Investing in a Better Chicago

The Center for Neighborhood Technology's 2011 Mayoral and City Council Agenda for Sustainable Development

CNT

Table of Contents

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) has been a leading voice on urban sustainability for 32 years. CNT applies new ways of thinking to old problems, uses data to drive solutions, and tests strategies here in Chicago. Our work is rooted in demonstrating to communities large and small that efficient use of existing and natural resources is key to economic well-being and social equity. That premise is now at the center of policy discussions both at home and abroad. As a result, leaders inside and outside of government are increasingly turning to CNT for direction in the areas where we work: energy, natural resources, transportation and community development, and climate. For more information, go to:

www.cnt.org

Executive Summary

Chicago's next leaders have an excellent opportunity to demonstrate what the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) has long understood: that sustainable development is economic development.

Sustainable development means the efficient use of resources. Known as "productivity" in private industry, it is the hallmark of good business, whether for a 10-person firm or for the nation's third largest city. Chicago has a reputation as a sustainable city, but it has unrealized potential when it comes to increasing the productivity of its urban economy. The city is not investing enough in the assets that will make business, households and government run more cheaply and efficiently in the long term. Meanwhile, expensive inefficiencies force people to pay too much to conduct business and live their lives. The city's future leaders can do their part to support our long-term productivity by making sustainable development the guiding ethos of public decision making.

Take energy, for instance. Chicago households and businesses spend far less on utilities when we invest public resources in smarter infrastructure and energy efficiency. Conventional electricity costs 10 cents per kilowatt, while efficiency measures costs 3 cents per kilowatt saved. For all we spend on energy costs, we invest only a fraction on measures to reduce energy demand. Freeing up cash through energy efficiency retrofits is like increasing income—in other words, it's economic development.

The need for productivity-enhancing investments is also evident in Chicago's building and transportation patterns. In a time of economic challenges and declining development, city leaders should be mindful not to chase development for development's sake. Chicago needs thoughtful mixed-use development that prioritizes places where residents can live close to transit, retail, and jobs. The next mayor and City Council should use this time to plan appropriately for the city's next wave of development.

The city needs a strong public and private commitment to transit-oriented development, which integrates residential and commercial development around public transportation nodes. This commitment will create jobs, reduce household transportation costs, avoid costly municipal infrastructure, link workers to opportunities, and improve land values—in other words, it's a commitment to economic development.

CNT's policy platform for sustainable economic development focuses on four overall strategies:

- Ramp up energy conservation with efficiency retrofits of the city's buildings and other cost- and energy-saving measures.
- Improve transportation alternatives, encourage development around transit, and champion Chicago's rail assets so people and products can travel affordably.
- Strengthen benchmarks and incentives to encourage value-enhancing green infrastructure to manage stormwater and avoid costly flooding to private property.
- Reduce climate change emissions by pursuing the above strategies and implementing low-carbon, low-cost goals for municipal operations.

Chicago is at risk of falling behind other regions and cities unless it takes steps to improve its productivity as an urban area. CNT's sustainable development recommendations provide a path forward. In the next four years, Chicago's new leaders can position us to be the most productive, competitive, environmentally conscientious, livable and profitable city in America in the 21st century.

Overview of Policy Recommendations

CNT's work is rooted in the belief that sustainable development is economic development. Now more than ever, Chicago needs leaders who champion policies that create jobs, increase residents' incomes, are fiscally responsible, and protect the environment. The following 22 policy recommendations meet all of those objectives. The next Chicago mayor and city council members should:

Energy

- Continue to pursue the City's existing goal of enabling the retrofit of 65,000 housing units per year to make them more energy efficient, comfortable, and affordable for residents.
- Require property owners to disclose a building's energy use at its sale or lease, to help residents and businesses plan their energy costs and identify needed energy efficiency upgrades.
- Ensure that building inspectors continue to receive training on Chicago's energy code and that contractors comply with its requirements.
- Promote reduced electricity use during peak usage periods and supportive rate structures to help residents and businesses manage their energy use and utility bills.

Transportation Options

- Champion innovative ideas for financing the city's public transit system, such as expanding the state sales tax to currently untaxed consumer services, flexing federal highway funds to transit; introducing an oil industry franchise tax and a transit impact fee; and developing public-private partnerships.
- Secure a larger share of state and federal transportation funds for the Chicago region.
- Advocate for transit-supportive policies, such as an ordinance enabling pre-tax transit benefits for all employees in the city, expedited approvals for transit-oriented development projects, and increased car-sharing parking on city-owned land near transit stations.
- Redefine housing affordability to include transportation costs based on location, as measured by CNT's Housing + Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index, and prioritize public projects that will have the greatest impact on increasing affordability for residents.
- Ensure that users pay a higher proportion of the costs of auto-oriented services, such as roads and parking.
- Support freight rail improvements and promote cargo-oriented development—the development of vacant and underutilized land near significant freight facilities.

