



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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**Making the Connection:  
Community Health, Land Use, and Transportation Planning  
Workshop Summary  
Monday, December 9, 2013  
10:00 a.m.  
Cook County Conference Room  
233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago, Illinois**

With the help of CMAP's [Human and Community Development Working Committee](#), CMAP held its first *Making the Connection: Community Health, Land Use, and Transportation Planning Workshop* on Monday, December 9, 2013.

The audience for the workshop included nearly 50 representatives from the region's seven Counties and the City of Chicago—large jurisdictions that are active in public health, land use, and transportation planning. Organizations with a regional focus also participated including Active Transportation Alliance, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Chicago Community Trust, Health and Medicine Policy Research Group, Illinois Public Health Institute, and Social IMPACT Research Center of Heartland Alliance. A representative from the Federal Highway Administration Resource Center Planning Team also participated.

The workshop had two primary purposes:

- To discuss coordination between County and City of Chicago departments that address public health, land use, and transportation; and
- To better understand how CMAP can work with Counties and the City of Chicago to integrate health, land use and transportation with local planning.

Below is a summary of highlights from workshop presentations and discussions based on the [workshop agenda](#).

## ***Welcome and Introductions***

After reiterating the purpose of the workshop, CMAP staff shared the definition of each of the fields represented in the room so that everyone was on the same page:

- **Public Health:** The practice of preventing disease and promoting good health within groups of people, from small communities to entire countries. Public health

professionals rely on policy and research strategies to understand issues such as infant mortality and chronic disease in particular populations ([American Public Health Association](#)).

- Land Use Planning: The practice of managing and modifying land, including the natural environment and built environment. Land use planning focuses on improving the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations ([American Planning Association](#)).
- Transportation Planning: The practice of improving coordination between land use and transportation system planning; providing cooperative interaction between planning, design, and operation of transportation services; and maintaining a balance between transportation-related energy use, clean air and water, and encouraging alternative modes of transportation that will enhance efficiency while providing high levels of mobility and safety ([Institute of Transportation Engineers](#))

### ***Opening Remarks***

Randy Blankenhorn, Executive Director, CMAP

CMAP was created to break through traditional silos for land use and transportation planning. The [GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan](#) takes a comprehensive look at planning for the region's economic prosperity and ensures that the region's residents and workers have a high quality of life with livable communities. CMAP would like to take a similar planning approach when working with local communities through CMAP's [Local Technical Assistance \(LTA\) program](#) by integrating public health into traditional land use and transportation planning. CMAP wants to create a healthier region; and coordination between land use, transportation, and public health at the county and municipal levels is paramount to such an effort.

### ***GO TO 2040 and Public Health***

Bob Dean, Deputy Executive Director for Local Planning, CMAP

GO TO 2040 addresses public health in a number of ways. Recommendations within the plan that relate to health include preserving open space, improving access to fresh, healthy food, support for local food production, and active transportation. Many organizations that address public health do not have land use regulation responsibilities or the ability to invest in transportation. This workshop was designed to give participants the chance to discuss opportunities for coordination of investments, policies, and programs amongst parties that are responsible for public health, land use, and transportation investments.

CMAP's LTA program was created to help communities implement the recommendations of GO TO 2040; and the integration of public health, land use and transportation is a priority for the LTA projects. It is the hope that LTA projects integrate health by assessing existing

conditions related to health, including health-related goals and objectives, and by making recommendations that have positive health impacts.

### ***Coordination Is Key to Creating Healthier Communities***

Christina Welter, DrPH, MPH, Associate Director for Doctor of Public Health in Leadership Program and the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health

Dr. Christina Welter provided an overview of the public health field and its approach, today's health issues, the challenge of change within the field, and the opportunity coordination with land use and transportation planning brings.

Public health professionals approach their work like planners do—assessment, policy development, implementation, evaluation and assurance. Local public health departments (and the Illinois Department of Public Health) are required to pursue a planning process every five years that involves assessing major health issues in their jurisdictions and results in an [IPLAN](#) (Illinois Project for Local Assessment of Needs).

Today's health issues include rising rates of chronic conditions, lack of prevention funding, and the collective impact of demographic shifts, geopolitical complexity and unequal socioeconomics leading to health inequity. The social conditions in which people are born, live, work and play are called the "social determinants of health". These conditions are impacted by the way power, money, and resources are allocated both at local and national levels. Additionally, demographic shifts in areas with existing social inequity have led to increasing poverty rates. For example, southern Cook County is home to minority populations that have historically suffered from lower income levels, educational achievement gaps, and limited access to healthier options and resources. These conditions in which people live, work, and play increase their likelihood of chronic diseases and continue to contribute to health inequalities. Ultimately, social inequity leads to health outcome inequity.

