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# Public Participation Plan

Draft 2007



The CMAP Board's vision is to provide the framework that will help our region connect its land use to the transportation systems, preserve its environment, and sustain its economic prosperity.

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### 1.3 New Standards in SAFETEA-LU

Prior to the 2005 passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), CATS followed public participation guidelines contained in earlier iterations of federal transportation law. SAFETEA-LU expanded those guidelines to include the following:

- The definition of “interested parties” to be engaged in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning has been expanded.
- A Participation Plan (required for MPOs)
  - Shall be developed in consultation with “interested parties.”
  - Publish or make available for public view transportation plans, State Transportation Improvement Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs.
  - Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible times and locations.
- Make information available in electronically accessible formats (e.g., the Internet) to the maximum extent practicable.
- Employ visualization techniques to depict statewide and metropolitan transportation plans.

CMAQ intends to use the standards set forth in SAFETEA-LU as the basis for its public participation program, expanding on them where necessary to conform to the regulations of other agencies and to better meet the needs of the residents of northeastern Illinois.

The full wording of the federal regulations can be found in Appendix A.





## 2.2 The MPO and CMAP

Both CATS and NIPC had policy boards made up of local elected officials, state and federal officials, implementing agencies, and impacted interest groups. NIPC was created by state statute, while CATS was created by an intergovernmental agreement between local elected officials and the governor.

In 1974, the governor and local elected officials designated the CATS Policy Committee as the MPO for the northeastern Illinois region, which now includes all of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties, and a portion of Grundy County (Section 2.5).

A shared process between the MPO and the CMAP Board will allow for transportation decision-making that is accomplished through a comprehensive approach that is consistent with the region’s vision. Additionally, each of the two boards has representation on the other board to ensure communication exists at the policy level. This relationship was formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix E) between CMAP and the MPO.

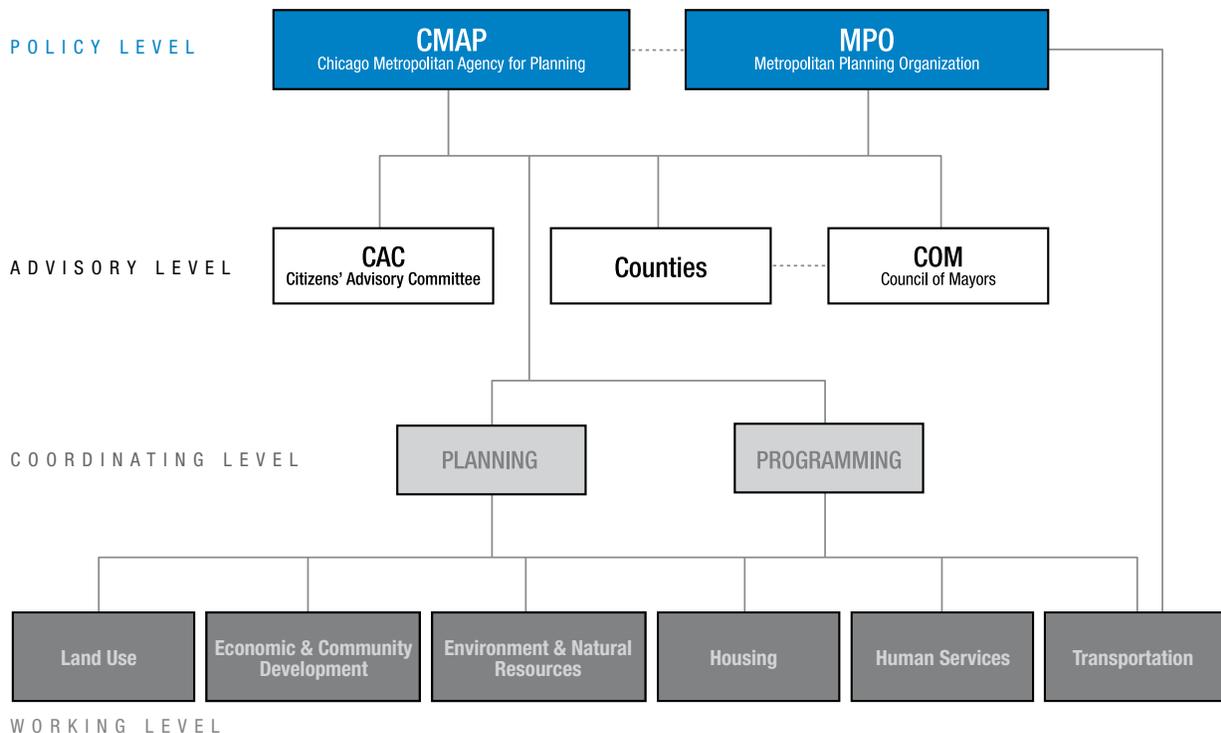
MPO members (Section 2.6) represent 21 organizations: the Illinois Department of Transportation; the Regional Transportation Authority; the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; the Council of Mayors; the City of Chicago Department of Transportation; county governments (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will); the Chicago Transit Authority; Class 1 Railroads; Metra; Pace; the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority; mass transit districts; private transportation providers; the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. The MPO meets four times a year.

