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Dates to Remember

- April 9** **Accessing Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects under MAP-21 Webinar - 1:00 p.m.**
(see article on page 6)
- April 15** **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Application Deadline**
(see article on page 3)
- April 16** **NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Meeting - 10:30 a.m.**
NWMC Offices
- April 17** **Economic Benefits of Walkable and Bike Friendly Communities Webinar - 2:00 p.m.**
(see article on page 6)
- April 25** **NWMC Transportation Committee Meeting - 8:30 a.m.**
NWMC Offices

Transportation Committee Discusses Transit Access and Ventra

On March 28, the NWMC Transportation Committee met and received presentations from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and Pace. RTA Local Planning and Program Project Manager Patty Mangano presented the recently released "Making Way: A Guide for Communities to Promote Pedestrian Mobility and Increase Access to Existing Transit." The guide provides municipalities with a framework for developing pedestrian access improvement plans

with a focus on small scale and low cost improvements to the pedestrian network. The RTA can assist in completing these plans and is examining funding options for implementation. More information and other Land Use and Transit-Oriented Development resources are available by visiting the [RTA website](#).

Steve Andrews from Pace provided information about the new Ventra fare payment system being implemented this

summer by Pace and the Chicago Transit Authority. Transit riders will be able to use the new Ventra Card or their existing bank-issued contactless credit or debit card to pay for transit fares. The new fare system will require seniors and other reduced fare riders to use new RTA issued cards. For more details on the new Ventra system, please visit www.ventrachicago.com.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Discusses Lease Agreements, Crosswalk Policies

On March 19, the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee met and discussed ComEd lease agreements and crosswalk policies. A number of planned NWMC regional bicycle corridors and local projects aim to utilize existing ComEd right-of-way. The committee dis-

cussed recent experiences with securing lease agreements and potential strategies to improve coordination with ComEd on the process. The committee directed staff to look for model lease agreements and contact ComEd about opportunities to provide better municip-

pal guidance through the process.

In addition, the committee discussed policies for crosswalk treatments, with a focus on those in residential neighborhoods. Crosswalks provide greater visi-

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Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Continued

(Continued from page 1)

bility to pedestrians, but marking each crosswalk may lessen the effect and cause an undue burden on municipalities. The committee discussed using established pedestrian routes and traffic generators as criteria for striping a crosswalk. The committee will conduct a

membership survey to take stock of best practices within the Conference.

Finally, staff reported that responses to the Des Plaines River Trail Corridor Plan were due on March 20. Staff will work with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to select consultants and launch this exciting planning project.



News from the North Shore Council of Mayors

On March 20, the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee met at the *Skokie Village Hall* and approved Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for the Northfield Road reconstruction project in the *Village of Northfield*. At its December meeting, the committee agreed to reconsider the project as it was not included in the proposed program from the 2012 call for projects. The committee reviewed and approved the project due to its regional and local significance as well as other justifications for inclusion in the program. The recommendation will be considered by the full North Shore Council of Mayors

at the April 10 NWMC Board meeting.

The committee also reviewed the status of projects programmed with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funding. The committee discussed new ITEP projects announced in January and CMAQ application submittals, which are currently being reviewed by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. The next meeting of the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19 at the *Skokie Village Hall*.



News from the Northwest Council of Mayors

The Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee met on Thursday, April 4 at *Arlington Heights Village Hall*. The Committee voted to recommend *Barrington President Karen Darch* as the new Technical Committee chair. If approved by the full Northwest Council at the May NWMC Board meeting, she will succeed *Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder*, who has served as chair since 2001. There is one position open for a Mayor and details on nominations for that vacancy will be sent after all new mayors are seated in May.

John Donovan of the Federal Highway Administration reported on the current federal transportation legislation, *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)*, which focuses on performance based programming and consolidation of programs.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of using the Council's STP funding for Phase I Engineering of potential CMAQ projects. Currently the Council does not fund Phase I for any projects, but new CMAQ guidelines require that Phase I be complete before a project can be funded. Staff will present a report at the next meeting on the potential impact the policy would have on the Council's program based on previous CMAQ applications.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 24 at 10:00 a.m. at the NWMC offices.

