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Preferred Regional Scenario

An interim product of the GO TO 2040 plan

November 10, 2009

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. The preferred Regional Scenario's role in *GO TO 2040* 2
Building on the Regional Vision 2
Regional Vision themes and Regional Scenario policy directions 3
3. Why we should pursue the preferred Regional Scenario 5
How we get there: components of the preferred Regional Scenario 8
Local infrastructure and the built environment 9
Regional infrastructure and the built environment 11
Non-physical infrastructure and the policy environment 13
4. How the preferred Regional Scenario was developed 15

Appendices (not included in this draft) will include:

Appendix A: Alternative scenario evaluation
Appendix B: Public engagement
Appendix C: Socioeconomic forecasts

DRAFT

1. Introduction

The centennial of Daniel Burnham's and Edward Bennett's *Plan of Chicago* gives us an opportunity to revisit the impact of that plan on our region. It also should challenge us to think about our long-term future. How will future generations look back on the choices that we are making today?

Thinking about our region's future raises many critical questions. What businesses will drive our economy, and what types of employment will be available? How will our transportation system function? Will we have clean air and water? How will we accommodate growth and demographic change? The answers depend on how we respond to challenges facing the region. Today's policy and investment choices will determine quality of life for decades to come.

One of metropolitan Chicago's foremost challenges is to prosper in the rapidly changing global economy. As parts of the economy grow, shrink, or disappear entirely, we will need to continually reinvent ourselves as a region and continue to retain and attract jobs and businesses. Maintaining a strong and diverse economy brings its own set of challenges. Our infrastructure – including transportation, housing, water, wastewater, stormwater, open space, energy, and telecommunications systems – is barely sufficient to sustain the current economy, let alone allow it to adapt and expand. To achieve sustainable prosperity, we also must ensure that none of our residents are left behind as the economy and social systems adapt to change.

Reducing consumption of natural resources must also be a high priority. To help create a sustainable future, we must limit our emissions of greenhouse gases – the chemicals that cause climate change – and also be prepared to adapt to a future in which climate change has occurred. We must address our energy supply and demand, by embracing clean energy sources and by reducing consumption. Also, our region's demand for water continues to increase, while supplies do not; if current trends continue, parts of the region could face water shortages by 2040.

The resources to achieve our goals are finite. Every decision requires trade-offs, every expenditure has "opportunity costs," and every policy has consequences. Especially in today's daunting economic climate, we need to make sure that policies and investments make the best possible use of public and private funds.

In short, the region has difficult decisions to make, and the need for action is clearly immediate. Many of today's challenges are the result of policy decisions made -- or deferred -- in past decades. Yet the benefits of effective planning can actually emerge quite rapidly when the will to implement those plans is strong.

As a region, we must seize this moment. And with its *GO TO 2040* plan, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is prepared to lead. This preferred Regional Scenario builds on the Regional Vision and on many months of research and public input. It provides the clear path toward completion and implementation of the first truly comprehensive regional plan for northeastern Illinois.

DRAFT

2. The preferred Regional Scenario's role in *GO TO 2040*

To meet its many challenges, our region needs to carefully choose policies and investments that will lead to positive results, both now and well into the future. The long-range, comprehensive *GO TO 2040* plan is meant to do just this for metropolitan Chicago. Led by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), which was formed in 2005 to integrate transportation and land use planning in the region, the *GO TO 2040* plan will set the course to sustain our region's prosperity through 2040 and beyond.

This report is an important interim product of the *GO TO 2040* plan. It describes the *GO TO 2040* preferred Regional Scenario, which is a combination of actions that will prepare the region to achieve its goals for 2040. The scenario goes beyond the broad goal statements of the Regional Vision by identifying in more detail the best course of action to reach the vision's goals. But it does not go as far as recommending specific policies and investments; this level of detail will be stated in the full *GO TO 2040* plan.

If the preferred Regional Scenario becomes our region's reality, it will bring substantial quality-of-life benefits. Infrastructure will be more effective to use and efficient to maintain. The economy will be stronger, and public costs will be contained. The environment will be healthier, and pressure on natural resources will be eased. The region as a whole will be a more equitable place to live and work.

