

The transit system is the glue that holds our region together. It connects workers to jobs and all of us to the diversity and richness of the region we call home. The Chicago region has the second largest transit system in the country, a tremendous legacy to build on.

Since the first 'L' was built in 1895, our region has gone through momentous changes. Our population has increased dramatically, and the jobs and economic life have spread beyond Chicago's Loop to other parts of the region that are not as well served by transit.

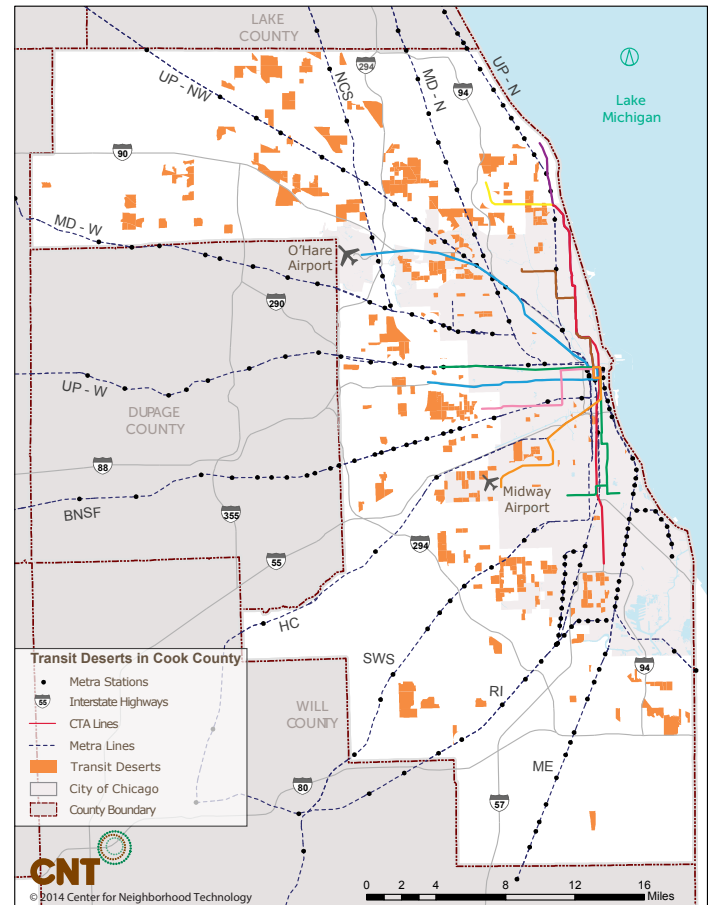
The time has come to make Cook County's transit system the high-quality connector that we all need – to find and keep jobs, to save money, and to reduce our carbon footprint. Transit Future is building a regional consensus around the need to update and expand Cook County's transit system. This is a bold vision that is essential for an efficient and connected 21st century.

**Get involved at transitfuture.org.
Support the **Transit Future** vision.¹
Join the **Transit Future** campaign.²
Together we can build the best, most efficient, and the most inclusive transit system in the United States.**

Reconnecting Transit Deserts Improves a Region's Vitality

Transit Deserts in Cook County, a 2014 report by the Center for Neighborhood Technology, showed that in many parts of Cook County, jobs and residents are disconnected from the transit system.³

The region's hub-and-spoke transit system leaves many transit deserts between the lines that radiate out from downtown. **Approximately 438,500 Cook County residents live in transit deserts.** Nearly a half-million people – roughly one-tenth of the entire population – face restricted mobility and limited access to all of the region's jobs and amenities.



The current hub-and-spoke system leaves many Cook County residents stranded in transit deserts.

1 <http://vision.transitfuture.org/>
2 <http://transitfuture.org>
3 <http://transitfuture.org/2014/07/10/transitdeserts/>

