



NWMC Transportation Newsletter

Table of Contents:

Elgin O'Hare Western Access Groundbreaking	1-2	Metra Schedules Budget Hearings	5
Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Update	2	Safe Routes to School Call for Projects	6
Transportation Committee Focuses on Funding	3	IDOT Seeks Input on State Bicycle Plan	6
News from the North Shore Council of Mayors	3	NACTO Urban Street Design Guide Webinar	6
News from the Northwest Council of Mayors	3	Pace Distributes Ventra Details	6
News from Other Councils of Mayors	3	MPO Approves Illiana	7
Route 53/120 Finance Committee Kicks Off	3	TMA of Lake-Cook Transportation Update Meeting	7
Mount Prospect Adopts Downtown Plan	4-5	Contacts	7

Dates to Remember

November 6	NACTO Urban Street Design Guide Webinar—2:00 p.m. (see article on page 6)
November 8	TMA of Lake-Cook Transportation Update Meeting—9:00 a.m. (see article on page 7) Baxter Healthcare, 1 Baxter Parkway, Deerfield
November 19	NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee—10:30 a.m. NWMC Offices
November 21	NWMC Transportation Committee—8:30 a.m. NWMC Offices

State and Local Leaders Break Ground on Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project

On Tuesday, Governor Pat Quinn, Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur, Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider and DuPage County Board Chairman Dan Cronin broke ground on the long-awaited Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project. The \$3.4 billion project includes 17 miles of new toll roads and 15 new or improved interchanges. The Tollway reports that the project will bring needed congestion relief, reduced travel times, new access to O'Hare International Airport and thousands of jobs for residents of the region.

The soon-to-be-reconstructed road and the new roadway that will extend east along Thorndale Avenue to O'Hare, is now designated as Illinois Route 390. The roadway will be the first all-electronic toll road in Illinois and follows the vision set by Governor Quinn's Advisory Council, which brought together local communities, businesses, regional

planning and transportation experts, labor representatives and public finance experts to reach consensus on the project.

\$3.1 billion of the \$3.4 billion projected project cost is part of the Tollway's 15-year, \$12 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*. Roughly \$70 million of the \$300 million gap will be funded through the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. The remaining funding gap still needs to be addressed.

The first phase of the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project will widen and rehabilitate Illinois Route 390, including reconfiguring the interchange at I-290 and constructing a new interchange at Illinois Route 53 (Rohlwing Road). Much of this initial work is expected to be completed by the end of 2015, including six

ramps for the new interchange at I-290. The full interchange is expected to be complete by the end of 2016. Work to extend the highway east to O'Hare Airport will be completed by 2018. In 2018, work will begin to construct a new toll road along the western edge of O'Hare International Airport that will connect the west-east roadway with the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and then north to the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90). After the project is completed in 2025, up to 120,000 vehicles per day are expected to use the roadway.

The Tollway reports that the project will save drivers \$145 million in time and fuel annually by 2040; decrease traffic by more than 16 percent during rush hour and reduce delays on local roads by 24 percent; accommodate three times as many vehicles per day as local roads now carry; reduce travel time by

(Continued on page 2)



Elgin O'Hare Western Access Continued

(Continued from page 1)

more than seven minutes for the 11-mile trip between the west side of O'Hare Airport and U.S. Route 20 – a savings of 25 percent; and relieve congestion near the existing I-290 and

Thorndale Avenue interchange, where construction of new interchanges will reduce travel times by up to 35 percent. It is expected to create or support as many as 65,000 jobs by 2040 when combined with completion of the western terminal at O'Hare International Airport.



From Left to Right: Hanover Park President Rodney Craig, NWMC Executive Director Mark Fowler, State Representative Marty Moylan, Schaumburg President Al Larson

Bike-Ped Committee Reviews Des Plaines River Trail

On October 22, the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee met to review the preliminary existing conditions report for the Des Plaines River Corridor. The consultant team leading the planning process presented the results from the public and stakeholder outreach survey. The public survey received over 300 responses that help understand trail usage, identify problem areas as well as potential solutions. Additionally, the consultant team presented the preliminary findings regarding trail conditions, surface types, widths, crossing characteristics, signage and branding. This work to catalog the existing conditions throughout the corridor will inform the identification of problem areas and potential solutions.

The planning approach will look to identify trail and crossing typologies and appropriate standard treatments. In addition, the plan will delve into difficult crossing locations where more substantial improvements may be necessary, such as trail realignment or grade separation. Furthermore, the plan will address trail amenities, such as signage, branding, restrooms and canoe launches.

