportation options, it was abysmal in the suburbs," says Cindi, who lives in the western suburbs.

Once her vision loss made it difficult to continue working as a journalist, she got a master's degree and became a certified social worker. Cindi has become a passionate advocate for planning and development that address the needs of all residents, including residents with disabilities.

Her 23-year-old son, who has Down's Syndrome, works within a mile of home so he can get there on foot. But development choices like the removal of a sidewalk for construction often ignore the needs of people with disabilities, Cindi says, making the commute harder or even unsafe.

"I want my son to go out and be engaged in the community," she says. "If you can't walk or it's too dangerous to walk, there's a lot of home sitting."

Her family moved from a subdivision to be closer to their town's central business district, with more amenities nearby. Even downtown, she can't easily run all her errands, though. "There's still no place to just buy a gallon of milk without having to get in a car," she says.

Cindi works with local planners and city officials who are trying to make it easier to get around her community. She invited many of them on a walk through the neighborhood to see how difficult it can be for people with special needs to navigate.

"I showed them how challenging it is to get around, and I try to show them that we aren't just talking about the blind, but people who want to age in place and stay in town," Cindi says. "We're also talking about the good soldiers who will be coming back home with disabilities."

To get places that aren't in walking distance, Cindi and her son use "Ride DuPage," which offers bus or taxi services for residents with physical or cognitive disabilities. Having helped develop the program with the DuPage Inter-Agency Paratransit Coordinating Council, she says it's a model that groups in Kane and Will counties are replicating.

"We don't just need to build the structure, we need to build a culture around this," Cindi says. **"Inclusion is more than just architecture, inclusion is also of the heart."**

RECOMMENDATIONS

96	Invest Strategically in Transportation
102	Increase Commitment to Public Transit
106	Create a More Efficient Freight Network
110	GO TO 2040 Capital Projects

4

Regional Mobility
Getting Around

A modern transportation system is indispensable for our region's future prosperity. To sustain our economy and quality of life, residents must be able to travel quickly and easily around our region so they can choose from a wide variety of jobs and communities in which to live. Businesses must be able to count on the timely delivery of their goods.

Historically, our region's transportation system has been a foundation of our success. But the system's infrastructure was built decades ago, with inadequate ongoing investment to keep it up to date. While transportation is still a significant strength of this region, we must modernize our system to compete with other U.S. and global economic centers.

Reducing Congestion is Imperative

Congestion affects how livable our communities are, shaping decisions as personal as where we live and work. After decades of underinvesting in public transportation and developing land that doesn't support transit, too many residents lack options for getting around. The consequences include limited personal choices, more cars tying up our roads, more pollution, and continued dependence on foreign oil.

Our region's congestion is already among the nation's highest. Without new approaches, it will only increase due to the projected growth of our population, jobs, and traffic. Current revenues are not keeping up with maintenance and operation costs. Underinvestment and deferred maintenance have strained our transportation system, leaving us with aging infrastructure that is deteriorating in some places.

As a region, we need to make better use of existing funds and identify new sources of revenue that will encourage more efficient travel patterns.

