



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

**Date:** August 13, 2008

**From:** Tom Murtha

**Re:** Transportation Indicators

---

---

### *Regional Indicators*

CMAP, as part of the Go To 2040 plan process, is developing a *regional indicators system* that will tell a story about the position and progress of Metropolitan Chicago toward its adopted Vision. Indicators are concepts that are quantifiable and responsive to changes in our regional policies. These indicators will be useful for plan development, implementation, and monitoring. They are designed to be consistent with our cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive transportation planning process. Work on several of the proposed indicators is on-going, as part of the implementation of the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan.

Indicators are tied to the Regional Vision, though not every vision statement will have an associated indicator. Indicators are important because they will be used to monitor progress toward our regional vision as the comprehensive plan is implemented. Just as importantly, they will be used to evaluate regional scenarios during plan development to the extent feasible.

### *Schedule*

The regional indicators are scheduled for approval by the MPO Policy Committee in January. Working back, they will be recommended for approval by the Board of CMAP in November and the Planning Committee in October. The Policy Committee will be introduced to the indicators concept in October.

Transportation-related working committees and other groups will be discussing the indicators in August and September:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force: August 13
- Freight Committee: August 14
- Transportation Committee: August 22 (Discussion)
- Advanced Technology Task Force: September 18

- Transportation Committee: September 26 (Recommendation)

In addition, information and feedback is being obtained from other committees and our workshops, to which you received an invitation previously.

***Indicator Selection***

In developing indicators, staff is proposing to consider the criteria in Appendix A. Staff has proposed a mixture of indicators and datasets that may be able to measure regional progress toward our regional vision. Indicators are being developed for eleven themes, including:

- transportation
- civic involvement
- coordinated planning and government
- reinvestment
- economic competitiveness
- education
- safety and security
- health
- environment, natural resources and water supply
- housing
- culture

Fifteen indicators have been allocated for each theme, except the transportation theme, which has been granted a preliminary allocation of fifteen indicators plus five indicators for freight transportation. The transportation indicators are proposed within the context of transportation being related to the indicators for many themes.

To develop a list of recommended indicators on the transportation theme, staff considered data available, national practices, indicators on other themes, and existing approved performance measures, and the newly adopted vision statement. These indicators are available as regional aggregates and measured using datasets that will be updated periodically into the foreseeable future. For recommended indicators, we anticipate broad agreement among CMAP stakeholders that an increasing or decreasing trend line over time is positive or negative

At its August meeting, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force will review all of the recommended indicators on the transportation theme and some indicators on other themes. The entire list of indicators now being considered will also be available for review. Given feedback from the Task Force and other groups, staff expects to ask the Transportation Committee to recommend a final list of regional indicators at its September meeting.

***Relevant Materials to Review***

With this memo, we have attached the following documents:

- Staff Recommendation - Tracking Indicators (including Transportation)
- Regional Indicators Project Data Inventory.

If you have questions about these materials, contact me at [tmurtha@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:tmurtha@cmap.illinois.gov) / 312-386-8790 or Drew Williams-Clark at [awilliamsclark@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:awilliamsclark@cmap.illinois.gov) / 312-386-8770.

## Appendix

### Indicator Selection Criteria<sup>1</sup>

- 1) **Importance:** The indicator measures an aspect of the region's vision which committee members would agree is important, in relation to the region's vision.
- 2) **Policy relevance:** The indicator measures progress towards the region's vision achievable through municipal and regional activities and policies.
- 3) **Responsiveness:** The indicator responds relatively quickly and noticeably to real changes in the region, as revealed by changes in the direction or slope of the indicator's trend line.
- 4) **Validity:** If the indicator's trend line moves either upward or downward, the committee would agree on whether the region is improving or declining.
- 5) **Understandability:** The indicator measures an aspect of the region's vision in a way that most citizens can easily understand and interpret, in relation to their own lives.
- 6) **Clarity:** The indicator uses clear measures that filter out extraneous factors. For instance, dollar indicators are reported in deflated, constant dollars; per-person rates are used where appropriate to factor out population growth; and raw numbers are used where total magnitudes are important.
- 7) **Outcome orientation:** Where possible, the indicator measures a regional outcome—the actual condition of the vision (e.g. the crime rate). Alternatively, it measures an outcome of the region's response to an issue (e.g. police response time) rather than the input of the response itself (e.g. number of police officers).
- 8) **Asset orientation:** Where possible, the indicator measures a positive aspect of the region's quality of life (the community's assets rather than its liabilities) so that an increase in the indicator's trend line reveals community improvement (e.g. the high-school graduation rate rather than the dropout rate).
- 9) **Anticipation:** The indicator anticipates future quality-of-life conditions rather than reacting to past trends. A "leading" indicator (e.g. cigarettes sold) is more useful than a "lagging" indicator (e.g. lung-cancer deaths) because it allows a proactive community response.
- 10) **Representativeness:** Taken together, the indicator set, and the indicators within each vision theme, cover all the major dimensions of the region's quality of life.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. and adapted by CMAP