To attain this future, our region must focus on the policies and investments that matter most. We need to:

- Create more compact, mixed-use, livable communities to serve as the building blocks of our region's future development.
- Invest more effectively in education and workforce development, while fostering a business climate that encourages innovation by the private sector.
- Improve the region's high-quality system of parks and open space, while using conservation measures to reduce our consumption of energy and water.
- Plan multi-modally for transportation and make transportation investments targeted to clear economic and environmental outcomes, while finding more sustainable ways to finance infrastructure improvements.
- Track our performance to assess where to make improvements to reach the region's desired future.

These priorities are described in more detail later in this report, and they will be at the core of implementing the *GO TO 2040* plan.

Building on the Regional Vision

The preferred Regional Scenario builds on the Regional Vision that CMAP put forth in June 2008. The Regional Vision describes where our region should be in 2040, organized by themes such as quality of life, economic competitiveness, environment, and many others. During the 18 months since it was adopted, CMAP and its partners have carried out intensive research and analysis of potential

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implementation strategies, while also conducting extensive public outreach to get residents' and stakeholders' views for how they would implement the vision. While regional unanimity isn't possible, the public feedback has been extremely supportive of the general implementation strategies that have been under consideration, with most residents clearly wanting better transit, more compact development, and preservation of natural resources.

To take the *GO TO 2040* plan to completion and implementation, this preferred Regional Scenario is the next major step, in which CMAP is articulating the strategies this region should pursue to make the Regional Vision a reality. In addition to extensive, thoughtful input from residents and stakeholders, the research that underpins these policy directions has been rigorous. The research includes more than three dozen in-depth strategy papers (http://www.goto2040.org/strategy_papers.aspx) authored by CMAP and its partners, on topics suggested by the Regional Vision. CMAP also continues to publish a series of Regional Snapshot reports (http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/snapshot.aspx) that analyze broad areas requiring further in-depth study, such as the jobs-housing balance, air quality, the Latino population, infill, and more. Ongoing work includes an analysis of regional taxation issues and a study of infrastructure and economic development as it relates to the freight industry. CMAP also continues developing the Regional Indicators Project (http://www.goto2040.org/indicators.aspx), a close partnership with The Chicago Community Trust to establish metrics to predict and measure progress by the region and its communities in implementing the Regional Scenario and Vision.

The next section briefly recaps the Regional Vision's central themes, and how each relates to policy directions in the preferred Regional Scenario.

Regional Vision themes and Regional Scenario policy directions

The *GO TO 2040* Regional Vision describes our desired future in terms of the region's **quality of life**, **natural environment**, **social systems**, **economy**, and **governance**. The economy theme contained a section on **transportation** which is also treated as a separate theme below. Throughout all of these vision themes, three other cross-cutting issues recur: **sustainability**, **equity**, and **innovation**.

Vision Theme: Quality of Life. The Regional Vision describes a future quality of life based on "attractive, interdependent communities" that offer a "range of housing options," "diverse… transportation and recreation choices," and access to "employment, education, health care, and other regional assets [such as] an abundance of art forms."

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To strengthen existing communities, and to find opportunities to encourage new development and redevelopment that is denser and designed for mixed uses.*

Vision Theme: Natural Environment. The Regional Vision describes a future environment in which "open space [is] preserved and enhanced," the region consumes "less energy and fewer natural resources," treats "water…as a critical natural resource," preserves "the overall ecological health and diversity of the region," and improves its residents' health through "the availability of open space, transportation and recreation options, healthy food, clean water, and clean air."

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To improve the region's system of parks and open space, providing recreation options and protecting ecosystem function, and to conserve natural resources. This requires increasing the*

resources devoted to protection of an open space network, designing communities to meet environmental goals, taking a proactive approach to both supply and demand for energy and water, supporting green jobs and industry, and directly incorporating local food systems in the long-range plan.

Vision Theme: Social Systems. The Regional Vision describes future social systems that "foster an educated, healthy, safe, and involved populace," housing that is "safe, decent, affordable, and stable," and "access to quality education, jobs, health care, cultural and social amenities, and transportation" for all residents.

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To pursue a balanced housing supply, with denser development that helps increase affordability while minimizing household transportation costs, and to support and encourage policies and programs to fill housing gaps that cannot be met by the private market. To improve the quality of education in the region, by eliminating gaps and increasing collaboration across early childhood, K-12, and higher education systems.*

Vision Theme: Economy. The Regional Vision describes a future economy that "ensures superior job opportunities" by "enhancing our…education systems and physical infrastructure… [as well as] workforce development programs and other training" and being a "center of innovation across all disciplines."

