

2019 CMAP
Federal Agenda

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HELPING
COMMUNITIES
PROSPER

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 serve as the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and 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 first presents CMAP's positions on federal transportation policies, followed by key recommendations related to climate change, managing water and natural resources, information access, housing and land use, and education and workforce development. A more detailed Legislative Framework to inform potential federal legislation is available at www.cmap.illinois.gov/updates/legislative.

Improve surface transportation

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act authorizes surface transportation programs through October 2020. As policymakers consider FAST Act reauthorization, annual appropriations bills, and other policy proposals related to transportation infrastructure, CMAP offers the following reforms and policy recommendations.



Ensure sustainable, adequate revenues sources for multimodal transportation investments

Due to the inadequacy of current revenue sources, the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) has required non-transportation revenue infusions of \$144 billion since 2008. Absent new or increased revenues, the trust fund will again face insolvency shortly after expiration of the FAST Act. Although appropriations bills can provide needed supplemental funds, these cannot be relied upon for long-term planning. Benefit-based transportation user fees can provide sustainable, adequate funding for multimodal improvements. Investment should be ongoing and adequate, structured to align with technological developments and consumer habits, and allocated in a manner that addresses the system's most pressing needs.

Changes in travel behavior and vehicle technology will require a replacement for the HTF's primary revenue source — the motor fuel tax — with a per-mile road usage charge in the long term. Looming reconstruction needs on the northeastern Illinois Interstate and expressway system will require substantial funds, but current federal law limits the ability to toll existing Interstate capacity. New operational approaches that can limit congestion, such as managed lanes, also require the ability to price roadway use.

The FAST Act established two new highway and freight programs that have provided funds for nationally important freight projects in the Chicago region, such as the 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project. These programs should be continued and would benefit from a sustainable, dedicated funding source that has a user-fee nexus to the freight system.

CMAP supports increasing the federal motor fuel tax rate, indexing it to an inflationary measure, and in the long term replacing it with a per-mile road usage charge.

CMAP supports continued funding for state per-mile user fee pilot programs and development of a streamlined national solution that allows each state to collect road usage charges from out-of-state drivers.

CMAP supports removing federal restrictions on tolling the Interstate system.

CMAP supports implementation of a federal "cost of freight service fee" that would charge a percentage fee on the cost of all shipments, regardless of mode, with revenues disbursed to states based on their freight needs.



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During Construction of the New
Lafayette-Wabash Elevated Station

JCDconnect

CDOT

WABASH

Make transit a more competitive transportation option

For the Chicago region's public transportation system to reach a state of good repair would require substantial new funding — \$19.4 billion — with even more needed to modernize the system to world-class standards. Federal funding reforms are needed to level the playing field between transit and highways for large expansion projects. For transit, the New Starts program requires a substantial local match and the completion of significant engineering work prior to consideration for federal funding. In contrast, a large highway expansion project is subject to the lower, standard local match and has more flexibility in using federal funds for engineering work. Additionally, federal agencies should support transit-oriented development through their transportation, housing, and economic development investments. Finally, CMAP recognizes the important role that intercity passenger rail plays in the regional transportation system and the need for it to be well-funded.

CMAP supports legislative initiatives that provide more resources for the maintenance and modernization of transit systems, transit-oriented development, increased transit capacity, and intercity passenger rail.

CMAP supports revising federal requirements to eliminate the funding disparity between transit projects and highway projects.

Implement performance-based funding across programs

The FAST Act does little to advance performance-based funding, whether through the apportionment of funds among federal programs or the evaluation and prioritization of projects.

Performance-based approaches ensure that limited resources are allocated based on their ability to address established goals and targets, rather than on arbitrary derived formulas. CMAP remains committed to transparent, data-driven approaches to programming transportation funds. Policy makers should also consider how performance measurement data could be used to influence funding decisions.

CMAP supports application of performance-based funding principles across programs.

CMAP supports discretionary programs such as BUILD and INFRA that select projects based on demonstrated benefits. CMAP encourages reforms to these programs to increase decision-making transparency.



Provide a greater role for metropolitan planning organizations in programming funds

Increasing the authority of MPOs to program federal resources allows a stronger connection between regional plans and investment decisions. Increased authority would also allow MPOs to better address the safety, system condition, and system performance issues they are now required to measure and set targets for under federal law.

CMAP supports increases in the Surface Transportation Block Grant suballocation to urban areas and stronger requirements for MPO involvement in programming of these and other federal funds.

CMAP supports MPO programming authority for a portion of transit and Highway Safety Improvement Program funds, reflecting new responsibilities for transit asset management and achieving safety goals.

