



NWMC Transportation Newsletter

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Dates to Remember

- January 11** **DuPage Mayors and Managers Road Salt Procurement Forum (see article page 2) - 10:00 a.m.**
Downers Grove Public Works Department, 5101 Walnut Avenue
- January 19** **NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee - 10:30 a.m.**
NWMC Offices
- January 28** **NWMC Transportation Committee - 8:30 a.m.**
NWMC Offices
- February 11** **Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee - 8:30 a.m.**
Barrington Village Hall

Transportation Committee Discusses CMAP's Next Regional Plan

The NWMC Transportation Committee met December 10 and heard from Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Outreach and Community Engagement Associate Berenice Vallecillos, who outlined the agency's development of a new regional comprehensive plan. While building on the existing Go To 2040 plan, the new plan will explore additional topics under Go To 2040's four themes of Livable Communities, Human Capital, Efficient Governance and Regional Mobility. A launch event for development of the new plan will be held on Wednesday, February 24 (see sidebar). CMAP staff will be back at Transportation Committee in the spring to directly solicit feedback on the new plan. The plan is scheduled to be adopted in October 2018.

The committee also discussed the recently passed new federal transportation bill (see article on Page 2) and the passage in Springfield of SB 2039, which released undistributed local revenues, including the Motor Fuel Tax. Finally, the group also discussed the recommendation by the Illinois Tollway Customer Service and Planning Committee to move forward with an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Illinois Route 53/120 project in Lake County. The Tollway Board subsequently approved the EIS on December 17 (see article on page 2). The next NWMC Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 28 at the NWMC offices.

CMAP Regional Plan Launch Event

A launch event for development of CMAP's next regional comprehensive plan will be held on Wednesday, February 24 from 9:30 a.m. to Noon at CMAP's offices in the Willis Tower. CMAP staff will describe research currently underway and participants can provide their feedback to CMAP staff on what they want to see included in the new plan. The event will be open house style, so participants can come and go as they please. More information will be provided closer to the event.



President Signs New Federal Transportation Bill

On December 4, President Obama signed into law a \$305 billion, five-year surface transportation bill. The bill, known as the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, is funded through the federal motor fuel tax and approximately \$70 billion in offsets from other areas of the federal budget. Under the new bill, roads will receive \$205 billion and transit will receive \$50 billion, a 5% and 8% increase respectively, over levels under the previous authorization, MAP-21. The FAST Act will be the first federal surface transportation bill since 2005 to provide more than two years of funding.

The bill reauthorizes the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program and will increase the percentage of STP funding distributed to local governments. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) was also renewed. IDOT estimates that over five years, the bill will bring in \$7.5 billion for Illinois highways, an average increase of \$134 million annu-

ally. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) estimates that Illinois transit agencies will see an 11% boost in annual federal funding. The bill also contains several provisions that will be beneficial to municipal governments. Local engineers will be able to use any Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved design guideline, even if it is not the preferred design guide of the state DOT. This will be of particular importance to those communities with Complete Streets policies. Finally, FAST sets aside money to help railroads implement Positive Train Control, improve road and rail crossings and improves safety standards for rails cars carrying crude oil and ethanol.

The bill does not increase the federal 18.4 cents-per-gallon motor fuel tax. This tax provides the majority of the funding in the Highway Trust Fund. Increased construction costs, inflation and increased fuel economy have dramatically reduced the purchasing power of this tax. The



annual shortfall between highway expenditures and fuel tax revenue is approximately \$13 billion. Rather than raising the fuel tax, this bill takes roughly \$70 billion from other areas of the federal budget including the Federal Reserve. This pushes the decision on how to deal with the Highway Trust Fund shortfall until another day.

The passage of a long-term highway bill will allow state and local agencies to begin planning for construction through fiscal year 2020, content in the knowledge that federal funds will be available. Our thanks to Senator Dick Durbin, Congressman Dan Lipinski and the entire Illinois congressional delegation, who played an important role in the passage of this act.



Illinois 53/120 Study Approved by Tollway Board

On December 17, the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority Board approved moving forward with an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the extension of Illinois Route 53 and the Route 120 Bypass in Lake County.

