



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Board and Committees

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** September 5, 2018

**Re:** Initial Summary of Public Comment Period Feedback

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The draft ON TO 2050 plan was available for public comment from June 15<sup>th</sup> through August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. During that time, CMAP staff held a series of 10 Open Houses and one Public Hearing, as well as broadly publicizing the plan via social media and partners to generate feedback from residents. Staff also met with partners throughout the summer to discuss the draft plan, potential changes, and next steps on implementation. This memo summarizes the major findings of this phase of public outreach.

### Overview of Comments

Staff received 970 comments, via the following formats:

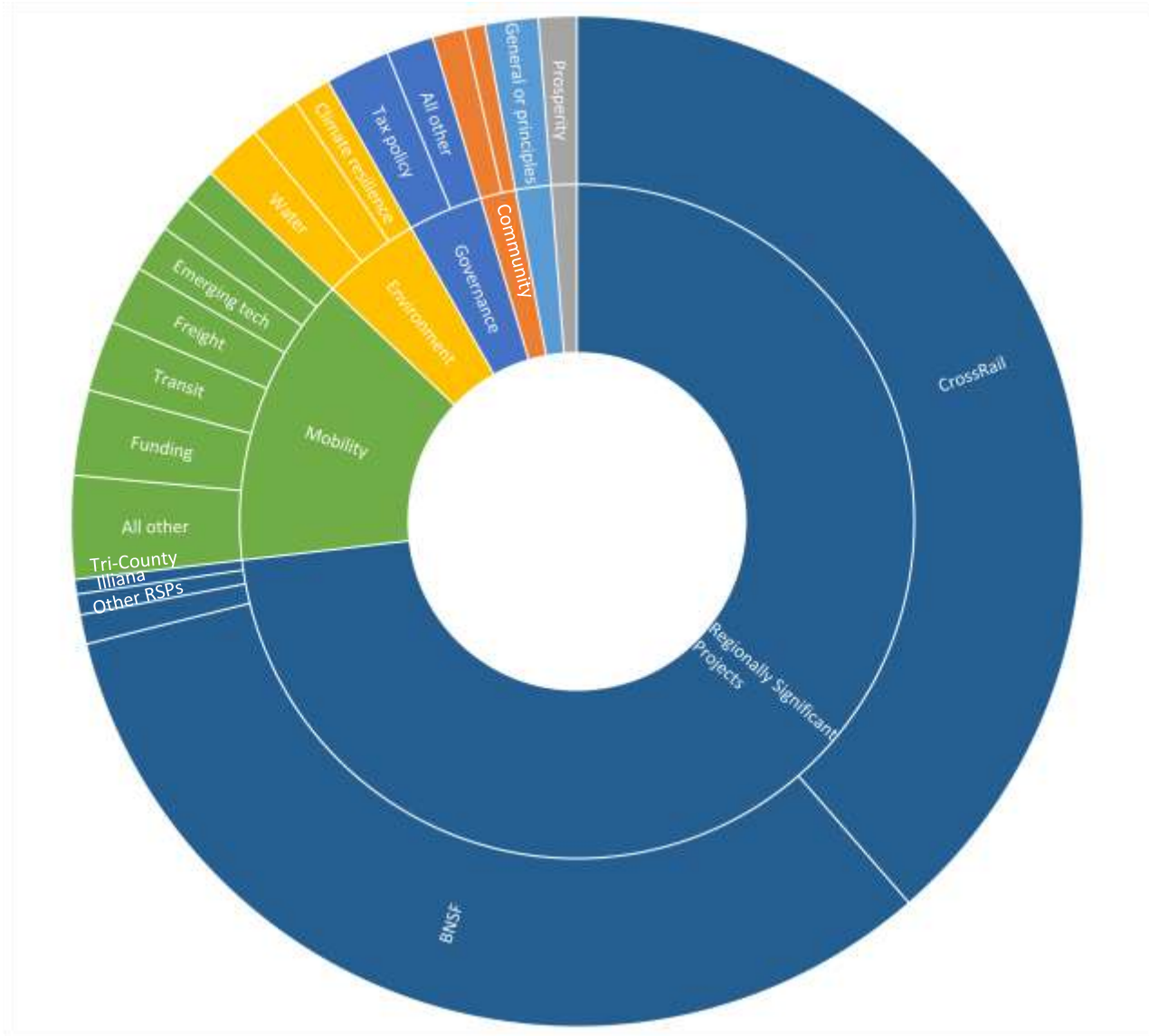
473 Web form comments  
450 Emails or letters  
3 Phone calls from residents  
28 Open house comment cards  
16 Public hearing statements  
**970 Public Comments**

As with the GO TO 2040 public comment, the majority of these comments were received via form letters or coordinated campaigns. The comment total includes 410 letters and comments in favor of Crossrail and 340 web form or email comments regarding the extension of Metra's BNSF service to Kendall County. These and smaller pushes related to expressway expansion and freight issues in Will County are discussed below.

The content of the public comment varied broadly. Most comments supported a particular initiative or project, while a few expressed concern about expansion of the transportation system. A number of residents spoke with concern about climate resilience, flooding, and open space preservation. Stakeholder letters covered a variety of topics, offering both support and

revisions. The charts below depict the focus of the comments. To provide more detail, the second removes the two major campaigns. Where comments addressed multiple topics, staff divided the comments for this accounting.

**ON TO 2050 public comment sorted by topic area, including Regionally Significant Projects**



## ON TO 2050 public comment sorted by topic area, excluding Regionally Significant Projects



The remainder of this memo discusses the revisions in response to public comment, by chapter.

