

2023 State Advocacy Agenda – DRAFT for discussion (as of 9/19/2022)

**Subject to change based internal and external feedback during review period*

Introduction

Over the past two years, the region has continued to grapple with the prolonged impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing uncertainty about our future economic outlook. With a chronically underfunded transit system, persistent economic inequality, and the growing threat of climate change, the region's long-standing challenges remain.

At the same time, the pandemic has also fostered a greater spirit of innovation and collaboration. ON TO 2050, and the update to the plan, provides a vision for how to overcome these new and enduring challenges and foster a more inclusive and thriving region. The Illinois General Assembly and Administration have critical roles to play to ensure we can realize this vision.

ON TO 2050's three principles of inclusive growth, resilience, and prioritized investment guide the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)'s State Advocacy Agenda. The priorities in the agenda are aligned with the themes of CMAP's strategic direction – transportation, regional economic competitiveness, and climate, with an emphasis on how these focus areas are connected and strengthened with sound planning and regional collaboration.

Administration & Funding

The pandemic highlighted the importance of strengthening local capacity and regional coordination. The Regional Planning Act, CMAP's enabling legislation, outlines a broad range of planning activities for the agency to undertake, including integrating transportation and land use planning with housing, water resources management, economic development, and more. Work that does not have a direct transportation nexus often requires external funding from multiple sources, limiting the resources available to undertake comprehensive and integrated planning processes.

CMAP's enabling legislation pledged that "additional funding shall be provided to CMAP to support those functions and programs authorized by [the Regional Planning Act]" (70 ILCS 1707/62). With more flexible funding, CMAP will be better positioned to fulfill our legislative obligations. We will seek to expand our work on municipal capacity building, climate resiliency, and water resources management. Additionally, more flexible funding will allow all of the state's MPOs to be more responsive to the pandemic's shifting of local mobility, land use, and economic needs. Given the many opportunities this funding will unlock, this will be CMAP's primary legislative priority this session.

CMAP supports:

- Providing annual funding to support implementation of the Regional Planning Act and comprehensive planning for the state's MPOs
- Increasing data sharing and transparency by state and local agencies, especially in instances that could aid in COVID-19 recovery, to guide data-informed policymaking and regional collaboration

Transportation

Earlier in 2022, Governor Pritzker signed into law Public Act 102-1028, which directs CMAP in coordination with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to devise a comprehensive set of legislative recommendations for the long-term financial sustainability of the transit system. The transit system urgently needs comprehensive, sustainable sources of revenue for the region to recover from the pandemic and prosper in the future. Furthermore, traffic congestion in northeastern Illinois remains a significant challenge. Freight congestion in particular is only expected to increase, likely further impacting Black and Latino communities that are already disproportionately harmed by emissions from the transportation sector.

The passage of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act presents a tremendous opportunity to address some of the state's longstanding mobility issues and transportation concerns exacerbated by the pandemic. This includes confronting the rise in traffic fatalities, which began climbing upward in 2010 and have continued to rise since the COVID-19 pandemic began. To complement federal funding opportunities, there are additional steps that can be taken to advance improvements in street design, the expansion of safe walking and biking infrastructure, and safety related policy changes.

Transportation funding and finance reform

CMAP supports:

- Developing a comprehensive strategy to identify and enact new long term, sustainable sources of revenue for transit
- Beginning the necessary steps, including implementing pilot projects, to replace the MFT with a road usage charge of at least 2 cents per mile indexed to an inflationary measure.
- Piloting different congestion pricing frameworks to assess how different options enhance mobility and limit impact on low-income drivers
- Instituting a regional fee on transportation network company (TNC) trips, and allowing anonymized trip data to be shared with third party transportation researchers and planners
- Providing incentives to employers to reduce VMT of their employees, and requiring employers of a certain size within the RTA service area to participate in the Transit Benefit Fare Program

Safe and complete streets

CMAP supports:

- Expanding capacity at IDOT to address traffic safety concerns in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion, including through the creation of a new Safe and Complete Streets Coordinator position or similar role
- Creating a competitive grant program to incentivize municipalities to adopt road diets, design self-enforcing streets, and institute other traffic calming measures to improve traffic safety
- Giving municipalities greater ability to make safety related improvements by reducing the barriers municipalities encounter when seeking to lower speed limits
- Allowing additional municipalities to pilot automated technology to promote traffic safety in conjunction with instituting requirements to conduct an equity analysis assessing the impacts on communities of color, effectiveness in reducing speeding, and evaluating the opportunity to dedicate potential revenues to make safety related improvements in pilot areas
- Identifying dedicated resources to provide local governments with comprehensive ADA support

Innovation and transparency

CMAP supports:

- Instituting performance-based planning and project selection measures for IIJA funded investments and making these metrics publicly available
- Modernizing transportation funding decision processes to prioritize demonstrated system needs, align with federal funding and regional plans, and promote transparency
- Ensuring motor vehicle fuel tax revenues are able to support holistic transportation system needs

Climate

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) puts Illinois on a path toward a 100% clean energy future by 2050 by investing in renewable energy and promoting clean energy job creation. CEJA also includes important provisions to measure equity in access to clean energy resources and job training opportunities. In addition to CEJA, the Reimagining Electric Vehicles (REV) Act introduced new incentives to strengthen Illinois' competitiveness as a hub for electric vehicle manufacturing. Taken together, CEJA and REV Act put Illinois in a strong position to reduce emissions, especially from the energy sector, and build a clean energy workforce pipeline. Today, the transportation sector is the largest source of emissions in Illinois, highlighting the need to accelerate transportation mitigation efforts while protecting our communities from future climate risks.

The growing threat of climate change will also have a greater impact on local and regional water infrastructure needs. The region suffers major flood damage on an annual basis, degraded aquatic systems across the majority of the region, and water shortages in areas that are growing the fastest. Water infrastructure is expensive to maintain, and underinvestment can lead to economic, environmental, and public health challenges. Adopting a more integrated approach that coordinates planning and management of water supply, wastewater, and stormwater can help alleviate the burden municipalities individually and foster regional collaboration.

Integrated water resources management

CMAP supports:

- New, sustainable revenues to support state and regional water planning and enhanced coordination among the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois State Water Survey, Illinois Water Inventory Program, and regional partners
- Coordinating and standardizing community water supplier reporting requirements and improving data sharing across agencies and partners in support of an integrated water resources management approach
- Promoting equity in water infrastructure investments supported by the state revolving loan fund, including expanding capacity in low-income communities to promote access to loans
- Updating statewide design standards to reflect green infrastructure techniques and precipitation trends

Reducing transportation emissions

CMAP supports:

- Providing resources and incentives for local governments to complete Community Energy, Climate, and Jobs plans as described in CEJA
- Ensuring equitable deployment of and access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the region
- Establishing state transportation emissions reduction goals in alignment with federally required greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and the state carbon reduction strategy

Regional Economic Competitiveness

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated long-standing challenges in the region's economy, including stagnating economic growth and pay disparities among communities of color. But the crisis has also created an opportunity to more intentionally rebuild the region and ensure economic growth reduces inequality and strengthens the region's resilience. Local governments will continue to play an essential role in recovery, and creating more opportunities for regional collaboration and shared service delivery will help foster a stronger and more resilient economy. Additionally, transit service has been integral to keeping our regional economy moving forward. Ensuring service is responsive to changing mobility needs and job opportunities will be key to a successful recovery.

Furthermore, while the official 2020 Census figures show overall population loss in Illinois, all seven counties in northeastern Illinois grew over the last 10 years. This growth is the result of a number of different demographic trends. The region is becoming more diverse even as many residents of color remain excluded from skilled, family-sustaining jobs and Black residents disproportionately leave the region to seek opportunity elsewhere. Our workforce is also getting older, as Baby Boomers age and birth rates decline—undermining efforts to sustain a strong tax base to support public services. To respond to these and other evolving trends and remain an economically competitive region, it is critical to prioritize strategic and sustainable development practices, improve access to high-quality jobs, and promote investment in disinvested areas.

Local and regional tax policy

CMAP supports:

- Modernizing the sales tax, including broadening the sales tax base to include additional services to increase funding for transportation, give municipalities more options to generate sufficient revenue from existing and desired development, and reduce economic distortions
- Increasing state revenue allocation to local governments and reforming state revenue disbursement criteria to reduce wide divergences across municipalities
- Allowing non-home rule municipalities to impose certain kinds of user fees to provide services and maintain infrastructure

Data standardization and transparency

CMAP supports:

- Requiring a regular audit of all tax abatements, diversions, and credits for economic development to assess their economic and fiscal impacts

- Giving research partners access to additional details about sales tax rebate agreements (including agreement text and amounts rebated) through data use agreements that protect proprietary business data
- Instituting TIF data reporting standards to allow planners and researchers to more easily assess TIF expenditures, impacts, and effectiveness across the region

Innovative service delivery

CMAP supports:

- Providing funding for local governments to study implementation of consolidation and innovative partnerships, including shared services models
- Further enabling use of public private partnerships for infrastructure in the region, including providing resources for innovative financing, advancing design-build strategies, and promoting workforce equity

Equity in fees, fines, and fares

CMAP supports:

- Authorizing local jurisdictions to create a pilot program to test income-based fines, escalating fines, or other alternative traffic enforcement structures that consider a driver's ability to pay that may be below the statutory minimum fine amount
- Expanding reporting of incidents of traffic violation fines and ticketing outcomes to allow for analysis with an equity lens