Stormwater Management

- Support a strong incentive program to encourage property owners to use green infrastructure to reduce the volume, velocity and pollution of stormwater runoff.
- Strengthen the city's stormwater ordinance to meet or exceed all provisions of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's proposed Watershed Management Ordinance.
- Meet or exceed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Guidelines for Stormwater Management for Federal Facilities in all city construction projects.
- Devise and carry out a long-term plan to retrofit the city's existing impervious surfaces with green infrastructure.
- Establish a payment system for stormwater services based on a property's impervious surfaces, and provide credits against the fee for properties that implement green infrastructure methods.

Climate Change

- Fully implement the Chicago Climate Action Plan to reduce global warming emissions 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Make energy efficiency the highest priority for climate action.
- Adapt to a changing climate with green infrastructure for stormwater management.
- Enable efficient transportation options that reduce household and business expenses by reducing the number of miles traveled by car in addition to fuel efficiency and low-carbon fuels.
- Create the next generation of intercity travel by encouraging alternatives to plane travel.
- Set a zero waste emissions goal for the city.
- Institute low-carbon municipal operations for Chicago by requiring agencies to develop and implement significant emissions reduction goals and low-carbon purchasing policies.

For more information on these policy recommendations, contact CNT Strategic Communications Manager Emily Robinson at erobinson@cnt.org, (773) 269-4043.

Detailed Policy Recommendations

Energy

Our buildings consume 40 percent of America's energy. Here in Chicago, energy use in buildings is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Improving the energy use of the city's buildings is a political winner: It saves residents and building owners money, preserves affordable housing, creates jobs in the recession-devastated construction industry, improves air quality, and makes the places we live and work more comfortable and more productive. Investing in energy efficiency is financially responsible. In fact, well-planned energy efficiency programs are cheaper than the energy they replace. Energy efficiency programs produce 8 to 14 jobs for every $1 million invested, compared with 2 jobs for an equivalent investment in energy generation.[1]

CNT Energy and its partners have had significant success in implementing innovative energy programs in Chicago. The Energy Savers program[2] offers a one-stop shop that helps multifamily building owners reduce energy use, retrofitting thousands of homes per year with typical energy savings of 30 percent. CNT Energy also develops tools for evaluating energy performance in commercial buildings, with a particular focus on ensuring long-term performance in LEED-certified buildings. And, CNT Energy provides program support for both the Ameren Illinois and ComEd residential hourly pricing programs, two of the largest and most successful dynamic pricing programs in the nation. With more than 20,000 Illinois households now enrolled, these programs have demonstrated that a well-designed hourly electricity pricing program can work for residential customers.

To continue with this success and maximize the benefits of energy efficiency in our building stock, the future mayor and Chicago city council members should:

Retrofit 65,000 Housing Units Per Year.

The city's landmark Chicago Climate Action Plan identifies increased building efficiency as a top priority for reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions. Meeting the Chicago climate plan goals will require the city to retrofit nearly 50 percent of its building stock. Chicago has committed to the ambitious goal of enabling the retrofit of 65,000 residential units per year, and new city leadership should continue to meet this goal. CNT strongly encourages the next mayor and council to create financing programs for energy-efficient building retrofits. Financing programs can help building owners achieve cost-effective savings without major capital outlays.

Require Building Energy Use Disclosure.

Chicago's building stock varies widely in its energy efficiency, even accounting for building type and size. Requiring building owners to disclose building energy use at sale or lease would help residents and businesses plan for energy costs and identify needed energy efficiency upgrades. Austin, Texas, and several other cities already have building energy disclosure ordinances in place that could serve as a model for a Chicago program.

Enforce the Building Energy Code.

Chicago's Energy Conservation Code is a useful tool for ensuring that new buildings in the city are built in a responsible, energy efficient manner. Codes only save energy, however, if they are enforced and contractors comply with them. Chicago should ensure that its code inspectors receive adequate training and that their inspections place appropriate emphasis on energy code enforcement. In addition, the city should ensure that contractors receive training on the energy code's requirements and know that they will be held to these standards.

