



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Committees  
**From:** CMAP Staff  
**Date:** May 9, 2016  
**Re:** Place-based approach: universe of layers

---

---

A “place-based approach” is a framework for catering the content of a regional plan to local (and other) partners through more spatially specific recommendations. Earlier this year, CMAP staff [introduced](#) the working committees to two place-based approaches – typologies and layers – and recommended incorporating the layers approach into ON TO 2050. The layers approach will be used to further key policy areas in ON TO 2050 by mapping data related to each policy area and using the maps and contextual information to provide more specific, sub-regional guidance pertinent to local partners and other stakeholders. The layers approach would integrate well with ongoing plan development, allow the plan to speak more specifically about a wide range of topics, and provide valuable data, information, and guidance to partners.

Two primary activities are underway to further develop the layers approach. First, two pilot layers – high quality natural areas and high priority reinvestment areas – are being [developed](#) to test out the approach, determine how layers could be integrated in the regional plan, and estimate the level of effort associated with developing layers. Second, CMAP staff have created an initial “universe of layers” that correspond to the policy areas being explored for ON TO 2050. This list of potential layers is a starting point for discussion with working committees and partners, and will inform additional layers to be considered as well as the selection of layers to be developed as part of the plan’s development. Staff are seeking feedback and guidance from the committees on the initial universe of layers, particularly as the proposed layers relate to the Freight and Economic Development Committee members’ areas of expertise.

### Universe of layers

To develop the initial universe of layers, CMAP staff considered ON TO 2050’s ongoing and upcoming policy development work, and which particular policy areas might benefit from an increased level of spatial detail. The purpose of layers is not solely to provide data sets or descriptive maps. Rather, layers should shed light onto a priority policy area and inform more specific recommendations for plan implementers.

In assessing potential layers, staff used several screening questions:

- Does the layer relate to a key policy area for ON TO 2050?
- Would the layer inform better and more specific recommendations? What recommendations might come from the layer's development?
- Can we reasonably assume that the layer will help forward implementation of the regional plan by inspiring action among local implementers?
- How complex is the layer to create? Would consensus-building among partners be necessary to ensure implementation of the recommendations associated with the layer?
- Do we have access to the data or information needed to create the layer?

The following potential layers are especially relevant for the Freight and Economic Development Committees' consideration. In addition, the universe of all potential layers is shown in Table 1. Committee feedback on these potential layers, as well as additional ideas, are welcomed.

- **Critical Urban Freight Corridors and other components of the National Highway Freight Network:** designate priority freight corridors to receive funding through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act
- **Freight planning areas:** identify concentrations of freight assets and freight-supportive land uses
- **Employment centers:** use industrial and commercial employment concentrations to describe the region's economy and identify areas with significant economic activity
- **Vulnerable populations:** development is ongoing. The inclusive growth team has identified a vulnerable populations definition that includes low-income limited English proficient or minority residents. Vulnerable populations may also include other characteristics, such as seniors or disabled residents, for other policy areas. Staff is in the process of refining the terminology used to describe vulnerable populations
- **Municipal tax base:** build on CMAP's existing measure of tax capacity per capita and other ongoing work to identify an appropriate tax base metric. This could include illustration of the largest revenue source (property, sales, utility, or other tax) by municipality or change in tax base
- **Community capacity:** to be determined by FY 17 work on community capacity. May include select characteristics of capacity, or utilize an index or spectrum, to lend insight on challenges faced by communities in implementing regional goals
- **Infill opportunity areas:** identify broad areas in the region that are prime for infill. May ultimately subsume other proposed layers, such as high priority reinvestment areas or disinvested areas, and include other target locations for infill as well
- **High priority reinvestment areas:** development is ongoing. This layer will aggregate areas of high priority for reinvestment as identified by local plans
- **Disinvested areas:** to be determined by ongoing plan development work on reinvestment and infill as well as inclusive growth

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion



**Table 1. Universe of Potential Layers**

<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Description</b>
Regionally significant projects (RSPs)	Ongoing; fiscally constrained capital projects
Priority congestion pricing corridors	Subset of RSPs; recommended corridors to implement congestion pricing
Future ART / BRT corridors	Subset of RSPs; recommended corridors to implement Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
Highway operations corridors	Recommended corridors to implement operations strategies
Access to transit index	Areas of moderate to high transit access
Critical Urban Freight Corridors and other components of National Highway Freight Network	Ongoing; Priority freight corridors to receive funding through the FAST Act
Freight planning areas	Concentrations of freight assets and freight-supportive land uses
Greenways and trails	Ongoing; existing and proposed regional trails
Pedestrian Environment Factor	TBD; illustrate pedestrian facilities
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Description</b>
High priority reinvestment areas	Ongoing; areas of high priority for reinvestment as identified by local plans
Infill opportunity areas	Areas in the region that are prime for infill
Disinvested areas	TBD by inclusive growth and disinvested areas work
Critical growth areas	Land not yet developed in the municipal envelope in transitional parts of the region
Key agricultural areas	Areas with high quality soils and critical massing of farms that are prime for agricultural preservation
Housing market areas	Ongoing; group areas with similar socioeconomic and physical characteristics for future collaborative housing planning
Housing opportunity areas	Areas with stable housing, as well as low crime, good schools, access to jobs, and many amenities
<b>Economy</b>	<b>Description</b>
Employment centers	Industrial and commercial employment concentrations
Vulnerable populations	Ongoing; working definition for inclusive growth includes low-income limited English proficient or minority residents. May include other characteristics (seniors, disabled residents) for other policy areas
Municipal tax base or base growth	TBD; possible metrics include tax capacity, largest revenue source by municipality, or growth in tax base
Community capacity	TBD; goal is to provide insight on municipal barriers to implementing regional goals



<b>Environment</b>	<b>Description</b>
High quality natural areas	Ongoing; areas with existing high quality natural resources
Green infrastructure restoration	Areas with significant potential for ecological restoration, especially to buffer high quality natural areas
Green infrastructure retrofits	Urbanized areas that have significant potential for green infrastructure retrofits
Climate vulnerability areas	Areas that may experience difficulty in responding to increased flooding and heat; would incorporate vulnerable populations and other social factors
Access to parks and open space	Areas with low access to parks and open space
Water source protection	Group areas by drinking water source; include Sensitive Aquifer Recharge Areas (SARAs)
Water quality	Combined and separated sewer communities, along with combined sewer overflow events, impaired or high quality streams, watershed quality, impervious coverage
Priority flooding areas	Priority urban and riverine flooding locations to target for green infrastructure and other interventions