It is our environment that, in large part, can impact both positively and negatively our ability to make healthy choices. In regards to physical activity, community design plays a key role in promoting sedentary lifestyles and automobile dependency especially in municipalities with multiple challenges (e.g., lack of jobs and sidewalks, violence). Problems like poverty or violence have no one solution. Not only does the public health field have a role to play in improving population health, but land use and transportation planning fields do as well. Finding opportunities to collaborate and create shared goals to integrate public health, land use, and transportation planning can make the region stronger and could lead to goals like:

- All residents have the option to safely walk, bike, or take public transit to school, work, and essential destinations.
- All residents live in safe, healthy, affordable housing.
- All residents have access to open space, including parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy.

- All residents are able to live and be active in their communities without fear of violence or crime.

Some of the success stories of the public health sector include the [Communities Putting Prevention to Work](#) (CPPW) program, a federal initiative that is executed locally to address obesity and tobacco use. Through CPPW, Policy, Systems and Environment (PSE) changes have impacted 127 schools and 73 communities throughout Cook County. For example, a number of active transportation plans and policies were enacted including transit chapters of comprehensive plans, Complete Streets policy, Safe Park Zones policies, zoning regulations to support transit-oriented development, bike-ped plans and signage installation. These PSE changes affected a total of 54 municipalities encompassing nearly 1.5 million residents.

While there is coordination going on throughout our region, our challenge is to institutionalize this coordination and improve it.

### **Breakout Discussion #1**

GO TO 2040 makes the connection between public health, land use, and transportation. Collaboration across these fields is critical to improving the health of the region. It is important to consider how to coordinate or, in some cases, better coordinate between the departments within large jurisdictions such as the region's counties and the City of Chicago.

### ***Discussion Questions***

*What are the challenges to integrating health, land use or transportation objectives into the plan(s) of your department?*

- Applying for funding with community partners is time-consuming
- Balancing power
- Engaging local communities to buy into coordination
- Overcoming departmental lingo
- Making this coordination a priority
- Accessing funding opportunities
- Providing technical assistance regarding issues along borders
- Securing champions including elected officials, staff and community partners
- Serving as a conduit to local communities

*In thinking about the plans that your department is responsible for or presently working on, are there opportunities for coordination? If so, please describe?*

Workshop participants discussed possible coordination on their departments' required plans including the Illinois Project Local Assessment of Needs, the Consolidated Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, and the long-range transportation plans. Participants also mentioned that there are opportunities to coordinate on sustainability plans, and active living plans.

## ***Integrated Planning at the County Level: Experiences from Kane County and DuPage County***

### **Kane County**

- Michael Isaacson, MPH, Assistant Director of Community Health, Kane County Department of Health
- Mark VanKerkhoff, AIA, Director, Kane County Development & Community Services Department

Over the past decade Kane County has taken strategic steps to integrating planning. Kane County started integrating land use and transportation in 2004. In 2008, they launched [Fit for Kids](#)—a campaign designed to tackle childhood obesity involving several county departments, organizations, and agencies. Between 2010 and 2012, the County Board integrated public health, land use and transportation. Kane County has broadened their focus by creating policies that promote healthier homes, neighborhoods, schools and workplaces.

Kane County's impetus for coordination is based upon projected growth in population, households and employment. CMAP population projections indicate that 90% of the new growth will be due to the land use decisions made by 30 municipalities. Kane County has created a vision that all residents live and work in a healthful environment, have access to various forms of transportation, and are the healthiest in Illinois. This vision has been infused throughout the county's plans:

- The 2040 Conceptual Land Use Strategy Report outlines 12 recommendations that integrate health with land use and transportation planning.
- The 2040 Transportation Plan includes policies and infrastructure recommendations to create transportation systems that promote healthy, active living.
- The Community Health Improvement Plan supports and creates health promoting neighborhoods, towns, and cities.
- The county has developed a 2040 Plan Implementation Strategy, which promotes the integration of public health, land use, and transportation through various activities including a County cooperative, planning workshop series, funding coordination and working with municipalities.

