



**Volume 2, Issue 3,  
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# NWMC Transportation Newsletter

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## Dates to Remember

- March 16**      **NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee—10:00 p.m.**  
NWMC Offices
  
- March 17**      **North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee Meeting—8:30 a.m.**  
Skokie Village Hall, 5127 Oakton Street
  
- March 18**      **Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee Meeting—1:00 p.m. (please note later time)**  
Arlington Heights Village Hall, 33 S. Arlington Heights Road
  
- March 25**      **NWMC Transportation Committee Meeting—9:00 a.m.**  
NWMC Offices
  
- April 7**         **RTA Call for Projects for Funding Programs (see article on page 4)**

## Transportation Committee Supports Expanding Metra North Central Service

On February 26, the Transportation Committee recommended a resolution supporting the expansion of service on Metra’s North Central Line, including reverse commute, suburb-to-suburb and express train options. While recognizing that there are both physical constraints and freight service interference constraints on this line, the Transportation Committee is recommending renewed dialogue with Metra and the Canadian National (CN) Railroad, which owns the tracks. CN expects freight traffic to decline on portions of the line due to its purchase of the EJ&E tracks, which potentially allows for an increase in commuter traffic. The NWMC Executive Board added language to the resolution to ensure that changes will not negatively impact other NWMC communities.

The NWMC Board will consider the resolution on March 10.

In addition, the committee discussed pending state legislation. The committee recommended supporting House Bill 43, which amends the Illinois Vehicle Code to provide that vehicles must stop and yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk rather than yielding the right-of-way by slowing down or stopping if need be. The *Village of Hoffman Estates* passed a resolution in favor of the bill and encouraged the NWMC to support the legislation.

Additionally, CMAP staff delivered a presentation on an upcoming municipal survey. The survey will provide data for the CMAP’s regional indicator project, which will aggregate relevant data and

trends for municipal officials and decision-makers. CMAP anticipates distributing the survey in April.

Finally, the committee heard an update on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the potential for a second federal stimulus bill. First, the North Shore and Northwest Councils of Mayors have obligated 100 percent of their ARRA funding. Illinois has also obligated 100 percent of its ARRA transportation funding. Additional ARRA funding from low construction bids will be programmed at the March 10 NWMC Board Meeting. Second, the committee discussed a second round of stimulus spending (see article on page 3). Currently, Congress is poised to pass a jobs bill that does not include any additional transportation spending.



## News from the Northwest Council of Mayors

The Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee met on February 11 at *Arlington Heights Village Hall* with a focus on spending all of the Council's funds from last year's stimulus bill and positioning itself for a possible second stimulus this spring.

The Council successfully obligated all funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) by the March 2010 deadline. However, due to low bids received for a number of projects, the Council will have approximately \$1.2 million to reprogram by September, 2010. The Technical Committee has tentatively decided to use these funds on projects currently in the STP program and scheduled to go to letting by September. Staff will present specific programming recommendations at the next Technical Committee meeting March 18.

The Committee also addressed the possibility of a second stimulus plan cur-

rently under discussion in Washington. Under the original House version of HR 2847, the Council would likely receive a level of funding similar to that of the last bill (\$12.5 million), for projects which must be obligated by January 2011 letting (see article on page 3). To better position the Council for this possibility, the Technical Committee has recommended that any municipalities which currently have a project on the MYB list, which is already in the federal review process at IDOT or has the potential to move quickly through the process, provide a project update to Mike Walczak by March 12. New projects will also be considered if projects from the current list cannot use the funds.

The next Technical Committee meeting will take place on March 18 at 1:00 p.m. at *Arlington Heights Village Hall*. Please note the later start time.



## News from the North Shore Council of Mayors

The North Shore Council has obligated 100 percent of its ARRA; however, the council received low bids on a number of projects. Because of low bids, six ARRA projects will not be able to spend over \$537,000 in ARRA funds. Starting this month, the council has a six-month grace period to de-obligate leftover funds, and re-obligate them on other projects. The Technical Committee recommended using the leftover ARRA funding on three ARRA B-List projects. The committee recommended projects for *Evanston*, *Glenview* and *Morton Grove*. These municipalities agreed to proceed through the state and federal review and approval process last summer with no guarantee that their projects would be funded. The North Shore Council of Mayors will vote on funding the ARRA B-List projects at the NWMC Board meeting on March 10.

The North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee will resume its regular meeting schedule on March 17.

## News from Other Councils of Mayors

### Lake County Council of Mayors

The Lake County Council of Mayors is announcing a call for project proposals for the Council's Surface Transportation Program (STP). An email was distributed to Lake County Council of Mayors members on February 4 with the necessary application information and form.

