



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Climate Committee  
**From:** CMAP Staff  
**Date:** Thursday, July 18, 2024  
**Subject:** Climate Action Plan for the Chicago MSA  
**Purpose:** Provide update on the Climate Action Plan for the Chicago MSA  
**Action Requested:** Information

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The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC), CMAP, and Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) are partnering to update and expand existing regional climate mitigation plans to address greenhouse gas emissions and establish GHG reduction measures throughout the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), including parts of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. The work is supported in part by a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency initiative to provide funding to states and metropolitan areas to develop and implement plans to reduce GHG emissions.

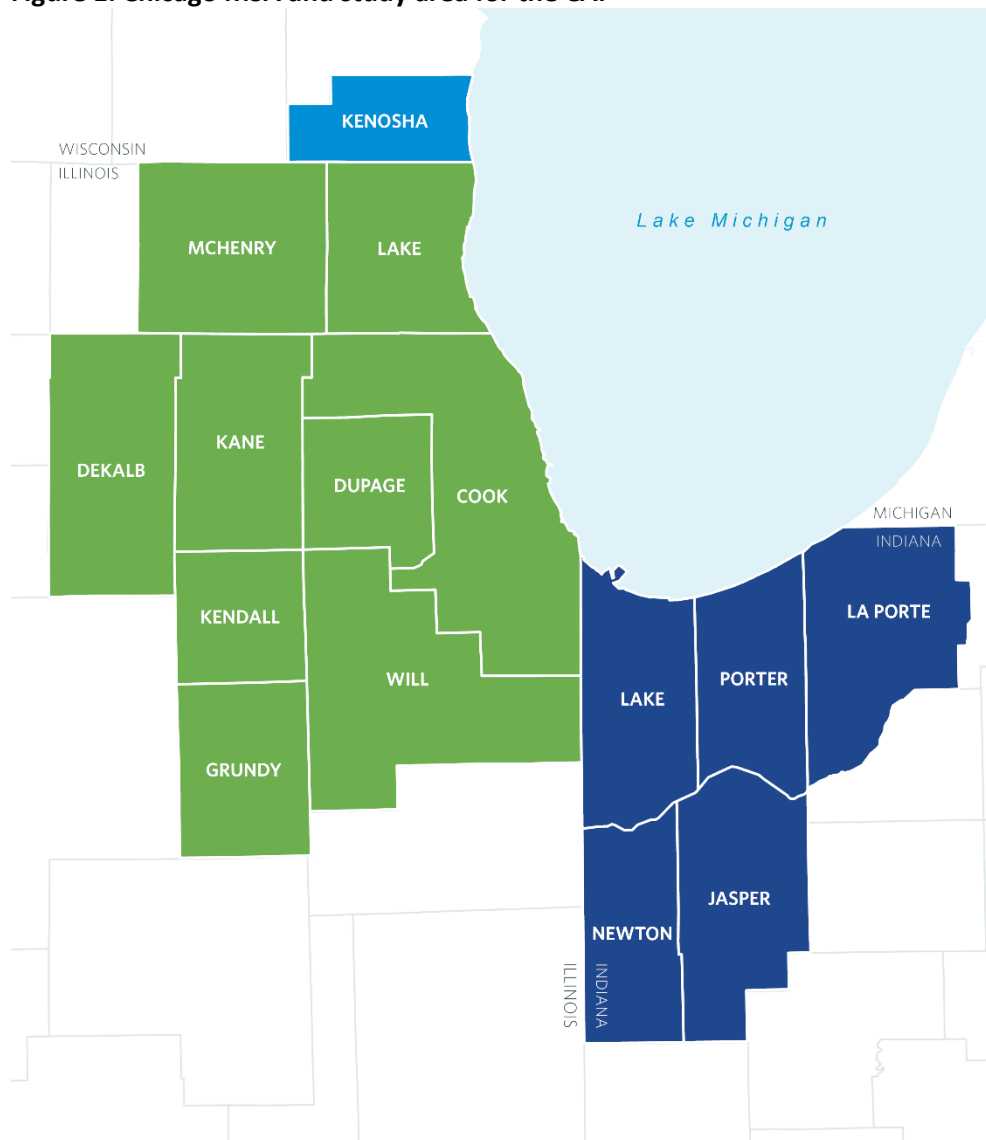
By July 2025, the CAP must engage a broad array of stakeholders, estimate the effectiveness of potential reduction measures, and lay out a strategy to address all significant GHG sources, sinks, and sectors. The overarching goal is to define the steps needed for the Chicago MSA to achieve the national goals of 50-52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions no later than 2050. Per CRPG requirements, the CAP will identify GHG reduction targets and establish targets for each sector. It will also assess the benefits that could be achieved through the reduction of criteria air pollutants as well as co-benefits to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.

