

# Transportation Newsletter

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Northwest Municipal Conference  
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Cover Photo: NWMC Staff



Northwest Municipal Conference

## Dates to Remember:

**NWMC Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee:**  
Tuesday, February 11, 10:30 a.m. — NWMC  
offices and virtually

**NWMC Transportation Committee:**  
Thursday, February 27, 8:30 a.m. — NWMC  
offices and virtually

## NWMC Bike/Ped Committee Examines Winter Facility Maintenance Policies

The NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee met Tuesday, January 14 and delved into a decade of NWMC surveys on municipal bicycle and pedestrian facility maintenance plans, paying particular attention to winter weather clearance policies. The discussion ranged from how communities plan for long-term infrastructure maintenance to municipal sidewalk clearance programs, focusing on resident interest and manpower availability.

The Committee also discussed opportunities for inter-governmental agreements, particularly where bicycle and pedestrian facilities are maintained by park districts, forest preserves and school districts, which can affect a municipality's bicycle and pedestrian network. Staff is currently working on a follow-up survey.



## **IDOT Comments on Federal Funding Impacts**

Recently the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) produced a circulation letter in response to the recent federal funding freeze, which can be read [here](#). If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact NWMC Program Associates for Transportation Eric Czarnota, [eczarnota@nwmc-cog.org](mailto:eczarnota@nwmc-cog.org), or Brian Larson, [blarson@nwmc-cog.org](mailto:blarson@nwmc-cog.org).

## **Apply Today for Invest in Cook Grants**

The 2025 Invest in Cook grant program is now open for applications. Invest in Cook offers \$8.5 million to local governments and agencies with transportation or recreational trail authority in Cook County. This funding resource supports planning, engineering, right-of-way acquisition and construction for municipal projects that follow [Connecting Cook County](#), the county's long-range transportation plan. For more information, including a list of previously funded projects, please visit the [Invest in Cook website](#), or email [InvestinCook.CC@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:InvestinCook.CC@cookcountyil.gov). Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 21.

## **USDOT PROTECT Grants Make Transportation Infrastructure Resilient to Natural Hazards**

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) has opened applications for the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program. This program will offer \$576 million in FFY 2024-2025 for planning and construction of surface transportation facilities to be resilient to natural hazards such as climate change, flooding and extreme weather events. Learn more about the PROTECT grant and how to apply by visiting the program [webpage](#). Applications are due by Monday, February 24.

## **IEPA Electric Vehicle Rebate Program Now Open**

For communities seeking to incentivize residents' adoption of electric vehicles, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) will open its next all-electric vehicle rebate application cycle on Tuesday, January 21, with applications closing on Wednesday, April 30. Approximately \$14 million in rebates will be available this year, with low-income applicants receiving priority. For more information, please visit the [Electric Vehicle Rebate Program](#).

Village of Buffalo Grove



## CNT Launches New Interactive Indexing Tools for Community Analyses

The Center for Neighborhood and Technology (CNT) recently updated its [Housing and Transportation \(H+T\) Index](#) and [AllTransit](#) tools integrating in the latest 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) data. The H+T Index visualizes community affordability through a combined analysis of housing and transportation costs, allowing communities to analyze specific Census data and its impact on their residents, while AllTransit helps identify transit accessibility to jobs, with the ability to dive into details like level of education, frequency of transit service, income, and much more. Read more about how you can use H+T Index and AllTransit on [CNT's website](#).

## Highlighting Bannockburn's Approach to Cycling Citations

The *Village of Bannockburn* offers a novel approach to address individuals who commit traffic violations while cycling on village roadways. Instead of a formal traffic citation and its attendant fines, eligible individuals can participate in the village's Bicyclist Traffic Citation Diversion Program. By achieving a Bronze Level on [Ride Illinois' Bike Safety Quiz](#), individuals can avoid issuance of a formal traffic citation. For questions about the diversion program, please contact the Bannockburn Police Department, 847-945-8490.

## IDOT Highway Safety Program Grants Now Accepting Applications

IDOT's Bureau of Safety Programs and Engineering (BSPE) has opened its Highway Safety Program grant to applications. A variety of funding opportunities are available, including the [Mini-Grant Enforcement Program](#), the [Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program](#), [Non-Enforcement Program](#), [Pedestrian and Bicycle Program](#), [Traffic Records Program](#), [Racial Profiling Program](#), and [Motorcycle Awareness Program](#). To learn more, access the program's NOFO through the above links, or visit the [BSPE Highway Safety Program](#). Applications are due by Monday, March 3 at 4:00 p.m.

