

CMAP Legislative
Agenda for the
101st Illinois
General Assembly

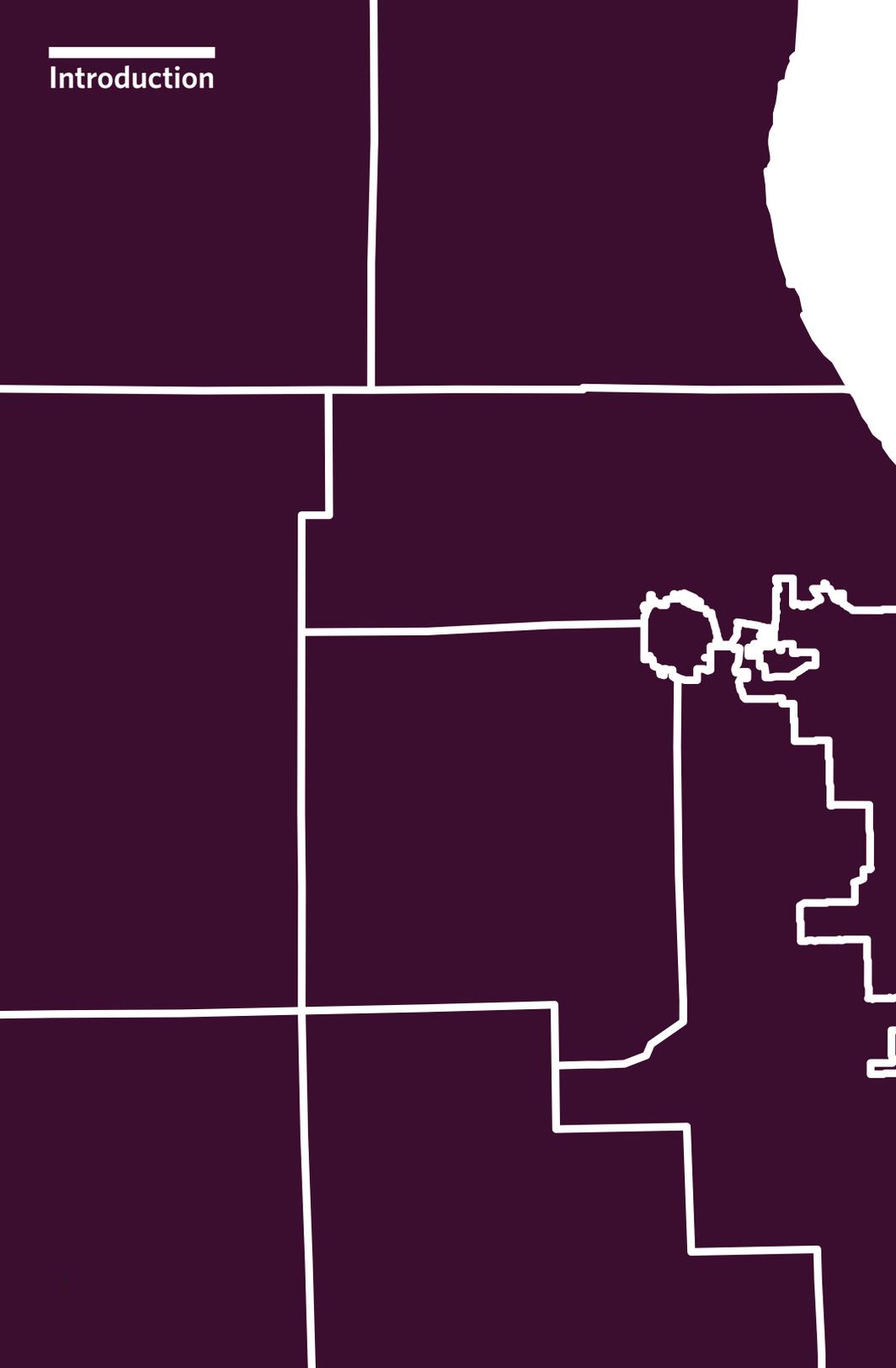
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CMAP

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Introduction





The Chicago region has a tradition of seizing its destiny rather than leaving the future to chance. That tradition is founded on ambitious, bold planning. In that vein, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) was created in 2005 (70 ILCS 1707) to guide planning in northeastern Illinois. CMAP helps communities prosper by supporting planning and policies that enhance quality of life and make Chicagoland more competitive.

