



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL

August 22, 2006

Honorable Gerald R. Bennett
Chair
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606-6415

Dear Mayor Bennett:

I am writing to congratulate you on your progress thus far in launching the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). I believe strongly that CMAP can shape planning and investment strategies to improve the competitiveness of the entire region.

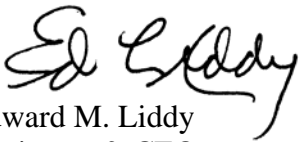
I am writing as an Executive Advisor of the Metropolitan Planning Council and on behalf of a company collectively employing more than 6,000 people in the region to ask you to push for the authorities and tools necessary for CMAP to connect the decisions about where we as a community want to grow with the investments we make. Uncoordinated growth harms business and jeopardizes Chicagoland's competitiveness in the global marketplace. Traffic jams, insufficient transit service, freight gridlock, polluted air, disappearing open space, and a lack of affordable homes near jobs challenge local companies' ability to continue to attract the talent they need to thrive. This, in turn, limits their ability to grow and contribute to the economic development of the region.

During the editing process of your report to the Illinois General Assembly, I encourage you to use the specific suggestions that the Metropolitan Planning Council has shared with your board and staff. The fact that the General Assembly passed – unanimously – the Regional Planning Act in 2005 is a signal that our region agrees that the status quo is no longer acceptable. This historic opportunity calls for bold actions. Now is the time for CMAP to unite stakeholders around a compelling vision for the region.

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 the progress that CMAP has made over the last few months. I am confident that your efforts will make the agency – and the region – even stronger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Liddy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical red line to its right.

Edward M. Liddy
Chairman & CEO
The Allstate Corporation
Executive Advisor
Metropolitan Planning Council