The consultant team is seeking input on the preliminary findings from communities within the corridor until Friday, November 8. Please contact staff if you are interested in reviewing the preliminary existing conditions report. The Conference is working with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to coordinate the planning process with the District's Trails Master Plan, which is also currently under development.

Also at the meeting, Nancy Wagner from the Active Transportation Alliance gave a brief presentation about opportunities for bringing bike sharing to suburban communities. If you are interested in discussing how a program might be structured for your community, please contact Nancy at nancy@activetrans.org or 312-427-3325, ext. 383. *The City of Evanston* is currently pursuing the expansion of the Divvy bike sharing system implemented in the City of Chicago. The next meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee is scheduled for 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, November 19, at the NWMC offices.



Transportation Committee Focuses on Funding

The NWMC Transportation Committee met on October 24 and focused on local transit governance and adequate transportation revenue from all levels of government. Staff updated the committee on the work of the Governor's Transit Task Force Update and recommended a set of position points focused on expanding and enhancing suburban mobility options and the critical role of local government decision making in successful transit governance. The committee also approved a transportation funding statement calling on all levels of government to provide revenues to reflect the actual maintenance and operational

needs as well as strategic investment. Both recommendations will be sent to the Legislative Committee for their consideration.

The committee also concurred with a resolution passed conditionally by the NWMC Board on October 9 which supports the retrofit of existing rail tank cars that transport hazardous materials. The resolution will now be forwarded to the federal Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. The next Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 8:30 a.m. at the NWMC offices.



News from the North Shore Council of Mayors

The North Shore Council of Mayors enters federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 with a positive Surface Transportation Program (STP) balance for the first time since 2006. The North Shore Council has maintained an aggressive programming philosophy to address the region's transportation needs. FFY 2014 will be no different, as the Council is pursuing an ambitious program with six construction projects scheduled to be let in the next eleven months. These projects total over \$6.3 million in STP funding. For comparison, the North Shore Council obligated roughly \$2.3 million in FFY

2013. Additionally, communities will be pursuing right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and engineering with STP funds in order to prepare projects programmed in between FFY 2015 and 2019.

The next meeting of the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee is scheduled for December 18 at the Skokie Village Hall. The committee will review the FFY 2013 annual report and look at new projects programmed through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program.



News from the Northwest Council of Mayors

At the close of Federal Fiscal Year 2013, the Northwest Council expended over \$15 million in Surface Transportation Program (STP) projects, its largest one year expenditure in history. Long delayed projects in *Arlington Heights* (US 14 at Arthur/Davis intersection improvement) and *Rolling Meadows* (Commuter Drive reconstruction) were awarded as well as other major projects in *Mount Prospect* (Kensington Road reconstruc-

tion) and *Hoffman Estates* (Palatine Road reconstruction and Hassell Road reconstruction). There are still STP funds available to program for 2014. Please forward any project requests to staff.

The next meeting of the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee will likely be in December, with the exact date to be determined soon.

Route 53/120 Finance Committee Kicks Off

On October 21, the Illinois Route 53/120 Finance Committee held its first meeting in *Libertyville*. The committee, which includes mayors in the project corridor, transportation agencies and other local stakeholders, is tasked with determining whether the project is financially feasible and whether the Tollway should undertake the project. The committee is co-chaired by Illinois Finance Authority Executive Director Christopher Meister and Illinois Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Doug Whitley.

One of the first tasks facing the committee is how to close a substantial funding gap, since bonding from projected tolls on the road would only cover approximately \$400 million of the total cost of \$2.5 billion. At the meeting, the Elgin O'Hare Western Access project was used as an example of a project that has recently narrowed a wide funding gap through a scaled back and staged construction schedule, tolling an existing adjacent roadway, federal grants and increased local participation.

The committee will next meet in December or January when refined financial estimates and funding options will be discussed. By the end of 2014, the committee will make its recommendation to the Tollway Board. Please visit the [Tollway](#) website for additional information.

News from Other Councils of Mayors

The next McHenry County Council of Mayors meeting will be Thursday, November 21 at 2:00 p.m. at the McHenry City Hall.

