

Transportation Newsletter

May 2026
Volume 18 Issue 5

Northwest Municipal Conference
1600 E. Golf Rd. Suite 0700 Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: 847-296-9200 www.nwmc-cog.org
Cover Photo: City of Park Ridge, NWMC Staff



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian: Tuesday, May 12, 10:30 a.m. — NWMC Offices and Virtually

NWMC Transportation Committee: Thursday, May 21, 8:30 a.m. — NWMC Offices and Virtually

North Shore and Northwest Council of Mayors Approve FY 2027-2031 Programs

On April 30 the North Shore Council of Mayors Board approved their FFY 2027-2031 Surface Transportation Program (STP) with 4 new projects totaling nearly \$9 million in funding. Another twelve projects were added to the Contingency Program.

On April 24, the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee and Board approved eleven new projects totaling nearly \$39 million in funding. In total twenty-four projects were added to the Active and Contingency Program.

The proposed FFY 2027-2031 programs have now been sent to CMAP for final approval and inclusion in the region's STP.

Cook County Offering ITEP Support

From the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways:

The Active Transportation Alliance (ATA) and Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) are offering free support to help fifteen suburban Cook County municipalities submit strong, competitive ITEP applications, including one-on-one coaching and work plan (including three sessions with ATA staff), help in developing your application narrative, support gathering data, maps and community input, and peer learning with other communities. Additionally, seven participating communities will receive \$2,000 to fund small-scale safe streets improvements like pedestrian crossing signage or bike racks. Eligible applicants must be suburban Cook County municipalities or partners, communities planning to apply for ITEP in 2026, teams ready to commit to the process (June through September support and virtual trainings), with priority given to [CMAP Cohort 3 & 4](#) communities. To request technical assistance on your 2026 ITEP application, please complete the [request form](#) by Monday, May 11, and visit the [project page](#) for more information.

Village of Schaumburg

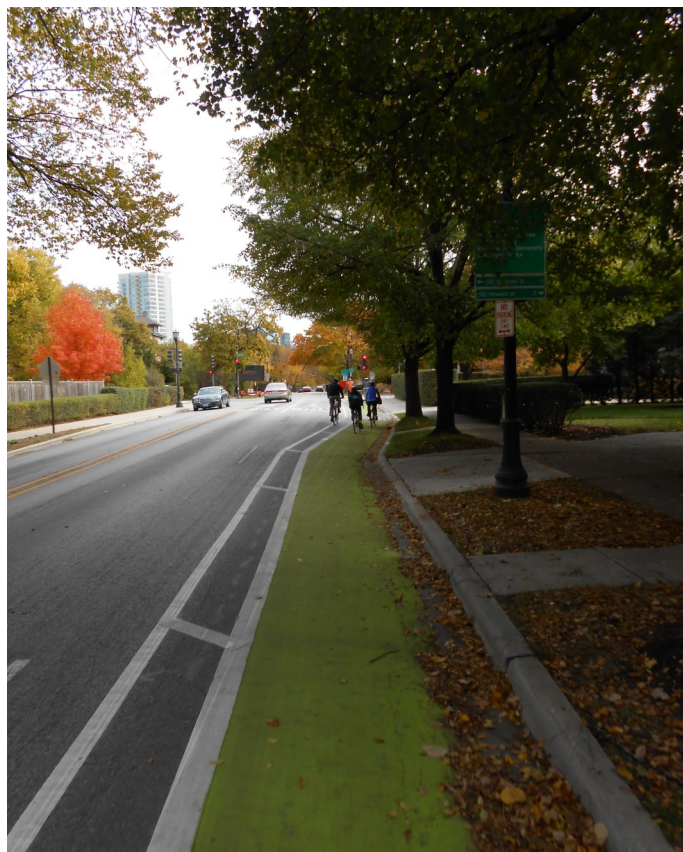


IDOT to Host Special Program Assistance Conference

Is your community interested in accessing Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Funding? The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Special Programs Unit is ready to help. IDOT staff will help stakeholders identify projects that qualify and learn how to craft successful applications. Each session will take place over two days, with group presentations the morning of the first day followed by one-on-one appointments and networking opportunities throughout the remainder of the workshop.

The conference will be held on May 18 and 19 at the IDOT District 1 Office in *Schaumburg*, on May 11 and 12 at Orland Park Civic Center, and on May 27 and 28 at the McHenry County Government Center. Learn more by visiting the [ITEP](#) website and register for the morning session and/or individual appointments [here](#).

City of Evanston



ALL ABOUT ITEP



SPECIAL PROGRAMS ASSISTANCE CONFERENCE

The Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program Cycle 17 will open Aug. 1, 2026.

