



Restoring the Comprehensive Regional Planning Fund: Why It's Critical

There is no opportune time to stop planning for the future. The time isn't right when our economy is in crisis and future prosperity is uncertain. Nor is it when a chaotic housing market is forcing communities to deal with home foreclosures and decreased municipal revenues. It's not when water supply and quality are in question across a seven-county region that will add 2.8 million new residents by 2040.

And just when Illinois and the Chicago region are preparing long-overdue infrastructure investments that depend on billions in federal stimulus and transportation funding? That is certainly the wrong time.

Yet that will be the exact result unless Governor Quinn and the General Assembly restore funding for the state-wide Comprehensive Regional Planning Fund (CRPF).

About the CRPF

The fund was created in 2007 by Public Act 95-0677. It provides \$5 million annually to support regional planning in metropolitan and rural areas of Illinois, of which \$3.5 million is for the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), CMAP has an overall budget that relies primarily on \$11 million in U.S. Department of Transportation funds, which federal law requires be spent for regional transportation planning, with a 20 percent matching requirement.

In addition to providing the required matching of those federal dollars, the CRPF contribution to CMAP supports the agency's varied non-transportation activities, which include planning and technical assistance to municipalities on issues such as housing, community development, management of natural resources, data acquisition and analysis, and more.

Capacity at Risk

Loss of the CRPF will seriously reduce regional planning capacity. The following are among the examples of CMAP leadership that no other agency is suited to provide:

- Preparation of *GO TO 2040*, the region's first comprehensive plan, to guide development and investment for the 21st Century, which is on-schedule for completion in late 2010.
- Coordination of the region's response to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, including tracking of funding opportunities, tracking of projects, and reporting on successes.

- Assistance to local governments seeking to apply for federal foreclosure relief and related housing matters.
- Oversight of the Regional Water Supply Plan for an 11-county area that faces potential shortages without aggressive steps to conserve water by managing demand.
- Development of the Regional Indicators Project, to predict and measure outcomes of detailed strategies for guiding growth and preserving quality of life.

Federal Funding at Risk

The CRPF provides a source of stable, dedicated funding for effective comprehensive planning throughout Illinois. Without the ability to match federal transportation planning dollars, our agency and region would forfeit close to \$11 million in federal planning funds. Furthermore, because CMAP is the region's MPO, the inability to match our federal transportation planning funds and manage the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) could jeopardize all of the region's programmed transportation projects -- which total \$2 billion annually. (See graphic below.) This would also apply to all of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, as well as any new state capital bill intended to leverage federally appropriated dollars.

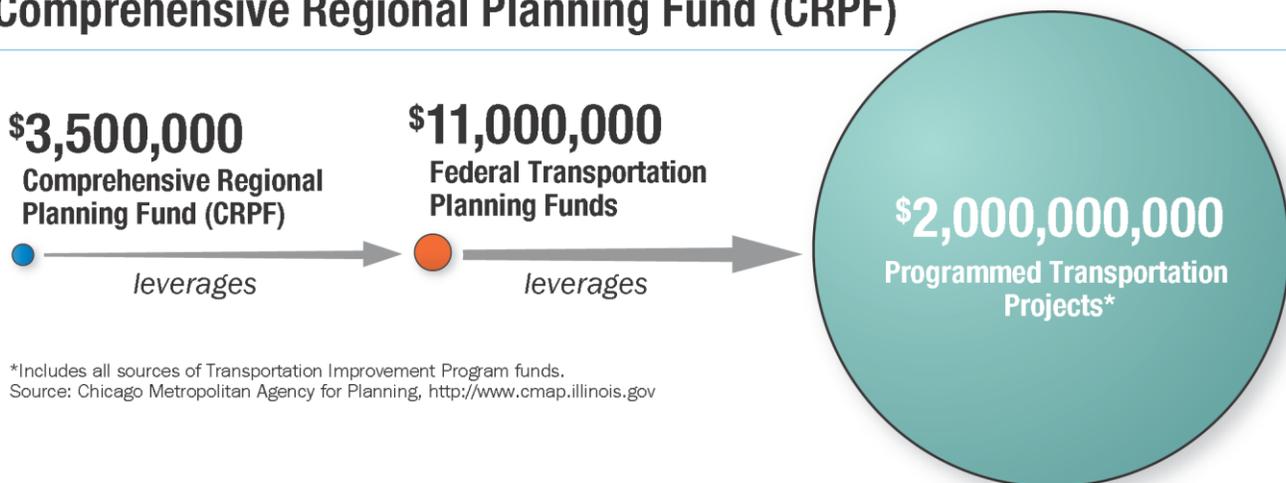
The Solution: Action by the General Assembly

CMAP and the CRPF were created by acts of the Illinois General Assembly. A legislative solution is required to restore the fund in collaboration with the Governor and his administration. Please work with your fellow State Senators and Representatives to reinstate the Comprehensive Regional Planning Fund.

For more information, please contact Jill Leary, CMAP chief of staff (312-386-8662 or jleary@cmmap.illinois.gov).

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Metropolitan Chicago: Annual Leveraging of the Illinois Comprehensive Regional Planning Fund (CRPF)



*Includes all sources of Transportation Improvement Program funds.
Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, <http://www.cmmap.illinois.gov>