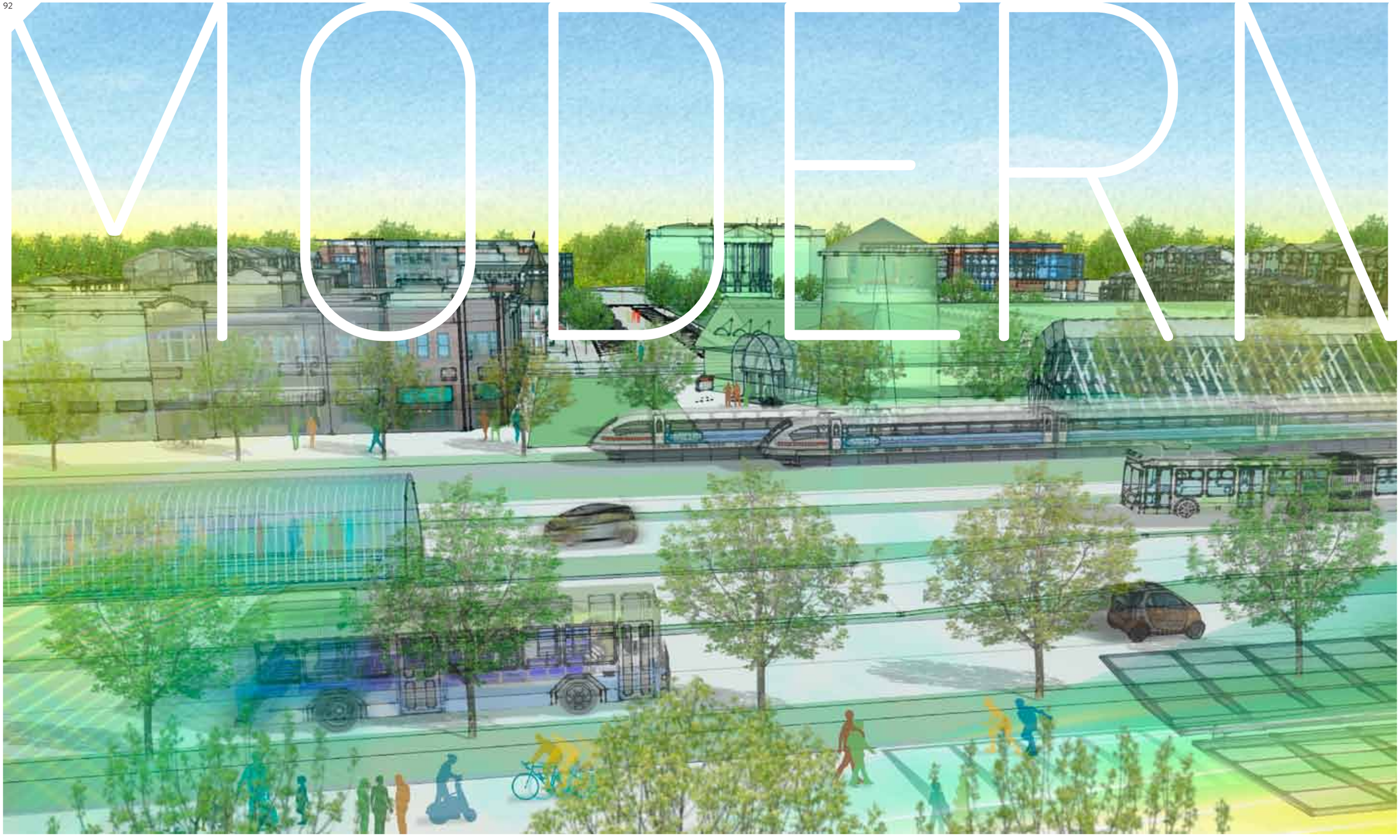
A World-Class Transportation System

Our seven-county region needs to take better care of existing roads and transit while strategically investing in the transportation system to reduce congestion, strengthen our communities, and foster a robust economy.

Making our system "world class" is not simply a matter of raising taxes to generate more revenue, nor is it about massive expansion of the system. Instead, the primary goal is to prioritize spending on maintenance and modernization, which will account for more than 97 percent of the proposed transportation funding over the next three decades.

While the fundamentals for moving people and goods are in place, we must dramatically improve the transportation system's condition and provide 21st Century enhancements to make it operate more efficiently. To maximize benefits from our limited funds, GO TO 2040 recommends focusing resources on implementing the region's capital priorities. Carefully selecting projects through a transparent decision-making process will help us achieve clear regional objectives, with our ultimate goal being to create the world-class transportation system that the region needs and its residents deserve.

MODERN



MOBILITY MATTERS

To a significant extent, quality of life and economic prosperity are shaped by how well the region moves people and goods. GO TO 2040 takes a strategic approach to coordinating investments and maximizing the benefits of our transportation system. Below are key aspects of improving regional mobility:

$7,300,000,000

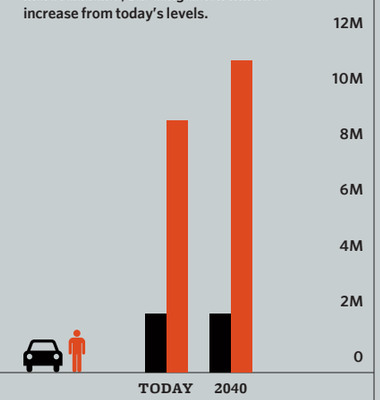
Annual Cost of Congestion
Source: Metropolitan Planning Council

Reducing Congestion and Its Costs

Congestion is expensive for residents, businesses, and governments. By limiting our ability to get around, it restricts people's choices of where to live and work. It limits businesses' access to skilled labor and reduces the reliability of truck and train shipments. Congestion wastes fuel and causes air pollution. It even reduces safety and security by delaying rapid response to emergencies.

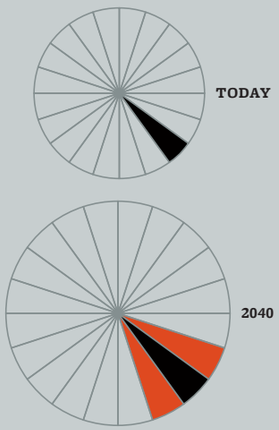
Today: Our region has 8.6 million residents and spends 1.8 million hours in congestion every day.

GO TO 2040: We will have 2.4 million more residents, but congestion will not increase from today's levels.



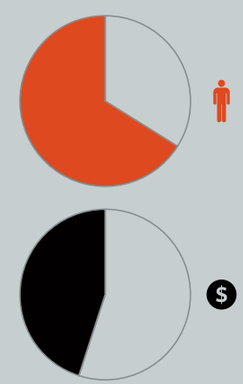
Increasing Transportation Options

Sustainable prosperity depends on our region's success in reducing congestion by promoting transportation options other than driving. While cars will continue to be the primary mode of transportation for many of us, other modes—like walking, bicycling, and transit—need to make up a greater share of trips in the future. Despite recent increases in riders, fewer people are using public transportation than 20 years ago. Compared to driving alone, transit is far cheaper, reduces congestion, raises the value of nearby land, and is better for the environment.



Today: 95% of transportation funds are spent just to maintain and operate roads and transit. Only 5% remains to actually improve, modernize, or expand the system.

GO TO 2040: By exploring innovative financing options, we can free up significant dollars needed to help modernize the system and bring it toward a state of good repair.



Despite having 66% of the state's population, our region receives only 45% of the state's road funding. This so-called "55/45 Split" needs to be addressed.

