

MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Transportation Committee

From: CMAP Intergovernmental Affairs Staff

Date: February 21, 2025

Subject: Legislative update

Action Requested: Information

2025-2026 Advocacy Agenda

One of CMAP's responsibilities is to develop an advocacy agenda that outlines policy positions and priorities that address challenges and seize opportunities across all levels of government. Updated biennially, the agenda is developed through the lens of ON TO 2050 and the strategic direction, ensuring that CMAP continuously strengthens and advances regional goals in transportation, climate, and economic competitiveness.

The advocacy agenda is a tool used to inform policymakers and elected officials with concrete and tangible actions that can be taken to effectuate change. While the theme of the 2023-2024 Advocacy Agenda focused on promoting a robust economic recovery from the pandemic, [CMAP's 2025-2026 Advocacy Agenda](#) acknowledges the economic uncertainties that lie ahead over the next several years.

The top priority in this agenda is securing a dedicated annual appropriation from the Illinois General Assembly. To broaden and expand support for local communities throughout the region, the Regional Funding Act (RPA) funding request is included at the beginning of the updated agenda to highlight the importance of this initiative.

In developing the 2025-2026 Advocacy Agenda, CMAP took into consideration the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization process and how the agenda's guiding principles can help shape the development of upcoming reauthorization legislation. Building on CMAP's recent policy research and regional policy priorities, CMAP identified key policy recommendations from the Plan of Action for Regional Transit (PART) report and Speed Management Report for inclusion in the Advocacy Agenda. These recommendations offer concrete steps for federal and state lawmakers to sustainably fund and advance regional transportation improvements, fostering a safe, reliable, and world-class system.

With a foundational understanding of the region's climate goals and policy priorities, the updated advocacy agenda emphasizes strengthening policies at both the federal and state levels that enhance resilience, cut emissions, and alleviate congestion while also expanding resources for integrated water resources management.

As CMAP continues to bolster the region's economic competitiveness and build on the tremendous success of the Greater Chicagoland Economic Partnership (GCEP), the agenda outlines how federal and state partners can help the region better prioritize strategic and sustainable development practices, strengthen housing coordination, encourage regional innovation and coordination, improve access to high-quality jobs, and promote investment in communities that have felt the brunt of disinvestment for decades.

CMAP's 2025-2026 Advocacy Agenda outlines our critical path priorities that can help the region address challenges, seize opportunities and continue to thrive.

State transit legislative activity

Earlier this month, Senator Ram Villivalam and Representative Marcus Evans, Jr. filed a bill addressing the future of transit in northeastern Illinois in partnership with the Labor Alliance for Public Transit.

In addition to certain governance reforms and improvements to the region's transit system, the bill also calls for the creation of a Road User Charge (RUC) Advisory Committee to devise a structure for a RUC pilot in Illinois. The bill includes one seat for CMAP on this committee.

We are continuing to review the bill for its alignment to the Plan of Action for Regional Transit and will provide feedback to legislators as requested.