

NORTH SHORE COUNCIL OF MAYORS ANNUAL REPORT

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2008
(OCTOBER 1, 2007 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2008)



Concrete base course placement
on Sheridan Road in Wilmette

Executive Summary

Introduction

The North Shore Council of Mayors, which is housed within the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC), is a cooperative body focused upon programming federal transportation funding for local road, transit, and bicycle facilities. Primarily, the North Shore Council programs federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds to improve transportation facilities. The North Shore Council is one of eleven suburban subregional councils in the Chicago Metropolitan Region. Mayor George Van Dusen of Skokie and President Kerry Cummings of Glenview serve as the co-chairs for the North Shore Council and represent the council on the CMAP Council of Mayors Executive Committee.

STP Program

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008, the North Shore Council utilized \$843,970 in STP funds. This was a large drop from the \$10,801,496 that the Council spent in FFY 2007. In fact, the FFY 2007 created a large negative balance for the Council. Consequently, the negative balance forced the Council to seek advanced funding for any programmed projects ready to proceed. The North Shore Council seized on a regional opportunity in order to secure advanced funding for projects. The suburban council STP has a sizeable unobligated balance that is at risk of rescission at the end of FFY 2009 (September 2009). Seizing the opportunity, the North Shore Council sought advanced funding, and consequently, no North Shore Council projects have been delayed due to lack of federal funding.

CMAQ Program

Two Glenview projects received federal funding under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program for federal fiscal year 2008. The Chicago Metro-

politan Agency for Planning programs the CMAQ funds, but NWMC staff is available to assist with the application process. CMAQ funding traditionally requires a 20% local match. The call for projects occurs during the beginning of December.

Regional Transportation Issues

While the North Shore Council focuses on utilizing STP funding, the Northwest Municipal Conference Transportation Committee traditionally addresses regional transportation issues. Among these issues is the Conference's continued support for the Metra STAR Line. In addition, the NWMC staff is assisting communities in the planning of a bike and pedestrian path along an old Union Pacific rail line, which covers multiple North Shore communities.

A funding crisis that threatened service for the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) loomed over the first months of FFY 2008. Ultimately, the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed House Bill 656. The bill included operational funding (sales tax increase), institutes important management and fiscal reforms at the RTA along with the CTA, Metra, and Pace. The law also contains a plan to reform and improve the CTA pension retiree health care system.

While the RTA funding crisis dominated the first half of FFY 2008, proposals for a capital program dominated the second half of the FFY. The proposed "Illinois Works" program failed to attract broad support and ultimately died in the regular session of the General Assembly. The NWMC remains committed to the passage of a comprehensive and accountable capital program in Illinois.

Another hot topic that emerged in November 2007 was the proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern (EJ&E) railroad by the

Canadian National (CN) railroad. The proposed purchase concerns the NWMC because of its potential impacts to the STAR Line and local communities along both the EJ&E and CN routes. NWMC staff has closely monitored the proposed acquisition in order to present members with informed information about the process and opportunities to comment.

Looking to the Future

The next FFY present a number of opportunities and challenges for the North Shore Council. Despite a negative program balance, the North Shore Council will continue to aggressively seek advanced funding opportunities. With the end of SAFETEA-LU in September 2009, the future of the federal role in surface transportation is unclear. The NWMC staff will monitor the reauthorization process while continuing to work with members to accomplish projects with available funding.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is preparing the "Go to 2040" Regional Comprehensive Plan. CMAP will complete the plan in the fall of 2010. NWMC staff will continue to engage in the planning process and encourage our members to engage in the process and provide input.

The NWMC will continue to advocate for the transportation priorities of the Conference.