Changing How Transportation is Funded

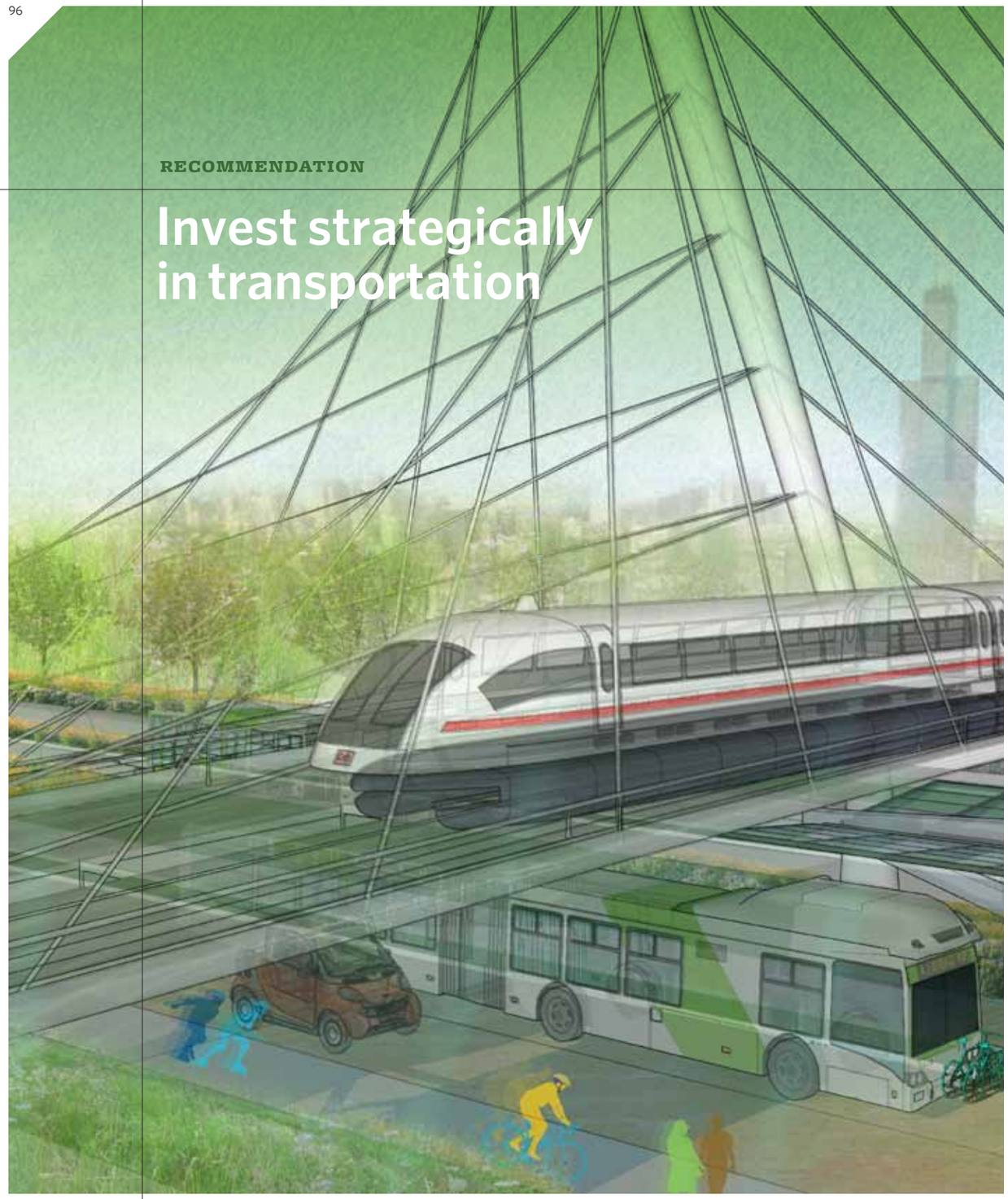
Transportation requires new funding from innovative sources. By tying revenue to how individuals and businesses actually use the system, our region can provide incentives for more efficient use while generating revenue for needed improvements. Just as important, we need to make careful investment decisions to maximize benefits, which should include stimulating economic productivity and reducing congestion.

Setting Strategic Priorities

Transportation investments have a profound impact on our economy and quality of life, influencing where residents can live and work and how they can travel. Safety and security must be paramount when the region invests in transportation. Because access to transportation helps shape growth and construction affects the natural environment, it's also essential to consider how transportation investments will drive land use and development.

Making Freight Efficient

Our region is the truck and rail freight center of North America, with major distribution centers and intermodal hubs that integrate trucking and rail, contributing to our economy and its strong industrial base. But freight traffic is forecast to grow, straining our infrastructure and negatively affecting some communities with delays at crossings, and higher levels of truck traffic, noise, and pollution. Our region needs infrastructure and policies to enhance freight's benefits to the economy while reducing its negative impacts on our quality of life.



RECOMMENDATION

Invest strategically in transportation

The transportation network is one of our region's most important assets, key to our economic prosperity.

While our advanced system of highways, trains, and buses retains an excellent national and global reputation, it is aging quickly and falling behind other industrialized parts of the world, many of which have invested significantly to create, operate, and maintain world-class systems.

Achieving a modern, well-functioning system of roads and public transit simply makes good economic sense. Businesses want efficient and effective transportation infrastructure, including rapid access to airports and efficient movement of goods. Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce requires a system where ease of mobility is ensured and where car ownership is not a requirement for living, working, and recreation.

Traffic congestion has real costs, including lost time and fuel, decreased productivity, inefficient movements of freight, and pollution. Underinvestment in transportation is also harmful, as seen with distressing cuts to public transit and a backlog of deferred maintenance on our roads and bridges.

Prioritizing Investments

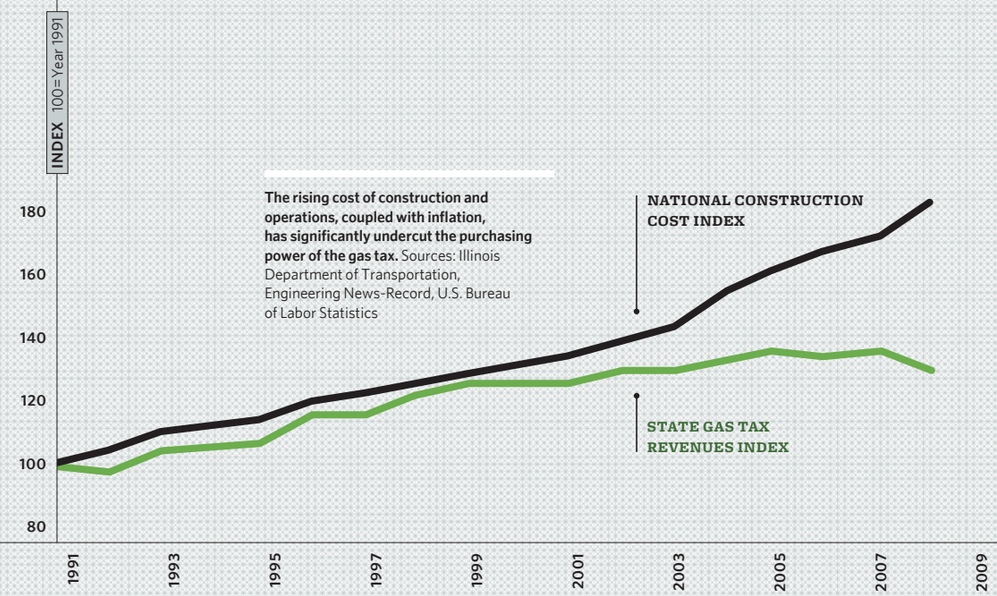
To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our transportation system, the first requirement is to spend existing resources more wisely. Investment decisions should be based on performance-driven criteria, rather than arbitrary formulas. The region should prioritize efforts to modernize our significant existing assets we have, rather than continuing to expand the system.