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To support economic growth and innovation without overly involving the public sector in private sector decisions, by investing in infrastructure, education, and workforce training for jobs of all skill levels, and by creating a supportive business environment, including addressing tax policy.*

Vision Theme: Transportation. The Regional Vision describes a future transportation system that is "safe, accessible, easy to navigate, affordable, and coordinated with nearby land use" and that supports "reinvestment in our existing communities…leading to environmentally sensitive and fiscally efficient outcomes."

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To gain operational efficiencies from existing infrastructure, make additional investments in transit and freight, use innovative and sustainable finance and system management ideas, and encourage choices that result in livable, transit-supportive communities.*

Vision Theme: Governance. The Regional Vision describes a region where "governance systems [are] characterized by high degrees of intergovernmental coordination" with links between physical planning and "social systems like health care, public safety, education, and social services."

> ***Scenario Policy Direction:*** *To increase data sharing, governmental transparency, and intergovernmental collaboration, and to remove artificial barriers across programs at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.*

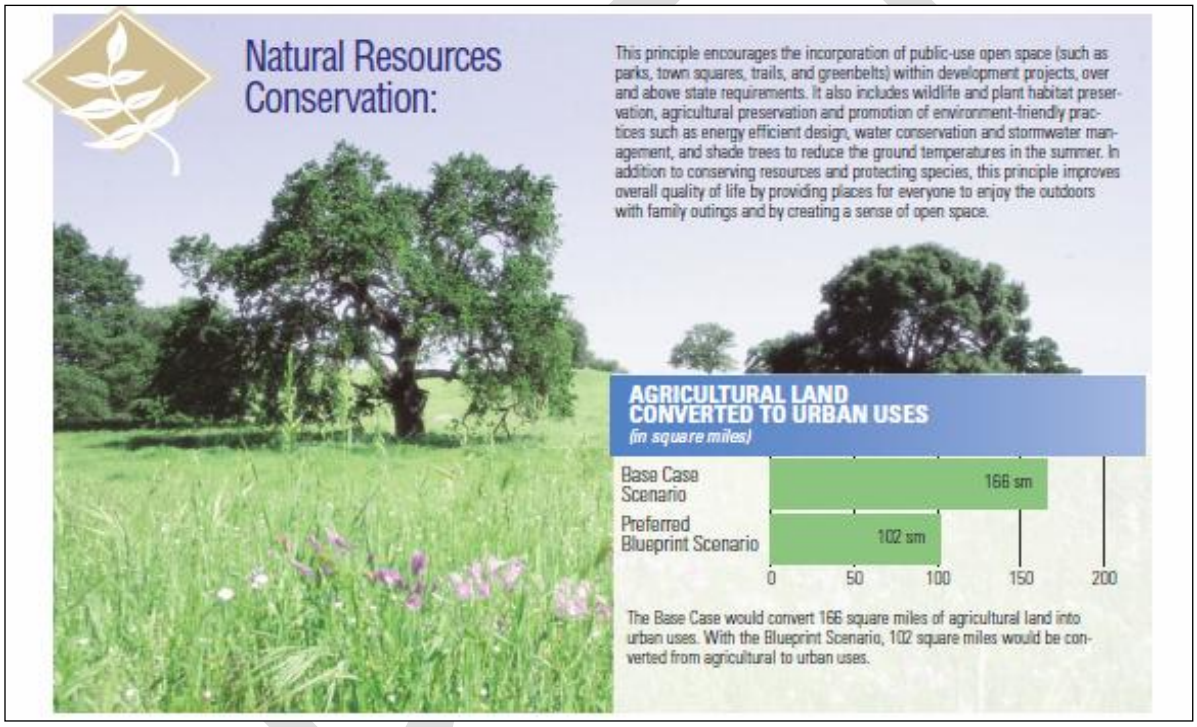
DRAFT

3. Why we should pursue the preferred Regional Scenario

By pursuing and implementing the policies of the preferred Regional Scenario as described in this report, our region will reap significant and lasting quality-of-life benefits. We expect a stronger economy with lower fiscal costs; a healthier environment; better-performing infrastructure systems; and a more equitable region. This section contrasts the expected regional characteristics of pursuing the preferred Regional Scenario with the results of continuing current trends.