Since the April Climate Committee meeting, the project team has made significant progress in the following areas and will provide an update at the July meeting.

## Planning area

CMAP staff expanded the planning area beyond the Chicago MSA to include La Porte, Indiana (Figure 1). This change was made to ensure the CAP covers NIRPC's entire jurisdiction and provides that agency with a more useful tool for implementation. When accounting for La Porte County, the population of the new planning area increased to 9.7 million people with 4.9 million people employed, spanning three states, 15 counties, and 364 municipalities.

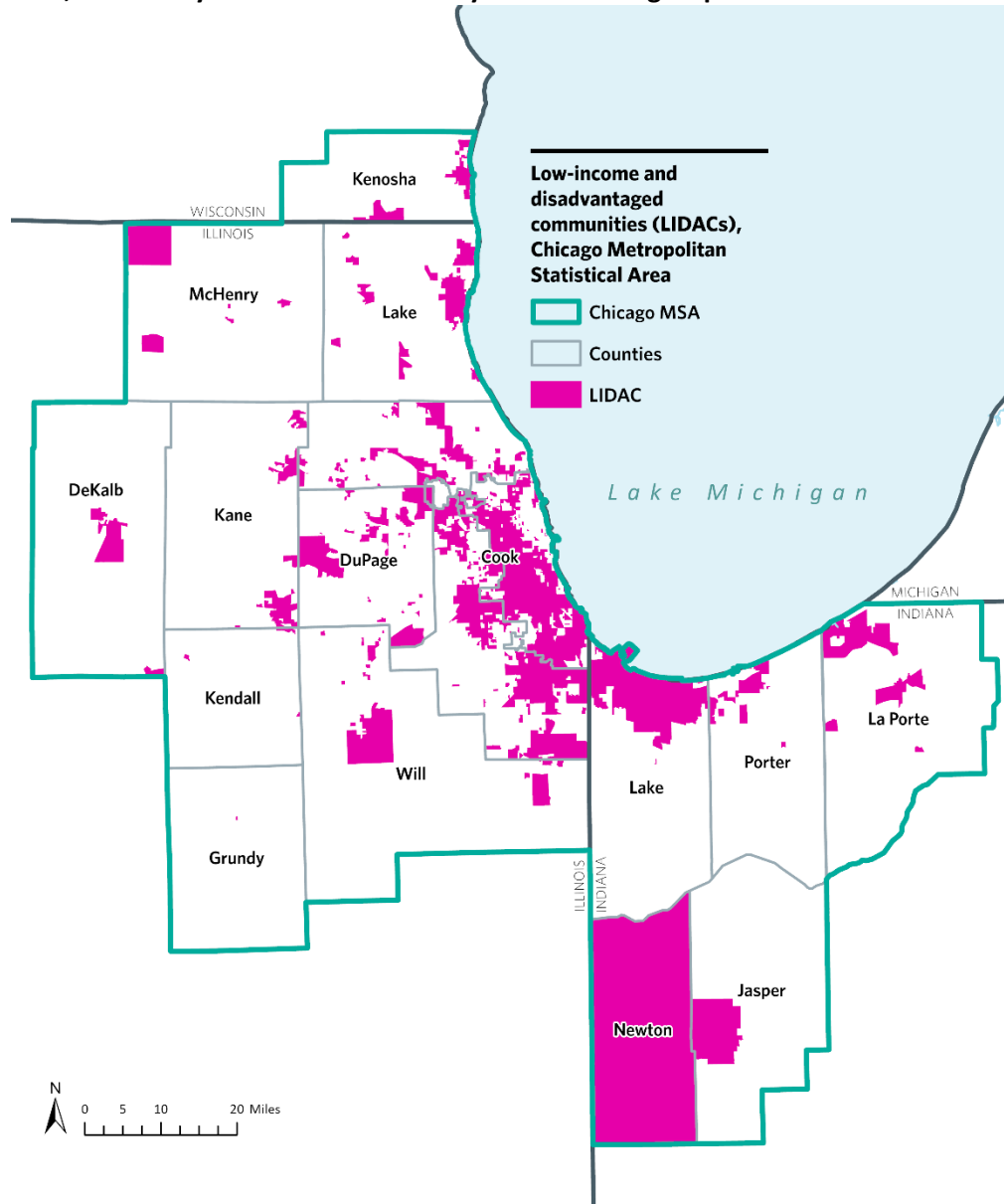
**Figure 1. Chicago MSA and study area for the CAP**



