

Transportation Newsletter

February 2026
Volume 18 Issue 2



Northwest Municipal Conference
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Cover Photo: City of Park Ridge, NWMC Staff



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

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

Presidents Day (NWMC Offices Closed): Monday, February 16

NWMC Transportation Committee: Thursday, February 26, 8:30 a.m. — NWMC Offices and Virtually

NWMC E-Mobility Working Group Drafts HB4840

Following the [NWMC's summit on e-motos, e-bikes, e-scooters, and other e-mobility devices](#) last fall, NWMC convened a legislative working group to address municipal concerns and propose potential legislation. The working group, consisting of local elected officials, municipal staff, a city manager, law enforcement, advocacy groups, legal, the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference and Representatives Mary Beth Carty and Daniel Didech, met from November to January to produce the recently filed [House Bill 4840](#). The bill provides a clear definition of e-mobility devices based on classification and capabilities; identifies appropriate user age and/or licensing requirements; and specifies locations where use is allowed or restricted.

NWMC Members Recognized as 2025 Bicycle Friendly Communities

The League of American Bicyclists recently announced the 2025 Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Awards and Honorable Mentions. Congratulations to *Evanston* and *Niles* for receiving Silver and Bronze awards, respectively, and to *Grayslake* and *Skokie* for receiving Honorable Mentions. A Bicycle Friendly Community designation recognizes communities that are working to support bicycling and make it a safe and accessible daily opportunity. The level of award is determined by the policies, plans, and systems that improve local standards and enable increased involvement. Please visit the [awards list](#) to view all the recipients and bikeleague.org/community to learn more about the BFC program, or to apply for the 2026 cycle.

Funding Safety Projects That Save Lives

From the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning:

How can local communities pay for traffic safety improvements? CMAP and the DuPage Division of Transportation teamed up for a webinar on funding strategies that support safety action plan priorities. What you'll learn: How to pursue U.S. Department of Transportation discretionary safety grants; State and regionally administered federal funding options; Other funding sources for safety improvements; Eligibility basics and what makes a strong, competitive project. While examples focus on DuPage County, the funding guidance applies to communities across the region working to implement safety action plans. [Watch the webinar.](#)

Time Running Out to Apply for US DOT BUILD Grants

As previously reported, the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program is accepting applications. BUILD is a competitive grant program that provides funding for "planning or constructing surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation." Eligible projects include Title 23 federal-aid highways and bridges. \$1.5 billion dollars in funding will be available, with awards ranging from \$5 million to \$25 million for urban capital projects. Read more by visiting the [BUILD NOFO](#). Applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 24.

Apply Soon for IDOT's EV Charging Infrastructure Grant

As previously reported, applications are open for IDOT's [Illinois National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure \(NEVI\) program](#). Over \$65 million in reimbursable grant funding is available to build and operate light-duty and medium/heavy-duty charging stations. Eligible projects include publicly available EV charging stations, including upgrades to existing or new stations within three miles of eligible roadways. Applications are due by Friday, February 13. For more information, including how to apply and access to recorded informational webinars, please visit the [Illinois NEVI website](#) or read the [NOFO](#).

Illinois Secretary of State Launches Ride Safe, Ride Smart, Ride Ready

The Illinois Secretary of State has announced a statewide initiative, "[Ride Safe, Ride Smart, Ride Ready](#)," aimed at addressing high-speed e-motos and other devices. "Micromobility technology is advancing faster than our rules," Giannoulias said. "Some of these devices now travel at highway speeds, yet there are few clear standards, age limits and safety requirements. We need common-sense solutions that reflect today's reality and make our streets safer for everyone".

Among the initiative's efforts include updated regulations, a public education campaign, updated drivers education, and partnership with local law enforcement on preventative actions to comprehensively address safety. To read more, visit www.ilsos.gov/oneroad.

AARP Community Challenge Grants Open for Applicants

The American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) has opened applications for its 2026 Community Challenge grant opportunities, 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 a range of housing options, increasing digital connections, and supporting community disaster resilience, with up to \$25,000 available per grant. Capacity-Building projects are \$2,500 grants that 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 4 at 4:00 p.m. For more information please visit the [AARP Community Challenge website](http://www.aarp.org).



IDOT Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation and Funding Releases its Final Report

Following a year of discussion and debate, the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation Infrastructure Funding and Policy (BRC) has released its [final report](#). The report identifies ways that IDOT can “improve project delivery, build new capacity, strengthen operations, and sustainably and equitably meet the future transportation needs of our state.”

The report’s recommendations will assist IDOT in developing a strategic implementation plan to modernize IDOT, alongside IDOT’s statewide and local partners. Recommendations that are of interest to local government include: acceleration of land acquisition; embedding IDOT staff within local agencies; adoption of digital project delivery practices; establishing a clearer process for jurisdictional transfer of local roads; increased delegation of design review to local agencies; and expanded local agency technical support services. Read the [full report and its recommendations here](#).

Invest in Cook Now Accepting Applications

The Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (CCDOTH) is now accepting applications for the tenth round of [Invest in Cook](#). Over \$8.5 million is available to cover planning studies, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for transportation projects. Prioritized projects are those which “support transit and other transportation alternatives, support the region’s role as North America’s

freight capital, promote equal access to opportunities, maintain and modernize what already exists and increase investments in transportation.” Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 20.

