



« Rahm Takes Chicago, Willing or Otherwise

Where Do We Go From Here on the Education Front? »

U R B A N T U P E L A O N C N T I N I G 9 2 0 1

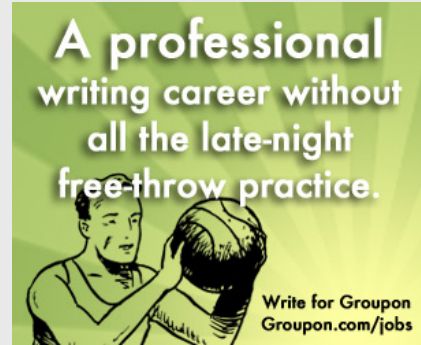
Chicago is What Happens When You're Busy Making Plans

On the rooftop of the Harris Theater last Wednesday, over 800 people overcame the torrential rains to witness the adoption of the **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's** GOTO 2040 plan. CMAP, as it's colloquially called, is the regional planning organization of Chicagoland, and **GO TO 2040** is their official, three-years-in-the-making guidebook that intends to serve as a road map for Chicagoland's growth and development over the course of the next 30 years. Paring its ambitious mission down to four main themes -- Livable Communities, Human Capital, Efficient Governance, and Regional Mobility -- the GOTO 2040 plan offers holistic prescriptions for the region as a whole, recognizing structural fixes are needed across all platforms.

Within its analysis, illustrations, and recommendations, CMAP, while never overtly saying so, lays claim to the argument that Chicago is effectively the main remaining relevant economic factor in the State of Illinois. (Obviously, the city is the largest and most influential in the Midwest as well.) And hence, given Springfield's antagonistic inability to recognize this, Chicago's relation to its state is simply a restraint on growth. It's Chicago's connection to Beijing, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, London, Dubai, almost anywhere *but* Springfield, that serves as the springboard to success for the region. Essentially, CMAP's plan is an argument that says in order maximize the global connectivity of Chicagoland to other global centers, the region's ability to successfully do so is directly correlated to the strength between its regional connections. With over 1,226 government units in the Chicagoland region due to myriad metropolitan agencies and functions, there is much room to streamline services and improve efficiency. And efficiency, used in the economic sense to mean the production of a good at the lowest possible cost that still provides benefit, plays directly into CMAP's call for sustainability.

Sustainability and tangibility are the two pillars on which GOTO 2040 rests. The plan promotes sustainability in its Livable Communities initiatives through the development of local food production, retrofitting programs to make older buildings better users of energy, and crafting local zoning laws to encourage mixed-use development of land. The Regional Mobility portion of the plan aims to improve mobility by increasing intermodal effectiveness, micromanage the budgeting process to bring transit agencies into fiscal well-being, and the implementing of five major capital projects, including extending the CTA Red Line south to 130th St, building the West Loop Transportation Center, and creating suburban highway connectors that flank the city and beyond. The Efficient Governance focus of GOTO 2040 is perhaps the crux of the entire plan. Any aspect of any plan must start with making access to government process and information more open and available, as CMAP outlines, and as [detailed here in an earlier post](#), refocusing our taxing bodies into common sense vehicles.

All of the above measures promote sustainable practices in terms of using government services and public resources in a manageable way. They also have the potential to utilize tangibility as the metric on which to build public support. If people see steps being taken in a tangible way, it can only serve to increase the political will of the people to see the full implementation of projects through. Again, the exchange



R E V E N G E O F T H E S

Announcing Classroom Mechanics: An Oral History Project of Teaching in Chicago

By Ramsin Canon / 0 Comments

We are none of us either angels or devils, and that fact is where the best stories live. Teachers are wrongly lauded as heroes and demeaned as Those Who Can't. At Mechanics we've been covering the struggle of educators and... [More...](#)

News near 100-121 N. La Salle St. EveryBlock

Search for your own location in Chicago: Address, ZIP or neighbor

1 location in the media 6 hours ago

170 N Dearborn
AGlittering Candide At The Goodman
Candide, at Goodman Theatre, 170 N Dearborn, through October 31, Tuesday - Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Friday - Saturday at 8 p.m., Saturday - Sunday at 2 p.m., \$31 - \$85
Published by **Chicagoist** on **October 19, 2010**.

B L O G R O

- America Blog
- Archpundit
- Balloon Juice
- Beachwood Reporter
- Bridget in the Sixth
- Center Square Journal
- Change of Subject
- Chatham - Avalon
- Community Council
- Chicago Current
- Chicago Journal
- Chicago Justice Project
- Chicago News Cooperative
- Chicago Reporter Blog
- Chitown Politics
- Clout City
- Clout Tracker
- Megan Cotrell
- CounterPunch
- CREW
- Daily Daley
- Daily Kos
- Driftglass
- Ellen of the Tenth

between sustainability and tangibility cannot be played up enough.

Which gets to the heart of the matter: in a panel discussion moderated by WTTW's Geoffrey Baer that followed CMAP's presentation, Baer asked Mayor Daley how is it that politicians can sell long-term plans such as Go to 2040 to constituents increasingly concerned about only the short-term. Daley replied, in typical tangential style, in a monologue about schools. Between the rambling nods of giggle-inducing admiration towards China, Daley articulated a position that makes perfect cohesion of the underlying principles in play in GOTO 2040 with the realities of governing.

