



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

**FINAL DRAFT** Report by the Board of CMAP

for submittal to Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois General Assembly

233 South Wacker Drive  
Suite 800, Sears Tower  
Chicago, IL 60606

312-454-0400 (voice)  
312-454-0411 (fax)  
[www.chicagoareaplanning.org](http://www.chicagoareaplanning.org) (web)  
[info@chicagoareaplanning.org](mailto:info@chicagoareaplanning.org) (e-mail)

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Nigel Telman, Partner, Sidley Austin Brown & Wood law firm

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## **Agency Representatives (non-voting members)**

Ed Paesel, Executive Director, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (NIPC)  
Stephen Schlickman, Executive Director, Regional Transportation Authority (CATS)

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# 1. Significant Challenges in Metropolitan Chicago

The Chicago region faces many challenges as the 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Residents spend 253 million hours and 151 million gallons of fuel sitting in traffic jams, at a cost to the region of \$4 billion annually. Chicago's economy benefits from having the world's third busiest rail hub -- 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 twenty 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

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\*Data cited in Section 1 are from the Texas Transportation Institute (paragraph 1), the U.S. Department of Transportation (paragraph 1, only as noted), the Chicago Area Transportation Study (paragraph 2), the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (paragraphs 1, 3, and 4), the Illinois Department of Agriculture (paragraph 5), Chicago Wilderness (paragraph 5, only as noted), and World Business Chicago (paragraph 6).

(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.

To address these and other regional challenges, in Spring 2005 local government, business, and community leaders recommended to the Governor and the General Assembly the creation of a new public agency to coordinate comprehensive planning in northeastern Illinois. The General Assembly unanimously approved the Regional Planning Act (House Bill 3121), which Governor Blagojevich signed into law in August 2005. This legislation created the Regional Planning Board -- now known as the Board of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) -- and stated that "a streamlined consolidated planning agency is necessary in order to plan for the most effective public and private investments in the northeastern Illinois region and to better integrate plans for land use and transportation." The Board began meeting in October 2005 and has made substantial progress toward consolidating within CMAP the two agencies that had, respectively, been responsible for planning of transportation and land use: The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC).

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.

With comprehensive and coordinated planning as outlined in the report, CMAP will address the region's most significant challenges. To accomplish this, CMAP must have a

stable, dedicated source of funding, which will be part of a comprehensive legislative package that we and our partners will prepare for consideration in the General Assembly's 2007 session.

## **2. CMAP's Regional Vision**

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. The agency must be responsive to the region's residents, working cooperatively with municipalities and counties that maintain authority for local land-use decisions.

CMAP is integrating specialized expertise in a number of areas -- research and analysis, transportation, land use, environment and natural resources, housing, economic and community development, and human services -- to preserve and enhance quality of life for current and future generations. To accomplish this, CMAP will:

- Develop a comprehensive framework for the region's future through long-range regional plans and strategies.
- Provide high-quality information and analysis through coordinated technical assistance to facilitate regional decision making.
- Build consensus to identify and advocate for regional priorities.

CMAP will be an agent for fundamentally changing the way planning occurs in Illinois. Taking a new integrated and collaborative approach to regional planning and decision making will create a more comprehensive framework, with more focused implementation at the local level. Working with our partners and using new tools, CMAP will improve its capacity to understand and communicate the significant impacts that land-use and transportation decisions have on each other and on housing, economic and community development, and natural resources. Only CMAP is positioned to provide the leadership that will frame this decision making with a comprehensive, systematic approach.

CMAP cannot achieve this vision alone, nor can we succeed with a top-down approach. Our agency will work to strengthen communication, cooperation, and partnerships to make the vision a reality. We will not duplicate what is already done effectively by others in the region, including work of local, county, state, and federal governments; the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus; the councils of government; advocacy organizations such as the Metropolitan Planning Council, Chicago Metropolis 2020, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, the Openlands Project, and Chicago Wilderness; business groups; and many other partners. To ensure that northeastern Illinois will remain a world-class place to live, work, and play, CMAP will work with these groups and others to address the real issues that face our communities.

As a region, we need to ensure an adequate and safe water supply that will allow the region to meet its growth projections. We need to ensure housing and transportation options that offer real alternatives to our residents as they decide where they want to live and work. We need to create an economic climate that emphasizes the significant assets that are unique to

northeastern Illinois. We must protect our natural resources of global and national significance and continue to preserve open space and recreation opportunities for future generations. And we must build communities that are sustainable, emphasizing their unique and diverse character.

To help accomplish these complex and inter-related goals, CMAP needs to actively engage its partners and the general public in a new planning process that focuses on measurable results. Recognizing that metropolitan Chicago's prosperity depends on many forces -- including decisions by local governments and the private sector regarding land use, transportation investments, water and environmental issues -- CMAP needs above all to be relevant to decision makers in those areas, convening policy discussions and influencing them to think beyond traditional boundaries or parochial interests. CMAP will provide alternative ways for decision makers to look at the impacts of their choices on neighboring communities and on the region as a whole, supporting these efforts with a sustained program to measure and report on progress toward our goals.

For CMAP to be relevant in the region, we must return to the roots of our merged agencies, CATS and NIPC. The new organization needs to provide information, analysis, and research about key planning issues. These were CATS and NIPC strengths for many decades, though sometimes emphasis shifted away from the core tasks of providing high-quality information and analysis to help leaders make good decisions.

CMAP will also create a comprehensive plan, as required by the Regional Planning Act, to articulate a vision for the region's future and the strategies necessary to realize that vision. It is vitally important to fully integrate this work by breaking down barriers that often have artificially separated traditional planning functions that should naturally intersect. This integrated approach will incorporate continual input from the region's leaders and residents, whose buy-in will be essential. CMAP will carefully identify and promote regional priorities and work with our local, county, state, and national partners to ensure that those objectives are met.