Encourage Reduced Electricity Use During Peak Usage Periods and Supportive Rate Structures To Save Consumers Money.

Reducing electricity use during peak times reduces strain on our electric infrastructure, encourages energy efficiency, and saves consumers money. The next mayor should foster residential and commercial utility customer efforts to engage in demand response and actively manage their electricity use.

Detailed Policy Recommendations

Transportation Options

An estimated $385 billion in federal, state and local funds will be available for regional transportation investments over the next 30 years.[3] By helping ensure that as much of those funds as possible are invested in rail transit and freight rail, Chicago will maximize the potential for job creation, help Chicagoans lower household expenses by reducing car usage, and minimize the environmental impacts of our transportation system. The walkability of Chicago's neighborhoods and the richness of the transit network are the major reasons Chicago households avoid the exorbitant burden of transportation costs faced by residents on the outskirts of the metropolitan area.[4] Nevertheless, Chicagoans in aggregate spend $7.2 billion per year on transportation.[5] CNT research shows that what's good for households is also good for getting people back to work, because transit creates almost twice as many job-months as highway investments per billion dollars spent.[6] While the Chicago region relies on rail-based transit to move people, the nation relies on Chicago's rail freight to move goods—so freight rail improvements and cargo-oriented development must be a top economic priority.

Chicago's next mayor and City Council should:

Champion Innovative Ideas for Financing the City's Public Transit System.

Chicago's economy and city residents depend heavily on transit infrastructure that is currently projected to need nearly $10 billion in capital funding just during the new mayor's first term.[7] City leaders must do everything possible to ensure our transit infrastructure is safe and continues to expand by serving as strong advocates for new, stable sources of revenue for transit. These could include expansion of the state sales tax to currently untaxed services, such as hair cuts, legal, accounting and real estate services, home or auto repairs and dry cleaning. In expanding the tax base to include services, the state could lower the tax rate and still come out ahead financially. Under this scenario, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) portion of the sales tax would be applied to services and set aside for capital improvements. Similarly, the state could flex federal highway funds to transit as permitted by the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), institute a business or corporate franchise tax on firms in the oil industry, introduce a transit impact fee on new development, and congestion or parking fees for city buildings. City leaders should also advocate at the state level for an increased gas tax (which is a flat number instead of a percentage of gas price that has remained unchanged since 1990) to fund local transit systems and for legislation to allow for public-private-partnership projects and strategies.

Secure a Larger Share of State and Federal Transportation Funds for the Chicago Region.

The Illinois Department of Transportation has historically directed 45 percent of transportation funds to the Chicago region and 55 percent downstate, even though the Chicago metropolitan region represents 70 percent of the state population and generates 78 percent of the Illinois gross state product. Illinois and Chicago's economies have undergone fundamental changes away from goods manufacture and towards a value-added service economy. The state's transportation improvements downplay the importance of the Chicago area to Illinois' economy by not reinvesting to ensure that the Chicago economy continue to grow and diversify. CNT and others have documented the costs to households and businesses of the state's policies: high household transportation costs, growing congestion that costs businesses time when employees and delivery trucks are stuck in traffic, and less leisure time for residents with their families as they drive longer distances between home and work. If Chicago expects to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace, it needs to ensure that it receives the transportation investments necessary to guarantee such an outcome.

Advocate for Transit-Supportive Policies.

Increasing ridership requires more than just building new lines: Although 1.6 million people use the city's bus and rail system each weekday,[8] millions more continue to drive because we fail to enact policies that would make transit the cheapest and most convenient option for most trips. There are numerous policy avenues for supporting transit. First, a recently proposed local ordinance would require businesses over a certain size

to offer pre-tax transit benefits to their employees, which would encourage transit use while reducing employers' taxable payrolls. Second, expediting permit approval and reducing parking requirements[9] for transit-oriented development (TOD) projects would help create mixed housing and retail centers anchored by transit, resulting in increased ridership and an expanded local tax base. Similarly, the city and community development corporations should prioritize economic development infill projects near bus and rail stations. It is important that the City Council and next mayor establish TOD principles that are consistent across the city and not a patchwork of aldermanic preferences.

Additionally, further integrating car-sharing with the transit system can make public transportation more flexible and convenient for its users. Allocating City-owned space near transit stations for parking spaces dedicated to car-sharing vehicles and requiring TODs to include car-sharing spaces in their plans would help transit riders reach the last mile of their trips. This can include reducing parking requirements for new buildings when a car-sharing vehicle is included in the project. The City also needs to update zoning requirements and streamline the permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations and related renewable energy installations. Finally, we need transit-oriented parking policies that include phasing out free parking for City employees and a local ordinance to encourage or require businesses over a certain size to allow employees to cash out their parking benefits.

