

**NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE**

1600 East Golf Road, Suite 0700  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016  
(847) 296-9200 • Fax (847) 296-9207  
[www.nwmc-cog.org](http://www.nwmc-cog.org)



*A Regional Association of Illinois  
Municipalities and Townships  
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

**Northwest Municipal Conference  
Transportation Committee**

**Agenda**

**December 2, 2021**

**8:30 a.m.**

**NWMC Offices and via Zoom Video Conference**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82601001210?pwd=RHhRY3N2Z29sdGRlNHlCbDFJT1diUT09>

**Meeting ID: 826 0100 1210**

**Passcode: TC120221**

**Dial by your location: (312) 626-6799 US (Chicago)**

- MEMBERS**
- Antioch
- Arlington Heights
- Bannockburn
- Barrington
- Bartlett
- Buffalo Grove
- Deer Park
- Deerfield
- Des Plaines
- Elk Grove Village
- Evanston
- Fox Lake
- Glencoe
- Glenview
- Grayslake
- Hanover Park
- Highland Park
- Hoffman Estates
- Kenilworth
- Lake Bluff
- Lake Forest
- Lake Zurich
- Libertyville
- Lincolnshire
- Lincolnwood
- Morton Grove
- Mount Prospect
- Niles
- Northbrook
- Northfield
- Northfield Township
- Palatine
- Park Ridge
- Prospect Heights
- Rolling Meadows
- Schaumburg
- Skokie
- Streamwood
- Vernon Hills
- West Dundee
- Wheeling
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Lincolnwood
  
- Executive Director*
- Mark L. Fowler

- I. Call to Order/Introductions**
  
- II. Approval of October 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)**  
*Action Requested:* Approval
  
- III. Agency Reports**
  - a. CMAP (Attachment B)**
  - b. Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways**
  - c. IDOT Highways**
  - d. Illinois Tollway**
  - e. Metra (Attachment C)**
  - f. Pace**
  - g. RTA (Attachment D)**
  
- IV. IDOT Highways Update**  
Tavis Farmer, Area Programmer with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), will share general updates on IDOT Highways projects in the NWMC area, including those included in their Multi-Year Program.  
*Action Requested:* Informational/Discussion
  
- V. Other Business**
  
- VI. Next Meeting**  
The next meeting of the NWMC Transportation Committee is scheduled for January 27, 2022 at the NWMC Offices and via Zoom video conference.
  
- VII. Adjourn**

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Des Plaines  
Elk Grove Village  
Evanston  
Fox Lake  
Glencoe  
Glenview  
Grayslake  
Hanover Park  
Highland Park  
Hoffman Estates  
Kenilworth  
Lake Bluff  
Lake Forest  
Lake Zurich  
Libertyville  
Lincolnshire  
Lincolnwood  
Morton Grove  
Mount Prospect  
Niles  
Northbrook  
Northfield  
Northfield Township  
Palatine  
Park Ridge  
Prospect Heights  
Rolling Meadows  
Schaumburg  
Skokie  
Streamwood  
Vernon Hills  
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*Executive Director*  
Mark L. Fowler

**NWMC Transportation Committee****Via Teleconference****Thursday, October 21, 2021****Meeting Minutes****Members Present**

Rod Craig, President, Village of Hanover Park, *Co-Chair*  
Marie Hansen, Director of Development Services, Village of Barrington  
Heather Lis, Village Engineer, Barrington  
Darren Monico, Village Engineer, Village of Buffalo Grove  
Bob Benton, Trustee, Village of Deerfield  
Jeff Brady, Director of Planning, Village of Glenview  
Bill McLeod, Mayor, Village of Hoffman Estates  
Nadim Badran, Public Works Director, Lincolnwood  
Sean Dorsey, Public Works Director, Village of Mount Prospect  
Thomas Powers, Village Engineer, Niles  
Bob Israel, Trustee, Northbrook  
Matt Farmer, Village Engineer, Northbrook  
Peter Falcone, Assistant Administrator, Prospect Heights  
Lara Sanoica, Alderman, Rolling Meadows  
Karyn Robles, Director of Transportation, Village of Schaumburg  
Dan Kaup, Director of Public Works, Village of Wheeling