Mount Prospect Adopts Downtown Implementation Plan

By *Nellie Beckner, Long Range Planner, Village of Mount Prospect*

The Village of Mount Prospect is pleased to announce the completion of the Downtown Implementation Plan, which is currently being heard by the Village Board. The planning process began in September 2011, with the Village receiving an \$80,000 Community Planning Grant from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to conduct a study of the Village's downtown and create a development plan for the area. The plan addresses a few important goals, such as improving the livability and accessibility of the downtown, enhancing the downtown's economic viability, and encouraging the establishment of new business, shoppers, and visitors to the area. It includes several components to help the Village reach these goals:

- A thorough assessment of the current state of the downtown was completed through on-site data collection and analysis
- Opportunity sites were identified and concept plans were designed, detailing examples of potential redevelopment
- Improvements to the transportation network were suggested, including the addition or redesign of pedestrian crossings where needed

The Village selected the Lakota Group as the lead consultant for the project. Working with the Village and RTA, Lakota gathered input through community open houses, focus groups, and steering committee meetings with various stakeholders. The Downtown Implementation Plan will serve as a guide for future development for the downtown area for the next 15 – 20 years and will be an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan of 2007. The plan also builds upon the Downtown TIF District Strategic Plan, the 2008 Mount Prospect Public Transportation Study, the Village's Northwest Highway Corridor Plan and Bicycle Plan.

Transportation Elements

The Village of Mount Prospect's mixed use downtown, centrally-located Metra

train station and PACE bus routes provides a great starting point to encourage alternative transportation. However, there are some challenges, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. The downtown consists of two distinct areas, divided by the Union Pacific Northwest Line and Northwest Highway (Rte 14). In addition, the downtown has a few intersections that discourage walking and biking due to their traffic counts and lengthy crossings. To address these issues, the Downtown Implementation Plan includes strategies to improve linkages to different parts of downtown and to encourage pedestrian and bicycle transportation; the plan recognizes connectivity within the downtown is vital to its success.

Crosswalk Improvements

The plan includes improved bike/pedestrian access and traffic circulation for three key intersections: Busse Avenue/Main Street, Central Avenue/Northwest Highway/Prospect Avenue, and Evergreen Avenue/Main Street/Prospect Avenue. Each of these recommended improvements results in greater public space, reduced crosswalk

distance, and generally creates a more welcoming pedestrian experience. For example, the Busse Avenue/Main Street concept includes a new landscaped median with pedestrian refuge, which would result in better connectivity across Main Street (Rte 83) and provide better access to the Village's public parking garage.

Bicycle Network

Downtown Mount Prospect gets a fair share of bicycle traffic, but additional strategies have been identified to help increase the amount of ridership and provide for safe travel. One highlight of the plan is the incorporation of a bike lane along Prospect Avenue (see graphic on page 5), which would link to existing and proposed on-street routes and provide a convenient alternative east/west route which runs parallel to Northwest Highway. This route could be considered an interim route to the NWMC's plan for a bike path located along Northwest Hwy in the Union Pacific right-of-way. In addition, the Downtown Implementation Plan discusses the importance of signing routes identified in the Village's

(Continued on page 5)



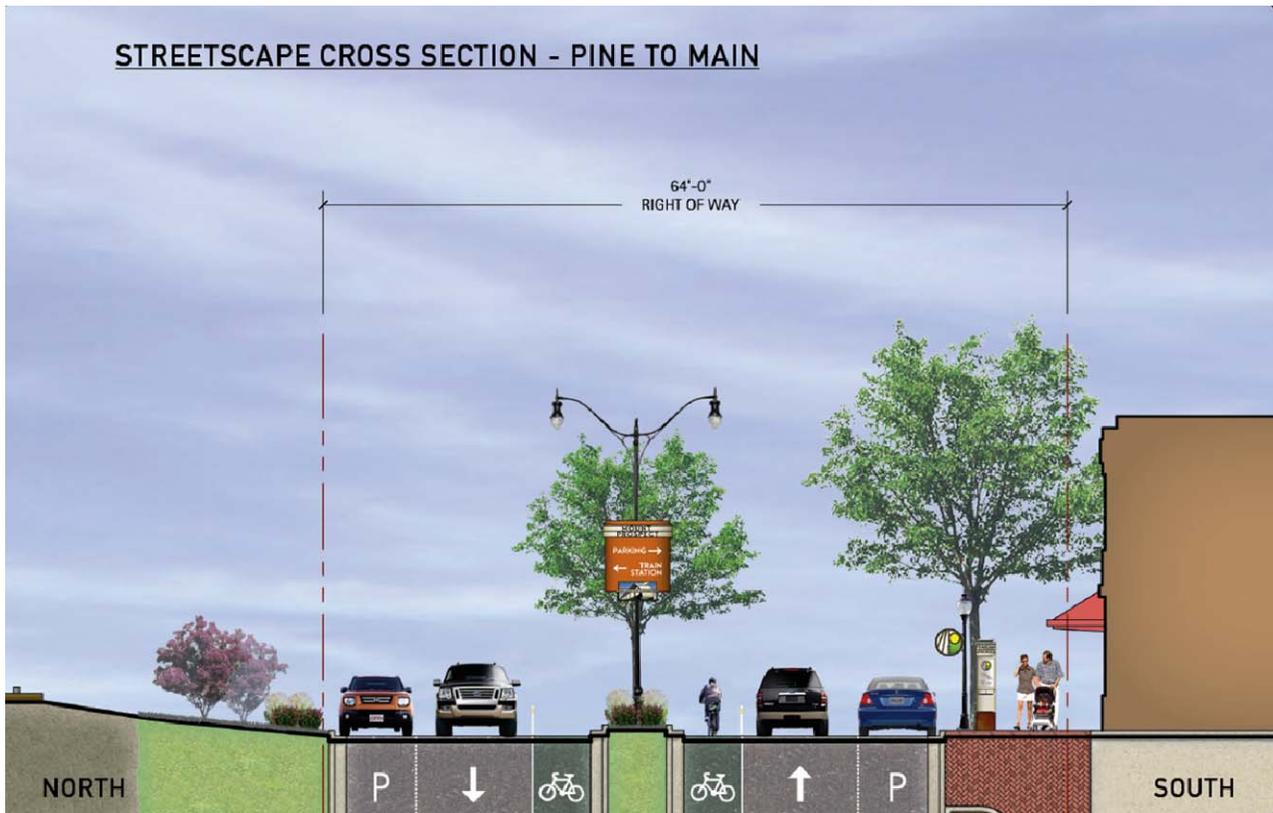
Mount Prospect Adopts Downtown Implementation Plan

