

# NORTH SHORE COUNCIL OF MAYORS SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM METHODOLOGY

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# Introduction

## Overview

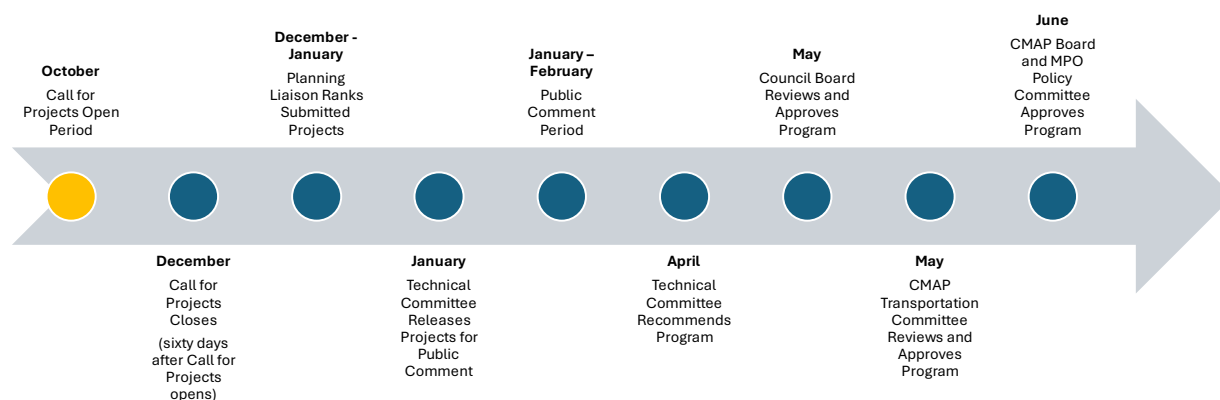
Federal surface transportation funding operates under multiyear authorizations through the Surface Transportation Program (STP). Northeastern Illinois is comprised of eleven regional Councils of Mayors and the City of Chicago. Each local council oversees the planning and programming of these STP funds within their own region. The STP provides flexible funding states and localities can use for projects on any federally eligible roadways, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, or intercity and intercity bus terminals and facilities. Each Council has developed a set of project selection guidelines. These guidelines set the parameters by which the Councils program STP funds to locally submitted projects.

The North Shore Council is comprised of Evanston, Glenco, Glenview, Golf, Kenilworth, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Northbrook, Northfield, Skokie, Wilmette and Winnetka. Project applications are reviewed by the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee. The Technical Committee recommends projects to the North Shore Council of Mayors which makes final decisions based on Council vote.

## Key Terms

1. **Planning Liaison** - The Planning Liaison coordinates the STP for the North Shore Council of Mayors. The liaison also represents the Council to county, state, regional and federal transportation agencies and performs other duties described in the contract scope of work with CMAP.
2. **North Shore Council of Mayors** - A cooperative body of municipalities comprised to plan and program the STP for the North Shore region. The North Shore Council of Mayors membership includes the mayor or president from each municipality in the North Shore Council.
3. **North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee** - The committee contains municipal engineers (or other staff) that review and recommend projects for STP funds. Membership on the Technical Committee is made up of one engineer from each municipality.

# Project Application and Selection Process



## Project Submittal Process

### 1. Call for Projects

The North Shore Council of Mayors will develop a five-year program with a call for project every two years. The Technical Committee will only consider programming new projects after a call for projects. Project applicants should be given adequate notice of call for projects. In addition, project applicants should have no less than sixty days between the call for projects and the application deadline.

### 2. Project Scoping

Project applicants wishing to apply for STP funds must first contact the Planning Liaison to discuss the scope of the project. Project applicants may (but are not required to) get initial concurrence from the Bureau of Local Roads at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) regarding the project's scope, federal and state requirements and schedule. Project scoping prior to submittal of an application is extremely important. Requirements associated with the use of federal funds and the IDOT review process can delay and add costs to projects. Poorly scoped projects can face significant delays and considerable cost increases.

### 3. Project Application

Following project scoping, project applicants will complete the project application form provided to them by the Planning Liaison and located at the back of this packet.

### 4. Project Review

The Planning Liaison, with the assistance of the Technical Committee, shall review each project application in accordance with the project prioritization system outlined in the [Project](#)

Prioritization section. The Planning Liaison will assign a "benefit number" which shall be used to compare project applications.

