

# Transportation Newsletter

April 2026  
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Northwest Municipal Conference  
1600 E. Golf Rd. Suite 0700 Des Plaines, IL 60016  
Phone: 847-296-9200      [www.nwmc-cog.org](http://www.nwmc-cog.org)  
Cover Photo: City of Park Ridge, NWMC Staff



Northwest Municipal Conference

## Dates to Remember:

**NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian and Transportation Committee:** Tuesday, April 14, 10:30 a.m. — NWMC Offices and Virtually

**North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee:** Thursday, April 15, 8:30 am— *Village of Glenview*

**NWMC Transportation Committee:** Thursday, April 23 8:30 a.m. — NWMC Offices and Virtually

**Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee:** Friday, April 24, 9:00 a.m.— *Village of Palatine*

## NWMC, BACOG, Host First CMAP Century Plan Local Insights Workshop

On March 31 and in partnership with the Barrington Area Council of Governments (BACOG), the NWMC hosted the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in *Deer Park* for the first [Century Plan](#) Local Insights Workshop. This event brought together local officials and staff to discuss historic regional patterns, current conditions, future trends and how best to address them. The Century Plan will develop a shared vision for the region to guide long-term policies regarding transportation, environment, and the economy.

At the workshop, participants noted a desire for streamlined processes with state and regional partners to help communities maximize development opportunities, regional

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Photo Courtesy of CMAP

coordination to mitigate rising costs of replacing aging infrastructure and purchasing new equipment, and how successful implementation of strategic tools like TIFs and conservation easements can serve as models at a regional scale.

Learn more by visiting the [Century Plan website](#), read up on the [State of the Region](#), and [subscribe](#) to The Century Plan newsletter. Thank you to our regional partners at BACOG and CMAP for a successful event!

## CMAP/RTA Local Technical Assistance Call for Projects Now Open

*From the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP):*

The annual joint call for CMAP's [technical assistance](#) and RTA's [community planning](#) programs is now open. These programs

support communities through planning and implementation assistance.

The [application](#) is available online. The deadline to apply is Friday, April 17 at noon.

A [PDF copy of the application](#) is available to view the questions before applying. Applicants can also save a draft of their application by clicking *save and resume later*. If you would like help with completing the application, please email [applications@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:applications@cmap.illinois.gov) or [alex.waltz@rtachicago.org](mailto:alex.waltz@rtachicago.org).

Communities interested in applying are encouraged to attend one of two upcoming virtual open houses to learn more about available support and the application process: Thursday, April 2 at 9:30 a.m. ([registration link](#)) and Wednesday, April 8 at 1:30 p.m. ([registration link](#)). CMAP and RTA staff members will be available to answer questions during these one-hour sessions.

## NWMC Members Win 2026 APWA Chapter Awards

On March 13, the American Public Works Association (APWA) Chicago Metro Chapter hosted its chapter awards, where multiple NWMC communities were honored. Project of the Year awards were given to the *City of Evanston* in the Structures \$5M to \$25M category for its Evanston Animal Shelter reconstruction. *Elk Grove Village* received the Management Innovation Award for its Elk Grove Business Park Drainage Management project. The *Village of Streamwood* won an award for its IL Route 59 Pedestrian Bridge and Trail Improvements project in the \$5M to \$25M category.

Additionally, *Streamwood's* project won the Public Works Project Excellence Award as the top Chicago Metro Chapter Project of the Year. *Village of Buffalo Grove* Maintenance Superintendent Bryan Beitzel received the Samuel A. Greenley Award for his long-term service in a local public agency and his contributions to advancing public works practices as a member of the American Public Works Association. Congratulations to all recipients on their hard work!

## NWMC Members Named Government Champions

In March, Local Gov 250 and the National Academy of Public Administration announced the Government Champions. "Local Gov 250 is a national effort to honor and elevate the role of local government as the United States approaches its 250th anniversary. Through storytelling, recognition, and innovation, the initiative highlights how cities, counties, regional councils, and tribal governments have shaped – and continue to shape – American democracy from the ground up."

On behalf of the NWMC membership and staff, we proudly congratulate the following NWMC members who received this award:

*Phil Kiraly, Village Manager, Glencoe*

*Ghida Neukirch, City Manager, Highland Park*

*Phil Green, Transportation and Long-Range Planner, Hoffman Estates*

*Molly Talkington, Finance Director, Rolling Meadows*

"These Champions recognize and celebrate the exceptional individuals, from all levels of government, who make a significant impact in their work in cities, counties, regional councils, states and the Federal Government. These individuals are currently working (or recently retired) in government who exemplify "democracy at the doorstep" through dedication, innovation, and the highest sense of public service." Congratulations all!