Investments of all types should take a multimodal approach, with consideration for transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The federal government and State of Illinois should keep pace with global competition by increasing transportation investment in metropolitan regions like ours, which drive the U.S. and state economy.

Find New, Innovative Revenues

The second requirement is to generate new revenues through more-efficient user fees, which should be better structured to reflect actual maintenance and operations needs as well as the costs of congestion. The federal and state gas taxes, which fund a large share of our roads, have not kept up with the costs of construction. These should be bolstered in the short term, and a replacement revenue stream should be explored as automobiles become more fuel-efficient.

Also, applying free-market, supply-and-demand principles like congestion pricing and parking management strategies will reduce congestion by providing incentives for some drivers to alter their travel behavior. These strategies will enhance mobility for all users and will also help fund badly needed improvements to our transit systems and local roads. Other innovative financing sources, such as public-private partnerships (PPPs), also show promise in reducing costs and shortening the duration of project development and construction.



The rising cost of construction and operations, coupled with inflation, has significantly undercut the purchasing power of the gas tax. Sources: Illinois Department of Transportation, Engineering News-Record, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

CREATE

Cost and Investment Efficiencies

Given limited resources, the region should evaluate road and transit investments based on the degree to which they impact the economy and livability. Maintaining and modernizing the existing system should take precedence over more costly expansions. The federal government and state should prioritize funding toward metropolitan areas, which drive our economy, rather than spreading funds around too thinly.

INCREASE

Gas Taxes

Current federal and state gas taxes have proved inadequate to fund maintenance and operation of the system. Neither per-gallon tax has been raised in 20 years. The State of Illinois should increase the existing 19 cents per gallon gas tax by 8 cents in the short term, and this tax should be indexed annually to keep pace with inflation and the rising costs of construction. A portion of the revenues should be devoted to transit. Over the longer term, gas taxes will eventually need to be replaced by more efficient user fees, as vehicles switch to alternative energy sources.

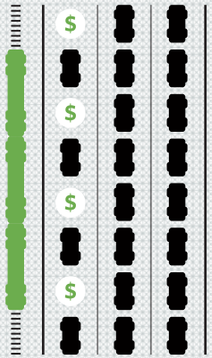
IMPLEMENT

Congestion Pricing

Congestion pricing applies free market principles of supply and demand to reduce congestion, resulting in more efficient personal travel and freight movement. Tolls on expressways should be charged based on the level of congestion, meaning that travel at peak periods is more expensive. To provide travel options, supportive transit projects and arterial improvements should be funded by the revenues generated from congestion pricing.

Today: During peak travel times, congestion slows the driving commute.

GO TO 2040: With congestion pricing, drivers pay a premium to use an express lane during peak travel times. This will reduce congestion by giving people an incentive to travel at off-peak times and will help to pay for road and transit system improvements.



IMPLEMENT

Parking Strategies Including Pricing

Local governments can utilize a range of strategies, including pricing, improved information on parking availability, and reforming ordinances to reduce parking requirements for new developments. In particular, variable pricing can allow parking to reflect its true market value, with higher prices charged at times and locations of peak demand.

Estimated 50-year Lifetime Costs of an Expressway (current dollars)

$65,000,000/mile	**Construction**
$6,500,000/mile	**Resurfacing** over 50 Years
$16,000,000/mile	**Reconstruction** after 50 Years
$87,500,000/mile	**Total**