Finally, CMAP will be an agency that does more than just create plans. If the region is not implementing those plans, then no matter how good the planning effort, our agency will not have accomplished its mission. CMAP will provide leadership and improve coordination, delivering technical assistance to communities, other regional partners, state and federal government, and the private sector that will help them address growth in ways consistent with the region's vision. CMAP will continue to convene, support, and facilitate coordination among local jurisdictions. Our technical assistance will promote best practices not only from other parts of the country and the world, but also from right here in northeastern Illinois. We will work with our partners to provide incentives for decision makers to plan for sustainable communities and to plan across political boundaries. CMAP will build on regional cooperation that has already occurred and play a leadership role in evaluating issues that have significant regional impacts.

The following section further defines this vision in terms of the agency's mission and strategic direction within specific focus areas.

### **3. Mission and Strategic Direction**

CMAP's emphasis on comprehensive planning recognizes the interrelationships between various factors, including the impacts they have on each other and collectively on the region. For that reason, the Board and staff have outlined a mission and strategic direction within seven focus areas that this document examines individually and comprehensively. The focus areas include:

- Research and Analysis
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Economic and Community Development
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Housing
- Human Services

In each focus area, the CMAP Board and staff are carefully examining how to improve planning by clarifying and, where necessary, expanding the agency's role. Each area includes the work traditionally done at CATS and NIPC, the new CMAP work that has already begun to address gaps (while avoiding duplication with other organizations), and the anticipated CMAP work that will be needed to meet additional challenges and opportunities.

CMAP will change the nature of planning in northeastern Illinois by providing a policy framework that shapes all regional plans, identifying and promoting regional priorities. Seeing the planning process through to implementation will be the region's real measure of success. Local officials will maintain responsibility for local land-use decisions, and CMAP will work with its partners to identify planning priorities while reviewing regionally significant projects to ensure consistency with the region's long-term objectives. By providing a range of tools including research and analysis within the focus areas, we can work to develop programming incentives that are based on consistency with the comprehensive regional plan.

Using the resources of the agency, CMAP will engage the public and its planning partners at a significantly increased level of activity. The CMAP Citizens' Advisory Committee, the Council of Mayors structure, a committee comprised of county officials, and general outreach activities will be used to obtain input from the public and our partners regarding all aspects of planning and programming.

The following subsections define CMAP's roles by examining the agency's work across the specific focus areas.



## ***Research and Analysis***

**Be the authoritative source for regional data collection, exchange, dissemination, analysis, evaluation, and modeling.**

Research and analysis are distinct from the other CMAP focus areas because they represent a core function that informs every aspect of the agency's work and is a resource to governments and organizations across the region. Building on the central role traditionally played by NIPC and CATS, CMAP will serve as the authoritative source for regional data collection, exchange, dissemination, analysis, evaluation, forecasting, and modeling. The agency will maintain a staff of highly qualified professional technicians, analysts, and modelers to secure relevant data using state-of-the art analytical tools. These activities are critical to providing the CMAP board and other decision makers with objective, definitive assessments of current and future regional conditions.

CMAP will be responsible for maintaining and providing access to the region's comprehensive inventory of information on land use, transportation and environmental analysis, such as the identification of environmentally critical areas. The agency serves as a regional repository for federal, state, and local planning databases, while undertaking significant in-house data collection and inventory development. CMAP will also continue an important historical CATS/NIPC role in dissemination of data to regional planning participants, while providing instruction and training in the proper use and application of regional data.

In support of its overall work program, CMAP will enhance its current array of analytical tools that are critical to the agency's objective assessment of general and specialized regional planning issues. Supported by a unique archive of historical data that is part of the agency's merged assets, CMAP will employ rigorously developed statistical techniques that distill the implications of complex, interrelated policy actions. The clarity and transparency of these assessments are necessary to ensure systematic objectivity in deliberations over the regional costs and benefits of proposed investments.

Robust forecasting and modeling tools are critical to scenario-based planning activities. CMAP will preserve the pioneering legacy of CATS and NIPC in developing computerized procedures that predict the interactions of regional conditions in land use, the environment, and transportation. CMAP will also undertake cutting-edge forecasting and modeling research to improve decision makers' understanding of how private decisions and public policy interact and determine regional development patterns.

## ***Land Use***

**Promote coordinated and sustainable development, redevelopment and preservation within the region through collaborative local, county and regional land use planning.**

Metropolitan Chicago's land-use patterns are the result of a complex decision making process that includes private and public participants. Among the most important decision makers are the businesses that decide where they will invest and the families that decide

where they want to live. They make their choices within a context created by a wide-range of government agencies. The private choices are influenced by such things as the property tax structure, the quality of local schools, the availability of good roads and mass transit, the availability of water, the probability of flooding, the proximity of recreational opportunities, and much more. Local, regional, state and federal governments greatly influence the patterns of land development, but most of the final decisions are made by families and businesses.

Within this larger context, local governments exercise zoning authority and subdivision control as a means to protect local health, safety and public welfare and encourage a particular community character. This local authority must remain the prerogative of local governments. They determine the location and type of developments that will occur through public and private investment. CMAP's role regarding land-development patterns is to place these local choices in a broader context and to influence decision makers for the good of the region as a whole.

