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## Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning asks residents to help plan for the future

By: Katie Leimkuehler/Triblocal.com staff reporter  
06/04/09 11:16 AM 2677 hits



A man visits the kiosk in the Sears Tower.

The year 2040 is far off for most people, but the **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning** is thinking of the future for area residents.

Starting this month, CMAP is launching a new initiative, **GO TO 2040**, metropolitan Chicago's first real comprehensive planning campaign, by hosting community workshops to gather input from residents.

The plan will guide growth for Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall,

Lake, McHenry and Will counties for the rest of this century.

"The ultimate goal is to create a new vision and strategies for the 21st century for these several counties," said CMAP Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn.

The campaign will also address issues focused on land use, transportation, natural environment, economic development, housing and human services such as education, health care and social services.

"We are hoping to really show people the relationships between transportation and land use decisions and how the impacts other areas like the environment," said CMAP associate planner Erin Aleman.

Blankenhorn said that they want people to look back in 30 years to say that correct decisions and investments were made.

"I think it's very hard for people to think 20 years away. They are concerned about their jobs and their kids today," Blankenhorn said. "People care about the future but they just don't have time to think about it and talk about it. We are providing them that opportunity."

Another aspect of the plan is called "Invent the Future" that asks for the public's input. The public will be able to learn and voice their preferred choices about three alternative scenarios for accommodating the 2.8 million new residents expected by 2040, according to CMAP.

"We want to put residents together and see how they envision the future for their children and grandchildren," he said.

CMAP will be hosting 50 workshops in several counties asking the public to contribute their ideas for the future of the economy and regional investments and policies. Participants will discuss vital issues in their community, designate priorities, review actions for moving forward and identify inevitable trade-offs.

"We want to get community residents together to discuss what choices are being made what is the impact of those choices," Blankenhorn said.

CMAP hosted their first workshop June 4 in Oak Park at Unity Temple with a turnout of 58 people.

"We talked about historic preservation and what kinds of tradeoffs are needed to make a sustainable environment while preserving the historic homes and provide great transit access," Aleman said, who facilitated the workshop.

Another way for the public to participate is to visit one of the interactive **GO TO 2040** kiosks found at several locations, including Millennium Park, Metra stations, libraries, festivals and other sites around the region.

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"We trying to provide people with a variety of opportunities to get involved," Aleman said.

CMAP also has developed Web tools with MetroQuest that allow users to create their own future growth scenarios and compare them with friends and other users.

"There are many alternate strategies to get to where you want to go depending on how you develop your resources," Blankenhorn said. "All of them have different benefits and consequences, there is no right answer."

Blankenhorn said that it's crucial to hear from people in these communities and what concerns they have for the future.

"The most important thing for people to know is that this is their plan, they need to help us create it," Blankenhorn said. "We need people that care about their communities and to tell us what they think."

CMAP will host a workshop from 7 to 9 p.m., June 23 at the DuPage County Government Center Auditorium, 421 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton.

For more information or to see the workshop schedule, visit [www.goto2040.org](http://www.goto2040.org).

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By [Katie Leimkuehler](#)/Triblocal.com reporter

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