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CMAP seeks public input

County has until Aug. 6 to weigh in on 2040 plan

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WOODSTOCK – McHenry County residents and leaders have about a month to weigh in on the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's vision for 2040.

The County Board's Planning and Development Committee got a look Thursday at the draft executive summary of the Go to 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, which is up for public review after three years of work. The plan seeks ways to improve community livability, regional mobility, workforce development, and efficient governance in the seven-county area covered by CMAP.

Although CMAP is a planning agency, it intends to shift its focus once the plan is approved to provide assistance to governments lacking planning

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On the Net

You can read the executive summary and the full text of the draft Go to 2040 Plan at www.goto2040.org.

If you go

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning is holding an open house for public comment on the draft plan. The meeting, one of 10 scheduled for the Chicago area, is set for 6 to 8 p.m. July 13 at Woodstock Public Library, 414 W. Judd St.

Priorities include better management, water and energy conservation

• 2040 PLAN

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staff and resources, spokesman Gordon Smith told the committee.

The plan's 15-page executive summary says it is designed to help Chicago communities "... face challenges that are strikingly similar but seldom identical."

"We think there is an important portion of [the plan] that will help local governments grow and prosper in

the region," Smith said.

People can view the summary and the 414-page plan and submit comments online at www.goto2040.org. The deadline to submit comments is Aug. 6.

Many of the issues touched on in CMAP's summary are familiar to committee members, who spent much of this year finishing the county's 2030 Land Use Plan.

Among the plan's goals for livability are better management and water and energy conservation. A priority of

the public that Smith called "kind of a shocker" is creating a supply of sustainable local food – he said 97 percent of the area's food is imported from elsewhere.

"People really were concerned about where they got their food," he said.

The plan also calls for adding an additional 150,000 acres of open space in its seven-county area, a total area about a third of the size of McHenry County.

Committee members had no argument with improving

the metro area's road, rail and mass transit system, and improving workforce development.

But they and audience members stifled laughs, directed at Springfield and state lawmakers, when Smith began talking about efficient governance.

Member Mary Donner, R-Crystal Lake, said CMAP's goal of reforming state tax policy was unrealistic.

"What can CMAP possibly do that's going to move our state government to do any-

thing that Mr. [House Speaker Michael] Madigan doesn't want done?" Donner asked.

The plan also calls for expanding the state's sales tax to apply to services to broaden the tax base and therefore lower rates.

Former County Board member Dan Shea, who represents the county on the 2040 committee, said he opposed the language because it was naïve.

"Taxes that [the state] institutes never reduce other taxes," Shea said.