

### Community Building Resources at your finger tips

When it comes to planning for your community's future, the questions you ask are as important as the answers you arrive at. You need to start with large questions like, "What's our vision?," before you can address more more practical ones like, "Where should we build the new library?"

The 1-2-3 Workbook Series was created to assist local governments, municipal officials, and community leaders in making decisions to foster thoughtfully planned, sustainable, and livable communities. Each workbook has an easy-to-read format that focuses on planning issues specific to Illinois. They can be used effectively separately or in tandem with other books in the series. The workbooks are the result of collaboration between the Metropolitan Planning Council and several other regional partners, including the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

### The Workbooks

#### Sensible Tools for Healthy Communities

Even though markets and the economy continue to change, communities need to make tough decisions about balancing immediate needs with a long-term vision. *Sensible Tools for Healthy Communities* outlines the guiding principles of Smart Growth and demonstrates how those principles can be incorporated into local planning decisions.

#### Planning 1-2-3

*Planning 1-2-3* breaks down the daunting task of creating a comprehensive community plan into several easy-to-understand steps. The workbook describes the elements of a comprehensive plan, and presents tools community leaders can use to facilitate the planning process from start to finish.

#### Retail 1-2-3

*Retail 1-2-3* covers the basics of writing an economic development plan, examines the ways a community can improve its place in the market, highlights organizational structures for retail development, identifies financial options, and explores different means a community can use to evaluate its progress.

#### Housing 1-2-3

*Housing 1-2-3* simplifies the complex issues related to planning, developing, preserving, and managing housing for municipalities and real estate professionals. This book helps communities plan for and invest in diverse housing options, and highlights strategies from preserving rental housing, to attracting new construction, to promoting mixed-income housing. Whatever the market and wherever the community, this book offers a range of tested solutions to ensure a healthy local housing market.

### Metropolitan Planning Council's Community Building Initiative

MPC's Community Building Initiative (CBI) works with community partners throughout the greater Chicago region to provide solutions to development challenges and form creative visions for the future. CBI draws on our core strengths in planning and policy, covering issues of housing, transportation, sustainability, and economic development. The 1-2-3 Workbook Series is one of the many MPC resources available to communities seeking short-term assistance on planning matters.



## Complementary Interactive Sessions

MPC is available to facilitate interactive sessions to demonstrate the tools highlighted in the workbook series. These role-playing workshops offer fun and engaging ways to spark community dialogue about planning issues, begin a comprehensive planning process, and strengthen the ability of local decision makers to grapple with difficult development decisions.

### Sensible Tools for Healthy Communities

Participants roleplay the process of reviewing a development proposal, including hearing from developers, a variety of key community stakeholders, planning commissioners, and village/town board members. Participants are challenged to weigh various perspectives when deciding if the development fits the community's goals and vision for growth. Approximate time: 2 hours.



### Planning 1-2-3

This exercise in land-use planning assigns participants to a fictitious village growth task force trying to determine the best way to accommodate a growing population and its related impact on community infrastructure. The *Planning 1-2-3* simulation showcases the different solutions for achieving growth objectives that shape a community's comprehensive plan. Approximate time: 1.5 hours.



### Retail 1-2-3

Participants in the *Retail 1-2-3* strategy game work as a group tasked with recommending what kind of retail development a community most desires and needs. Participants have to evaluate concepts against costs, population needs, local market demand, and available resources. Approximate time: 1.5 hours.

### Housing 1-2-3

Participants assess local goals and housing market demands, and develop a set of strategies to solve a commonly faced housing challenge. Tools covered in this session include financing mechanisms, funding programs, and potential partners. Approximate time: 2 hours.



### Sensible Tools/Planning 1-2-3

Two handbooks, one session: Participants get guidance on developing a comprehensive plan provided by *Planning 1-2-3*, as well as an overview of *Sensible Tool's* tips for encouraging high-quality community growth. The session reinforces the importance of connecting local development and land use decisions with an up-to-date comprehensive plan. Approximate time: 2 hours.