

MEMORANDUM

To: MPO Policy Committee

From: CMAP Regional Policy and Implementation team

Date: March 12, 2026

Subject: Regional Transportation Plan update

Action Requested: Information

During the March MPO Policy Committee meeting, CMAP will provide an update on the development of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including draft strategies and proposed investment priorities for review and feedback.

Draft RTP strategies

Building on the goals and objectives identified in the [Emerging Priorities](#) report, CMAP has prepared a draft list of strategies for inclusion in the RTP. The proposed strategies were informed by:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Ongoing input from the CMAP Board, committees, Financial Plan and Regional Capital Projects resource groups, industry associations, community groups, advocacy organizations, and residents.
- **Policy research:** [Research and analysis](#) conducted by CMAP and consultant partners on topics such as asset management, intercity bus and rail, emerging technologies, new revenue sources, and more.
- **Recent and ongoing regional initiatives:** Work such as the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan, Plan of Action for Regional Transit, Transit is the Answer, regional freight assessment, Congestion Management Strategies Guidebook, and countywide safety action plans.

Priority Investments

In addition to the fiscally constrained project list, CMAP is advancing the prioritization framework previously shared with the Committee, applying a performance-based, data-driven approach to identify a focused set of priority investments within the RTP.

These investments represent the projects and programs that deliver the most significant regional benefits based on measurable performance outcomes, cost effectiveness, and long-term system impact. The proposed list reflects analysis conducted through the Financial Plan,

Congestion Management Process, RCP Benefits Report, and RTP Existing Conditions Report, alongside meaningful input from project sponsors, regional partners, and stakeholders throughout the RTP development process.

Priority investments include:

- Individual projects: Specific, high-impact projects from the constrained list of Regional Capital Projects (RCPs)
- Programmatic investments: Recurring regional investment focus areas that address systemwide needs over time

The proposed list is not an exhaustive list of all important transportation needs. Rather, they represent the most transformative opportunities to advance the goals and objectives within the RTP and signal where coordinated action can generate the greatest benefit for northeastern Illinois. The draft list of priority investments as well as the full list of constrained projects are attached.

Next Steps

The project team will present the draft RTP strategies and proposed investment priorities to the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee in March for feedback. Following that discussion, CMAP will begin the federally required air quality conformity process and nondiscrimination analysis in the latter half of March for the proposed fiscally constrained project list. Feedback and analysis results will be incorporated into the draft RTP in preparation for public release in June 2026, with adoption anticipated in October 2026.

ACTION REQUESTED: Information

Attachments:

1. Draft RTP priority investments
2. Draft RTP constraint list
3. Draft RTP objectives and strategies