Kane County has faced some challenges while integrating planning including:

- Turnover at all levels including elected officials, appointed officials, and staff among partner organizations
- Time commitments required for collaborative processes and grant applications
- Fiscal constraints among partners
- Overcoming lingo spoken by partners, who represent different fields

Kane County continues to overcome these challenges, and can share with other counties methods for doing so. Additionally, the county can pass on a number of lessons when it comes to coordinating across departments:

- Elected officials, professional staff and community partners must work together to strategically lead.
- The best potential for sources of funding is from funders who prioritize projects that integrate health, land use, and transportation to improve health.
- Staff coordination takes extra time, thought, and effort.

To keep coordination a priority, Kane County holds a series of workshops on integrated planning for county leaders and those who represent various sectors. The county has been recognized by the American Public Health Association for its work, conducted a Health Impact Assessment for increasing local food production, and is receiving technical assistance from CMAP for projects on Big Rock's comprehensive plan, two Homes for a Changing region studies involving eight communities, the Department of Transportation's Primary Transit Network Study, and a Health Impact Assessment for a community to be determined in spring 2014.

#### **DuPage County**

- Daniel Thomas, AICP, Trails Coordinator / Principal Planner, DuPage County Division of Transportation
- Gary Cuneen, Founder and Executive Director, Seven Generations Ahead
- Ann W. Marchetti, MS, Consulting Director, FORWARD

DuPage County has also been working to integrate public health, land use, and transportation planning to tackle obesity through [DuPage Forward](#) (Fighting Obesity Reaching healthy Weight Among Residents of DuPage). DuPage Forward is a public-private partnership that is collectively impacting policies, systems and the environment thereby creating sustainable changes that make the healthy choice easy, affordable, accessible and available for all residents in DuPage to reduce obesity.

Made up of more than 1,100 partners, DuPage Forward has identified a big idea to address obesity in the county: To increase physical activity by promoting active transportation and alternative recreational opportunities that encourage and promote safety, health, social interaction, equity, environmental stewardship and resource conservation. This mission has led to the creation of an Active Transportation Task Force consisting of the DuPage County Department of Transportation, DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference, DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau, DuPage Forest Preserve District, League of Illinois Bicyclists, Trails for Illinois, CMAP, and Active Transportation Alliance. Seven Generations Ahead provides technical assistance to the group. The Task Force has developed strategies for working with municipalities to accomplish active transportation goals.

In 2004, the DuPage County Division of Transportation (DCDOT) passed the Healthy Roads Policy. DCDOT is committed to making future county roadways better for pedestrians and bicyclists. The policy allows for bicycle-friendly roadway designs, acquisition of right-of-way for non-motorized improvements, and implementation of low-cost improvements such as re-striping existing roadways and paving shoulders. As a result of this policy, there have been more than 20 new roadway construction projects with bicycle-pedestrian improvements, segments of the Southern DuPage Regional Trail constructed, and improved public input for projects. To further the connection between public health, land use and transportation planning, DCDOT emphasizes the health benefits of the Healthy Roads Policy, which supports connecting trails to destinations to enable healthy transportation options; improving quality of life and safety goals that promote healthy living benefits; and increasing partnerships with health-focused organizations.

DuPage Forward operates successfully because of its common agenda, shared measurement system, mutually-reinforcing activities, continuous communication and engagement, and a backbone support organization.

### **Breakout Discussion #2**

The Kane County and DuPage County presentations are two examples of successful integration of health, land use, and transportation. However, coordinating public health, land use, and transportation required commitment from each partner.

### ***Discussion Questions***

*Historically, what have been the barriers to working together?*

- Jurisdictional barriers
- Lack of knowledge about other departments
- There is a tendency to segment the community into transportation and housing
- Staff and technical capacity issues across small municipalities

*What are the first steps needed to promote coordination across departments?*

Participants discussed presenting information at the Mayors and Managers meetings in an effort to educate them about coordination and communicate what is currently happening in this area. There was also talk about determining who is responsible for implementing or evaluating all the plans across the different departments, and coordinating with that individual.

*Is there someone from your department that could assist with local plans? If not, could there be?*

Participants shared who would be the person from their various departments to assist with local plans.

## ***Highlights from the City of Berwyn and Village of Park Forest LTA Plans***

### **Village of Park Forest**

Kristin Ihnchak, AICP, Senior Planner, CMAP and Project Manager, Park Forest sustainability plan

The Park Forest [sustainability plan](#) focuses on how land uses relate to one another. For example, the plan takes into consideration where residents have access to alternative modes of transportation and what areas should be targeted for improvements. The plan also looks at how the community is served by open space and who is missing out. Less than one percent of the population does not have open space within walkable distance. Park Forest has the highest open space per capita in Illinois.

