

**ON TO
2050**
plan update



**Public
comment
summary**
appendix

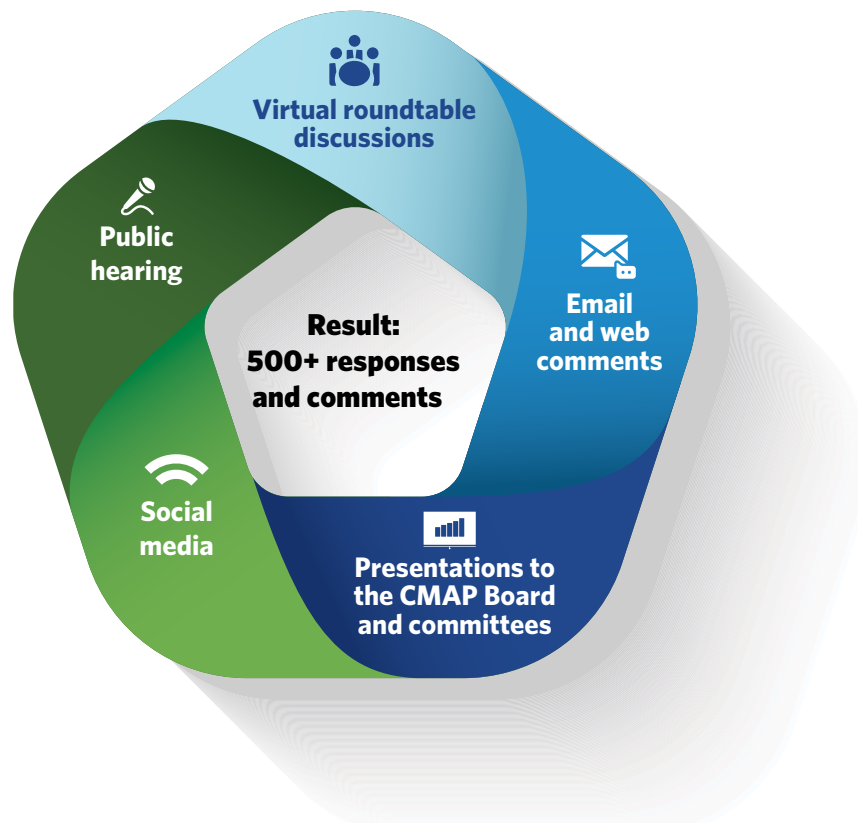
1 Introduction

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) invited stakeholders to provide input during the ON TO 2050 update process at key stages and for specific technical components.

Conditions in the region change frequently, which is why CMAP is required to update parts of the long-range plan every four years. Public comment is a crucial component of this process, ensuring that the values and priorities of the people who live and work in the region are included.

CMAP leveraged a variety of engagement and communications strategies and tactics to engage diverse stakeholders for feedback and guidance on the ON TO 2050 Update.

Overview of public engagement and comments



Respondents

residents **elected officials** county representatives
regional transportation advocates **members of the CMAP board and committees** **transportation agencies**
community organizations municipal representatives



Public engagement strategies, tools, and tactics

The CMAP engagement team developed a phased communications and engagement strategy for the ON TO 2050 Update: information and engagement, formal public comment, and plan update approval. The plan identified stakeholders and prescribed engagement activities, with measurable objectives.

CMAP identified regional stakeholders relevant for each technical area in the ON TO 2050 Update and in these general categories:

- Federal, state, county, and transportation agencies
- Councils of government and councils of mayors
- Planning, community, and advocacy organizations
- General public
- CMAP board, MPO Policy Committee, and agency working group members



Public comment period

Formal public comment on the ON TO 2050 Update opened on June 10, 2022, and closed on August 13, 2022, following the public hearing on August 11, 2022.

Below is a summary of the results from each of the primary engagement and communications events that generated feedback for the plan update.

View the [full appendix of public comments](#) collected through CMAP's public engagement process.



Information-sharing (website, newsletters, and social media)

To increase awareness, interest, and participation in development of the ON TO 2050 Update, CMAP shared information consistently through its various communications channels during the public comment period. This included [Updating the Plan](#), a landing page on CMAP's website, to provide detailed information on the ON TO 2050 Update, opportunities for public input, and more.

CMAP regularly sent information regarding the ON TO 2050 Update process in eight newsletters from late April through early August, each going to an average of 11,000 subscribers. CMAP also posted regularly across its social media platforms — Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn — garnering 4,274 impressions, 140 engagements/reactions, and 11 shares/retweets.



Presentations to the CMAP Board and committees

Members of CMAP's Board, MPO Policy Committee, Council of Mayors, Transportation Committee, Coordinating Committee, and Tier II Consultation Committee reviewed several aspects of the ON TO 2050 Update at their regular meetings, totaling sixteen meetings in 2022. CMAP staff presented the financial plan for transportation, socio-economic forecasts, performance measures, the process for evaluating and identifying regionally significant projects, and the draft of the ON TO 2050 Update.

