



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## ***GO TO 2040 Major Transportation Capital Projects*** **March-April 2010**

### **Introduction**

*GO TO 2040*, due to be completed in October, is the region's long-range comprehensive plan. Over the last several years, CMAP has developed a [Regional Vision](#), produced [snapshot reports](#) and [strategy reports](#) on regional trends and best practices, and most recently, released the [Preferred Regional Scenario](#) in January. The Preferred Regional Scenario describes the key policy directions that will be pursued in *GO TO 2040*.

Beyond policy recommendations, the plan will also include a "fiscally constrained" list of "major transportation capital projects," as required by federal regulations. Since there is insufficient funding available to pursue all projects, prioritization is necessary. This document describes the terms used above, explains how the level of funding available for major capital projects was determined, and presents the initial CMAP proposal for projects to be considered fiscally constrained.

### **Definitions**

Several terms were used above which need definition. First, "major transportation capital projects" make up only a small subset of all transportation projects. They are large projects with a significant effect on the capacity of the region's transportation system, including extensions or additional lanes on the interstate system, entirely new expressways, or similar changes to the passenger rail system. Arterial expansions and intersection improvements are not major capital projects; neither are bus facilities, unless they involve a dedicated lane on an expressway.

The term "fiscally constrained" was also used. Fiscal constraint is the amount of funding judged to be available for major transportation capital projects, based on a thorough review of expected transportation revenues and costs between now and 2040. Projects that are on the "fiscally constrained" list are those for which sufficient funding is available.

### **Level of fiscal constraint**

A detailed [transportation financial plan](#) is being prepared as part of *GO TO 2040*. The conclusions of this work are that approximately \$10.5 billion (in year of expenditure dollars,

which adjust for inflation) from existing or reasonably expected sources is likely to be available for major capital projects between now and 2040. While this is a significant number, it remains a small percentage of the region's overall \$385 billion in transportation expenditures during this time frame. This emphasis reflects the overall priority of *GO TO 2040* in maintaining, systematically improving, and modernizing the infrastructure that we already have, rather than creating entirely new capital facilities.

## **Project prioritization**

Projects were prioritized based on their support for the Preferred Regional Scenario, the results of individual project evaluations, and information from other project analyses. The priorities of *GO TO 2040* are to maintain the existing system and make systematic improvements. The bulk of the region's transportation investment will be to maintain, improve, and modernize our infrastructure; pursuing new major capital projects, while important, is a lower priority than these other activities.

The highest priority major capital projects are those on the "fiscally constrained" list, on pages 3-4 of this memo. Several themes can be seen in the prioritization of fiscally constrained projects. First, there are few new projects or extensions. The majority of the constrained projects involve improvements to existing facilities. Second, there are a number of "managed lanes" projects. These are envisioned to incorporate advanced tolling strategies such as congestion pricing, transit alternatives like Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), or special accommodations for truck travel. Third, there is considerable public investment in transit. These priorities are consistent with the direction of the Preferred Regional Scenario, which calls for investment in the existing system, use of innovative transportation finance methods, support for freight, and a focus on improving the public transit system.

## **Implications of project categorization**

In the tables below, projects are broken into two categories:

- Projects that are "fiscally constrained," meaning that their costs can be covered within the region's expected transportation revenue and that the project has been included in the demonstration that air quality standards will be met (a federal requirement). This is the highest priority category of major capital projects.
- Projects that are "fiscally unconstrained." As a later step, further prioritization and classification of these projects is expected. The projects in this category are in a variety of stages of development or financial analysis. Some are rapidly advancing through the project development process, or show high potential benefits; *GO TO 2040* will make specific recommendations for actions to be taken to continue to advance these projects.
- Also, several projects were proposed by individuals or organizations during the *GO TO 2040* plan or during past regional plans but were not fully evaluated. These projects are listed in an appendix attached to [this memo to CMAP's Transportation Committee](#).

Under federal regulations, major capital projects may not receive design approval (awarded at the completion of preliminary engineering), unless they are included in the fiscally constrained project list. Implementers may initiate preliminary engineering, feasibility studies, or other preliminary work regardless of how projects are treated within *GO TO 2040*.

Regional planning is a continuous process which responds to changing circumstances, and priorities change over time. The long-range plan is updated at least every four years, and this provides an opportunity to reassign projects to different categories in response to changes in funding situations or priorities. Even outside of the required update cycle, the plan can be modified at any point by CMAP's governing boards. However, changes between plan updates should not be made casually; they should be reserved for rare circumstances that could not be foreseen. CMAP believes that the project categories should truly reflect the region's priorities.

The placement of a project on the fiscally unconstrained project list does not mean that the project is undesirable or not recommended. Some projects on this list showed regional benefits, but are not far enough along in the study phase to have firm cost estimates, alignment, or limits; for these, *GO TO 2040* will recommend accelerating the study of these projects so that they can be better understood. Other projects may have potential for innovative financing arrangements which would significantly change their public sector cost or implementation schedule. For both of these cases, more detailed information or changes in financing status would justify reconsidering whether the project should be placed on the fiscally constrained list.