### Overarching changes

During the public feedback period, CMAP received several responses expressing concern about the lack of coverage of disability issues, particularly in areas where small additions could expand the reach of recommendations, such as those related to aging in place. Staff added references to the growing number of disabled residents in the region and relevant strategies throughout, but most extensively in Mobility and Community.

Feedback from CMAP committees and some partners offered concern that the draft Plan did not sufficiently address equity or the racial determinants of today's negative employment, health, education, and other outcomes for residents of color. Staff supplemented these connections in each chapter.

A number of stakeholders asked for additional connections between the draft 2050 Indicators and the draft Plan's recommendations, as well as information regarding progress on GO TO 2040 indicators. While the final web version of the plan will emphasize these links much more clearly, staff made a number of additions to the Plan and appendix to enforce these connections.

### **Community**

While the early recommendations of the Community Chapter generated significant comment from CMAP committees and some partners, with requests to provide more direct recommendations for suburban parts of the region, little feedback was received during the public comment period. The largest comments were directed at the recommendations relating to housing options and walkable communities, noting their potential to offer more information and strategies for residents with disabilities. Staff updated the recommendation on walkable communities. Within the housing choice recommendation, staff significantly expanded the strategy related to aging in place to include residents with disabilities. As indicated in the draft Plan, staff developed and added an indicator on walkability to accompany the walkable community recommendation.

This chapter also contains a shared recommendation on reforming tax policies, which has been significantly revised. This is discussed in the Governance chapter.

### **Prosperity**

This chapter also received significant comment as early recommendations were proposed, with no major requests for revisions during the public comment period. Several comments supported the Plan's recommendations and the ongoing economic research that CMAP provides. Staff made small changes to emphasize the role of disability in determining economic opportunity, and to clarify the relationship between state, regional, and local economic development plans.

### **Environment**

As with Community and Prosperity, this chapter received few comments requesting substantive change. CMAP received many public comments in support of planning for climate resilience, addressing stormwater and flooding, pursuing open space and agricultural preservation, and other environmental recommendations. Staff made minor changes to nomenclature, updated some data, and included indicators relating to greenhouse gas emissions and water supply (as indicated in the draft Plan).

### **Governance**

Partners offered substantive comment on this chapter. While many supported recommendations related to partnerships and collaboration in economic development efforts, they wanted the recommendation to be clear that CMAP would assist voluntary efforts, rather than mandate collaboration. Staff clarified language where relevant to indicate that the Plan recommends – but does not mandate – these activities.

Communities offered the most substantive feedback on the recommendation to reform tax policies, and an underlying strategy to reduce divergences in state disbursements to local governments. Staff revised the recommendation and strategy to focus on modernizing revenues

available to and disbursements to municipalities, in response to socioeconomic and technological shifts like rising ecommerce, intermodalism, and consumer preference for walkable and amenity-rich communities. These trends have far-reaching impacts on development patterns, transportation needs, and revenues at all levels. A modern revenue system could better respond to these changes, and any changes should occur in close collaboration with local governments and ensure that communities are not negatively affected.

As with the other chapters, staff also completed a number of small updates, additions, and clarifications.

## **Mobility**

The majority of public comment responded to recommendations in this chapter. A number responded to emerging technology like autonomous vehicles and private transportation providers, with both anticipation and concern. A group of letters from the general public offered concern about the growing freight activity in outer areas of the region, particularly Will County. Partners also provided comments supporting additional planning for growing freight activity. In response, staff added to text describing the potential negative impacts of freight, and expanded strategies relevant to ensuring that new freight development has supportive infrastructure that improves safety and reliability, as well as being planned with careful consideration of quality of life and open space preservation issues. Staff also emphasized the need to improve truck routing and planning throughout the region.

Several partners asked that the plan clearly outline the importance of multimodal transportation improvements and highlight those projects. Staff added text supporting multimodal projects at the beginning of the Regionally Significant Projects section, created a combined map, and designated multimodal projects with a unique symbol in the forthcoming web version of the plan.

Several stakeholders expressed concern about the revenue increases or changes proposed in the draft Plan. Several residents also commented on revenue recommendations, with concerns focused on tax burden and tolling. In response to one comment that a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fee would have disparate impacts on some drivers, it was clarified that implementation should be preceded by testing to ensure a fair system.

The majority of the public comments on the Mobility chapter – and for the draft overall -- were in reference to specific Regionally Significant Projects. Several members of the public and environmental organizations offered comments supporting ON TO 2050's categorization of the Illiana Expressway and the Tri-County Access projects on the unconstrained list, while other residents and partners commented on the value of these projects and advocated for their inclusion on the constrained list. Several commenters opposed all expressway expansion projects and advocated for additional funding for biking, walking and transit. No changes were made to the designation of constrained expressway projects, though some minor changes were made to clarify project descriptions, and additional text was added about the importance of system enhancement projects, including bicycle and pedestrian projects, that do not meet the technical definition of Regionally Significant Projects.

Several hundred residents provided comments in support of extending the Metra BNSF service to Kendall County, as did a number of local jurisdictions. The project remains on the fiscally unconstrained list. Staff changed the project description to emphasize its strong local support, and pointed to the need to develop a strong financial plan for building and operating the facility.

More than 400 residents provided letters in support of the CrossRail project. Staff changed the project description to emphasize that several elements of the project are on the constrained list, and that the O'Hare Express project has also begun advancing. However, the project was retained on the fiscally unconstrained list.

#### **Updated ON TO 2050 Draft**

The CMAP Board and Planning Committee will receive a revised draft of the ON TO 2050 Plan for discussion at their September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Staff will make final revisions based on this discussion. The Transportation Committee will receive a revised version of the plan prior to their September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, where they will be asked to approve the revised ON TO 2050 Plan.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Discussion

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