Once each project has been assigned a benefit number, the project applications will be placed on the agenda of a Technical Committee meeting. Prior to the project selection meeting of the Technical Committee, the Planning Liaison shall distribute copies of the project applications to all committee members. At the meeting, the project applicants should be prepared to give a brief presentation and answer questions concerning the project. The Technical Committee will review project applications, project rankings and available funding in making programming recommendations. The Technical Committee will recommend projects with the five-year program and will recommend projects for inclusion in a Contingency Program.

#### **5. Project Selection**

The North Shore Council of Mayors will consider the Technical Committee's programming recommendation at its next regular scheduled meeting. Following the North Shore Council's approval, the Planning Liaison will submit the required documentation to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) so that the project may be considered for addition to the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

#### **6. Project Kick-Off**

Following inclusion in the TIP, the project sponsor and Planning Liaison will schedule a kick-off meeting with IDOT's Bureau of Local Roads. Similar to the project scoping, this meeting will confirm the project scope, engineering requirements and schedule. Although Phase I Engineering is not eligible for STP funding, the project sponsor must hold a kick-off meeting at the beginning of Phase I Engineering to ensure that all federal and state requirements will be met.

The municipality must work closely with IDOT's Bureau of Local Roads. Any work that proceeds without the consent of IDOT may be ineligible to receive STP funding.

### **Outside Agency Applications**

Outside agencies, such as Cook County, townships and transit agencies have access to STP funds for capital costs of projects by obtaining the co-sponsorship of the project from at least one North Shore Council of Mayors member. This municipality would then present the project to the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee for consideration for STP funding. Any applications from outside agencies must be for STP eligible projects.

# Project Prioritization

## Overview

The following project selection categories shall be considered by the Technical Committee in formulating their recommendations for STP projects.

Project Selection Category	Weight
A. Safety	20 %
B. Pavement Condition	20 %
C. Congestion Mitigation	10 %
D. Project Readiness	15 %
E. Local Needs	10 %
F. Complete Streets	15 %
G. Inclusive Growth	3 %
H. Green Infrastructure	2 %
I. Transit Supportive Land Use	5 %

The Planning Liaison will score each project on a 100-point scale. Point totals in the Congestion Mitigation and Complete Streets/Multimodal categories will be multiplied by a weighting factor.

## Safety

The Safety category aims to prioritize projects where major safety concerns exist and can be addressed by appropriate engineering solutions.

### Safety Need

The safety need score is calculated using IDOT's safety road index (SRI) for roadway segments and intersections. The SRI score is based on the locations Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI) score. IDOT developed SRI scores for local and state routes and categorized them by peer group into critical, high, medium, low, or minimal. Within each peer group, locations categorized as critical have the highest PSIs, and locations categorized as minimal are less likely to have safety benefits from treatments. CMAP will provide the data on SRI scores. The proposed project's safety need score will be the highest SRI category along the project location. This will include both segment and intersection locations.

SRI Category	Points
Critical	10
High	8
Medium	6
Low	4
Minimal	2

### Safety Improvement

This score is based on the improvement of the project and the planning level expected safety benefit (reduction in number and severity of crashes) after implementing the improvement. The planning level safety improvement score is modeled using the [US DOT Safe Systems Approach](#)-developed [Framework for Projects](#). Projects will complete a before improvement version and after improvement version of the project using separate Framework sheets for segments and/or intersections. Details

on calculations using these forms are in Appendix I. This results in a Safety Improvement score. Point assignments for Safety Improvement are as follows: .

<u>Safety Improvement</u>	<u>Points (10 point maximum)</u>
Above 50%	10
36-49%	8
26-35%	6
15-25%	4
0.1-15%	2
0	0

## Pavement Condition

The Pavement Condition category aims to prioritize projects most in need of rehabilitation and repair. Scoring will be based on [IDOT pavement condition data](#) for all federally-eligible routes.

Applicants may appeal for the use local data in place of IDOT pavement condition data by motion to and approval by a majority vote of the Technical Committee.

To assist the Council in identifying best practices for rehabilitation and rebuilding, projects are requested to submit the date the section was last rehabilitated/rebuilt, the technique utilized, and the funding source utilized, if known, at time of application.