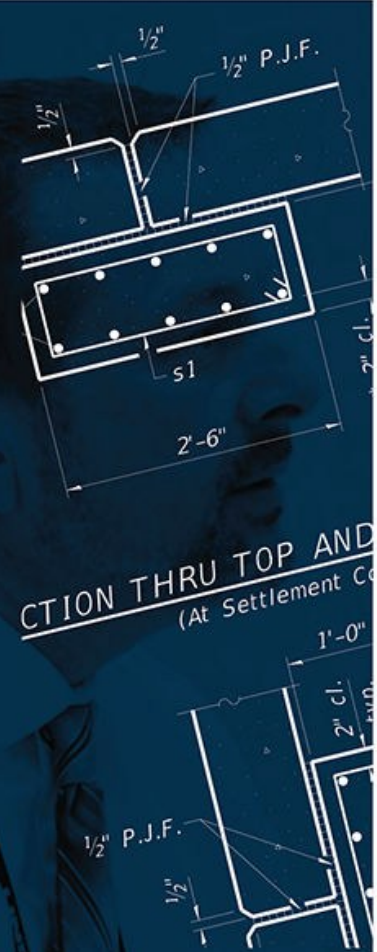
Mark your calendars now and plan to attend **SPAC 2026 – All About ITEP** to learn about exciting changes being made for this next cycle of funding!

More information and links for registration will be available on our webpage in the coming weeks!

- APRIL 14–15**
IDOT Central Office
Springfield
- APRIL 22–23**
Edwardsville Public Safety Building
Edwardsville
- MAY 5–6**
Tuscola Community Building
Tuscola
- MAY 11–12**
Orland Park Civic Center
Orland Park
- MAY 13–14**
Peoria Public Library North Branch
Peoria
- MAY 18–19**
IDOT District 1 Headquarters
Schaumburg
- MAY 27–28**
McHenry County Government Center
Woodstock
- JUNE 3–4**
Greater Egypt Regional Planning Office
Marion
- JUNE 8–9**
IDOT District 3 Headquarters
Ottawa
- JUNE 11–12**
Effingham County Emergency Management Agency
Effingham
- JUNE 17–18**
Dixon High School
Dixon



Illinois Department
of Transportation



Implement Traffic Safety Interventions with a SS4A Grant!

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) has opened its final call for projects for the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant program. Municipalities are now eligible to apply for nearly \$1 billion in [SS4A Planning and Implementation Grants and Demonstration Grants](#) under the [SS4A Federal Highway Administration \(FWHA\) NOFO](#). SS4A grant awards range from \$100,000 up to \$25,000,000. Applications are due by Tuesday, May 26 at 4:00 p.m. Read more, including how to apply, at [the SS4A grants webpage](#).

USDOT hosted three webinars on SS4A:

- [Implementation Grants](#) Passcode: .^B**4sK
- [Action Plans](#) Passcode: SM6s.1K+
- [Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Grants](#) Passcode: W+4L@Hg7

Unsure where to start? Use the NWMC's [NWMC Multimodal Plan Street Design Tools](#) to choose the improvements to make travel safer for people walking, biking, and driving.

Alternatively, the [county-level Safe Travel for All Safety Action Plans](#) were adopted last year to support community applications for SS4A funds. These plans provide roadmaps for improving traffic safety through identification of High Injury Networks, intersections or road segments.

BRIC Grant Program Now Accepting Applications

[Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#) is a Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant program that makes federal funds available to states, U.S. territories, federally recognized Tribal Nations, and local governments for hazard mitigation activities. It does so by recognizing the need to upgrade and modernize the nation's infrastructure against the growing risks to communities and the need for natural hazard risk mitigation activities that promote resilience with respect to natural hazards.

FEMA has published the Fiscal Years 2024/2025 funding opportunity for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program. The application period opened on March 25, 2026, and will run for 120 days. The deadline to submit applications is July 23, 2026. Eligible applicants and subapplicants must apply through FEMA Grants Outcomes (FEMA GO). The full notice of funding opportunity is published on [Grants.gov](#).

Be a Bicycle Friendly Community!

The League of American Bicyclists is currently accepting Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) applications through June 17 for the 2027-2030 cohort. The League of American Bicyclists provides a roadmap, hands-on assistance and recognition for communities seeking to build places more welcoming to people who bike. Past and present NWMC member communities with BFC status include Silver-ranked *Evanston* and Bronze-ranked *Glenview*, *Highland Park*, *Niles*, *Schaumburg*, and *Wilmette*. To learn more about the BFC program, [visit the League of American Bicyclists website](#).

