



MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee

From: CMAP Staff

Date: April 17, 2026

Subject: Regional Transportation Plan update

Action Requested: Information

During the April Transportation Committee meeting, staff will provide an update on the development of the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), with a focus on research conducted through the financial plan.

Progress continues to develop the 2026 RTP. With the constrained Regional Capital Projects (RCPs) having been proposed at the February Transportation Committee meeting as well as the March Board and MPO Policy Committee meetings, CMAP initiated federally mandated analyses about nondiscrimination and air quality conformity. Analyses will conclude this spring in preparation for proposed adoption of the final RTP in October 2026.

Financial plan update

To meet federal requirements for fiscal constraint, CMAP has prepared long-range financial forecasts to estimate baseline revenues and expenditures and identify additional reasonably expected revenues. Following recent decisions regarding the constrained RCP list, the draft fiscal constraint stands at \$573 billion between 2027 and 2050, in year of expenditure dollars.

This figure is the culmination of over two years of research and analysis, as well as coordination with implementers on assumptions, data, and forecast methodologies. Despite these efforts, it holds true that any forecast is fundamentally an effort to assess future conditions despite present-day uncertainty. Even the most sophisticated plans and financial forecasts are subject to economic, policy, and implementation uncertainties over 20-plus-year horizons. To further support the success of the RTP — beyond developing revenue and expenditure forecasts — the staff are conducting a risk assessment. Staff will provide an update on these efforts and key findings.

Once complete, the risk assessment’s sensitivity analyses and scenarios — which explore key financial assumptions, such as the availability of future revenue streams, cost escalation rates, and project delivery schedules — will reveal the conditions under which the fiscal constraint may be at risk (Table 1). By providing greater transparency into the strengths and limitations of a long-range forecast, this exercise has informed the RTP strategies that seek to fortify the region’s ability to responsibly implement its transportation priorities and support better decision-making in the face of uncertainty.

Table 1: List of risks under consideration in the Financial Plan risk assessment

Revenue	Expenditures
Decreased federal funding	Increased material and labor costs
Decreased state funding	Increased financing costs
Increased fuel efficiency	Project delays
Lower growth in vehicle miles traveled	Lack of coordination
Reduced population forecast	Operating inefficiencies
Economic downturns	Disruptive technological changes
Reduced transit fare revenue	Escalated weather-related impacts
Inadequate public subsidy of transit	Increased roadway wear

Next steps for transitioning to a road usage charge

A key assumption that enables the region to constrain the RTP is the inclusion of reasonably expected revenues (RERs) in the financial plan. As with past financial plans, expenditures for 2027-2050 are projected to exceed the baseline revenues that will be available, underscoring the need for additional revenues to support the transportation system over the planning horizon and beyond. The risk assessment exercise further illustrates how these RERs can be important strategies that mitigate the region’s risk to uncertainties, including funding shortages that may be beyond the region’s control.

Due to improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency that are contributing to year-over-year reductions in the number of gallons of fuel purchased, the motor fuel tax (MFT) is losing its efficacy as a primary funding source for transportation. Although Rebuild Illinois improved this dynamic by doubling the MFT rate and indexing it to inflation in 2019, MFT revenues are projected to continue growing at a slower rate than transportation costs. For this reason, in line with ON TO 2050 and prior CMAP planning efforts, the financial plan includes the replacement of the MFT with a road usage charge (RUC).

The transition to a RUC would represent a significant shift in the way Illinois pays for transportation. However, it would also be an important step towards a more solvent and efficient system. To support the inclusion of a RUC as a RER, and to discuss the path forward, CMAP has published [Advancing a road usage charge in Illinois](#), a whitepaper that presents a framework for future RUC implementation considerations and RUC-related policy questions to explore. Staff will provide an overview of the whitepaper, which recommends a feasibility study as the next tangible step towards an innovative, reliable, and context-appropriate RUC program in Illinois.