



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item 2.01

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MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board

From: Erin Aleman, Executive Director

Date: February 5, 2025

Subject: Executive Director's report

Action Requested: Information

Dear Board Members,

This report provides an update ahead of our February meeting with the goal of greater transparency to CMAP's work and to supplement the agenda.

Should you have questions regarding this report, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Aleman".

Erin Aleman

Impact of recent executive orders on CMAP work and operations

The impact of recent presidential executive orders on CMAP's work and operations remains uncertain.

Thank you to our partners at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for agreeing to continue to process funding reimbursements to CMAP and other grantees. This allows us to continue much of our work put on pause last week, with some exceptions based on funding source.

This continues to be a rapidly changing environment with new information to digest and assess each day.

While we are working under the new guidance from IDOT, we are awaiting more specific guidance from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Executive Order: [Unleashing American Energy](#) directs federal agencies to "pause" and "review" "the disbursement of funds appropriated through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) or the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)."

CMAP relies on Metropolitan Transportation Planning (MTP) funds (through the IIJA), which comprises approximately 90 percent of its operations budget. CMAP also utilizes MTP funds to distribute and program funding within the region for [four federal funding programs](#) - Surface Transportation Program (STP) Shared Fund, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and Transportation Alternative Program (TAP-L). Calls for projects are held every two years. The last round of programs allocated approximately **\$385 million** to projects throughout the region. The most current call for projects resulted in nearly 100 applications, which are currently under evaluation.

Last week, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) asked for a review of all funding programs and all our programmatic funds were identified as subject to review. However, that guidance was rescinded and pointed back to the executive order which states that all "green new deal" programs will be under review.

Additionally, USDOT awarded CMAP a *Safe Streets for All* discretionary grant to complete a regional safety framework and develop safety action plans in six counties. Unlike the MTP funding, CMAP is a direct federal recipient for this grant and the executive order appears to be focused on halting all discretionary grants in IIJA until further review. We have not received guidance as to whether this grant has been impacted. At this time, we are working to submit outstanding reimbursements to confirm payment will be made.

CMAP is a subrecipient of a USEPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant issued to the Metropolitan Mayors' Caucus (MMC), with CMAP (and its consultants) providing most of the technical support. This was funded through the IRA. These funds were awarded to complete a Climate Action Plan for the Metropolitan Statistical Area to allow the region to envision a path towards the previous Administration's 2050 greenhouse gas reduction targets in all sectors,

including transportation. The executive order halts all grants funded through the IRA until further review. We are working closely with MMC to determine next steps.

As with all federal funding, CMAP operates on a reimbursement basis and does not have the sustained cash-flow to pay for work that may be “at risk” for non-reimbursement.

Last week, CMAP temporarily issued a stop work order to all consultants (both those funded through formula programs and discretionary grants).

While work has resumed on MTP funded projects, we await further clarity that CMAP’s responsibilities and operations will continue to be reimbursed through these federal funding program.

In addition, several other executive orders and DOT orders were issued that staff is working through to determine how it will impact our work. We have also been in touch with our federal legislative delegation to engage them in their support for greater clarity and assessing potential impacts.

I’ve also been in constant communication with my peers across the country and our advocacy associations including the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO).

I will be attending the NARC conference in Washington D.C. February 9 – 11, and federal activities will be a focus of discussion, along with strategies to navigate the shifting political landscape and best position our organizations for success, particularly with a new administration. I will provide you with the latest information at the February 12 board meeting.

[My Daily Travel survey](#)

Over the next couple of months, the last batch of My Daily Travel survey invites will be mailed to select addresses across the region. Our communications team continues to spread the word, collaborating with our transportation and county partners, as well as advocates. To date, almost 2,000 households have completed our survey, helping us get to our goal of 4,000 responses.

[Planning Technical Assistance updates](#)

CMAP is preparing to kick off its annual joint call for technical assistance projects with the RTA. We plan to accept project applications for this year’s call from March 10 to April 4.

