



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Board  
**From:** Drew Williams-Clark  
**Date:** March 7, 2012  
**Re:** FLIP Program Update

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CMAP staff created the Future Leaders In Planning (FLIP) program with high school interns in 2008 as a means to involve youth around the region in the development of GO TO 2040. Four years later, over 100 high school students around the region have participated. The program has two objectives: teach high school students about regional planning issues and engage them in developing planning recommendations that have real impact. Each FLIP cohort brings about 30 participants together one Saturday per month from September through April. Early sessions focus on the educational objective with field trips and expert interviews. Later sessions engage groups of students in a final project to fulfill the recommendation objective. Every year, the FLIP program ends with a culminating presentation event for Board members, family and stakeholders.

Last year, FLIP participants worked with stakeholders of an unincorporated community in Will County to add value to a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant proposal. The community, known as Fairmont, has its own elementary school district, but lacks sidewalks and some basic services. It covers a relatively small amount of land, but many parents drive their students to school, because walking in the streets poses obvious safety risks. Will County Land Use Department submitted a proposal to pave a sidewalk along a major walking route south of the elementary school. FLIP students interviewed local leaders and youth, conducted research and made recommendations to improve the project's benefit to the community and natural environment. In January, IDOT funded the Fairmont SRTS proposal. Building off of that project, CMAP has developed a community plan with Fairmont as part of the Local Technical Assistance program. The plan is now being considered for approval by Will County.

This year, FLIP participants have been studying the ice removal practices of local governments across the region. We were able to visit ice removal facilities in McHenry County and interview experts in the field. CMAP was also able to partner with other organizations to provide a winterization workshop for residents of Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood that was co-facilitated

by FLIP participants and CMAP staff. At this point, students have broken up into groups that will create a video, a flyer, a video and a model with the objective of encouraging snow and ice removal best practices. Staff will notify the Board immediately when the date and location have been selected for the FLIP Final Presentation in May.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Informational

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