



# Community Planning Program



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

# Local Technical Assistance Program

## Application form: Community Planning program and Local Technical Assistance program

**DEADLINE:** Noon on Wednesday, June 26, 2013

This application form is online at [www.rtachicago.com/applications](http://www.rtachicago.com/applications). You may submit the form by email to [applications@rtachicago.com](mailto:applications@rtachicago.com).

Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

**1. Name of Applicant:**

City of North Chicago

**2. Main Contact for Application (please include name, phone number and email):**

Joseph Napolitano; (847) 596-8670; josnap@northchicago.org

**3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply):**

Local government

Multijurisdictional group\*  $\longrightarrow$  Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):

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Nongovernmental organization\*  $\longrightarrow$  Name of local government partner(s):

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\*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information. Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

#### 4. Project Type (please check any that apply):

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project. (This will help us determine whether your project is best handled by CMAP or RTA.)

- My project involves preparation of a plan.
- My project helps to implement a past plan.
- My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
- My project has direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
- My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

#### 5. Project Location:

Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

City of North Chicago

#### 6. Project Description:

**Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed.** If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. CMAP and RTA staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

(Please include any additional information that is relevant, preferably by providing links to online documents.)

The City of North Chicago is seeking assistance to update our Official Comprehensive Plan. The current Plan was last updated in 1996 (<http://www.northchicago.org/vertical/sites/%7B892BE042-FCA9-4ADD-99D5-E4FC8D1104BD%7D/uploads/%7B60C360B6-7C2C-4976-8F7F-518650EDFBB9%7D.PDF>) and does not accurately reflect the City's vision for future growth.

North Chicago, population 32,574, is located 33 miles north of downtown Chicago on the shores of Lake Michigan. From its incorporation in 1909, North Chicago has had a strong manufacturing base. Firms such as Abbott Labs, Goodyear Tire, American Motors and Ocean Spray opened facilities in North Chicago. When this sector started its decline in the late 1960's and 1970's, the City started losing population and the community began to decline. Long-time residents that owned homes moved out and homes were converted to rental properties. Little reinvestment was made and neighborhoods declined further. Household incomes fell and economic development in the community lagged. Retail uses relocated to nearby communities and North Chicago still struggles to attract new retail uses such as a grocery store and pharmacy to serve its residents. The City's median income (\$44,904 source 2010 US Census) is well below the state average (\$53,966 source 2010 US Census). 19.5% of North Chicago residents live in poverty and unemployment remains in double digits (19.1% source USBLS, Jan. 2013). North Chicago is home to Naval Station Great Lakes, the world's only training center for US Navy recruits, and the James A. Lovell Federal Medical Center. However, this federal land is not taxable, which makes the tax burden on private residents among the highest in Illinois.

Updating the Plan will provide City leaders with a blueprint to reverse this decline and encourage sensible growth over the next 20+ years. We envision a more user-friendly document that is easy to read and understand as well as a flexible document that includes options to address changing conditions. Overall, it is anticipated that the updated Plan will provide strategies and policies to:

- Attract new development in appropriate locations to enhance the tax base and reduce unemployment.
  - 1) Evaluate existing assets (Naval Station Great Lakes, Abbott Labs/Abbvie, Lovell Federal Health Care Center, abundant municipal water) and identify employment opportunities that compliment these assets;
  - 2) Identify opportunities for new, clean industrial uses.
  - 3) Provide North Chicago residents with additional opportunities to obtain retail goods and services without leaving the community thereby keeping tax dollars local.
- Encourage homeownership. According to the 2010 Census, 62.9% of housing units in North Chicago were renter occupied. In comparison, 22.2% of housing units in Lake County, IL were renter occupied and 32.7% of housing units in the state of Illinois were renter occupied. Lack of homeownership is a cause of neighborhood instability; frequent turnover of tenants, absentee owners and a general lack of caring by tenants make it difficult for neighborhoods to stabilize and be sustainable. The Plan should help to encourage homeownership and stabilization of neighborhoods.
- Identify standards that can be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance to address current development practices. The City's Zoning Ordinance is also in need of a comprehensive update. The Comprehensive Plan should include suggestions to modernize that document, make it more responsive to current development practices, and assist in implementing the provisions of the Plan.
- Encourage sustainability for new and existing development and infrastructure. The Plan should provide measures that the City can adopt to encourage the use of sustainable materials and practices in all new development. Aging infrastructure must be evaluated to ensure replacement is completed in the most economically sustainable method. Provisions for Complete Streets should be incorporated as an available option for new and replacement streets.
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment. The Plan should help the City develop strategies to leverage its resources by coordinating and collaborating with adjacent municipalities, the US Navy and Veterans Administration so that services are not duplicated and resources are used efficiently.
- Enhance mobility options and provide increased connectivity so that residents will have better access to employment, shopping and open space. North Chicago is well served by various transportation modes include the auto, bicycle, train and bus. Existing mobility routes and new/proposed land uses should be reviewed to provide connectivity and ease of use.
- Be consistent with the themes identified in the GoTo2040 Plan. The Plan should be consistent with the themes identified in the GoTo2040 Plan. The recommended actions in that plan regarding sustainability, use of resources in an efficient manner and increased mobility should be incorporated, where practical.

The Plan must also incorporate, where appropriate, existing documents created since the Plan was last updated, including the Downtown Transportation Plan, Transit Oriented Development Plan, and the Biotechnology-Medical District.

Updating the Plan is a necessary step in the City's efforts to bring forth positive change and improve the quality of life for North Chicago residents, businesses and visitors.