

1. Introduction and overview

From May 27 to September 10, 2009, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) launched an important period of public input for the *GO TO 2040* comprehensive regional planning campaign. Referred to as “Invent the Future,” this phase solicited feedback from residents and stakeholder groups regarding several alternative future scenarios that CMAP had created to describe how the region might develop in coming years and decades. Each scenario combined a number of different planning strategies, and the best strategies -- as identified through extensive research and public input -- will ultimately be the basis of the preferred Regional Scenario that will be presented for CMAP Board approval in January 2010. “Invent the Future” was a large-scale effort that encouraged residents to express their priorities for the future of the region.

Based on public feedback and quantitative analysis of the effects of each scenario on traffic, public health, the environment, the economy, and many other features, the preferred Regional Scenario will be the basis of specific strategies, policies, and investments that will make up the *GO TO 2040* Plan, which will be completed in October 2010.

This report details how CMAP engaged the public in setting the priorities for the development of the preferred Regional Scenario. *GO TO 2040*'s Invent the Future phase had two primary goals:

1. To educate the region on the impacts of multiple planning strategies;
2. And to gain public input on the development of CMAP's preferred future.

To accomplish these goals, from June 1 to September 10, 2009 CMAP provided the public with a variety of opportunities to have their say on policy decisions that could be included in *GO TO 2040*. The public engagement phase began with an official sneak-preview kick-off event on May 27, 2009 at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois. CMAP's partners and stakeholders were invited to preview workshop activities, online interactive tools, and the kiosk software before they were presented to the rest of the region. This preview was also meant to promote to key partners and stakeholders that now is the time CMAP needs to hear from their membership and constituents.

Building flexible opportunities for participation was key for the implementation of this phase. Therefore CMAP developed a variety of ways for the public to be involved. Participants could choose the length and depth of participation, with options ranging from taking a two-question survey to participating in a two-hour workshop. Opportunities were available for face-to-face contact at public workshops or online participation that did not require direct interaction. Throughout these methods of engagement CMAP asked residents to help us prioritize policies and tell us about the trade-offs they would be willing to support to reach their goals.

All the activities described in this document align closely with CMAP's *Public Participation Plan*, which was created to "develop a proactive public participation process in northeastern Illinois that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing regional plans and capital programs." In addition, CMAP recognizes that public participation is a key component in effective planning. It is essential that the residents of northeastern Illinois have a voice in how the region's plans are formulated. This report details the public engagement tools, promotion, results, and lessons learned from our summer public engagement events and activities.

1.1 MetroQuest

The primary public engagement tool used during the summer was an interactive software, called MetroQuest. This software was developed so that users can experiment with different types of transportation investments and development patterns and consequently view the outcomes of each decision they make. Each combination of potential actions is called a scenario. MetroQuest allows users to create multiple future scenarios and compare them to one another. The software visually illustrates the relationships between land use and transportation and depicts the impact of these choices on the region through animated maps, graphs, and charts. Variations on this software were used throughout the public engagement process: at public meetings, [on the web](#), and also in stand-alone kiosks.

With funding support from The Chicago Community Trust, this tool was developed by Vancouver-based Envision Sustainability Tools, Inc, in collaboration with CMAP over an eight-month period beginning in the spring of 2008. This software was based on local data that included the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision, current CMAP land use inventories, regional information on water and energy consumption, travel data, census data, and national research.

Built in to the tool is a "current trend," or reference, scenario that shows what would happen if the region continues in a linear fashion on the path it is presently headed in. The "current trend" scenario is depicted by the orange shape in the figure below. This scenario is a fictional scenario that assumes that there are no significant changes to the way we are building or investing in transportation, the environment and other policy areas. It serves as a comparison tool to show the impact of different choices on the future. After a user creates their own scenario it can then be compared to the current trend scenario on different performance indicators.

To create a scenario, MetroQuest begins by asking six questions on planning and policy issues and offering participants a variety of answer choices.