## AARP Offers Community Challenge Grant Funding

The American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) has opened applications for its 2025 Community Challenge grant programs, including Flagship, Capacity-Building and Demonstration Grants. Flagship projects will benefit residents, especially those 50 years of age and older, with creation of vibrant public places, delivering transportation and mobility options, supporting range of housing options, increasing digital connections and supporting community disaster resilience, with up to \$25,000 available per grant. Capacity-Building grants offer \$2,500 to support disaster preparedness, walk and bike audits and home modification programs. Demonstration projects offer up to \$25,000 for projects that enhance pedestrian safety, expand high-speed internet, reconnect divided communities and implement housing design competitions. Applications are due by Wednesday, March 5 at 4:00 p.m. For more information, please visit the [AARP Community Challenge website](#).



## RTA Publishes Transit-Friendly Communities Guide

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) recently released a [Transit-Friendly Communities Guide](#). The guide features transit-friendly design concepts, Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD), land use and market trends, case studies and best practices and an implementation toolkit. Several NWMC members are highlighted as positive examples throughout the guide, including Arlington Heights, Bartlett, Evanston, Glenview, Hanover Park, Niles, Rolling Meadows, Skokie and Winnetka. The guide is a direct implementation step of the RTA's strategic plan, [Transit is the Answer](#) and is available for download [here](#).

## NACTO Releases New Urban Bikeway Design Guide

The third edition of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide is now available for purchase. Updated for the first time in a decade with new detailed policy, planning, and project development guidance, the guide will enable cities to plan and implement bike networks that address the multiple bikeway users. Streetscape illustrations showcase how communities can implement high-quality improvements and interventions within existing space. Read more in [this Streetsblog summary](#), and visit the [guide's store page](#) to purchase a copy.

## Accessible Communities Program Resources

*From our partners at CMAP:*

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) launched the Accessible Communities Program to help communities in northeastern Illinois improve accessibility for their residents and visitors with disabilities. Essential information about improving accessibility can be found on this [CMAP webpage](#) and in the Accessible Communities newsletter. Receive the latest news by updating your subscriber preferences [here](#).

Recordings and slides for CMAP's ADA trainings, which cover ADA and Title II requirements, completing a self-evaluation, the role of an ADA coordinator, developing a transition plan, and PROWAG [available](#).

CMAP is excited to launch the newest initiative in our Accessible Communities program: the [Regional ADA Coordinators Group](#). The next meeting is the morning of February 11 and [registration](#) is open now. This group is for municipal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinators or others interested in learning more about this federally required role. It will connect ADA coordinators from across the region with each other, as well as resources and training.

- If you are an ADA coordinator, [please take this survey](#) to help CMAP understand your role and how we can support your work.
- If you require an accommodation, please email [Accessibility@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:Accessibility@cmap.illinois.gov).

CMAP has also developed [templates and guidance](#) that public entities can use to help meet their legal obligations of providing an ADA notice, grievance procedure, and designating an ADA coordinator.

Contact [Jaemi Jackson](#), Principal Planner and ADA Coordinator, for more information.



## Chicago Region Needs Input in the Safe Travel for All Safety Action Plan Process

As part of a regionwide initiative called [Safe Travel for All](#), CMAP has partnered with Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties to develop and implement a Safety Action Plan for each county. The goal of these plans is to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the region. Utilizing a nearly [\\$4 million federal Safe Streets and Roads for All grant](#), the counties will develop individualized safety action plans that will operate in a regional framework for future coordination. To participate in each county's safety survey and to sign up to receive updates, please visit each county's corresponding Safe Travel for All page:

[Cook County](#), [DuPage County](#), [Kane County](#), [Lake County](#), [McHenry County](#)

The Cook County steering committee is also looking to promote community engagement at your local events. If you have upcoming events where the County can staff a table, please contact Brian Larson, [blarson@nwmc-cog.org](mailto:blarson@nwmc-cog.org), to get involved.

## Section 5310 Program Call for Projects opens March 20

*From our partners at the RTA:*

The [Section 5310 Program](#) is a federal formula grant program that provides funding assistance to public transportation projects that focus on enhancing mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities. As a co-designated recipient of the Section 5310 Program, RTA awards and administers funding to operating, mobility management, capital improvement projects, and associated administrative expenses to non-profit and local government providers of eligible transportation programs. The 2025 Call for Projects opens on March 20 and applications are due by April 24.