Table of Contents:

Introduction	3
North Shore Surface Transportation Program	4-5
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)	6
Regional Transportation Issues	6-7
Looking to the Future	8

Introduction

The North Shore Council of Mayors is a cooperative body focused upon programming federal transportation funding for local road, transit, and bicycle facility projects. The North Shore Council consists of twelve member municipalities: Evanston, Glencoe, Glenview, Golf, Kenilworth, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Northbrook, Northfield, Skokie, Wilmette, and Winnetka. Primarily, the North Shore Council of Mayors programs federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds to improve transportation facilities. On August 10, 2005 President Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act

– A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which is the current federal transportation legislation. SAFETEA-LU provides federal funding, guidelines and requirements for all transportation projects seeking federal funding. The STP is one of the programs outlined in SAFETEA-LU.

The STP provides funding to the state departments of transportation. In Illinois a portion of this funding is designated by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for the Chicago metropolitan region. The North Shore Council is one of eleven suburban subregional councils in the Chicago metropolitan region. Subur-

ban Cook County accounts for six councils, and there is one council for each of the five collar counties. Each council is responsible for programming an annual allocation of STP funds. The STP allocations are split between the suburban Council of Mayors system and the City of Chicago. The suburban allocations are based on population within a council area. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Council of Mayors Executive Committee approves the STP funding allocations. Mayor George Van Dusen of Skokie and President Kerry Cummings of Glenview serve as the co-chairs for the North Shore Council and represent the council on the CMAP Council of Mayors Executive Committee.



The North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee is the working body of the North Shore Council. Fred Schattner, Director of Engineering in the Village of Skokie, continued to serve as the chair of the committee. Each North Shore Council municipality has a representative on the Technical Committee. Recommendations from the Technical Committee are sent to the North Shore Council via the Northwest Municipal Conference's monthly board meeting. In this manner, the presidents/mayors of the North Shore Council remain the final step in the council approval process, while avoiding the need for additional meetings.

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North Shore Surface Transportation Program (STP)

Table 1 shows that the North Shore Council of Mayors utilized \$843,970 in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2008. Austin

plans to obligate more funding in FFY 09, which will increase the Council's negative balance. The North Shore Program was approved by the Technical Commit-

tee in September and the full Council in October 2008. The North Shore Council has programmed two projects for construction in FFY 09. Golf Rd. at Skokie Blvd. is a major intersection improvement project that anticipates a March letting. Lake Ave. is a resurfacing project in Evanston.

federal transportation legislation is set to expire at the end of FFY 09. Unless Congress changes the law, a final rescission could take back substantial unobligated balances

Table 1: North Shore Expenditures in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008

Project	Sponsor	TIP Number	Phase	Total Cost	STP Funding
Shermer Road	Morton Grove	02-01-0016	ENG II	\$ 44,455	\$ 31,780
Austin Avenue	Morton Grove	02-01-0117	ENG II	\$ 26,780	\$ 18,746
Austin Avenue	Morton Grove	02-01-0117	ENG III and Resurfacing	\$ 884,791	\$ 619,354
Golf/Skokie	Skokie	02-99-0102	ROW	\$ 248,700	\$ 174,090
TOTAL				\$1,204,726	\$ 843,970

Avenue in Morton Grove was the only project that went to construction. The North Shore Council programmed over \$4 million in FFY 08, but a number of projects were delayed and moved into later fiscal years. Because the North Shore Council obligated over \$10 million in FFY 07, the Council has

tee in September and the full Council in October 2008. The North Shore Council has programmed two projects for construction in FFY 09. Golf Rd. at Skokie Blvd. is a major intersection improvement project that anticipates a March letting. Lake Ave. is a resurfacing project in Evanston.

from all program (including STP). The suburban councils' STP is one program with unobligated balances. Consequently, the CMAP Council of Mayors Executive Committee has taken an aggressive stance in spending down the suburban STP unobligated balance. Because of the aggressive stance,

Table 2: Projects Securing Advanced Funding in FFY 2008

Project	Sponsor	TIP Number	Phase	STP Funding
Golf/Skokie	Skokie	02-99-0102	ROW	\$ 179,220
Greenwood/Glenview Road	Glenview	02-05-0004	ROW	\$ 168,000
Greenwood/Glenview Road	Glenview	02-05-0004	ENG II	\$ 100,940
Church/Crawford Intersection	Skokie	02-99-0103	ENG II	\$ 29,870
Austin Avenue	Morton Grove	02-01-0117	LAPP	\$ 638,874
Total Advanced Funding				\$ 1,116,904

a negative balance. Consequently, obligating only \$843,970 did not jeopardize any federal funds for the Council.

