

Principles for Illinois Transportation Funding

Metropolitan Chicago's infrastructure, which has given the region its historic strategic advantage, remains in need of critical investment. Recent increases to existing revenue sources and indexing to make them more sustainable provided significant progress, but rebuilding and modernizing the transportation system requires additional long-term, equitable, user-supported funding solutions. These funds must be directed to projects with the greatest impact. The State of Illinois and metropolitan Chicago should lead the way on transformative policies to support infrastructure projects with long-term benefits for livability, mobility, and the economy. **The following principles are essential to any transportation revenue proposal:**

Sustainable – A long-term solution adaptable to evolving mobility trends

New transportation revenues must provide ongoing, sufficient, and sustainable funding to improve and enhance the system. Diversified sources improve the reliability of funding. Revenues should grow sustainably by indexing them to inflation to keep pace with the costs of operating and improving the system, which inevitably increase over time. Revenues must also change to adapt to new technology like electric vehicles, and changing preferences for how to get around.

User supported – Fees paid by those who gain the most benefit from the system

Costs should be paid primarily by those who use the transportation system or derive the most benefit. This may include replacing traditional revenue sources with modern user fees such as a road usage charge and setting varying rates based on vehicles' impacts on the system. Some sources, such as tolling, could raise revenues based on the benefits that users or businesses reap from specific improvements, while managing congestion.

Equitable – Options that consider the ability of users to pay

Some revenue sources can have disproportionate impacts on low income residents. To promote equity, new revenues should address the burden of increased costs on lower income individuals or offset such costs through other tax strategies.

Performance-based – Transparent criteria to address critical needs

Project selection criteria must be used to fund the projects of greatest benefit to the public. A performance-based approach can result in a geographically equitable distribution of funding while allowing all areas to access the funds they need for large, important projects.

Multimodal – Achieving a well-integrated system

Revenue must also be allocated to all modes of transportation to improve not only the region's road network but also transit, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure to help the region achieve a well-integrated multimodal system. Supporting all modes requires that all jurisdictions be permitted to fund transportation improvements that would benefit their residents and businesses, regardless of jurisdiction or ownership.



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The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is our region's comprehensive planning organization. The agency and its partners developed and are now implementing ON TO 2050, a new long-range plan to help the seven counties and 284 communities of northeastern Illinois implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues.

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