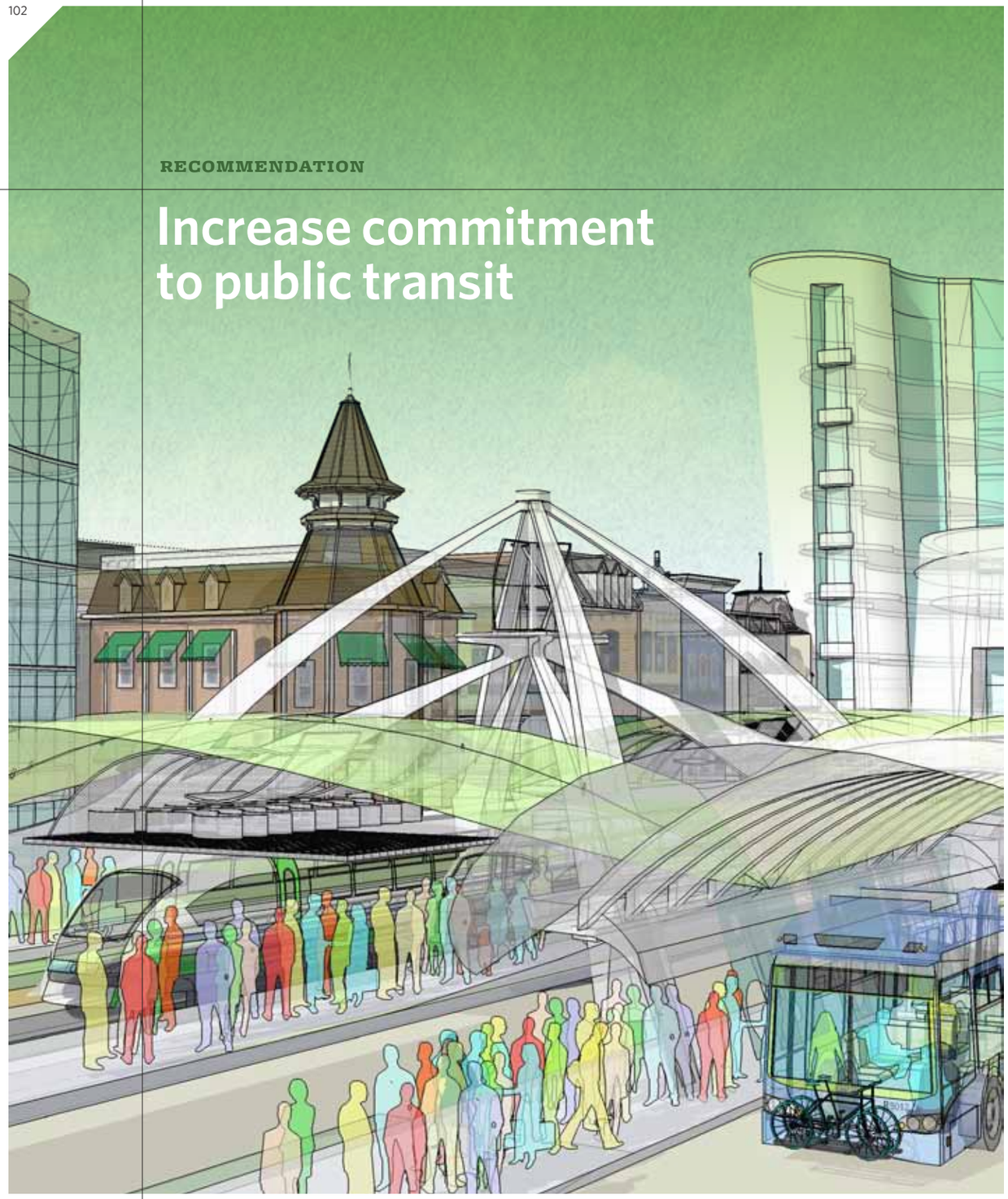
DISCOVER

Innovative Finance Mechanisms

Other efficient mechanisms for transportation funding should be explored. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) offer a range of approaches to privatize infrastructure assets and realize cost savings from shorter construction schedules. A range of pros and cons exists for each strategy, but they should be explored. However, the State of Illinois currently lacks legislation to enable PPPs. "Value capture" mechanisms and impact fees also have promise in generating revenue from increases in property values caused by nearby infrastructure investments.

RECOMMENDATION

Increase commitment to public transit



Our region relies on its transit system, which benefits us all—not just the 2 million riders who commute each day by train or bus.

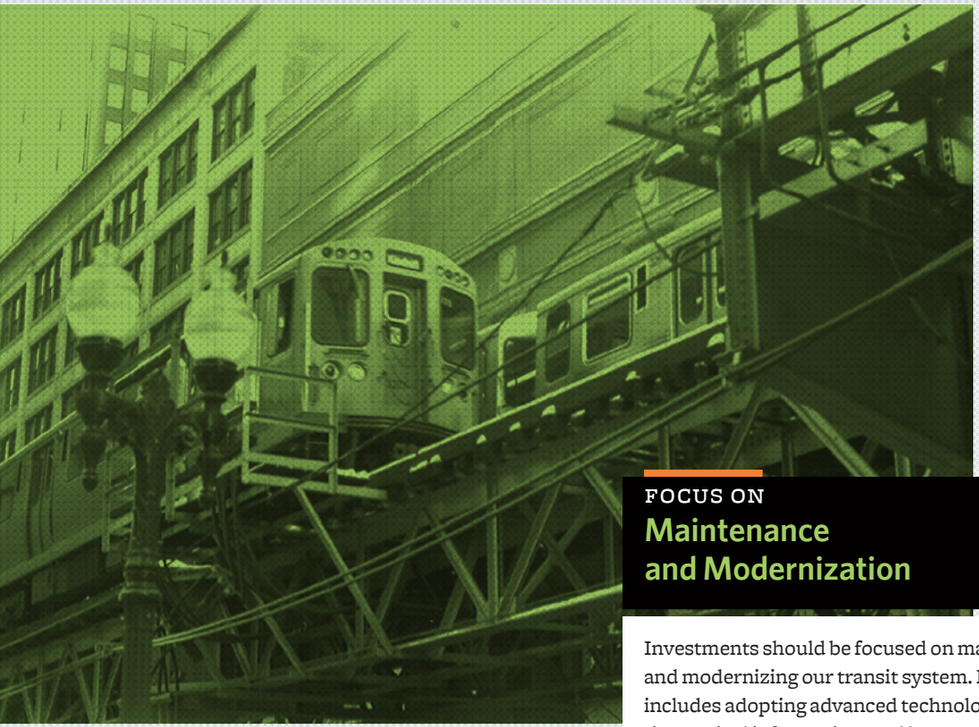
Public transportation keeps cars off the roads, reduces congestion for everyone who drives, and improves air quality for all. And the mobility enabled by transit helps our economy and quality of life, giving people more choices for getting around.

But after decades of underinvestment, our transit infrastructure is aging and in need of improvement. Some people choose not to use it due to concerns about delays or infrequent service. Many residents don't even have that choice, because parts of the region lack transit service altogether. Improving public transportation will increase ridership while making transit accessible to more people.

Investing in maintenance will put more of our infrastructure in good condition, reducing delays and increasing reliability. In making improvements, we need to consider how residents perceive transit, because comfort and aesthetics can prompt more people to travel by train or bus instead of driving. So can the use of advanced technology that makes transit more efficient—for example, by providing riders with real-time service status information. To increase coverage of the region, investments should be prioritized to expand bus service in communities that are actively planning for transit-supportive development.