Photo by NWMC Staff

## 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 \(FHWA\) 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 will offer three webinars on SS4A:

- [Implementation Grants: Tuesday, April 7, 12:30 p.m.](#)
- [Action Plans: Thursday, April 9, 12:30 p.m.](#)
- [Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Grants: Tuesday, April 14, 12:30 p.m.](#)

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.

## APA Opens Spring Virtual Plan Commissioner Training to All

*From the American Planning Association Illinois Chapter (APA-IL):*

The APA-IL's virtual Plan Commissioner Training is happening on April 8 from 7:00-9:00 p.m. If that sounds familiar, that's because it is! The Illinois Chapter has been holding this virtual training in the spring and fall the last couple of years. Plan commissioners and board members dedicate significant time and effort reading packets, reviewing cases, holding public hearings, and considering policies. Yet, they rarely have the opportunity to step back and reflect on the bigger picture: the impact their work has on their community.

Because most commissioners and board members are not professionals in planning or development, they can benefit from additional training to strengthen their understanding of the profession. Even experienced commissioners and board members value the chance to learn what's new in planning and exchange ideas. This training helps commissioners and board members understand the basics of planning and explores how their decisions shape their communities. Who is this training for? All planning officials, boards, and commissions are welcome. This includes Zoning Board of Appeals, Design Review Board, Historic Preservation, etc. To learn more and to register, please visit the [training announcement page](#).

## National Action Plan to End Illegal School Bus Passings

*From the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center:*

The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) presents a [nationwide strategy](#) for addressing illegal school bus passings and improving safety for children traveling to and from school. The plan includes 69 recommendations for State Highway Safety Offices, law enforcement, school districts, and transportation partners focused on enforcement, education, technology, and policy solutions.

## IDOT to Host Special Programs 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](#).

## How to Create a Simple, Streamlined Safe Routes Project Action Plan

*From the Safe Routes Partnership:*

Every successful Safe Routes project begins with a great plan – but sometimes the planning process can be a struggle. The second part of a webinar series will be held Tuesday, April 7 at 12:00 p.m., to show how project planning can be simple, streamlined, and fun! Join us as we discuss the ins and out of Safe Routes to School project planning, from goal setting to evaluation. Part One will focus on the components of a strong project plan and how to get a head start on the planning process. Part Two will dive deeper into developing an action plan and preparing it for grant applications, project proposals, and funding requests. We will have plenty of time to unpack your planning questions and concerns, so come ready to share! [Register here](#).



*Village of Hanover Park*

## Spend Five Days in June With CMAP! Students Invited to Apply for Future Leaders in Planning

*From the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP):*

Today's high school students will be tomorrow's northeastern Illinois' leaders. Do you want to learn how the decisions that shape our region are made? Spend five days in June with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) as part of the [Future Leaders in Planning \(FLIP\)](#) summer program!

CMAP seeks high school students from Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties who want to learn about urban planning and our region and share ideas about how to make northeastern Illinois a better place to live, go to school, work, and play.

When: five-day 2026 FLIP program will take place over two weeks from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day

- Week 1: June 23, 24, 25, 26 (Tuesday – Friday)
- Week 2: June 30 (Tuesday)

Where: Students will meet at CMAP's office at the Old Post Office in downtown Chicago ([433 W. Van Buren St.](#)). The program is fully in person, and it will include field trips.

The program is completely free to students, and includes snacks, meals, public transportation to and from sessions, and materials.

The application deadline is 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 1. [Apply to be part of the 2026 FLIP cohort.](#)

## IDOT Offering Personnel and Process Trainings

IDOT's Technology Transfer Center (T2) is hosting a series of in-person and virtual courses this spring. Upcoming local courses include Flagger Training for Local Public Agency Personnel only on [April 8 \(Elgin\)](#) and [April 15 \(Schaumburg\)](#), and Eminent Domain and Appraisal Issues & Income Property Valuation Techniques on [April 22 \(Schaumburg\)](#). Additionally, IDOT is offering virtual learning opportunities, including OSHA 101 [on April 15](#) and the ADA Coordinators Group Meeting [on May 21](#), both held via Webex. These trainings are designed to support transportation professionals in strengthening technical expertise and staying current with state and federal requirements. Advance registration is required for all sessions. For more information, please visit the T2 [website](#).