The region is home to one of the world's great economic centers, abundant natural resources, and a vast multimodal transportation system. Adopted in October 2018, CMAP's ON TO 2050 comprehensive regional plan recommends policy changes and legislative actions to capitalize on these vital assets. Framed by three main principles — Inclusive Growth, Resilience, and Prioritized Investment — ON TO 2050 builds on past planning efforts to maintain metropolitan Chicago's competitive advantages, address persistent challenges, and achieve regional prosperity.

This document presents CMAP's positions on state legislation related to planning, transportation funding and programming, fiscal and tax policy, support for local governments, and water resource management. A more detailed legislative framework to inform potential state legislation is available at www.cmap.illinois.gov/updates/legislative.



Ensure reliable access to planning funds

When the State of Illinois created CMAP, it charged the agency with the responsibility to comprehensively plan for the Chicago region, incorporating land use and transportation planning with work on housing, regional economic growth, water resource management, community development, and environmental issues. CMAP's enabling legislation pledged that "additional funding shall be provided to CMAP to support those functions and programs authorized by [the enabling legislation] (70 ILCS 1707/62)." Funding from the state needs to include resources that support all of CMAP's planning activities as mandated in the state enabling legislation.

CMAP supports dedicated funds for comprehensive planning in northeastern Illinois.

Collect and provide the public data needed to support decision making and accountability

CMAP and partners rely heavily on public data to conduct research, prioritize public investments, and make better and more informed decisions. Data sharing through open governance also improves transparency and accountability by enabling residents to understand how government operates. A complete-count 2020 Census is crucial to ensuring the state and the region receive their fair share of representation in the federal government and federal support for infrastructure and transportation. The State of Illinois should dedicate resources toward a complete-count Census, and support the collection and sharing of data between public and private partners.

CMAP supports legislation to increase data and information sharing by requiring state and local agencies to make their programs and policies more accountable to the public.

CMAP supports all efforts by the State of Illinois to ensure a complete-count 2020 Census by targeting resources toward hard-to-count communities.



Secure sustainable, adequate, and multimodal transportation funding

Metropolitan Chicago is North America's freight hub and its public transit system moves more than 2 million people each weekday. However, much of the region's transportation system has been chronically underfunded and urgently needs repair, but lacks a source of non-federal revenue for capital needs such as maintenance, enhancement, and expansion. The State of Illinois must take bold steps to ensure sustainable, adequate, multimodal capital investments that rely on performance-based criteria to address northeastern Illinois' maintenance backlog and meet key regional goals.

Simply put, the current transportation funding mechanisms in Illinois are inadequate to support the current system, let alone make improvements that are crucial to our economic competitiveness. Traditional state revenue sources — the motor fuel tax and vehicle registration fees — are not keeping pace with the costs of maintaining infrastructure. Modern trends such as increasing fuel economy and stagnant population growth have diminished these revenues over time. The motor fuel tax should be increased and indexed to inflation in the near term. Ultimately, the motor fuel tax faces long-term threats to its viability as vehicles become more fuel efficient and as vehicle miles traveled continue to decline. The state urgently needs to begin a pilot study of a per-mile road usage charge to aid in transitioning away from the motor fuel tax.

Increased state and federal investment, while critical, will likely be insufficient to meet the region's significant needs. Metropolitan Chicago should generate robust local revenues and allocate those funds based on performance rather than arbitrary formulas. Regionally raised and regionally invested funds would help complete a significant number of prioritized projects and modernize the system while leveraging private and public funding sources.

