

MPO POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

Thursday, March 12, 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 March 11, 2026 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/85990958636?pwd=dQ1amZkvYpCly59uT3pmWLCBZNO6ax.1>

Conference Call number: 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 859 9095 8636 Passcode: 634859

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 Gia Biagi called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Present: CDOT Representative, CMAP Representative 1, CoM Representative, Cook Co Representative, CTA Representative, DuPage Co Representative, IDOT Representative, Kane Co Representative, Lake Co Representative, McHenry Co Representative, Metra Representative, Pace Representative, RTA Representative and Tollway Representative

Absent: CMAP Representative 2, Kendall Co Representative and Will Co Representative

Non-Voting: Class I Railroads Representative, FHWA Representative and FTA Representative

Noting a physical quorum of the committee, Chair Biagi reported requests were received from the Lake County Representative, McHenry Co Representative, and Class I Railroads Representative to attend the MPO Policy Committee meeting virtually in compliance with the Open Meetings Act requirements.

A motion was made by CMAP Representative Frank Beal, seconded by Metra Representative Lynnette Ciavarella, to allow the remote participation of members in compliance with the Open Meetings Act requirements. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: CDOT Representative, CMAP Representative 1, CoM Representative, Cook Co Representative, CTA Representative, DuPage Co Representative, IDOT Representative, Kane Co Representative, Metra Representative, Pace Representative, RTA Representative and Tollway Representative

Absent: CMAP Representative 2, Kendall Co Representative and Will Co Representative

Non-Voting: FHWA Representative and FTA Representative

Not Present: Lake Co Representative and McHenry Co Representative

Absent (NV): Class I Railroads Representative

Gia Biagi served as IDOT Representative, Mary Nicol served as CDOT Representative, Frank Beal served as CMAP Representative 1, Molly Poppe served as CTA Representative, Tara Orbon served as Cook Co Representative, Jeffrey Schielke served as Council of Mayors Representative, Stephen Travia served as DuPage Co Representative, John Paul Diipla served as FHWA Representative, Mark Kane served as FTA Representative, Cassandra Rouse served as Illinois Tollway Representative, Tom Rickert served as Kane Co Representative, Shane Schneider served as Lake Co Representative, Alicia Schueller served as McHenry Co Representative, Lynnette Ciavarella served as Metra Representative, Erik Llewellyn served as Pace Representative, Jill Leary served as RTA Representative, Thomas Evenson served as Class I Railroads Representative

Staff present: Erin Aleman, Bill Barnes, Alex Beata, John Carpenter, Kama Dobbs, Elizabeth Ginsberg, Ryan Gougis, Patrick Guziak, Kasia Hart, Aimee Lee, Maren Lutterbach, Stephane Phifer, Julie Reschke, Elizabeth Scott, Ryan Thompto, Jennie Vana, Blanca Vela Schneider, Claire Williams

Others present: Garland Armstrong, Holly Bienemann, C Burns, Eric Czarnota, Heidi Files, Michael Fricano, Brandon Geber, Henry Guerriero, Jennifer Henry, George Kandathil, Gretchen Klock, David Kovarik, Brian Larson, Heidi Lichtenberger, Tim McMahan, Gordon Smith, Megan Swanson, Janice R. Thomas, Michael Vanderhoof, Adalee Wasikonis, Michael Zakosek

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no changes to the agenda.

Chair Biagi provided an update on the work of the IDOT Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation. The Commission, composed of legislators, industry representatives, advocates, and labor partners, has spent the past year examining how IDOT can improve project delivery, strengthen its workforce, enhance governance, advance equity, and support sustainability. The Commission's final report contains 27 recommendations and 113 sub-recommendations.

Chair Biagi announced that IDOT has launched the "IDOT Blueprint for the Future," a strategic action and implementation plan that will organize the recommendations into approximately twenty workstreams. She noted that work has already begun and emphasized that the Blueprint will involve broad organizational engagement and opportunities for input from CMAP and other partners. She highlighted that many CMAP priorities are directly reflected in this initiative.