**Others Present**

Eric Heiker, Civil Engineer, City of Des Plaines  
Mary Weber, Assistant Analyst, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Howard Killian, Municipal Services Director, Engineering Resource Associates  
Jeremy Glover, Transportation Associate, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Cecilia Diaz, Transportation Planner, Cook County Dept. of Transportation & Highways  
Joe Cwynar, Senior Project Manager, Engineering Enterprises  
Kelsey Passi, Community Relations Corridor Manager, Illinois Tollway  
Katie Renteria, Community Relations Representative, Metra  
Thomas Gill, President, Thomas Engineering Group  
Steven Andrews, Community Relations Representative, PACE  
Rick Mack, Community Affairs Administrator, METRA  
Lindsay Hollander, Senior Policy Analyst, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Gordon Smith, Director, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning  
Dan Kedzrzak, P.E., Chastain & Associates  
Larry Bury, Deputy Director, NWMC  
Kendra Johnson, Program Manager for Transportation, NWMC  
Mark Fowler, Executive Director, NWMC  
Eric Czarnota, Program Associate for Transportation, NWMC

**I. Call to Order/Introductions**

Mayor Craig called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

**II. Approval of September 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Trustee Benton moved approval of the September 16, 2021 meeting minutes. Ms. Robles seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**III. Agency Reports**

**A. CMAP** – Ms. Weber reported that last week, the CMAP and MPO policy board approved its FFY 2022 – 2026 Shared Fund program. She shared that CMAP has updated its Community Data Snapshots with data from the 2020 Census. Trustee Israel asked if there was more in-depth data breakdowns available such as age demographics. Ms. Weber said that she was not sure because the final 2020 Census data is still not available yet and that she would follow up with other CMAP staff.

**B. CCDOTH** – Ms. Diaz reported that they are evaluating the Invest in Cook program after gathering feedback from the region. She noted that CCDOTH would host a 3 part webinar on Wednesday, October 27 in conjunction with the FRA on railroad trespassing and suicide prevention which included federal and state funding opportunities for public health and safety.

**C. IDOT Highways** – No report.

**D. Illinois Tollway** – Ms. Passi announced that the process to approve the 2022 budget is underway and that the general public is encouraged to visit the Illinois Tollway website to review the tentative budget book. She added that two virtual public hearings will be held on Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup> and that the Tollway anticipates approval of the budget at their December board meeting. Ms. Passi reported on the expansion of the I-PASS assist program which helps individuals and families recognize the benefits of I-PASS. Finally, she updated the Committee on the Hinsdale Oasis pavilion closure as the over the road structure is removed as a part of the Central Tri-State project.

**E. Metra** – Mr. Mack reported that the Metra Board approved and released their 2022 budget at their October meeting. This budget will not increase fare prices and will help restore service to pre pandemic levels. He also noted that Metra is looking into a new \$6 pass that would allow for unlimited rides within 3 zones for a full day. He reported that Metra will also be reducing the expiration date for their 10 ride ticket from one year to 90 days and the one way ticket from 90 days to 14 days.

**F. Pace** – Mr. Andrews noted that public budget hearings started and that the hearing for North Cook County will be held virtually on Friday October 22. He reported that Pace will be working to reverse some of the route reductions that occurred because of the pandemic as well as introducing a few new ones. Mr. Andrews reported that \$15 million will be used for these changes and \$300 million towards capital projects throughout the region. He reported that PACE Executive Director Rocky Donahue will be retiring at the end of the year.

**G. RTA** – No report.

**IV. Status of Metra Negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad**

Mr. Mack reported that the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad has noted its desire to leave the commuter rail business to focus solely on freight. He discussed Metra's lawsuit with the UP citing their common carrier obligation; however, a

judge ruled in favor of the UP. Mayor Craig reported that Metra is carefully considering its legal options with a focus on keeping commuter rail service running. Several members discussed recent developments concerning sale of UP-owned station properties throughout the region. Mr. Mack mentioned that if a municipality was interested in buying their station property, Metra can provide a contract template. Both Mr. Mack and Mayor Craig noted that Metra and UP will continue to run commuter train service as negotiations continue.