The MPO receives direct input from the Council of Mayors Executive Committee, the Transportation Committee, other CMAP committees and the staff.

The Council of Mayors was originally formed as a liaison between CATS and local elected officials throughout the region. The Council is an important transportation decision-making body that, in addition to prioritizing projects for federal transportation funds, plays a key role in ensuring that the long-range plan and multi-year program reflect the needs and concerns of citizens throughout the region.

The Council of Mayors encompasses 280 municipalities organized into 11 suburban regional councils plus the City of Chicago. The subregional councils appoint two mayors each to serve on the Council of Mayors Executive Committee, whose chairman serves on the MPO.

## 2.3 CMAP's Organization



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## 2.4 Our Region

The Chicago region faces many challenges as the 21st Century unfolds. Despite having one of the world's most advanced transportation systems, the metropolitan area experiences the third worst traffic delays in the nation, with congestion projected to worsen as the region adds nearly 2 million people and 1.2 million jobs over the next 25 years. Each year, residents spend 253 million hours and 151 million gallons of fuel sitting in traffic jams, at a cost to the region of \$4 billion.

Chicago's economy benefits from having the world's third busiest "port" — handling 37,500 freight cars per day and moving one-third of the rail freight in the country — but it is in danger of becoming a bottleneck. The U.S. Department of Transportation has estimated that freight movements will double nationally over the next 20 years, further exacerbating the problem.

Northeastern Illinois possesses the nation's second largest public transit system, but resources are lagging as costs increase for both capital improvements and operations. While over \$60 billion is expected to be available to maintain and improve the region's transportation system over the next 25 years, over three-quarters of those dollars are needed just to maintain the existing system.

The local economy has also felt the effects — positive and otherwise — of soaring home values. Housing prices for owner-occupied units increased 35 percent in the Chicago area from 2000 to 2004. But during the same period, household incomes increased only 5 percent and the percentage of households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing increased from 29 percent to 38 percent. One result is that people are living farther from where they work, with ever-increasing transportation costs. The shortage of affordable housing near major employment centers contributes to traffic congestion, among other negative economic and social effects.

The region's diversity is an asset, with constantly shifting demographics that merit careful, coordinated analysis. Northeastern Illinois has an aging population, with persons 65 years or older projected to nearly double by 2030. Between 1990 and 2000, new foreign-born residents accounted for 65 percent of the region's total population growth, and that pace continues to accelerate. In 2030, the Latino population will constitute one-third of the region's residents. The U.S. Census "non-Latino white/other" group, which includes the Asian population, is expected to constitute less than half the region's people by 2030.