We’re also proud to announce the completion of two technical assistance projects — the **Austin Central Avenue Action Plan** and the **Braidwood Comprehensive Plan**. CMAP staff have also started working with communities and partners who were awarded technical assistance in last year’s call for projects.

[Gathering public input to inform the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan](#)

CMAP continues to guide the development of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Public engagement is a critical component to a majority of CMAP's work across northeastern Illinois. CMAP created a questionnaire that gathers public input, to ensure that the RTP is informed by the experiences and needs of those who use the transportation system. It includes 20+ questions that take approximately 10 minutes to complete, and is available in both English and Spanish at cmap.is/rtp. CMAP will be collecting responses throughout 2025, and will be working with advocates, as well as community and transportation partners, to spread the word.

Q2 FY2025 Communications and Engagement metrics report

CMAP Communications and Engagement team informs and influences through various platforms — meeting our partners where they are — and these quarterly metrics reports capture the agency's extensive work engaging with our many stakeholders.

CMAP Communications & Engagement

Engagement metrics

Q2 FY2025: October-December



65 events in 7 counties

Highlights included meetings with agency partners, stakeholders, and legislators; community events for planning projects; and Community Alliance for Regional Equity meetings.







17,491

Engagement HQ site visits

3,003

New contributions, with 12.6% of visitors contributing to projects

CMAP Communications & Engagement Social/newsletters metrics Q2 FY2025: October-December

	14 newsletters Topics including accessibility, climate, regional economy, transportation, and more
	19,849 Total unique newsletter opens
	121,839 Social media impressions Across Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Threads
	63 mentions Media coverage included mentions and quotes covering housing/development, safety action planning, accessibility, and environmental, the transit fiscal cliff, and more (<i>see below for links</i>)

CMAP media mentions

- [Freedom of speech can be a slippery slope \(commentary\)](#), The Free Newspapers
- [Programs aim to build housing on vacant West Side lots](#), Austin Weekly News
- [Time running out for lawmakers to address public transit fiscal cliff \(commentary\)](#), Daily Herald

- [Chicago Tonight](#), WTTW
- [Elmhurst Has Relatively Little Open Space: Study](#), Patch
- [DuPage County has big plans – and many studies and reports – to make the western suburbs more walk/bike/transit-friendly](#), Streetsblog Chicago
- [From safety to silence: More people of all ages are engaging with biking](#), Daily Herald
- [Lawmakers Grapple With Public Transit Funding, Governance and Statewide Needs as Series of Hearings Wrap](#), WTTW
- [In final public transit hearing, downstate operators join chorus for more state funding](#), Capitol News
- [Joliet City Council Approves Laraway Road Grant](#), 1340 WJOL
- [CTA ridership just 60% of pre-COVID levels while budget is 30% higher \(commentary\)](#), Illinois Policy
- [Chicago Tonight -- Chicago-Area Public Transit Leaders on Looming Fiscal Cliff](#), WTTW
- [Merging Chicago area transit agencies could be just the ticket for riders \(Editorial\)](#), Chicago Sun-Times
- [Black Urban Farmers Are Preserving Generations Of Knowledge In America's Biggest Cities](#), Blavity
- [Polling shows public open to concept of consolidation, but lots of hard work remains \(commentary\)](#), Capitol Fax
- [La Grange Park kicks off effort to improve sidewalk accessibility](#), Chicago Tribune
- [5 Transit Board Appointees Advance, But Some Bristle At Another Pastor With No Transit Experience](#), Block Club Chicago
- [Changing Focus: Mobility Hub Design Centered on Women and Caregivers](#), Shared-Use Mobility Center
- [DuPage County & CMAP Open House Nov. 14](#), Westmont website
- [Paving a path for pedestrians, bicyclists to get around Oswego](#), Shaw Local News Network
- [Federal Spending Rescued Mass Transit During Covid. What Happens Now?](#), Derna Chrichten Channel
- [Mayor's Pick For RTA Board, A Pastor With No Transit Experience, Rejected By City Council](#), Block Club Chicago
- [Sidewalk issues limit access for disabled \(opinion\)](#), Daily Herald
- [Here's where Chicago's top brokerages compete for deals](#), The Real Deal
- [On election night, city releases Envision Evanston comprehensive plan draft](#), Chicago Tribune
- [Council Bytes: Options for Civic Center and police/fire HQ, and more meeting highlights](#), Evanston RoundTable
- [Development, Not Displacement](#), MacArthur Foundation
- [Brave the elements and bike in all types of weather](#), Daily Herald
- [CMAP, DuPage County to host traffic safety open house](#), Daily Herald
- [Contract selected for Barrington underpass project](#), Daily Herald
- [Impacts of urban heterogeneity in environmental and societal characteristics on coyote survival](#), Springer Nature Link
- [Isabel's afternoon roundup](#), Capitol Fax
- [Failure to Yield](#), Malman Law