Adopt the H+T Affordability Benchmark.

The Housing+Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index, developed by CNT, shows that compact neighborhoods with robust transit service enjoy lower transportation costs because a higher percentage of people can avoid using a car for many of their daily needs.[10] By contrast, many areas with inexpensive housing costs but few transportation options have very high transportation

costs. CNT recommends that the combined cost of housing and transportation should not exceed 45 percent of area median income. Chicago's leaders should adopt that benchmark to guide development, prioritizing public investments that will have the greatest impact on increasing true affordability for current and future residents.

Ensure Users Pay More for Auto-Oriented Resources.

According to the Metropolitan Planning Council, traffic congestion costs Chicagoland commuters $7.3 billion per year in wasted hours—a cost that is projected to rise to $11.3 billion per year by 2030.[11] Yet we can't afford to keep building new roadways and highways when we don't have enough money to keep our existing infrastructure in good condition. By instituting fees for using automobile-related infrastructure, such as roadways and parking, drivers would weigh their options before adding to road congestion and deterioration. Initial steps could include allocating funding to complete a detailed study of potential congestion pricing projects, forming a working group to build a framework for implementing priority congestion pricing projects, and building support for the use of congestion/parking revenues for transit projects near congested corridors.

Support Freight Improvements and Cargo-Oriented Development.

Freight rail is vitally important for Chicago's economy as well as for future passenger rail service. Cargo-oriented developments (CODs) contain industrial and logistics businesses with excellent access to multiple modes of freight transportation, complementary businesses, and a ready workforce. Chicago's next leaders should build a larger national coalition to support the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) project, which works to relieve rail congestion in and around Chicago, secure funding to complete more of the CREATE projects,[12] and develop a priority list for next-generation improvements. To support COD, establish a revolving loan fund for predevelopment and environmental remediation costs to create a pipeline of "shovel ready" COD sites above 20 acres in size; establish a value-capture district to finance COD predevelopment costs through expected increases in industrial property values from freight investments;[13] and identify strategies to capture emerging economic development opportunities around water freight at the Port of Chicago.

Detailed Policy Recommendations

Stormwater Management

Chicago is a dense urban area with many square miles of impervious surfaces, such as streets, alleys, parking lots, sidewalks and buildings. When rain falls on these surfaces it picks up pollutants that contaminate our streams and lakes, require costly purification at water treatment facilities, and can flood businesses and homes. Climate experts predict and city staff expect that Chicago will experience more frequent and larger storms as climate change affects our weather patterns, exacerbating stormwater runoff's negative effects. Green infrastructure—a network of rain gardens, rain barrels, permeable pavement, green roofs and bioswales, among other practices—is an effective way for communities to manage and filter rain where it falls and reduce basement flooding. Green infrastructure can be cost-effective if private property owners work with the City when they make their landscaping decisions.

Green infrastructure's interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas not only alleviates water pollution and reduces flooding, but it naturally recharges aquifers, improves water quality and quantity, provides recreational opportunities, improves air quality and increases wildlife habitat. Green infrastructure strategies can also increase land values. Because green infrastructure can manage water as effectively as conventional "gray" infrastructure, while conferring many more benefits to a community, CNT promotes its widespread use throughout Chicago and other urban areas.

To increase green infrastructure use in the city, Chicago's future leaders should:

Support a Strong Incentive Program for Green Infrastructure.

Because green infrastructure is less well known than conventional stormwater infrastructure, grants, loans and other incentive programs are needed to encourage land owners to install green infrastructure on their properties. The Chicago Department of Environment and CNT are embarking on a two-year Ecostructure Incentive Program that will demonstrate how a combination of intensive engagement with residents and rebates for trees, rain gardens, native plants and rain barrels can bring measurable benefits to communities that take advantage of the program. The City's incentive program will also quantify and promote the other important ecosystem services that green infrastructure provides. Incentive programs such as this will shorten the time it takes to bring green

infrastructure use to scale across the city so that its benefits to the community and city budget can be enjoyed to the fullest extent.

Strengthen the City's Stormwater Ordinance to Meet or Exceed MWRD's Ordinance.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is in the process of adopting a Watershed Management Ordinance that will govern the stormwater management of some new development and redevelopment projects in Cook County. Some provisions of the MWRD's ordinance provide greater green infrastructure benefits than the current Chicago Stormwater Ordinance. By adopting the stronger provisions, the City would further protect and improve the quality of its waters and enjoy other benefits that green infrastructure provides.