<u>Condition Rating</u>	<u>Points (20 point maximum)</u>
1.0 to 4.5 (poor)	20
4.6 to 6.0 (fair)	15
6.1 to 7.5 (good)	10
7.6 to 9.0 (excellent)	0

## Congestion Mitigation

The Congestion Mitigation category aims to prioritize projects on roadways with severe congestion that threatens the transportation utility of a roadway or intersection. The project must address the level of service to qualify for congestion mitigation points. The project sponsor is asked to provide supporting documentation of the level of service improvement.

<u>Level of Service (Existing)</u>	<u>Points (5 point maximum)</u>
F	5
E	4
D	3
C	2
B	1
A	0

<u>Level of Service Improvement</u>	<u>Points (5 point maximum)</u>
3 levels	5
2 levels	4
1 level	3
No improvement	0



## Project Readiness

The Project Readiness category aims to prioritize those projects that are closer to construction. Given the complexities that go along with federal funding, project readiness is important for spending STP funds within a reasonable timeframe. Project sponsors will need to provide documentation to receive points for project readiness. In order for Phase I to be underway, the applicant must either have entered into a Phase I engineering contract with an outside firm, or be able to provide documentation showing that Phase I work has begun in-house. Documentation of in-house work may include interim work products, timesheets indicating that work on the project is underway, or some other form of documentation that clearly demonstrates that Phase I has begun. NWMC staff may bring documentation before the Technical Committee to ensure that it is sufficient.

To encourage active completion, projects on the Contingency List can request a Project Readiness score reevaluation once each Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) if progress status has changed since submission. Project ranking will change accordingly if the project status has changed.

<u>Project Status</u>	<u>Points (15 point maximum)</u>
Project has received Design Approval from IDOT	15
A Phase I Project Development Report (PDR) has been submitted to IDOT	10
Phase I underway through IDOT	5
Project has not started Phase I	0

## Local Needs (Up to 10 points total)

The Local Needs category aims to prioritize projects that are most significant to the region's transportation network, assist communities that have not been awarded STP funding for their transportation system to the same level as other communities, and to address community-identified needs.

## Regional Significance and Historic and Future Funding (Up to 4 points total)

Funding will be based on the highest of whether a project's roadway classification is a minor arterial or higher, or the project community's per capita historic and future STP funding. Population will be based on the most recent [CMAP Community Data Snapshot](#). Funding numbers will be based on the most recent [North Shore Council STP program](#), with past three years consisting of the current FFY and past two FFYs, and future funding consisting of the next FFY.

<u>Per Capita STP Funding Past 3 Years</u>	<u>Points</u>
<\$100	4
\$100-300	2
>\$300	0
<u>Future STP Funding</u>	<u>Points</u>
No	2
Yes	0
<u>Minor Arterial or Higher Classification</u>	<u>Points</u>

Yes	4
No	0

## Community Planning

<u>Planning</u>	<u>Points (4 point maximum)</u>
Project appears in local, subregional or regional plan	4
Project not in any adopted plans	0

## ADA Transition Plans

The ADA Transition Plans requirement prioritizes projects whose communities have adopted [ADA Transition Plans](#) and are building projects that are in furtherance of the ADA Transition Plan. ADA Transition Plans do not count towards Community Planning.

<u>ADA Transition Plans</u>	<u>Points (2 point maximum)</u>
Project furthers goals or items in the ADA Transition Plan	2
Project not in furtherance of ADA Transition Plan	0

## Complete Streets (Up to 15 points total)

The Complete Streets/Multimodal category aims to prioritize projects that account for all users of the transportation network. For transit projects, scoring is based off of the presence of a transit improvement or an improvement that makes transit more accessible. For bicycle and pedestrian projects, the full 10 points will be awarded to a project if it involves the construction of a new facility that connects users to one or more existing facilities, or if it involves a significant enhancement to an existing facility. Enhancements must make a substantial change to the design or function of the existing facility in order to earn the maximum 10 points. Projects that involve standard maintenance of an existing bicycle or pedestrian facility, or the construction of a new isolated facility, will receive five points in this category. The Planning Liaison will determine scoring based on information provided in the application, as well as online resources such as Google Maps or Google Street View.