Development Density

Q. What type of development should the region encourage?

A. Low density growth, current patterns of growth, moderately compact growth, or highly compact growth

Development Location

Q. Where should the region encourage development of new homes and businesses?

A. Unfocused, community and metropolitan centers, or metropolitan centers

Road Network.

Q. How much should we invest in the road network?

A. Minimum maintenance, moderate increase, or significant increase

Transit System

Q. How much should we invest in the transit system?

A. Minimum maintenance, moderate increase, or significant increase

Transportation Policy

Q. Which transportation policies should we encourage?

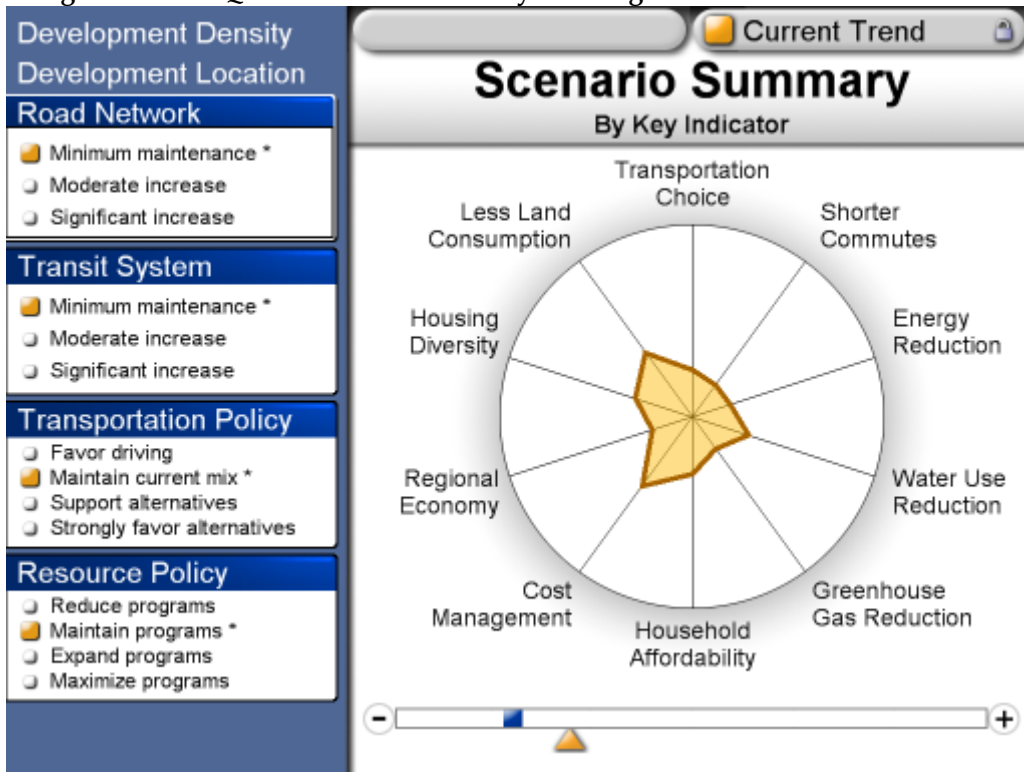
A. Favor driving, maintain current mix, support alternatives, or strongly favor alternatives

Resource Policy

Q. How much should we invest in managing energy, air quality, greenhouse gases and water?

A. Reduce programs, maintain programs, expand programs, or maximize programs

Figure 1: MetroQuest Scenario Summary showing the "Current Trend" scenario



After answering the questions, MetroQuest instantly allows users to see the impacts of their choices on ten different indicators. The closer the points on each spoke are to the outer edge of the wheel, the better each scenario has performed. Users can compare the scenario they created to the “current trend” scenario, depicted above in orange, and see how their answers have impacted the following performance indicators (also listed around the wheel above):

Housing Diversity
 Land Consumption
 Transportation Choice
 Commute Time
 Energy

Water Use
 Greenhouse Gasses
 Household Affordability
 Cost Management
 Regional Economy

The relationship between answer choices and the indicators can be explored in even greater detail than the polygon it creates. For instance, by choosing to invest in roads and transit as well as policies that support alternatives to driving, the green scenario – labeled “my scenario” – shape gets larger. In a workshop environment, the multitude of options can lead to discussions on the costs and benefits of one choice over another. To provide fodder to potential discussions, land use maps depicting land consumption or preservation are also available to explore (see below). After exploring outcomes, the newly created scenario can then be refined to achieve a desired outcome.