To pay for these improvements, our transit agencies need to address the cost of their services, which have been rising rapidly. New revenue—specifically, a portion of the gas tax increase and congestion pricing revenue—should support transit. The region needs to investigate other innovative revenue sources, such as public-private partnerships.

We should take a limited and conservative approach to major expansion. Rather than pursue expensive transit "mega-projects," our resources must be targeted to improve what we already have. While the GO TO 2040 plan supports high-speed rail, it should be funded with new money that adds to (rather than replaces) federal funds for the existing regional transit system.



$12,500

ANNUAL AVERAGE COST OF CAR COMMUTING

$1,000

ANNUAL AVERAGE COST OF TRANSIT COMMUTING

Source: American Public Transportation Association

DAILY TRANSIT RIDERSHIP (WEEKDAYS)

2,000,000 trips TODAY

4,000,000 trips GO TO 2040

FOCUS ON

Maintenance and Modernization

Investments should be focused on maintaining and modernizing our transit system. Modernization includes adopting advanced technology, using real-time arrival information, and better coordination of services—all of which will help improve how transit operates and is perceived. Expansion of the transit system should be done in a limited way, focusing on efficient operational improvements such as advanced bus service, rather than on expensive new rail lines.

IMPROVE

Fiscal Health

Improvements to our transit system rely on its remaining financially healthy. GO TO 2040 recommends several new transportation funding sources—including an increase in the state gas tax and the use of congestion pricing—and a portion of these revenues should go to transit. Cost reductions must also be a part of the solution, requiring proactive efforts to control cost increases by the region's transit agencies.

SUPPORT

Transit Locally

Transit works best when it is supported by small-scale infrastructure improvements—like sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and bus shelters—and by land use planning. Local governments and transit agencies should work together to coordinate transit expansions with local investments in infrastructure, planning for nearby land use, and other support.

RESIDENTS WHO CAN WALK TO PUBLIC TRANSIT FROM

WORK	TODAY 76%	↑ GO TO 2040 80%
HOME	TODAY 68%	↑ GO TO 2040 75%

RECOMMENDATION

Create a more efficient freight network

Metropolitan Chicago's freight system links us to the global economy. Nearly everything we buy as consumers must reach us by rail or truck, including the food we eat and the clothes we wear.

Our freight system delivers everything that local businesses need to thrive—from raw materials for manufacturing to office supplies. Without the freight system we would be shut off from the rest of the world.

But freight travel can negatively impact our communities as well. While the consumption of goods carried on our freight network creates jobs and boosts our economy, the movement of goods by truck and train can also increase congestion, add to air pollution, and hold up traffic at rail crossings. Freight bottlenecks caused by inadequate infrastructure make it harder for commuters to reach their destinations and for companies to get their goods into and out of our region—which hurts our economy. The region must balance this inherent tension so freight traffic can serve as an engine of economic prosperity with minimal impact on local communities. We must overcome the financial and institutional barriers that hamper freight improvements—such as the challenge of coordinating multiple private carriers within a competitive industry—while working together to produce both public and private benefits.

The increased investment in our freight system called for in GO TO 2040 will improve economic competitiveness by reducing travel delays and pollution and by improving safety. The private sector will fund some improvements through the normal course of business, but public investment is needed to promote economic growth as well as residents' health, safety, and welfare.

Our National Role Requires a Regional Voice

By any measure, our region is the nation's hub of rail and truck freight. Six of the nation's seven major railroads have large terminals here, with nearly 500 freight trains operating daily. But even more freight in our region moves by trucks, which carry about 1.5 billion tons of freight annually compared to 631 million tons by rail.

Despite being the leading U.S. freight center, metropolitan Chicago has not had a strong voice or a champion to look out for the public interest. National discussions and decisions about the movement of goods have traditionally been dominated by port cities and states.

The movement of goods is a regional issue more than a state one, and it is broader and more complex than a simple accumulation of the 284 municipal and seven county governments' individual interests. CMAP and its partners need to address economic needs and freight efficiency while assuring that metropolitan Chicago remains a place where skilled workers want to live and where businesses want to grow.

COMPLETE

CREATE

The regional and national significance of CREATE (Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program) make it a high priority. This public-private partnership of the U.S. Department of Transportation, State of Illinois, City of Chicago, Metra, Amtrak, and the freight railroads should complete strategic upgrades of four critical corridors over the next two decades. Despite substantial progress with 10 projects completed to date, CREATE needs to prioritize the remaining 61 projects and aggressively secure funds to implement them.

IMPLEMENT

A National Vision

We need to resolve our freight pinch points, which are a problem that transcends geographical boundaries. To address these problems, the federal government needs to develop a vision, a plan, and funding to address freight movement across the nation. Once that has been developed, state, regional, and local actions will be needed to improve the efficiency of our freight system.