<u>Transit*</u>	<u>Points (10 point maximum)</u>
Transit Improvement	5
Transit Access Improvement	5
No Transit Improvements	0

<u>Pedestrian</u>	<u>Points (10 point maximum)</u>
New Connected Facility or Enhancement to Existing Facility	Up to 10
Maintenance of Existing Pedestrian Facility or New Isolated Facility	5
No Pedestrian Improvements	0

<u>Bicycle</u>	<u>Points (10 point maximum)</u>
New Connected Bicycle Facility or Enhancement to Existing Facility	Up to 10

Maintenance of Existing Bicycle Facility or New Isolated Facility	5
No Bicycle Improvements	0

\* A project with transit components can receive points for an improvement (bus pullout, transit shelter, transit signal priority, etc.) and for an access improvement (sidewalk to transit stop or station, bicycle access, etc.).

## Inclusive Growth (3 points max)

Inclusive growth is a regional priority from ON TO 2050. The [CMAP inclusive growth map, which is created using data from CMAP's travel demand model](#), will be used to determine the allocation of points in this category.

<u>Percent of users that are low-income and people of color</u>	<u>Points</u>
10%+	3
5-10%	2
0-5%	0

## Green Infrastructure (2 points max)

<u>Element</u>	<u>Points</u>
Project incorporates a green infrastructure element (bioretention, bioswale, street trees, permeable pavement, native plants, other elements as approved by Technical Committee on a case-by-case basis)	2
Project does not incorporate green infrastructure elements	0

## Transit Supportive Land Use (Up to 5 points total)

<u>Element</u>	<u>Points</u>
A project adjacent zoning district has eliminated parking minimums	2
A project adjacent zoning district has parking maximums	2
A project adjacent zoning district requires parking behind, to the side, or underneath buildings	1
A project adjacent zoning district allows for shared parking	1
<i>Only score one of the below, if applicable:</i>	
A project adjacent zoning district allows for greater than 16 dwelling units/acre	2
A project adjacent zoning district allows for between 6 and 16 dwelling units/acre	1

## Programming Guidelines

### Eligible Routes

All projects must be on STP eligible routes (federal-aid eligible) prior to applying for STP funds. Routes must have a functional classification as a "collector" or higher. STP eligible routes serve a regional purpose and must serve more than a local land access function. Project applicants can review current roadway classifications at the [Getting Around Illinois website](#).

The STP provides flexible funding. Under federal provisions, bridge projects on any public road are eligible for STP funding. In addition, carpool, pedestrian, bicycle and safety projects may be implemented with STP funding on roads of any functional classification.

## Eligible Projects

The following is a partial list of projects eligible for STP funding. Should a project applicant be unsure of a project's eligibility, contact the Planning Liaison.

- Construction, reconstruction, restoration and rehabilitation of roads and bridges
- Highway and transit safety improvements
- Traffic signalization projects
- Intersection improvements
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in conjunction with another approved STP project type
- Wetland mitigation, wetland banking, landscaping and mitigation of water quality impacts if undertaken with an approved STP project

## Project Requirements

Before submitting an STP application, project applicants must complete the following:

- Contact the Planning Liaison to discuss the project's scope, timetable and estimated costs
- Confirm that the project is on a STP eligible route
- Confirm that the project work type is STP eligible
- Confirm that the project sponsor can fund the required local match

## Regional Projects

The Technical Committee shall accept proposals for regional projects and may develop its own project proposals. Proposals for regional projects must go through project scoping and have the support of the relevant jurisdictions before the Technical Committee will consider programming funds to regional projects.

## Active Program Management

Applicants must follow the guidelines in CMAP's [STP Active Program Management Policies](#). Training, when available, is encouraged for applicants but not required. Applicants are highly encouraged, but not required, to have projects in their capital improvement programs.

## Obligation Extensions

The North Shore Technical Committee must approve requests for the six month extensions of the phase obligation deadlines allowed in the active program management program. If denied, the applicant may appeal to the North Shore Council of Mayors. Projects that are programmed using regional STP funds beyond those allocated to the North Shore Council of Mayors are ineligible to apply for an obligation extension.

## Active and Contingency Program Changes

No project can be moved out of the active program without approval of the North Shore Technical Committee except as required in the active program management policies. NWMC staff may make other active reprogramming decisions without the need for Technical Committee approval. This includes accelerating projects into the active program and current FFY (if the project is ready to

obligate and funding is available). NWMC staff must log any changes and present them to the North Shore Technical Committee at the next meeting.

