

Transportation Newsletter

October 2024
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Northwest Municipal Conference
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Cover Photo: Village of Mount Prospect



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

NWMC Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee:
Tuesday, October 8, 10:30 a.m. — NWMC offices and virtually

NWMC Transportation Committee:
Thursday, October 24, 8:30 a.m. — NWMC offices and virtually

North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee: Thursday, October 17, 8:30 a.m.
— *Glenview Village Hall* and virtually

Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee: Thursday, October 24, 8:30 a.m.
— *Barrington Village Hall*

President Darch Highlights NWMC Transit Principles to Senate Transportation Committee and House Working Group

Barrington Village President Karen Darch testified on behalf of the NWMC at a September 19 hearing of the Senate Transportation Committee. The committee, chaired by Senator Ram Villivalam, has hosted five subject matter hearings throughout the region with varying themes on potential reforms to public transit. The subject of this hearing was “transit mitigates climate impact.”

In her testimony, President Darch noted “the importance of regional transit services to our communities and transit’s importance in mitigating threats to our environment - by reducing noise and air pollutants from the thousands of vehicles which would crowd the roads of our region daily if we did not have transit.”

Senate Hearing, Cont. on Page 2

Senate Hearing, *Cont. from Page 1*

She touted the environmental and climate change benefits of local land use planning for transit oriented development and commuter parking as well as construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to better connect transit stations and users. She also discussed the NWMC's "Regional Transit Legislation Guiding Principles", which outline ideas to improve regional transit services and highlight the need for additional state investment.

One final committee hearing with the theme "Funding transit is a statewide priority" is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16 in Springfield. In addition, Speaker Chris Welch recently announced formation of the House Public Transit Working Group to "engage all stakeholders, review any current proposals, and foster new ideas and solutions to strengthen the existing transit system." On September 30, President Darch presented remarks on behalf of the NWMC to the working group along with presidents from other councils of government in the region.

USDOT Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Webinars On Project Implementation

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) has provided over \$454 billion in funding since its passage in 2021. To ensure the continued success of the program, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) is hosting a series of webinars highlighting how to bring projects to life. Dates and topics include:

Tuesday, October 8, 12:00-1:00 p.m., [Best Practices to Get Big Infrastructure Projects off the Ground](#)

Tuesday, October 22, 12:00-1:00 p.m., [Project Acceleration for the Public Good](#)

To learn more about the webinar series and to register, please visit the [US DOT Volpe Center](#)

Evanston Secures USDOT Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant

Congratulations to the *City of Evanston*, recently announced as a recipient of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant for its transit-oriented development [Putting Assets to Work \(PAW\) strategy](#). The city plans to use the \$985,000 grant to leverage assets to address affordable housing, sustainability and community development.

2024 CMAP Municipal Survey Now Open for Input

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Municipal Survey is now officially open. The biennial survey of municipal governments supports a variety of agency priorities including measuring demand for various types of technical assistance, informing policy analysis, and tracking implementation of regional goals. CMAP's last survey completed in 2022 had an outstanding response rate of over 86% of the region's 284 municipalities.

The 2024 Municipal Survey will provide an updated snapshot of the current priorities and challenges of the region's communities. For more information, please contact CMAP Planner [Mai Dang](#).



Congratulations to Morton Grove as an RTA 2024 Community Planning Recipient

The *Village of Morton Grove* is one of the recipients of the RTA 2024 Community Planning program, intended to enable transit-supportive land uses and infrastructure. The village will partner with the RTA for its Dempster Street Corridor Study, capitalizing on the new Pace Pulse Dempster Line, to “provide a cohesive vision for Dempster Street that connects transit, expands retail and employment-generating development, and identifies opportunities for new housing.” To read more about the other recipients and how to prepare for the next Call for Projects, visit the [RTA Connections Blog post](#).

County Safety Action Plans Seek Input

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](#), [Will County](#)

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

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has embarked on 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 be completed in 2025.

The first phase of the plan was focused on transportation studies and public engagement to determine preferences for transportation goal areas. During this second phase, IDOT is focusing on potential actions and strategies to include in the plan. As part of this phase, residents are invited to provide feedback for the plan by filling out a [survey](#) and staying informed via online meetings that can be found [here](#).

An advisory group consisting of residents, business owners and transportation professionals from across the state will work with the project team. This group combines local transportation expertise and information gathered in each phase to help form the goals, objectives and strategies of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.





City of Des Plaines

CMAP, CRP, STP-SF and TAP-L Call for Projects Opens Soon

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) will soon accept applications for more than \$385 million in funding through the Climate Reduction Program (CRP), Surface Transportation Program-Shared Fund (STP-SF), and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-L). This call for projects for FFY2026-2030 will open on Monday, October 21.

To assist communities with understanding options and identifying the best fund for their project, CMAP has developed fact sheets for each funding source, [CRP](#), [TAP-L](#), and [STP-SF](#). To learn more about the programs, as well as read frequently-asked questions, please visit the [CMAP Call for Projects website](#).

IDOT Highlights Ongoing and Upcoming Road and Bridge Projects for Northern Cook

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) highlighted the eleven major road and bridge projects currently scheduled for completion from 2024-2026, with three scheduled for completion this year. Projects are currently ongoing and scheduled for *Arlington Heights, Des Plaines, Hoffman Estates, Morton Grove, Niles, Palatine, Rolling Meadows, Schaumburg, and Skokie*, and include bridge replacements, resurfacing, culverts, signal modernization, and ADA improvements.