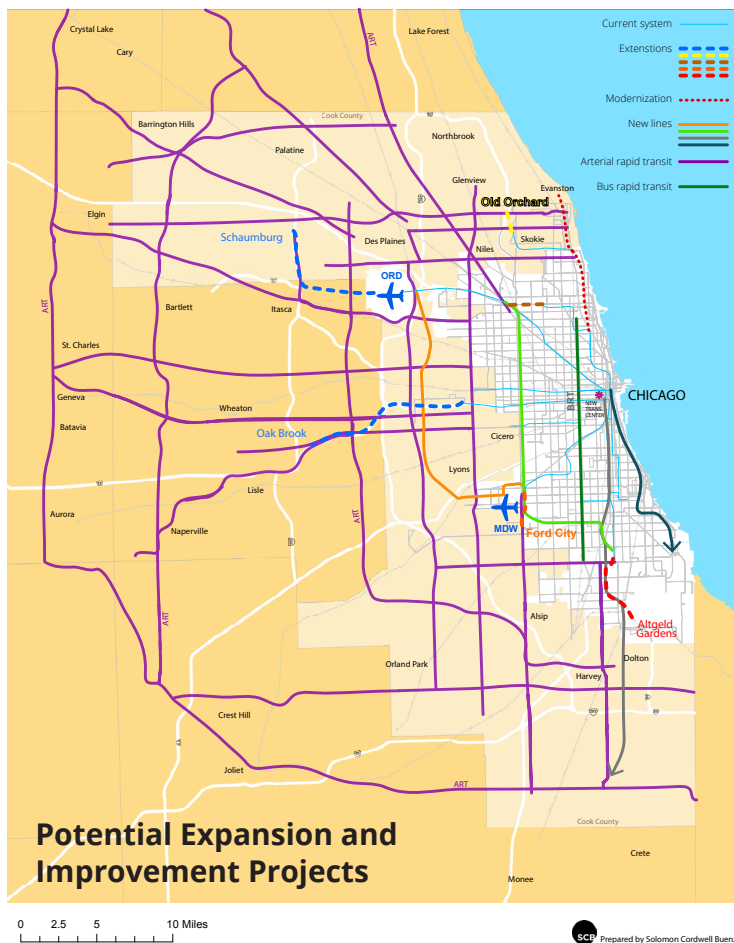
A Livable, Walkable, Transit-Centered Region

Transit Future envisions a significant expansion of the Cook County transit system that will result in the construction of more than 100 new transit stations that can become hubs of livable, walkable communities with ready access to the entire region through transit. Today, there are 145 rail rapid transit stations in Cook County; the projects advocated by Transit Future would increase that number by 83% to 265. It would also add an estimated 400 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) stops in Cook County.

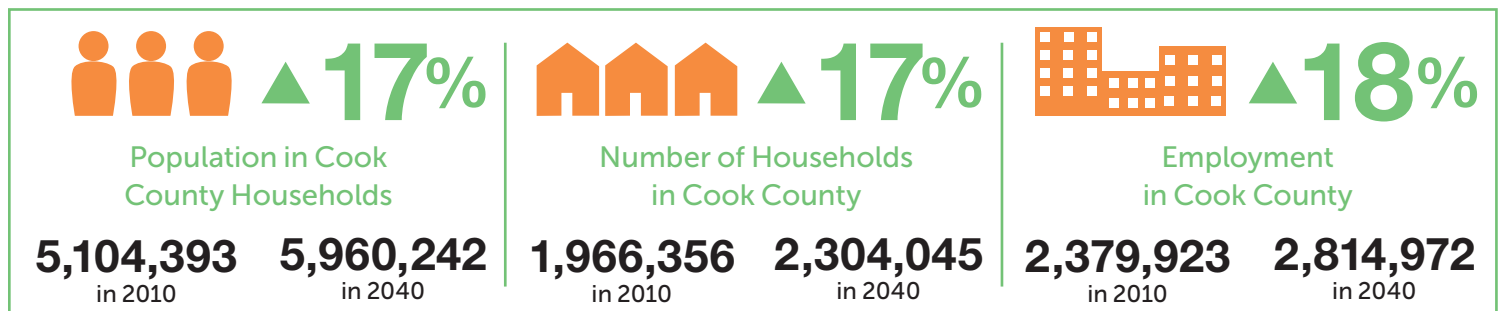
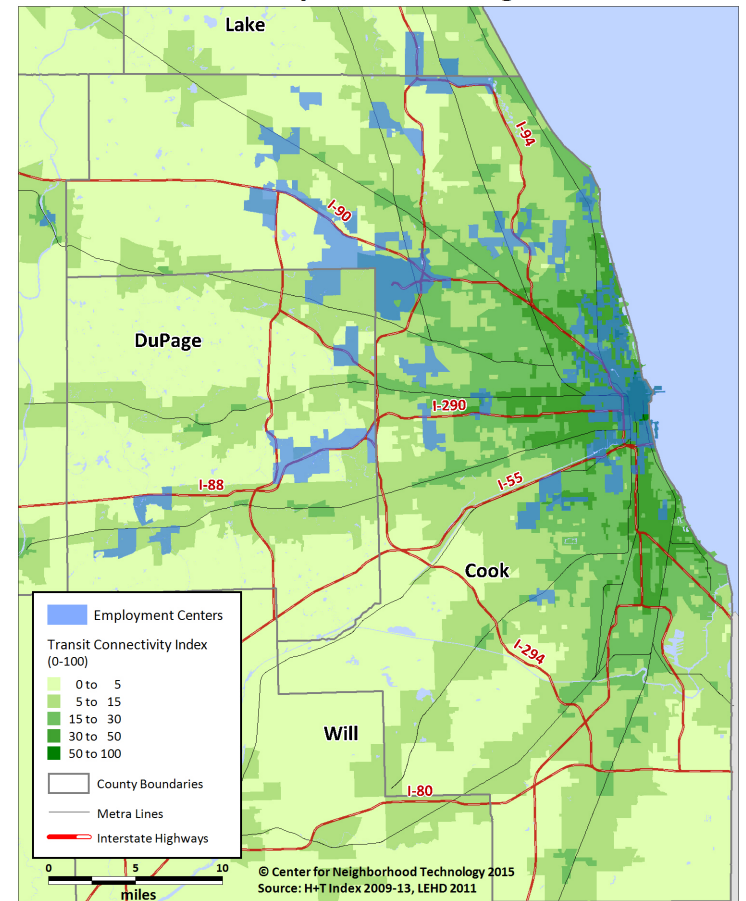
Jobs and Transit