Although land-use choices remain local, these decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. Where and how the region develops is critical to its health and prosperity. The award winning 2040 Regional Framework Plan was developed to guide the region's future land use and development by coordinating local land-use planning and the regional, state, and federal decisions that shape land development. The plan defines seventeen implementation strategies that include approaches to compact, mixed-use development and redevelopment; jobs and housing balance; transit-oriented development; preservation of biodiversity, water resources, and farmland; and economic vitality. CMAP will develop tools to help communities implement the regional plans and will provide technical assistance to help them make more informed land-use decisions through coordinated planning. CMAP will focus on communication, outreach, and engagement efforts that are key to ensuring coordination between regional and local planning.

As we develop the region's first truly comprehensive plan, CMAP will use scenario modeling to strengthen the functional links between land use and transportation planning, with a comprehensive range of regional issues such as health, economic development, education, environment, and water supply. Because these issues cut across political boundaries, CMAP will facilitate planning processes and partnerships that cut across jurisdictional boundaries. By reviewing municipal and county plans we can work with communities to better understand the impacts of their land-use decisions, especially in terms of projects of regional significance. Often local choices have a significant impact on neighboring communities or facilities, and CMAP will provide the regional context in which local decisions should be made.

CMAP will provide local technical assistance by improving our analysis and forecasting tools. CMAP will build on the "Paint the Town" and "Paint the Region" interactive tools that allow communities to visualize the effects of their development patterns. CMAP will conduct certified training for local officials and staff to provide incentives for communities to follow the regional plan. The agency will also continue its original research that is critical for measuring the region's successes in building sustainable communities.

This research will also focus on best practices in northeastern Illinois and around the nation and world. The issues that each community faces are not unique. Although there are no one-size-fits-all solutions, the region can learn from its neighbors and others who face similar challenges. CMAP will develop a system for monitoring progress toward implementation of the regional framework as we strive to build and maintain vibrant communities. Developing a regional reporting framework with accountability measures and other indicators will help gauge the success of implementation strategies.

It is important that CMAP play an advisory role beginning at the earliest stages of projects that have regional significance. Whether these are major developments or infrastructure proposals, CMAP is positioned to provide regional and sub-regional analyses of major projects to ensure that their impacts on natural resources, neighboring communities, and residents are fully considered. CMAP will work with local governments and other partners to define the agency's role in evaluating major regional developments and infrastructure investments.

### ***Transportation***

**Promote a regional transportation system that is safe, efficient, and accessible while sustaining the region's vision related to the natural environment, economic and community development, social equity, and public health.**

Both the planning and programming aspects of the transportation focus area will require that CMAP actively pursue an aggressive work program to acquire necessary information relative to both transportation and land use. Areas requiring special attention include highway congestion, freight, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian issues, safety and security, environmental impacts and mitigation strategies, and seniors and the disabled.

CMAP will continue to aggressively improve its analytical tools for both transportation planning and programming. Increasingly, analytical methods are being called for in the areas of the Federal Transit Administration New Starts program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) improvement program, and the newly created federal Congestion Management Process. Using analytical tools in an environment of performance-based planning, CMAP will provide information critical to decision makers and will clearly document the decision-making process.

An area where CMAP efforts may have their most immediate impact is in the development of a regional transportation financial plan. Our enabling legislation calls for the development of a transportation financial plan in cooperation with the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is the CATS Policy Committee. The financial plan shall address the adequacy of funding to meet identified needs for regional transportation agencies in all modes of transportation and the allocation of funds to regional priorities, also recognizing the importance of funding to maintain our existing infrastructure.

Current practice consists of identifying reasonably available resources and then allocating those resources to maintain the existent system, to improve strategic regional systems (arterial, transit, bicycle and pedestrian, and freight), and to carry out various major capital project recommendations. A robust, zero-based financial forecasting model would allow an examination of various plan scenarios under consideration. The information gained from this enhancement to the planning process will provide the CMAP Board and the MPO with valuable additional information.

The CMAP staff is working to develop models and forecasting tools that will permit a more complete understanding of the interaction among regional conditions for land use, socioeconomics, transportation, and environment. Simultaneously, the CMAP Board must champion the policies and programs shaped by these tools, fostering sustainable development throughout northeastern Illinois. By establishing strategic principles and funding criteria for the region's transportation system, CMAP can identify and promote real regional transportation priorities. In addition, the agency can develop incentive-based transportation planning and programming consistent with the regional plan. The implementation of sound regional transportation plans is essential to the success of CMAP.

Northeastern Illinois has a number of agencies engaged in the development of transportation plans and programs from both the public and private sector. CMAP will build upon the strengths of these agencies through partnerships and mutually beneficial cooperative agreements. The Illinois Department of Transportation, the Regional Transportation Authority, its service boards, the city of Chicago, and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority to name a few, all bring a high level of expertise to the body of regional planning in northeastern Illinois. A current example is the strategic planning effort called *Moving Beyond Congestion*, led by the RTA. CMAP can augment its own planning efforts by becoming full partners in efforts such as these, while also providing a regional, multi-disciplinary perspective.

## ***Economic and Community Development***

**Enhance economic development and a healthy, balanced regional economy integrated into the global economy through regional coordination, planning, and outreach.**

While the private sector has not traditionally been very involved in public planning processes, CMAP intends to change that. The CMAP Board and staff understand that significant efforts are already occurring throughout the region to promote economic growth. As a public agency, we will not presume to speak for the business community, but incorporating that perspective will be vital for regional planning efforts. With our existing data and resources, we can assist in economic and community development by providing input into location decisions or infrastructure development. We will also work to achieve regional goals by partnering with local business, economic-development organizations, chambers of commerce, and the state to improve business retention and recruitment through better planning.