**V. CMAP Presentation – Transportation Fees, Fines, & Fares**

Ms. Hollander presented an overview of the CMAP report, *Improving Equity in Fees, Fines, and Fares*, which covers the financial realities households in the Chicago region face regarding transportation fees, fines and fares. The report focused on how the region can raise sufficient revenues for the transportation system while promoting more equitable outcomes. Some of the recommendations made in the report included: improving mobility options, making transportation fees more affordable for households with low incomes, pilot initiatives that coordinate fee and fare collection, and implementation of traffic and parking violation fine reform.

**VI. Other Business**

None.

**VII. Next Meeting**

Mayor Craig noted the next meeting of the NWMC Transportation Committee is scheduled for December 2, 2021 at the NWMC offices and via Zoom Video conference.

**VIII. Adjourn**

Trustee Benton moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 a.m. Trustee Israel seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**CMAP Updates – November 22, 2021****CMAP News**

The CMAP office is now open daily and [staff](#) are transitioning to hybrid work schedules. [CMAP committee meetings](#) may be held in-person or virtually, depending on the unique situations and requirements of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) that apply to each committee.

For general questions, you can send an email through our [contact form](#) and remember to stay up-to-date by subscribing to CMAP's Weekly Update emails or [viewing online](#).

**Job Opportunities**

CMAP is hiring for several positions, including an [Associate Policy Analyst](#) under the Plan Implementation and Legislative Affairs (PILA) division, a [Digital Communications Senior, Associate Designer](#), and [Strategic Alignment and Innovation Director](#) in the Communications and Engagement Division, and three Principal Planners for [Technical Assistance, SPR and Economic Collaboration](#), and a [Regional ADA Coordinator](#) in the Planning Division. Visit CMAP's [Careers page](#) to discover more job opportunities.

The McHenry Council of Mayors is hiring a Planning Liaison. Visit the McHenry County [Careers](#) page, and search for "Planning Liaison" to view the job announcement.

**What does the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure plan mean for northeastern Illinois?**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure plan, makes generational investments for rebuilding the nation's roads, bridges, and rails. More than \$567 billion of funding will go toward projects and programs that affect every aspect of transportation. It expands access to clean drinking water, addresses climate change, strengthens the nation's broadband infrastructure, and supports safer travel. A [new update](#) from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) details key transportation provisions in the IIJA and the funding estimates for Illinois.

**A Route to Work — and a Better Quality of Life**

CMAP is telling stories throughout the year from residents with disabilities about their experiences with transportation. CMAP is highlighting these stories as we support our partners with [implementing ADA transition plans](#) and creating a more inclusive region.

Lavelle Howell has been a dedicated transit rider for more than 25 years. As a resident of Chicago's South Side who does not drive, Lavelle depends on the Chicago Transit Authority to travel around the city — including reaching his job. In [this Q&A](#), Lavelle shares how transit is critical to his employment and quality of life.

**Ride-hailing, Bike-share Services Add New Dynamic to Regional Mobility**

Even before the onset of COVID-19, [new and emerging forms of mobility](#) were gaining popularity in northeastern Illinois. In the fourth and final part of the [My Daily Travel](#) series, CMAP looks at the potential effects ride-hailing and bike-share services could have on regional mobility going forward.

**Moving Forward on Regional Economic Recovery**

CMAP's Regional Economic Recovery Task Force met last week to wrap up its work and ensure continued collaboration on building back a stronger and more inclusive regional economy. The task force, which included leaders from across northeastern Illinois, was [assembled in November 2020](#) at the request of the region's seven county board chairs and the City of Chicago.

The task force resulted in [several key initiatives](#), including "The Only Thing Missing Is You" tourism campaign; a regional economic development collaborative; and efforts to promote access to 2-1-1, a resource that connects residents with housing, transportation, and other assistance in their communities. The group also discussed next steps and future collaboration on equitable economic progress.

## **Program Status Updates**

### **CRRSAA Program**

On December 27, 2020, Title IV of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) was enacted. This Act included a local government component that resulted in the allocation of \$42,647,247 to be programmed and managed by CMAP. Eligibility for these funds is similar to the STP funds distributed to the councils and CDOT on an annual basis. As such, CMAP has [distributed](#) these funds in a manner that is similar the annual STP-Local distribution process.

CMAP also developed [guidance](#) for the programming and active program management of these CRRSAA funds to maximize the impact of these funds on the region's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. To ensure that funds are obligated prior to sunset, project selection will balance consideration of the amount of funds available, project readiness, and implementing projects that have a meaningful innovation, equity and safety impact on the region's ongoing recovery efforts. More details on the projects selected by individual councils, CDOT, and the STP Project Selection Committee can be found on the Surface Transportation Program [web page](#).