Virtual roundtable discussions



Four virtual roundtable discussions in April and May 2022 guided development of the draft ON TO 2050 Update. CMAP invited identified stakeholders to the roundtables, including transportation equity advocates, local and county governments, transportation partner agencies, and the general public. Fifty-four people attended the four roundtable events. The roundtables offered accessible and valuable discussions to share information about the plan update and solicit feedback.

In addition to discussion of the ON TO 2050 Update, the roundtables sought forward-looking perspective from attendees on trends and future needs in anticipation of the next regional long-range transportation plan. Participants engaged in a discussion about the the durability of remote work and its effect on the transportation system, land use planning, and housing. The roundtables included a discussion of the future of retail development and the impact of freight and warehousing on regional communities.

Roundtable participants also shared their insights on these forward-looking topics by participating in a virtual poll using Mentimeter. Mentimeter is a web-based engagement tool that allows stakeholders to provide feedback through open ended questions and polls via their computer or smartphone. Responses are displayed in real time and can be further analyzed by generating reports and tracking data over time.



April 14:
10 attendees



April 28:
10 attendees



May 5:
10 attendees



May 12:
24 attendees



How has your community been affected by higher levels of remote work? How might it be affected in the future?

Lower levels of transit ridership, which will be a lasting change UNLESS...

Lower transit ridership, which will be a lasting change

Reduced train schedule during the week with fewer express trains, which discourages use of metra

Much less travel overall. In the future, less transit use and more car, bike, and TNC trips

Fewer people are using transit to commute to work each weekday

Less people working downtown so transit ridership is lower

How has your community been affected by the growth of freight and e-commerce? How might it be affected in the future?

Worsening air quality

Increased congestion

Way more trucks on side streets

Increased congestion on residential streets because of multiple delivery vans

What are we missing?

This has been covered a bit, but these shifts have broad implications for equity, so identifying strategies to promote equitable economic outcomes through them will be critical

What ground-up role can communities and neighborhoods have in adapting to these changes and creating solutions to the transportation, land use, equity, and resilience challenges

Operationalize a commitment to racial equity and mobility justice

Long term resilience of the region and our assets



Public hearing

CMAP held a public hearing for public comment on the plan update in accordance with the Regional Planning Act, 70 ILCS 1707/40. The public hearing was a hybrid event, and stakeholders participated by attending in person in CMAP's offices and on Zoom.



34 total attendees



8 attendees provided public comments

The impact of roadway expansion on climate; the region's natural resources; pedestrian, bicyclist, and driver safety; and the equity impact of prioritizing car-oriented infrastructure.

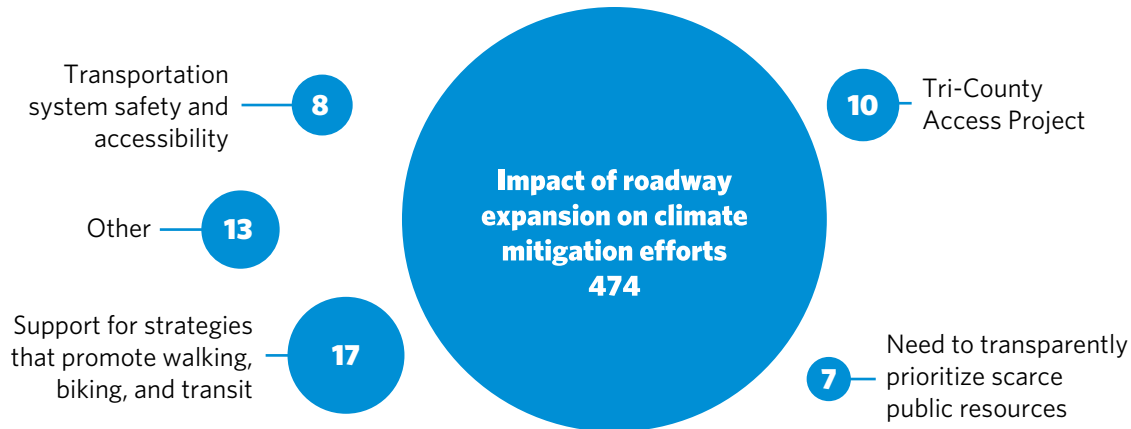
Walking, biking, transit, and micro transit projects should be funded for their own merits and advocated for denser, more walkable areas.

Electric vehicle infrastructure, and the infrastructure needs of economically disconnected communities.

Adding capacity for Pace Bus and the Chicago Transit Authority.

