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To: Human Services Committee

Date: January 14th, 2008

From: Russell Pietrowiak, Associate Regional Planner

Re: Human Services Definition

The Human Service committee has discussed various definitions that could be used to define the term Human Services as it relates to the work of the Human Services committee at CMAP. A few definitions have been put together based on comments from various committee members. The goal is to have a definition that if someone were to read it they would likely understand what it is that the committee is working on. This definition is not meant to be the authoritative Human Services definition. Below are a few variations. They are intended to illicit a response and to further the discussion.

1. Human Services encompasses the sustenance and development of residents of the Chicago Region. This includes but is not limited to; personal health (both physical and mental), social relations, personal capacity and growth (child care, education, disabilities, aging, etc.).
2. Human Services encompasses a broad spectrum ranging from child care to aging, from youth involvement to recreation, from public health and safety to education, from individuals with disabilities to access to government, from criminal justice to issues related to poverty or low income, etc.
CMAP's role is to incorporate Human Services issues and perspectives into the planning and policy making process, while also being a place where information and data is collected and disseminated, and where the relevant parties come together to discuss Human Services issues.
3. Human Services are the support and education systems that the region has in place for its residents. CMAP's role is to ensure that the region is planning and developing policies so that the region is prepared to meet the challenges of the future and that to insure that the voices of those institutions, people, and providers of human services are ingrained in the region's planning process and have input in the development of the region's policies and vision.
4. Human Services are services provided to the public that are designed to educate, enhance the quality of life, or serve as a support system. They are an essential component of the region and an integral part of the region's planning efforts. Human Services range from public education to public health, from recreational activities to criminal justice, from services for seniors, the disabled and low income individuals to child care.

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion and comments.