(Continued from page 4)

Bicycle Plan and providing additional, convenient bike parking close to businesses and the train station.

The transportation elements in the plan are an important component toward achieving and maintaining economic success in Downtown Mount Prospect. If you would like more information about

the plan, visit the website at www.thelakotagroup.com/mountprospect, or contact Nellie Beckner, Long Range Planner, at nbeckner@mountprospect.org.



Metra Budget Hearings Scheduled

The Metra Board of Directors has released the agency's preliminary 2014 budget and 2015-2016 financial plan. The 2014 budget does not include any changes in fares while still maintaining the same level of service. Metra's total proposed budget is \$935.9 million, including \$728.6 million for operations and \$207.3 million for capital needs. The full budget can be viewed at the [Metra website](http://www.metra.com).

Budget hearings in the NWMC area will be held at:

November 6 (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
Grayslake Village Hall
Council Chambers
10 S. Seymour Ave.
Grayslake

November 6 (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
Arlington Heights Village Hall
Village Board Room
33 S. Arlington Heights Rd.
Arlington Heights

November 7 (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
Woodstock Village Hall
Council Chambers
121 W. Calhoun St.
Woodstock

Written comments may be submitted not later than 24 hours after the conclusion of the hearings on Nov. 7, 2013, via U. S. mail or online at the following physical and email addresses:

Metra Headquarters
Attn: Assistant Secretary to the Board of Directors

547 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60661
Metrarail_feedback@metrarr.com

After the public hearings, the board will vote on a final budget on Nov. 15. The budget will then be forwarded to the Regional Transportation Authority, which will vote on the region's transportation budget in December.



Safe Routes to School Call for Projects

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is responsible for oversight and implementation of the Safe Routes to School Program. On Thursday, IDOT announced a new application cycle for 2013-2014 using funding set aside from the federal Transportation Alternatives Program. IDOT is requesting candidate projects that will be initiated in state fiscal year 2014 and state fiscal year 2015.

The Safe Routes to School Program is a federally funded program with the goal of enabling and encouraging children to walk and bicycle to school. With the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), the Safe Routes program was consolidated under the Transportation Alternatives Program. This legislative change affects the federal share for local projects. While Safe Routes projects previously were funded

with 100 percent federal funding, under MAP-21, federal funding will now cover 80 percent of the project cost.

IDOT anticipates programming \$6 million (\$5 million of infrastructure and \$1 million for non-infrastructure projects) statewide. IDOT will fund infrastructure projects up to \$200,000 and non-infrastructure projects up to \$30,000.

More information and applications are available at the [IDOT website](#). The deadline to submit applications is January 31, 2014.



IDOT Seeks Input on Illinois Bike Transportation Plan

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has identified “connectivity” as a guiding theme in the development of this first statewide bicycle plan. While initial phases of the planning process focused on policy level analysis, IDOT is now seeking specific recommendations via survey regarding new regional bicycle connections and current barriers to bicycling in Illinois. Staff is coordinating with IDOT regarding the most appropriate way to incorporate findings and

recommendations from the NWMC Bicycle Plan.

