



Transportation Newsletter

December 2023
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Northwest Municipal Conference
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Cover Photo: City of Prospect Heights

STP-L Call for Projects Closing Soon

As a reminder, the Surface Transportation Program - Local (STP-L) Call for Projects (CFP) is now open to member communities in the North Shore and Northwest Council of Mayors. The CFP will run until **December 15** for the Northwest Council of Mayors and until **December 29** for the North Shore Council of Mayors. Projects submitted during this CFP will be eligible for funding during the FFY2025 -2029 period.

In October, staff hosted a CFP workshop. Nearly 60 municipal staff and consultants attended the hybrid event. [A recording of the session is available online.](#) The workshop also covered changes in, and unique aspects of, the Councils' methodologies, managing STP-L projects, and the different funds that may be used. To obtain a copy of the slides, please contact staff.



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

Northwest Council of Mayors STP-L Call for Projects Closes December 15, 5:00 p.m.

North Shore Council of Mayors STP-L Call for Projects Closes December 29, 5:00 p.m.

Pace Commemorates Launch of Pulse Dempster Line

On November 10, Pace commemorated the launch of its newest Pulse service, the Dempster Line. At the new Pulse stop outside the Morton Grove Park District's Prairie View Community Center, speakers touted how the high-frequency express bus service is "Catching Greens" thanks to Transit Signal Priority technology, allowing it to offer service every 15-20 minutes throughout the day from Evanston to O'Hare, and cutting trip times by up to 15 minutes from prior service.

Skokie Mayor George Van Dusen, Senator Ram Villivalam, Representatives Michelle Mussman and Martin Moylan, Cook County Commissioners Josina Morita and Maggie Trevor, Pace Chairman Rick Kwasneski, Pace Directors Chris Canning, David Guerin and Linda Soto, and Pace Executive Director Melinda Metzger spoke in support of improving transit access and service for the entire region. *NWMC Executive Director Mark Fowler and staffers Eric Czarnota and Brian Larson* attended on behalf of the Conference, with Brian celebrating the Pulse Dempster Line by taking the new service to and from the event. For more information, please see [Pace's press release](#).

Photos by NWMC Staff

RTA's Access to Transit Program Applications Close Soon

As a reminder, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has opened its Access to Transit program Call for Projects. The Access to Transit program is open to municipalities, counties, and the service boards (CTA, Metra, and Pace) that have completed, or are in the process of completing, a planning study that specifically recommends bicycle and/or pedestrian access improvements to transit.

The RTA is also seeking applications to fund Phase II Engineering and Construction of small-scale bike and pedestrian infrastructure improvements resulting from these planning studies. Programs resulting from the RTA's Community Planning or CMAP Technical Assistance programs are prioritized, including those where a municipality has served as a project partner in a corridor study. To learn more about Access to Transit and how to apply, please visit the [Access to Transit webpage](#). The CFP closes on Friday, December 15.



Metra Convenes First Meeting of Community Bike Working Group

On November 6, Metra officials held the first meeting of its Community Bike Working Group to discuss its current and upcoming bicycle infrastructure and resources with interested individuals from across the region. Convened in response to continued community comments about inconsistent application of Metra's bike-on-trains policy, the working group shared how the transit agency is developing new bike rack designs to accommodate the wide variety of bike styles and types. Metra has provided a [recording of the meeting on its YouTube page](#), and for more information, please [read the Streetsblog article on the meeting](#).

It's Wintertime! Are You Watching for Sneckdowns?

As the first snow falls and streets are slowly cleared, transportation agencies are taking a closer look at their intersections to identify wasted space and areas for traffic calming. Enter the *sneckdown*, a portmanteau of *snow* and *neckdowns* (where the sidewalk is extended to slow down drivers). Before the snow is fully cleared from the street, drivers navigate more carefully through intersections and crosswalks, with the remaining snow showing how much space is actually used.

The sneckdown offers a visual way to identify where streets may be overbuilt and where space can be reallocated to walkers and cyclists while creating less dangerous, safer-speed roads. The cities of Philadelphia and Raleigh, North Carolina, are just two major cities who have used sneckdowns to redesign intersections. Read more about sneckdowns in [Bloomberg](#), [The Week](#), [The Economist](#), and for a Chicagoland perspective, [Moss Design](#).

IDOT Announces Truck Access Route Program NOFO

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) recently issued a circular letter announcing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY 2025 Truck Access Route Program (TARP). The fillable TARP application form with instructions is available on the [TARP website](#). Each candidate project must include completed application forms and a project location map. Applications should also provide information on prior commitments by the Department, a description of industries, municipalities, and truck generators along the proposed route, projected growth in the area, and the number of trucks using the proposed route.

The program offers \$45,000 per lane mile and \$22,000 per eligible intersection, with total project funding up to half of the project cost, capped at \$900,000 per project. TARP funds are designated for project construction only and should be submitted for projects ready to advertise within two (2) years. TARP funds are not intended for use in pavement preservation or maintenance projects.