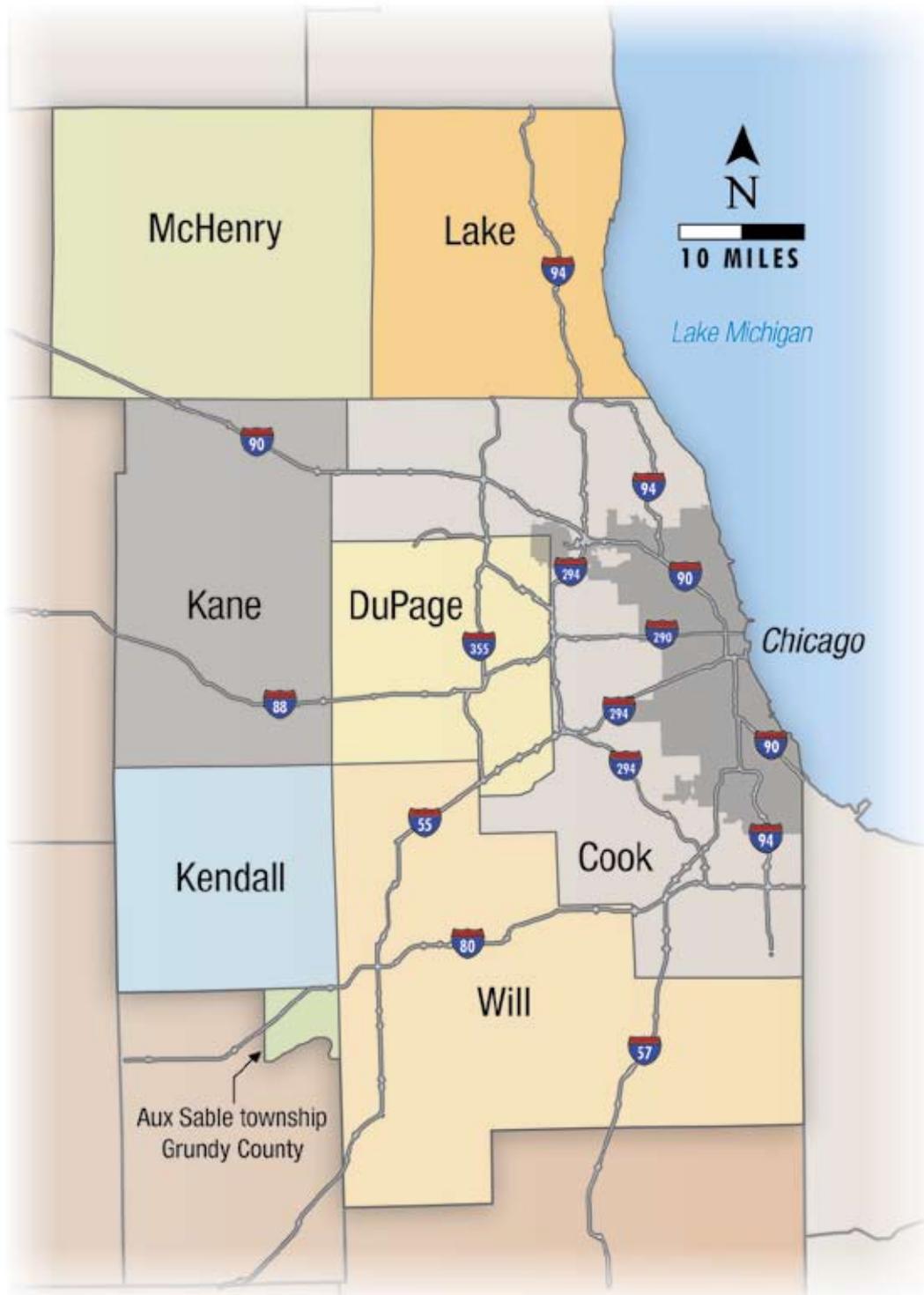
Natural resources are abundant but under increasing pressure. According to Chicago Wilderness, the rapid development of land for urban uses is the primary threat to the region's unprotected natural lands, and in some cases it is even causing serious degradation of protected lands. Four of the seven counties still have significant percentages of their land in agricultural production: Kane County (60 percent), Kendall (86 percent), McHenry (61 percent), and Will (50 percent). In 2002, the market value of agricultural products from these four counties was well over \$300 million. But increasing development threatens prime farmland and our region's role as a world leader in agricultural production.