This section is still under development, and calculation of expected impacts is underway. Below, the outcomes are listed for which impacts will be calculated and discussed. For each, an initial description of the expected change and the rationale for this change are given.

This section of the report will include graphics and illustrations representing the difference between the preferred Regional Scenario and a base case for each of these outcomes. A sample of what this will look like, copied from another regional agency that has gone through a similar process, is pasted below.



- Economic competitiveness
  Economic prosperity is caused by many factors, including high-quality infrastructure, a skilled labor force, a supportive business environment that fosters innovation, and a good regional quality of life, among others. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *improve regional prosperity* by directly addressing each of these contributors to economic growth.

- Job accessibility
  Access to jobs is measured by the number of jobs that the "average" resident of the region would be able to access within a certain amount of time by car and by transit. The transportation system investments and improved jobs-housing balance of the preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *increase job access*.

- Infrastructure cost
  The region has an enormous supply of physical infrastructure, including transportation, sewer, water, stormwater, and other types, and maintaining this infrastructure is quite costly. Using existing infrastructure as efficiently as possible by reinvesting in our existing communities can reduce the need for new infrastructure. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *reduce the cost of new infrastructure needed to support growth*, allowing resources to be focused on improving our existing infrastructure and making strategic improvements.

- Energy and greenhouse gas emissions
  The region's principal sources of greenhouse gas emissions are from the electricity and natural gas used to power our buildings, and the consumption of gasoline by private and commercial vehicles on our roads. The preferred Regional Scenario includes a denser development pattern, conservation measures in new and older buildings, and a more efficient transportation system, and is expected to *reduce regional energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions*.

- Air quality
  The region's air quality has been continually improving for several decades, due primarily to technological improvements and stricter federal regulations. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to continue to *improve air quality* through increased use of transit and non-motorized transportation modes.

- Land consumption
  The conversion of farmland and open space to developed uses will occur to some extent as our region grows, but reducing the rate of consumption is an important regional goal. The preferred Regional Scenario contains a number of policies that affect land consumption, including its reinvest in existing communities, promotion of county and local agricultural preservation, support for local food systems, preservation of sensitive environmental land, and incorporation of natural lands and agricultural activities into some new developments; therefore, it is expected to *reduce consumption of farmland and open space*.

- Water use
  Water supply is an issue of growing importance for the region, particularly those parts of the region reliant on groundwater, where increased pressure on water supplies is being felt. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *reduce water consumption* due to its denser development pattern, which allows water systems to operate more efficiently, and also due to its support for water conservation measures.

- Water quality / imperviousness
  The quality of the region's lakes, rivers, streams, and other water bodies is important for health and biodiversity. Future water quality can be approximated through the concentrations in impervious surfaces (those through which water cannot flow, like concrete). The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *reduce impervious surfaces* through reinvestment in existing communities and using green, low-impact design techniques for development and redevelopment.

DRAFT

- Housing and transportation cost
  Addressing housing and transportation cost together highlights the increased transportation cost that households face in lower-density, auto-dependent areas, even if housing costs in those areas are inexpensive. This can be calculated through the "H+T index", a measure developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT). The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *reduce H+T costs* due to its investments in transit infrastructure and increased development in areas with high transit access.

- Transportation mode share
  Providing transportation options will increase the use of public transportation, non-motorized travel modes (walking and biking), and carpooling. Allowing more use of these transportation modes can reduce congestion, improve the natural environment, and create more livable communities. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *increase the use of alternative transportation modes* through its investments in transportation improvements and denser, mixed-use development pattern.

- Walkability
  The design of our communities is critically important for quality of life in the region. The community-focused development pattern of the preferred Regional Scenario, and its investment in alternative transportation, is expected to *increase walkability* in the region.

- Congestion
  The region's traffic congestion is among the worst in the nation, with negative impacts on the economy, environment, and quality of life. The transportation investments and denser land use pattern in the preferred Regional Scenario are expected to *reduce congestion*.

- Human and community development outcomes
  Many of the positive impacts of the preferred Regional Scenario are in areas beyond physical planning. The investments in human capital, infrastructure investments that allow walking and biking, and investments in low-income communities will have *positive impacts on human and community development outcomes* in areas such as education, health, safety, hunger, food systems, workforce development, arts and culture, emergency preparedness, and human relations.