Comply with EPA Guidelines for Stormwater Management for All City Construction Projects.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Guidelines for Stormwater Management for Federal Facilities is stronger than either the MWRD's or Chicago's stormwater ordinance. The city should follow the federal government's lead and adopt the EPA guidelines in all city construction projects. For example, EPA requires federal buildings to retain all of the most frequent storms ("95th percentile storms") on-site; the City could do the same for construction on City-owned property. By applying these federal standards to its own construction projects, the city will quickly reduce flooding risk on the City's property, help restore the natural hydrology of the area, and reap all the other benefits of green infrastructure. The City will also provide excellent examples for private developers, demonstrating how these standards can be met in dense urban areas.

Detailed Policy Recommendations

Carry Out a Long-Term Plan to Retrofit Existing Impervious Surfaces throughout the City.

The City's stormwater ordinance applies to new development and redevelopment projects, which means that it affects only a fraction of one percent of the land area in the city each year. At this rate, it will take decades for these requirements to show significant improvements in water quality and flood control. Chicago would see a more rapid improvement if the City implemented a program that gradually retrofitted existing impervious surfaces on both public and private land. This could be accomplished, for example, by identifying a number of acres of private and publicly held land required for retrofits each year. Priority should be given to those areas with the most critical water quality and flooding problems. The City should provide assistance in obtaining grants or low interest loans, or simply provide outright grants for this work.

Establish a Stormwater Service Fee Program Tied to a Property's Impervious Surfaces.

The city's stormwater projects and services are currently debt financed. Many municipalities across the country are switching to a system that provides a dedicated stream of revenue and a mechanism for reducing stormwater runoff. By charging landowners a stormwater fee based on the quantity of impervious surface, the system creates an incentive for landowners to reduce these surfaces. An important element of this system is to reward the installation of green infrastructure practices with runoff reduction credits against the stormwater fee. It also may be helpful to establish a separate stormwater utility for this program.

Climate Change

Although it is crucial for the United States to implement a federal-level strategy to improve our energy system and reduce our global warming pollution, many of the actions required to meet any national climate goal will occur at the local level. That means every community can and should do its part. Chicago has been a leader on this issue and must remain so in 2010 and beyond. The city has a comprehensive climate action plan that documents Chicago's emissions profile and lays out strategies to reduce its global warming emissions.

Cities can be the most efficient places to live, with their lower per capita greenhouse gas emissions due to efficient land use and transportation alternatives. Because urban areas are compact and have extensive mass transit and communication networks, they offer the greatest opportunities to help solve the climate crisis by expanding and enhancing their existing strategies for reducing carbon emissions. But without targeted climate action, Chicago will not meet its full potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable climate action can be a driving force behind developing Chicago's green economy, attracting investment and creating jobs. Moreover, efficiency improvements can lower the cost of living and doing business in Chicago by decreasing utility and transportation costs.

The policy recommendations in the prior energy efficiency, transportation, and stormwater management options sections are all supportive of greenhouse gas emissions reductions. CNT strongly advocates that the city's next mayor and council members:

Fully Implement the Chicago Climate Action Plan.

Chicago's leaders should actively pursue full implementation of Chicago's Climate Action Plan (CCAP). CNT led the climate change mitigation research for the CCAP, which was published in 2008. CNT created emissions inventories and forecasts for Chicago and developed a portfolio of greenhouse gas mitigation strategies that were the basis of the climate action plan. As such, CNT's policy agenda for Chicago dovetails with the plan, which sets a goal for reducing community-wide emissions in Chicago 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. These are ambitious but attainable targets that would put the city on the path toward a sustainable green economy and ensure that Chicago joins the ranks of the world's leading cities in addressing its global warming impact.

Make Energy Efficiency the Highest Priority for Climate Action.

Electricity and natural gas use accounted for 72 percent of Chicago's greenhouse gas emissions in 2005. To meet the greenhouse gas reduction goals in the CCAP, nearly 50 percent of Chicago's building stock must be

Detailed Policy Recommendations

retrofitted, new buildings must be designed to use significantly less energy, and Chicago's energy sources must become cleaner. Helping Chicagoans use less energy to cool their buildings will also provide a buffer against the health and financial impacts of the increased high heat days that may come with a changing climate in Chicago. To this end, CNT promotes the policies discussed in the Energy Efficiency section of this document.