The format for the submittal of project proposals must include a standardized Project Scoping/Field Review Report form. Previously submitted projects contained in the Multi-Year "B" list of the Council's current STP Program will automatically be considered for programming unless the Council is notified otherwise by the sponsoring municipality. For those Council members that have projects on the MY"B" list, updated project cost estimates should be submitted. Each new project submittal will also need to include a project location map reproducible in an 8 1/2" X 11" format.

Please transmit project proposals with a cover letter on the sponsoring municipality's letterhead signed by the appropriate staff person. The Lake County Council of Mayors will not accept submittals directly from consultants (electronically submittals are preferred). Project proposals must arrive at the Lake County Division of Transportation offices no later than 4:30 p.m. on April 2.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, you may contact Bruce Christensen at 847-377-7400 or

[bchristensen@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:bchristensen@lakecountyil.gov).

### McHenry County Council of Mayors

The Next McHenry County Council of Mayors meeting is Thursday, March 18 at 2:00 p.m. at the *Fox River Grove Village Hall*.



## *Congress Poised to Pass Jobs Bill*

On December 16, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Jobs for Main Street Act (HR 2847), which includes \$154 billion in new spending and tax cuts. On February 24, the U.S. Senate passed its \$15 billion Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act as an amendment to the Jobs for Main Street Act. The Senate version of the bill is still subject to a House-Senate conference to reconcile differences if the House chooses not to pass the Senate version. On Thursday, the House passed the Senate version of the bill with minor changes. The Senate must now approve the bill.

The original House version contained \$37.3 billion in new transportation spending, which is nearly identical to the spending contained in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The level and distribution of funds in the House version was expected to follow the same guidelines as the ARRA program, with the sub-allocation of surface transportation funds going through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Council of Mayors system. The scaled-down Senate version and the current House version contain no new transportation funding.

Both versions of the jobs bill address the extension of SAFETEA-LU, the current federal surface transportation legislation, which expired on September 30, 2009. Since then, Congress had extended SAFETEA-LU three times. The last extension expired at the end of February. The jobs bill was supposed to prevent a shutdown of U.S. DOT activities funded by SAFETEA-LU; however, because Congress was unable to pass the jobs bill before the end of February, Congress passed an emergency 30-day extension (fourth extension) on Tuesday.

The current version of the legislation extends federal funding for highway and transit programs through December 31, 2010. The jobs bill restores surface transportation funding to pre-rescission levels, which means that Councils of Mayors would not see a decline in their Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding. In addition, both versions provide a \$19.5 billion transfer from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund.



## *CMAP Addresses STP Rescission*

On Tuesday, the SAFETEA-LU Subcommittee of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Policy Committee met to discuss the effect of the \$8.7 billion SAFETEA-LU rescission that occurred on September 30, 2009. Illinois's share of the rescission was over \$290 million. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) reported that the local Surface Transportation Program's (STP) share of the rescission is approximately \$36.2 million. Northeastern Illinois is responsible for \$23.16 million of the local STP rescission. CMAP staff is

working with IDOT staff to clarify and confirm the local share of the rescission. Because the suburban Councils of Mayors obligated over 100 percent of their STP funds from SAFETEA-LU, the subcommittee recommended that the suburban STP programs not bear the responsibility of absorbing the rescission. The recommendation will be presented to the CMAP Policy Committee at its March 11 meeting.

## *Introduction to Bicycle Planning Seminar*

On February 16, the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) and the League of Illinois Bicyclists (LIB) held an "Introduction to Bicycle Planning" seminar to introduce the technical aspects and strategic issues of local bike planning. Over fifty attendees representing municipalities, counties, engineering firms and bike clubs attended the seminar and learned about the importance of bike planning and how to prepare and construct a bikeway network.

Additionally, attendees learned how to identify the appropriate bikeway type for different roadways (side path, bike lane, bike route, etc.). The seminar provided information on the infrastructure that accompanies a successful bikeway network, such as bike parking and signage.

Finally, the seminar discussed tools, both financial and educational, for implementing a bike plan. If you were unable to attend the seminar, you can access the slides from the presentation at:

<http://www.bikelib.org/technical/seminarhandouts.pdf>



## RTA Announces Call for Projects

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will issue a call for projects for its funding programs on April 7. There are four programs administered by RTA: Community Planning; Subregional Planning; Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC)/New Freedom; and Innovation, Coordination and Enhancement (ICE). Transit projects focused on planning, operations and infrastructure are eligible.

