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CMAP BOARD

MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

9:30 AM

**Cook County Conference Room
433 West Van Buren Street, Suite 450
Chicago, IL 60607**

Members of the public who attend in-person can pre-register for a visitor's pass at info@cmap.illinois.gov until January 13 at 4:00 p.m. or should plan to arrive early to check-in with the building's information desk for access.

You can also join from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82917643166?pwd=T5D697gzTxXjvaPBrescB9BeRxuTB1.1>

Conference Call number: 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 829 1764 3166 Passcode: 056489

CMAP provides the opportunity for public comment. Individuals are encouraged to submit comment by email to info@cmap.illinois.gov at least 24 hours before the meeting. A record of all written public comments will be maintained and made publicly available.

The total cumulative time for public comment is limited to 15 minutes, unless determined otherwise by the Chair. Public comment is limited to three minutes per person unless the Chair designates a longer or shorter time period. Public comments will be invited in this order: Comments from in person attendees submitted ahead of time; comments from in-person attendees not previously submitted; comments from virtual attendees submitted ahead of time; and comments from virtual attendees not previously submitted.

To review CMAP's public participation policy, please visit <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/committees>.

If you require a reasonable accommodation or language interpretation services to attend or join the meeting, please contact CMAP at least five days before the meeting by email (info@cmap.illinois.gov) or phone (312-454-0400).

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Bennett called the meeting to order at 9:46 a.m.

Present: Gerald Bennett, Frank Beal, Matthew Brolley, Jada Curry, Gary Grasso, Paul Hoefert, Nina Idemudia, John Noak, Richard Reinbold, Nancy Rotering, Joanna Ruiz, Carolyn Schofield, Matthew Walsh and Jung Yoon

Absent: Anne Sheahan

Non-Voting: Kouros Mohammadian and Leanne Redden

Noting a physical quorum of the Board, Chair Bennett reported requests were received from Paul Hoefert, John Noak, Nancy Rotering and Abolfazl Mohammadian to attend the meeting virtually in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. A vote is needed to approve their virtual attendance.

A motion was made by Member Gary Grasso, seconded by Member Carolyn Schofield, to permit Members Paul Hoefert, John Noak, Nancy Rotering and Abolfazl Mohammadian to participate in the meeting in accordance with Open Meetings Act requirements. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Gerald Bennett, Frank Beal, Matthew Brolley, Gary Grasso, Nina Idemudia, Richard Reinbold, Joanna Ruiz, Carolyn Schofield and Jung Yoon

Absent: Anne Sheahan

Non-Voting: Kouros Mohammadian and Leanne Redden

Not Present: Jada Curry, Paul Hoefert, John Noak, Nancy Rotering and Matthew Walsh

(CMAP Board Members Jada Curry and Matt Walsh arrived at 9:50 a.m.)

Staff present: Laurent Ahiablame, Erin Aleman, Alex Beata, Bill Barnes, Victoria Barrett, Nora Beck, Vas Boykovskyy, John Carpenter, Kama Dobbs, Phoebe Downey, Austen Edwards, Ryan Gougis, Jane Grover, Patrick Guziak, Natalie Kuriata, Kasia Hart, Aimee Lee, Maren Lutterbach, Tony Manno, Stephane Phifer, Kyle Schulz, Elizabeth Scott, Jennie Vana, Blanca Vela-Schneider

Others present: Garland Armstrong, MarySue Barrett, Eric Czarnota, Rithvika Dara, Michael Fricano, Jane Hirt, George Kandathil, Mike Klemens, Gretchen Klock, David Kovarik, Brian Larson, Heidi Lichtenberger, Amy Liu, Brittany Matyas, Leslie Rauer, Michael Sewall, Vicky Smith, Joe Surdam

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There are no changes to the agenda.

2.01 Executive director's report

[25-367](#)

Attachments: [Memo - Executive director report](#)

Executive Director Erin Aleman opened the January Board meeting by welcoming members and extending New Year's greetings.

Erin Aleman reported that CMAP will undergo its federal certification review at the end of the month. This review, conducted every four years by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, evaluates CMAP's adherence to federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements. She noted that CMAP welcomes the opportunity to demonstrate the strength, transparency, and quality of its work. A public comment period will run from January 13 through

February 10, with comments accepted through a web form or directly through the Executive Director.