Park Forest has its own health department that provides low-cost preventive health and home-based nursing services. A representative of the health department sat on the steering committee for the sustainability plan. Other departments such as Recreation and Parks and the Police Department also play key roles in community health. The existing conditions report to the sustainability plan addressed community health and wellness by including information on diseases and other health concerns, public safety, wellness and recreational opportunities, and healthy diets. As a result the following community health and wellness goals were created:

1. Promote and connect residents, especially seniors, with existing health services in the community.
2. Continue to address common health problems via the Village's Health Department; and include proactive prevention-oriented activities when possible.
3. Promote and enhance educational opportunities for residents related to healthy living, such as sessions on healthy diets or swim lessons.

Strategies along with target indicators were created to support these goals. For example, there is a strategy to further develop and promote health-related programs and events. The target indicator for this strategy is to increase enrollment in Village-provided recreational programs by 20 percent by 2017.

This planning process to address health uncovered some lessons learned such as there is competition from other health-related initiatives, the Health Department focuses on mostly on services, there are data constraints, and public health helps to connect a number of topics. As a result of the sustainability planning process, Park Forest is updating zoning and subdivision ordinances, has established several community gardens, and is creating a bike-ped plan.

### **City of Berwyn**

Samyukth Shenbaga, AICP, LEED AP, Senior Planner, CMAP and Project Manager, Berwyn comprehensive plan

The fact that the Berwyn's healthcare sector employs fifty percent of the city's workers was the impetus for integrating public health into the [comprehensive plan](#). When researching about the



city's health conditions, it was found that data limited and available data is outdated, the Health Department works closely with hospital, there is a lack of safe bike-ped access throughout community, there are a limited number of recreational amenities, there are 1.1 acres of open space per thousand residents, and the labor force is in need of education and training.

Berwyn's comprehensive plan includes a Community Health chapter that outlines recommendations related to the natural environment, open space, and recreation; active transportation; and human capital. There were several implementation actions for each recommendation area. Some highlights include: creating a community garden program (which has been launched), and converting vacant lots to open space. The City has also created School Travel Plans to help children walk and bike safely to school and received a Model Communities grant from Cook County Department of Public Health.

### **Breakout Discussion #3**

Berwyn and Park Forest are unique examples of communities integrating public health, land use, and transportation, primarily because each has their own health department. However, there are many ways that counties and local communities have worked together in the past.

### ***Discussion Questions***

*Does your department work with local communities or neighborhoods? If so, in what capacity?*

A few counties and the City of Chicago have had the opportunity to work on local plans that are a part of CMAP's LTA program.

*What are the challenges to contributing to local plans?*

- Budget cuts have led to a loss of focus
- Neighborhood stabilization plans
- Balances of power with municipalities
- Sense of jurisdiction competition among municipalities
- Politics between unincorporated and incorporated areas
- Perceptions of the larger jurisdictions

*Are there opportunities to better connect at the local level?*

- Share information
- Technical assistance
- Guidance for issues on borders
- Through the LTA program

### ***Strategizing to Commit***

CMAP convened this workshop to better understand how to integrate public health, land use, and transportation. Coordinating across these departments will lead to healthier communities and ultimately a healthier region.

*How do we move forward with making the connection between public health, land use, and transportation?*

- Bridge State and Federal issues at the local level
- Build CMAP's health capacity
- Convene annually about this coordination
- Educate elected officials about coordination starting with a summary from this workshop
- Include public health in LTA applications
- Follow up with workshop participants about their progress and continue to find ways to share information between counties
- Include a highlight on health in CMAP's weekly email
- Increase Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) in the region
- Involve the private sector planning community with integrating health and encourage them to do HIAs
- Involve State agencies
- Involve counties in the LTA application process
- Keep this issue relevant within existing CMAP committee structure
- Strengthen health connection in GO TO 2040
- Think of good urban planning as inherently including health

*What resources are needed to integrate public health, land use, and transportation into local planning efforts?*

- Work with Counties to create key measures to advance across the region and evaluate in the future, and determine how counties can contribute
- Create CMAP health toolkit
- Develop a more comprehensive sharing of network information

If you have any questions about the workshop, please contact Samantha Robinson, CMAP Associate, at [srobinson@cmapp.illinois.gov](mailto:srobinson@cmapp.illinois.gov) or 312.386.8712.