These programs target projects that are innovative and will increase transit usage, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the region's current transit system, provide for better mobility for seniors and people with disabilities, and improve job access.

### Community Planning

The Community Planning program provides funding and planning assistance to local municipalities for planning projects that benefit both the local community and the RTA transit system. Projects within the program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by planning for transit-oriented development, access and circulation improvements in and around transit facilities, improved job access, improved mobility for seniors and people with disabilities, and increased transit usage.

### Subregional Planning

The Subregional Planning program provides funding and planning assistance for county, subregional or corridor level transit and land use focused planning studies. Projects within the program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by providing useful data and analysis to support informed transportation investment decisions; ensuring that regional and local governments understand mobility needs, transportation system deficiencies, and existing and emerging travel markets within the subregion; exploring and assessing a range of corridor transportation options and their impacts; and identifying alter-

natives that offer the best net advantage to corridor communities and the region.

### Job Access Reverse Commute / New Freedom

The Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program is a federally funded program that provides operating and capital assistance for transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of eligible low-income individuals and of reverse commuters regardless of income. The New Freedom program provides new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Projects funded through this program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by reducing transportation barriers and expanding mobility options available to persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the ADA.

### Innovation, Coordination, or Enhancement (ICE)

The Innovation, Coordination, and Enhancement (ICE) program is a competitive funding program, established as part of the 2008 Mass Transit Reform Legislation. The program provides operating and capital assistance to enhance the coordination and integration of public transportation and to develop and implement innovations to improve the quality and delivery of public transportation. Projects funded through this program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by providing reliable and convenient transit services and enhancing efficiencies through effective management, innovation and technology.

Applications will be due on June 10. More information about the call for projects and the funding programs can be found at:

[www.rtachicago.com/programs](http://www.rtachicago.com/programs).

### RTA Funding Programs Open Houses

**April 28, 2010  
3:00-5:00 P.M.**

RTA Headquarters  
Board Room (15th Fl)  
175 W. Jackson Blvd  
Chicago

**May 3, 2010  
3:00-5:00 P.M.**

Arlington Heights Village Hall  
Community Meeting Room (3rd Fl)  
33 S. Arlington Heights Rd.  
Arlington Heights



*Highway Safety Improvement Program*

The Illinois Department of Transportation has announced a call for projects for the Fiscal Year 2011 Highway Safety Improvement Program and High Risk Rural Roads Program.

Highway Safety Improvement Program funds are provided to address severe injuries and fatalities on all public roads. 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.

The federal funding level is a maximum of 90 percent of the total improvement with the local agency responsible for the ten percent matching funds. Proposed projects should be submitted to the IDOT District Bureau of Local Roads and Streets office no later than April 16, 2010. More information about the program can be found at:

<http://www.dot.il.gov/illinoisshsp/hsip.html>.



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*Grade Crossing Collision Course*

If railroad tracks run through your community, your police officers could become involved in a specialized highway-rail grade crossing collision investigation. Commander Jim Kveton from the City of Elmhurst will be putting on a one-day Grade Crossing Collision Investigation (GCCII) class at the Elmhurst Police Department on April 6 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and has some spaces available. If your community would like to send a police officer to take this class, please contact Jim directly at:

Jim Kveton  
[James.kveton@elmhurst.org](mailto:James.kveton@elmhurst.org)  
 630-530-6406

This training was developed for the North American law enforcement community with the cooperation of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs Association and Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

*CMAP Data Collection Request for Projects*

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is announcing its 2010 request for data collection projects. CMAP offers the services of Field Data Collection interns to local governments for:

- Vehicle Traffic Counts – 12 Hour (6AM-6PM) for intersections and railroad crossings.
- Visual inventory of pavement features, physical roadway features and traffic signalization features.
- Commuter parking lot occupancy/residence counts.

If you are interested in having any of these types of projects completed by CMAP field data collectors, please contact Jose Rodriguez. Project requests are due no later than *Friday, April 30* to:

Jose Rodriguez, PTP  
 Associate Planner  
 CMAP  
 233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800  
 Chicago, IL 60606  
[jrodriguez@cmmap.illinois.gov](mailto:jrodriguez@cmmap.illinois.gov)  
 Fax: 312-386-8807  
 Phone: 312-386-8806

CMAP can only accommodate a limited number of data collection requests. Please submit data collection requests early to ensure that CMAP will be able to fulfill the request.

*Member Spotlight*

If your municipality is undertaking a transportation plan or project of note, please contact NWMC staff to be featured in an upcoming edition of the NWMC Transportation Newsletter.