- Effects on elderly and disabled residents
  Long-range planning must be sensitive to all members of all communities, including those with special needs or mobility restrictions such as elderly or disabled residents. The preferred Regional Scenario includes design features to improve the accessibility of our region's communities, as well as investments in transit service and non-motorized transportation to improve mobility. Therefore the preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *improve quality of life for elderly and disabled residents*.

- Environmental justice and equity
  "Environmental justice" involves ensuring that the benefits and burdens of regional transportation decisions are shared by all socioeconomic groups, specifically including low-income and minority populations. This concept is being measured in terms of economic growth and increased access to jobs in areas with high concentrations of low-income or minority populations. The preferred Regional Scenario is expected to *increase economic growth* and *increase access to jobs* in "environmental justice" areas.

DRAFT

How we get there: components of the preferred Regional Scenario

This section describes the most important policy directions that are contained within the preferred Regional Scenario. It is meant to communicate priorities rather than to present an exhaustive list of all of the policies that the plan may support or encourage. The following focuses only on policies that are the most important or that require the deepest analysis and discussion.

Traditionally, comprehensive plans have chapters that separately cover transportation, housing, environment, and other topics. This report deliberately avoids that structure, linking inter-related issues that cannot be addressed effectively in "silos." Instead, the policies and investments of the preferred Regional Scenario are divided into three main categories:

- Local infrastructure and the built environment
- Regional infrastructure and the built environment
- Non-physical infrastructure and the policy environment

As explained in the introduction, this report does not contain detailed recommendations for action, which will instead be included in the draft *GO TO 2040* plan to be released in May 2010.

DRAFT

Local infrastructure and the built environment

The many planning decisions made at the local level have, in sum, major regional impacts. This section describes the approach of *GO TO 2040* to land use, housing, and overall community livability. The plan's approach to these issues is to support the efforts of local governments to improve livability within their communities, and to encourage a future pattern of more compact, mixed-use development that focuses growth where infrastructure already exists.

Local control

It is important for local control of land use to continue, and none of the plan's recommendations should be interpreted as conflicting with this local responsibility. The plan will support intergovernmental coordination and cooperation, while recognizing that land use decision-making authority rests with individual local governments.

Denser, mixed-use reinvestment

The region's development pattern is extremely diverse, reflecting the unique characters of our many communities; growth between now and 2040 will be equally diverse. The plan will recommend that opportunities for moderately dense, mixed-use development be pursued, but the interpretation and application of these concepts will vary by community. The plan will also recommend that much of the region's growth occur as reinvestment, or in areas within existing communities across the region that are already served by infrastructure, while recognizing that some development in currently undeveloped areas will also be necessary to support expected growth. As noted above, local governments will continue to have responsibility for land use decision-making, including the appropriate implementation of these concepts in a way that respects local historic context, provides sufficient parks and open space, and addresses other local priorities.

Achieving a pattern of denser, mixed-use, reinvestment-focused development – which can be done in communities of any type across the region – is critically important to the plan's goals. Long-range modeling of different future land use patterns showed that development of this type can have significant positive impacts in lowering the costs of infrastructure, reducing congestion and supporting alternative transportation modes, improving housing affordability, and minimizing environmental impacts. Denser, mixed-use development creates more accessible communities, allowing older residents to "age in place," improving mobility for disabled residents, and leading to an overall healthier region. Land use is also critically important to support the expansion of public transit, another of the plan's key recommendations.

The plan will focus on strategies to help local governments overcome challenges and pursue opportunities for redevelopment. One important element is the economic and financial feasibility of redevelopment projects. The public sector cannot create a market for redevelopment where none exists, but it can make investments in infrastructure to make redevelopment projects more viable. In particular, transit improvements are critical for supporting growth and can be a catalyst for redevelopment. Other actions, such as remediating brownfields, reconsidering parking policies and requirements, and locating public buildings (such as schools) in areas where redevelopment is sought, can also contribute to increasing the viability of development in these places.