Erin Aleman then provided an update on the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, which would create the nation’s first transcontinental railroad. She explained that the railroads submitted their joint application to the Surface Transportation Board on December 19, 2025. The merger could have significant implications for northeastern Illinois, including potential impacts on at-grade crossing delays, truck volumes, passenger rail performance for Metra and Amtrak, and the region’s economic competitiveness. She emphasized the region’s role as a national freight hub, noting that Illinois handles approximately \$3 trillion in goods annually, with \$1 trillion moving directly through northeastern Illinois and more than 700 million tons of freight crossing the region each year. The freight sector supports roughly 125,000 jobs across 13,000 employers. Erin Aleman stated that CMAP will continue monitoring the federal review process and will bring a more detailed discussion of freight issues to a future board meeting.

She then previewed the meeting agenda, which included the consent agenda items-approval of the November meeting minutes, updates to the line of credit policy, the TIP conformity analysis, and concurrence on the region’s proposed roadway safety targets. Information items included highlights from the 2025 Annual Report and an overview of the draft FY2027 Work Plan. Erin Aleman noted that the agenda was intentionally streamlined to allow time for a discussion with guest speaker Amy Liu.

Chair Bennett congratulated Erin Aleman on receiving the Motorola Solutions Foundation Excellence in Public Service Award in December 2025.

The executive director's report was presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

3.0 Approval of Minutes

Approval of the Group Vote

A motion was made by Member Matthew Walsh, seconded by Member Jada Curry, to approve agenda items 3.01 through 4.03 under the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Gerald Bennett, Frank Beal, Matthew Brolley, Jada Curry, Gary Grasso, Paul Hoefert, Nina Idemudia, John Noak, Richard Reinbold, Nancy Rotering, Joanna Ruiz, Carolyn Schofield, Matthew Walsh and Jung Yoon

Absent: Anne Sheahan

Non-Voting: Kouros Mohammadian and Leanne Redden

3.01 Minutes from November 12, 2025 [25-368](#)

Attachments: [11.12.25 Board meeting minutes draft](#)

Agenda items 3.01 through 4.03 were approved under the Consent Agenda.

4.0 Other Items for Approval

4.01 Approval of revised Line of Credit (LOC) policy and borrowing controls [26-007](#)

Attachments: [Memo - Revised LOC policy and borrowing controls](#)
[Attachment 1 - CMAP LOC Policy - Revised](#)

Agenda items 3.01 through 4.03 were approved under the Consent Agenda.

4.02 ON TO 2050/2023-2028 TIP Conformity Analysis and TIP Amendment[25-375](#)

Attachments: [Memo - TIP Conformity Memo 26-03](#)

Agenda items 3.01 through 4.03 were approved under the Consent Agenda.

4.03 2026 Roadway Safety Targets[25-359](#)

Attachments: [Memo Board - 2026 Roadway Safety Targets](#)

Agenda items 3.01 through 4.03 were approved under the Consent Agenda.

Board Member Carolyn Schofield asked why the roadway safety target data only extends through 2022 and why more recent years are not reflected in the baseline.

Executive Director Erin Aleman invited Program Lead Victoria Barrett to address the question. Victoria Barrett explained that, under federal guidance, IDOT revised its target-setting methodology to establish three-year targets at one time. The current set of targets was developed at the end of the 2022 data cycle, and therefore all three consecutive years are based on the same 2019-2022 baseline. She noted that the baseline will be updated in the next federal reporting cycle.

REGULAR AGENDA**5.0 Information Items****5.01 2025 CMAP Annual Report**[26-004](#)

Attachments: [Memo - 2025 CMAP Annual Report](#)
[CMAP Annual Report 2025](#)

Executive Director Erin Aleman presented CMAP's 2025 Annual Report, noting that the report will also be transmitted electronically to the General Assembly, as required by statute. Erin Aleman highlighted the report reflects CMAP's 20 year history of partnering across the region to solve complex challenges, deliver technical assistance, and support communities.