Chair Biagi also discussed the Memorandum of Understanding between the MPO Policy Committee and the CMAP Board, which provides for one member of the Policy Committee to serve on the CMAP Board to support coordination between the two bodies. She thanked Leanne Redden for serving in this role for several years and informed the committee that Executive Director Erin Aleman has agreed to serve as the interim representative on the CMAP Board until a new appointment is made.

3.0 Approval of Minutes

3.01 Minutes from January 8, 2026

[26-044](#)

Attachments: [1.8.26 MPO Policy Committee meeting minutes draft](#)

A motion was made by Council of Mayors Representative Jeffrey Schielke, seconded by CMAP Representative Frank Beal to approve the January 8, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: CDOT Representative, CMAP Representative 1, CoM Representative, Cook Co Representative, CTA Representative, DuPage Co Representative, IDOT Representative, Kane Co Representative, Lake Co Representative, McHenry Co Representative, Metra Representative, Pace Representative, RTA Representative and Tollway Representative

Absent: CMAP Representative 2, Kendall Co Representative and Will Co Representative

Non-Voting: Class I Railroads Representative, FHWA Representative and FTA Representative

4.0 CMAP Announcements

4.01 Executive Director's report

[26-045](#)

Executive Director Aleman confirmed her willingness to serve as the interim representative to the CMAP Board during the current transition period. She explained that, due to the creation of NITA, the MPO Policy Committee bylaws must be updated to ensure alignment with the evolving governance structure. CMAP staff will review the bylaws, consult with members, and bring a redlined version to the committee for discussion and approval at the June meeting.

Executive Director Aleman then summarized key developments since the January meeting. The CMAP Board has approved the annual budget and work plan for Fiscal Year 2027, which, together with the

UWP, outlines CMAP's state-mandated and federal responsibilities, funding sources, and expenditures. The final UWP is being presented at this meeting for committee approval.

She also reported that CMAP recently completed its federally required certification review with FHWA and FTA. Initial feedback was very positive, and CMAP does not anticipate any findings. A final report with recommendations will be shared with both the Board and the MPO Policy Committee once received.

Executive Director Aleman announced that the technical assistance program, conducted jointly with RTA, will open its annual call for projects on March 30 and close on April 17, with awards expected this summer. She highlighted a new service category, node-oriented planning assistance, which will support communities in strengthening key activity centers and improving transportation connections. Virtual open houses will be held in April to support interested applicants.

Erin Aleman informed the committee that the Phase 1 data set from the My Daily Travel survey is now available. Approximately 3,500 households participated between September 2024 and June 2025, making this the first post-pandemic regional travel dataset. CMAP is beginning analysis and will prepare policy briefs to support development of the next Regional Transportation Plan.

Executive Director Aleman also reported that CMAP has completed the region's first Transportation Resiliency Improvement Plan, developed to meet FHWA requirements under the PROTECT program. The plan is expected to improve federal match eligibility for certain projects. CMAP will present the plan to both the Board and the MPO Policy Committee at an upcoming meeting and will incorporate its findings into the Regional Transportation Plan process.

The Executive Director's report was presented.

4.02 CMAP Board update

[26-046](#)

Executive Director Aleman reported on the CMAP Board meetings held in February and March. At these meetings, the Board approved a revised line of credit policy for the agency. The Board also approved the TIP conformity analysis, the TIP amendments, and the 2026 road safety targets, which were presented to the MPO Policy Committee at its January meeting.

She noted that the Board received and discussed the CMAP Annual Report, which was also shared with the committee earlier this year, and accepted the FY25 financial audit. In addition, the Board approved the proposed FY27 budget and work plan.

Executive Director Aleman added that updates related to the Century Plan and trends from the State of the Region report were included on both Board agendas and mirror discussions taking place at today's meeting.