To complete the survey, please visit the [Illinois Bike Plan website](#). The deadline to complete the survey is Saturday, November 9.



NACTO Urban Street Design Guide Webinar

On Wednesday, November 6, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) and The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) will provide a free webinar on the Urban Street Design Guide. Leading experts in street design who contributed to the guide's development will address how this resource will change the face of our nation's streets, the ways you can use it in your community and how specific

topics and elements in the document differ from conventional practice.

To register for the webinar, please visit the [registration page](#).

Pace Distributes Ventra Details

Pace and the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) have launched an aggressive public information campaign to educate the public about the new Ventra fare card system. While more than 3-million trips have already been taken using Ventra, Pace wants to make sure that all of its customers are aware of the new fare system and fare policy changes that will occur by December 15, 2013.

The main change to be aware of is that the 25c transfer card will be discontinued for cash paying customers. Full fares will be paid for every transfer made; therefore, by using the new payment system riders will still be able to receive the discounted transfer rate.

Pace will be out meeting with riders during the transition period that concludes December 15. In addition, Pace is looking for other opportunities and assistance in promoting the fare policy change in relation to the new Ventra payment system. Here are ways Pace is asking for your help:

- Add the following link to the fare information on your website or in an e-newsletter: <http://www.pacebus.com/sub/programs/ventra.asp>.
- Let Pace know of events occurring in your community that Pace staff can attend and pass out educational materials or discuss the fare policy change.
- Provide locations in your community where Pace can have educational materials for distribution or posters hung with new fare information.

Please email any recommendations or ideas to Karyn Romano at kromano@metrostrategiesinc.com. Pace appreciates your assistance in getting the word out.



MPO Approves Illiana Expressway

On October 17, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee approved adding the Illiana Expressway to the region's Go To 2040 Plan list of constrained transportation projects. The proposed tolled expressway would connect I-65 near Lowell, Indiana with I-55 near Wilmington in southern Will County. The 11-8 vote by the Committee, which must approve all major system expansion projects in a fiscally constrained long-range plan for the region, allows engineering on the project to move forward. IDOT will pursue a public-private partnership to build and maintain the expressway. Ultimately, moving the project to construction will depend on private interest and the structure of partnership.

Over the past month, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) staff and the CMAP Board recommended against the project, citing a potential public cost as high as \$1.1 billion, lack of regionwide traffic impacts and potential to induce sprawl through

rural farmland. IDOT and the CMAP Transportation Committee supported the project due to its potential travel savings on I-80, the potential for a Public-Private Partnership to build and maintain the road and benefits to the freight industry in Will County. IDOT expects that half of the traffic on the expressway would be trucks.

As CMAP performs a required update to the Go To 2040 Plan starting later this year, it is unclear how much of the project's cost will count against the roughly \$10 billion set aside for system expansion projects. Proponents claim that the project will largely pay for itself and no other projects will need to be removed from the plan to offset the Illiana's cost. Projects of importance to the NWMC on the current constrained list of system expansion projects include the Illinois Route 53 Extension and the Elgin O'Hare Western Access project.

TMA of Lake-Cook Transportation Update Meeting

The Transportation Management Association (TMA) of Lake-Cook will host a Transportation Update on Friday, November 8 with Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur and Illinois Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Doug Whitley. Director Lafleur will provide an update on 2013 Tollway Construction Projects such as I-90 expansion as well as the recent initiatives for the Route 53/120 project. Mr. Whitley, who also leads the Transportation for Illinois Coalition (TFIC), will discuss Illinois transportation infrastructure needs and TCIF funding proposals to address this situation. RSVP to lynn_stailey@baxter.com.

Friday November 8, 2013
9:00 a.m.
Baxter Healthcare
1 Baxter Parkway
Deerfield, IL



Contacts

Mike Walczak
NWMC Program Manager for Transportation
Northwest Council Planning Liaison
1600 East Golf Road – Suite 0700
Des Plaines, IL 60016
847-296-9200, ext. 134
mwalczak@nwmc-cog.org

Chris Staron
NWMC Program Associate for Transportation
North Shore Council Planning Liaison
1600 East Golf Road – Suite 0700
Des Plaines, IL 60016
847-296-9200, ext. 131
cstaron@nwmc-cog.org

Follow @NWMCTrans on Twitter

The NWMC Transportation Division has a Twitter feed: [@NWMCTrans](https://twitter.com/NWMCTrans).

Follow us for meeting announcements, funding opportunities, project updates and other useful information.