Figure 2 MetroQuest Scenario Summary showing the "Current Trend" vs. "My Scenario"

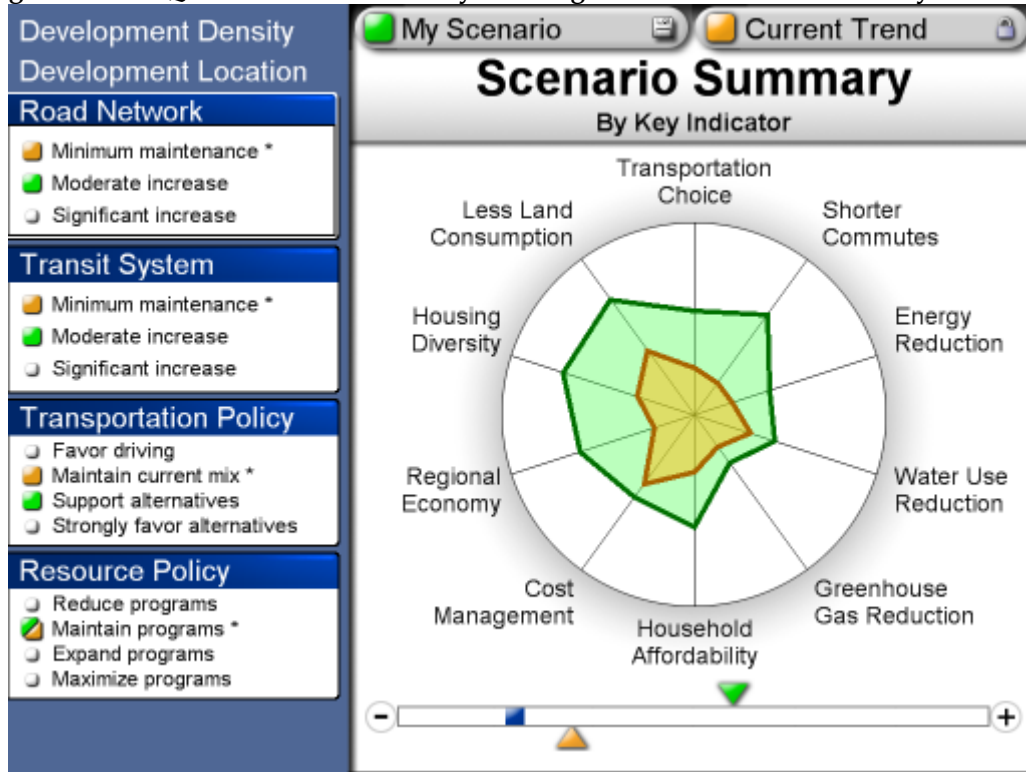
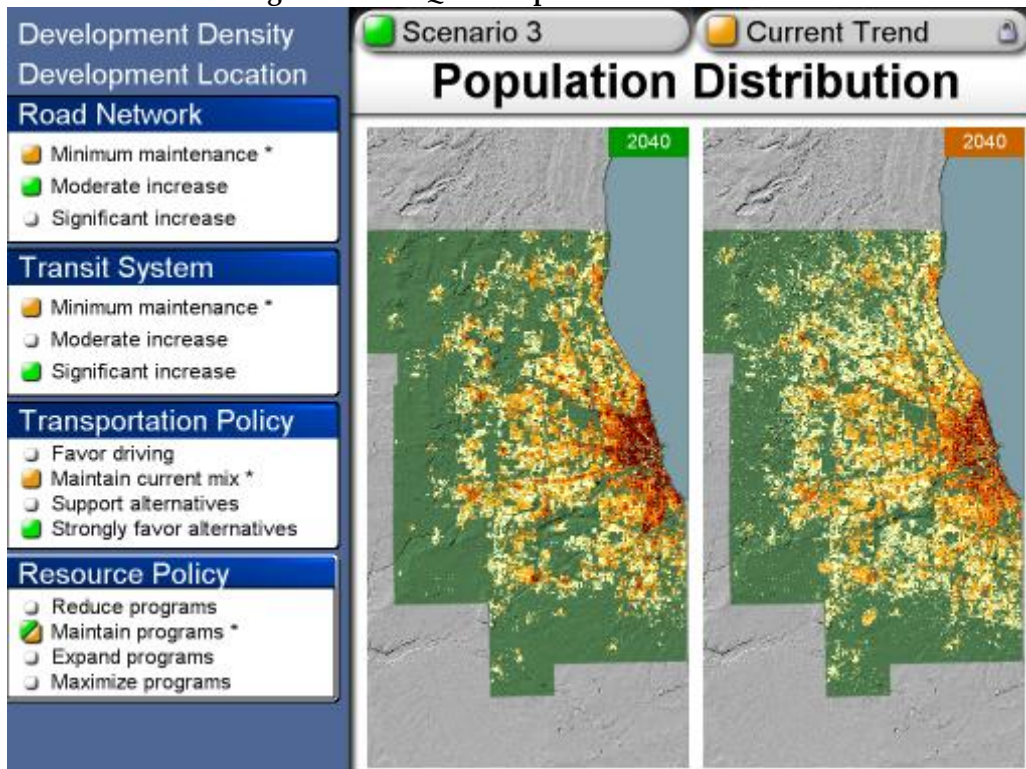