### Quarterly Status Updates

Upon inclusion of any phase of a project within an active or contingency program, quarterly status updates detailing initial (time of application) estimated dates, current adjusted estimated dates (based on progress made since the application was submitted), and actual accomplishment dates of all project milestones, regardless of the phase(s) programmed with STP funds, shall be submitted by one of the project's designated project managers through CMAP's eTIP website. These updates are required to be submitted in December, March, June, and September of every federal fiscal year. Updates submitted any day within the required month will be considered to have met the deadline. Updates submitted in any other month of the year will not be considered an official quarterly update.

Submittals shall be verified by NWMC staff, in consultation with IDOT District 1 Bureau of Local Roads and Streets (BLRS) staff. Status updates may be submitted more often than required, at the NWMC's request and/or sponsor's discretion. Status updates must be submitted even if no progress has been made since the prior update. Failure to submit required status updates, as outlined below and in accordance with [Active Program Management requirements](#), may result in significant project delay or the loss of funding for current and subsequent phases of projects:

Failure to submit the required status updates will result in project phases being reprogrammed or removed from the programs. Projects that are removed from the programs must reapply for funding during a future call for projects.

- a. Projects with any phase programmed in the current year of the active program:  
If a required quarterly update is not submitted, the following actions will be taken by NWMC staff and/or CMAP:
  - (i) The phase(s) programmed in the current year will be either reprogrammed in an out year of the active program (subject to fiscal constraint) or moved to the contingency program, at the selecting body's discretion.
  - (ii) All subsequent phases of the project that are included in the active program will be moved to the contingency program and will not be eligible to be moved back into the active program until the current year phase(s) is authorized/obligated or until the next call for projects, whichever comes first.
- b. Projects with any phase programmed in an out year of the active program:  
If a required quarterly update is not submitted, the following actions will be taken by NWMC staff and/or CMAP:
  - (i) All phases of the project that are included in the active program will be moved to the contingency program.
  - (ii) The earliest phase will be eligible to be reinstated into the current year of the active program.
  - (iii) Any phase(s) not reinstated into the active program prior to the next call for projects must reapply for funding consideration during that call.
- c. Contingency projects:  
If a required quarterly update is not submitted, all phases of the project will be removed from the contingency program.

# Funding Parameters and Policies

## Eligible Phases

The North Shore Council of Mayors dedicates STP funding for Phase II Engineering and Construction (including Construction Engineering). Phase I Engineering and any Right-of-Way acquisition are the responsibility of the project sponsor.

## Local Match Requirements

The North Shore Council of Mayors allocates STP funding to projects based on a 70/30 federal/local match ratio for phase II engineering. If an applicant does not utilize STP funds for phase II engineering they may receive an 80/20 federal/local match for construction and construction engineering. Project sponsors are responsible for the local match and any non-participating expenses.

Project sponsors who receive a 70/30 federal/local match ratio for phase II engineering, but then do not use those funds, can reallocate their funds to an 80/20 federal/local match for construction and construction engineering. Project sponsors who do so can request a cost increase to bring federal funding to the 80/20 ratio under the Cost Increase Policies as described below.

## Funding Limit

The North Shore Council of Mayors limits the funding of a single project to \$5 million.

## Cost Increase Policies

All cost increases will be subject to approval by the North Shore Council of Mayors via the Technical Committee. Approval will be contingent upon the following:

- a. Programming constraints and funding availability within that fiscal year.
- b. Special circumstances that resulted in an increase in project costs such as additional improvements that are being required by federal, state and/or county transportation agencies not considered in during the project scoping process.
- c. Project sponsor has not petitioned the Council for cost increases for the same project during that particular fiscal year.
- d. Request is in compliance with [Active Program Management guidelines](#).

All cost increases will be funded at the same match ratio they are receiving for the project unless otherwise specified. Projects that seek to change their match ratio after their project is included will have their request reviewed in the same manner as a regular cost increase. Project sponsors seeking cost increases will be required to submit a written request to the Planning Liaison. The written request must outline the updated project costs, explain the cause for the cost increase and state that the project sponsor agrees to pay the percent local match.