Source: CMAP, 2024.

The CPRG program is covered under the Justice40 initiative,<sup>i</sup> which seeks to ensure that 40 percent of federal benefits flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. The Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) process discussed previously with this Committee required the identification of communities using Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) and USEPA’s Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen).<sup>ii</sup> CMAP staff updated the PCAP community identification to reflect the planning area change (Figure 2). When accounting for La Porte County, the percentage of regional population residing in a LIDAC area increased from 3.7 million to 3.8 million. The percent of the total population decreased from 40 percent to 39 percent.

**Figure 2. Low-income and disadvantaged communities in the Chicago metropolitan statistical area, defined by CEJST and EJScreen by census block groups**



Source: CEJST, November 2022, and EJScreen, June 2023, via IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map.

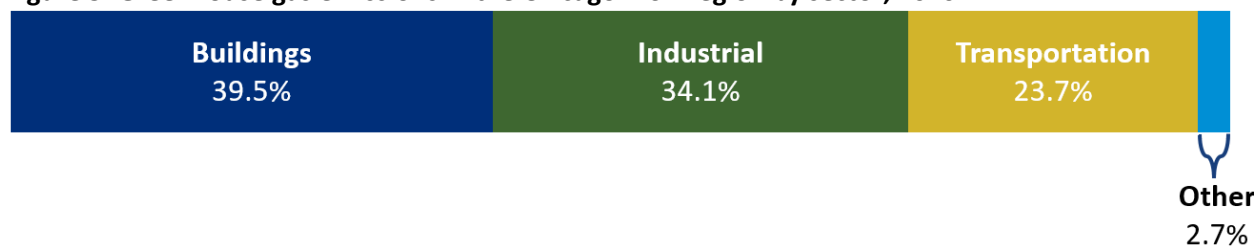
## Greenhouse gas inventory

CMAP staff updated the 2020 GHG inventory that was developed in accordance with USEPA guidance through the PCAP. Recent updates include:

- Addition of emissions from La Porte County, Indiana
- Addition of emissions from aviation activity
- Accounting for carbon sequestration such as land use conversion, wetlands, and other carbon sink sources
- Addition of agriculture emissions from soil management, enteric fermentation, and field burning
- Reclassify emissions previously identified as “energy generation facilities” to the industrial sector

After accounting for these changes, the 15 counties in the Chicago MSA produced approximately 168 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e) of GHG emissions. This represents an increase of eight million metric tons. Figure 5 provides the updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the Chicago MSA region, broken down by the following sectors: residential and commercial buildings, industrial, transportation, and other. Carbon sequestration is estimated to reduce emissions by 2.86 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e annually.

**Figure 5. Greenhouse gas emissions in the Chicago MSA region by sector, 2020**



Source: CMAP, 2024.

## Stakeholder engagement

CCAP stakeholder engagement is structured to strengthen the plan and improve its chances for implementation. To accomplish these goals, CMAP will implement an outreach approach that includes a steering committee, three working groups, and several topical workshops, among other initiatives. Since the Climate Committee’s last meeting, CMAP has refined the stakeholder engagement approach and convened the steering committee and three working groups in June and July.