FULLY IMPLEMENT CREATE BY 2040 : ↑ **172,000** JOBS/YEAR ↑ **$7,000,000,000** PRODUCTION/YEAR

Source: Regional Economics Applications Laboratory

Regional Freight Movements by Mode

67%	30%	3%
TRUCK	RAIL	OTHER

IMPROVE

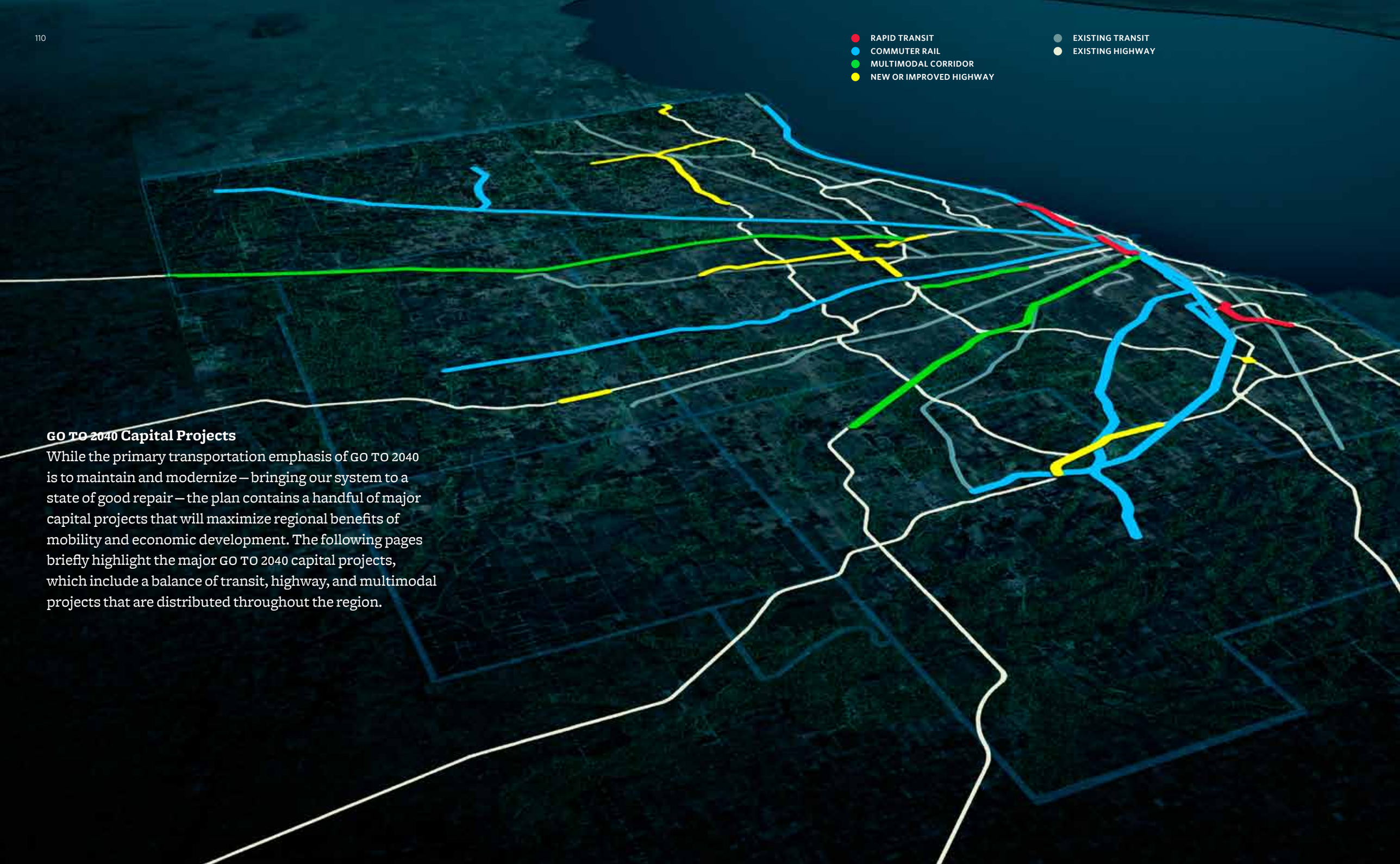
The Truck System

To reduce congestion, improve safety, reduce emissions, and make deliveries to local suppliers more efficient, the region should pursue truck transportation improvements. These should include dedicated and managed truckways funded through a congestion pricing revenue stream, as well as an analysis and update of truck routes and restrictions.

ESTABLISH

A Regional Freight Authority

The region should explore designating a self-financed Regional Freight Authority with a mandate to address freight issues. The Regional Freight Authority should have the ability to finance freight system capital improvements and address public policy challenges, including community issues like grade crossing delays, safety, and noise.



GO TO 2040 Capital Projects

While the primary transportation emphasis of GO TO 2040 is to maintain and modernize — bringing our system to a state of good repair — the plan contains a handful of major capital projects that will maximize regional benefits of mobility and economic development. The following pages briefly highlight the major GO TO 2040 capital projects, which include a balance of transit, highway, and multimodal projects that are distributed throughout the region.

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

Elgin O'Hare Expressway and West O'Hare Bypass
This project will improve access to areas west of O'Hare Airport and also to a proposed West O'Hare Terminal. It includes a western expressway bypass of O'Hare, an extension of the Elgin O'Hare Expressway from I-290/IL 53 to the western bypass and west terminal, and an additional lane in each direction on the existing Elgin O'Hare expressway. This project is needed to relieve congestion and improve accessibility throughout the O'Hare area, which is a major economic driver for the region.

I-294/I-57 Interchange
A full interchange will be added at the juncture of these two interstates, improving access to and from the south suburbs and improving north and south regional travel. Arterials that connect at the new interchange will also be improved.

West Loop Transportation Center (BELOW)
The West Loop Transportation Center is proposed to be built west of the Chicago River between the Eisenhower Expressway and Lake Street in Chicago. This large terminal will be an important new multimodal gateway to our region. While increasing capacity and improving operations for Chicago Union Station, the center will make it easier for residents and visitors to transfer seamlessly between commuter rail, rapid transit, buses, and intercity rail, including high-speed rail.

Central Lake County Corridor (ABOVE)
Illinois Route 53 will be extended to central Lake County, beyond where it currently ends at Lake-Cook Road. To ease congestion that has resulted from rapid development of central Lake County in recent decades, this project will improve access and mobility in the county and our region as a whole. GO TO 2040 calls for a 21st Century urban highway—this "modern boulevard" should have a smaller footprint to minimize potential negative impacts while protecting the natural environment and preserving the character of nearby communities.