Staff Contact: [Kama Dobbs](#) (312-386-8710)

### **Surface Transportation Program**

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee approved the [FFY 2022-2026 Shared Fund program](#). The STP Project Selection Committee (PSC) met on October 28, 2021, and approved the proposed [CRRSAA funding allocations](#) and discussed the [STP Shared Fund Methodology Discussion outline](#), which lays out a tentative schedule for the committee to discuss changes to the STP Shared Fund methodology throughout 2022.

The next STP PSC meeting will be held on February 10, 2022. Meeting materials will be posted on the [committee web page](#) one week in advance. Program status reports for the STP Shared Fund, based on quarterly updates submitted by project sponsors and an accounting of available, programmed, and obligated funds is for the region are available on CMAP's [STP web page](#).

Staff Contact: [Kama Dobbs](#) (312-386-8710)

### **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives (TAP-L)**

The December 2, 2021 meeting of the CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) will not be held and the next meeting will be held on February 10, 2022. Meeting materials will be posted on the [committee web page](#) one week in advance.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee approved the [FFY 2022 - 2026 CMAQ and TAP-L programs](#). The CMAQ PSC met on October 28, 2021, and approved [changes to the CMAQ and TAP-L Status Update procedures](#). New forms implementing these changes will be posted on the [Program Management and Resources](#) page.

Staff Contact: [Doug Ferguson](#) (312-386-8824), [Elliott Lewis](#) (312-386-8664)

## Regional Safety Action Agenda

CMAP is continuing its work to improve traffic safety and address the growing number of fatalities and injuries. Our Safety Resource Group met for the third time in October to discuss recommendations related to speed management through design, policy, education and enforcement. Topics included ways to improve design to support lower speeds, appropriate speed limits in urban environments, effective and equitable enforcement strategies and how to improve safety data for our region. The discussion points are being incorporated into the speed management paper which is in production. An [update](#) on the group's work was presented at the July 16, 2021 CMAP Transportation Committee.

Staff Contact: [Victoria Barrett](#)

## CMAP Products and Data

### Understanding the costs and benefits of tax incentives

Local governments often use tax incentives to encourage development and strengthen their communities. But before using these tools, they must ask whether tax incentives are the most effective way to achieve their community's goals.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has created [Are tax incentives the right tool for this development?](#), a new pamphlet to help local governments in northeastern Illinois assess the costs and benefits of three common incentive types: tax increment financing districts, sales tax rebates, and property tax abatements. This piece is a companion to [Improving local development incentives](#), a technical guide published in 2020 that provides clear strategies and practices for more effective incentive use.

### New Community Data Snapshots

CMAP recently updated its [Community Data Snapshots](#) with [new data from the 2020 Census](#). These data-rich snapshots — one for each of the region's 284 municipalities, 77 Chicago neighborhoods, and seven counties — summarize demographics, housing, employment, transportation habits, and other key details. They help local leaders and the public track progress and make informed decisions in their communities.

The new census data has been incorporated into the General Population Characteristics table, which includes information on total population, total households, average household size, and percent population change since 2010 and 2000. Raw data, including more detail, is available on the [Data Hub](#).

## From Our Partners

### City of Chicago Pilots Income-Based Traffic Fines

As part of its recently passed [2022 budget](#), the City of Chicago will pilot [traffic fine reforms](#) to reduce the burden on residents with low income. Implementing fine reform is a key recommendation of Improving equity in transportation fees, fines, and fares, a CMAP report published earlier this year. The report details how transportation fees, fines, and fares impact residents with low income and people of color and recommends policy changes to improve equity. Under the two-year Clear Path Relief Pilot Program, people who make less than 300 percent of the federal poverty level could qualify to pay 50 percent less for traffic fines. Chicago also offers a ticket debt relief program.

[CMAP's report](#) highlights the disproportionate burden of traffic fines, which can result in late fees and spiraling debt with escalating consequences for residents with low income. The report recommends adopting income-based fines or waivers, as well as improving collection practices.