The region's eastern border is Lake Michigan, one of the world's largest fresh-water resources, serving the majority of the region's water needs. However, the 2030 population forecasts indicate as many as 23 townships may suffer water deficits of varying severity over the next 25 years; recognition of this growing problem helped prompt a statewide water supply study that was announced in Spring 2006.

As a major center of the global economy, metropolitan Chicago has strengths in technology, freight, manufacturing and tourism. The region is home to headquarters of 30 Fortune 500 companies and 12 Fortune Global 500 companies. According to World Business Chicago, the region features 98 corporate headquarters, second nationally to New York. Twenty-five percent of the largest 100 employers in the region are in electronics, computers or telecommunications. In 2002, Chicago welcomed 32 million visitors who spent an estimated \$8.5 billion. Yet many business leaders recognize the need for coordination of economic development efforts at the regional level to keep northeastern Illinois globally competitive. More than ever, as communities compete to attract investment in this new economic environment, urban and suburban communities must be on the same team because their futures and fortunes are intertwined.

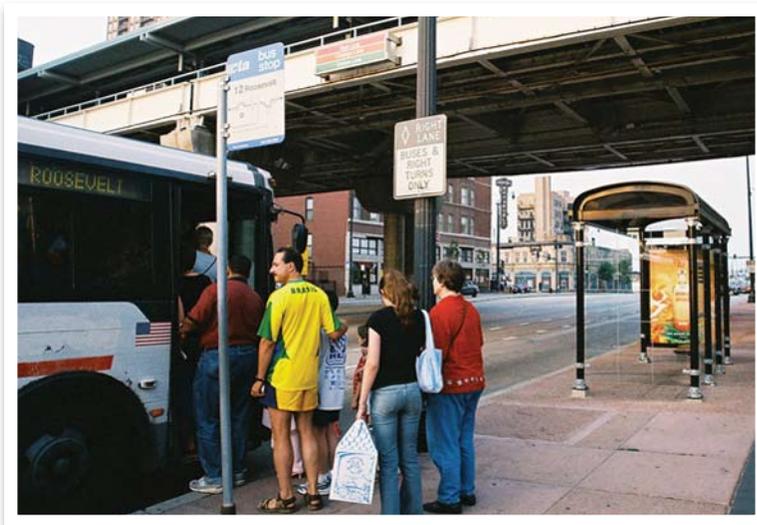
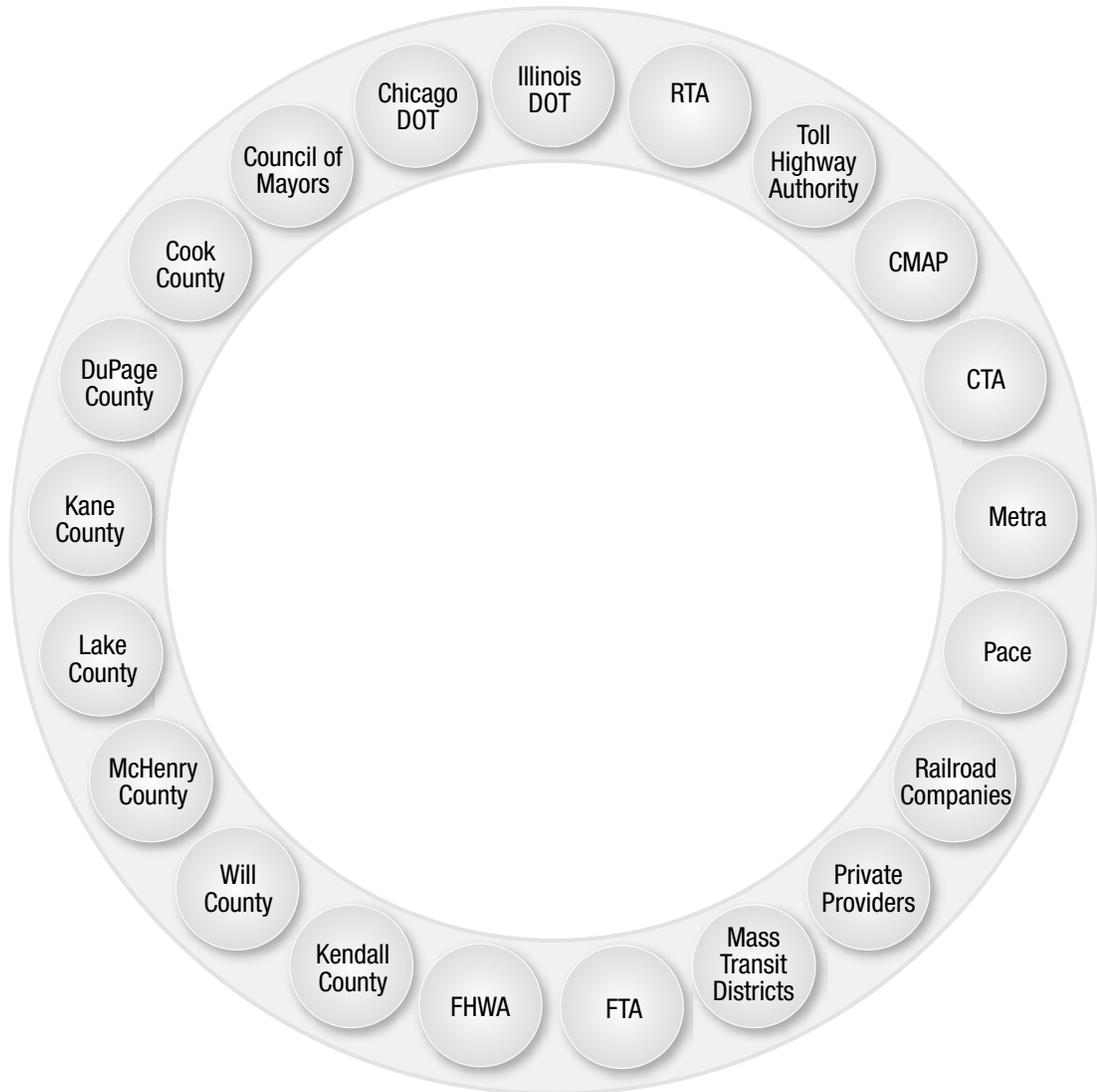
The region is now at a crossroads, as continued growth is clearly ahead. Yet to be determined is whether that growth will constitute progress rather than an erosion of residents' quality of life. Together, through collaborative planning, decision-makers must shape these trends regionally instead of passively letting them shape our individual communities. Nor are these challenges confined to the geographic boundaries of the seven counties that comprise CMAP; in fact, they impact the entire state of Illinois and cross state boundaries.

