

Formally established in 2005, Metropolitan Planning Council's Community Building Initiative (CBI) works with community partners throughout the greater Chicago region to tackle development challenges that demand a creative vision for the future. Partnerships consistent with MPC's mission to build a more equitable, sustainable and competitive region. CBI coordinates MPC's multiple competencies, drawing on our core strengths in planning and policy, and addressing the intersecting issues of housing, transportation, sustainability, workforce, and economic development.

Communities face many challenges in planning for housing, natural resources, transit, and retail, due to market pressures, lack of fiscal incentives, and over-extended staff. CBI helps communities meet these challenges by providing technical expertise, and crafting market-based strategies for community redevelopment and sensibly-planned new development.

What the Community Building Initiative offers

MPC's community partnerships through CBI offer both long and short-term assistance to municipalities and community-based partners through a variety of tools.

MPC Task Force: The Community Building Initiative's main product, a Task Force is a long-term community redevelopment, housing or sustainable development partnership, supported by MPC's breadth of expert volunteers and guided by a memorandum of understanding.

Short-term consultation: MPC is available to consult with community leaders on an immediate need. This could range from advising on a specific topic to a workshop to train community leaders on how to use MPC's resources, such as *Sensible Tools for Healthy Communities*, *Retail 1-2-3*, or other workbooks.

Urban Land Institute Chicago Technical Assistance Panel (TAP): MPC partners with ULI-Chicago on several TAPs each year. The format includes several months of advanced planning and a two-day session with approximately 10 industry professionals. The panel is followed by a written report that is used to implement the strategies recommended by the panel.

Community Engagement Tools: CBI has diversified the way in which it assists communities in the region through two new community engagement tools: Placemaking, a resident-driven approach to creating vibrant public spaces; and the Corridor Development Initiative, a three-step planning process that teaches local residents about development finance, design, and affordability.

Interjurisdictional Collaboration: Understanding that many development challenges do not stop at municipal borders, and to build capacity that many individual communities do not have, MPC works across municipal boundaries to foster regional solutions to complex growth challenges. We provide assistance in structuring partnerships, identifying funding resources, setting goals, and providing community-level technical support. Topics range from transportation and water planning, to workforce and energy efficiency, and are often multi-issue focused.

Community Building Initiative partners

MPC's Community Building Initiative relies on our strong partnerships with organizations such as the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Urban Land Institute Chicago, and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