## New Corridor Studies Map Added to Local Planning Dashboard

*From the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA):*

Late last year, RTA launched a new [Local Planning Dashboard](#) mapping projects in the Access to Transit program as well as plans related to transit oriented development (TOD). Now, a new map added to the dashboard visualizes the spatial distribution of corridor projects from the [Community Planning program](#). Every project featured in the dashboard has its own standalone project page on RTAMS comprising a project description, current activities, related reports, funding information, and more. [Learn more about RTA's Corridor Studies on RTAMS.](#)

## RTA Begins Transition Working Groups, Focus on Rider Experience, Service Coordination, and Other Key Issues

*From the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA):*

Inter-agency working groups comprised of staff from the RTA, CTA, Metra, and Pace have begun laying the groundwork for the transition to the Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) this June, identifying timelines, key issues, and critical decision-making points for early NITA priorities. The RTA has established five working groups to address budget, fares, service, land-use, and rider information policy changes outlined in the NITA Act. Progress from early meetings of each working group was discussed at the February [RTA Board of Directors](#) meeting, and a presentation is available online. The RTA is seeking input from regional stakeholders, please contact [RTA Government Affairs staff](#) to share your perspectives on these issues.

## NACTO Issues Robotaxi Guidance

*From the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO):*

Robotaxis are here, and cities are the current and future testing and deployment grounds of this new technology. Company narratives promote robotaxis as a “miraculous remedy” to the traffic-safety crisis on U.S. streets and a transformative mobility option for people with disabilities.

Under current regulatory frameworks, city officials have few—if any—tools to align these companies’ operations with city goals. Consequently, a city’s Safe Routes to School coordinator doesn’t have oversight of a vehicle failing to stop for a school bus. A firefighter has no effective way to influence state regulations that could give public safety personnel control of a stopped robotaxi blocking an emergency scene. And a city’s signal engineer cannot clear intersections at the times they need to the most—like when a power outage occurs and traffic signals flash.

To meet this pressing need, NACTO’s new resource —[Robotaxis Aren’t Coming, They’re Here: A Practical Guide for Cities to Get Started](#)— focuses on preparing cities now for the arrival of for-hire, robotaxi passenger services and outlines the most efficient strategies for getting started.



Village of Niles

## Upcoming Transportation-Related Webinars

**Minnesota DOT:** [Vulnerable Road User Safety Countermeasures](#)—April 7, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

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

- April 7, 12:00 p.m.—[Systemic Safety Project Selection Tool](#)
- April 8, 12:00 p.m.—[Public Health Approaches to Population-Level Behavior Change](#)
- April 14, 12:00 p.m.—[Maintaining a Safer Roadway](#)
- April 15, 12:00 p.m.—[MUTCD for First Responders](#)
- April 21, 12:00 p.m.—[Worker Safety](#)
- April 22, 12:00 p.m.—[Safety of Responders on Roads](#)
- April 28, 12:00 p.m.—[Take Action Now—Maintaining Safety](#)
- April 29, 12:00 p.m.—[Road Safety Audits](#)
- May 6, 12:00 p.m.—[Evaluation of the Legal Landscape Impacting First Responders](#)

## Did You Miss It? News Items in Brief

*Daily Herald:* [Arlington Heights first in Illinois to add financial penalties for police camera data misuse](#)

*Daily Herald:* [Time for electric vehicle owners to pony up? Legislation to hike EV fees has a pay-per-mile option](#)

*Capitol News Illinois:* [How Illinois' Road Fund will help fund transit, especially in the Chicago region](#)

*Chicago Tribune:* [\\$100 million Touhy Avenue improvement project breaks ground in Des Plaines](#)

*Daily Herald:* [Nearly a century old, Rand Road bridge in Des Plaines to be rebuilt](#)

*Daily Herald:* [What would robotaxis mean for the Chicago region?](#)

*Daily Herald:* [Take a ride to check out these Bicycle Friendly Communities](#)

*Daily Herald:* ['Sounding the alarm': Metra hopes bridge funding bill gains traction despite distraction](#)

*Daily Herald:* [Bridge connecting two Mount Prospect parks nears construction phase](#)

*Chicago Tribune:* [Feds back off threats to withhold funds from the CTA, but begin pressing the Illinois transportation department](#)

*Transportation for America:* [Yes, even the suburbs want more transit](#)

*Yahoo:* [Drivers are watching YouTube and TikTok behind the wheel. Experts say it's getting worse](#)

*NPR:* [With more older drivers on the road, states try to balance safety and mobility](#)

*IDOT:* [IDOT seeks firms for Northern Illinois Transit Authority transition](#)

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1600 E. Golf Rd Suite 0700  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
Phone: 847-296-9200 | [www.nwmc-cog.org](http://www.nwmc-cog.org)

Eric Czarnota: 847-296-9200 ext. 128  
[ECzarnota@nwmc-cog.org](mailto:ECzarnota@nwmc-cog.org)

Brian Larson: 847-296-9200 ext. 131  
[BLarson@nwmc-cog.org](mailto:BLarson@nwmc-cog.org)