Application form:
RTA Community Planning Program and
CMAP Local Technical Assistance Program

DEADLINE: Noon on Thursday, June 29, 2017

This application form is online at www.rtachicago.org/applications. You may submit the form by email to applications@rtachicago.org. Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

1. Name of Applicant

Kane County

2. Main Contact for Application

Name: Janice Hill

Title: Executive Planner and Farmland Protection Manager

Phone number: 630-232-3483

Email: hilljanice@co.kane.il.us

3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply)

___X___ Local government

____ Multijurisdictional group*  Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

____ Nongovernmental organization*  Name of local government partner(s):

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information.
Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

4. Project Type (please check any that apply)

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project.

___ My project involves preparation of a plan.
___ x__ My project involves updating an already existing plan.
___ x__ My project helps to implement a past plan.
___ My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
___ My project has direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
___ My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

5. Local Match Requirement (please initial to indicate you are aware of the local match requirements)

I am aware that a local match will be required for most projects, and understand that if my project is selected it is up to the project applicant to contribute a local match. (See the program guide for further details on local match requirements.)

___ x__ Yes, I understand that applicants will be required to contribute a local match.

6. Project Location

Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

This project will focus on Kane County but will include analysis and involvement with the entire CMAP region. The project will have two tracts for consideration: a local tract focused on Kane County specific work in farmland protection and local foods production and consumption; and a regional tract which will include the entire CMAP region in the appropriate areas of farmland protection, urban development, local foods production and consumption. We plan to create location specific strategies and solutions for Kane County and the region, using experts from both the area and from across the U. S. if necessary.

http://www.countyofkane.org/Documents/Quality%20of%20Kane/2040%20Plan/default.htm
7. Project Description
Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed. If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. For plan updates please tell us how you will be building upon (or replacing) the previous work. Program staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

Kane County proposes to lead an investigation as a CMAP LTA to examine the potential of expanding revenue streams for the purpose of additional farmland protection and local food investment. Openlands has agreed to be a partner in this project and provide legal research and guidance in the areas of Transfer of Development rights. They have provided a draft list of questions and considerations for the project, which is attached.

The request for this LTA is for CMAP to provide technical guidance and partner oversight and coordination. Additionally we request funding if available to hire expert consultants in the areas of revenue expansion and the intricacies of Transfer of Development rights potential for the Chicago region. Additionally CMAP may also serve as a partner should we search for additional private or public funding for this project. Kane County will provide matching funds for this project in an amount to be determined depending on the availability of CMAP funds. Other expert consultants will be hired to guide us in creating a ground-breaking local and regional, public/private investment partnership using previously untapped revenue streams including but not limited to: philanthropy, crowdfunding, social impact investment, transfer of development rights and benefits.

Anticipated benefits to the local and regional areas include more local funds for farmland protection thereby expanding the capacity to capture more federal funding and investment. Other benefits include a creation of a dedicated local and regional funding stream to support more local food production. Resulting long term benefits include capturing millions in food dollar leakage; protection of local and regional food supply, adherence to CMAP and county growth and land protection strategies; control of public cost and prevention of sprawl.

8. Previous Plan Implementation Efforts
Please describe actions you have taken to implement previous plans in your community – whether your efforts were successful or not – to achieve infrastructure improvements, development investment, policy changes, advocacy, volunteer involvement, or other actions. If you do not have experience implementing previous planning work, please describe what you will do to make sure that your plan is implemented. Illustrating a commitment to implement plan recommendations is very important to both agencies as we consider new planning projects.

Kane County is a leader in the planning and implementation of farmland protection and local foods arena. We have partnered with Openlands, CMAP, American Planning Association Plan4Health, counties, non-profits, and lenders to strategize, share and implement strategies to both protect and increase local food production and consumption. The Kane County 2040 Plan, Go to 2040 CMAP plan, Farmland Protection ordinance, Growing for Kane ordinance, Fit for Kids plan, Growing for Kane Health Impact Assessment, and Food Hub feasibility study are foundational documents
for all of our work. We create plans, policies, programs and projects to set for our goals and implementation.

9. Additional Strategic Partnerships
Please list any additional partners you may want to include in this planning project. Please specify if you have made contact with them in advance of submitting this application.

Kane County will partner with Openlands and CMAP on this project to ensure a regional perspective. In a recent conference call with both organizations, Kane County released the proposal to investigate new revenue and investment strategies for farmland protection and local foods at both the county and regional levels. The proposal includes consideration of a Food and Farm Investment Partnership (public/private) including banks and financial institutions; Kane County Agriculture Committee; Not-for-profits; private investors; Growing for Kane Commission; and Kane County Health Department to oversee the expansion and diversification of revenue streams and new funding support to innovative local and regional efforts demonstrating outcomes that support farmland protection and expanded local foods.

See attached concept paper: “Building on Kane County’s Farmland Preservation Success”
See video prepared by Kane County consulting videographer Juneteenth Productions:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOlyW6RoyP8&feature=youtu.be
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) to Protect Farmland & Local Food Production in Northeast Illinois

Draft for research purposes

- What is the geography of ‘sending areas’? – urban AND/OR rural?

- Jurisdiction –
  - within one county (with property tax assessment powers),
  - one town (with zoning powers);
  - region (multiple jurisdictions with multiple zoning & property tax zones). NOTE: Inter-municipal transfers can cause shifts in tax revenues and land values that may need to be mitigated.

- Development market – what type of demand is present in the current building market?

- Existing zoning/development options for landowners in sending areas – under the base zoning, how many residences can landowners construct? Can they construct non-residential (commercial or industrial) buildings? These considerations all influence the amount of money that development rights are worth.