Economic-development organizations, business leadership, and workforce advocates will benefit from forging a unified, cohesive strategy for economic development at the regional level. That strategy can, in turn, inform and guide transportation and other public investments to support the region's economic agenda. Building on the solid data and analysis available at the agency and working with the latest forecasting and modeling tools, CMAP can inform and coordinate economic development planning and investment within the context of regional priorities.

For example, improving the flow of freight through northeastern Illinois has to be a regional and even national priority. Metropolitan Chicago receives one-third of all U.S. freight rail traffic, but the high volume means a freight car takes two days just to get through the city -- equal to the time it takes to get here from the west coast. That traffic is expected to increase 80 percent in the next 20 years, and inability to address the growth will continue to negatively affect roads, as more companies turn to trucks instead of rail. In this area and others, CMAP can track industry trends, develop and promote best practices, benchmark costs and conditions, provide training and technical assistance, and facilitate regional discussions to support the efforts of our economic-development partners.

Over 120 business and community leaders attended a CMAP economic and community development summit on August 17, 2006, to provide input in helping to define our role in this focus area. The primary feedback from participants was that CMAP should focus on its data analysis tools and resources to link transportation, land use, and economic development for improved planning and decision making. The sentiment was echoed a number of times that for CMAP to be successful in supporting economic development efforts, it should emphasize the core activities of integrating land-use and transportation planning and provide easily accessible data and information to both the public and the private sectors.

Community development is of equal importance with economic development and is an opportunity for CMAP to provide technical assistance to build or re-build strong communities throughout the region. One example -- CMAP's Full Circle project -- helps community-development organizations to collect detailed data about their neighborhoods' land use and to leverage that information with a collaborative planning process. The project leaders are also committed to facilitating open data exchange among public and private agencies, to improve decision-making at all levels of community development. This is an excellent model of how CMAP can provide regional coordination that is complemented with local technical assistance.

## ***Environment and Natural Resources***

**Protect and enhance the region's environmental and ecological health through regional collaboration that actively promotes the adoption of best practices.**

Northeastern Illinois has undergone extraordinary urbanization and development over the last 100 years, at a cost of natural resources and ecological diversity. CMAP is committed to protecting and restoring these valuable resources. Northeastern Illinois' regional

planning efforts regarding natural resources -- especially water issues -- have been a national model that will be supported and enhanced by CMAP. The agency will serve as the authoritative source for environmental and natural resource Best Management Practices (BMP) supported by our staff's research and analysis. The agency's comprehensive plans will identify areas for protection and restoration -- including natural resources, air and water quality, ecosystems, and open space -- to gauge environmental impacts and evaluate land-use alternatives.

CMAP will provide leadership, advocacy, and the needed capacity to ensure that the region's environmental assets are protected and sustained, with assistance from our sponsoring agencies and partners that include park districts, forest preserve districts, and wastewater agencies. CMAP's leadership can help to integrate and coordinate programs such as the recently initiated comprehensive program for state and regional water supply planning and management by the Department of Natural Resources; the national trend and state supported approach to develop watershed planning; Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's storm water management programs; the federally mandated transportation act (SAFTEA-LU) requirements for environmental mitigation; the Green Infrastructure Vision developed in partnership with Chicago Wilderness; future initiatives resulting from the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration; and national support for principles of smart growth and sustainable development.

These activities will require major staff support to research and plan in a comprehensive, integrated manner across the greater northeastern Illinois region. Successful integration will also require that CMAP have the capacity to research and provide information through technical assistance and incentives to units of local government on how to respond to these new opportunities and requirements. In addition, CMAP's mandate to produce a regional plan will be a further opportunity to integrate adopted policy positions of the individual regional agencies into a consistent policy for sustainable development practices that are vital, healthy, and equitable. To facilitate guidance and feedback on this report, CMAP staff met with over 100 members of the Chicago Wilderness consortium on August 18, 2006. This partnership will continue as we work together to implement CMAP's vision.

CMAP will work to define environmental goals for the region to protect sensitive areas that preserve our natural resources, habitats, farmland, open space, and historic and cultural resources. We will also encourage practices to conserve energy and improve our air and water quality, for example, by conducting capacity analyses of proposed infrastructure investments and by incentivizing communities' conservation efforts. These goals and guidelines will be used to promote sustainable land use via policies and programs in other CMAP focus areas, including transportation and housing.

Creation of CMAP also provides the opportunity to integrate formerly isolated review activities performed by NIPC and CATS into a more consistent, balanced activity. We will review county plans, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality improvement projects, growth forecasts, and Facility Planning Area amendments in relation to the regional plan to achieve consistency with environmental goals established by the Board and with related state and federal requirements. As CMAP works to define its role in evaluating regional

major developments and infrastructure investments, environmental factors and resources will be instrumental to assess each project's impact (e.g., runoff effects on streams and wetlands). In addition, CMAP will work to develop incentive-based environmental planning and programs to foster compliance with the regional plan.

## ***Housing***

**Create a comprehensive regional housing plan as part of an overall comprehensive plan and provide the support tools so that projects adhere to the regional framework.**

Housing, like all of our focus areas, needs to be examined comprehensively because it affects land use, infrastructure, and environmental resources. To meet regional priorities, the location, availability, and affordability of housing need to balance with the location of jobs, access to transportation, and protection of open space and natural resources. The escalating costs of housing force some families to move farther from employment centers in seeking lower-priced housing options, although such savings may be partially or even completely offset by increased transportation expenses due to longer commutes.

Examining and planning for regional shifts in demographics and population are critical to addressing the issue of housing. Policy options include housing trust funds, inclusionary zoning, set-asides, community land trusts, low-income tax credits, and employer-assisted housing. Many organizations throughout the region are involved in these housing issues, but there is strong demand for CMAP to bring a regional approach with the assistance of our partners. Housing data and analysis are key CMAP assets that the agency must build upon to develop a regional housing plan.