CMAP supports increasing the motor fuel tax and indexing it to inflation in the near term, then replacing the motor fuel tax with a per-mile road user charge over the longer term.

CMAP supports new, sustainable revenues for transportation including a dedicated source of capital funding for transit and intercity passenger rail, and a greater focus on improvements to the freight system.

CMAP supports state legislation enabling northeastern Illinois to secure sustainable and substantial revenues to make performance-based infrastructure investments.



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Making transit more competitive

Our public transit system is one of metropolitan Chicago's most critical assets. Together, the region's bus and rail services provide two million rides per weekday, improving air quality, reducing carbon emissions, allowing commuters to avoid congested highways, and connecting people to jobs, education, entertainment, and other amenities. Public transit access is especially crucial for those who cannot drive or lack access to a car. ON TO 2050 commits to the aggressive goal of doubling regional transit ridership by 2050. Achieving this goal will require sustained state investment. State policies and programs should make transit a more competitive transportation option, for example by prioritizing transit-supportive land uses and infill economic development. Coordinating investment broadly — by linking transportation with housing, and targeting public expenditures to attract private investment, among other examples — is also essential for effectively using limited resources.

CMAP supports legislative action to provide a dedicated, robust source of capital funding for transit.

CMAP supports state policy and programs that benefit transit by encouraging land use decisions that support dense commercial and residential development near bus or train service.

Adopt an integrated approach to managing water resources and promote policies to address urban flooding and protect water supply

Water is at the center of our regional prosperity and here, too, metropolitan Chicago has tremendous assets. However, climate change and development are exacerbating water management challenges such as flooding, and even straining the availability of water for some residents and businesses in northeastern Illinois. ON TO 2050 recognizes the value of managing water as a singular resource and recommends an integrated approach.

By making decisions that reflect the interconnectedness of water resources, the State of Illinois can sustain regional growth and environmental health well into the future. To advance integrated water resource management, the State can coordinate existing programs to identify cost-effective ways to maintain water and wastewater infrastructure while protecting natural assets. Promoting watershed plans and assisting watershed-based working groups can help identify multi-jurisdictional solutions to address both water quality and water resource goals.

While there are many low-capital solutions to flooding — such as encouraging watershed plans, updating risk mapping, and revising development standards — some problems can only be solved by investing in green infrastructure and retrofitting gray infrastructure. As parts of the region face groundwater supply challenges, there is also a pressing need for regional cooperation and integrated water supply planning. However, the state does not have a dedicated fund for water supply planning and management. Water supply planning funds should be adequate and sustainable, particularly for the state's most populous region.

CMAP supports legislative initiatives that promote an integrated approach to water resources, recognizing water as a singular resource and regional strength.

CMAP supports investment in comprehensive watershed planning to identify the most significant water resource problems and address flooding throughout the region.

CMAP supports policies and programs that promote green infrastructure retrofits to better manage stormwater on-site.

CMAP supports new, sustainable revenues to support state and regional water planning by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Water Survey, Illinois Water Inventory Program, and regional partners.

Reform state tax policy and build local capacity

Fiscal and tax policy decisions made at the state level significantly affect the Chicago region's ability to make infrastructure and community investments recommended in ON TO 2050. CMAP is specifically focused on how tax policy influences the region's overall economy, including the commercial, industrial, and residential development of communities.

State tax policies can often distort land use decisions rather than allow markets or quality of life factors to guide them. Under the current tax structure, communities without sales tax generating businesses or dense commercial development often have few revenue options sufficient to cover the cost of public services and infrastructure. Reforms should improve revenue-generating options for communities that have a very low tax base compared with their costs for basic services, to help break the cycle of slow growth or disinvestment. These same policies can inadvertently lead local governments to compete with one another for economic development, with little or no overall gain for the region or state.