Housing affordability

The *GO TO 2040* plan treats housing as a critical part of the region's infrastructure. The plan's main direction is to pursue a balanced supply of housing distributed throughout the region, with access from

DRAFT

affordable housing to regional assets. A balanced housing supply that provides options positively affects many measures of quality of life, allowing people to live closer to work and giving groups with lower incomes, including older residents and young households, more housing choice. It is especially important to provide opportunities for affordable housing in places with transit service as part of transit oriented development projects. As noted above, one benefit of a denser overall development pattern is increased affordability, particularly if the costs of transportation and housing are considered together. When households are able to spend less of their income on housing or transportation, a higher portion of their income can be spent in other areas, and the entire economy benefits.

The majority of the region's affordable housing is created by the private sector, and this is expected to continue. A key strategy for creating an adequate and regionally balanced supply of affordable housing is for local governments to support and permit its construction. Affordable housing and a balanced housing supply are broad concepts and there will be varying ways that local governments define these terms to meet local needs. Similarly, there are a variety of housing policy options that work best when targeted to specific situations, rather than broadly applied. For example, housing preservation, inclusionary zoning, or removal of regulatory barriers are solutions that may be appropriate in different parts of the region. In addition to supporting affordable housing provision through the private market, the plan will support appropriate roles for other supplemental public programs.

Resource conservation

The plan will call for resource conservation efforts, including water and energy conservation; these can be effectively applied at the local level or by individual households and businesses. This will include a focus on green design for new developments and buildings, energy codes to guide new development, retrofits or renovations of existing buildings, and support for the growth of green jobs. Many of these improvements, in addition to imparting environmental benefits, also reduce energy costs for households and businesses, increasing affordability. The plan will also treat our farmland and food supply as an important natural resource, and emphasize local food production and access to fresh food as a means to reduce energy consumption, improve health and the natural environment, support the agricultural economy, and increase a sense of community.

Resource conservation will help to reduce the region's greenhouse gas emissions, but is only part of the solution. Cleaner energy sources are needed to power our buildings, and cleaner fuels and more efficient vehicles must be part of the solution to reduce emissions from the transportation sector. While these issues are addressed at a larger scale than the region, the plan will support efforts to develop cleaner energy sources or use technological advancements to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

DRAFT

Regional infrastructure and the built environment

Local land use decisions and regional infrastructure investments are interrelated and should be mutually supportive. Our region relies on a strong infrastructure system for its future prosperity and livability. Regional infrastructure is defined here to include both "gray" infrastructure, primarily including transportation, energy, water, stormwater, and wastewater infrastructure, as well as "green" infrastructure, referring to networks of open space including waterways.

Maximizing use of existing infrastructure

Priority will be given to the preservation and maintenance of existing infrastructure at a level that is safe and adequate. In the transportation area, this involves continued routine maintenance activities, but also maximizing the use of infrastructure and preserving its capacity through technological and operational solutions. For other infrastructure such as water, stormwater, and sewer systems, this means replacing our aging pipes and other infrastructure, which requires significant investment; in the case of "green" infrastructure, it means maintaining our existing high-quality open space.

This focus on preservation and maintenance is expected to have positive economic impacts. Research has found that reinvestment in existing infrastructure generally has greater economic benefit than new construction. Also, a more compact, mixed-use development pattern – discussed in the previous section of this report – can reduce the need for additional physical infrastructure, lowering future construction and maintenance costs. Ensuring that infrastructure is sufficient to support this redevelopment is a priority.

Prioritizing investments

In the current economic climate, it is critically important that the region prioritize investments based on long-term impacts, ensuring that we are making the best use of scarce funding. Major transportation capital projects, such as new roadways or rail lines, will be evaluated and prioritized in a later step of the plan. For other non-transportation infrastructure, prioritization of investment will be a recommendation of *GO TO 2040*, and the plan will call for the relevant decision-making groups to use evaluation criteria that include long-term economic impacts when making infrastructure investment decisions. Regional infrastructure should also be designed to enhance environmental features and be sensitive to local context.

As noted above, maintenance and preservation of existing infrastructure is a priority, but the region also needs to improve and enhance our infrastructure. In the transportation area, this is particularly important in the areas of public transit and freight, and these topics are covered in more detail later in this section. Beyond these, strategic highway improvements should be targeted to achieve particular economic goals or to reduce congestion hotspots. Also, bicycle and pedestrian travel is important, and a multimodal "Complete Streets" approach to transportation planning will be supported by the plan.

