

CMAP Alternative Futures: Increased preference for walkable, mixed-use communities

Draft memo outline

1. Summary of Alternative Futures project

2. Summary of walkable, mixed-use future

Marked consumer preference for walkable, mixed-use communities leads to increased investment in those areas, significantly densifying suburban downtowns and commercial cores. Jobs concentrate in downtown Chicago and denser suburban cores; consequently, disinvestment occurs in auto-oriented suburban office parks and strip malls. Residents increasingly bike, walk, and use transit, leading to decreased demand for driving and parking. As demand for urban living increases, affordable housing becomes more scarce, particularly near amenities and transit.

3. Main drivers shaping the future

- a. Significantly increased preference for walkable, car-optional mixed use communities
 - i. Baby boomers, as well as millennials and the generations that follow them, increasingly prefer to live in walkable, car-optional places.
 1. As people live longer and millennials age, seniors will represent a larger share of the region's population.
 - ii. Greater ability to live without a car
 1. As technology advances, innovations in car sharing (e.g., Zip Car, etc.) allows people to live more easily without car ownership
 2. More telework so people can work from home or within their neighborhoods in workshare spaces

4. Potential impacts of drivers

- a. Land Use and Development Patterns
 - i. Increase in mixed-use, walkable development
 - ii. Increase in higher density, transit-supportive development
 - iii. Revitalization of existing suburban downtowns and commercial corridors
 1. More reinvestment in 2017 disinvested, infill areas that are well served by transit
 2. Disinvestment in suburban commercial areas, such as office parks and malls
 - iv. Emergence of *new* downtowns, commercial corridors, and other mixed-use activity centers
 - v. Decline in low-density, greenfield development
 - vi. Less need for parking increases developable space
 - vii. On-demand delivery decreases need for retail footprint, increases need for smaller warehousing facilities throughout the city.

- b. Housing
 - i. As demand for living in urban areas increases, so does cost of living, leading to affordability challenges
- c. Transportation
 - i. Increase in active transportation
 - ii. Decrease in car usage
 - iii. More on-demand delivery of goods (need for loading/unloading space on streets, potential freight conflicts with bike/pedestrian travel)
 - iv. Increase in transit ridership
 - 1. Increased and broadening support/expectations for investments in transit
 - v. Expansion of transit options across majority of neighborhood types
 - 1. Bus rapid transit in suburbs, vanpooling
 - 2. Improved last mile connections
 - vi. Increase in multi-modalism
- d. Regional Economy
 - i. Region becomes more competitive for firms and workers because of mixed-use/TOD development patterns
 - ii. Jobs in knowledge, service, and retail locate near transit and population centers
 - iii. Jobs in industrial, intermodal, and warehousing (primarily lower wage jobs) continues to locate on the peripheries of the region
- e. Demographics
 - i. Urban areas are increasingly made up of higher income and college educated residents, due to increase in cost of urban areas
 - ii. Racial and ethnic diversity in suburbs increases as groups who cannot afford to live in the urban core move to suburban areas
 - iii. 2017 disinvested areas well served by transit gradually have more racial and ethnic diversity as higher income white residents move in to areas where most residents have historically been overwhelmingly people of color
- f. Quality of life/ Public Health
 - i. Increase in health as people increasingly opt for active transportation
 - ii. Increase in health as people live in more inter-connected communities
- g. Efficient use of resources
 - i. Decrease in energy usage due to efficiency of denser living
 - ii. Government services can be provided more efficiently in transit served communities and/or downtowns that see density increases and population growth
 - iii. Reinvestment in built out areas that have grown
 - 1. Public amenities such as parks and community centers in some communities thrive
 - iv. Less congestion on roads
- h. Natural Systems
 - i. Less greenfield development puts less pressure on natural resources and green infrastructure
 - ii. More need to integrate green infrastructure and provide access to open space in dense/densifying communities

5. Disproportionately impacted populations

- a. Low income priced out of neighborhoods
- b. Auto-oriented suburban communities without downtowns experience some disinvestment
- c. People working in industries located in non-transit accessible/ low-density typologies (e.g., manufacturing) with potentially high housing and transit costs

6. Possible CMAP resources for strategies

- a. Land use and development
 - i. [Reinvestment and Infill Strategy Paper](#)
 - ii. [Lands in Transition Strategy Paper](#)
 - iii. [Tax Policy and Land Use Strategy Paper](#)
- b. Regional economy / Housing
 - i. [Housing Supply and Affordability Strategy Paper](#)
 - ii. [Inclusive Growth Strategy Paper](#)
- c. Natural systems
 - i. [Green Infrastructure Strategy Paper](#)
- d. Transportation
 - i. [Transit Modernization Strategy Paper](#)
- e. Governance and Administration
 - i. Municipal Capacity Strategy Paper
- f. Mitigating Negative Impacts on Disproportionately Impacted Communities
 - i. [Housing Supply and Affordability Strategy Paper](#)
 - ii. [Inclusive Growth Strategy Paper](#)
 - iii. Public Health Strategy Paper
 - iv. [Aging in Place White Paper](#)
 - v. [Immigrant Integration Toolkit](#)
 - vi. [Homes for a Changing Region Recommendations Guide](#)