The CMAP Board update was presented.

4.03 Council of Mayors' Executive Committee report

[26-049](#)

Mayor Jeffrey Schielke reported that the Council of Mayors Executive Committee, which includes representatives from each of the eleven subregional councils, met last week. He noted that the committee welcomed a new member, Mayor Scott Nickles of Round Lake Beach, who is now representing the Lake County Council of Mayors.

He explained that the meeting focused on the Century Plan, including discussion of the State of the

Region report, which will also be reviewed during today's meeting. The committee is additionally discussing CMAP's analysis of goals and challenges identified in municipal and county planning documents. Mayor Schielke expressed hope that municipal managers and elected officials will participate in deeper conversations about these challenges when CMAP brings the discussion to the Councils of Government later this spring.

He concluded by noting that the Council of Mayors' next meeting will take place in June.

The Council of Mayors' Executive Committee report was presented.

5.0 Items for Approval

5.01 FY2027 Unified Work Program (UWP)

[26-068](#)

Attachments: [Memo - FY2027 Unified Work Program](#)
[FY2027 Unified Work Program](#)

Kama Dobbs reminded the committee that it approved the draft FY2027 Unified Work Program in January and noted that the CMAP Board has since approved the agency's budget and work plan, and those materials are now incorporated into the final UWP. Appendix F, which documents regional planning activities not funded through the UWP, has also been updated.

She reported that the FY2027 program includes just under \$35 million in federal and matching funds for CMAP and partner agencies, covering personnel and operating costs for the six core MPO activities and the annual competitive program.

Kama Dobbs requested the committee's approval of the final FY2027 UWP so it may be submitted to IDOT and USDOT for federal approval.

A motion was made by Council of Mayors Representative Jeffrey Schielke, seconded by CDOT Representative Mary Nicol to approve FY2027 Unified Work Program. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: CDOT Representative, CMAP Representative 1, CoM Representative, Cook Co Representative, CTA Representative, DuPage Co Representative, IDOT Representative, Kane Co Representative, Lake Co Representative, McHenry Co Representative, Metra Representative, Pace Representative, RTA Representative and Tollway Representative

Absent: CMAP Representative 2, Kendall Co Representative and Will Co Representative

Non-Voting: Class I Railroads Representative, FHWA Representative and FTA Representative

6.0 Information Items

6.01 NITA Act overview

[26-069](#)

Attachments: [Memo - NITA Act overview](#)

Elizabeth Scott, Principal, provided an overview of the newly enacted Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) Act and CMAP's ongoing work to support its implementation. She noted that the legislation, signed at the end of last year, is extensive and complex, and that IDOT and the Governor's Office are currently organizing the transition process and preparing to engage a transition consultant. CMAP is working in parallel to identify upcoming milestones, interpret legislative requirements, and support the region in understanding next steps.

Elizabeth Scott emphasized that appointing authorities across the region will soon need to select

individuals to serve on both the NITA Board and the service boards. To assist with that process, CMAP is analyzing the responsibilities that future appointees will be expected to oversee and the decisions they will need to make in the coming six to eight months.

She explained that the NITA Act represents a significant restructuring of regional transit governance, affecting both the RTA and the service boards. New or expanded responsibilities centralized at NITA will include fare policy integration; development of a unified timetable and ticketing framework; creation of regional safety standards and a long term safety strategy; and the establishment of standardized service planning. Strategic and capital planning functions will be strengthened, major capital project oversight will shift to NITA, and new authorities related to joint development and transit-oriented development will be introduced.

Scott noted that many of these initiatives will entail new costs, and that CMAP's financial modeling-conducted for the Plan of Action for Regional Transit (PART)-helped determine the approximately \$1.5 billion in new revenue included in the Act. Of this amount, roughly \$1.25 billion will address the system's structural deficit, while about \$500 million will remain available for improvements that advance the Act's vision, including expanded frequency and service levels. She stressed the importance of monitoring how new costs develop so that funding for service expansion remains viable.