In order to continue completing projects, the North Shore Council is seizing on a regional opportunity. SAFETEA-LU, the active

no North Shore Council projects have been delayed due to lack of federal funding.

Table 2 displays the projects that received advanced funding during FFY 08. Because the Council has a negative balance, all projects must receive advanced funding from the Council of Mayors Executive Committee.

The North Shore Council finished FFY 08 with an estimated \$5.5 million negative balance. Chart 1 and Table 3 show that the North Shore Council

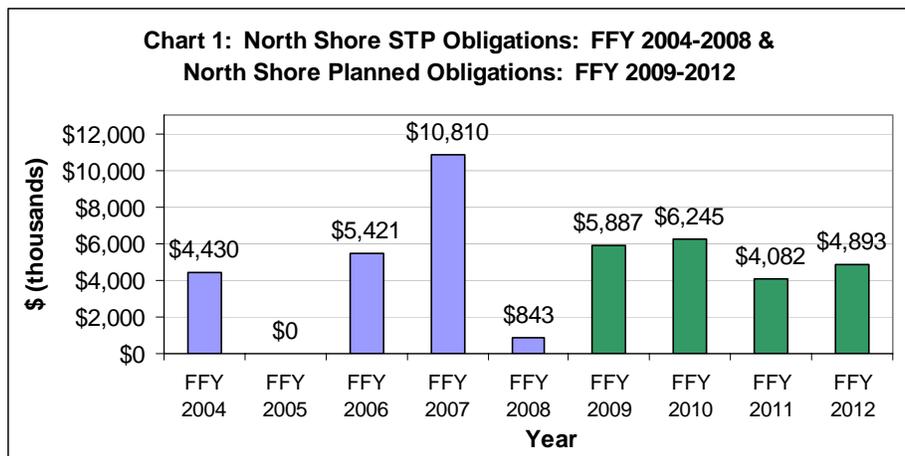


Table 3: North Shore Program for FFY 2009

Project	Sponsor	TIP Number	Phase	Total Cost	STP Funding
Greenwood/Glenview Road	Glenview	02-05-0004	ENG II	\$148,526	\$103,968
Golf/Skokie	Skokie	02-99-0102	ENG II	\$40,154	\$28,108
Golf/Skokie	Skokie	02-99-0102	Construction	\$5,345,844	\$3,581,903
Old Orchard/Skokie	Skokie	02-00-0103	ENG II	\$420,406	\$234,192
Old Orchard/Skokie	Skokie	02-00-0103	ROW	\$97,603	\$67,898
Church/Crawford Intersection	Skokie	02-99-0103	ROW	\$41,000	\$28,700
Church/Crawford Intersection	Skokie	02-99-0103	ENG II	\$73,089	\$51,162
Willow Road	Winnetka	02-06-0021	ENG II	\$272,651	\$190,962
Lake Street	Evanston	02-07-0010	LAPP	\$1,947,812	\$1,363,257
Chestnut/Waukegan	Glenview	02-06-0019	ENG II	\$157,013	\$110,334
Chestnut/Waukegan	Glenview	02-06-0019	ROW	\$180,353	\$126,247
TOTAL				\$ 8,724,452	\$ 5,886,730

Other Funding – CMAQ Projects

Two Glenview projects received federal funding under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program in FFY 08. The Glen of North Glenview Station Commuter Parking received \$109,200 for phase II engineering in federal fiscal year 2008. In addition, the project will receive \$1.365 million for construction in federal fiscal year 2009. Glenview further secured CMAQ funding for the Techny Trail Segment 3 from Chestnut Ave. to Lake Ave. The project has CMAQ funding in federal fiscal years 2008-2010 for phase I engineering, right-of-way acquisition, phase II engi-

neering, and construction. Table 4 displays the funding details for these projects.