- How is sending area protection compensated?
  - Restrict property & landowner or developer receives credits in one, all-or-nothing transaction
  - Restrict property & receive credits gradually as receiving area builders purchase them

- Valuation of development rights –
  - per unit of development (home, structure, square foot, ...);
  - credit valuation = ‘before’ minus ‘after’;
  - market-driven value of development units being added to receiving area
  - formula-driven development capacity additions (floor-area-ratio, setbacks, etc.)
  - development footprint (square feet)
  - auction for credits run by centralized TDR administrator or bank

- Structure of credit market –
  - centralized (a single entity/credit bank sets value of all uniform credits);
  - decentralized (credit buyers and sellers trade directly with one another)

- Nature of participation
  - Mandatory for sending area landowners (i.e. TDR is mitigating $ impact of required down-zoning)
  - Optional for sending area landowners
  - Mandatory for receiving area builders (builders must use TDR credits to build)
  - Optional for receiving area builders to purchase credits

- Timing of program implementation –
  - Immediate – sending & receiving zones are fully designated simultaneously
  - Gradual – as fees for building above density in receiving zones accumulate, the TDR administering body deed restricts land in the sending zones (possibly by reverse auction)
Building on Kane County’s farmland preservation success

Call for action

The Kane County Development and Community Services Department is launching a public awareness campaign to support the county’s farm and food economy. A video series will inform a public-private, partnership-building initiative. The first video will introduce two farm families whose stories speak to the importance of the continued success of the county’s farmland preservation program. Kane County seeks to create a “farmland investment fund” that will combine its purchase of development rights (PDR) and Growing for Kane programs with such creative financing mechanisms as a new transfer of development rights (TDR) tool.

Nationally recognized PDR program is regional model

In 2000, Kane County became the first county in the Midwest to establish a PDR program. State and local governments on the East and West Coasts have invested billions of dollars to preserve 2.7 million acres of farmland. In the last 17 years, Kane County has expended $32.4 million for the development rights to 5,500 acres of productive farmland. Riverboat gaming grant funds and federal match money have underwritten the preservation of 31 family farms.

PDR programming reflects the ethic that farmers deserve protection and compensation to keep their businesses viable. Kane’s program sends a signal that subdivisions are not the “highest and best use” of land in the unincorporated sections of western Kane County. (McHenry, Boone, and Kendall Counties have authorized farmland protection programs but no funding.)

Today, Kane County farmers’ interest to protect farmland by selling their development rights to the county exceeds the available funding. Declining county financial resources underscore the need for new farmland preservation revenue streams. The county’s first step will be to explore the possibility of augmenting its PDR program with TDR.

Transfer of development rights

This voluntary, incentive-based, and market-driven tool has proven effective in a number of counties in Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, and Washington State. TDR is designed to preserve rural/exurban land currently in agricultural use and to steer new development towards targeted suburban/urban centers. Rural landowners realize economic return by selling development rights to private sector builders. In return, local governments allow developers who have purchased TDRs to build additional dwelling units in their projects.

Kane County is exploring the feasibility of customizing a TDR program to enhance local market opportunities. Potential partners include Fox River municipalities as well as neighboring counties and municipalities. Chicago region benefits could include strategically-located investment in, for example, permanent urban, suburban and rural farmland; downtown infrastructure; brownfields redevelopment and transit-oriented development projects.
Formula for TDR success:

- Strong public support for overall preservation efforts
- Rural/exurban TDR “receiving areas” and urban/suburban “designated growth zones”
- An ample supply of TDRs available for developers to purchase
- A robust real estate development market generates demand for TDR sales

Laying foundation for “farmland investment fund”

Kane County has a six-decade record of farm-friendly land use planning and policies. County government’s commitment to farming reflects a recognition that agriculture is an economically productive, environmentally beneficial and socially desirable industry.

Kane County’s farmers represent one percent of the population and six percent of economic output. Their $200M a year farm gate value generates $2.8B in economic impact, according to Decision Innovations Solutions’ analysis of USDA Census data.

This accounting doesn’t include benefits like aquifer recharge, wildlife habitat and scenic views. Such “ecological services” merit inclusion in a new formula for valuing permanently protected farmland. In addition, preserved farmland enables local taxing districts to plan on farmland owners paying into the public coffers with little demand for new services.

Proposed design objectives for a farmland investment fund include:

*Regional scale can maximize resource management, fiscal & infill-development goals.*

All collar counties seek a balance of exurban and suburban patterns of growth. Consumer demand for locally-sourced food is also sparking micro-farming enterprises in Cook County.

*New agriculture-oriented metrics can measure economic, ecological & social benefits.*

The Farm Credit System—agriculture’s federally designated “government-sponsored enterprise”—has identified seven business segments comprising the agricultural economy in “urban edge” places like Kane County. They are: commodities (broadly stated as grains, oilseeds, livestock, specialty crops); horticulture/sod; equine; forestry; local food; “agriment” (the marketing of rural experiences); and farm supply businesses.

*Permanent farmland programs can represent “reinvestment in existing communities.”*

Farming on the outskirts of suburbs is generally viewed as a temporary land use awaiting conversion to concrete, asphalt and rooftops. Market actors in the regional farm and food economy would benefit from public policies and programs that strive to put agriculture on equal footing with residential, commercial and industrial development. An expanded PDR program together with a TDR program could create a market-based firewall to curb sprawling patterns of development. Stabilized farmland markets could lead to infill development opportunities for the real estate industry: a win-win outcome.