Please visit the [Invest in Cook website](#) for more information and how to apply. To see current and past Invest in Cook recipients, please visit the [CMAP eTIP portal](#).

IDOT Offering Training on ADA Transition Planning and New Self-Evaluation Template and Guide

From the Illinois Department of Transportation:

On Wednesday, February 11 at 9:00 a.m., IDOT will offer a virtual training on quality transition planning and will introduce IDOT’s new template and companion guide which is focused on ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Planning for facilities within the public right-of-way. The course includes a review of local agency ADA Title II Administrative Requirements, obligations, and IDOT’s Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP) compliance review process. In addition, the course includes an introduction and review of the new Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan template available for agency use. Attendees will learn how to use and inform the template to create a quality plan that can be used and updated until access barriers are removed. Findings from the review of transition plans across the state will be shared so that your agency can avoid common pitfalls and create a useful and quality self-evaluation and transition plan. [Register for the seminar here](#). The seminar will be available in the On-Demand catalogue beginning in March 2026.

ITE Quick Bites Explore Safety, Health, and People-Centered Street Design

From the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center:

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) released a set of [Quick Bites](#) that examine approaches to improving transportation safety and community outcomes. The reports highlight how Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School can work together to support safer travel for students, outline methods and tools for estimating the health benefits of transportation investments such as walking and bicycling infrastructure, and describe the Movement and Place framework as a way to guide more people-centered street design and policy decisions. Each report offers insights and examples that transportation professionals can use to inform planning, design, and decision-making across a range of contexts.



Village of Streamwood

Apply Today for the ComEd Powering Safe Communities Grant Program

From the desk of Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Executive Director Neil James:

the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is proud to partner with ComEd to administer the Powering Safe Communities program, which provides grants for local public safety and clean transportation projects.

The application period is open now until 11:59 p.m. CDT on March 13, 2026. To learn more or apply, visit the [Powering Safe Communities Program](#).

Municipalities, townships, counties and local governments in ComEd's service territory are eligible to apply for competitive grants up to \$10,000. Not-for-profit organizations may also be eligible if they partner with at least one municipality or government institution. Recipients must provide a match equal to or above the amount of grant funds awarded and may use funds for any project completed within one year of the grant award. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus will review applications and administer grant awards for qualifying applicants.

This marks the 12th year of the Powering Safe Communities Program. Previous grants awarded include a range of projects including traffic and pedestrian safety equipment, fire or police equipment, electric vehicles and charging stations, automated external defibrillators, and emergency weather sirens. To learn more about how grants have been utilized by communities throughout the program's history, please visit the [Powering Safe Communities Program](#).

Please feel welcome to contact Ben Schnelle at bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org if you have any questions about the program.

Upcoming Transportation- Related Webinars

UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies: [Paving Over How Much Paradise?](#) - Tuesday, February 10 at 12:45 p.m.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [Working Together for Safer Responses: Collaboration Strategies for EMS and Highway Safety Partners](#) —Tuesday, February 10 at 1:00 p.m.

National Center for Rural Road Safety: [Intersection of Transportation with Public Health and Law Enforcement](#)—Tuesday, February 10 at 1:00 p.m.

IDOT: [Quality ADA Transition Planning, How to use IDOT's New Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan Template and Companion Guide](#)—Wednesday, February 11 at 9:00 a.m.

Vision Zero Network: [Intelligent Speed Assistance in Practice: Pilots, Plans, and Funding Pathways](#)—Thursday, February 19 at 12:00 p.m.

Center for Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety: [Right Turn on Red Maneuvers: Vulnerable Road User Safety Concerns](#)—Wednesday, March 4 at 2:00 p.m.

Did You Miss It? News Items in Brief

Daily Herald: [Transforming Touhy: Gridlocked and hazardous, major suburban thoroughfare is getting a redo](#)

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Chicago Tribune: [New Morton Grove Metra station opens but more work on the \\$4M project still to be done: 'It was a big deal for us'](#)

Daily Herald: [As fatal pedestrian crashes rise, state task force aims for zero deaths](#)

Route Fifty: [State and local governments must automate digital accessibility processes](#)

RTA: [What happens next: Key dates and deadlines as RTA transitions to NITA in 2026](#)

Daily Herald: [Fare increases proposed for McHenry County rideshare, dial-a-ride services](#)

WBEZ: [What's next for Chicago-area public transit?](#)

AASHTO Journal: [House Passes FY 2026 THUD Bill Within Minibus Package](#)

Active Transportation Alliance: [Elaine Nekritz: The strategist behind Illinois' transit victory](#)

Smart Cities Dive: [Surface transportation bill will shape the U.S. transportation outlook](#)

The Record North Shore: [Quiet Time: Glenco gets trains to silence horns](#)

Evanston Now: [Divvy expansion plan approved](#)

Journal & Topics: [Des Plaines Seeks To Stripe Wolf Road To Reduce Speeding, Side Swipes](#)

Electrek: [Court rules feds cannot interfere with disbursement of EV charger funds](#)

State Smart Transportation Initiative: [New research shows where low stress streets make the biggest difference](#)

Realtor.com: [Americans Hit the Brakes on Driving—and It Could Shift the Housing Market in Reverse](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Cook County court clerk piloting electronic traffic tickets](#)