Completed project applications must be submitted to your IDOT District Local Roads and Streets office by Wednesday, December 20. Project award notifications are expected to be announced in early 2024. For inquiries about this program, please contact IDOT Local Planning & Programming Manager Holly Primm, 217-782-1662 or Holly.Primm@illinois.gov.

CMAP ADA Compliance Training Sessions hosted in Arlington Heights

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) hosted its third and fourth Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance training sessions on November 8 and 9 at the *Arlington Heights Senior Center*. The sessions focused on ADA design standards, the self-evaluation process, barriers to access and developing an ADA Transition Plan.

It is important to note that ADA Transition Plan status will be required in future funding program scoring methodologies. *NWMC Program Associate for Transportation Brian Larson* attended the sessions and can assist member communities with completing these ADA-required programs and policies. To view these or earlier training sessions, [recordings and slides are available on the CMAP website.](#)



Fill Out IDOT's Long-Range Transportation Plan Survey

The Illinois Department of Transportation has introduced Move Illinois: the 2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP will strategically outline goals, objectives, and strategies for Illinois' diverse transportation network for the next 20 to 30 years. IDOT is hosting a public survey at www.moveillinois2024.com to help identify the plan's goals and objectives. The LRTP will take place through late 2024, with the final plan complete by the end of 2024. IDOT is currently soliciting input through their [Move Illinois Survey](#), which will close on Saturday, December 30. IDOT welcomes and encourages community input to develop a well-rounded plan.

IDOT Hosting Virtual Advisory Group Webinars for Long-Range Transportation Plan

The Illinois Department of Transportation invites you to participate in a Virtual Advisory Group webinar for Move Illinois: the 2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This group's input will shape the plan's strategic goals, objectives, and strategies, influencing Illinois' diverse transportation network for the next 20 to 30 years. Please join one of the following dates:

Monday, December 11, 2023, Noon – 1:00 p.m. via [Webex](#)

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. via [Webex](#)

Please register through the links above by Wednesday, December 6 to confirm your attendance. Both webinars will present the same information.

More information can be found by visiting www.moveillinois2024.com.

Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award Open for Applications

Has your city had a great accomplishment making roads safer for children and youth? Applications are now open for the [2024 Vision Zero for Youth US Leadership Award](#) through Saturday, December 16. The award highlights noteworthy practices taken to protect youth road safety to inspire other communities.

Local Researchers Dive Into Transportation Inequities Through Map Analytics

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) has a bevy of researchers analyzing the impacts of the region's transportation system on community inequities. Professor Fabio Miranda has used machine learning to map out sidewalk networks, along with their materials and condition, collecting them into an urban visual analytic framework called [Urban Toolkit](#). Professor Yochai Eisenberg is investigating how well communities are meeting the infrastructure requirements of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act to locate barriers to the mobility of people with disabilities. Professor Eisenberg's work has resulted in an interactive web map called [Project Sidewalk](#) to catalog these barriers. Finally, Dr. P.S. Sriraj and Professor Nebiyu Tilahun have created mapping projects such as the [Metropolitan Chicago Accessibility Explorer](#) to visualize job and amenities access via different transportation modes, as well as research focusing on land mile transit barriers. [Read more about UIC researchers utilizing maps to improve communities.](#)

IDOT Letting Update

January 19 is the first letting for statewide construction projects that are scheduled in 2024. Here are some dates to note in advance of the letting:

December 8 at 10:00 a.m. Transportation Bulletin release (Official advertisement of projects.)

December 29 at 4:30 p.m. Prequalification cutoff (Date that contractors must be qualified to bid on contracts.)

January 12 at 4:30 p.m. Joint venture cutoff (three contractor limit. Date for these groups who want to bid can do so.)

January 16 at 4:30 p.m. Request for authorization to bid cutoff (Final date for contractors who are authorized to bid on contracts.)

January 19 at noon Letting (Bids can be submitted until 11:59 a.m. on the day. Bids are shut down at noon.)

If you are new to the IDOT bid letting process or need updated information, following are some helpful resources:

[Transportation Bulletin](#)

[EBids](#)

[Letting Schedule](#)

[Electronic Subscription Service](#)

[Prequalification](#)

[Authorization to Bid](#)

[Bid Bonds](#)

FHWA has updated its Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities Table

The FHWA [Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities Table](#) has been updated to include new funding sources implemented since the 2022 update. Newly added programs include [Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program](#), [SMART Programs](#), and [Neighborhood Access and Equity Program](#) eligibility under [Reconnecting Communities](#). Electric bicycle and scooter charging, education programs and technical assistance activities have also been added to the list. Please contact NWMC staff if you would like to learn more about these programs.

Upcoming December RTA Engagement Events

The Regional Transportation Authority is hosting some upcoming engagement events for the regional transit system.