Public comment themes and responses

The 529 public comments received for the ON TO 2050 Update fell into five key themes as reflected below, with the majority of comments falling under the theme of roadway expansion impacts on climate mitigation. The Active Transportation Alliance led an advocacy campaign calling on people to submit comments opposing road expansion. Out of the 474 comments opposing road expansion, 38 were custom messages while the remainder were submitted in the same form template.



CMAP's response to comments for each theme is found below. These responses were shared with commenters and CMAP provided responses to the thoughtful feedback provided by organizational stakeholders, including village and township officials, as well as community partners.

Key theme	CMAP responses
Impact of roadway expansion on climate mitigation efforts	<p>The plan update reaffirms the regional goal of developing a multimodal transportation system and maintains ON TO 2050's call to intensify climate mitigation efforts. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions requires compact infill development, improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and increased investments in public transit as well as considerable expansion in renewable energy systems, energy efficiency and retrofits, and electrification of our transportation system. CMAP will continue to work across these many areas to mitigate climate impacts and recover from the effects of climate change.</p> <p>CMAP is continuously evaluating regional performance measures and adjusting our tools and processes for understanding the impact transportation has on quality of life across the region. This includes how we model roadway expansion, as well as advances in greenhouse gas emissions modeling.</p>
Tri-County Access Project	<p>The Tri-County Access project was not submitted for evaluation as a Regionally Significant Project for the ON TO 2050 Update. Therefore, it is not included in the plan's Regionally Significant Projects list, which can be found in the Regionally Significant Projects Benefits Report appendix.</p>

Key theme	CMAP responses
<p>Transportation system safety and accessibility</p>	<p>Road safety. CMAP launched a program of work to improve regional traffic safety, including by creating new safety data resources on issues like speeding, competing for competitive planning and capital funds, and convening regional stakeholders to promote joint problem solving.</p> <p>Transit safety. CMAP is currently developing a report of legislative recommendations to support the region’s transit system in consultation with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The report will address transit safety considerations insofar as the user experience is critical to public confidence in the system, system ridership, and transit employee hiring and retention.</p> <p>Accessibility. CMAP launched a program to help every community in northeastern Illinois establish Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plans over the next ten years. Additionally, the agency is currently exploring new ways to support the region’s dial-a-ride services and better integrate them into the broader mobility system.</p>
<p>Need to transparently prioritize scarce public resources, including Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding</p>	<p>The new federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) seeks to make transformative transportation investments that advance equity, environmental, climate, resilience, and safety goals. Those federal goals align with the Plan Update’s core principles of inclusive growth, resilience, and prioritized investment. As the coordinating regional agency, CMAP is a resource to all communities and counties in northeastern Illinois. Since IIJA became law, CMAP has focused on leveraging the increased infrastructure funding for our region, coordinating around new competitive grant programs, and preparing regionally significant projects. CMAP believes that developing clear, transparent, and regionally-supported methods for prioritizing projects and IIJA funding upholds the ON TO 2050 plan’s core principles, improves the region’s competitiveness for discretionary federal funds, and accelerates progress towards regional goals.</p>

Key theme

CMAP responses

Support for strategies that promote walking, biking, and transit

In general, CMAP devotes a significant portion its annual work plan to projects that support the residents' ability to travel by active modes. Recent examples include the Regional Sidewalk Inventory and Northern Lakeshore Trail Connectivity Plan.

Historically, bicycle and pedestrian projects have not been specifically included in the Regionally Significant Projects list because of their relatively small capital costs. As a reminder, Regional Significant Projects are:

- Projects that cost at least \$100 million and (a) change capacity on the National Highway System (NHS) or is a new expressway or principal arterial; or (b) change capacity on transit services with some separate rights-of-way or shared right-of-way where transit has priority over other traffic.
- Projects that cost at least \$250 million, regardless of the facility type or work type.

They are, however, accounted for within the financial plan for transportation in the "system enhancements" category. This category includes capital and operational enhancements or improvements not already constrained under other categories. Examples include bicycle, pedestrian, and ADA improvements, as well as highway management and operations, including intelligent transportation systems. The plan update provides \$43.7 billion in enhancement investments between now and 2050.

For the next regional plan, CMAP commits to improving transparency of these investments to better support their critical role in advancing the region's goals.

Conclusion

The ON TO 2050 Update reflects the input and perspectives of hundreds of stakeholders, including residents, advocates, community organizations, county and municipal representatives, and CMAP's transportation partners and committee members. By using multiple communications channels to keep the public informed about the plan update and when and how to provide input at key stages, CMAP secured valuable input from stakeholders through an open and accessible public process. Their contributions and comments guided development of the ON TO 2050 Update and its technical components, suggesting forward-thinking approaches for the next comprehensive regional plan.

CMAP will continue to implement the ON TO 2050 regional plan as updated, leaning heavily on meaningful stakeholder involvement and new and longstanding partnerships across the public and private sectors.

FY22-0056

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