

Transportation Newsletter

May 2021
Volume 13 Issue 5

Northwest Municipal Conference
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Cover Photo: Village of Fox Lake



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, May 18, 10:30 a.m. — *NWMC
Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee*

Thursday, May 27, 8:30 a.m. — *NWMC
Transportation Committee*



Happy National Bike Month!

NWMC Prepares to Relaunch Multimodal Transportation Plan

In March 2020, the NWMC Board adopted the Multimodal Transportation Plan but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic halted plans for kick-off events and the initial launch. With the pandemic more contained over a year later, NWMC staff is working to relaunch the plan. To kick things off, staff created a [flyer](#) briefly detailing the Plan and staff's offer to present it to the boards, councils, committees and/or task forces of our member communities. If your community is interested in receiving a presentation, please contact Kendra Johnson and Matt Pasquini, kjohnson@nwmc-cog.org and mpasquini@nwmc-cog.org.

North Shore Technical Committee Recognizes Outgoing Chair, Selects New Chair

On April 15, the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee met and recognized the tenure of outgoing chair and former *Skokie Director of Engineering Erik Cook*. To fill the vacancy, the committee unanimously approved the appointment of *Winnetka Director of Engineering Jim Bernahl* as the new chair. The committee received a presentation from the *Village of Northfield* about the Happ Road Corridor project, which requested consideration of Surface Transportation Program Shared Fund (STP-SF) regional priority points. Finally, the committee unanimously approved granting the full amount of points which will be considered when evaluating regional projects for the 2022-2026 STP-SF program.

Transportation Committee Learns About Alternative Fuels

The NWMC Transportation Committee met on April 22 and received a presentation on the Michigan to Montana Alternative Fuels Corridor from Ted Barnes, Director of Research and Development with the Gas Technology Institute. He provided an overview of the project and described how local partners can play a role in the development of the corridor. John Walton, Chair of the Chicago Area Clean Cities Coalition, also briefed the Committee on resources available to municipalities for alternative fuels first responder training. Finally, the committee received reports from regional agency partners and stakeholders.

Northwest Council Technical Committee Considers Subregional Priorities

The Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee met on April 23 to discuss a host of important issues, including the Council's allocation of subregional priority points for Surface Transportation Program (STP)-Shared Fund projects in the region. The Committee also considered two cost increase requests from locally programmed STP projects that were granted initial approvals pending funding availability, with final approval recommended for consideration at the next meeting. Regional agency partners provided the committee with updates on federal community project requests and schedule and service changes due to COVID-19. Finally, the committee considered proposed changes to the Complete Streets scoring category of the Northwest Council's STP guidebook, which were ultimately deferred until after the next call for projects.



Village of Bannockburn

IDOT Circular Letter Announces Local Government Component of COVID Relief Supplement

On April 22, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) published [Circular Letter 2021-13](#). As a result of the enactment of Title IV of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (HIP-CRRSAA) on December 27, 2020, an additional \$10,000,000,000 was appropriated for Highway Infrastructure Programs (HIP). The State of Illinois received an apportionment of this COVID relief in the amount of \$352,911,487. Of that amount, \$42,647,427 is to be utilized in District 1 and will be distributed by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). At this time CMAP is having internal discussions regarding the programming of these funds. It is anticipated these funds will be programmed within Federal Fiscal Year 2022, which begins on October 1, 2021. Questions regarding this Circular Letter may be directed to IDOT Local Program Development Engineer Stephane B. Seck-Birhame, 217-782-3972 or Bablibile.Seck@illinois.gov.

Bike-Ped Committee Briefed on Cook County Bike Plan

At their April 20 meeting, the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee received a presentation from Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways Transit Manager Benet Haller on the development on the Cook County Bike Plan. He reviewed the plan's scope and ways for communities to be involved in the planning process. Staff also presented the new GIS tools embedded in the Multi-modal Plan section of the NWMC website and led a discussion about a relaunch strategy for the Multi-modal Plan due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Metra Expanded Schedules on Three Lines in April

As the region continues to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic, Metra added service in April on the BNSF, Milwaukee District North, and North Central Service lines. Minor adjustments were also made to two trains on the Milwaukee District West line. On the Milwaukee District North line, four trains were added and two outbound train schedules were adjusted, while on the North Central Service line, two trains were added and one existing train schedule was adjusted. For more information and details of the schedule changes, please see [Metra's press release](#).



Village of Wheeling

USDOT Issues Notice of Funding Opportunity for RAISE Grants

Last month, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) published a notice of funding opportunity to apply for discretionary grant funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. Formerly known as BUILD and TIGER, RAISE provides a unique opportunity for project sponsors at state and local levels to obtain funding for multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects in road, rail, transit and ports. To provide technical assistance to prospective applicants, DOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2021 RAISE grant application process. Registration for the webinars opened on Monday, April 19. The deadline to submit an application is Monday, July 12 at 4:00 p.m. CST. For further information, please visit the [RAISE website](#) or contact the grant program staff via e-mail, RAISEgrants@dot.gov.

U.S. Census Bureau Requests Feedback on Redefining Urban Areas

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) issued a [memo](#) to provide notification that the U.S. Census Bureau has published a Federal Register notice with proposed criteria for redefining urban areas based on the results of the 2020 Decennial Census. Urban area classifications are used by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and IDOT to determine eligibility for some of transportation funding criteria, including the Surface Transportation Block Grant (also known as STP). These criteria also have uses outside those of transportation funding. The opportunity for review and public comment is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, with written comments on the proposed criteria available now and before Thursday, May 20. The Federal Register notice, as well as information as to how to provide comments, can be found [online](#).



Village of Winnetka

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