On Tuesday, December 5, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. the RTA will host its quarterly [Transit is the Answer coalition meeting](#) at their offices (175 West Jackson Boulevard 22nd Floor Chicago, IL 60604). Attendees will have the opportunity to hear about the latest implementation updates and give input on upcoming projects including the [2024 Regional Transit Budget](#) and our [2024 State Legislative Agenda](#). Then on Thursday December 7, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., the RTA will host a virtual public hearing on [the 2024 proposed regional transit operating budget, two-year financial plan, and five-year capital program](#). [Register here to receive the link to join.](#)

IDOT Releases Build America Buy America Act Final Rule

The Illinois Department of Transportation recently released a [Circular Letter](#) clarifying several requirements for certain materials to be manufactured and produced in the U.S.A. as part of the Build America Buy America (BABA) Act. The final rule categorized changes into four sections: Manufactured Products; Iron and Steel; Construction Materials; and, Aggregates and Cement. Waivers may be requested based on public interest, unreasonable costs or nonavailability. The FHWA general waiver for manufactured products is still in effect, with certain conditions. The Final Rule was effective beginning October 14. If your project received an award between May 14, 2022, and October 14, 2023, or for more general information, please check the [Circular letter](#). For any additional questions please contact Local Project Implementation Engineer Greg Lupton, greg.lupton@illinois.gov or 217-785-1670.

FHWA Now Accepting Applications for ATTAIN

FHWA is now accepting applications for its [Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation \(ATTAIN\) Program](#), which awards funding to eligible entities to deploy, install, and operate advanced transportation technologies that improves safety, mobility, efficiency, system performance, intermodal connectivity, and infrastructure return on investment. Up to \$120 million (\$60 million for FY 2023 and \$60 million for FY 2024) is set aside for the ATTAIN Program to fund grants under this NOFO. Applications are due by Friday, February 2, 2024. FHWA will host an information session on Wednesday, December 6 at 10:30 a.m. – [register here to attend.](#)

Did You Miss It? News Items in Brief

NPR: [Skinny roads save lives, according to a study on the width of traffic lanes](#)

NPR: [Taller cars and trucks are more dangerous for pedestrians, according to crash data](#)

CBS News: [Nation's top auto safety regulator misses deadline on potentially life-saving new rules for vehicle seats](#)

NBC 15: [Additional Amtrak service from Chicago to the Twin Cities, including Glenview, enters final design phase](#)

The Conversation: [The world's 280 million electric bikes and mopeds are cutting demand for oil far more than electric cars](#)

Washington Post: [Earth passed a feared global warming milestone Friday, at least briefly](#)

AASHTO: [AASHTO Board of Directors Passes Safety Resolution](#)

AASHTO: [Annual Meeting Knowledge Session: Putting Transportation Equity into Action](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [Making the holiday trains: How CTA decks the L's at Santa's Skokie workshop](#)

Route 50: [What's driving post-pandemic downtown recoveries?](#)

Daily Herald: [Seismic shifts coming to Metra zoning and fares in 2024](#)

WBEZ: [Right turn on red? With pedestrian deaths rising, US cities are considering bans](#)

Chicago Tribune: [EVBox launches fast-charger production in Libertyville, as part of national push for widespread EV adoption](#)

Route 50: [Looming 'fiscal cliff' shows deeper problems with transit funding, researchers say](#)

Daily Herald: [Tollway shifting to stickers in January, transponders will still work](#)

National League of Cities: [10 tips to get a federal transportation grant](#)

Daily Herald: [How Des Plaines is improving pedestrian safety and trail access](#)

Recent and Upcoming Webinars

- [FHWA - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\) and Federal Requirements - Guidance for Local & Tribal Agencies](#)
- [See the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center's full list of upcoming and archived webinars](#)
- [FHWA - December 6, 12:30 pm: Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation \(ATTAIN\) grant program webinar](#)

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*NWMC staff wishes everyone a Happy Holiday Season and Wonderful New Year.
Special thanks to our Bicycle & Pedestrian and Transportation Committee Members
for their dedication throughout the year:*

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Samantha Maximilian
Village of Skokie

Jeff Brady
Village of Glenview

Dan Kaup
Village of Wheeling





FUNDING SAFETY FOR ALL.

FHWA encourages implementation of projects and programs that improve safety, equity, and accessibility for all road users. Take the first step toward exploring federal funding opportunities for your Complete Streets Network.

[Federal Transit Administration Grant Programs](#)
[National Highway Performance Program](#)
[Surface Transportation Block Grant Program](#)
[Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program](#)
[Highway Safety Improvement Program](#)
[Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program](#)
[Bridge Investment Program](#)
[Transportation Alternatives](#)
[Carbon Reduction Program](#)

[Tribal Transportation Program](#)
[Metropolitan Planning Funds](#)
[PROTECT](#)
[Railway-Highway Crossing Program](#)
[Statewide Planning and Research](#)
[Recreational Trails Program](#)
[Bridge Formula Program](#)
[Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing](#)
[TIFIA Program](#)
[Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Programs](#)

[Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund](#)
[ATTAIN](#)
[RAISE Discretionary Grants](#)
[INFRA Grants](#)
[Safe Streets and Roads for All Grants](#)
[Transit Oriented Development](#)
[Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#)
[Areas of Persistent Poverty Program](#)
[National Scenic Byways Program](#)
[Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program](#)



Interested in learning more? Visit the FHWA Complete Streets Funding site: <https://highways.dot.gov/complete-streets/make-complete-streets-default-approach>. In addition to funding, FHWA provides guidance, technical assistance, and other resources to improve safety in projects, policies, and procedures.