The committee approved moving two projects into the active program – *Rohlwing Road/Industrial Drive* reconstruction in *Rolling Meadows* and *Howard Street* reconstruction in *Niles*. New project applications and functional classification change requests were tabled to give the Committee more time for review.

Illinois Tollway Announces \$922 Million 2013 Capital Program

On March 11, the Illinois Tollway announced plans to invest \$922 million in capital projects in 2013, doubling the amount it spent in 2012. This year, the tollway will begin the \$2.2 billion *Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) Rebuilding and Widening* project including the \$61 million interchange at Illinois Route 47. The tollway will also begin construction of the new ramps for the \$719 million *Tri-State Tollway (I-294/I-57) Interchange Project* and break ground on the \$3.4 billion *Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project*.

Within the *Jane Addams Memorial Tollway* corridor, the tollway will invest \$415.2 million this year, including roadway reconstruction and widening between *Elgin and Rockford*. In addition, the tollway will rebuild a number of bridges in the corridor and improve interchanges at *U.S. Route 20/State Street in Rockford* and *Lee Street in Des Plaines*.

For the *Elgin O'Hare Western Access* project, the tollway will invest \$95.6 million this year to construct new bridges at *Rohlwing Road* on the *Elgin O'Hare Expressway* and at *Elmhurst Road* on *I-90*. Additionally, a new noise wall will be built along the *Elgin O'Hare Expressway* between *Irving Park Road* and *Meacham Road*.

For more detailed information about Illinois Tollway construction projects, please visit "Project by Roadway in the Construction/Planning section on the Tollway's website:

www.illinoistollway.com.



IDOT Beginning Outreach on Bicycle Plan

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), in conjunction with Alta Planning + Design's team, is developing the state's first bicycle transportation plan, which will be incorporated as part of the Long Range Transportation Plan by December 2013. IDOT has released a brief [survey](#) in order to subscribe to future updates on the plan and offer initial input, which can be completed [here](#). There will be several interactive opportunities, both online and in person, for public input on the plan.

The Illinois Bike Transportation Plan will follow the Long Range Plan's theme of Transforming Transportation for Tomorrow and will provide the Department with policies, best practices and strategic direction for implementing a sustainable, multimodal vision for Illinois.

In order to gain input from as many stakeholders as possible, the Plan will set up an advisory group with other state agencies (IDNR and others) and bicycling stakeholders such as the League of Illinois Bicyclists, the Illinois Greenways and Trails Council, and state Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

Some of the issues that will be addressed in the plan include: a statewide

and regional analysis of the current accommodations, policies, and planning documents for bicycling in Illinois; an evaluation of IDOT's implementation of the state's Complete Streets policy and other bicycling-related statutes; and, a review of national bicycling trends and best practices and their applicability in the Illinois transportation context. Based on the existing conditions analysis, plan recommendations will be made that include the following:

- Bicycling related planning and policy recommendations;
- Bikeway safety, design and maintenance recommendations;
- Regional-scale bikeway network recommendations;
- Bikeway network implementation and prioritization recommendations;
- State bicycling performance measures;
- Education, outreach and enforcement recommendations; and,
- Funding recommendations.

The final plan will serve as a bike improvements policy document as well as an action plan with specific recommendations.



Highway Safety Improvement Program Applications Due Soon

Applications are due on April 15 for the FY 2014 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Funding will be available in July 2013 and projects are funded at 90 percent federal to 10 percent local split. HSIP funds are federal safety funds designated to address locations with a history of severe injuries and fatalities. Specific site or system-wide improvements that reduce severe crashes are eligible for funding.

Funds may be used to address safety issues independently without completely reconstructing entire roadway segments or intersections to all of the latest policies and standards.

All phases of a safety improvement pro-

ject are eligible for this program to include preliminary engineering, land acquisition, construction and construction engineering.

Applications can be found at [here](#).

Grade Crossing Safety Program Announced

The Illinois Commerce Commission has approved the FY2014-2018 Crossing Safety Improvement Program 5-Year Plan. The \$200 million in projects are funded by the Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF). In the NWMC region, two Lake County Department of Transportation projects are in the program. The Rollins Road grade separation in Round Lake Beach is funded in 2014, while the Washington Street grade separation in Grayslake is under consideration for funding in 2015-2018.