Other public infrastructure systems such as water, stormwater, and sewer face similar issues. New growth will require the expansion of these systems, but these should be prioritized to best meet the region's goals. Energy and telecommunications systems are also critical, and the public and private sectors will be encouraged to work together to consider long-term economic impacts when making investment decisions, and to ensure that regulations governing energy and telecommunications infrastructure do not limit the ability of private industry to adapt and innovate.

DRAFT

"Green" infrastructure

The plan will also address strengthening the region's "green infrastructure," made up of an interconnected network of land and water, ranging from large open space areas to small-scale green stormwater management practices. Such a network will benefit our natural environment, improve biodiversity, and support ecosystem function. Green infrastructure is also shown to improve the health of our residents, and the region's overall economy; public support for additional regional and local open space has been shown to be strong.

Prioritization is no less important for this type of infrastructure, and the plan will recommend targeting acquisition and restoration activities in the most sensitive or valuable environmental lands to preserve biodiversity, increase the supply of parks and open space in parts of the region that have shortages of these features, or provide important connections between open space areas. This approach also highlights the value of open space for stormwater management and considers waterways to be part of the green infrastructure system.

Transportation system finance and expansion

Any recommendations for improvement or expansion of the transportation system will require reconsideration of existing resource distribution or additional funding beyond what is now available. Due to the scale of our needs and the difficulty of increasing taxes, we will need innovative ways of financing transportation improvements beyond the federal and state gas tax and other conventional sources, although these sources will remain important. Options being explored include Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fees to replace or supplement the gas tax, "value capture" strategies as part of new transit service extensions, public-private partnerships for new facilities, user fees such as congestion pricing, and others.

Transit improvements have broad support across the entire region, and improving transit regionwide is a high priority. Improvements to transit service are shown to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the regional economy, provide important connections between jobs and housing, and support reinvestment in existing communities; these benefits are recognized by residents, as evidenced by the high level of support for public transit expressed during CMAP's public engagement. The plan will support new transit service or expansion of service into areas that are currently underserved, provided that it is complemented by land use planning and infrastructure investment that supports transit. Because of the extremely strong link between the success of transit service and the character of nearby development, the importance of supportive land use planning cannot be overemphasized. Also, inter-regional high speed rail will be an important element of the plan's approach to transit, requiring extensive coordination outside of the region.

The region's freight system is a critical component of the regional – and national – economy, and the plan will recommend freight improvements to preserve this important asset. These include rail-focused freight investments (including and going beyond the CREATE program) and a similar system of truck-focused infrastructure improvements. Beyond physical infrastructure, having a skilled labor force able to access jobs within the freight industry is also important, and the plan will also recommend improving the links between education and training opportunities and the needs of the freight industry.

DRAFT

Non-physical infrastructure and the policy environment

GO TO 2040 will address broad issues of governance and policy, which are equally important as physical infrastructure is to our region's future. Many of these issues are beyond the traditional focus of regional planning agencies, but some, including human capital, innovation, tax policy, and the equitable distribution of economic benefits, are too important to the region's future prosperity for a comprehensive plan to ignore. To help the region to attract and retain business and jobs, the plan needs to support activities that make the region attractive to the private sector and contribute to a skilled workforce.

An important role for CMAP is to address these broader policy issues by providing data and tracking key indicators. These indicators will be used to measure how well the plan is meeting its goals, and to establish accountability for its implementation. An initial report on the status of key indicators will be released as part of the completed *GO TO 2040* plan in October 2010.

Workforce and human capital

The quality of our labor force will be one of the most important factors influencing future prosperity. The economic importance of a skilled, educated workforce is recognized by our region's leaders and the general public regionwide, and is reinforced by research that shows education levels to be the strongest predictor of future economic growth for regions. Improving the labor force will require increases in the quality of education systems in the region, particularly identifying and eliminating gaps between early childhood, K-12, and higher education systems; increased collaboration between these education levels through a comprehensive P-20 (preschool through advanced education) approach will be recommended. Similarly, gaps between education systems, employer needs, and workforce development programs need to be addressed, with particular attention to increasing the role of community colleges as a critical link in this relationship. These efforts should include workforce training programs for jobs not requiring advanced education and should support development of skills relevant to green businesses. Also, the region will need to continually attract and retain skilled and educated workers, and will support arts and culture and other amenities that are shown to be effective at this.

