

DRAFT Vision Themes

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Introduction

Metropolitan Chicago needs a long-term vision for the future to define the desired standards of prosperity and livability for its residents. With projections of an additional 2 million residents and over 1.2 million new jobs by 2040, communities across the seven-county region of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will must plan more collaboratively and comprehensively. Anticipated growth can become real progress if all stakeholders -- including local governments, public agencies, developers, businesses, and especially residents -- work together to define and implement a regional vision of sustainable prosperity.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is developing the region's first truly comprehensive plan for land use and transportation. To be published in 2010, the plan will articulate a regional vision based on a number of themes that have been identified by CMAP's working committees. These themes are:

- 1. Quality of life**
- 2. Sustainability**
- 3. Civic involvement**
- 4. Coordinated planning and government**
- 5. Economic competitiveness**
- 6. Education and workforce development**
- 7. Energy and resource conservation**
- 8. Environmental health**
- 9. Equity**
- 10. Future population needs**
- 11. Housing**
- 12. Public health and safety**
- 13. Reinvestment and infill**
- 14. Transportation accessibility and efficiency**
- 15. Water supply**

Two themes -- Quality of Life and Sustainability -- are broader than the rest. Each of the other 13 themes contributes to or is related to Quality of Life and Sustainability. Therefore, these two overarching themes will be given special consideration during today's visioning event.

This participatory meeting will yield the preliminary vision statement that, from Fall 2007 to Spring 2008, CMAP will use to engage stakeholders across the region. That public involvement process will yield the broader input and buy-in that will later be critical to the plan's successful implementation.

Quality of life

- *In 2040, residents of the region will enjoy a quality of life that is among the highest of any metropolitan region worldwide.*
- *The region will consist of livable communities with recreation opportunities, transportation choices, housing options, and access to employment, education, and other regional assets.*
- *Communities will have distinct identities, built on their histories, aesthetic preferences, and the unique character of their residents and businesses.*
- *Residents of the region will be safe, healthy, educated, and involved in their communities, regardless of age, income, ethnicity, or disability status.*

Sustainability

- *In 2040, the region's systems and activities will be sustainable in terms of the environment, economy, and equity, through a global approach that considers the needs of future generations.*
- *The region will actively mitigate the effects of its activities on climate change and will be prepared to adapt to the likely effects of climate change.*
- *The region's leaders – today's youth – will consider the externalities of their decisions on larger systems, including long-term economic competitiveness and regional equity.*

Civic involvement

- In 2040, residents from across the region will be heard on issues that matter to them most.
- The region will have civic involvement from people of all ethnicities, cultures, and ages, and their contributions must be respected and valued.

- Residents will have an opportunity to voice their opinions about regional issues -- including health care, public safety, environmental justice, land use, and transportation planning -- that contribute to livable communities.
- Residents of the region will be educated, have access to information, and have a strong sense of civic pride in their communities and region.

Coordinated planning and government

- In 2040, local officials and planners from across the region will together address inter-related challenges that cut across jurisdictions and influence quality of life.
- Governments will share resources to promote efficiency and reduce destructive competition, balancing the need for economic development, a healthy environment, and equity across the region.
- Planning for transportation and other infrastructure will go hand-in-hand with land development and preservation, also recognizing links between health care, public safety, education, and social services.
- On major inter-regional issues, leaders will coordinate with their counterparts in Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, and other neighboring states.

Economic competitiveness

- In 2040, the region's economy will enjoy a global status that ensures job opportunities at competitive wages across northeastern Illinois.
- Economic benefits will be created through planning that makes efficient use of energy and other resources and that reinvests in existing communities to enhance infrastructure, environment, public health, social equity, and cultural amenities.
- Traffic congestion will be addressed, and the region's status as America's intermodal and freight hub must be enhanced.
- Investments in education will prepare the region's workforce to fill the jobs of tomorrow.

Education and workforce development

- In 2040, schools will have adequate funding, with accountability in terms of school performance, fiscal efficiency, and equity across the region.
- Workforce development programs will be a central component of economic prosperity and quality of life.
- Early childhood learning opportunities will help prepare young people across the region for the challenges of their school years.
- The region's dependence on property taxes to fund education will be reduced by exploring other funding options.