With the assistance of our regional partners -- including local governments, affected state agencies, home builders, developers, contractors, non-profit and other interested groups, and residents -- we will develop a five-year regional housing plan to be included as part of the regional comprehensive plan. This plan will document the region's needs on this important issue and address housing conditions, type, affordability, and location. CMAP staff and partners will use forecasting, modeling, and other analytical tools to evaluate current and future circumstances. In addition, we will provide local guidance on implementation to ensure consistency with the regional plan and the housing plan.

The first step in developing a regional housing plan will require convening and coordinating with other stakeholders working in this area. Regional goals, policies, and guidelines will be established in the course of developing the plan. We will work with municipalities to review development proposals in the regional plan's context, while seeking to shape broader state and regional policies that are key to implementing the regional housing plan. By providing direct technical assistance to communities, CMAP may also use programming incentives to support the planning process by rewarding local municipalities that align with the regional plan.

## ***Human Services***

**Enhance the regional quality of life by being the objective source of information, expertise and policy perspectives for human service issues (e.g. health care, aging, disability, safety) with a regional scope.**

While regional agencies throughout the country vary in the degree to which they participate in planning or providing human services, there is a consensus that residents' health, safety, and quality of life are critical to the continued prosperity of metropolitan Chicago. CMAP's goal is not to replicate what others are doing well in the area of human services, but this focus area reflects a broad spectrum of issues that intersect with our mission in land use and transportation. In many cases, CMAP can bring a unique regional perspective in shaping communities' policies and programs. For example, federal transportation legislation calls for human-services provisions aiming to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older Americans, and individuals with lower incomes. To assist with such provisions, CMAP can provide data, tools, and technical assistance to municipalities or other organizations, facilitate coordination of human services, or solicit and analyze projects in support of specific program objectives.

As demographics of the region change, CMAP is ideally suited to provide information and analysis regarding trends and the impact that they have on transportation, development and a number of social and economic issues. We can provide forecasting and modeling information to better allow human service agencies and providers to meet the needs of the residents of the region. The Illinois Data Exchange Affiliates (IDEA) is a voluntary group of government agencies and non-profit organizations working to improve data sharing by providing a web interface to make it easy for organizations to exchange up-to-the-moment information internally and externally. CMAP will continue NIPC's role in expanding IDEA data resources so that communities can access the information they need, recognizing that access to information is critical to influencing investment decisions and to planning human services.

This information can also be useful for disaster preparedness or health issues of regional significance, which are roles that other metropolitan planning agencies across the U.S. are being asked to consider. It is important for CMAP to carefully define its focus within this area in the context of regional policy development. To that end, we will work to identify gaps among existing local agencies and explore how CMAP can best serve as an advocate and resource for human-service issues.

## **4. Implementation of the Regional Planning Act**

### ***Governance***

The Regional Planning Act called for a merger of the functions of the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC). The Act created a Regional Planning Board (now the Board of CMAP) comprised of fifteen voting members appointed by local elected officials from the City of Chicago and



Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties. Both CATS and NIPC have existing policy boards that are 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 among several transportation service providers. It was subsequently named as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under agreement between local elected officials and the Governor, as required under federal law.

The Regional Planning Act states that the MPO designation remains with the Policy Committee of CATS, which the CMAP Board supports. At this time, CMAP feels that a shared process between the MPO and the 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 should include representation of the other board to ensure communication exists at the policy level. This relationship will be formalized in a Joint Statement of Understanding that CMAP and the MPO will work collaboratively to develop over the next six months.

We propose an operating process in which the staff provides information jointly to CMAP and the MPO, toward achieving a consensus between the two boards. Both boards will review staff and committee work to ensure that consistency and consensus are achieved. The Joint Statement of Understanding will include a conflict-resolution process to be used in the event that CMAP and the MPO do not reach a consensus on regional transportation plans and programs. On regional transportation plans and programs, by federal rule, the MPO has the final determination and therefore will take the last action to forward them to the Governor and federal agencies.

The CMAP staff will provide support to both the CMAP Board and the MPO, similar to the current arrangement whereby the MPO is served by a staff that is administered by IDOT. The MPO will continue to approve the annual Unified Work Program for all transportation planning activities. The Policy Committee members of the MPO will continue to be members of committees and task forces that will guide and monitor work of the staff. The result will be a more robust staff that is part of CMAP -- expertise in a number of new issues affecting transportation -- and that is available to the MPO for its decision-making process.

CMAP proposes that, at the end of state fiscal year 2007, the legislation authorizing NIPC be rescinded and the Commission's authorities and responsibilities be transferred to CMAP. It is vitally important to the region that the functions of NIPC remain a top priority for CMAP and that we take advantage of the existing expertise of NIPC Commissioners. We feel that this can be accomplished through the proposed staffing and committee structure that emphasizes our functional areas while integrating those functions in a more comprehensive manner.

CMAP and the MPO should have a committee structure that avoids segregating functions such as land use, transportation, housing, economic development, natural resources, and human services into committees that have little interaction. We believe it is the legislative

intent to better integrate planning and decision making across all functions by addressing regional issues comprehensively. The proposed committee structure therefore establishes a hierarchy of decision making that consists of a working level, a coordinating level, an advisory level, and a policy level. Figure 1 at the end of this document is a graphic that displays this hierarchy, as well as the information flow between committees. Both CATS and NIPC have an extensive committee structure and, as we transition to the structure described here, we will work to create an inclusionary process that incorporates all functions of those committees, working groups, and task forces. The intent is to create an overall committee structure that will lead quickly to integrated, comprehensive planning.