Innovation

To support our future prosperity, the plan will seek to facilitate a business environment that encourages innovation. The plan's approach is based on the concept that the public sector does not by itself create innovation, but that it can support it. In particular, appropriate directions for the plan are to coordinate with public and private sectors and educational institutions to support innovation, and to collect and disseminate data on innovation trends. The plan will call for a particular focus on "green jobs," including manufacturing components for alternative energy generation and similar industries, or construction employment involving energy or water conservation improvements.

Tax policy

The plan must recognize the importance of tax policy to economic growth and development decisions within the region. The current tax system causes the region's local governments to rely on sales and property tax as their primary revenue sources, with far-reaching land use, development, and economic impacts. Critical issues to address in the plan include the impact of state revenue distribution arrangements, property tax classifications and limitations on rate increases, the sustainability of state motor fuel tax, local tax capacity, and other sales, property, or income tax issues that affect development decisions, local government finance, or transportation system funding.

DRAFT

Distribution of growth

The plan must address the distribution of economic growth, specifically ensuring that the economic benefits of *GO TO 2040* are fairly distributed throughout the region and have a positive impact on our lowest-income population groups. A goal of the plan is reduction of poverty, which improves health and education outcomes while reducing crime, hunger, and other negative outcomes. In turn, improving the economic situation of lower-income people creates additional economic growth, as their workforce participation is increased. The plan also seeks to maintain jobs in the region that pay a good wage but do not require advanced education.

A critical part of this approach is to encourage economic growth through reinvestment in disadvantaged communities, particularly those with existing concentrations of affordable housing, but it is recognized that the public sector cannot by itself successfully create this growth. Instead, long-term solutions such as investments in infrastructure and in the labor force, as well as providing access between these areas and job centers, will be recommended in the plan. The plan should ensure that the benefits and burdens of the region's economic growth are shared fairly among its communities.

Intergovernmental coordination and transparency

Increasing intergovernmental coordination will be among the plan's key recommendations. In a number of areas, public programs would deliver better services by coordinating efforts across agencies, such as those involved in early childhood education, health, and hunger.

Across the region, an enormous number of federal, state, regional, and local agencies currently collect administrative data for their own use. The plan will call for real-time sharing of this data by public agencies with each other, as well as other organizations and residents, which will improve efficiency for a variety of public services. Such increased transparency of data and improved intergovernmental data sharing is vitally important for emergency preparedness, and it will be an important factor in the success of the Regional Indicators project.

"Unsiloing" federal and state programs.

The best-laid plans can go to waste without incentives for implementation at the regional and local level, where most of the decision-making authority exists for coordinated transportation, environment, and housing. For regional planning and community-level implementation to be aligned effectively, federal and state funding and regulatory programs need to be removed from their "silos" and provide regions flexibility in identifying the best ways to achieve identified outcomes, rather than specific program-based grants. While pilot programs and "seed money" will be necessary early on, over the longer term these funding sources need to be sustainable and significant.

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4. How the preferred Regional Scenario was developed

Several years of research, analysis, and public engagement were used to develop the preferred scenario described in this report. Through a series of regional snapshot reports and strategy research papers written during 2008 and 2009, CMAP developed a base of understanding of the many important issues and potential policy responses that confront the region. These research papers are available at www.goto2040.org.

Based on this research and feedback from experts around the region, three alternative future scenarios, each featuring a distinct combination of policy and investment choices, were developed. These were compared to a "reference scenario" which continued current trends, and the pros and cons of each were analyzed. Descriptions and analysis of the three scenarios were released for public comment during summer 2009, and are available online at www.goto2040.org/scenarios. More detail on scenario evaluation is included in Appendix A (not part of this draft).

A wide variety of public engagement activities took place during summer 2009. Participants could choose their depth of participation, ranging from taking a two-question survey to exploring CMAP's scenario evaluation results in detail. Opportunities were available for face-to-face contact at over fifty workshops, online participation that did not require direct interaction, or visits to CMAP booths or kiosks located around the region. The primary public engagement tool used during the summer was an interactive software tool, called MetroQuest, which let users experiment with different types of transportation investments and development patterns and view the outcomes of these decisions. More detail on the public engagement process is included in Appendix B (not part of this draft).

The policies, strategies, and investments within the preferred scenario were used to generate a set of socioeconomic forecasts that are used for the calculation of the quantitative measures within this report. County-level totals of population, households, and jobs and discussion of the methodology used are included in Appendix C (not part of this draft).

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