Turning to governance, Scott outlined the appointment process for the NITA Board, which will include seats appointed by the Governor, the Mayor of Chicago, the Cook County Board President, and the chairs or executives of the collar counties. Many appointees will hold dual roles on both NITA and individual service boards. She highlighted that the Act takes effect June 1 and requires all NITA Board members to be seated by September 29, noting that various advice-and-consent processes will affect timing. She also reviewed statutory requirements for appointees, including substantial and relevant experience in transit planning, operations, or funding, as well as the expectation that the Board's composition reflect the region's diversity. Elizabeth Scott concluded by emphasizing the scale of work ahead and the tight timelines for implementation, noting that identifying and appointing qualified individuals will be one of the region's most critical near term responsibilities.

Mayor Jeffrey Schielke remarked on the rapid residential growth occurring in Batavia and surrounding communities, noting that proximity to the Tollway and Metra service is a major driver. He emphasized that this growth will increase demand on the regional transportation system and expressed interest in how the new NITA Board will respond.

Cassandra Rouse, speaking for the Illinois Tollway, stated that the Tollway looks forward to working with NITA, the future Board, and the incoming Executive Director to support the Act's goals.

Asked about the timeline for issuing the transition consultant contract, Secretary Biagi replied that the goal is to release it as soon as possible, acknowledging the tight timeframe created by the June 1 effective date and the September 29 deadline for seating the Board.

(Secretary Biagi excused herself from the meeting at 10:13 a.m., delegating her responsibilities as Chair to Vice Chair Cassandra Rouse and transferring IDOT representation to her alternate, Michael Vanderhoof.)

The NITA Act overview was presented.

6.02 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update

[26-058](#)

Attachments: [Memo - RTP update](#)
[Draft RTP priority investments](#)
[Draft RTP constraint list 03-2026](#)
[Draft RTP objectives and strategies](#)

Ryan Thompto provided an update on the development of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan. He explained that CMAP continues to advance several major workstreams, including strategy development, stakeholder engagement, and preparation of the financial plan. He noted that staff are meeting with communities across the region and releasing short videos to highlight lived experiences related to transportation. CMAP is also finalizing the prioritization process for Regional Capital Projects and progressing toward a complete draft financial plan.

Ryan Thompto stated that CMAP intends to finalize the constrained project list and priority investments following this meeting so that required federal analyses - such as air quality conformity and Title VI nondiscrimination reviews - can be completed. CMAP expects to return in June with the draft plan and appendices, seeking approval to release them for public comment. Final adoption is anticipated in October 2026.

Julie Reschke then presented an overview of the draft RTP strategies included in the meeting packet. She explained that the strategies build on the RTP's goals and objectives and are informed by stakeholder input, research, and related regional planning initiatives. She summarized the five goal areas: improving regional mobility, enhancing traffic safety, addressing climate impacts and environmental resilience, supporting economic prosperity, and strengthening regional coordination and investment.

Ryan Thompto went on to describe the proposed priority investments. He explained that this new component responds to recommendations from the federal certification review and regional stakeholders seeking a more focused set of regional priorities. CMAP evaluated all submitted major projects based on current need, future performance, and alignment with regional goals, and then divided them into constrained and unconstrained lists according to fiscal capacity. The priority investments list identifies the most transformative projects and programs among the constrained set, reflecting both largescale regional investments and smaller scale multimodal programs with significant cumulative benefit.

The proposed list includes fifteen priority investments. Ryan Thompto noted that the list was well received by the Regional Capital Projects Resource Group and that CMAP also received substantial public comment regarding the North DuSable Lake Shore Drive project, which has appeared on previous fiscally constrained lists.

He concluded by outlining next steps. Following feedback from the MPO Policy Committee, CMAP will begin federal conformity and equity analyses and incorporate those results into the draft RTP before returning in June with a request to release the plan for public comment.