CTA Red Line South Extension (BELOW)
The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Red Line will be extended south 5.5 miles to 130th Street, beyond where it currently ends at 95th Street. Currently the CTA's most heavily used line, the Red Line is now 22 miles long, and access to it by bus is especially difficult south of 95th Street—the station whose ridership is higher than any outside of downtown Chicago. The Red Line South Extension will streamline those connections, significantly reducing the number of bus-to-rail transfers. One key component is an intermodal terminal and major park-and-ride lot at 130th Street, with intermediate stations at 103rd, 111th, and 115th Streets. This project strongly supports GO TO 2040's emphasis on infill development, and a number of vacant and under-utilized lots are ripe for redevelopment near the new stations.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

To meet federal requirements intended to ensure "fiscal constraint," GO TO 2040 includes a transportation financial plan that details how much funding is reasonably expected for all transportation investments between now and 2040. Major capital projects that have been evaluated to meet significant regional needs—and for which sufficient funds are anticipated to be available—are included in the list of "Fiscally Constrained Projects." While their costs are substantial, they represent less than three percent of the region's projected $385 billion available for transportation through 2040, with 97 percent going to maintenance and modernization.

While fiscally constrained projects are the highest priority, projects on the unconstrained list also have important benefits. Some of these are not far enough along to have firm cost estimates or clear alignment with regional priorities. Others on the unconstrained list might benefit from innovative financing arrangements, which could reduce public costs and speed up implementation. In either case, a project may be reconsidered for inclusion on the fiscally constrained list upon availability of new details or changes in financing status.

Fiscally Constrained Projects

New Projects or Extensions
I-294/I-57 Interchange
Central Lake County Corridor (IL 53 NORTH AND IL 120)
Elgin O'Hare Expressway Improvements (INCLUDING WESTERN O'HARE BYPASS)
CTA South Red Line Extension
West Loop Transportation Center

Expressway Additions and Improvements
I-190 Access Improvements
I-80 Add Lanes (US 30 TO US 45)
I-88 Add Lanes
I-94 Add Lanes North

Managed Lanes and Multimodal Corridors
I-55 Managed Lanes
I-90 Managed Lanes
I-290 Multimodal Corridor

Transit Improvements
CTA North Red and Purple Line Improvements
Metra Rock Island Improvements
Metra SouthWest Service Improvements
Metra UP North Improvements
Metra UP Northwest Improvements and Extension
Metra UP West Improvements

Fiscally Unconstrained Projects

Central Area Transitway
CTA Blue Line West Extension
CTA Brown Line Extension
CTA Circle Line (PHASE II, SOUTH)
CTA Circle Line (PHASE III, NORTH)
CTA Orange Line Extension
CTA Yellow Line Enhancements and Extension
DuPage "J" Line
Elgin O'Hare Expressway Far West Extension
Elgin O'Hare Expressway West Extension
Express Airport Train Service
I-55 Add Lanes and Reconstruction
I-57 Add Lanes
I-80 Add/Managed Lanes
I-80 to I-55 Connector
IL 394
Illiana Expressway
Inner Circumferential Rail Service
McHenry-Lake Corridor
Metra BNSF Extension
Metra Heritage Corridor
Metra Electric Extension
Metra Milwaukee District North Extension
Metra Milwaukee District North Improvement
Metra Milwaukee District West Extension
Metra North Central Service Improvements
Metra Rock Island Extension
Metra SouthEast Service Corridor
Metra SouthWest Service Extension and Full Service
Metra STAR Line Corridor
Mid-City Transitway
O'Hare to Schaumburg Transit Service
Prairie Parkway
South Lakefront Corridor

When 8-year-old **JOHN HATCHER JR.** imagines the future, his first wish is for a clean world: "Then the sky can be blue, the grass can be green. There'd be no pollution, and people would care about each other. I'd really like a perfect world."

John thinks about the environment every day. "I'm a very curious guy," John explains. "I'm mad because where I live, they don't recycle. I wish they would—it would help the environment and help us keep the area clean."

John tries to make our world a better place by picking up trash that people throw on the ground. "I'll pick it up, even if it's a glass bottle. I'll recycle it. I will set a good example for other people," he says.

John likes to spend time outside, but the park near his home in the south suburbs isn't as welcoming as it should be. "I can't play at the park near my house because it's really bad, I can't even explain how bad it is. Kids there curse, it's not safe," he says.

"I love to ride my bike, I wear my helmet," John says. "And I love to get my exercise by walking." If the neighborhood had more sidewalks, it would be easier and safer for him to get around. For now, he has to bike along the curb and walk two or three miles to the next closest park.

John learned the power of community from his family. His mother, Peggie Jackson, quit her job when he was born with a condition that required medical therapy three times a week. She wanted to ensure him the opportunity to succeed despite his illness.

When John got a little older, preschools wouldn't admit him because he had to take quite a few medications. His mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother would read to him whenever possible. Now, John attends the gifted program at 21st Century Preparatory Center in Park Forest. He won a scholarship to attend the public school, where he just finished second grade and is already reading at a sixth-grade level.

"He's just blowing me away, that's why I have to be on top of my game," his mom Peggie says. "He beat all the odds. Where he came from and where he is now, it's unbelievable."

John plans to become a doctor someday. "The most important thing I can do is help people take care of each other," he says.

Designed to guide development and infrastructure decisions through mid-century and beyond, GO TO 2040 takes a forceful but nuanced approach to aligning the region's public policies and investments to achieve sustainable prosperity. CMAP is grateful to all who have contributed to GO TO 2040, our region's first comprehensive plan since Daniel Burnham's in 1909. Now that the plan's implementation has begun, your region needs you more than ever. CMAP is prepared to lead aggressively with the continuing help of many organizational and individual partners.

Now is the time for all stakeholders of the seven-county region to emphasize our common interests and look beyond our short-term concerns to strive toward the long-term vision articulated in the region's plan. Whether you have participated to date or are participating for the first time by reading this, we hope you continue to take advantage of opportunities presented by GO TO 2040 to weigh in on issues that matter to you and your community. The region's future depends on your active engagement.

Please visit www.cmap.illinois.gov/2040 for the full GO TO 2040 plan, related materials, and information about how to get involved. The full plan contains much more, including goals for performance measurement, detailed recommendations, targeted implementation steps, and best practices placed in context for implementers and other stakeholders.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
October 2010

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