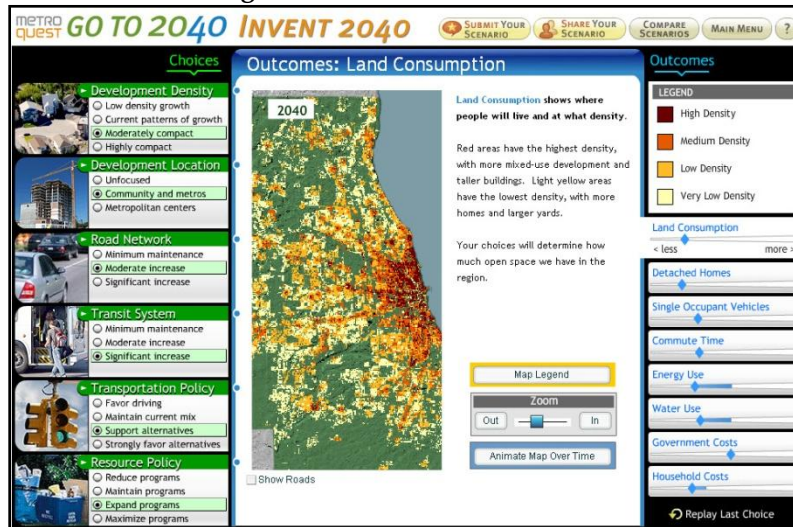
Figure 3 MetroQuest Population Distribution



1.2 Online

MetroQuest: Invent 2040

Figure 4 Invent 2040 screenshot



The online version of MetroQuest, called *Invent 2040*, has very similar functionality to the workshop software. It provides users many of the same options as the workshop version, but was designed specifically for individual non-facilitated use. Users began the online experience by answering the same six questions that were posed to workshop participants. Users were then able to explore the impacts development patterns, transportation investments, and environmental policies have on key outcomes. However, this tool had less detail than the workshop software and only included eight outcome indicators.

- Land Consumption
- Detached Homes
- Single Occupant Vehicles
- Commute Time
- Energy Use
- Water Use
- Government Costs
- Household Costs

While this version was less intensive than the workshop software, it allowed participants to explore at an individual pace. After creating and refining a scenario, users could then rate their scenario, add comments, and send it to CMAP. Users could also share their scenario with a friend or post a link to social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter. Lastly, participants could compare the scenario they created to three sample scenarios developed by CMAP.