The RTP update was presented.

6.03 Corridor planning for congestion management

[26-059](#)

Attachments: [Memo - Corridor planning for congestion management](#)

Alex Beata provided an update on CMAP's congestion management work, focusing on recent deliverables and next steps related to corridor planning. He noted that CMAP has followed the Federal Highway Administration's eight step congestion management process and highlighted two newly completed products that are now available on the CMAP website: the Congestion Management Strategy Guidebook and the Comprehensive Corridor Study Template. These resources are intended to assist transportation agencies and local governments in identifying, evaluating, and implementing congestion management strategies, and they emphasize that congestion management is a shared regional responsibility.

Alex Beata explained that the guidebook introduces a "mobility solutions ladder" that prioritizes strategies such as mode shift and vehicle-miles-traveled reduction before capacity expansion. The accompanying corridor study template provides structured guidance for conducting corridor-level planning, including technical analysis, engagement, and implementation considerations.

He then described CMAP's intention to pilot a corridor-based planning approach using these tools in a real world setting. Staff conducted an internal analysis of arterial corridors with significant reliability challenges and assessed potential locations with input from partner agencies. Based on this work, CMAP identified Cicero Avenue, from 55th Street to 167th Street in Cook County, as the recommended pilot corridor due to its severe congestion, crash history, strong agency interest, and anticipated land use changes at both corridor endpoints.

Alex Beata stated that CMAP will begin procurement to hire a technical team to support the study and will continue engagement with affected communities and partner agencies. Early staff research is already underway. Once the consultant team is selected, the study will formally begin, and CMAP will report back to the committee as the work progresses. He noted that the congestion management work will be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan to reflect its importance as a regional priority.

Asked how equity considerations were incorporated into the corridor selection process, Alex Beata responded that staff examined whether corridors intersected with CMAP's Economically Disconnected Areas layer and considered how each corridor serves diverse communities. He noted that Cicero Avenue offers significant potential to support transit ridership and improvements benefiting residents along the corridor.

Mayor Schielke raised concerns about the inclusion of Kendall County in the illustrative materials, noting that it is outside the RTA sales tax district. He observed that rapid growth in Kendall and neighboring DeKalb County may prompt renewed interest in expanding transit governance or funding boundaries.

The corridor planning for congestion management was presented.

6.04 The Century Plan update

[26-064](#)

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

Elizabeth Scott provided an update on the development of the Century Plan, CMAP's next regional plan to replace ON TO 2050. She reminded the committee that CMAP launched the planning process last fall at the State of the Region event and has since been conducting extensive engagement across the region. This includes community conversations on issues such as housing affordability, future industry and utility needs, climate action, and water resources. Additional engagement with councils of government is planned throughout the year, and a regional discussion on the future of infrastructure will take place this summer.

Elizabeth Scott noted that CMAP is also conducting significant research to understand current regional conditions and long-term forces expected to shape the next 30 years. This includes work with Kerr Smith, a Toronto-based consulting team specializing in foresight analysis, to explore technological, economic, and climate-driven disruptions that could affect the region. All of this input will inform the development of a plan direction document later this fall, outlining the priority issues CMAP believes the region must organize around to secure a successful future.

Julie Reschke then summarized the State of the Region report, the first published deliverable of the Century Plan process. She explained that the report highlights key strengths that position northeastern Illinois for continued success-including its expansive regional economy, globally significant transportation network, and abundant natural resources-while also identifying emerging challenges related to demographic shifts, economic performance, housing affordability, and rising cost burdens.

Julie Reschke described several notable trends, including an aging population, slower economic growth than peer regions, a post-pandemic shift toward lower-wage job growth, continued reliance on driving despite transit's importance for job access, and significant increases in the cost of housing and essential household expenses. She emphasized that nearly half of renters and a quarter of homeowners in the region are cost-burdened, with limited midrange housing options contributing to affordability pressures.

