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Oak Park Oak Leaves

Oak Park, IL

Published: Wednesday

Circ: 9,305

APRIL 23, 2008

What world will there be in 2040?



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0119
The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has begun its GO TO 2040 effort on behalf of northeastern Illinois' seven counties.

The plan will shape the region's transportation system and development patterns, while also addressing the natural environment, economic development, housing, education, human services and other factors shaping quality of life," says the press release.

"Good luck," say I.

What kind of world will they plan for?

Will it be one where the

price of fuel pushes individual transportation into the luxury category? Will people crowd into high-density areas around commuter train stations, such as Lake and Harlem, and live without a car, shopping in the neighborhood and either working at home or riding public transportation?

Will the distant suburbs be likewise centered around the commuter stations of a vastly enhanced system? Can such a system be built?

Will it be an America whose government develops housing, education, health and employment programs to benefit all citizens (circa 1946-1980), or one that believes in every man for himself (since)?

Will it be a post-Social Security world in which the lucky retirees can live in the spare rooms of their children? How would de-

velopment prepare for that type of housing while cramming people into high-rise apartment buildings?

Will it be a world in which a quality education is out of reach for a growing number of our children?

Will it still be a world in which a full-time job does not always provide a family's essentials, if you consider food, shelter and health care to be essential?

"The plan and its implementation campaign will be based on values that are shared across the region, including the desire for reduced congestion, for access to housing and human services, for good jobs, and for a healthy environment," said Randy Blankenhorn, CMAP executive director.

"I'm with you except for the part about shared

values," said I.

It seems to me most people share the opinion that all of those lovely things are great as long as somebody else is paying for them.

The agency will prepare plans and recommendations based on citizen input and expert testimony. The plan will likely be a sincere effort to make it a better world.

It will run up against powerful opponents whose interests do not coincide with the general welfare. Would you be surprised to learn there is no commuter train system in Detroit?

Who wins is the 2040 question. What do you think?

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