She noted that the report showcases major milestones from CMAP's two decades of work, including the State of the Region event held in November and the ongoing development of the Century Plan. Erin Aleman emphasized that engagement with businesses, local governments, and regional stakeholders will continue throughout the coming year, leading toward anticipated adoption of the Century Plan in October 2027.

The report also includes information on the NITA transit reform legislation and CMAP's contributions through the PART report, testimony, and data analysis to support lawmakers during the legislative process. Erin Aleman stated that these examples reflect CMAP's longstanding legacy of regional leadership and collaboration.

She concluded by expressing enthusiasm for the report's format and its usefulness as a communication tool for local governments and partners across northeastern Illinois.

Member Carolyn Schofield expressed appreciation for the inclusion of a "people and culture" section, noting that CMAP's staff play a critical and often underrecognized role in the agency's success.

The 2025 CMAP Annual Report was presented.

5.02 FY2027 CMAP Proposed budget and regional work plan**26-005**

Attachments: [Memo - FY2027 Proposed budget and regional work plan](#)
[FY2027 Proposed work plan draft](#)

Executive Director Erin Aleman provided a preview of CMAP's proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget and Work Plan, noting that the full draft document will be distributed to board members within the coming weeks for review prior to formal approval. She explained that the FY27 fiscal year begins on June 1.

Erin Aleman began by outlining the framework that guides CMAP's work. For many years, CMAP has relied on a single, comprehensive regional plan - most recently ON TO 2050 - to direct long-range planning across transportation, housing, water, and other systems. With the development of the Century Plan, CMAP is shifting to a more dynamic, multi-plan approach that will allow for deeper strategic planning on key issues facing communities. Over time, these coordinated efforts will collectively form the Century Plan and replace ON TO 2050 as the region's comprehensive plan.

In addition to regional plans, CMAP's work is guided by a five-year strategic direction and the annual budget and work plan. Erin Aleman noted that CMAP manages a portfolio of approximately 30 program areas, many of which include multi-year projects that reflect the agency's long-range planning responsibilities. Program areas also include agencywide services such as communications, engagement, finance, and human resources. The FY27 Work Plan will describe each program area and highlight key activities planned for the year.

Erin Aleman summarized several major initiatives that will appear in the FY27 Work Plan. CMAP will continue strengthening communities through the Local Technical Assistance program and the annual call for projects, providing data-driven support for capital improvement planning, bicycle and pedestrian planning, and other local initiatives. Safety work will continue through two program areas: Safe and Complete Streets, focused on hands-on local planning, and Safe Systems, focused on regional safety policy.

In FY27, CMAP will expand its work on economic competitiveness, including development of a regional economic framework and continued support for the Greater Chicagoland Economic Partnership. Related efforts include coordinated land use strategies to expand housing options across the region and direct assistance to communities on housing and land use policy.

Erin Aleman noted that CMAP will complete the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan during FY27, including the identification and evaluation of regional capital projects. Climate work will also continue, with efforts to implement the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and quantify regional impacts.

Finally, Erin Aleman stated that significant work will continue on the Century Plan, including support for regional partners and serving as a resource as the NITA Board is established. CMAP will also continue work on corridor initiatives such as the I-290 and CTA Blue Line Corridor Development Office.

She concluded by noting that a full draft of the FY27 Budget and Work Plan will be provided in the coming weeks and that staff will seek Board approval in February.

The FY2027 CMAP Proposed budget and regional work plan was presented.

5.03 The Century Plan update

[26-006](#)

Attachments: [Memo - The Century Plan update](#)

Executive Director Erin Aleman introduced guest speaker Amy Liu, senior fellow at Brookings Metro within the Brookings Institution, explaining that her insights are especially valuable as CMAP advances the Century Plan. Erin Aleman noted that CMAP recently completed scenario-planning work to assess future risks and opportunities, with findings to be presented at an upcoming meeting. As the Century Plan progresses toward its 2027 adoption, CMAP will launch workshops with local governments and a stakeholder series focused on key regional issues.

She emphasized the importance of engaging public, philanthropic, and business partners to co-create a plan that positions the region for long-term impact. The first forum, focused on housing and held in partnership with Lake County, will take place next month. Erin Aleman thanked Amy Liu for her longstanding regional leadership and support, including her role in helping launch the Greater Chicagoland Economic Partnership.

