



Metropolitan **Planning** Council

**Plan for Prosperity  
2010 Policy Objectives**



## Metropolitan **Planning Council**

Each year, MPC presents its 12-month plan for developing, advocating for, and implementing policies that advance our mission:

Since 1934, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has been dedicated to shaping a more sustainable and prosperous greater Chicago region. As an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, MPC serves communities and residents by developing, promoting and implementing solutions for sound regional growth.

MPC builds consensus around its agenda by partnering with civic organizations, community groups, business leaders, and government agencies throughout the research, advocacy and implementation stages of policy development. For 76 years, this cooperative approach has proven fundamental to making lasting change in our growing region.

# Dear Partner:

In July 2009, President Barack Obama addressed a room of policy experts, business leaders, and elected officials from around the country, and put out an open call for “new strategies for our cities and metropolitan areas that focus on advancing opportunity through competitive, sustainable and inclusive growth.”

The President’s remarks, which also directed key Cabinet officials to conduct a comprehensive review of federal policies that impede coordinated regional growth, were music to MPC’s ears — and amplified our drumbeat for policies and investments that support an **economically competitive, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable** region.

We welcome Washington reviewing its policies from top to bottom, but solutions need to come from the bottom up. That’s why the President dispatched members of his Cabinet to metropolitan regions across America, including Chicagoland, to hear about and see examples of local innovation the federal government can help to replicate and support.

What the White House and Cabinet officials saw and heard when they launched their national listening tour at MPC’s 2009 Annual Luncheon is the tri-state metropolitan Chicago region is ready to be a laboratory for change — and already has tested models of sustainable community development. MPC is looking forward to continuing to work with local, regional, state, and federal partners throughout 2010, to pursue **goal-driven, right-sized** and **coordinated** policies and investments. This document provides a roadmap for actions we want to take and policy changes we want to accomplish, guided by these three principles.

Sincerely,



MarySue Barrett  
President



MPC’s 2009 Annual Luncheon served as the kick-off for a White House Office of Urban Affairs national listening tour to “lift up best practices from around the country, to look at innovations for the metropolitan areas of tomorrow,” according to President Barack Obama. MPC was proud to host (from left) Adolfo Carrion, first director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs; Lisa Jackson, administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Shelley Poticha, Senior Advisor for Sustainable Housing and Communities, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and Ray LaHood, secretary, U.S. Dept. of Transportation. MPC President, MarySue Barrett (far right), moderated the discussion.

# Goal-driven

adj. compelled by an aim or objective

## What we want

Investment should be based on desired policy outcomes, not specific means or pet projects. The best investment — whether for a roadway or railway, water treatment plant or wetland — should be determined and funded according to the project's quantifiable benefits when compared with other spending proposals. By taking a goal-driven approach, progress is measurable and governments are held accountable.

## How to get there

### Secure federal transportation funding and reforms

Congress is expected to act on a new federal surface transportation bill, which would authorize billions of dollars to repair, modernize and expand transit, roads, bridges, and freight rail, in 2010 or 2011. MPC is working with the national Transportation for America coalition and local partners to shape this critical piece of legislation. By spending tax dollars smarter, maximizing the capacity of the existing transportation network, and reducing demand for costly new investments, this legislation can improve quality of life, clean the air, and generate much-needed economic development.

## INGREDIENTS FOR A 21ST CENTURY TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

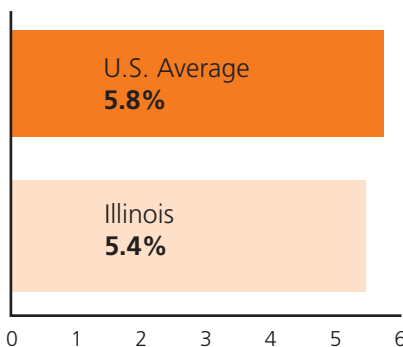
Total increase in ridership on Chicago Transit Authority, 2008-2009