The Chicago regional transit system developed as a hub-and-spoke system to connect Chicago neighborhood workers to jobs in the Loop. That configuration worked as long as the region's jobs remained concentrated in the center. The post-war era, however, saw the growth of the Interstate highway system and the sprawling out of both population and jobs. The Loop is still the region's largest job center, but today it represents only 55% of regional jobs. The other four major job centers, with 26% of the region's jobs, are in suburbs *largely inaccessible by rapid rail transit*: the I-90 Corridor (211,000 jobs), I-88 East Corridor (89,000 jobs), Lake-Cook Road (47,000 jobs), and the I-94 Corridor (42,000 jobs).

The current configuration of the regional transit system does a poor job of connecting residents with the existing job centers.



Transit Connectivity Index and Largest Job Centers



Currently we have a choice in shaping the future of Cook County: take the predicted path of inefficient sprawl or create a more connected county by developing around public transit.

Access to Jobs via Transit

Depending on where they live, residents of Cook County experience very different access to jobs.

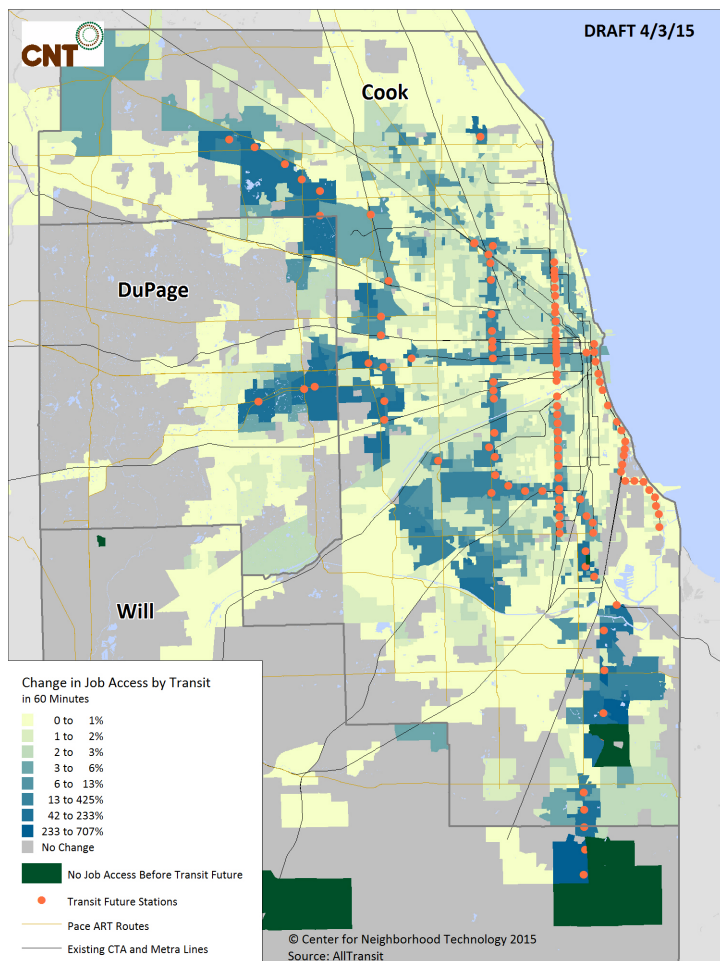
A 60-minute commute from transit-poor Altgeld Gardens on Chicago's far South Side, for example, connects with only 26% as many jobs as from transit-rich Blue Island (access to 303,567 vs. 1,174,768 jobs) in the South Suburbs.

The disparity in jobs access by transit represents a hidden opportunity tax on many Cook County residents.

The Transit Future vision increases job access throughout the region, most dramatically in places with the poorest transit access. As shown on the map to the left, the increase in job access is greatest on the periphery of Cook County where many companies have moved beyond the reach of rapid transit, specifically in the western and southern regions of Cook County.

By expanding the transit system, Cook County residents will gain access to a larger number of jobs within a 60-minute commute. Highlighted are several areas that will benefit from the vision of Transit Future (see chart below).

