



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL

August 8, 2006

Hon. Gerald Bennett  
Chairman  
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Chairman Bennett:

Congratulations on your early progress in launching the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. I have very high hopes for the impact you and your team can have in guiding rational growth and investment strategies for the good of the entire region.

I am writing as Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Council and on behalf of companies collectively employing 500 people in the region. In your upcoming report to the Illinois General Assembly, I urge you to push for the authorities and tools necessary to finally connect the decisions about where we want to grow with the investments we make. We see firsthand the enormous cost to both taxpayers and businesses of having no game plan for growth. Traffic jams, insufficient transit service, freight gridlock, polluted air, disappearing open space, and a lack of affordable homes near jobs top the list of urgent concerns. Attracting talented employees now and in the future means we must do a better job on these core quality of life and competitiveness measures.

As you make critical decisions about the authority, structure, and funding of CMAP, I hope you use the specific suggestions that the Metropolitan Planning Council has shared with your board and staff. As shown by the unanimous passage of the Regional Planning Act 2005, our region agrees that the status quo is no longer acceptable. Now is the moment to debunk fears and unite the region around a vision of where we will grow and invest, and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

When your predecessor agency, NIPC, was created in the 1950s, incrementalism won – and we all lost. Today’s historic opportunity calls for bold actions. While many development decisions will continue to be made at the local level, CMAP can offer technical assistance and incentives to support more intensive development near infrastructure, resulting in a more vibrant region offering real choices on where to live, work and play.

Congratulations again on your impressive commitment to sheparding CMAP through these difficult first few months. I look forward to being involved in your success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John A. Buck".

John A. Buck  
Chairman & CEO  
The John Buck Company  
Chairman  
Metropolitan Planning Council

Cc: CMAP Board members  
Randy Blankenhorn, CMAP Executive Director