Energy and resource conservation

- In 2040, the region will have effective local and regional stewardship for its extensive natural resources that require conservation.
- Energy consumption will be reduced by mixed-use developments that promote efficient transportation, with a balance of jobs and housing so residents may live nearer to where they work.
- Farmland will be viewed as an important regional resource, and its protection will be linked to conservation of the region's soil and water resources.
- Effective regional and local water-supply planning will address shortages that are projected for many parts of the region.

Environmental health

- In 2040, metropolitan Chicago will build upon important steps taken in recent decades to protect the environment, including air quality, biodiversity and natural communities, native species, water quality and supply, stormwater management, and overall ecological function.
- Open space will be preserved -- especially along sensitive waterways -- to create green networks that reduce habitat fragmentation and enhance regional identity.
- Lake Michigan will be protected as an irreplaceable natural resource for health, economic prosperity, and recreation.

- Abundant transportation options, infill, and redevelopment will reduce the pressure to develop in environmentally sensitive areas, enhancing public health by creating communities that allow transportation choices.

Equity

- In 2040, the region as a whole will benefit the most by pursuing equitable objectives that benefit each part of the region in terms of environmental justice, public safety, education, housing, taxation, and overall livability.
- Policy and investment decisions will reflect careful consideration of their impacts on the region's diverse residents.
- All residents must have equitable access to economic opportunity, infrastructure, natural resources, and other public assets.
- Intergovernmental cooperation through collaborative planning will be key to achieving equity.

Future population needs

- In 2040, needs of the region's population will be met through effective, collaborative planning at all levels of the public and private sectors.
- Today's planning for land use, transportation, housing, and other systems will carefully consider the differing needs of future residents.
- True sustainability will be achieved by addressing the impacts of policy and investment decisions on the needs of residents and businesses in 2040.

Housing

- In 2040, residents of the region will have access to decent, safe, and affordable housing across the region to assure equal access to opportunities.
- The region's communities and institutions will recognize that housing is a basic human need, and the region will be balanced geographically in its housing supply.
- Today's proactive planning for housing needs will lead to greater economic viability in 2040.

- The region's approach to housing will respond to national trends and market conditions and will feature progressive, inclusionary policies to mitigate detrimental regulatory barriers.

Public health and safety

- In 2040, residents will choose healthy lifestyles that benefit from the availability of open space, transportation and recreation options, livable communities, and fresh locally grown food.
- To protect public health and economic competitiveness, equitable access to health care will be a priority for decision makers in the public and business sectors.
- In 2040, the region and its residents will be served by effective systems for managing emergencies related to public health, security, transportation, stormwater, and natural disasters.
- Residents will live and work in communities that are safer due to effective law enforcement built on mutual trust and intergovernmental cooperation.

Reinvestment and infill

- In 2040, the region will pursue a strategy of reinvestment and infill to maximize the benefit of existing infrastructure and contribute to a healthy environment.
- Public and private investment in businesses, homes, physical infrastructure, and people will contribute to community prosperity and vitality across the region.
- "Fix it first" policies will maintain and enhance the current multi-modal transportation system, leading to fiscally efficient investment decisions.
- Intergovernmental cooperation will structure taxation in the region to promote reinvestment and equitable access to resources among communities.

Transportation accessibility and efficiency

- In 2040, the region's transportation system will be accessible and efficient to ensure quality of life and economic competitiveness.

- On-going and ample investment in transportation infrastructure will give residents a range of transportation choices that are multi-modal, integrated, and seamless.
- The transportation system will allow efficient movement of freight, with logistical support provided by intermodal centers that ease local connections to national and international markets.
- Congestion will be reduced to a level that permits sustainable economic activity and a high quality of life.

Water supply

- In 2040, water-supply planning and stewardship will be a high priority for governments, residents, and stakeholder groups across the region.
- Water demand and supply will be managed carefully to ensure equitable availability through drought and nondrought conditions alike.
- The quality of ground- and surface water used for drinking supplies will be protected, and withdrawal from each water source will be managed to protect long-term productive yields.
- Water availability will be sufficient to sustain aquatic ecosystems.