## 2.5 The CMAP Planning Area



*The CMAP and MPO planning areas both encompass the seven counties in northeastern Illinois: Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will. The MPO area also includes Aux Sable Township in Grundy County which, as a result of the last census, is part of the federally-designated urbanized area.*

## 2.6 MPO Members





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### 3.3 Public Involvement Goals

CMAP has established a set of goals around three areas of Public Involvement:

**outreach** — the task of identifying participants across multiple demographic sectors;

**engaging** — the task of informing, educating, listening and sharing in the planning process;

**sustaining** — maintaining the relationships with residents to keep them interested in participating.

Following are CMAP's goals and objectives for effective public involvement:

#### 3.3A Outreach

**Goal 1:** Design and execute outreach activities to facilitate public involvement.

**Objective:** Facilitate effective public involvement processes through early notice to stakeholders of upcoming planning cycles, providing for adequate time and resources for outreach activities and evaluation of those activities.

**Goal 1:** Develop outreach strategies to identify the interested and affected public.

**Objective:** Increase the number and diversity of people involved in the planning process both regionally and locally by identifying members of the public who have expressed an interest in or may be affected by upcoming activities.

#### 3.3B Engagement

**Goal 1:** Provide information for the public.

**Objective:** Provide the public access to accurate, understandable, pertinent and timely policy, program and technical information to facilitate effective involvement in CMAP decision-making processes.

**Goal 2:** Provide venues and tools to engage the public in planning dialogue.

**Objective:** Assist the public in understanding the reasons for CMAP actions so the public can provide meaningful comments through the broadest range of formats.

**Goal 3:** Design and develop materials to increase the public's understanding of regional and local planning.

**Objective:** Consider whether CMAP should provide information in languages other than English to reach the affected public or interested parties.

#### 3.3C Sustainability

**Goal 1:** Review and use input and provide feedback to the public

**Objective:** Consistently earn and retain the public's trust and credibility for CMAP's actions and consultation processes by evaluating and assimilating public viewpoints and preferences into final decisions, where appropriate and possible, and by communicating to the public the decisions made and how the public input affected those decisions.

**Goal 2:** Evaluate public involvement activities.

**Objective:** Evaluate the effectiveness of this Public Participation Plan and of all CMAP public involvement activities.

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### 3.4 Public Involvement Process and Methods

To achieve the aforementioned goals, CMAP has established the following strategies and initiatives to engage the public.

#### 3.4A Outreach

Building on the public participation efforts of CATS and NIPC, CMAP already has in place several specific outreach programs for the northeastern Illinois region. These programs allow CMAP to reach the public through elected officials, community leaders, civic and faith-based groups and other organizations to which they may belong. In-place programs include:

##### **CMAP Board and Committees**

CMAP Committees make certain that public participation is considered at the policy, advisory, coordinating, working and staff levels.

##### **Elected Officials Initiative**

Includes municipal organizations, local and county planning commissions, councils of government and county boards.

##### **Planning Professionals Initiative**

Collaborates with public and private sector planning professionals across all disciplines (housing, transportation, economic development, etc.).

##### **Civic Initiative**

Continues ongoing contact with community leaders and residents who have been participating in meetings across the seven counties.

##### **Community Initiative**

Collaborates with organizations to invite participation from groups and communities of interest and identify those who are traditionally uninvolved or under-involved in the planning process.

##### **Youth Initiative**

Collaborates with schools and youth-service organizations to increase the current participation and develop ongoing networks involving youth in planning.

##### **Online Web Initiative ▶**

Developing an interactive web environment to reach out to the residents of northeastern Illinois and engage them in the CMAP planning process. The web initiative allows and encourages participation in online surveys and other forms of interactive dialogues and responses.

##### **Special Groups Initiative**

Reaches out to professional, educational or other groups that have expressed interest in participating in regional planning.





### 3.4C Sustainability

CMAP strives to continually inform, educate and involve the public in the planning process. In measuring our work, CMAP also intends to continually evaluate what we have done and share those evaluations with the public.

#### Why CMAP measures

To ensure residents' concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how the public influenced the decision.

#### What CMAP measures

The number of meetings conducted, demographics of attendees, media coverage, the type and quantity of materials presented, translation of materials, website hits, the number of public comments, how those comments changed the plans, how public concerns and preferences were addressed and whether the public understood the information.

#### When CMAP measures

Following every public outreach event, at the end of every planning cycle, at the end of each calendar quarter.

#### Feedback CMAP provides

Meeting reports, public comment and response reports, analyses on the impact of public response and an Internet-based public comment database.



## Chapter IV: Conclusion

Northeastern Illinois is a highly diverse region featuring large urban, suburban, ex-urban and rural areas, numerous socio-economic layers and a multitude of language and ethnic minorities. While diversity gives the region its unique flavor, the interests of the various publics are often competing. CMAP's job is to engage those competing interests in a dialog that results in comprehensive plans that promote the overall well-being of the entire region.

CMAP is committed to a public participation process that involves residents in every step of the planning process — from concept to final construction. Along the way, CMAP will provide the information the public needs to make enlightened decisions, afford opportunities for the public to evaluate and respond to that information, and take the public's response into consideration before finalizing any plans.

There are opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process. This plan is meant to articulate how those opportunities can be facilitated.





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