Following the presentation, committee members inquired how the plan will consider emerging transportation technologies. Elizabeth Scott responded that CMAP's futurist consultants are analyzing technological and climate-related disruptions as part of a dedicated workstream, and that more detailed deliverables on these issues are forthcoming. She added that CMAP will convene topic-specific working groups later in the year, including groups focused on transportation.

The Century Plan update was presented.

6.05 Legislative update

[26-063](#)

Attachments: [Memo - Legislative update](#)

Kasia Hart provided federal and state legislative updates. She noted that the House Appropriations Committee recently released its FY27 Community Project Funding guidance, and members of Congress may now submit project requests, which are due March 20.

Kasia Hart reported that work on federal surface transportation reauthorization is progressing. In the

House, base text for all titles has been drafted and is circulating between majority and minority staff, with markup expected in late March or April. In the Senate, several committees have jurisdiction, and the Environment and Public Works Committee appears furthest along, with draft language anticipated in April or May and a focus on permitting reform and project delivery. She noted that the current authorization expires in September, making a continuing resolution increasingly likely.

Turning to state issues, Kasia Hart summarized the Governor's proposed FY27 budget, a \$56billion spending plan representing a 1.6 percent increase, largely driven by required education and pension costs. CMAP staff are reviewing the proposal in more detail. She also highlighted the Governor's "Build" initiative, which includes housing, zoning, and permitting reforms aimed at advancing recommendations from the state's missing middle housing report and accelerating housing production.

Kasia Hart also reported that legislation has been introduced (House Bill 4689) directing CMAP to prepare recommendations on water management and governance within the region, specifically focused on Lake Michigan allocation. The bill would establish a Northeastern Illinois Water Governance Advisory Committee. She clarified that this was not a CMAP initiated proposal but that CMAP has been engaged with the sponsor and stakeholders to provide feedback on scope and resource needs. She emphasized that CMAP would require additional state funding to carry out such work, and amendments reflecting this concern are underway.

She added that CMAP recently testified before the Senate Environment and Conservation Committee during a subject matter hearing on groundwater, sharing findings from its groundwater governance report and underscoring opportunities for regional collaboration. Water policy issues appear to be an increasing area of legislative focus this session.

Mayor Jeffrey Schielke remarked on growing concern among municipal leaders regarding the Governor's recent proposal to assume greater state authority over local zoning. He noted that numerous meetings have already been convened on the issue, with plans underway for mayors to travel to Springfield to express their concerns directly to state leadership.

The Legislative update was presented.

7.0 Other Business

There was no other business before the MPO Policy Committee.

8.0 Public Comment

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

No in-person commenters were present. Three written comments were received in advance from Michael McCarthy, Eyad Olayan, and Matthew Soper, regarding the inclusion of the North DuSable Lake Shore Drive project on the RTP's constrained list. These written comments were distributed to committee members and are attached to the minutes as part of the official public record.

Furthermore, Garland Armstrong provided a remote public comment and encouraged continued attention to ADA accessibility and language access needs.

Public Comments[26-092](#)

Attachments: [3.12.26 Public Comment by Michael McCarthy](#)
[3.12.26 Public Comment by Eyad Olayan](#)
[3.12.26 Public Comment by Matthew Soper](#)

9.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2026.

10.0 Adjournment

A motion was made by Council of Mayors Representative Jeffrey Schielke, seconded by CMAP Representative Frank Beal, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: CDOT Representative, CMAP Representative 1, CoM Representative, Cook Co Representative, CTA Representative, DuPage Co Representative, IDOT Representative, Kane Co Representative, Lake Co Representative, McHenry Co Representative, Metra Representative, Pace Representative, RTA Representative and Tollway Representative

Absent: CMAP Representative 2, Kendall Co Representative and Will Co Representative

Non-Voting: Class I Railroads Representative, FHWA Representative and FTA Representative

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Maren Lutterbach using Microsoft Copilot M365.