

THE CONNECTOR

Supporting more than 100 communities, CMAP continues commitment to local planning



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When the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) released its GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan on Oct. 13, 2010, it was serendipitous that the very next day, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development announced funding to support the plan's implementation through a \$4.25 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. With this funding, CMAP did not miss a beat, harnessing the energy, excitement, and extensive resident and community engagement that helped create the plan for the critical next step: realizing its goals. CMAP used the funds to provide direct support to communities across the region, making the plan real by providing individualized planning assistance to a wide range of communities consistent with the goals of GO TO 2040.

While we knew there was a pent up need and demand for local planning support, the overwhelming interest generated by CMAP's Local Technical Assistance program could not have been predicted. More than 130 communities applied for assistance with 220 projects in the first round. CMAP stepped up to the challenge and approved more than 70 projects, 17 of which are now complete and another 42 underway. CMAP completed its second application round last month and accepted an additional 48 projects. Generated by the communities that applied for assistance, project scopes include issues such as comprehensive plans and zoning updates, bike path and integrated water resource plans, and housing and parking studies. The projects also draw on a wide range of partnerships and span the region's geography, touching almost 15 Chicago neighborhoods, 60 municipalities, and every county CMAP serves.

There's no disputing that embarking on more than 100 individual projects over three years is a daunting task. That's why CMAP has diligently engaged and directly involved a wide range of

civic partners to support the planning work and ongoing implementation. MPC is proud to participate with more than 15 civic partners who meet regularly with CMAP staff to provide guidance and direct their own planning staff and resources in support of Local Technical Assistance projects. Not only is this coordination supporting individual projects and community partners, but it also is strengthening the region's overall coordination of planning and implementation, reducing duplicative efforts, and maximizing each organization's role and impact. MPC has worked directly with CMAP on six of its Local Technical Assistance projects to date and will be involved in another 14 going into 2013. These include our continued work on the [Homes for a Changing Region](#) partnership with CMAP and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus to help communities plan for housing based on future population shifts; a parking study in Chicago's Wicker Park Bucktown neighborhood; retail planning and development work in Chicago's [Bronzeville neighborhood](#); and, several water management projects, including in [Lake Zurich](#), DuPage County, and along the [Fox River](#).

Keep up to date on all of [CMAP's Local Technical Assistance work on their website](#).