**+23M**

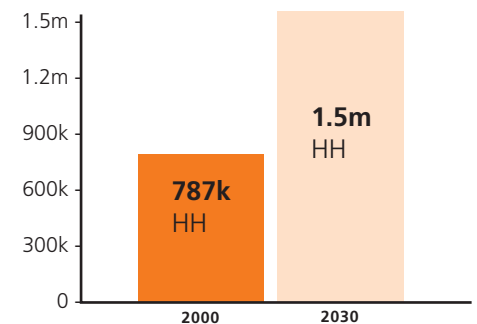
### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Listen to the audio recordings of the Reinventing Public Investment: Better Choices for a Better Chicagoland 2009 forum series hosted by MPC and the Chicago Architecture Foundation, at [metroplanning.org](http://metroplanning.org).

Percent of roads in 'poor' condition, 2010



Demand for housing near transit in Chicagoland



Demand for housing near transportation options in the Chicago Metro area will increase by over 90% by 2030.

SOURCE: Graphics courtesy of Transportation for America

## Explore market-based strategies to reduce congestion

As MPC's groundbreaking 2008 study documented, excess traffic costs metropolitan Chicago at least \$7.3 billion per year. Some of that crushing congestion and cost can be alleviated through market-based strategies that influence how often, when and where people choose to drive. MPC is researching strategies that have been successful in other places, such as congestion pricing and public-private partnerships to pay for new infrastructure, and exploring options for implementing these strategies. The goal is to reduce congestion in Chicagoland while expanding transportation choices to meet people's needs.

MPC is advocating for the Illinois General Assembly to approve legislation enabling state transportation agencies to use public-private partnerships for new infrastructure, an option they do not currently have by state law. In partnership with the Illinois Tollway, MPC will advance the concept of congestion pricing, combined with improved transit service, on at least one of the region's roadways in 2010.

# 87,000

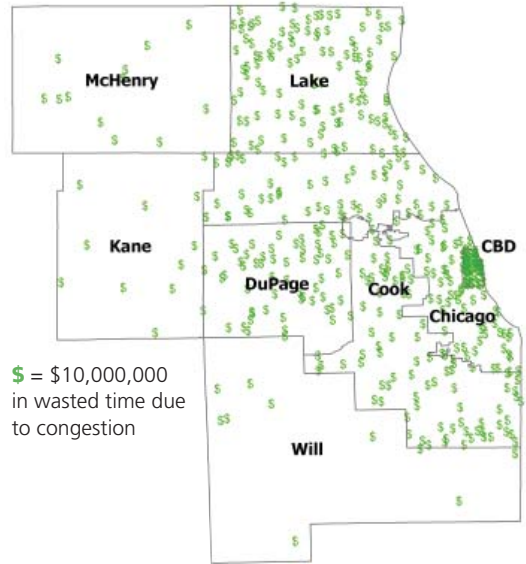
Number of jobs metropolitan Chicago would add by eliminating excess congestion

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read *Moving at the Speed of Congestion: The True Costs of Traffic in the Chicago Metropolitan Area August 2008*, available at [metroplanning.org](http://metroplanning.org).

## TIME IS MONEY

### Time cost of congestion in the Chicago region



Each vehicle-hour lost to congestion has an assumed cost of \$24.03. With 250 days of congested travel per year (i.e., excluding weekends and holidays) for 2005, the estimated total cost of congestion in wasted time amounts to \$6.98 billion for the metropolitan area. While most people tend to factor in wasted fuel when they think of congestion, the cost of lost time is almost 20 times greater for the region.

SOURCE: HDR calculations based on data from CMAP's *Congestion Management System for Northeastern Illinois, 2006 Status Report*, July 2006 and from other sources.

## Enact criteria for Illinois capital investments

In 2009, Illinois lawmakers voted for \$31 million in new capital spending, but failed to approve a better system to establish clearly defined goals for these and future investments. This year, MPC will continue to advocate for enactment of a goal-driven approach toward smarter investments, which would position Illinois more favorably in the next round of federal transportation funding.