This approval came after a land use framework was approved by the corridor's Land Use Committee in November. The completion of the framework as well as the report completed by the Route 53/120 Finance Committee outlining funding and financing options in May and the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC) report from 2012 will guide the work of the EIS.

Similar to previous forums where the project has been discussed, the public comments during the meeting were split between citizens and groups against the report or the project in general and those that touted the economic and transportation benefits of the project.

The \$50 million budgeted for the EIS is part of the \$1.4 billion in capital spending approved by the Tollway Board for 2016, which is the fifth year of the agency's 15-year, \$12 billion "Move Illinois" capital program.

DMMC to Host Road Salt Procurement Forum

On Monday, January 11, the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference (DMMC) is hosting a forum on road salt procurement for municipal managers and public works departments. Panelists will include representatives from Cargill Salt and DuPage County.

The event will be held at 10:00 a.m. at the Downers Grove Public Works Department, 5101 Walnut Avenue. For questions and additional information, please contact DMMC Transportation Project Manager Mike Albin, 630-571-0480, ext. 225 or malbin@dmmc-cog.org.



North Shore Technical Committee Considers Annual Report; Names New Chair

On December 16, the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee met at the *Skokie Village Hall* and named *Skokie Director of Engineering Erik Cook* as the new Chair. The committee received updates on the current Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program and the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP), considered a modification request to the STP program and considered the draft annual report for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015. The report will be presented to the NWMC Board on January 13.

In FFY 2015, the North Shore Council obligated \$1.5 million in STP funds. The Council began and ended the year with a

positive program balance, therefore it was not necessary to seek advanced funding from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Council of Mayors Executive Committee. The Council plans to obligate \$8.2 million in FFY 2016, spending down the council's accumulated balance.

Also in fiscal year 2015, the North Shore Council also obligated \$3.3 million in CMAQ funding. Previously deferred project phases were moved back into the active program, allowing them to move forward. The Council plans to spend \$2.1 million in CMAQ funds in FFY 2016. Finally, the Council obligated \$2.7 million in ITEP funds in FFY 2015 with \$1.6 million planned for FFY 2016.

Northwest Council Update, Opening for Manager/Administrator

The next Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee meeting will take place on Thursday, February 11 at 8:30 a.m. at the *Barrington Village Hall*. Please send any project updates or requests to Mike Walczak, mwalczak@nwmc-cog.org by Friday, January 29.

Village Managers/Administrators – if your municipality is not currently represented on the Technical Committee, you are eligible to fill a vacant position on the committee. If you would like to be considered for appointment, please submit a letter stating your intent and relevant qualifications to Mike Walczak by January 29.



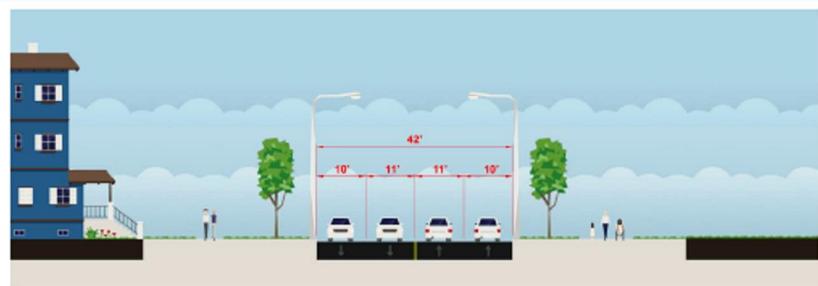
Bike/Ped Committee Discusses Sheridan Road Improvements, Improved Bike Signage

On December 15, *Evanston Assistant Director of Public Works Sat Nagar* introduced the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee to a series of improvements that the city and its consultants are planning along Sheridan Road, from downtown north along Northwestern University's campus. He explained that the goal of the city is to provide a safe way to separate bicycles, pedestrians and vehicles in the congested area. Nathan Roseberry of TY Lin International Group and Michael Kerr of Christopher Burke Engineering described the plans, which include a two-way cycle track along the campus which will allow bicycles their own designated space, as well as crossing improvements and bus pullouts. The northern segment of the road will also be reduced from four lanes to three. The city hopes to construct the project in 2017 and 2018.