MetroQuest: Compare 2040

After creating a scenario in the *Invent 2040* module, participants who were interested in spending even more time going into the details on alternative scenarios and different policies could do so in the *Compare 2040* module. Broadly, the three scenarios in the *Compare* module are as follows; Preserve, Reinvest, and Innovate.

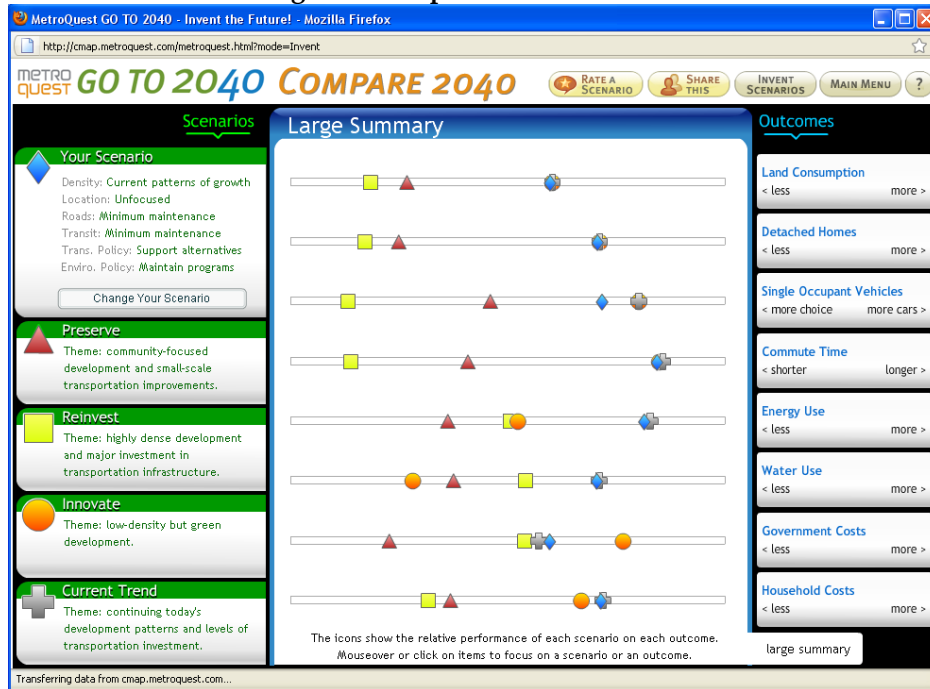
The *preserve* scenario consisted of community focused development and small-scale transportation improvements.

The *reinvest* scenario focused on highly dense development and major investment in transportation infrastructure

The *innovate* scenario is low density but used green development and innovative technologies to mitigate the human impact on the region.

The three CMAP sample scenarios were developed to invoke discussions on different policy directions *GO TO 2040* could take. The purpose of the *Compare 2040* module was to create a seamless transition for users between the scenario they created and all of the data, research, and analysis that is encapsulated in the CMAP sample scenarios. Users were able to look at the performance of each scenario individually and were also able compare them across scenarios. For example, the CMAP *Innovate* scenario helps the region conserve water but will also increase the number of cars on the road. Users could then create their own scenario that outperformed the *Innovate* scenario and submit it to CMAP.

Figure 5 Compare 2040 screenshot



1.3 Kiosk software

Figure 6 Millenium Park kiosk



To encourage broad participation in the *GO TO 2040* process, CMAP developed interactive kiosks that were installed in several locations around the region. Kiosk software drew upon the MetroQuest tool as a base for its user experience and repackaged it into a simplistic three to five minute user experience. Following a short introductory video (see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56FW_iu0Qz4&NR), the kiosks introduced participants to the idea of long-range regional planning and asked them to answer two questions concerning development patterns and transportation investment. After each video the user is then asked to make a decision about how they would plan for the future. The questions are:

- Q. How would you plan for new development?
- A. Unfocused, community focused, or metropolitan focused