## **Funding Opportunities**

### **Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program**

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements grant program for nearly \$362 million. The program will fund a variety of projects including those that deploy railroad safety technology, capital projects that address rail service congestion challenges, reduce congestion and facilitate ridership growth along heavily traveled rail corridors, and/or improve short-line or regional railroad infrastructure, highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects, and rail line relocation and improvement projects. States, local governments, intercity rail passenger carriers, Class II and Class III railroads, and others are eligible to apply through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by **5:00 pm ET on November 29, 2021**. Match rates may vary based on the source of awarded funding. Additional details can be found in the [NOFO](#).

## **Public Input**

### **ON TO 2050/FFY 2022-26 TIP Conformity Analysis and TIP Amendment**

CMAP released the following conformity analysis of ON TO 2050 and the FFY 2022-2026 [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP). Please review the [ON TO 2050/TIP conformity analysis](#) and [TIP amendment 22-03](#). Comments may be submitted to CMAP by [mail](#), [email](#), or phone (312-454-0400) through **Tuesday, December 7**.

### **McHenry County Moves 2050**

Transportation impacts everyone - no matter where you live, play, shop, or work, it's important to get involved and make sure your voice is heard! McHenry County is currently seeking public input on their county-wide long-range transportation plan via [this survey](#). Additional information about the plan development process and timeline is available at [mchenrycountymoves2050.com](http://mchenrycountymoves2050.com).

### **Engage with CMAP to share your thoughts on planning projects**

Plans that reflect the values and priorities of their communities require meaningful public participation from residents and stakeholders. The [Engage with CMAP](#) website allows residents to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns on current planning projects in the region. Stay informed and connected by checking out the site. We look forward to hearing from you!

## **Opportunities**

### **National Highway Institute (NHI) Web-based Training**

The NHI has no-cost trainings available that are recommended for engineers and construction workers. These includes topics such as such as Introduction to Safety Inspection of In-Service Bridges, Chip Seal Best Practices, Pipe Installation, Inspection, and Quality, Introduction to a Transportation Asset Management Plan and Hot In-Place Recycling. To browse courses and register visit <http://bit.ly/nhitraining> and enter your government email.





November 17, 2021

**RE: Union Pacific Marketing Program to Sell Stations**

Dear Mayors and Managers:

This letter is a follow up to a letter sent to your community in September 2021, as an update on Metra's response to Union Pacific's (UP) purchase agreement with an unnamed developer for the sale of 41 properties near Metra stations along the UP lines and UP's offer to Metra to purchase some or all those 41 parcels on similar terms and conditions as the purchase agreement with the developer.

You'll recall Metra was given notice of the sales on September 28, 2021 and was required to notify UP of Metra's intent to purchase some or all the properties within forty-five days of that notice, which was Friday, November 12, 2021.

Metra worked with the communities involved to get necessary information, and Metra has offered to act as any municipality's conduit for the purchase of the property affected at their station. Metra understands some communities may need more than forty-five days to determine whether such a purchase was desirable.

Therefore, on Friday, November 12, 2021, Metra sent its required notice letter to UP, informing that Metra accepts UP's offer to purchase all 41 properties contemplated in the September 28 notice. As previously stated, Metra does not have the capital budget to acquire any of these properties but given the terms and conditions of the purchase and sale agreement for the properties, Metra will allow each municipality more time to determine if it would like to purchase its relevant affected property, with Metra only acting on its behalf.

Metra is willing to enter into an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with each municipality to purchase that affected property and transfer it to the municipality if the municipality elects to finance the cost of the acquisition.

Metra still intends to do all it can to work with each municipal partner by: first, if invited, Metra will be at the table with each municipality to review every proposal to ensure the same level of commuter service and, second, act as a channel to acquire and convey each property financed by a municipality. Metra still believes that maintaining the "status quo" for most municipalities is the best option, considering the parcel involved and the fact that there are ample local government control mechanisms to prevent undesired outcomes.

Please feel free to reach out to your Metra community relations representative with any questions or concerns or to start the IGA process. I will personally see to the best of Metra's ability that your questions are answered, and your concerns addressed.