MPC wants to fundamentally change business-as-usual by tying state capital investment decisions to criteria based on goals such as relieving congestion, curbing emissions, and connecting affordable homes and jobs.

### Illinois' transportation investment policy should encompass:

#### Accountability

By requiring all projects vying for capital funding to be weighed against measurable criteria based on state-wide goals, the state could squeeze more value out of every taxpayer dollar spent.

#### Transparency

A criteria-driven system would make it clearer for Illinois taxpayers to understand why their tax dollars are being targeted to a specific project and what results they can expect.

#### Leveling the playing field

A more open and honest way of making capital investment decisions in Illinois means every community's project would be measured against the same yardstick: The "have-nots" will have as good a chance to compete as the "have-lots."

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [metroplanning.org](http://metroplanning.org) to listen to audio from our March 2009 "Making Sense of Springfield" roundtable, featuring supportive comments about capital investment criteria by Ill. Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago) and Ill. Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno (R-Lemont).

# Right-sized

*adj.* prioritized or arranged in an appropriate, logical manner

## What we want

Traditionally, most federal money has gone to states and then individual municipalities, creating costly local competition for resources that does not reflect the regional and interjurisdictional nature of our most pressing concerns. Solutions should be planned and implemented at the scale of the problem. Federal and state investments programs should encourage this, while providing flexibility to scale investment up or down as necessary.

## Increased Water Use

**+12%**

Projected growth of Illinois' population by 2025

**+32%**

Projected increase of Illinois' water use by 2025

**0%**

Growth in current water supplies

Meanwhile, our Lake Michigan diversion will remain constant, and groundwater supplies are trending downward.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read *Before the Wells Run Dry: Ensuring Sustainable Water Supplies for Illinois*, a joint initiative of MPC and Openlands, at [metroplanning.org](http://metroplanning.org).

## How to get there

### Protect Illinois' limited water resources

The Illinois State Water Survey projects water supplies will be dangerously low in some parts of the state as early as 2015. The good news is Illinois can avert a water crisis through more efficient and coordinated planning, flexible policies that allow communities to protect shared water resources, and public education and infrastructure investment to curb rampant waste. MPC and its partner Openlands advocate for a regional approach to protecting Illinois' water resources.

Illinois should renew funding to support two existing regional water supply planning groups, and expand funding to create new regional groups covering the rest of the state. Though water is delivered locally, it knows no municipal boundaries; conservation strategies are best planned at the regional scale.

The federal Clean Water and Drinking Water revolving loan funds allow communities to make water quality investments, but do not prioritize conservation measures. As Congress discusses reauthorizing these two funds via the Water Quality Investment Act, reforms should be made to encourage investment in conservation, efficiency, and "green" infrastructure.

### Improve access to homes in opportunity areas

Across Illinois, communities with good jobs, schools and transit options often have a shortage of affordable homes — while communities with affordable housing lack the amenities needed to promote job development. MPC is addressing this so-called "jobs-housing mismatch" in 2010, by advocating for coordinated investments and a regional approach. Thousands of people in Illinois are on Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waiting lists, while numerous barriers — ranging from community misconceptions about affordable housing to rigid federal regulations — often make it difficult for the region's public housing authorities to work with local communities to meet the demand. MPC and its partners have developed

*We will use our funds to support the good work of communities locally and regionally, to support partnerships like the kind you already have here, both at the regional level and even extending from the city to the suburbs.* — Shelley Poticha, Senior Advisor for Sustainable Housing and Communities, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

two models to show the regional nature of this problem requires a regional solution: The Regional Housing Initiative provides operating subsidies to developers and owners of quality rental housing in “attractive” communities; and the Portability Pilot demonstrated improvements that would enable public housing authorities to move tenants to communities with jobs and transit more easily, at a 26 percent lower cost. As Congress debates the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) should incent public housing authorities to coordinate regionally, share their resources, and help families settle into communities with the opportunities they need.