Projects are funded through the Rebuild Illinois capital program. See the full list of projects, their scope, cost, duration, and impacts at the [Rebuild Illinois summary page](#).

Evanston Launches First-in- State Government Bicycle Voucher Program

The *City of Evanston* has put Illinois on the map of communities offering bicycle voucher programs. On September 12, the city opened applications for its [Bicycle Access Voucher Pilot program](#). While states, such as [Colorado](#) and [Minnesota](#), and cities and counties, such as [Tampa, Florida](#) and [Salt Lake City](#), have offered ebike voucher programs for several years, Evanston marks the first example of an Illinois program. The program is also unique in that it covers traditional bicycles in addition to ebikes, enabling users to obtain adaptive equipment or accessories as needed. Applications will be open through Monday, September 23, and the program is limited to Evanston residential households at or below 80% of the Chicago area median income.

National Walk & Roll to School Day Coming Soon

Is your community participating in National Walk & Roll to School Day on October 9? Event registration is open as the event draws near. Visit the [Walk Bike & Roll to School website to sign up](#), see current participants, and download organizing and promotional resources. Interest continues to grow as the number of member communities with already registered schools has greatly expanded to include *Arlington Heights, Bartlett, Des Plaines, Evanston, Hanover Park, Hoffman Estates, Kenilworth, Mount Prospect, Schaumburg, and Streamwood.*



NWMC Staff

Evanston Wins APA-IL Strategic Plan Award

Congratulations to the *City of Evanston* for winning the [Illinois Chapter of the American Planning Association \(APA-IL\) 2024 Strategic Plan Award with its One Howard Street Economic Recovery Plan](#). The city's plan was praised for its recommendations that prioritize pedestrians and residents who face displacement, with a variety of placemaking recommendations and first steps to "lead the way for future development and growth." The plan was further praised for the significant feedback obtained through its public engagement process as well as actively seeking out youth input. To see the other planning award winners, please visit the [APA-IL award website](#).

FHWA Office of Safety Releases Resources to Meet the Moment on Traffic Safety

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recently released multiple resources to address the rising rates of fatal and severely injurious traffic crashes. These resources focus on various aspects of road safety analysis, as well as policy and project development. First, engineers and GIS specialists can utilize the latest federal safety data policies and best practices with the new [Model Inventory of Roadway Elements 2.1 \(MIRE 2.1\)](#). Second, decision-makers at all levels can leverage the [Vision Zero Toolkit](#) to advance policies and practices that establish, implement, and improve upon the goal of achieving zero deaths and serious injuries for roadway users. Finally, while applying the Safe Systems Approach may seem daunting, the [Safe System Roadway Design Hierarchy](#) enables communities to easily implement this approach, developing infrastructure solutions for anything from local streets to expressways.

Complete the “My Daily Travel Survey” This Fall

CMAP is launching a major survey called [My Daily Travel](#) this fall to better understand the travel needs of residents in northeastern Illinois. As travel behaviors change and technologies evolve over the next few years, transportation planners will use this survey data to guide future transportation investments and prioritize improvements.

Through Spring 2025, at least 4,000 households in northeastern Illinois are expected to participate in the survey either online, over the phone, or through a smartphone app (rMove™). Households will receive an invitation by U.S. mail and are strongly encouraged to complete the survey and help plan a transportation system that meets their needs. Participants who complete the survey will receive a gift card for their time.

Upcoming Transportation-Related Webinars

Urban Transportation Center: [Autonomous Mobility-on-demand \(AMoD\)](#) — October 17, 12—1 PM

PeopleforBikes: [Tackle E-Bike Regulations With PeopleForBikes' New Toolkit](#) — November 4, 1-2 PM

Did You Miss It? News Items in Brief

Daily Herald: [What Senate leaders learned on summer road trip, as transit merger looms](#)

ABC7 Chicago: [ComEd gives Village of Skokie \\$45K for electrical vehicle project](#)

Daily Herald: [Metra delivers on new bike policy and suburbanites reap the benefits](#)

Safety and Health: [Illinois law revises driver's ed to help protect roadway workers](#)

Governing: [Want to make the most of federal infrastructure funding? There's a hub for that.](#)

Daily Herald: ['A lot of people have interest in it': What could be Lake County's single largest road project advances](#)

Reader: ['No new revenue without reform'](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Deaths raise awareness of need for pedestrian safety at rail crossings](#)

Daily Herald: [UIC students snap up reduced Metra passes; more colleges could come on board](#)

Bloomberg: [The Moonshot Plan to Eliminate Deaths on America's Roads](#)

Journal & Topics: [Busse Highway Bike Lane 'Road Diet' Project Slated For Early 2025](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [Feds target SUV, truck size to save pedestrian lives — 'one of the last frontiers of vehicle safety'](#)

KETV 7 ABC: [Experts say modernizing public transit can improve traffic congestion, boost the economy](#)

Chicago Sun-Times: [Illinois DMVs now accepting contactless payment — with digital IDs coming down the road](#)

The Guardian: ['Not safe to run in the dark': how inadequate lighting in public spaces is creating barriers for women](#)

Daily Herald: [Construction to start on new Morton Grove Metra station that will 'change the entrance to the village'](#)

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