### Project categorization

The initial staff proposal for the categorization of projects is presented on the following pages. The first chart shows that the total public sector cost for new capital for the constrained projects is approximately \$10.5 billion. Please note that a line item of \$100 million is included for the continued study and prioritization of projects that are currently not on the constrained list. Some of these projects appear to have considerable potential, but are at an early stage in the project development process; this funding is meant to advance the planning and study of these projects to better understand their benefits. Projects on the fiscally constrained list are shown in a map on the final page of this document.

#### Initial proposal for "fiscally constrained" projects:

| Project  | Year | Construction cost, 2009\$b | Full cost, YOE\$b | Revenue (toll) assumptions | Public sector cost, YOE\$b |
|--|------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>New facilities and extensions</b>   |      |                            |                   |                            |                            |
| Central Lake County Corridor: IL 53 North and IL 120 Limited Access  | 2025 | 2.00                       | 3.41              | 75%                        | <b>0.85</b>                |
| Elgin O'Hare Expressway Improvements (includes Western O'Hare Bypass, EOE East Extension, and EOE Add Lanes) | 2020 | 3.60                       | 5.49              | 75%                        | <b>1.37</b>                |
| I-294/I-57 Interchange Addition  | 2020 | 0.58                       | 0.88              | 20%                        | <b>0.71</b>                |
| Red Line Extension (South)   | 2015 | 1.05                       | 1.88              | 0%                         | <b>1.88</b>                |
| West Loop Transportation Center  | 2020 | 2.50                       | 4.15              | 0%                         | <b>4.15</b>                |
| <b>Expansions and improvements</b>   |      |                            |                   |                            |                            |
| I-190 Access Improvements  | 2020 | 0.36                       | 0.54              | 0%                         | <b>0.54</b>                |

|   |      |      |      |     |             |
|---|------|------|------|-----|-------------|
| I-290 Managed Lanes                                       | 2020 | 1.50 | 2.29 | 25% | <b>1.72</b> |
| I-55 Managed Lanes  | 2025 | 1.60 | 2.72 | 25% | <b>2.04</b> |
| I-80 Add Lanes (US 30 to US 45)                           | 2015 | 0.10 | 0.14 | 0%  | <b>0.14</b> |
| I-88 Add Lanes  | 2020 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 75% | <b>0.01</b> |
| I-90 Managed Lanes  | 2020 | 1.80 | 2.74 | 75% | <b>0.69</b> |
| I-94 Add Lanes North                                      | 2015 | 0.10 | 0.14 | 75% | <b>0.03</b> |
| North Red Line Improvements                               | 2020 | 2.26 | 3.45 | 0%  | <b>3.45</b> |
| Rock Island Improvements                                  | 2020 | 0.47 | 0.71 | 0%  | <b>0.71</b> |
| Southwest Service Improvements                            | 2020 | 0.19 | 0.31 | 0%  | <b>0.31</b> |
| UP North Improvements                                     | 2020 | 0.40 | 0.66 | 0%  | <b>0.66</b> |
| UP Northwest Improvements/Extension                       | 2017 | 0.44 | 0.69 | 0%  | <b>0.69</b> |
| UP West Improvements                                      | 2017 | 0.56 | 0.89 | 0%  | <b>0.89</b> |
| Other   |      |      |      |     |             |
| Continued study and prioritization                        |      |      |      |     | <b>0.10</b> |
|   |      |      |      |     |             |
| <b>Total public sector cost</b>                           |      |      |      |     | <b>20.8</b> |
| <b>Total public sector cost for new capital elements*</b> |      |      |      |     | <b>10.5</b> |

\* This figure is calculated by applying the standard that 50% of the cost of an average project actually involves reconstruction, which has already been included in estimates of maintenance needs. Therefore, while the total project costs of constrained projects are \$20.8 billion, only \$10.4 billion of this is actually estimated to be for new capital elements. Added to this is the \$100 million in project development costs described above.