The program is specifically for crossings that are under local, not state jurisdiction. Applications for new projects are always accepted and will be considered in during the next program cycle, typically in January.

Eligible projects include:

- Warning device upgrades;
- Grade separations (new and reconstructed);
- Grade separation vertical clearance improvements;
- Pedestrian grade separations;
- Signal interconnects;
- Highway approaches;
- Connecting roads;
- Remote monitoring devices;
- Crossing closures; and,
- Crossing surface renewals.

The GCPF covers up to 60 percent of a grade separation project and 85 percent to 95 percent of a grade crossing improvement, with the cap for funding at \$12 million.

The new program and applications can be found at the [ICC's website](#).



ASCE Releases Latest Report Card for American's Infrastructure

Once every four years, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) provides a comprehensive assessment of the nation's major infrastructure categories in ASCE's *Report Card for America's Infrastructure*. The Report Card provides a comprehensive assessment of current infrastructure conditions and needs, both assigning grades (A through F) and making recommendations for how to raise the grades. An Advisory Council of ASCE members assigns the grades according to the following eight criteria: capacity, condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, resilience and innovation. Since 1998, the grades have been near failing, averaging only Ds, due to delayed maintenance and underinvestment across most categories.

America's cumulative GPA for infrastructure rose slightly to a D+. The 2009 Report Card gave the nation's infrastructure a D. In regards to transportation, roads and bridges saw incremental improvements, and rail jumped from a C- to a C+. No categories saw a decline in grade this year. The Report Card credits increased investment for causing the improvement in infrastructure grades.

The following is a summary of the grades given to transportation infrastructure taken from the report's [Executive Summary](#):

Aviation: Despite the effects of the recent recession, commercial flights were about 33 million higher in number in 2011 than in 2000, stretching the system's ability to meet the needs of the nation's economy. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) estimates that the national cost of airport congestion and delays was almost \$22 billion in 2012. If current federal funding levels are maintained, the FAA anticipates that the cost of congestion and delays to the economy will rise from \$34 billion in 2020 to \$63 billion by 2040. Aviation again earned a D.

Bridges: Over two hundred million trips are taken daily across deficient bridges in the nation's 102 largest metropolitan regions. In total, one in nine of the nation's bridges are rated as structurally

deficient, while the average age of the nation's 607,380 bridges is currently 42 years. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that to eliminate the nation's bridge backlog by 2028, the country would need to invest \$20.5 billion annually, while only \$12.8 billion is being spent currently. The challenge for federal, state and local governments is to increase bridge investments by \$8 billion annually to address the identified \$76 billion in needs for deficient bridges across the United States. However, with the overall number of structurally deficient bridges continuing to trend downward, the grade improved to C+.

Inland Waterways: Our nation's inland waterways and rivers are the hidden backbone of our freight network – they carry the equivalent of about 51 million truck trips each year. In many cases, the inland waterways system has not been updated since the 1950s, and more than half of the locks are over 50 years old. Barges are stopped for hours each day with unscheduled delays, preventing goods from getting to market and driving up costs. There is an average of 52 service interruptions a day throughout the system. Projects to repair and replace aging locks and dredge channels take decades to approve and complete, exacerbating the problem further. Inland waterways received a D- grade once again as conditions remain poor and investment levels remain stagnant.

Ports: This new category for 2013 debuted with a grade of C. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that more than 95% (by volume) of overseas trade produced or consumed by the United States moves through our ports. To sustain and serve a growing economy and compete internationally, our nation's ports need to be maintained, modernized and expanded. While port authorities and their private sector partners have planned over \$46 billion in capital improvements from now until 2016, federal funding has declined for navigable waterways and landside freight connections needed to move goods to and from the ports.

Rail: Railroads are experiencing a competitive resurgence as both an energy-

efficient freight transportation option and a viable city-to-city passenger service. In 2012, Amtrak recorded its highest year of ridership with 31.2 million passengers, almost doubling ridership since 2000, with growth anticipated to continue. Both freight and passenger rail have been investing heavily in their tracks, bridges, and tunnels as well as adding new capacity for freight and passengers. In 2010 alone, freight railroads renewed the rails on more than 3,100 miles of railroad track, equivalent to going coast to coast. Since 2009, capital investment from both freight and passenger railroads has exceeded \$75 billion, actually increasing investment during the recession when materials prices were lower and trains ran less frequently. With high ridership and greater investment in the system, the grade for rail saw the largest improvement, moving up from a C- in 2009 to a C+ in 2013.

