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Campaign to help local growth

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Thirty years from now, northeastern Illinois will contain 2.8 million new residents working at 1.8 million new jobs.

To help accommodate the estimated growth, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning has launched a campaign to help guide investment and development decisions across the seven-county region that includes DuPage County.

Dubbed GO TO 2040, the campaign will help planners "get a handle" on the growth that is coming, according to a statement released by CMAP. It is intended to shape the region's transportation system and development patterns and address the natural environment, economic development, housing, education, human services and other factors shaping the quality of life.

Officials say GO TO 2040 is metropolitan Chicago's first comprehensive regional planning campaign.

"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.

The Chicago Community Trust is providing financial and research support for the campaign by partnering with CMAP.

After CMAP finishes developing a regional vision, residents will be given opportunities in mid-2009 to comment on several scenarios that take a distinct approach to accommodating growth and maximizing regional prosperity and global competitiveness.

Based on the chosen scenario, the GO TO 2040 plan will be finalized in 2010 and its implementation will begin.

"We'll be providing extensive opportunities for people of all ages to imagine how they want the region to look in 2040 and beyond," Blankenhorn said.

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