



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

433 West Van Buren Street
Suite 450
Chicago, IL 60607

312-454-0400
cmap.illinois.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP Board
From: Erin Aleman, Executive Director
Date: May 2026
Subject: Executive Director's report
Action requested: Information

Dear Board Members,

This report provides an update ahead of our April meeting with the goal of greater transparency to CMAP's work and to supplement the agenda.

Should you have questions regarding this report, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erin Aleman'.

Erin Aleman

May Board meeting

At our May meeting, we will provide an update on the recently released [Comprehensive Climate Action Plan for Greater Chicago](#) (CCAP), developed in partnership with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission.

As the next phase of work focuses on translating this roadmap into practical, near-term implementation priorities, we will focus on two areas that are central to implementation: the electric grid and building decarbonization.

We have invited experts from across the region to participate in a panel discussion on current grid modernization efforts, how different stakeholders are approaching long-range grid planning, and where regional collaboration can accelerate progress toward a more resilient and prosperous future.

We look forward to seeing you on May 13th.

The Century Plan Catalyst Series

In early April, CMAP hosted its third Catalyst Event — a series of conversations and convenings that are shaping The Century Plan.

Over 150 stakeholders from across the region joined us to celebrate the release of the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan for Greater Chicago.

The high energy, enthusiasm, and momentum to move from planning to action was truly inspiring.

Guests shared their hopes and aspirations for climate progress by leaving a message for their future selves. Watch a [video](#) here.

Our next event on Wednesday, May 6, focuses on how the region can work together to protect and strengthen our water. [You are welcome to join us.](#)

We have several more planned for this year.

In April, we also engaged with local governments around The Century Plan, holding workshops with the Northwest Municipal Conference, Barrington Area Council of Governments, Southwest Conference of Mayors, and West Central Municipal Conference. We have seven more events planned through June. The purpose is to listen and learn. These local insights will help us understand challenges and opportunities, to inform The Century Plan.

We will provide an update on our findings at your June meeting.

Engagements overview

April was a busy month with The Century Plan events and other engagements.

I recently attended the national conference of the Coalition for America's Gateways & Trade Corridors (CAGTC) in Washington D.C. I'm proud to serve as CAGTC's Board Chair. This is a special year as we are celebrating our 25th anniversary.

We heard from key leadership on transportation reauthorization. I was honored to introduce Michael Rutherford, U.S. Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary of the Office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure, as our keynote dinner speaker. He shared the critical role CAGTC members played in supporting a new freight office and dedicated funding for national multimodal freight projects.

In northeastern Illinois, that funding has supported the CREATE Program and other investments, including rail crossing improvements. These help maintain our global freight hub status and keep our economy strong.

We also met with Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth to talk about freight and transportation reauthorization.

We closed out the conference with a presentation from Jeff Davis, Senior Fellow for the Eno Center for Transportation, who shared insights from their recently published [paper on solving the Highway Trust Fund](#).

I recently provided a keynote address to the Illinois Association of Municipal Management Assistants — our state's next generation of city managers and policy makers — at their annual conference and provided insights on thinking regionally and leading locally.

I also joined the Midwest Leaders Tour to the Netherlands to explore how transportation design can build people-centered, connected communities. The tour, led by Global Philanthropy Partnership, is supported by the McKnight, TransitCenter, Mortenson Family, and Kresge foundations.

Valuable experiences like these help us maximize collective learning, build networks for future collaborations, and advance climate action opportunities for Greater Chicago and the Midwest — which impacts health, safety, economic mobility, and climate risk.