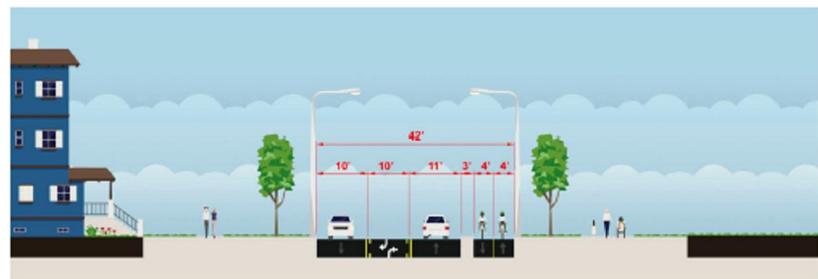
Ride Illinois (formerly League of Illinois Bicyclists) Executive Director Ed Barsotti discussed his organization's efforts to

improve signage options in areas where bicyclists and cars share the road. He is working with state and federal officials to determine which sign design may work best in Illinois. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 10:30 a.m. at the NWMC offices.

The illustration below shows the existing and proposed cross-sections for a portion of the Sheridan Road project between Northwestern Place and Central Street in *Evanston*. This segment includes a reduction in lanes from four to three and the addition of a separated cycle track on the east side adjacent to Northwestern's campus.



EXISTING



PROPOSED

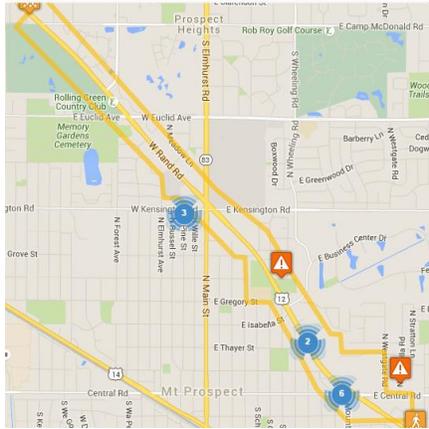


Mount Prospect, RTA Seek Input on Rand Road Study

The Village of Mount Prospect is developing a plan to improve connections for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users along the Rand Road corridor. This plan will also address safety improvements and identify potential new commercial developments. The project team consists of consultants and representatives from the Village, IDOT, PACE, and RTA. The study is funded by a grant from the RTA.

More information on the study can be found at www.plan4randroad.com. On the website, you can make comments directly on a map of the corridor, as seen on the right. You can also complete a survey about the corridor by visiting <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/plan4randroad>.

Please contact *Mount Prospect Senior Planner Nellie Beckner* at nbeckner@mountprospect.org or 847-818-5312 with questions or comments.



Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group Meeting

The Energy Resources Center at the University of Illinois-Chicago and the Chicago Region Trees Initiative is hosting a meeting of the Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group. The working group provides a forum to collaborate and share ideas, lessons learned, and other information to promote successful habitat development along rights-of-way. The working group consists of interested individuals and organizations from the utility, transportation, non-profit, academic and government sectors.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 19, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the University of Illinois-Chicago, 750 S Halsted Street, Student Center East, 3rd floor. The meeting will provide networking opportunities, program and policy updates, technical presentations on habitat restoration, and small group breakout discussions. A morning coffee reception and lunch will be provided.

Registration is available [here](#). Contact Iris Caldwell (312-335-1483 or iriscald@uic.edu) for more information.

2016 Construction Preview Event

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is hosting the 2016 Great Lakes Regional Operations and Construction Coordination Meeting on Wednesday, February 3 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at their offices in the Willis Tower. The annual event brings together transportation system operators from northeastern Illinois and the Great Lakes region to hear about construction projects scheduled for 2016 and share operations information. The morning session (9:00 a.m.—12 noon) will focus on northeastern Illinois, while the Great Lakes is the focus of the afternoon session (1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.). RSVP to Claire Bozic, Cbozic@cmaphillinois.gov.



Contacts

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

Brian Pigeon
NWMC Program Associate for Transportation
North Shore Council Planning Liaison
1600 East Golf Road – Suite 0700
Des Plaines, IL 60016
847-296-9200, ext. 128
bpigeon@nwmc-cog.org