Sincerely,

*Anthony Ognibene*

Anthony Ognibene  
Director of Real Estate & Contract Management

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Metra Board approves 2022 budget**

*Includes no fare increase, and adds new \$6 Day Pass pilot to incentivize short trips*

CHICAGO (Nov. 12, 2021) – The Metra Board of Directors today approved a 2022 operating budget of \$900 million and a 2022 capital program of nearly \$261 million. The operating budget makes conservative assumptions about ridership growth in 2022 but funds the restoration of service to pre-pandemic levels. To incentivize short trips and attract more customers, the agency will test a new \$6 Day Pass that will be valid for unlimited rides within three zones for a full day. There will be no fare increase next year.

“There’s still a great deal of uncertainty nearly two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, but our job is to be there for our riders,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski. “Adopting a budget with a conservative outlook to ridership growth and using federal relief funding so that we can ramp up our service in 2022 means that we’ll be ready when *My Metra* riders are ready.”

The operating budget assumes Metra will begin the year with ridership at about 25% of pre-pandemic levels and finish the year at about 35%. That conservative assumption for ridership growth projects \$146.4 million from fares and other system-generated revenues. The \$900 million budget also uses \$458.8 million in revenues from the regional transportation sales tax and \$294.8 million in federal COVID relief funding for operations.

The new \$6 Day Pass, valid for unlimited travel all day between three zones or less, will be offered as a one-year pilot program in addition to the current \$10 Day Pass, which is valid for unlimited travel all day across all 10 fare zones. The three-zone pass will be a more affordable option for shorter and intermediate trips, such as between suburbs or between Chicago neighborhoods, and could also be useful for college students commuting to class. Both day passes will be available only in the Ventra app, and the Round Trip Plus Ticket will be discontinued.

“With the new Day Pass, we want to provide our riders with value and the flexibility they need right now,” Derwinski said. “We are committed to rebounding from the pandemic and giving our riders schedules that accommodate their needs so that *My Metra* remains the region’s safest and most efficient transportation option.”

Other fare changes include reducing the expiration dates on the 10-Ride Ticket from one year to 90 days and on the One-Way Ticket from 90 days to 14 days. The changes will begin Feb. 1, 2022.

Metra's 2022 capital budget of nearly \$261 million continues significant investment in railcars, locomotives, bridges and stations. The work includes:

- \$40.8 million for **rolling stock**, primarily rehabilitations and upgrades to current cars and locomotives
- \$46.2 million for **bridges, track, and structures**
- \$50.6 million for **signal, electrical and communications**
- \$33.4 million for **facilities and equipment**
- \$59.4 million for **stations**, primarily rehabilitations and replacements to existing stations, platforms, shelters, and elevators
- \$30.5 million for **support activities**

The 2022 capital program is funded by \$181.6 million in federal formula funds, \$74 million from the state and \$5.5 million from the RTA.

###

### ***About Metra***

*Metra is an essential resource that safely and reliably connects individuals to the things that matter most in their lives — their work, their homes, and their families.*

Connect with Metra: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [metra.com](#)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Metra approves ticket vending machine contract to make buying tickets easier and more convenient***\$70 million deal also lays foundation for revolution in fare collection*

CHICAGO (Nov. 12, 2021) – By approving a \$70 million contract to buy and service new ticket vending machines at every station, the Metra Board of Directors on Friday did more than just make buying Metra tickets easier and more convenient – they also laid the foundation for a possible revolution in the way the agency sells and collects fares.

“These machines will allow Metra to meet a longstanding goal of eliminating cash sales of tickets onboard trains, and all the accounting hassles and safety issues that go with onboard cash sales,” said Metra Executive Director/CEO Jim Derwinski. “But they also will do much, much more, such as make tickets easier and more convenient to purchase, reduce person-to-person contact, speed up fare validation, reduce missed sales, reduce fare evasion, reduce printing costs, and allow for more flexible and promotional ticketing.”

“And, although other changes also would be needed, these vending machines can facilitate a best practices ‘proof of payment’ fare system – in which a ticket is required to board a train, with fines for those found without a valid ticket – and fare integration with CTA and Pace.”

The Metra Board approved a two-phase contract with VenTek International, of Petaluma, Calif., for a total of 650 machines. The total cost, including acquisition and five years of support and maintenance, is not to exceed \$70 million.

The first phase will consist of 225 machines to replace the 45 existing ticket vending machines (at downtown stations and the busiest Metra Electric Line stations) and existing point-of-sale credit card readers at 58 manned stations, and 75 machines to pilot a proof-of-payment system. The second phase will add 350 more machines so that all 242 Metra stations would have at least one vending machine.