CMAP has proposed working committees around the major functional areas of our mission: Land Use, Economic and Community Development, Environment and Natural Resources, Housing, Human Services, and Transportation. Serving on these committees will be current members of the NIPC Commission; experts in those functional areas; interest groups; business representatives; implementing agencies; local, county, and state government officials and their representatives; and advocacy groups. These committees will receive their charge from the CMAP Board (and the MPO on transportation issues) and will provide input regarding the issues that come before them. A chairperson and vice chairperson of these working committees will come from its members.

Because these working committees are specific to individual issues, CMAP needs to create a mechanism for coordinating issues that cross those committees. Nearly all of our regional planning and programming efforts have impacts beyond any particular functional area. For example, a regional greenways plan cannot be created without addressing the plan's impacts on open space, transportation, community development, land use, and even housing. It is important that CMAP not just review these plans at the end of their development. From their outset, we need to ensure that the plans are consistent with the regional vision and analyze those plans' impacts on other functional areas. CMAP has proposed that two coordinating committees be created to ensure appropriate review and analysis across committees. The first would be a planning committee that reviews longer-range proposals, and the second would be a programming and operations committee that looks at shorter-term activities. Each of the two committees will be chaired by a CMAP Board member and will consist of CMAP Board members and the chairs or vice chairs of the working committees.

The Regional Planning Act called for creation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC), which was established in July 2006. The CAC -- along with the CATS Council of Mayors and a committee comprised of county officials -- will be advisory in nature. These three committees would review major planning and programming efforts of the region and provide advisory recommendations to CMAP and the MPO from both the general public and the elected official perspective. The CATS Council of Mayors will continue to program the local surface transportation program funds and maintain its role in the programming of CMAQ and UWP funds.

We envision that transportation decisions will be made jointly at the policy level by the MPO and CMAP and will be based upon the regional vision encompassed in CMAP's

comprehensive plans. It is important that the MPO receive information not only from the transportation staff and committees, but from the rest of the committees as well. If we are to truly coordinate land use and transportation decisions, clear communication must exist throughout this structure.

### ***Staff Transition and Organizational Structure***

Soon after the Board held its inaugural meeting in October 2005, NIPC and CATS staff were co-located in the same suite of offices in Sears Tower. This was an important first step in working to merge the staffs into a single agency while protecting to the extent possible current employees' benefits. (Referenced in the appendix is the June 2005 report of the CATS-NIPC Joint Coordinating Committee, which includes details the phases that led to the reorganization.)

In May 2006, the agency hired its first executive director, who immediately began the detailed work of integrating functions of the newly consolidated agency. To break down barriers between transportation and land-use planning, the Board and executive director chose an internal structure organized into areas of planning, programming and operations, research and analysis, economic and community development, external affairs, and finance and administration. The staff is working to create a cross-functional management structure that further streamlines the agency's operations.

The intent is to organize the staff for maximum flexibility in addressing project tasks, which allows the creation of agile teams rather than segregated departments. For example, communications and outreach would be a component of nearly every project or task, but it would not stand alone -- instead, it would be project specific. By streamlining staff operations and creating greater efficiency in the agency's business functions, CMAP can focus resources on improving its technical and research capabilities that provide tremendous value to the region as a whole.

CMAP staff is working to develop methods to handle operational and administrative matters related to the transition, including labor and employment matters, pension benefits, equipment and technology, leases and contracts, and office space. Because CATS is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation, its staff members are state employees. NIPC staff are currently employees of the Commission. A fair and equitable benefits package will be designed and offered to current employees of NIPC and CATS (for the latter group, to take them off the IDOT payroll) as we work to unify CMAP by January 1, 2007.

CMAP is also working to secure agreements with funding agencies to provide support for board operations. In the FY 2007 budget year, the agency is relying on the current funding commitments to CATS and NIPC. As described in greater detail in the funding section below, CMAP will work to maintain these funding sources and expand future funding opportunities.

## 5. Funding

CMAP was created as an agent to fundamentally change the way planning occurs in Illinois. This mission includes responsibility for developing a comprehensive long-range regional plan and strategies, providing high-quality information and analysis through coordinated technical assistance, and building consensus to identify and advocate for regional priorities. Therefore, our success absolutely depends on the creation of a sound financial plan that ensures stable funding and flexibility for the agency to act independently. While the Regional Planning Act provided no funds to create CMAP, it did specifically call for the Board to develop a funding strategy that would accomplish its recommended functions as described in this report. In July 2006, consultants retained by the CMAP Board examined the current CATS and NIPC funding sources, providing a comparative analysis and recommendations to achieve adequate funding. Their findings showed that, at present, CMAP has a significantly smaller operating budget compared to other planning organizations throughout the nation.

The following paragraphs describe current revenue for planning in the region and give recommendations on funding necessary to support on-going regional planning. We will work closely with members of the General Assembly and our partners over the next several months to first explore and then build consensus on funding options.

### ***Current CMAP Revenues***

At present, CATS and NIPC are funded by federal and state transportation planning funds, voluntary contributions by local governments, competitive grants and fees for services. In state fiscal year 2007, the combined CATS and NIPC budgets totals approximately \$14.5 million. By combining the agencies, there have been efficiencies in streamlining the agency by reducing overhead and better coordinating service delivery.

A significant amount of the funding for the combined agencies is from federal Unified Work Program (UWP) funds, designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation to conduct transportation planning in metropolitan areas throughout Illinois and the nation. These funds are used for transportation planning activities and require a 20-percent local match.