Roads: Targeted efforts to improve conditions and significant reductions in highway fatalities resulted in a slight improvement in the roads grade to a D this year; however, ASCE reports that forty-two percent of America's major urban highways remain congested, costing the economy an estimated \$101 billion in wasted time and fuel annually. While the conditions have improved in the near term, and federal, state and local capital investments increased to \$91 billion annually, that level of investment is insufficient and still projected to result in a decline in conditions and performance in the long term. Currently, the Federal Highway Administration estimates that \$170 billion in capital investment would be needed on an annual basis to significantly improve conditions and performance.

Transit: The grade for transit remained at a D as transit agencies struggled to balance increasing ridership with declining funding. America's public transit infrastructure plays a vital role in our economy by connecting millions of people with jobs, medical facilities, schools, shopping and recreation. It is critical to the one-third of Americans who do not

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CTA Route Adjustments Affect NWMC Communities

At the beginning of this week, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) instituted a number of changes on bus routes. The CTA is reducing or discontinuing service on nine routes ([RedEye](#)). Three of those routes affect NWMC communities.

For the [#54A North Cicero/Skokie Blvd.](#) bus, southbound weekday morning service will operate between 6:30 a.m. and 9:37 a.m. instead of 6:00 a.m. to 10:05 a.m. (times departing Skokie Court House). The last southbound weekday evening trip will leave the Skokie Court House earlier, at 6:16 p.m. instead of 7:02 p.m. The last weekday morning northbound trip will leave the Irving Park Blue Line station earlier, at 9:40 a.m. instead of 10:53 a.m. The last weekday evening northbound trip will leave earlier, at 5:45 p.m. instead of 7:14 p.m. The CTA reports that the change in service hours is being made to

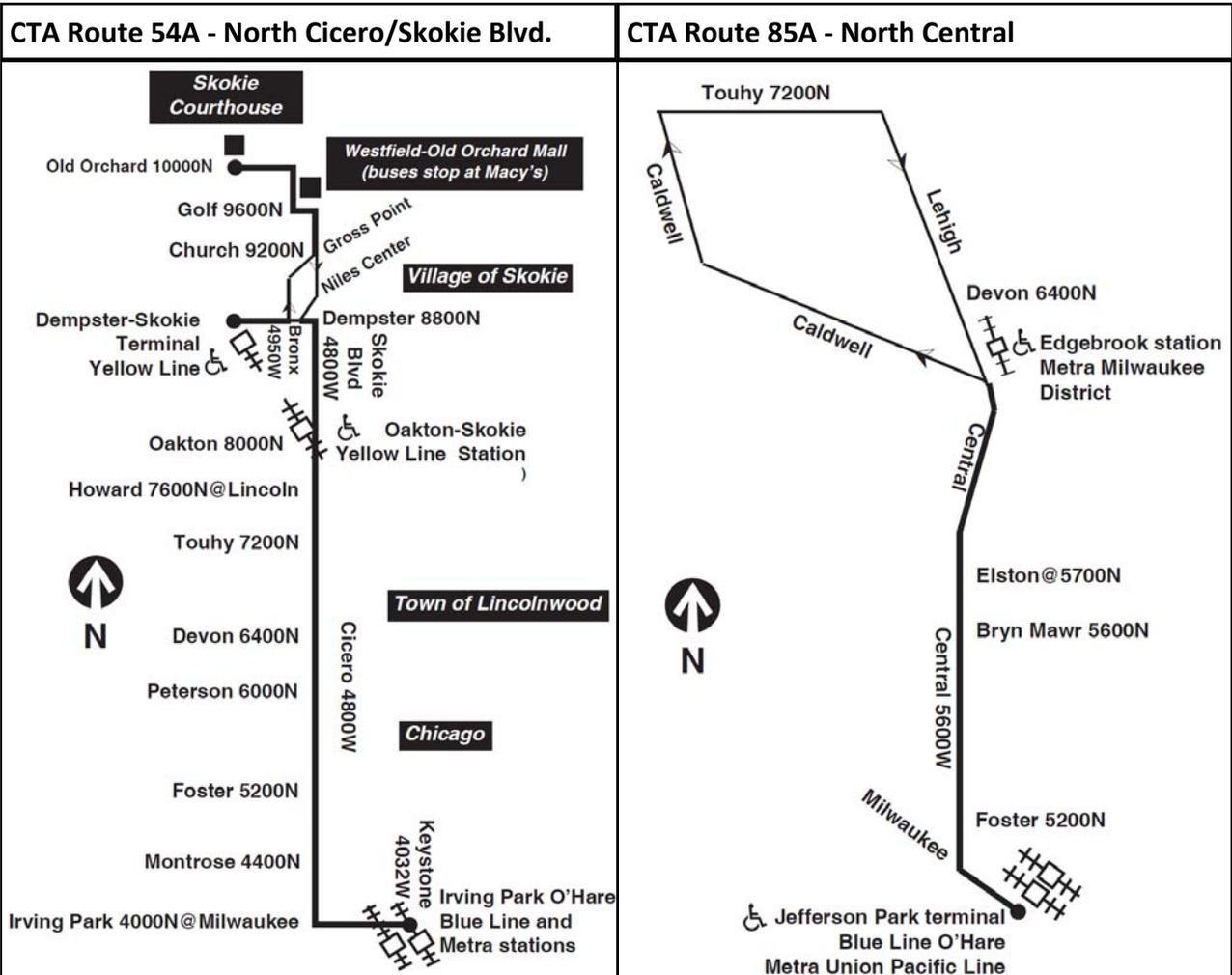
match demand and ridership patterns.

