



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

433 West Van Buren Street
Suite 450
Chicago, IL 60607

312-454-0400
cmap.illinois.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board

From: CMAP Engagement Team

Date: August 25, 2021

Re: 2021 Future Leaders in Planning (FLIP) Program Summary

CMAP's Virtual Friday Summer Series 2021 offered four unique, live-streamed sessions led by regional planning experts from CMAP and local partners. There were roughly 45 students who registered for the program and weekly attendance averaged **30** students in each session from four counties in the CMAP region. The FLIP team worked with Muse Community Design to build a curriculum for the 2021 program and beyond.

FLIP remains virtual

With continuing concerns about COVID-19 and state guidelines, the FLIP team decided to offer another virtual FLIP program. In the previous year, the FLIP program was held across four weeks for one-hour sessions with various themes focusing on water resources, urban festivals, planning in a pandemic, and inequities in planning. This year, virtual FLIP sessions were 90 minutes long and focused on the elements of planning, adapting the new curriculum. This year's program included opportunities for students to interact through live discussions during the sessions and through the FLIP engagement webpage. Facilitators led small group discussions in Zoom breakout rooms, where students could share their experiences and ask questions. Two of the sessions included activities where students got to put their planner caps on and make decisions that could affect their community. These discussions focused on pre-session homework assignments posted on the FLIP engagement webpage and session themes.

The FLIP engagement page supplemented the virtual sessions

The FLIP engagement webpage, available at <https://engage.cmap.illinois.gov/flip> on CMAP's Bang the Table/EngagementHQ online engagement platform, served as a hub for information and resources, and supplemented what students learned in each session. Students were asked to complete homework assignments that included readings, videos, blog posts, and discussion boards pertaining to the topic of the week and to help them apply what they learned. As an example, during FLIP's first session on equity in planning, students heard from Tonika Johnson of the Folded Map project and learned about disparities in Chicago neighborhoods. On the engagement page, students completed a "Twin Maps" assignment, which included finding a 'twin' on the map and viewing the address on Google Streetview. Students compared the assets

of where they lived to the assets of their map twin. Over **80%** of students engaged with the FLIP webpage weekly, which was a 30% increase from the previous year.

Student feedback

Students shared their experience in this year's FLIP program in a survey. We received a total of six responses.

- Over 80% of students would recommend the program to a friend
- Over 60% of students said the program increased their interest in urban planning

When asked about a takeaway from the FLIP program, one student said:

“I am not entirely familiar with Chicago planning practices and projects beyond what I read in articles and through newsletters, so it was great to hear from CMAP staff and others of the work being done around the region and targeted areas for investment and planning activity”

The Future of FLIP

Assuming that FLIP 2022 will resume as an in-person program, there are several key takeaways as we plan for next year:

- Incorporate a virtual component
- Collaborate with another Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Include a professional development component
- Add more educational materials on foundations in planning
- Allow only high school participants

Because of various levels of education and understanding among the high school and college students participating in FLIP 2021, the FLIP team decided it would be best to return to serving only high school students in future FLIP programs.

The next several months will focus on curriculum development for FLIP 2022 as we apply lessons learned and reconsider how a blended – virtual and in-person – FLIP program can continue the goals of growing the pipeline of planners, providing meaningful and inclusive civic leadership curriculum to young people, and supporting CMAP's core values.

The Four Sessions



Topic	Guest Speaker/s	Program
Centering Equity in Planning	Tonika Johnson, Folded Map Project	Inequities in urban planning
Planning in Practice	Kate Lowe, Associate Professor Director of Undergraduate Studies, Urban Planning and Policy	The essentials of planning and practice
Using Data to Inform Decisions	Lindsay Bayley, Senior Planner, CMAP Ghian Foreman, Elevated Chicago	Research and data in planning
Implementing a Plan	Nina Idemudia, AICP Assistant Commissioner Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago	Equitable development and planning