**70,000**

Approximate number of homes damaged or destroyed in Mississippi’s Gulf Coast region by Hurricane Katrina in 2005

**59,000**

Approximate number of homes sold at foreclosure auctions in northeastern Illinois between 2006 and 3Q 2009

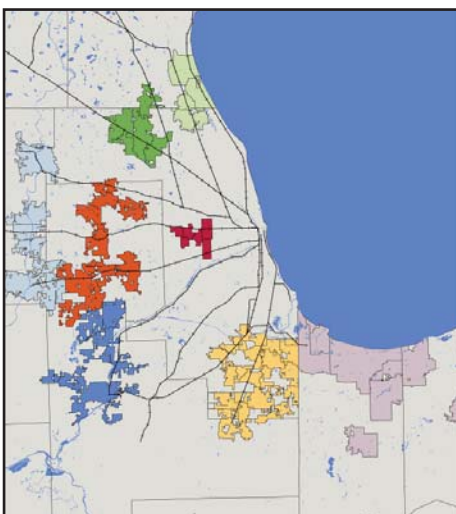
*Hurricane Katrina’s physical destruction was unprecedented, but the nation’s foreclosure crisis has since caused its own devastation, particularly in Chicagoland.*

## Promoting regional collaboration

**MPC is helping communities recognize and unleash the benefits of working together to tackle shared challenges. Many local development issues — housing, transportation, water quality, workforce — do not adhere to municipal borders. By partnering with neighboring towns, communities can address these issues more efficiently, and pool resources to save money.**

Despite the benefits of cooperation, misguided local, state and national policies sometimes create barriers to community collaboration — and even provide incentives for them to go

### **MPC Interjurisdictional Collaboration Areas 2009**



*MPC is assisting several clusters of communities across the region as they work together to tackle shared challenges.*

it alone. Tax policies, too, can stoke fierce competition between communities, rather than promote coordinated growth that benefits all.

To encourage communities and agencies to plan across issues and borders, President Obama has created the Livability Initiative. The 2010 HUD budget proposes \$150 million for the Sustainable Communities Initiative, which will issue challenge grants to promote interjurisdictional and inter-agency innovation. The U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE) set aside \$454 million of its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funding for competitive grants to “leverage the participation and support of multiple local jurisdictions, regional planning agencies, and state energy offices.” The U.S. Dept. of Transportation (DOT) will award \$250 million in competitive grants to transit proposals that support mixed-income, pedestrian-friendly communities. The Illinois Housing Development Authority is responding by stepping up its own efforts to encourage creation of more affordable homes in communities with good jobs and transit options. The proposed 2010 Illinois Comprehensive Housing Plan explicitly prioritizes regional coordination that aligns housing and transportation plans.

**Communities throughout Chicagoland recognize the benefits of coordination. MPC and the Metropolitan**

**Mayors Caucus have been providing technical assistance to two municipal collaborations in South and West Cook County, to help them maximize foreclosure recovery funding. Cook County rewarded these two groups of communities — 28 in South Cook and six in West Cook County — with more than \$12 million in federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding. The communities created plans to use the initial investments to jumpstart and leverage additional funds to re-develop hundreds of energy-efficient homes, many near mixed-use and transit-oriented development.**

In Indiana, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and a regional business group, Northwest Indiana Forum, are finalizing a comprehensive economic development strategy for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties. Government, business and civic leaders, working together as part of a newly created Northwest Indiana Economic Development District, will prioritize economic development projects in these counties. By collaborating, the region will be eligible to compete for federal and other resources to fund the projects.

In 2010, MPC will work to identify new, innovative ways to encourage communities, counties, the state, and federal governments to support right-sized, solutions to multiple issues that cross municipal boundaries.

# Coordinated

adj. brought together, harmonized

## What we want

More often than not, cities and regions face complex problems that cut across multiple issues; one program or agency — and in some cases, the public sector — cannot solve these dilemmas alone. Working together, and with the private sector, multiple agencies and departments can develop and leverage funding for joint solutions, minimize conflicting goals and wasteful spending, and contribute to more sustainable development.