Adapt to a Changing Climate with Green Infrastructure for Stormwater Management.

Chicago's climate has already begun to change, and climate models show Chicago could face increased high heat days in summer, atypical storm patterns, and flooding. Adopting green infrastructure policies can help Chicago reduce risk and adapt to a changing climate. Green infrastructure can also reduce greenhouse gases since less energy is needed for water pumping and treatment. The recommendations in CNT's Stormwater Management section will help our city adapt to climate change and mitigate the problem.

Enable Efficient Transportation Options that Reduce Household and Business Expenses by Reducing the Number of Miles Traveled by Car in Addition to Fuel Efficiency and Low-Carbon Fuels.

Transportation generated 20 percent of Chicago's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2005. Increasing vehicle efficiency and using lower-carbon fuels will help Chicago reduce emissions, but it will not be sufficient to meet Chicago's climate change goals. The number of vehicle miles traveled on Chicago's roads increased 3 percent from 2008 to 2009 according to the Illinois Department of Transportation. Chicago must support transportation alternatives to enable households to reduce travel costs and cut transportation emissions. Chicago can use its role as a regional leader to work to promote substantial expansion of transportation alternatives for residents, commuters, and commercial goods. Adoption of the policies discussed in the Transportation Options section of this document will help Chicago meet its climate change goals.

Create the Next Generation of Intercity Travel by Encouraging Alternatives to Plane Travel.

CNT research has shown that the use of fuel by aircrafts serving Chicago's airports may be a larger source of emissions than all on-road travel in the city. Chicago should work to support increased air carrier fuel efficiency and the use of low-carbon fuels. Just as important, the city should promote the development of alternatives for intercity travel, including high speed rail and high quality videoconferencing hubs.

Set a Zero Waste Emissions Goal for the City.

Emissions from waste disposal account for a small share of Chicago's greenhouse gas emissions—around 3 percent—however, city goal-setting can make a powerful statement to its citizens. Chicago should set a municipal target for zero waste that requires city-wide recycling and composting. San Francisco's recent mandatory composting ordinance enables renters to have access to municipal composting bins in homes and businesses where landlords may otherwise have been resistant to adoption.

Institute Low-Carbon Municipal Operations for Chicago by Requiring Agencies to Develop and Implement Significant Emissions Reduction Goals and Low-Carbon Purchasing Policies.

As members of the Chicago Climate Exchange, Chicago has worked to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with its municipal operations. The Chicago Climate Exchange is ending its program in 2010, but Chicago should continue to seek to reduce its operational emissions. Requiring each City department to develop a climate and sustainability plan with significant emissions reduction goals and low-carbon purchasing policies would allow Chicago to continue to be a leader in this arena. Examples of this type of policy can be found at the City of San Francisco and in the White House Executive Order 13514 "Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance." Part of such a plan may include, for example, an explicit and tangible commitment to reducing the size of the municipal fleet and replacing it with use of car sharing services.

Conclusion

Investing in strategies that make the city more sustainable are investments that make our economy more productive and resilient. Increasing energy conservation, improving transportation options, prioritizing development around transit nodes, and wide deployment of green infrastructure all save money, create jobs, conserve resources, and combat climate change. By implementing CNT's recommendations, the next mayor and City Council will help Chicago emerge from the current recession as home to the nation's most productive place to live and work. CNT looks forward to working with you to ensure the city reaches its full potential.

End Notes

1 American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy and CNT Energy's Energy Savers Program.
2 Learn more about the Energy Savers program at http://www.cntenergy.org/buildings/energysavers/.
3 "GO TO 2040," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), 2010.
4 "Driving: A Hard Bargain," CNT, prepared for CMAP, 2010.
5 Housing+Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index, CNT, 2010.
6 "What We Learned From the Stimulus," CNT, Smart Growth America, U.S. Public Interest Research Group, 2010.
7 "Report on RTA Capital Asset Condition Assessment," Regional Transportation Authority, 2010.
8 "Monthly Ridership Report," CTA Planning and Development Department, 2010.
9 Alternatively, parking requirements could have an opt-out option structured as a 'fee-in-lieu" rule, which allows developers to pay a fee for each avoided parking space that is lower than the construction cost of that space.
10 Access the H+T Affordability Index at http://htaindex.cnt.org/.
11 "Moving at the Speed of Congestion," Metropolitan Planning Council, 2008.
12 To date, 11 projects have been completed and another 31 are underway. "CREATE Program Overall Project Status Summary," CREATE, 2010.
13 Ideally this would be done in tandem with a state value-capture district.

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