For the [#85A North Central](#) bus, on weekdays, morning rush period service operating every twenty minutes will end earlier, at approximately 8:04 a.m. instead of 9:52 a.m. Evening rush period twenty-minute service will begin later, at 2:56 p.m. instead of 2:22 p.m., and will end at approximately 7:00 p.m. instead of 7:02 p.m. All times are departing the Jefferson Park Blue station northbound. Service will continue to operate every thirty minutes during all other times of the day, as it currently does. The last weekday trip will leave earlier, departing the Jefferson Park Blue Line station northbound at 9:00 p.m. instead of 10:30 p.m., and departing Touhy/Lehigh southbound at 9:14 p.m. instead of 10:44 p.m. CTA reports that the change in service hours and frequency are being changed to match

demand and ridership patterns.

For the [#88 Higgins](#) bus, on weekdays, morning rush period service operating every twenty minutes will end earlier, at 8:00 a.m. instead of 8:46 a.m. Evening rush period twenty-minute service will begin later, at 2:09 p.m. instead of 1:45 p.m., and will end earlier, at 6:50 p.m. instead of 8:45 p.m. All times are departing the Jefferson Park Blue station westbound. Service will continue to operate every 30 minutes during all other times of the day, as it currently does. On weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays/holidays, the last northbound trip will leave the Jefferson Park Blue Line station earlier, at 10:15 p.m. instead of 10:45 p.m. The last southbound trip will leave Devon/Canfield earlier, departing on weekdays and Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. and on

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CTA Route Adjustments Continued