Daley noted that people left Chicago, left cities all across the country, because the schools were not deemed adequate. In a market, they were perceived as an inferior product. So people went to markets to get the product they wanted. If that product was within the City though, Daley saw he could create a demand for it that would lead to population growth and stability. He couldn't wait for the feds or the state for the same reason Chicago can't wait for the feds or state now - these are bodies that are designed to act slowly and seemingly, in modern political times, to create villains out of *the other*. The net effect, when progress is not made, is disenchantment and disengagement. As Daley put it, "education no longer happened in the community. It was the government's problem."

By taking municipal control of the schools, Daley took control of the product, and while much work needs to be done, Daley's school coup can actually be seen as an attempt to bring the school system into a more manageable position by not simply leaving it up to a system detached. Remove that system of detachment in which education becomes the problem of government and not the community, and therein lies control. Results become tangible. It's not perfect, but it is a step towards sustainability, much like CMAP encourages.

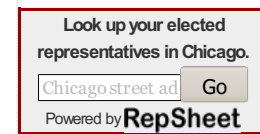
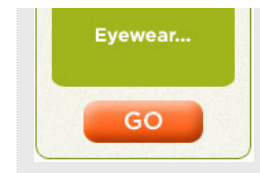
Sustainability is not necessarily meant to be a "green" word. Sustainability is an economic term being parlayed for "green design," and that alone highlights the importance of design itself. Daley is a great example of this. The words 'Daley' and 'control' a few sentences above almost automatically cause associations of autocracy. The man is in many ways **the face of Chicago caricatured**: 11th ward, Irish, Big City Crony Machine Boss. Dressed in a different design though, Daley might get more credit for when his political thinking goes beyond the reach of others and innovates.

And if there can be any complaints with CMAP's GOTO 2040, it's that innovation is not one of its heavier qualities. **There's been some criticism out there for the plan not showing this**, especially deficient as it is in the realm of innovating and creating new transportation. Frank Beal, the executive director of The Commercial Club of Chicago-created-CMAP- primogenitor **Chicago Metropolis 2020**, recently stated that "repair is paramount to expansion" when discussing fixes for the region's transit. Many of CM2020's proposals act as incubative ideas for CMAP and are outlined in their own recent guidebook, **Building Our Economy: Transportation for a New Illinois**. They are solid ideas grounded in the reality of lean times, and while CMAP fleshes out some of CM2020's suggestions further, with its five recommended capital projects, there seems to be a lack of a push to fundamentally change how people interact with how they move around. Obviously upkeep is needed, but if at the expense of truly innovative transport measures, it will constantly be a game of pothole and rail tie whack-a-mole.

This lack of innovation on the whole though is not necessarily a bad thing. For this is not meant to be a plan of bold innovation as much as it is of bold correctives. They are equally important, and at this stage in the game, perhaps the latter is even more so. It may not be as shiny to the public eye, but that will simply make the implementation all the more critical.

CMAP has been lucky to piggyback on the attention received by last year's centennial of Daniel Burnham's *Plan of Chicago*. It's unavoidable, if somewhat unfair, that the two plans will come under comparison. A close reading of Burnham's 1909 treatise shows it to be a blueprint for a spatial orientation that provides for immigrant assimilation and good citizenship through great design. His unattributed quote "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood" makes sense in the context of his book. It calls for a complete reorganization of city space and therefore, rebirth of

Each of the items
EveryBlock
The Expired Meter
Grande Americano
Greg Hinz
Illinois Coalition for
Immigrant and Refugee
Rights
Illinois Issues
Illinois Reason
Illinois Policy Institute
In These Times
It's My Mind
Jeff Berkowitz
Jesse Greenberg
John Fritchey's Open
House
LaborNotes
Lynn Sweet
Marathon Pundit
McHenry County Blog
Metropolitan Planning
Council
OneMan's Blog
PDA Illinois
Peoria Pundit
Planetizen
PostBourgie
Prairie State Blue
Progress Illinois
Progressive Advocacy
Ramsin Canon
Red State
Sweeney Report
Substance News (CPS
News)
Taibblog
Talking Points Memo
The Capitol Fax Blog
The Next Right
The Swamp
Think Progress
Ward Room
Working Life
Wurf White



A B O U T M E C H A N I C S

Mechanics is the politics section of **Gapers Block**, reflecting the diversity of viewpoints and beliefs of Chicagoans and Illinoisans. **More...**
Please see our submission guidelines.

Editor: Ramsin Canon, rc@gapersblock.com
Mechanics staff inbox: mechanics@gapersblock.com

Archives

By Category By Month

[Subscribe in a reader.](#)

citizen soul. The GOTO 2040 aims not quite so high, but just as strong -- CMAP recognizes the inherent underlying strengths of our City and our region, and seeks to solidify what's best by improving and strengthening the framework Chicagoland has in place. Chicago's got good bones. But it needs new moves. Let's learn a new dance.

— Ben Schulman

 Share |        |  Like | 9  retweet

 A D D A C O M M E N T

Name*

Email*

Website

Remember?

Please enter the letter Y in the field below:

L I V E C O M M E N T P R E V I E W

N O T E S & T A G S

Items marked with a * are required fields. Please respect each other. We reserve the right to delete any comments borne out of douchebaggery or that deal in assbattery.

Permitted tags and how to use them:

To link: `Link text`

To italicize: `Your text`

To bold: `Your text`

Copyright ©2003-2010 Gapers Block & respective authors. All rights reserved. No content may be reproduced without the express permission of Gapers Block. This site is made shiny with Movable Type and housed with Media Temple. Thank you, dear reader, for supporting the site and reading.

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Submissions](#) | [Contact](#) | [Shop](#) | [Top of Page](#)