Promote National Bike Month with League of American Bicyclists Resources

National Bike Month occurs in May, with numerous NWMC members participating. To assist promotion of National Bike Month and events, the League of American Bicyclists has prepared a [guide on how to celebrate and promote National Bike Month events](#), and offers promotional materials for use in publications and social media, including materials in Spanish. See the full collection at the [League website](#).

US DOT Opens Grants for Railroad Crossing Safety Projects

The US Department of Transportation (US DOT) is now accepting applications for its [Crossing Safety Program and Railroad Crossing Elimination \(RCE\) Grant Program](#). RCE will award over \$1.1 billion in funds to projects that provide 1) grade separation, 2) track relocation, 3) installation of protective devices, signals, and signs, 4) other measures to improve safety, or planning, review, or 5) design of the above improvements. Minimum awards, except for planning projects, are \$1,000,000, with no predetermined maximum award. Applications are due by Monday June 8 at 10:59 p.m. To learn more, including how to apply, [read the Notice of Funding Opportunity](#).

Apply for Love Your Block 2026-2028

Love Your Block is a two year civic engagement program that brings city leaders and residents together to strengthen neighborhoods, one block at a time. Selected cities will receive \$270,000, coaching, and implementation support to turn community priorities into action. From transforming vacant lots into community gardens to removing trash and debris from a public right-of-way, the program supports cities in engaging with their residents to design, develop, and deliver small-scale neighborhood improvement projects that make their communities and cities better places to live. [Learn More and Apply by June 1, 2026](#).

2026 Rails to Trails Grants Now Accepting Applications

The Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) [trail grant program](#) supports organizations at all levels—from local and national nonprofits to public agencies—with a focus on community-based leadership and engagement and long-term impact. In 2026, RTC will award approximately \$110,000 to organizations and local agencies that are working to develop and connect equitable trail networks. To support a wide variety of projects and programs that support the physical development of trails and reflect elements of the [TrailNation Playbook](#), grant amounts will range between \$10,000 and \$25,000. All applications are due by 10:59 p.m. on May 10. For the 2026 Trail Grants funding cycle, only projects that support the planning, construction, improvement and maintenance of trails and trail networks in the U.S. will be considered. [Review eligibility requirements](#) on the Rails to Trails Conservancy website. [Apply now](#).

Upcoming Transportation-Related Webinars

[National Center for Rural Road Safety Road Safety Champion Program webinar series:](#)

- Wednesday, May 6, 12:00 p.m.—[Evaluation of the Legal Landscape Impacting First Responders](#)

UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies:

- Thursday, May 7, 11:30 a.m.—[State Preemption of Parking Minimums: Insights from Washington and California](#)

Safe Routes Partnership:

- Tuesday, May 12, 12:00 p.m.—[Unlocking the School Partnership Puzzle](#)

America WALKS:

- Wednesday, May 13, 1:00 p.m.—[Walkability From the Bottom Up – Tactics for Engaging Your Community](#)

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals:

- Wednesday, June 3, 2:00 p.m.—[Q2 2026 APBP US Federal Policy Webinar](#)

Did You Miss It? News Items in Brief

Beacon-News: [E-bike sales in the Fox Valley keep on booming, bike shop owners say](#)

Daily Herald: [3 roundabouts in Lake County's 2026 construction program](#)

Daily Herald: [Metra tests preboarding fare checks in pilot program](#)

Shaw Local: [Metra's \\$156 million construction program includes station improvements, crossing upgrades](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Niles brings back its free bus service after an eight-month hiatus](#)

Evanston RoundTable: [City launches new phase of Sidewalk Safety Initiative](#)

Daily Herald: [Illinois House finally approves megaproject bill, but Bears still seek infrastructure funds](#)

Daily Herald: [New DMV with streamlined services debuts in Des Plaines](#)

SmartCitiesDive: [ADA website accessibility compliance deadline extended 1 year for local governments](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Here's how officials want to spend new transit funding this year](#)

Governing: [Five Forces Driving Up Road and Bridge Maintenance Costs](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [First chunk of new transit money to be spent on security, service for CTA, Metra and Pace](#)

Electrek: [New e-bike bill in congress could bring long-awaited federal regulation](#)

Daily Herald: [Five things to know about NITA — Illinois' new transit agency](#)

Northwest Municipal Conference
1600 E. Golf Rd Suite 0700
Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: 847-296-9200 | www.nwmc-cog.org

Eric Czarnota: 847-296-9200 ext. 128

ECzarnota@nwmc-cog.org

Brian Larson: 847-296-9200 ext. 131

BLarson@nwmc-cog.org