Although CMAP programs CMAQ funding, the North Shore Council planning liaison, Christopher Staron, is available to assist with the application process. CMAQ funding traditionally requires a 20% local match. The call for projects traditionally occurs during the beginning of December. The

CMAP MPO Policy Committee does not approve the program until October of the following year; however, the CMAQ Project Selection Committee ranks the projects and proposes a program in July. Common CMAQ projects are transit improvements, bottleneck eliminations, intersection improvements, signal interconnects, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and bicycle parking projects.

Table 4: CMAQ Funded North Shore Projects - FFY 08 Program

Project	Sponsor	TIP Number	FFY	Phase	CMAQ Funding
Techny Trail Segment 3	Glenview	02-08-0001	2008	ENG I	\$ 28,000
			2009	ROW Acquisition	\$ 40,000
			2009	ENG II	\$ 80,000
			2010	Construction	\$ 440,000
The Glen of North Glenview Station Commuter Parking	Glenview	02-08-0002	2008	ENG II	\$ 109,000
			2009	Construction	\$ 1,092,000

Regional Transportation Issues

Transportation Committee

While the North Shore Council focuses on utilizing STP funding, the Northwest Municipal Conference Transportation Committee traditionally addresses regional transportation issues. Both the North Shore Council and Northwest Council planning liaisons staff the NWMC Transportation Committee. During the last year, Mayor William D. McLeod of Hoffman Estates and President Kerry Cummings of Glenview co-chaired the committee. The Transportation Committee meets regularly on the fourth Thursday of every month (the committee does not meet between May and September).

Conference Priorities

The NWMC has identified four strategies that will improve transportation and air quality throughout the region:

- Expanding and improving transit service
- Completing the existing highway network
- Strategic improvements to the local arterial road network
- Providing safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities

The NWMC actively engages in initiatives in all four strategic areas. The Northwest Municipal Conference is leading a coalition of local governments in efforts to establish a new and completely different commuter rail service in the Chicago region. The Metra STAR (Suburban Transit Access Route) Line will provide a new dynamic of mobility for residents, workers and visitors in our region. Introduced by Metra in January 2003, the STAR Line will become the first com-

muter rail line in northeastern Illinois designed specifically to address suburb-to-suburb commutes. Instead of serving as a route to downtown Chicago like other traditional commuter services, the STAR Line utilizes the EJ&E railroad corridor to provide north-south service to a direct connection to the northwest suburbs and other existing Metra commuter lines.

While investment in road and transit improvements are major components of the Northwest Municipal Conference's strategy to improve mobility and accessibility in our region, it is just as important to provide non-motorized transportation options for those traveling within and between our communities. The Northwest Municipal Conference has taken an active role in several initiatives to enhance the biking and walking environment in

Regional Transportation Issues Continued from page 6

our communities. The Northwest Municipal Conference is working with communities to find ways to implement the regional bike plan published in 2007. For instance, the NWMC is assisting communities in the planning of a bike and pedestrian path along an old Union Pacific rail line, which covers multiple North Shore communities. Northbrook, Glencoe, Northfield, Glenview and Wilmette recently completed the *Skokie Valley Trail Feasibility Study* for the Union Pacific right-of-way, and Skokie secured High Priority Project funding for a portion of the trail.

Hot Topics

A funding crisis that threatened service for the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) loomed for much of 2007. After a number of temporary funding fixes, the General Assembly passed House Bill 656, which increased the sales tax for the RTA within the six county Chicago region. House Bill 656 included a .25% increase in the sales tax across the RTA region and authorized the City of Chicago to increase the real estate transfer tax to help support the CTA. In addition, the proposal contains an additional sales tax increase of .25% in each of the collar counties, which would be controlled by the individual county boards and could be used for transportation and public safety projects that are approved by each board. The NWMC, noting the importance of a sustainable solution for transit, supported the funding mechanism and the accompanying governance reforms. Governor Blagojevich approved the RTA legislation, but added free rides for senior citizens in Illinois. Nonetheless, the House Bill 656 included an operating funding plan, institutes important management and fiscal reforms at the RTA along with the CTA, Metra and Pace, and contains a plan to reform and improve the CTA pension and retiree health care sys-

tem.

