



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Board

**From:** Angela Manning-Hardimon  
Deputy Executive Director, Finance and Administration

**Date:** November 10, 2021

**Re:** Contract Approval for the Brookings Institution's partnership with Cities GPS LLC for the Chicago Inclusive Regional Economy Engagement Project

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Metropolitan Chicago has an opportunity to redefine its post-pandemic future and to use recent events as an inflection point to change the region's trajectory. Despite coming off the longest economic expansion in U.S. history, the region entered the COVID-19 pandemic with a declining population and lagging economic growth. The downturn now risks exacerbating long-running issues that are holding our economy back. However, recent events have also highlighted the enduring value of the region's greatest assets — its diverse talent, advanced industries, extensive infrastructure, innovative research, and high quality of life. If fully tapped, these assets would allow the region to outcompete peer regions economically and realize its potential. Doing so requires meaningful economic development and greater action to reduce inequality.

Leveraging leadership from The Chicago Community Trust and the national expertise of the Brookings Institution's partner Cities GPS, LLC, CMAP proposes convening key economic development players to prioritize the region's policy and investment decisions, to identify strategies for high-road, asset-based economic development, and to bring racial equity into sharper focus for future work.

CMAP staff seeks approval to enter into an agreement with the Brookings Institution's partner, Cities GPS, LLC to serve as a neutral, objective, third-party in conducting this outreach effort in partnership with CMAP. The Cities GPS, LLC will assist in establishing a shared definition of economic success and validating the importance of regional efforts to achieve both economic competitiveness and inclusion. In addition, the Cities GPS, LLC will assist in developing potential topics or programmatic areas of focus for regional action, and scanning identification of gaps and opportunities to provide substantive guidance of delivery and implementation.

It is recommended that the Board approve a 1-year agreement with The Brookings Institution's partner, Cities GPS LLC in the amount of \$87,500 for the Chicago Inclusive Regional Economy Engagement project. Support for this contract will be provided by a grant from the Chicago Community Trust, which designate the Brookings Institution's partner, Cities GPS LLC as a subcontractor, specifically granted for this purpose.

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