The weather-hardened, fully ADA-accessible vending machines will accept cash or credit and could eventually accept Ventra cards. They will sell any Metra ticket, printing them at the time of purchase to save on costs, and will be available 24 hours a day. Currently, most stations do not have agents, and most of the staffed stations have agents only in the morning hours.

Metra expects the first-phase machines to be installed starting in the middle of 2022 and finishing about a year later. Phase Two deployment will depend on when the option is exercised.

In October, 14.3 percent of all ticket sales were through a conductor, 14.3 percent were through a ticket agent, 2 percent were through a vending machine, less than 1 percent were through a transit benefits program and the remainder – 68.6 percent – were through the Ventra app. The app, a popular ticket sales channel for Metra customers since its introduction in 2015, will remain a sales option.

###

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[www.rtachicago.org](http://www.rtachicago.org)

## RTA Updates November 19, 2021

### **Comment on and attend a public hearing for the 2022 regional transit budget and capital program**

On Thursday, November 18, the RTA Board heard presentations on the [Proposed 2022 Operating Budget, Two-Year Financial Plan, and Five-Year Capital Program](#). Overall, the proposed 2022 regional transit operating budget totals approximately \$3.4 billion, an increase of 4.6% over the financial plan for 2022 adopted pre-COVID. The six-county system's proposed five-year capital program totals approximately \$5.3 billion, which is 17.1% less than the 2021-2025 program because the last of the Rebuild Illinois bond funds were programmed in 2020 and 2021.

The RTA welcomes public comment on the proposed budget through Wednesday, December 15, followed by the RTA Board's consideration for approval at its meeting on Thursday, December 16, 2021. On Wednesday, December 1, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., all interested parties are welcome to a virtual public hearing that will include a presentation and then time for comment. The budget, the link to join the meeting, and more details are available on the [Budget](#) page of the RTA website.

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### **Historic investment in transit from new infrastructure bill**

On Monday, November 15, President Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, a five-year surface transportation reauthorization bill that will make a significant investment in the nation's transit assets. The bill provides \$106.9 billion in public transit funding over five years -- an increase of \$41.1 billion or 63 percent from current spending levels. Pending urbanized area apportionments from the FTA, the RTA estimates that the bill will provide an additional \$1.3 billion in formula funding over five years for the larger Chicago urbanized area. This is in addition to the over \$2.7 billion of reauthorized federal formula funding for the region that will be generated under existing spending levels.

The bill contains billions in new discretionary funding opportunities for transit agencies across the nation including doubling the amount of Capital Investment Grant funding -- which has, for example, funded projects like the CTA's Red-Purple Modernization Program -- available to \$23 billion over five years. Also, a new State of Good Repair discretionary program was created with funding levels set at \$300 million per year and funding awarded to up to three recipients per year.

Additionally, the legislation authorizes a new \$1.75 billion discretionary program for station accessibility entitled the All Stations Accessibility Program, which was initially introduced by

Senator Tammy Duckworth. The program will help legacy transit systems like the CTA to bring aging transit infrastructure into ADA compliance.

No money from this legislation is in the currently proposed five-year capital program.

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**Help the RTA develop a strong strategic plan by providing your input and sharing a survey**

Public transit is essential to the region's economic, environmental, and social health. It can be part of the solution for issues including equity, mobility, and accessibility. As the RTA develops the next Regional Transit Strategic Plan for northeastern Illinois, the agency is seeking and hearing input through a variety of activities.

- The RTA welcomes everyone to take and share a [new public survey](#) to help the agency identify issues and priorities.
- On Thursday, November 11, the RTA hosted a public forum that brought leading researchers and advocates to discuss how the agency can apply lessons from the pandemic to reimagine regional transit. Check out a [recording](#) and [recap](#) of the event.
- Since August, Connections, the RTA's blog about the region's transit system, has hosted almost a dozen guest blog posts from national, regional, and local voices on how transit needs to improve. Read recent posts from [John Loper](#), Chief Transportation Planner, DuPage County Division of Transportation; [Kate Lowe](#), Associate Professor, University of Illinois Chicago; and [Audrey Wennink](#), Director of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Council. Look for future posts from Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, Lake County Partners, and more. To submit a blog post, please contact [communications@rtachicago.org](mailto:communications@rtachicago.org).