



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Dawn Raftery ([draftery@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:draftery@cmap.illinois.gov) or 312-771-7724)

## **CMAP to assist dozens of communities with long-term planning projects, public space innovations**

CHICAGO, March 10, 2021 – More than 20 communities with high needs will receive new planning assistance from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to help them prosper in the years ahead.

The selected planning projects span northeastern Illinois, from Waukegan in northern Lake County to Robbins in southern Cook County. Through our [Local Technical Assistance \(LTA\) program](#), CMAP staff will work with the communities to build their local capacity, implement long-range plans, identify grant opportunities, develop capital improvement programs and address safety improvements.

“Now more than ever, places with limited resources need planning assistance,” CMAP Executive Director Erin Aleman said. “The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning has a long history of helping communities better prepare for their futures. We look forward to building a stronger region where all communities can thrive.”

For the project in Robbins, CMAP staff will work with local officials to implement past planning recommendations to address flooding issues in a way that spurs economic development and creates new opportunities for recreation.

A separate project in Bellwood will assist local officials with safety improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians who cross 25th Avenue. A new bridge on the north side of Bellwood has increased truck traffic in the area, creating a threat to bicyclists and pedestrians who use the unimproved Illinois Prairie Path along 25th Avenue, just north of South Maywood Drive.

A group of communities also will learn more about the creative uses for public spaces that have developed since the COVID-19 pandemic began. CMAP will collaborate with officials in Berkley, Harvey, Lemont and Morton Grove on this pilot project to develop public space innovations, such as open streets, outdoor dining in the public right of way and pop-up markets.

CMAP selected 24 communities following a joint call for planning assistance with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) earlier this year. To best address the region’s immediate needs, CMAP and the RTA prioritized high-need municipalities based on factors such as population, income and tax base per capita. The pandemic has strained municipal capacity like never before while declining revenues are making it difficult for communities to plan for 2021 and beyond.

Selected communities will receive planning assistance for free. The capacity-building programs being offered are made possible with support from the MacArthur Foundation.



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

433 West Van Buren Street  
Suite 450  
Chicago, IL 60607

312-454-0400  
[cmap.illinois.gov](http://cmap.illinois.gov)

## The communities receiving planning assistance are:

1. Bellwood
2. Berkley
3. Berwyn
4. Burlington
5. Calumet City
6. Calumet Park
7. Chicago Heights
8. Dolton
9. Harvard
10. Harvey
11. Lake County Land Bank Authority
12. Lansing
13. Lemont
14. Lynwood
15. Marengo
16. Matteson
17. Morton Grove
18. Riverdale
19. Robbins
20. Steger
21. Summit
22. Thornton
23. University Park
24. Waukegan

CMAP's LTA program aligns with [ON TO 2050](#), the region's long-range plan, by focusing on inclusive growth. Since 2012, the program has assisted communities — often with limited capacity and resources — in developing more than 200 planning projects.

– END –

## About CMAP

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is northeastern Illinois' comprehensive planning organization. The agency and its partners developed ON TO 2050, a long-range plan to help the seven counties and 284 communities of our region address transportation, equity, environmental and other quality-of-life issues. Visit [CMAP's website](#) for more information.