Of the \$17 million available from UWP funds for northeastern Illinois in the current fiscal year, \$10.8 million was allocated to CATS and NIPC. The balance of the UWP funds were programmed for transportation planning activities of the City of Chicago, Metra, Pace, CTA, RTA, counties, and the Council of Mayors. These MPO member agencies use UWP funds to provide regional planning services where they require expertise not found on the staff at CATS and NIPC.

NIPC has a dues-based structure of voluntary contributions that bills nearly 500 local government entities including cities, counties, park districts, sanitary districts, and forest preserves -- only half of which contribute funds in the total amount of approximately \$1

million annually. NIPC also receives funds through grants from other governmental agencies and foundations for project-specific activities.

Virtually all CMAP's stakeholders agree that, to date, the region has not invested sufficiently in planning. We have addressed this by benchmarking the planning activities throughout the region and the nation to determine best practices. The Board and staff have used this information to conduct a rigorous internal exercise to determine our vision and the associated work plan necessary to achieve that vision. (Referenced in the appendix as the Visioning Workshop.) Our analysis indicates that approximately \$18 million per year will be necessary in the near term to meet the region's planning needs.

### ***Future Funding***

Existing sources will not be adequate to give CMAP the dedicated, stable funding source that its work requires. In working to create the financial plan, CMAP and its partners should pursue funding options from a combination of transportation planning funds, other state and federal funds, local funds and grant sources. We also need to evaluate innovative mechanisms to finance both the state and local shares of the regional planning process. The following criteria for potential revenue sources should be kept in mind as current and potential funding options are explored:

- Ease of Implementation
- Revenue Yield and Adequacy
- Stability and Sustainability
- Fairness and Equity
- Accountability and Tangible Results
- Political Acceptability

### ***Transportation Planning Funds***

While UWP funds provide a significant portion of the new agency's budget, providing the local share to match these funds will be a concern for CMAP. Historically, IDOT has provided the local match -- in cash -- for the CATS portion of the UWP funds. IDOT has also provided -- through soft match -- half of the local share for NIPC's UWP funds. While a soft match meets the federal requirement of matching funds, it does not provide necessary operating funds.

IDOT has indicated a commitment to continue its present level of support until such time as a permanent financial plan is in place. CMAP believes that there should ultimately be shared responsibility between IDOT and local governments to provide the match for federal transportation planning funds. Potential new sources that will be evaluated include the motor fuel tax, state sales tax, income tax, and vehicle registration fees.

## ***Other State and Federal Funds***

Although UWP funding is vital, we cannot rely solely on transportation funds to operate the agency. Federal transportation planning funds are limited in their use to transportation-related activities. The expanded mission of CMAP must incorporate funding from existing sources as well as an increased commitment from state agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Options to channel these funds to CMAP could include a direct appropriation from the General Assembly or from the individual state agencies. We must also evaluate non-traditional federal funding sources that are consistent with the agency's mission. As various options are examined, it will be important that CMAP's funding be stable and sustainable, as the agency cannot operate effectively without a high degree of certainty regarding its future finances.

## ***Local Funds***

To ensure the agency's success, CMAP must commit to securing a dedicated and reliable source of local funding. As previously discussed, options for matching federal transportation funds is just one piece of the funding puzzle. There also needs to be a local contribution for non-transportation planning activities. The current voluntary contribution structure employed by NIPC is largely inequitable, unstable, and insecure. Moving away from voluntary contributions, a number of existing and potential local revenue sources could meet the evaluation criteria mentioned above. Examples include, but are not limited to: Sales tax, personal income tax, property tax, real estate transfer tax, motor vehicle registration fees, a parking tax, or a congestion fee. Whatever source is identified must allow us to achieve our mission and at the same time give local governments an incentive to engage in the regional planning process.

## ***Grants***

Grants from non-governmental agencies are another important source of revenue that contributes to the overall mission of the agency, but they cannot be relied upon as stable or sustainable sources. We will actively pursue grant opportunities that will provide funds for foundation-specified planning activities. NIPC has successfully pursued a number of grants that supplement other, more stable sources. One example of this is the Full Circle Mapping and Planning Project that uses web based data collection systems to assist communities in planning a vision for the future. This project is funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce and the MacArthur Foundation. It meets an identified need in the region by providing valuable assistance at the community level. As CMAP demonstrates its capacity to deliver high-quality planning products, we anticipate that contributions from foundations and other agencies will increase.

## 6. Near-Term Options and Priorities

While many important steps have already been taken, the next 12 months require further bold action to ensure the long-term success of CMAP. One purpose of this report is to stimulate discussion among the agency's partners and supporters in northeastern Illinois and in Springfield, to jointly identify how best to achieve the desired result of highly effective, collaborative planning. This includes -- but is by no means limited to -- options for further legislative action to clarify and strengthen roles of the new agency and its board. Specific legislative initiatives will be prepared after full discussion with our partners. The following are areas where legislative action needs to occur.

To fully consolidate the staffs of CATS and NIPC, a benefits package is being developed to protect our employees. It has been determined that the retirement system that best fits the agency's needs is the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund system. Although the agency was created as a unit of local government, it requires corresponding legislation to make CMAP "IMRF eligible." CMAP staff is working with the retirement system to draft this legislation.

Working with our partners, CMAP will offer alternative funding packages for the General Assembly's consideration. It is the CMAP Board's philosophy that there needs to be a commitment to the financial responsibility of the agency by federal, state, and local governments. For CMAP to achieve its vision, financial resources must be made available from the state and a more equitable method of sharing the local responsibility for regional planning must be developed.

A few of the Regional Planning Act's assumptions regarding agency operations have become impractical, and minor revisions to the Act are needed to give the agency enough operational flexibility to meet its mission. These issues include altering the timelines for plan updates because they do not meet federal requirements, assessing voting procedures for non-policy issues, and changing staff requirements stated in the Act.