#### Initial proposal for “fiscally unconstrained” projects:

| Project                                    | Year | Construction cost, 2009\$b | Full cost, YOE\$b | Revenue (toll) assumptions | Public sector cost, YOE\$b |
|--|------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>New facilities and extensions</b>       |      |                            |                   |                            |                            |
| Blue Line West Extension                   | 2040 | 2.30                       | 5.58              | 0%                         | <b>5.58</b>                |
| BNSF Extension                             | 2020 | 0.08                       | 0.12              | 0%                         | <b>0.12</b>                |
| Brown Line Extension                       | 2040 | 3.70                       | 8.98              | 0%                         | <b>8.98</b>                |
| Central Area Transitway                    | 2020 | 0.30                       | 0.50              | 0%                         | <b>0.50</b>                |
| Circle Line (North)                        | 2040 | 2.00                       | 4.85              | 0%                         | <b>4.85</b>                |
| Circle Line (South)                        | 2017 | 1.00                       | 1.79              | 0%                         | <b>1.79</b>                |
| DuPage "J" Line                            | 2030 | 1.10                       | 2.16              | 0%                         | <b>2.16</b>                |
| Elgin O'Hare Expressway West Extension     | 2030 | 0.18                       | 0.34              | 25%                        | <b>0.26</b>                |
| Elgin O'Hare Expressway Far West Extension | 2030 | 0.21                       | 0.40              | 25%                        | <b>0.30</b>                |
| I-80 to I-55 Connector                     | 2040 | 0.10                       | 0.24              | 50%                        | <b>0.12</b>                |
| Illiana Corridor                           | 2030 | 2.87                       | 5.48              | 75%                        | <b>1.37</b>                |
| Inner Circumferential Rail Service         | 2040 | 1.10                       | 2.67              | 0%                         | <b>2.67</b>                |
| McHenry-Lake Corridor                      | 2040 | 1.00                       | 2.43              | 25%                        | <b>1.82</b>                |
| Metra Electric Extension                   | 2020 | 0.26                       | 0.43              | 0%                         | <b>0.43</b>                |
| Mid-City Transitway                        | 2040 | 1.30                       | 3.16              | 0%                         | <b>3.16</b>                |
| Milwaukee District North Extension         | 2020 | 0.58                       | 0.96              | 0%                         | <b>0.96</b>                |
| Milwaukee District West Extension          | 2020 | 0.78                       | 1.29              | 0%                         | <b>1.29</b>                |
| O'Hare to Schaumburg Transit Service       | 2040 | 1.00                       | 2.43              | 0%                         | <b>2.43</b>                |
| Orange Line Extension                      | 2015 | 0.45                       | 0.69              | 0%                         | <b>0.69</b>                |
| Prairie Parkway                            | 2025 | 0.90                       | 1.53              | 25%                        | <b>1.15</b>                |
| Rock Island Extension                      | 2040 | 0.05                       | 0.12              | 0%                         | <b>0.12</b>                |
| Southeast Service                          | 2017 | 0.74                       | 1.17              | 0%                         | <b>1.17</b>                |
| Southwest Service Extension/Full Service   | 2040 | 0.29                       | 0.71              | 0%                         | <b>0.71</b>                |
| STAR Line                                  | 2017 | 2.76                       | 4.39              | 0%                         | <b>4.39</b>                |
| Yellow Line Enhancements and Extension     | 2015 | 0.23                       | 0.36              | 0%                         | <b>0.36</b>                |
| <b>Expansions and improvements</b>         |      |                            |                   |                            |                            |
| Express Airport Train Service              | 2020 | 1.75                       | 2.87              | 0%                         | <b>2.87</b>                |
| Heritage Corridor                          | 2040 | 0.18                       | 0.43              | 0%                         | <b>0.43</b>                |
| I-55 Add Lanes and Reconstruction          | 2020 | 0.75                       | 1.14              | 0%                         | <b>1.14</b>                |

|   |      |      |      |     |              |
|---|------|------|------|-----|--------------|
| I-57 Add Lanes  | 2030 | 0.80 | 1.53 | 0%  | <b>1.53</b>  |
| I-80 Add/Managed Lanes                                    | 2025 | 2.25 | 3.83 | 25% | <b>2.87</b>  |
| IL 394  | 2020 | 0.54 | 0.82 | 0%  | <b>0.82</b>  |
| Milwaukee District North Improvements                     | 2020 | 0.08 | 0.12 | 0%  | <b>0.12</b>  |
| North Central Service Improvements                        | 2040 | 0.30 | 0.72 | 0%  | <b>0.72</b>  |
| South Lakefront Corridor                                  | 2020 | 1.00 | 1.66 | 0%  | <b>1.66</b>  |
|   |      |      |      |     |              |
| <b>Total public sector cost</b>                           |      |      |      |     | <b>60.70</b> |
| <b>Total public sector cost for new capital elements*</b> |      |      |      |     | <b>30.35</b> |

\* This figure is calculated by applying the standard that 50% of the cost of an average project actually involves reconstruction, which has already been included in estimates of maintenance needs.

### Schedule and next steps

The project categorization described above represents an initial staff proposal. Comments from stakeholders and the public will be sought during March and April. CMAP’s governing boards will be asked to release a draft of *GO TO 2040* – which will include a recommended fiscally constrained list of major capital projects – in June, and additional opportunities for public comment will be available over the summer. Final adoption of *GO TO 2040* is scheduled for October.

### Further resources

For more information on capital projects, please visit the CMAP website. Useful links include:

- A single document containing descriptions of each project:  
<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=18975>
- A matrix comparing the evaluation results of each project:  
<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=19013>
- Previous memos to CMAP’s Transportation Committee concerning the major capital project prioritization process and the development of the financial plan:  
<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/transportation/minutes.aspx>

## Initial proposal for fiscally constrained projects