## How to get there

### Support employer-assisted housing nationwide

More than 70 Illinois employers have contributed funds to help their employees purchase or rent homes near work or transit, and tapped state tax credits and matching funds designed to support this innovative public-private partnership, known as employer-assisted housing (EAH). Employers reduce turnover, employees lower their commuting costs and reap the rewards of homeownership, and communities benefit from increased neighborhood stability. Because of Illinois' success leveraging public funds to encourage private investments in workforce housing — and with start-up advice from MPC — other states have implemented their own EAH programs, yet no comparable tools exist to support EAH at a national level. MPC is working to secure federal support for EAH through existing programs such as HOME and CDBG, and Dept. of Energy's efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled. These models, as well as the proposed Livable Communities Act, could leverage the new HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership to launch a national EAH pilot in 10 states.

Employer-Assisted Housing successes in Illinois since 2000

**3,300+**

Employees benefitting from housing counseling since 2000

**2,000+**

Employees utilizing down payment assistance to buy homes since 2000

**\$1.5M**

in public investment has leveraged ...

**\$8+M**

... in employer investment

FOR MORE INFORMATION

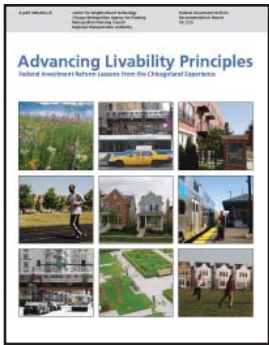
Visit [reachillinois.org](http://reachillinois.org).

*We're going to create an interagency working group on urban policy to lift the agencies — and the people in the agencies, and the programs — out of their so-called silos that everybody talks about, and begin a cross-fertilization of ideas and coordination of investments.* – Adolfo Carrion, Director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs





# Federal investment reform



During a time of historic economic change, the strength of the Chicagoland region — or any region in the nation — depends on smarter federal investment strategies. As more and more communities need resources to fund outdated infrastructure, deal with the foreclosure crisis, retrain workers, and respond to climate change, it is no longer acceptable to dole out funding based on politically derived formulas. Public resources need to be directed where they will

have the greatest benefit and most significant return, as well as reward innovation and collaboration. Federal investments should put communities on a clear path to a more economically competitive, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable future.

The Obama administration has articulated these goals through the following six Livability Principles, that will help guide and coordinate investment and planning decisions made by federal agencies.

The fall 2009 report, *Advancing Livability Principles: Federal Investment Reforms Lessons from the Chicagoland Experience*, drafted by MPC in partnership with the Center for Neighborhood Technology, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, and the Regional Transportation Authority, encouraged the administration to add a seventh principle: Conserve natural resources. It also outlines our collective ideas for putting the Obama administration's Livability Principles into action, and showcases the Chicago region's successes as models for nationwide implementation of federal investment policies that are goal-driven, right-sized, and coordinated.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Learn more about *Advancing Livability Principles: Federal Investment Reforms Lessons from the Chicagoland Experience* report and opportunities for federal reform at [metroplanning.org](http://metroplanning.org).

## Recommendations for implementing federal Livability Principles

### 1. Provide more transportation choices.

Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

### 2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.

Expand location and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

### 3. Enhance economic competitiveness.

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment

### 4. Support existing communities.

Target federal funding toward existing communities — through strategies like transit-oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling — to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.

### 5. Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.

Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

### 6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods — rural, urban, or suburban.

#### *Suggested additional principle*

### 7. Conserve natural resources.

Protect air, water, open space, and other natural resources by investing in existing communities, demand management, conservation, and efficiency strategies. MPC and its partners feel strongly that HUD, USDOT, and USEPA's current list of Livability Principles should be expanded to include the conservation of natural resources.



## **Our Mission**

Since 1934, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has been dedicated to shaping a more sustainable and prosperous greater Chicago region. As an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, MPC serves communities and residents by developing, promoting and implementing solutions for sound regional growth.



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