

- **Promoting Chicagoland TOD: Finance, Regulations, and Engagement** (*Yonah Freemark – Metropolitan Planning Council*)

Until the 1950s, growth in Chicagoland occurred almost exclusively in areas within a reasonable walking distance of the city's rail lines. The rate of transit ridership in the City of Chicago, however, has declined from about 385 annual rides per capita to 185 today, and now just 22 percent of the region's jobs and 9 percent of its population are located within a quarter mile of rapid transit.

The Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) is implementing an innovative three-part program to encourage Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) to support the CMAP goal of doubling transit ridership by 2040. The program incorporates regulatory reform, new financial support for TOD, and improved community outreach. With participation from local governments, MPC is pushing for new zoning rules in urban and suburban settings that will reduce parking minimum requirements and increase allowed densities. With a group of non-profit financial institutions, MPC is developing a TOD fund similar to those in place in the south and west suburbs designed to fill the gap in financing for certain transit-adjacent projects. And with a series of community workshops, MPC is encouraging discussion of neighborhood-scale TOD.

This presentation will describe the ridership effects of previous TOD investments in the region, then explore MPC's process, analyzing lessons learned from outreach to public and private officials, as well as local residents. It will offer insight into developments thus far and progress on community acceptance of denser new construction. This multi-element TOD initiative provides a useful model to encourage more growth in communities near transit.