Harness the benefits of emerging technologies and improve safety

Rapid developments in automated vehicle (AV) technology highlight the need for additional policy development at all levels of government. Federal leadership is needed to ensure safety and require that relevant data is collected and made available.

Automated speed enforcement is an effective tool that should be used more widely in the region while ensuring transparency, accountability, privacy, and equity. These programs can reduce fatalities while limiting police interaction. However, automated enforcement is generally not an eligible use of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Section 402 funds or Highway Safety Improvement Program funds.

CMAP supports federal legislation that establishes processes to ensure transparent public access to AV safety information and establishes a role for the federal government in convening stakeholders to establish technology standards that can enable long-range infrastructure planning by local and regional jurisdictions.

CMAP supports federal policy that empowers local governments to enact AV policies consistent with land use and mobility goals.

CMAP supports repeal of funding prohibitions for automated traffic safety enforcement.



Address climate change and protect water and natural resources

Climate change is already significantly affecting the region, manifesting as more frequent and severe storms, extreme temperatures, and drought. ON TO 2050 recommends intensifying climate mitigation efforts and reducing greenhouse gases, while at the same time preparing for and equipping to recover from the acute shocks and chronic stresses of climate change.

The federal government also plays a key role by providing help for states and local governments to maintain water infrastructure, administering flood insurance programs, protecting the Great Lakes, and supporting open space preservation.

CMAP supports federal policy to uphold the U.S. commitment to the Paris Agreement, expand renewable energy and efficiency programs, explore market mechanisms for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and transition to renewable resources.

CMAP supports actions to bolster climate resilience by investing in a more flexible and decentralized electric grid, such as the Smart Grid Investment Grant Program.

CMAP supports additional investment in water and sewer infrastructure, and encourages the use of pricing to manage demand and recover the full cost of service through water rates.

CMAP supports modernizing policies related to flooding, including making risk information available for property sales and reforming the National Flood Insurance Program to develop long-term solutions for properties that suffer repetitive losses or are at high risk of flooding.

CMAP supports investments that maintain the health, recreational use, and economic benefits of Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes.

CMAP supports direct federal investment in open space preservation.



Facilitate data-driven and transparent investment decisions

Solving policy challenges and implementing performance-driven investment requires complete, accessible, standardized, and high quality data resources. Because federal agencies control large amounts of data and information, the U.S. government should make data transparency a requirement for recipients of federal funds. One of the most critical data resources is the U.S. Census Bureau, which informs the allocation of billions of federal dollars and provides social, demographic, and economic data that guides policy decisions at each level of government. The need for investment in quality data is particularly acute as preparations escalate for the upcoming 2020 Census.

CMAP supports the collection of comprehensive data by federal agencies as well as initiatives that facilitate open exchange of data by applying best practices and technological improvements.

CMAP supports legislative and administrative initiatives that ensure the U.S. Census Bureau can conduct an accurate and complete count in the 2020 Census.

CMAP supports policies that ensure data from private transportation providers can be used by the public sector to assess transportation system needs.



Promote housing options, target assistance to disinvested areas, and coordinate planning

Federal housing rules often have the effect of discouraging development of multifamily housing and mixed use facilities that provide housing choice and promote compact development. More can also be done to target assistance to persistently disinvested areas. The federal government can support livable communities by funding collaborative planning and grant programs — such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development's former Sustainable Communities Initiative — that address the relationships among transportation, land use, and housing.

CMAP supports changes to federal regulations to facilitate development of multifamily and mixed use projects.

CMAP supports policies — such as Opportunity Zones — that catalyze growth in disinvested areas.

CMAP supports funding for programs such as the former Sustainable Communities Initiative that link planning and investment decisions across disciplines.



Improve education and workforce development to reduce inequality

Metropolitan economies drive national productivity, knowledge creation, and innovation. To ensure that the U.S. remains competitive, federal policies and programs can be targeted to leverage these economic assets and should also address their challenges. Metropolitan Chicago's diverse economy is the nation's third largest, but its growth lags behind peer regions. Lower- and moderate-income residents are leaving the region to seek economic opportunity elsewhere. To compete globally, our region must bridge the gaps between adults seeking to build a career and employers looking to build their workforce. The federal government can strengthen and expand strategies that link employers, educators, and workforce development entities to support upward economic mobility.

CMAP supports federal resources that further the development, implementation, and expansion of career pathway programs.

CMAP supports federal investment in the region's talent pool through robust and reliable funding for higher education and workforce development.

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. HUD 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 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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