## Limit on Cost Increases

The Technical Committee shall limit large cost increase requests as outlined below:

- a. If the programmed STP funding for a project phase is less than 25 percent of the Council's annual STP allocation, then the Council will not consider cost increases in excess of 100 percent of programmed STP funding for the project phase.

- b. If the programmed STP funding for a project phase is between 25 and 50 percent of the Council's annual STP allocation, then the Council will not consider cost increases in excess of 75 percent of the programmed STP funding for the project phase.
- c. If the programmed STP funding for a project phase is more than 50 percent of the Council's annual STP allocation, then the Council will not consider cost increases in excess of 50 percent of the programmed STP funding in the project phase.

Percent of Annual Allocation	Maximum Cost Increase Request
< 25 percent	100 percent
Between 25 and 50 percent	75 percent
> 50 percent	50 percent

If the cost increase request exceeds the limits outlined above, the project sponsor may choose to move the project to the contingency program or remove the project from the program and have it reconsidered during the next programming cycle.

Proper project scoping (see [Project Submittal Process](#)) is important in developing project application cost estimates in order to avoid large cost increases. Requests for increases from the Shared Fund, per the regional APM policies, are subject to these same limitations.

### Cost Increase Requests Between Regular Technical Committee Meetings

All cost increase requests submitted between regular quarterly meetings of the Technical Committee shall be added to the agenda of the next quarterly meeting, unless a project's letting or local agency agreement is contingent on approval of the cost increase request before the next quarterly meeting. In such cases, the Technical Committee can vote via fax/email, with a simple majority of the twelve members constituting the requisite votes for passage. A fax/email vote shall not be used if the cost increase request is:

- Over 35 percent of the currently programmed project cost estimate, or
- Over 25 percent of the North Shore Council's annual STP allotment for the federal fiscal year.

If either of these two conditions is met, then the project shall require a special meeting of the Technical Committee to act on the request.

## Council Prerogative

The North Shore Council of Mayors has the authority to grant special exceptions to any of the above guidelines if in its opinion the circumstances so dictate and the exceptions are within federal and state guidelines, the provisions of the October 2017 agreement between the Council of Mayors, Chicago DOT, and CMAP Active Program Management policies. This exception can be granted by a majority vote from the Technical Committee.

## Appendix I: Project Application Calculations

1. Safety Improvement
  - a. Vulnerable Road User Counts
    - i. Vulnerable road user counts will be calculated as 10 times the project corridor or intersection's Strava Metro bicycle and walk count. If a community has conducted a vulnerable road user count that covers the project area, that number will be utilized instead.
      1. Strava Metro counts are based on Lake County findings that Strava Metro accounts for approximately 7% of users.<sup>1</sup>
      2. Lake County supported its finding through use of Colorado Department of Transportation analysis of Strava Metro.<sup>2</sup>
      3. 10 times multiplier is also based on Lake County findings as regarding Strava Metro counts.<sup>3</sup>
      4. If a community does not have a Strava Metro account, NWMC staff can obtain this information upon request prior to project application.
  - b. Calculating Safety Improvement Score
    - i. The Safety Improvement score is measured by the sum of the segment and/or intersection before summary scores minus the sum of the segment and/or intersection after summary scores divided by the sum of the segment and/or intersection before summary scores.
      1. The Excel formula is:
        - a. 
$$\frac{((\text{SUM}(\text{BEFORE\_INTERSECTION} + \text{BEFORE\_SEGMENT}) - \text{SUM}(\text{AFTER\_INTERSECTION} + \text{AFTER\_SEGMENT}))}{(\text{SUM}(\text{BEFORE\_INTERSECTION} + \text{BEFORE\_SEGMENT}))}$$
    - ii. Combined segment and intersection score changes will be analyzed where a project scope includes both segments and intersections. A project that does not include either an intersection or segment in its scope will not calculate before and after scores for the respective item.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Klemens, Lake County Planning Liaison, in email with Brian Larson, North Shore Council of Mayors Planning Liaison, September 2024.

<sup>2</sup> "Colorado Analyzes Key Bike Corridors Using Metro to Prioritize Investments in Infrastructure." Strava. <https://metro.strava.com/fr/case-studies/colorado-analyzes-key-bike-corridors-using-metro-to-prioritize-investments>.

<sup>3</sup> Klemens, 2024