

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Transportation Committee

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** September 7, 2022

**Subject:** ON TO 2050 Plan Update public comment summary

**Purpose:** The ON TO 2050 Plan Update, ON TO 2050/ FFY 2023-2028 TIP conformity determination, and the FFY 2023-2028 TIP will be presented for consideration and approval.

**Action Requested:** Information

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The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) invited stakeholders to provide input during the ON TO 2050 plan update process at key stages and for specific technical components. Stakeholders included the general public, members of the CMAP board and committees, municipal representatives, and regional transportation advocates. CMAP's engagement initiatives for the plan update generated more than 500 responses and comments.

### Public engagement summary

CMAP provided the general public with timely information and used its website, e-newsletters, and social media to invite the public to participate in the development of the plan update and to comment on the draft. The agency offered opportunities to participate in multiple events and through several channels, including virtual roundtable discussions, email and web comments, presentations to the CMAP Board and committees, social media, and a public hearing. Four roundtable discussions in April and May 2022 guided development of the draft plan. Formal public comment on the draft plan itself opened on June 10, 2022, and closed August 13, 2022, following the public hearing on August 11, 2022.

### Public hearing

CMAP held a public hearing for public comment on the plan update as required by the Regional Planning Act (the Act), 70 ILCS 1707/40. In accordance with the Act, notice of the public hearing was published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the Chicago region more than 30 days prior to the date of the hearing. Attachment A is the Chicago Tribune Corporation's certificate of publication of the legal notice on June 13, 2022.

The public hearing was a hybrid event, and stakeholders participated by attending in person in CMAP’s offices and on Zoom.

Phase	Activities	Participants
<b>Stakeholder engagement</b> February through May 2022	Roundtable discussions: April 14, 2022 April 28, 2022 May 5, 2022 May 12, 2022	54
<b>Public comment period</b> June 10 through August 13, 2022	Emails and web comments, letters, social media posts	510
	August 11, 2022: Hybrid public hearing in CMAP’s offices and on Zoom	33

## Public comment summary

What follows is a summary of public comment received during the public comment period. Many of the individual comments received followed common themes, which are summarized below. These themes emphasize:

- The importance of continuing to improve how we understand the impacts of transportation investments on communities and the region,
- The need for more focused work on transportation safety, and
- The need to integrate climate considerations more deeply in CMAP’s work.

CMAP staff have crafted responses to each of these themes. The complete log of comments can be found in the Public Engagement Appendix that was part of your packet. Organizational stakeholders, including village and township leadership as well as community partners, will receive individual letters of response to their thoughtful feedback.

Key theme	Response
<b>Impact of roadway expansion on climate mitigation efforts</b>	<p>Commenters expressed concern about the inclusion of roadway expansion projects as Regionally Significant Projects due to climate impacts.</p> <p>The Plan Update reaffirms the regional goal of developing a multimodal transportation system and maintains ON TO 2050’s call to intensify climate mitigation efforts. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires compact infill development, improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and increased investments in public transit as well as considerable expansion in renewable energy systems, energy efficiency and retrofits, and electrification of our transportation system. CMAP will continue to work across these many areas to mitigate climate impacts and recover from the effects of climate change.</p>

	<p>CMAP is continuously evaluating regional performance measures and adjusting our tools and processes for understanding the impact transportation has on quality of life across the region. This includes how we model roadway expansion, as well as advances in greenhouse gas emissions modeling.</p>
<p><b>Transportation system safety and accessibility</b></p>	<p>Commenters emphasized the importance of continuing to make investments and update policies to improve transportation safety and accessibility in the region, particularly for vulnerable travelers.</p> <p><u>Road safety.</u> CMAP launched a program of work to improve regional traffic safety, including by creating new safety data resources on issues like speeding, competing for competitive planning and capital funds, and convening regional stakeholders to promote joint problem solving.</p> <p><u>Transit safety.</u> CMAP is currently developing a report of legislative recommendations to support the region’s transit system in consultation with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The report will address transit safety considerations insofar as the user experience is critical to public confidence in the system, system ridership, and transit employee hiring and retention.</p> <p><u>Accessibility.</u> CMAP launched a program to help every community in northeastern Illinois establish Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plans over the next ten years. Additionally, the agency is currently exploring new ways to support the region’s dial-a-ride services and better integrate them into the broader mobility system.</p>
<p><b>Need to transparently prioritize scarce public resources, including Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding</b></p>	<p>Commenters expressed the preference that new funding coming to the region be fairly allocated in a transparent and performance-based manner.</p> <p>The new federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) seeks to make transformative transportation investments that advance equity, environmental, climate, resilience, and safety goals. Those federal goals align with the Plan Update's core principles of inclusive growth, resilience, and prioritized investment. As the coordinating regional agency, CMAP is a resource to all communities and counties in northeastern Illinois. Since IIJA became law, CMAP has focused on leveraging the increased infrastructure funding for our region, coordinating around new competitive grant programs, and preparing regionally significant projects. CMAP believes that developing clear, transparent, and regionally-supported methods for prioritizing projects and IIJA funding upholds the Plan Update's core principles,</p>

	<p>improves the region's competitiveness for discretionary federal funds, and accelerates progress towards regional goals.</p>
<p><b>Support for strategies that promote walking, biking, and transit</b></p>	<p>Commenters broadly expressed support for non-single occupancy vehicle modes (e.g., walking, biking, transit) and proposed a variety of ways that CMAP and the region should encourage residents to travel by these modes.</p> <p>In general, CMAP devotes a significant portion its annual work plan to projects that support the residents’ ability to travel by active modes. Recent examples include the Regional Sidewalk Inventory and Northern Lakeshore Trail Connectivity Plan.</p> <p>Historically, bicycle and pedestrian projects have not been specifically included in the Regionally Significant Projects list because of their relatively small capital costs. As a reminder, Regional Significant Projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects that cost at least \$100 million and (a) change capacity on the National Highway System (NHS) or is a new expressway or principal arterial; or (b) change capacity on transit services with some separate rights-of-way or shared right-of-way where transit has priority over other traffic.</li> <li>• Projects that cost at least \$250 million, regardless of the facility type or work type.</li> </ul> <p>They are, however, accounted for within the Financial Plan for Transportation in the “system enhancements” category. This category includes capital and operational enhancements or improvements not already constrained under other categories. Examples include bicycle, pedestrian, and ADA improvements, as well as highway management and operations, including intelligent transportation systems. The Plan Update provides \$43.7 billion in enhancement investments between now and 2050.</p> <p>For the next regional plan, CMAP commits to improving transparency of these investments to better support their critical role in advancing the region’s goals.</p>
<p><b>Rural land preservation</b></p>	<p>Commenters expressed concern over the loss of farmland due to development in the region.</p> <p>CMAP provides technical assistance to urban, suburban, and rural communities. Our technical assistance helps us better understand the</p>

	<p>issues and specific needs of rural communities. We look forward to exploring how we can better use that local work to inform our regional approaches. In the upcoming year, CMAP will begin scoping for the next regional plan. Your comments are helpful as we consider how to approach that work. We look forward to your continued involvement.</p>
<p><b>Tri-County Access Project</b></p>	<p>Commenters opposed the inclusion of the Tri-County Access project in Lake County as a Regionally Significant Project.</p> <p>The Tri-County Access project was not submitted for evaluation as a Regionally Significant Project for the ON TO 2050 Update. Therefore, it is not included in the plan’s Regionally Significant Projects list, which can be found in the <a href="#">Regionally Significant Projects Benefits Report appendix</a>.</p>