



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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May 15, 2008

Via e-mail: [marisa.kollias@illinois.gov](mailto:marisa.kollias@illinois.gov)

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert  
Former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Glenn Poshard  
President, Southern Illinois University  
Co-Chairs, the Illinois Works Coalition  
The James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph, Suite 5-500  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Gentlemen:

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has been an early and vocal advocate for the need to pass a capital program in Illinois. Infrastructure (including transportation, water treatment, schools, housing, and open space) is the engine of economic prosperity. As a state and as a region, we are in serious danger of squandering our global competitive advantage.

CMAP was created specifically to prepare long-range plans for how to prioritize the investment of scarce dollars for transportation and other infrastructure. The public wants to know that their money is being spent wisely, according to a careful plan. Without that confidence, residents are unlikely to support new spending.

As long ago as December 2006, the CMAP Board issued a clear statement of principles about the need for a capital program that is based on accountability and transparency. Those five principles are:

- **Make it Significant.** It must be large enough to meet forecasted needs.
- **Make it Comprehensive.** No part of the transportation network can be neglected without affecting the whole. Non-transportation infrastructure cannot be ignored. This includes water treatment, schools, housing, and open space.

## Board Members

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Ian Doughty  
Stephen Schlickman

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Randy Blankenhorn

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- **Make the Project Selection Process Transparent and Results-Driven.** Select projects based on regionally approved evaluation criteria that produce agreed-upon results.
- **Support it with New Revenue.** Need an identifiable funding source to support both pay-as-you-go funding and new bonding authority.
- **Set Funds Aside for Planning.** The public deserves to know that their dollars are being spent wisely, effectively, and according to a well thought-out plan.

The CMAP Board wants to enthusiastically support a capital bill, but the funding must be adequate to preserve the state's economic competitiveness. Half-measures will not work. To be very direct, CMAP's support must also be contingent on our agency being part of a transparent process that emphasizes clear outcomes and accountability. This is what the leading newspapers are calling for, and we agree that the state's and region's residents deserve nothing less.

CMAP just launched *GO TO 2040* ([www.goto2040.org](http://www.goto2040.org)), metropolitan Chicago's first truly comprehensive planning campaign. For the first time, our region will set clear priorities and a strategy to get things done, with performance measures that are key to instilling public confidence.

The State of Illinois has a unique opportunity to make the case for strategic investments. The capital program, if passed, would likely be the last for many years, so we literally cannot afford to get it wrong. It's time to do the right thing and guarantee our continued economic competitiveness by passing a capital bill that adequately funds the infrastructure needs of the state, is outcome-based, and requires clear accountability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald R. Bennett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gerald R. Bennett  
Chair, CMAP Board

/stk