While designating CMAP as a unit of local government could have some advantages, it might not provide a governance structure appropriate for a regional agency. Therefore, many of the legal restrictions placed upon municipalities may not necessarily be consistent with the intent of the Act or with the operating procedures of a regional agency. CMAP staff will work with the General Assembly to ensure that the agency's operations are consistent with the original legislative intent behind creation of this regional planning agency.

As we consolidate the functions of CATS and NIPC, legislation will be necessary to rescind NIPC's enabling legislation, transferring those responsibilities and authorities to CMAP. NIPC's statutory review of other planning efforts will likewise need to be transferred to CMAP.

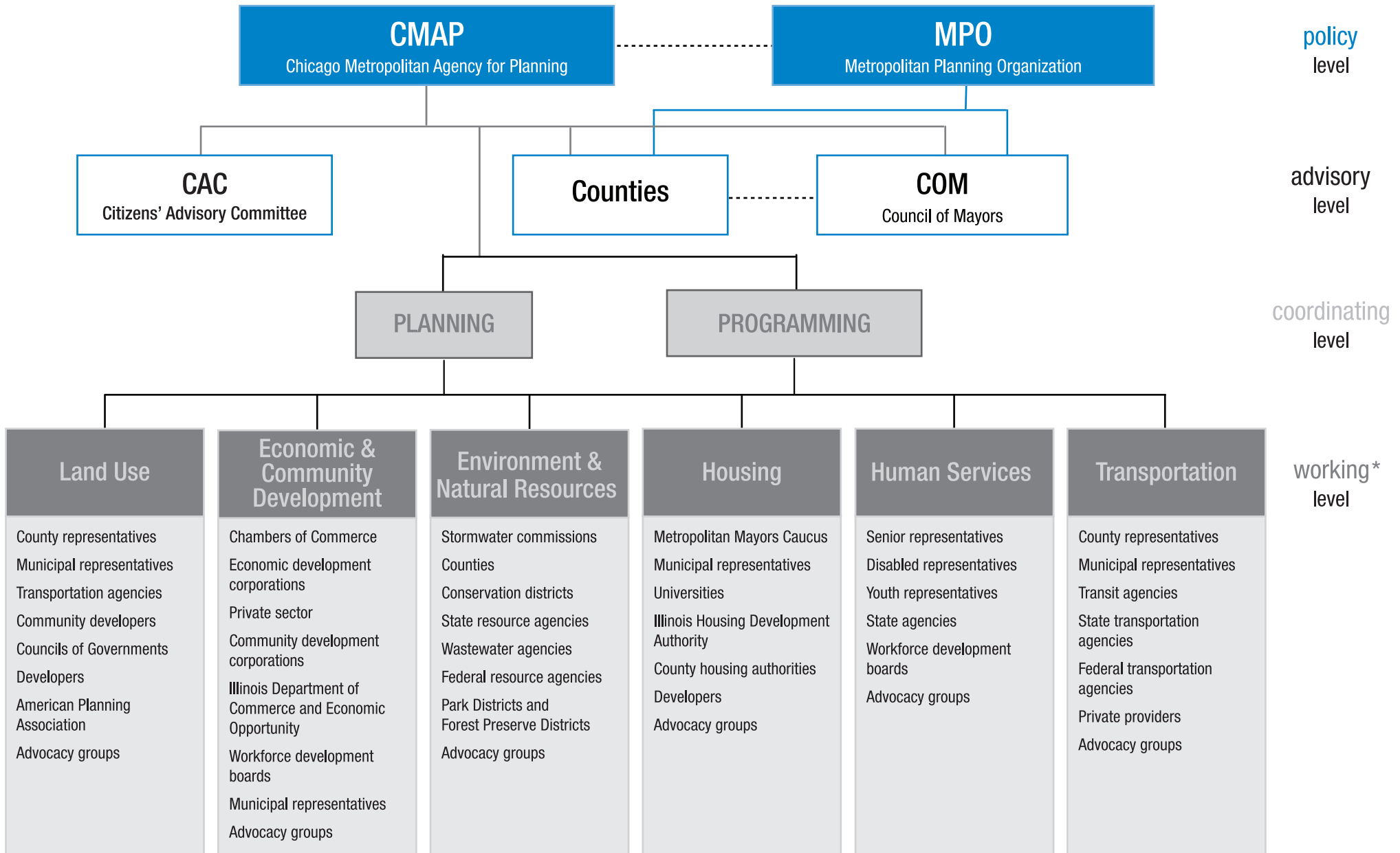
CMAP's leadership role in projects of regional significance may need to be clarified in legislation. CMAP was created in the recognition that no plan or project exists in a vacuum, whether its primary focus is land use, transportation, environment, natural

resources, housing, or economic development. Especially when a project crosses multiple jurisdictions, CMAP should have a central role not only in reviewing other agencies' plans, but more importantly as a partner in helping to develop those plans beginning in their earliest stages.

In cooperation with our partners over the next six months, CMAP will prepare a comprehensive legislative package for the General Assembly's consideration in its 2007 session. Our most important legislative initiative in that session will be to identify adequate and stable funding for the agency, enabling it to meet the region's comprehensive planning needs. Additional strategic initiatives outlined in this report are also significant but do not require specific legislative action. As the new agency continues to evolve, we will work shoulder-to-shoulder with our partners and funding agencies to successfully implement the Regional Planning Act.



# Proposed Committee Structure



\*The working level of this chart includes potential representatives, categorized broadly. Specific potential committee members are yet to be determined.