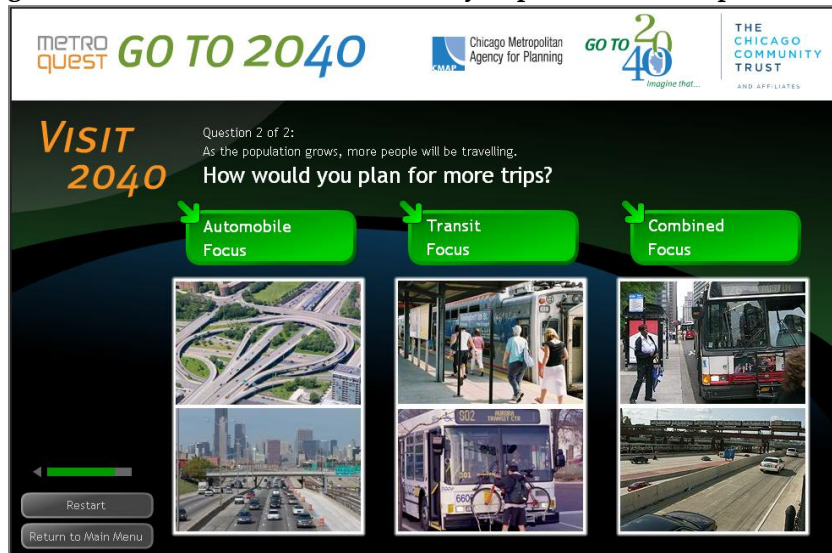
Figure 7 Kiosk screenshot "How would you plan for new development?"



Q. How would you plan for more trips?

A. Automobile focus, transit focus, or combined focus

Figure 8 Kiosk screenshot "How would you plan for more trips?"



Upon answering the questions, the kiosk played a video the results of the choices made on congestion, air quality, and fiscal health, and promoted the GO TO 2040 website as an opportunity for deeper involvement.

1.4 Fairs and Festivals: “GO TO 2040 On the Road”

As a grassroots effort to reach the public CMAP attended over 15 county fairs, street festivals, sporting events, and other public events between May 14 and September 19, 2009; a full list of these can be found in Appendix 6.3. The purpose of attending these events was to increase awareness and encourage broad participation in the GO TO 2040 process with the general public. At each, CMAP had a booth with information about GO TO 2040 and other CMAP initiatives. Many of the fairs and festivals are geared toward families and people with children, particularly the daytime activities. Recognizing the target audience, CMAP used a prize wheel to attract passersby. The prize wheel created excitement among children of all ages and compelled parents or guardians to approach the booth to learn more. While CMAP had kiosk software available on laptops, in many cases booths were not equipped with electrical outlets, as seen in the image of an outdoor booth. In place of actual kiosks, a two-question survey card was distributed to interested passersby.

These two questions were identical to the questions on the kiosk. People who filled out the form received a GO TO 2040 branded giveaway item such as a reusable tote bag, pen, seed packets (donated by GO TO 2040 Partner – Chicago Botanic Garden) post-it notes, and a map of bike trails or highways (donated by GO TO 2040 Partners RTA and IDOT).

How would you plan for new development? (Unfocused, community focused or metropolitan focused)

How would you plan for more trips? (Automobile focus, transit focus, or combined focus)



Figure 9 Booth set-up example, Matteson Festival



Figure 10 Mother and children at CMAP booth at the DuPage County Fair

In addition to collecting information on preferences, participants were also asked to provide us general demographic and geographic information such as name, gender, age, email, address, city, zip code and state. An example of the survey card used at the fairs is depicted below.

The image shows two survey cards. The left card is green and white, featuring the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning logo and the 'GO TO 40' logo. It contains two questions with multiple-choice options. The right card is white and blue, containing fields for Name, Address, Email, Gender (Male/Female), and Age.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning **GO TO 40** *Invest the Future*

How would you plan for new development? (circle one)

- a. Unfocused Development
- b. Community Focus
- c. Metropolitan Focus

How would you plan for more trips? (circle one)

- a. Automobile Focus
- b. Transit Focus
- c. Combined Focus

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Male Female

Age: _____

Figure 11 Fair and festival survey cards