



MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Coordinating Committee

Date: January 2, 2008

From: Bob Dean, Principal Regional Planner

Re: Partnership with Chicago Community Trust on the Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Chicago Community Trust (CCT) has expressed interest in partnering with CMAP in the development of the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Staff from both organizations have been working for several months to determine the details of this potential relationship, and are convinced that a partnership would have strong mutual benefits. This partnership will be considered by the CCT Board on January 29, and if approved, will be brought to the CMAP Board at its February 13 meeting.

CCT is a philanthropic organization that provides resources for programs in the general areas of arts and culture, basic human needs, community development, education, and health. The Chicago Matters series is funded by CCT, as are the activities of Burnham Plan Centennial Committee. More information on CCT is available on their website, www.cct.org.

The proposed partnership will improve CMAP's approach to the technical and public engagement work involved in the Regional Comprehensive Plan, described in more detail below. Some of CCT's contributions to this effort will be through their internal resources. However, it is expected that CMAP will receive grant funding from CCT to support several of these activities.

Technical work

As part of the development of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, the scenario evaluation process will use indicators to measure progress toward the region's vision for its future. Making these indicators available online will create more public knowledge and interest in long-range planning and its impacts.

The development of indicators will be greatly strengthened by a partnership with CCT. Through this partnership, CCT is expected to support a staff person at CMAP to develop this website and lead the development of indicators, and CCT is also expected to help fund external contracts for indicators measurement. CMAP will also devote internal resources and external contracts to the development of indicators, so CCT's contributions are strengthening the treatment of indicators in the planning process, rather than creating new activities. In particular, indicators related to education, public health, and other areas will be considerably improved by CCT's involvement. At the January 9 Planning Coordinating Committee meeting, staff will show the results of a similar indicators project in Boston, www.bostonindicators.org.

CCT's expertise in education, public health, and other areas that are outside of CMAP's current expertise will allow the Regional Comprehensive Plan to address these areas more effectively beyond the development of indicators. Possibilities for additional collaboration are still under discussion, but more details will be provided at the January 9 meeting.

Public engagement

CCT's connections with the media, community-based organizations, and the philanthropic community will support public engagement efforts related to the plan. The scope of CCT's involvement in public engagement in the Regional Comprehensive Plan process is still under development, but several activities listed below are expected to occur.

The Chicago Matters series, a public affairs series that is carried through a number of media outlets, is expected to focus on the topic of sustainability in 2008 and on regional planning in 2009, with coordination with CMAP's planning process in both years. Also, the Burnham Plan Centennial Committee, which is funded through CCT, will link its activities with the Regional Comprehensive Plan, particularly during 2009. In addition, CCT's existing relationships with community groups throughout the region can be used to gather their input on the long-range planning process. Other opportunities for collaboration between our organizations will be identified as the process moves forward.

Other involvement

Beyond CCT's contributions to technical work and public engagement, their overall involvement will be helpful to the development of the Regional Comprehensive Plan. Past planning efforts have not actively involved philanthropic organizations, so this is an opportunity to involve a new group of stakeholders in the planning process. In addition, organizations like CCT have the ability to assist in the implementation of the plan to a high degree through grantmaking or other means. Therefore, CMAP staff believes that a partnership with CCT would be a major asset in the development of an innovative but practical plan for the region's future.

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion and comments.