### ***Steering committee***

The steering committee includes regional implementers, subject matter experts, and leaders from impacted communities across the 15-county Chicago MSA. The steering committee held its first meeting on June 11, 2024, and will meet quarterly, between June 2024 and July 2025 to focus on plan development and implementation. Members will not vote on the plan. Rather, they will serve as resources to inform its development. Nine committee members will serve as representatives of the sector working groups and CMAP Climate Committee. More members will be invited to serve as representatives on the working groups, if interested.

## **Working groups**

Supporting the steering committee's work will be four working groups and a series of workshops – each with their own sector or stakeholder focus. It is CMAP's intent that the working groups contain public and private implementers, subject matter experts, and equity champions. Together, they will be responsible for reviewing and proposing strategies, goals, and targets, sharing data and resources as needed, and providing guidance on sector-specific messaging. The working group's efforts to craft reduction strategies will run parallel to one another as well as similar efforts in topical workshops on energy generation, freight, agriculture, and other ad hoc meetings. Additionally, the NIRPC Environmental Management and Policy Committee, MMC Environment Committee, this Committee and CMAP's Community Alliance for Regional Equity will be involved in proposing and considering mitigation strategies. The CAP team will continue to coordinate and collaborate with the States of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin to minimize redundancies in outreach and maximize consistency in the analysis and conclusions of the respective plans.

The three sector working groups held their first meetings in July. The CAP team has made progress on identifying members and roles for the equity working group, which will be convened later this summer. The CAP team is also in the process of refining the approach for engaging populations who are disproportionately burdened by air pollution and climate change impacts (e.g., flooding and extreme heat) and could be negatively impacted by decarbonization solutions. Updates on this work will be provided at a future meeting.

## **Guiding principles**

Developing a set of guiding principles confirms the values undergirding this regional planning process and will guide each and every one of us as we navigate the challenging questions and policy decisions that lie ahead. CMAP also believes that communicating these principles to larger audiences will give them appropriate context to the plan's development.

The CAP project team has developed the following draft guiding principles:

- **Center equity.** With equity at the core of the planning process, we seek to reduce existing disparities for underserved and marginalized communities, design strategies to maximize co-benefits, and advance an inclusive transition.
- **Seek transformational change.** Rather than considering existing conditions, potential strategies, or implementers in isolation, we will focus on understanding root causes, recognizing interconnections, and enhancing effectiveness.
- **Focus on zero.** We seek to identify strategies that get as close to zero GHG emissions as quickly as we can to reach science-based targets and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.
- **Plan for action.** We will prioritize actions that move the region towards short and long-term goals. We will work with stakeholders to ensure plan recommendations are relevant, realistic, and actionable.

The project team will solicit feedback from the steering committee and other stakeholders to incorporate into a final version of the CAP's guiding principals.

## Emissions sector research

The CAP team will develop “decarbonization briefs” to understand each emissions sector and inform both modeling and engagement efforts. The decarbonization briefs will cover the following sectors:

- Buildings
- Industry
- Transportation
- Energy generation
- Waste and materials management
- Water and wastewater
- Agriculture and working lands
- Natural lands and other sinks

This work involves reviewing the 2020 GHG inventory, summarizing existing conditions and drivers of emissions increases/decreases, and identifying public health, environmental, and other community impacts for each sector. The CAP team will research existing climate action plans and policies in the states and region as well as national resources, and outline emissions reduction strategies and measures, including implementation authority, rate, timeline, and community co-benefits to inform emissions modeling.

The CAP team has completed significant research in the buildings, industry, transportation, and energy generation sectors and has begun preliminary research into the other four lower emissions sectors. This work has explored the various sources of emissions, the distribution of those emissions, the factors driving emissions increases/decreases, and key stakeholders involved. As part of these efforts, the team is outlining the universe of known reduction strategies and identifying priority approaches with working group involvement.

## Next steps

During the next Climate Committee meeting, CMAP will provide updates on the following next steps:

- Sector research, focused on agriculture and working lands, natural lands and other sinks, and water and wastewater.
- Key findings and discussions from steering committee and working group meetings.

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<sup>i</sup> The White House, “Justice40 A Whole-of-Government Initiative,” accessed May 31, 2024, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40>.

<sup>ii</sup> Note: USEPA refers to this population as Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities or LIDAC.