Changes to the tax system must also reflect the region's and state's economies and demographics, and promote inclusive growth. The state should modernize outmoded aspects of its tax system, ensuring tax policy changes minimize economic distortions by broadening the tax base and potentially lowering rates, and evaluate key revenue sources, such as the income and sales taxes, to determine how to reform those taxes' structures.

CMAP supports comprehensive reforms of state tax policy to broaden the tax base in a manner that allows for lower rates.

CMAP supports tax policy reforms that encourage effective local land use decisions, generate sustainable economic development, and reduce the focus on intrastate and intraregional competition over economic development, while ensuring adequate revenues for state and local governments to invest in infrastructure and provide services.



Encourage partnerships and consolidation

Beyond tax reform, ON TO 2050 stresses giving local communities the tools and opportunities they need to build capacity and provide residents with a high quality of life. In many cases, this means exploring shared and consolidated services, which can provide benefits such as improved capacity and resources, greater efficiency, enhanced service quality, and cost savings. The state has already created processes to streamline consolidations; now it must contribute funds to further study and help implement the practice to assist communities that want to pursue these options.

CMAP supports action by the State of Illinois to provide funding to local governments for service sharing and consolidation feasibility studies.

CMAP supports the temporary use of tax credits by the State of Illinois to offset property tax differentials resulting from local government consolidations.

About CMAP

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) was created in 2005 by state statute (70 ILCS 1707) and its Policy Committee is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the seven counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will plus portions of Grundy and DeKalb. Its state and federal mandates require CMAP to conduct comprehensive regional planning, prioritize transportation investments, provide technical assistance for communities, and compile data resources that enhance decision making.

CMAP developed and now guides implementation of the region's ON TO 2050 comprehensive plan, which was adopted in October 2018 by leaders from across the seven counties. ON TO 2050 is an innovative, policy-based plan that establishes coordinated strategies to help the region's 284 communities address transportation, economic development, open space, water, energy, housing, and other quality-of-life issues. Three principles guide the plan and unify the goals and implementation strategies: Inclusive Growth, Resilience, and Prioritized Investment.

Implementation of ON TO 2050 is CMAP's main priority. The agency provides extensive support to communities through its Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program. So far, CMAP has initiated more than 220 LTA projects in which counties, municipalities, and nongovernmental organizations are planning for increased livability, sustainability, and economic vitality. The program helps address significant demand in the region for updating local comprehensive plans, ordinances, and related planning activities. Though its three-year U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant expired in December 2013, CMAP has continued the LTA program with funding from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and Cook County Community Development Block Grants, among other sources.

ON TO 2050 recommendations guide the allocation of federal transportation dollars in northeastern Illinois through the following programs that CMAP administers:

- The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program supports surface transportation improvements, with \$226 million programmed over five years (federal FY 2018-22) and a new call for projects announced in January 2019.
- The local Surface Transportation Program was developed through coordination with subregional Councils of Mayors and the City of Chicago, with \$171 million obligated in federal FY 2018. A new Shared Fund for projects that make large and lasting contributions to regional transportation priorities announced its first call for projects in January 2019. The subregional councils will have their next calls for projects in 2020.
- The local Transportation Alternatives Program supports non-motorized transportation in the region, with \$30 million approved in the most recent three-year cycle (federal FY 2018-20), and a new call for projects announced in January 2019.
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) accounts for these, and all federally funded and otherwise regionally significant projects, totaling \$13 billion, from federal FY 2019-23.

CMAP conducts extensive, data-driven research and analysis related to policy objectives contained in ON TO 2050, including diverse economic factors such as workforce, innovation, and state and local tax policies. CMAP helps to coordinate efforts to build partnerships involving the institutions that provide education and training and the industries that need a reliable pool of middle- and high-skilled workers. CMAP's research also has shed light on the impacts of state and local tax policies.

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