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Criticism of Illiana P3 Mounts as Critical Vote Nears.

The fate of the Illiana – Illinois first P3 transportation project connecting northeastern Illinois and northwestern Indiana – could be determined Wednesday when the board the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) votes on the its long-term transportation plan for the region.

Last year, CMAP's board rejected the Illiana proposal after the agency's analysis concluded the toll road is "broadly incompatible with the overall goals and recommendations" of its comprehensive plan, known as GO TO 2040. The analysis predicted a traffic shortfall which could leave tax payers on the hook for a \$440 million to \$1.1 billion shortfall, [reported the Chicago Tribune](#).

"The project is wrong and it shouldn't be in the plan," said CMAP Chairman Gerald Bennett. "[The Illiana toll way is] a political plan that has been dropped on us by the governor."

Bennett will seek to have the road removed from the regional plan, he announced Friday.

Following the rejection by CMAP, the Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee, led by appointees of Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn (D), inserted the highway into the GO TO 2040, the metropolitan area's long-term transportation strategy.

Illinois Secretary of Transportation Erica Borrggren on Friday defended the policy committee, saying the committee weighed the merits of the project and decided to add the Illiana to the plan.

"At this stage in the regional planning process, the upcoming CMAP board and Policy Committee votes are about consistent, reliable regional decision-making, not about the Illiana," Borggren said in a statement.

Removing the Illiana from GO TO 2040 will require the vote of 12 of the CMAP board's 15 members. But the Policy Committee has the final say for transportation plans and programs for the region and could reinstate the plan during its meeting on Thursday.