- [‘This village is sidewalk-challenged’: Lincolnwood residents say seniors need better access to sidewalks](#), Chicago Tribune
- [Coming to the rescue of Walsler House, Austin's Frank Lloyd Wright landmark](#), Chicago Sun-Times
- [Lake County gathering public input on improving roadway safety; ‘There is an increase in fatal and severe-injury crashes’](#), Chicago Tribune
- [Developer proposes 90 town houses in Orland Park on what is now farmland](#), Chicago Tribune
- [DuPage County Virtual Open House for Travel Safety Improvements is Dec. 5](#), The City of West Chicago (website)
- [Chicago-area transit agencies face a reckoning that could derail the region](#), Crain's Chicago Business
- [Financial crisis facing CTA, Metra and Pace casts doubt on future of transit-oriented development](#), Crain's Chicago Business
- [Whistleblower suit against Pangea Properties shines light on Section 8 fraud](#), The Real Deal
- [With little time left on City Council, Revelle focuses on ‘big laundry list’ of issues](#), Evanston RoundTable
- [Notable Nonprofit Board Leaders -- Diane Williams](#), Crain's Chicago Business
- [A Just Harvest Serves Meals — and Social Justice](#), The Loyola Phoenix
- [New plan aims to make Central Avenue ‘the spine of Austin’](#), Austin Weekly News
- [Highland Park Mayor Nancy Rotering to head Mayors Caucus](#), Daily Herald
- [Lake County Stormwater Management Commission met Dec. 5](#), Lake County Gazette
- [City Council notes: What’s on tap for the last meeting of the year](#), Evanston RoundTable
- [News Briefs: Linden Jewelry opens; Highland Park mayor named to regional role; Bank donates to local rotary](#), The Record North Shore
- [Is it really possible to 'save money to solve traffic jams'? Which countries have done this? \(translate from Thai\)](#), Brand Inside
- [Residents, business owners back protected bike lanes](#), Evanston Now
- [Illinois environment and labor officials seek closer ties on climate action](#), Chicago Tribune
- [Council Bytes: Options for Civic Center and police/fire HQ, and more meeting highlights](#), Evanston RoundTable
- [Road salt use during Chicago winters has dropped with climate change, but city remains mindful of usage](#), CBS News
- [City: Bike lanes won’t cut parking on Chicago Ave.](#), Evanston Now
- [Lake County launches countywide safety action plan](#), Shaw Local News Network
- [Cook County Property Tax \(PTAX\) Reform Group Releases Study on Commercial Property Valuation](#), Cook County Press Release
- [Chicago from the Air: A City at Work \(RERUN\)](#), WTTW
- [Barrington inks agreement with IDOT for cost sharing on Route 14 underpass](#), Deerfield Herald
- [New study finds systemic inequities in property assessment](#), Homewood Flossmoor Chronicle
- [‘Bad for everything:’ Invasive aquatic plant hydrilla discovered in DuPage County](#), Chicago Tribune

- [Route 14 underpass step closer to reality, will end train delays at crossing](#), Northwest Herald
- [An ode to Chicago and its freight hustlers](#), Freight Waves
- [Will County looks to improve dial-a-ride services countywide](#), Naperville Community Television