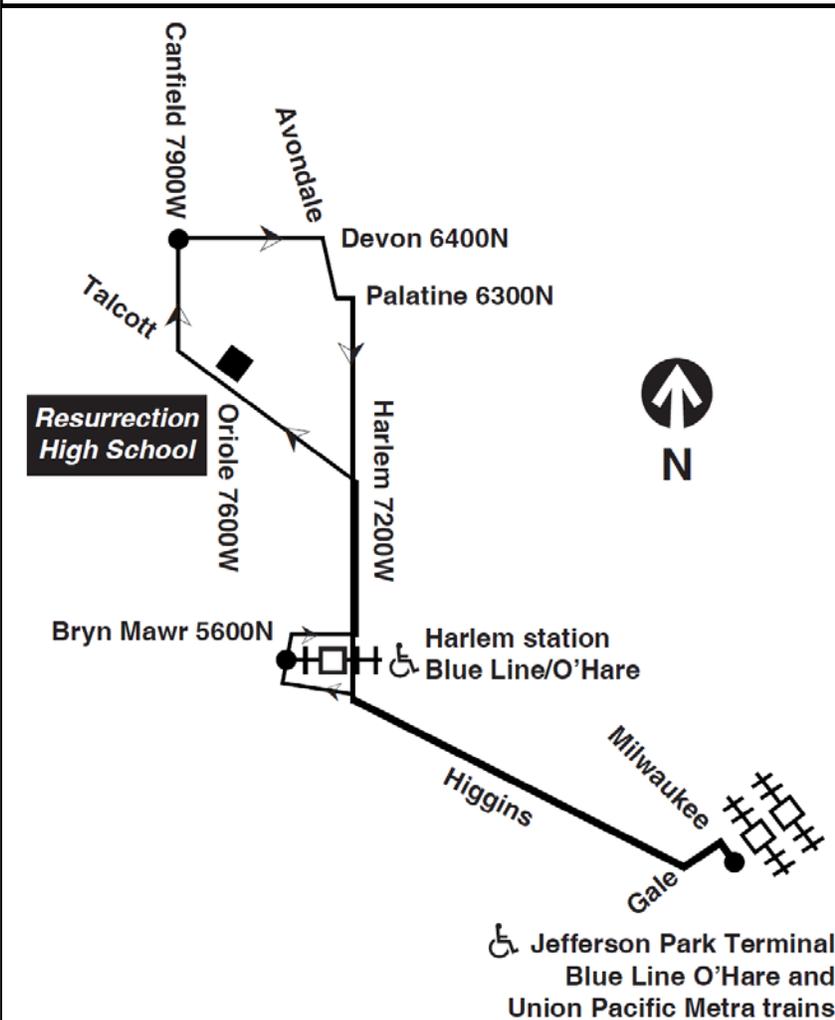
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Sundays/holidays at 10:25 p.m., instead of 11:00 p.m. The CTA reports that the change in service hours and frequency are being changed to match demand

and ridership patterns.

For more information on the schedule changes and to see all the effected routes, please visit the [CTA website](#).

CTA Route 88 - Higgins



ASCE Infrastructure Report Card Continued

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drive cars. Unlike many U.S. infrastructure systems, the transit system is not comprehensive, as 45 percent of American households lack any access to transit, and millions more have inadequate service levels. Americans who do have access have increased their ridership 9.1% in the past decade, and that trend is expected to continue. Although investment in transit has also increased,

deficient and deteriorating transit systems cost the U.S. economy \$90 billion in 2010. Many transit agencies are struggling to maintain aging and obsolete fleets and facilities amid an economic downturn that has reduced their funding and forced service cuts and fare increases.

To view the full report, please visit the [Report Card website](#).

Bicycle and Pedestrian Training Opportunities

Webinar to Explain Funding Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects under MAP-21

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) has partnered with the League of American Bicyclists for its next free webinar in its Livable Communities Webinar Series. The webinar is entitled *Accessing Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)* surface transportation authorization.

The presentation is intended to help pedestrian and bicycle officials learn how to use MAP-21 funding programs at the state and local levels. The presentation will discuss ways to access untapped or underutilized federal funding sources to build bicycling and walking projects, as well as how to leverage the new Transportation Alternatives program.

The webinar will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 9. To register, please visit [here](#). To register for upcoming webinars and to access archived presentations, please visit www.walkinginfo.org/webinars.

Economic Benefits of Walkable and Bike Friendly Communities Webinar

The Association for Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) will hold a webinar on Wednesday, March 20 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. entitled *Economic Benefits of Walkable and Bike Friendly Communities*. This webinar will present case studies on how economic vitality can be restored in historic downtowns, big cities and rural communities through improved walk and bike ability.

APBP will provide an attendance certificate to those who document their professional development hours; each 60-minute webinar provides one hour of training (.1 CEU). APBP applies to the AICP in order to obtain Certification Maintenance credit for each webinar.

A webinar site license costs \$85 (\$50 for APBP members). Member discounts for five or more webinars are available. To register, please visit [here](#). To view the full 2013 webinar schedule, please visit the [APBP website](#).



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