## Next Round of Public Engagement for IDOT'S Long-Range Transportation Plan

IDOT has begun the next phase of Move Illinois: the 2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan. The plan will strategically outline goals, objectives and strategies for Illinois' diverse transportation network for the next 20 to 30 years. This is a multi-phase effort that will take place into 2025. The first phase of the plan was focused on transportation studies and public engagement to determine preferences for transportation goal areas. During the second phase, IDOT is focusing on potential actions and strategies to include in the plan. Residents are invited to provide feedback for the plan by filling out a [survey](#) and staying informed via the online meeting that can be found [here](#). The project team works with residents, business owners and transportation professionals from across the state in an advisory group. This group combines the transportation expertise and information gathered from the community in each phase to help form the goals, objectives and strategies of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.



Village of Barrington



## Community Planning Call for Projects opens March 10

*From our partners at the RTA:*

For 27 years the RTA has supported local governments across the region through the [Community Planning](#) program, which provides technical assistance to municipalities to help foster the growth of sustainable, equitable, walkable, and transit-friendly communities. Projects funded by the program this year include:

- Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Plans
- Transit Corridor Plans
- Neighborhood Access & Improvement Plans
- Curb Management Studies
- Zoning Code Updates
- Special Financing Districts
- Developer Dialogues

The 2025 Call for Projects, which is hosted in partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, will open from March 10 to April 10.

## Lace Up for the Local Infrastructure Hub Bootcamp

The United States Conference of Mayors Local Infrastructure Hub (LIH) is again offering its [Bootcamp service, this time for the Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) grant programs](#). Communities can learn how to access funds to add sidewalks, improve local roadways, and apply the funding to implement safety measures. Registration is available through their [web portal](#) and is first-come, first-served.

NWMC Staff



## Upcoming Transportation-Related Webinars

Eno Center for Transportation: [Estimating Transportation Costs with Confidence](#)—Wednesday, February 12, 1:00 p.m.

National Center for Rural Road Safety: [Overview of the MUTCD](#)—Wednesday, February 12, 1:00 p.m.

National Center for Rural Road Safety: [Intersection of Transportation with Public Health and Law Enforcement](#)—Wednesday, February 19, 1:00 p.m.

## Did You Miss It?

### News Items in Brief

Evanston Now: [Transit faces year of reckoning in 2025](#)

Daily Herald: [What will happen in the air, on roads and with public transit in 2025?](#)

Fast Company: [Car sharing is a great idea, so why are so many car share companies failing?](#)

Block Club Chicago: [Chicago 'Should Explore' Congestion Tax To Reduce Traffic, Mayor Says](#)

Bloomberg CityLab: [Can American Drivers Learn to Love Roundabouts?](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [New state transportation boss looking to cure Kennedy construction 'headache,' focus on speeding up projects](#)

Daily Herald: [Bicyclist fatalities: How Illinois aligns with - and differs from - national trends](#)

## Briefs, Continued

Route Fifty: [Rethinking budgeting: A transformative approach for state and local governments](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Debate of the future of CTA, Metra, Pace, RTA to heat up in Springfield this year](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [CTA President Dorval Carter to retire](#)

Daily Herald: [Bell Works 'Metroburb' leads renaissance of repurposing abandoned corporate HQ sites](#)

Daily Herald: [Suburban school districts slowly rolling out electric school buses](#)

Chicago Tribune: [RTA proposes more bus and train service, fare hikes and stronger central agency as lawmakers prepare to debate future of transit](#)

Daily Herald: [Making its move: RTA proposes universal fares, more trains, cost cuts to counter merger plan](#)

Daily Herald: [Schaumburg has big plans for parcel at Algonquin, Meacham roads](#)

Streetsblog Chicago: ["It Was Magnificent": Illinois legislators take a learning tour of Berlin and Munich transit systems](#)

Daily Herald: [Metra fare hikes, 40% service reduction looms without funding fix](#)

Pew Charitable Trusts: [More EVs, Less Gas Tax Revenue Create State Transportation Budget Issues](#)

Daily Herald: [Metra could borrow from feds to fix 100-year-old bridges](#)

The Daily Northwestern: [Pulse Dempster bus to O'Hare notches strong opening year](#)

Bloomberg CityLab: [Will Americans Ever Lose Their Taste for Telework?](#)

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