Guest speaker Amy Liu delivered a presentation focused on how CMAP and the region can build the institutional capacity necessary to achieve the ambitions of the Century Plan. Drawing on nearly three decades of experience working with regional organizations across the country, Amy Liu emphasized that successful long-range plans require strong institutional capacity to execute them. She encouraged CMAP to not only reimagine the region's future but also reimagine its own organizational evolution to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and positioned for impact.

Amy Liu described how pioneering institutions in fields such as community development, economic development, and regional planning have adapted over time. She noted that traditional models - often siloed, transactional, and focused on short-term wins - have proven insufficient in the face of structural economic challenges, technological change, and shifting demographics. She highlighted the shortcomings of traditional economic development approaches and the need for strategies that prioritize job quality, business dynamism, workforce development, and inclusive growth.

Using examples from regions such as Minneapolis-St. Paul, San Diego, and Central New York, Amy Liu illustrated how leading organizations have transformed themselves by redefining their missions, restructuring programs and staffing, and building broad coalitions across government, business, philanthropy, universities, and community partners. She emphasized that high-capacity organizations serve as "quarterbacks" for regional initiatives - articulating a shared vision, assembling cross-sector teams, securing capital, and coordinating execution.

Amy Liu highlighted Central New York as a compelling case study. Over 15 years, the region modernized its economic base, strengthened partnerships, and prioritized inclusive growth - efforts that ultimately positioned it to secure Micron's \$100 billion semiconductor investment. She underscored that this success was not the result of a single incentive deal but rather years of intentional capacity-building, collaboration, and strategic alignment.

She concluded by encouraging CMAP and its partners to embrace similar transformational practices as they develop the Century Plan - setting ambitious goals, aligning regional actors, and building the organizational capacity required to deliver meaningful, long-term impact for the residents of northeastern Illinois.

Board members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion on workforce development, regional competitiveness, and the role of civic institutions in attracting major investment. Several members emphasized the importance of human capital and expressed concern about inequities in Illinois' education funding model, while stressing the need to assess and strengthen the region's capacity to produce skilled workers at scale in order to attract and retain major employers.

Amy Liu underscored that while talent is critical, companies primarily look for long-term capacity, predictability, and civic cohesion. She highlighted examples from Syracuse, Columbus, and Northern Virginia, noting that successful regions demonstrate strong collaboration among governments, educational institutions, employers, and community organizations.

The Board further discussed the importance of ensuring that large investments benefit the entire region, not just central cities, and raised questions about the role of incentives in site selection. Amy Liu responded that incentives are rarely the primary driver of location decisions and can often leave taxpayers worse off; she pointed instead to investments in education, infrastructure, and institutional capacity as more effective strategies.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of energy, water, and infrastructure as emerging priorities, with members noting opportunities for CMAP to take greater leadership in these areas. Board members emphasized CMAP's unique position to provide regional frameworks, align partners, and help municipalities navigate increasingly complex challenges amid declining federal resources.

The Century Plan update was presented.

6.0 Other Business

There was no other business before the CMAP Board.

7.0 Public Comment

This is an opportunity for comments from members of the audience.

Garland Armstrong, former Illinois resident, emphasized that individuals with disabilities must be more intentionally included in economic development, workforce, and regional planning efforts. He noted a lack of outreach to and engagement with the disability community and urged stronger attention to ADA considerations, communication accessibility, and inclusion in future strategies. Garland Armstrong also highlighted the need for clearer, more accessible communication around transit projects and construction, particularly for individuals with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency.

8.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2026.

9.0 Adjournment

A motion was made by Member Richard Reinbold, seconded by Member Matthew Walsh, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Gerald Bennett, Frank Beal, Matthew Brolley, Jada Curry, Gary Grasso, Paul Hoefert, Nina Idemudia, John Noak, Richard Reinbold, Nancy Rotering, Joanna Ruiz, Carolyn Schofield, Matthew Walsh and Jung Yoon

Absent: Anne Sheahan

Non-Voting: Kouros Mohammadian and Leanne Redden

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Maren Lutterbach