While the RTA funding crisis dominated the second half of 2007, proposals for a capital program dominated 2008. The NWMC called for a comprehensive capital program at their annual legislation brunch in February 2008. The "Illinois Works Coalition," which was led by former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Dennis Hastert and Southern Illinois University President Glen Poshard, proposed a \$34 billion capital program. The capital program was to be funded by a partial concession of the state lottery, an expansion of state gambling, and bonding. \$10.1 billion of the proposed capital program came from the Illinois Department of Transportation Multi-Year Program. The proposed program failed to attract broad support and ultimately died in the regular session of the General Assembly. The NWMC remains committed to the passage of a comprehensive and accountable capital program in Illinois.

Another hot topic that emerged late in 2007 was the proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern (EJ&E) railroad by the Canadian National (CN) railroad. The proposed purchase concerned the NWMC because of its potential impacts to the STAR Line and local communities along both the EJ&E and CN routes. The communities of the NWMC appreciate the broader impact that this proposed acquisition can have on the local, regional and national freight network. Some members have the potential to see a dramatic drop in the number of trains, while others face considerable

disruption due to increases in freight traffic. However, a number of concerns are collectively shared by the NWMC. Village presidents, council members and staff from NWMC communities have been leaders for well over ten years in championing a much needed suburb-to-suburb commuter rail line. In addition, the impact to existing Metra service, both positive and negative, concern the NWMC. Another concern is mitigation because under the proposed purchase, communities with minimal levels of freight traffic currently would see a dramatic traffic increase, disrupting established traffic and development patterns. The NWMC has stated the need to explore mitigation efforts with substantial CN involvement in order to prevent simply shifting gridlock from one portion of the region to another. Finally, the NWMC is concerned with the proposed acquisition's impact on existing and planned quiet zones. NWMC staff has closely monitored the proposed acquisition in order to present members with informed information about the process and opportunities to comment. The NWMC submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in September regarding concerns about the STAR Line, Metra service, and quiet zones. A decision on the proposed purchase is expected in late 2008 or early 2009.



Looking to the Future

FFY 2009 presents a number of opportunities and challenges for the North Shore Council. The North Shore Council will continue to utilize Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding to complete important regional projects. Despite a negative program balance, the North Shore Council will continue to aggressively seek advanced funding opportunities. The North Shore Council is committed to ensuring that the Chicago region does not leave STP funding unobligated.

With the federal reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU at the end of federal fiscal year 2009 (end of September 2009), the future of the federal role in surface transportation is unclear. The federal Highway Trust Fund is being depleted at an unsustainable rate, and many project that it will reach a negative balance in federal fiscal year 2009. Consequently, the North Shore Planning Liaison will monitor the reauthorization process while continuing to work with members to accomplish projects with available funding.

FFY 2009 will see the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) ramp up the preparation for the "Go to 2040" Regional Comprehensive Plan. The plan, which is due to be completed in the fall of 2010, aims to be Chicago's first truly regional comprehensive plan. NWMC staff will continue to engage in the planning process and encourage our members to engage and provide input.

In addition to long-range planning, the NWMC recognizes that there are immediate needs for the transportation infrastructure. The NWMC is committed to the passage of a comprehensive state-wide capital bill. Illinois has not passed a capital plan since Illinois FIRST in 1999. The condition of RTA system and roadway network require maintenance, rehabilitation, and in some cases reconstruction. Illinois infrastructure

demands attention if the state hopes to meet the transportation demands of the Chicago Metropolitan Region.

The NWMC will continue to advocate for the transportation priorities of the Conference: expanding and

improving transit service, completing the existing highway network, strategic improvements to the local arterial road network, and providing safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Golf Rd and Skokie Blvd Intersection is programmed for an intersection improvement in FFY 09

The Greenwood Road and Glenview Road Intersection is programmed for an intersection improvement in FFY 10