Residents who live near transit throughout the region will also be able to gain access to job centers, like Schaumburg and Oak Brook, that are not currently accessible via transit.



NEW STATIONS	Change in Average Jobs Accessible by Transit in 60 min.
Blue Line West Extension	
Mannheim (Hillside)	57.84%
Linden Ave (Oak Brook)	92.66%
Cermak (Downers Grove)	126.25%
Oak Brook	125.38%
York Town	92.66%
Southeast Service	
Village of Dolton	106.72%
Village of South Holland	105.03%
Village of Thornton	197.60%
Village of Glenwood	877.15%
City of Chicago Heights	19.39%
Village of South Chicago Heights	53.46%
Village of Steger	61.81%
Village of Crete	902.02%

Reducing Household Expenditures and Increasing Disposable Income

The Transit Future vision expands the potential for Cook County residents to shift from cars – an expensive, depreciating asset – to transit, which is much more economical. Some households will be able to cut back from three cars to two, or from two cars to one; others may be able to give up reliance on a car completely. Giving up a car is like giving yourself a raise. For Cook County residents, giving up one car and using transit instead can mean thousands* of dollars more in their pockets to spend on child care, groceries, and on other needs.

This expansion also benefits communities by **increasing health benefits** such as decreased traffic fatalities, increased physical activity, and **decreased greenhouse gas emissions** since subway and metro systems produces 76% fewer greenhouse gas emissions per mile than cars do.^{4,5}

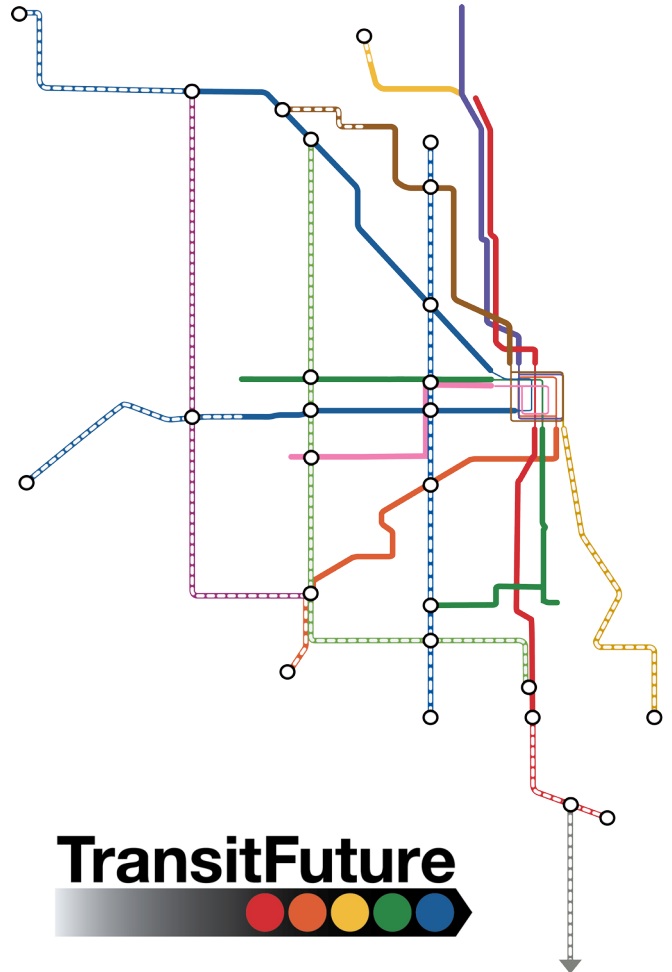
**based on an average household cost of \$4,672 per automobile per year in Cook County*



Conclusion

GO TO 2040, our regional plan developed by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, projects that by 2040 the population of the six-county region will grow by 28.6% to **over 10 million residents**.⁶ Almost half of that growth is expected to be in Cook County alone.

What will that growth look like? It can result in urban sprawl, with chronic traffic congestion, air pollution, and a large environmental footprint, or it can spark livable, walkable neighborhoods around transit stations or town centers that encourage strong local economies and connectivity to the rest of the region without a car. Transit Future can help to build this positive future for Cook County and the region.



ABOUT THE TRANSIT FUTURE CAMPAIGN

Transit Future is a campaign to build a 21st century transit system in Cook County, making the region more livable, economically competitive, and environmentally sustainable. Efficient and affordable public transit helps link people to jobs, reduces congestion, and fosters sustainable economic growth. Transit Future's mission is to build broad support in Cook County for increased, impactful, and immediate investment in an expanded regional public transportation system.

4 http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/APTA_Health_Benefits_Litman.pdf
 5 <http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/PublicTransportationsRoleInRespondingToClimateChange2010.pdf>
 6 <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/data/demographics/population-forecast>

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