

Transportation Newsletter

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Northwest Municipal Conference
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Cover Photo: Village of Grayslake



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

Wednesday, February 15, 10:30 a.m. —
NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

Wednesday, February 24, 8:30 a.m. —
NWMC Transportation Committee

Transportation Committee Discusses RTA Strategic Plan, New Transportation Legislation

On January 27, the NWMC Transportation Committee met and received a presentation from Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Communications Specialist Melissa Meyer and Principal Planner Peter Kersten on the organization's new [Regional Transit Strategic Plan](#). The plan focuses on three tracks: funding; planning; and, transparent and collaborative engagement. After stakeholder engagement and development of the draft plan during this year, it will be presented to the RTA board for adoption in January 2023. In other business, the committee discussed two bills ([HB 4276](#) and [SB 2930](#)) filed with the General Assembly that would affect the rules of the road for bicyclists and scooter operators. Please contact staff with comments or additional feedback on either of the bills.

Northwest/North Shore Councils Open Calls for Projects

As a reminder, the Northwest and North Shore Councils of Mayors have opened their biennial calls for local Surface Transportation Program (STP-L) projects. The submission deadline is Friday, March 18 at 5:00 p.m. Eligible projects must be sponsored by communities belonging to one of the two Councils of Mayors staffed by NWMC and must be located on a federally eligible route. Selected projects will be incorporated into a five year program covering federal fiscal years 2023–2027.

NWMC transportation staff hosted a [virtual workshop](#) on January 6 to communicate important information on the calls for projects. The workshop provided a brief overview of STP-L funding and requirements, a timeline of events and deadlines, specific application requirements for each council and tips for successful project management.

Application materials should be submitted via email to northshorepl@nwmc-cog.org for North Shore Council projects and northwestpl@nwmc-cog.org for Northwest Council projects. For more information, including each council's methodology and application materials, please visit the [North Shore](#) and [Northwest](#) Council websites.



City of Evanston

Northwest Technical Committee Approves STP Methodology Changes

At their January 28 meeting, the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee approved several amendments to the Council's Surface Transportation Program (STP) Handbook, including: allowing cost increases for Phase II engineering; changing when cost increase requests can be submitted; and, providing further guidance for prioritization when considering multiple requests. Along with the STP changes, two cost increase requests for the *Village of Arlington Heights* and the *Village of Streamwood* and three functional classification requests for the *Village of Wheeling* were approved. All items will be presented to the full Northwest Council of Mayors for approval at the February 9 NWMC Board meeting.



Village of Lincolnwood

Cook County Opens Application Period for Invest in Cook and CDBG Programs

The Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DoTH) is accepting applications for the [Invest in Cook](#) grant program, which assists communities with transportation infrastructure improvements. The Cook County Bureau of Economic Development (BED) is also accepting applications for the [Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) program](#), which supports economic development activities throughout the county. Both programs' application periods will close on Wednesday, March 16 at 5:00 p.m. The DoTH and BED hosted a virtual workshop to provide further information on the programs and application processes, and recordings are available on [Cook County's website](#). For more information on the Invest in Cook program, please email InvestinCook.CC@cookcountyil.gov and for the CDBG program, please email info.edev@cookcountyil.gov.

IDOT Accepting Applications for Six Highway Safety Programs

The Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering has posted six Highway Safety Program Notice of Funding Opportunities for federal fiscal year 2023. Details on each program's application period and submission processes are as follows:

Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP)

- Application Deadline - Monday, February 14 at 4:00 p.m.
- Application Submission – VIA email to DOT.TSGRANTS@illinois.gov.

Non-Enforcement Safety Program, Motorcycle Awareness Program, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program, Racial Profiling Program, and the Traffic Records Program

- Application Deadline - Friday, February 18 at midnight
- Application Submission – VIA AmpliFund

For more information on all six programs, please visit IDOT's [Illinois Traffic Safety Grants website](#).

North Shore Technical Committee Approves Program Update, Talks Call for Projects

On January 20, the North Shore Technical Committee hosted their first meeting of 2022. In addition to reports from regional transportation partners, the Committee approved updates and changes to the council's Surface Transportation Program (STP-L). Finally, and as reported on p. 2, staff presented an overview of the 2022 STP-L Call for Projects, including program requirements, timelines and North Shore council-specific application requirements.



City of Prospect Heights

Provide Input on I-294 Tri-State Market & Facilities Feasibility Study

Pace Bus and the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) are evaluating options for Pace express bus operations on the I-294/I-90 corridor from Harvey to Schaumburg with the [I-294 Tri-State Market & Facilities Feasibility Study](#). Pace seeks to leverage the opportunities provided by upgrades from the ongoing Illinois Tollway Central Tri-State Project, including Flex Lanes to support express bus service and further the goals of the agency's strategic plan, [Driving Innovation](#).

With the study now complete, Pace and the RTA are seeking feedback from regional stakeholders to evaluate the [draft recommendations](#). Study recommendations include: plans for faster and more reliable express bus service; expansion of bus service to new or underserved areas within the study area; proposed in-line bus rapid transit (BRT) stations, park-n-rides, roadway improvements, and other infrastructure needed to support this new and improved service; and, a plan for implementing these improvements and associated support infrastructure. Feedback can be submitted through a [survey available online](#).



Village of Buffalo Grove

New Resources Available to Help Navigate Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

On November 15, President Biden signed the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), which allocated funding to over 350 distinct programs across more than a dozen federal departments and agencies. To help achieve the goals outlined in the legislation, a [guidebook](#) was released to provide a roadmap to the funding available under the law, grouped by issue area. Subsequent versions with updated guidance are expected to be released as more information becomes available.

Further guidance on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is also available from The Atlas, which provides case studies and other resources to local government leaders. Their [handbook](#) is also divided into sections, and is intended to help local leaders allocate funding into impactful projects quickly, with a specific focus on areas of the legislation most relevant to state and local governments.



City of Highland Park

IDOT Releases Updated Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) recently adopted the 2022 Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, including the 2022 Supplemental Specifications and Recurring Special Provisions. Electronic versions are available for download on [IDOT's website](#), while hard copies are available to public agencies for free by completing and submitting a [Public Officials Manual Order Form](#) to DOT.Policy@illinois.gov. In addition, IDOT has noted that future updates to the specifications and special provisions will include summaries of the changes that will be communicated through new Specification and Special Provisions Memorandums. For more information, please contact DOT.LocalPolicy@illinois.gov.

Application Period Open for \$1.5B in Transportation Grants

The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) has issued a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity, or [RAISE program](#). RAISE is the first discretionary funding program included in the infrastructure package to begin accepting applications. A variety of road, transit, rail and trail projects are eligible for funding. This year, the U.S. DOT will factor in new criteria as it evaluates projects to prioritize increased mobility and expanded connectivity for all users of a project, particularly non-motorized travelers such as pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders. The U.S. DOT is also urging applicants to consider how their projects can address challenges around climate change, racial inequity and workforce development. Applications for RAISE grants are due by April 14 and grantees will be notified by August 12. For more information, please see the [RAISE Program NOFO](#).



Village of Wheeling

IDOT Issues Revised STP Funding Allotments

Following the initial release of federal fiscal year 2023 allotments for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) published revised figures for each relevant formula program's allotment. The revisions are the result of underestimated apportionment figures, which caused allotments to increase by approximately 33 percent versus the initially estimated 27 percent increase. For more information on each program's total allotments and distribution formulas, please see [IDOT Circular Letter 2022-01 – Revision #1](#) or contact the IDOT District 1 Office.

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