



# Transportation Newsletter

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## Transportation Committee Supports MFT Flexibility, Hears EOWB Update

At its meeting on April 28, the NWMC Transportation Committee narrowly approved support for Senate Bill 1258 (Sandoval), which provides increased flexibility for the use of Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) revenues and the Illinois Road Fund. The bill explicitly allows municipalities and IDOT to fund transit and non-motorized (bicycle and pedestrian) transportation projects. Those in favor of the bill saw the opportunity to build a more comprehensive transportation system, while those opposed had con-

cerns over sharing limited funding with non-road projects. The NWMC Executive Board took no action on the bill as the legislation failed in the Senate this week (18-31-2).

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Project Manager Pete Harmet updated the committee on the Elgin O'Hare – West Bypass project. IDOT continues its engineering and environmental studies while the Governor's Advisory Council has focused on economic development and a financial plan

for the project (see article on page 2 for more information about financing of the project). At the Governor's Advisory Council meeting on April 26, the Council extended the deadline for its final report until June 30. Please visit [www.elginohare-westbypass.org](http://www.elginohare-westbypass.org) for more information on the project, including all financing options being considered. The committee also thanked co-chair and outgoing *Rolling Meadows Mayor Ken Nelson* for his service to the committee.



## Dates to Remember

- May 16**      **Willow Road Study Open House—5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**  
New Trier High School (*Northfield* Campus), 7 Happ Rd. (see article on page 4)
- May 17**      **NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee —10:30 a.m.**  
NWMC Offices
- May 17**      **Making Complete Streets a Reality Seminar—2:00 p.m.**  
*Hoffman Estates Village Hall*, 1900 Hassell Rd. (see article on page 3)
- May 19**      **NWMC Transportation Committee—9:00 a.m.**  
NWMC Offices
- May 19**      **New Ideas for Bike-friendly Communities Webinar—12:00 p.m.**  
<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/790070123> (see article on page 4)
- May 25**      **NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide Webinar—2:00 p.m.**  
<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/279750106> (see article on page 3)
- June 9**        **Deadline for RTA and CMAP Planning Grant Program (see article on page 4)**
- June 10**      **TMA of Lake Cook Annual Meeting—10:00 a.m.**  
Baxter Healthcare, 1 Baxter Parkway, *Deerfield* (see article on page 5)



## Elgin O'Hare – West Bypass Financing Options Discussed

On April 7, the Project Finance Working Group of the Governor's Elgin O'Hare – West Bypass (EO-WB) Advisory Council met and discussed value capture options for financing the highway project. Value capture is the practice of capturing, via a tax or fee, a portion of the increase in a private property value that is gained as a result of a major public infrastructure improvement. Value capture is commonly implemented in the form of a taxing district that assesses properties near the improvement. Conceptually, a taxing district could be placed buffering the highway improvement as a special service area.

Based on a number of preliminary assumptions (tax rate, area and taxing commercial/industrial properties), the special service area could provide an estimated \$100-150 million in bonding

capacity. Municipal representatives, including NWMC members *Elk Grove Village*, *Hanover Park* and *Schaumburg*, expressed concerns that a taxing district puts an additional burden on existing businesses, property owners and local taxpayers.

Additionally, the working group recommended that the Governor's Advisory Council consider a broader range of funding options. The Governor's staff accepted this recommendation. The broadening of the study will push back the final Advisory Council report past the original April 29 deadline. Please visit <http://www.elginohare-westbypass.org> for more information about the project and upcoming meetings.



## Quiet Zone Issue Resurfaces on Canadian National Line

In 2007, municipalities along the Canadian National line from *Wheeling* to *Antioch* collaborated on the creation of a quiet zone under federal rules, banning the routine blowing of train horns at at-grade crossings. With *Buffalo Grove* as the lead municipality, the group hired Lower Cost Solutions Inc. (LCSI), which performed the technical analysis work. LCSI determined that no upgrades to existing crossings were needed, as the collective risk index for crossings in the corridor was lower than the threshold in federal rules. The proper paper work was filed with the Federal Railroad Administration and the quiet zone was enacted. This status remained in place for three years, after which time the Quiet Zone would have to be recertified to include a reassessment of the risk index of the corridor.

As part of its plan to remove the automated horns, the Village of Mundelein hired Patrick Engineering to analyze the impacts of removing the horns and possible improvements that would be necessary to recertify the quiet zone. Due to multiple factors including the removal

of the wayside horns in Mundelein, higher rail traffic north of *Vernon Hills* from the CN purchase of the Elgin Joliet and Eastern Railroad and higher vehicular traffic at many crossings, the risk index is now higher than allowed under federal rules.

In short, improvements must be made to one or more crossings to bring the risk index down and maintain the quiet zone status. The end result of the analysis so far is that even with the improvements made at Hintz Road, extension of the medians at Rt. 60 and Allanson Road, the installation of quick curbs at Washington Street and Harris Road, and ASM median improvement at Butterfield Road, the Quiet Zone does not qualify for recertification.

A meeting of the full corridor group has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 11 at 2:00 p.m. at *Vernon Hills Village Hall* to discuss next steps.

## News from the Northwest and North Shore Councils of Mayors

### News from the Northwest Council of Mayors

The Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee met on April 7 at the *Arlington Heights Village Hall*. The Committee approved adding the reconstruction of State Parkway in *Schaumburg* to the Surface Transportation Program in fiscal year 2013, with the possibility of moving up sooner if funds become available. The intersection improvement project on US 14 at Arthur and Davis Streets in *Arlington Heights* was moved back to 2012 due to ongoing right-of-way acquisition issues.

The meeting was also the last Technical Committee meeting for *Rolling Meadows Mayor Ken Nelson*, who will be leaving office in May due to term limits. *Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder*, on behalf of the committee, thanked Mayor Nelson for his service. Staff will inform all eligible mayors in the Northwest Council of the vacancy, which will be filled by a vote of the full Council later this year. The next meeting of the Technical Committee is on call.

### News from the North Shore Council of Mayors

The next North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 15 at the *Skokie Village Hall*. The committee will discuss progress of the North Shore Council's Surface Transportation Program (STP). In addition, the committee will review the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) programming process for the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2012-2016 call for projects. North Shore Council municipalities submitted eighteen CMAQ applications requesting approximately \$16 million in federal funding. Projects range from the engineering and construction of the Skokie Valley Trail to electric vehicle charging in the *Village of Winnetka*. In addition, the committee will likely begin discussions on future programming of STP funds beyond FFY 2015.



## NWMC Bike/Ped Committee Reviews Consultants, CMAQ Applications/Accessibility Guidelines

On April 19, the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee met and heard presentations from consulting firms who responded to the Request for Qualifications for a Northwest Highway Bicycle Facility Plan. Staff has interviewed candidate firms with the goal of forwarding a selection recommendation to NWMC Executive Board in June.

Staff also updated the committee on the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) 2012-2016 call for projects. NWMC member municipalities submitted a total of thirty-five bicycle and pedestrian projects, totaling approximately \$49 million. Overall, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)

received 146 bicycle and pedestrian related CMAQ applications totaling approximately \$291 million and 356 applications requesting over \$938 million in federal funding. CMAP estimates that the agency will program roughly \$350 million for the entire program for federal fiscal years 2012-2016. CMAP program focus groups are currently reviewing the submitted applications and will make recommendations to the CMAQ Project Selection Committee in early July, with approval of a final program scheduled for its October meeting.

Finally, the committee briefly discussed the proposed Shared Use Path Accessibility Guidelines proposed by the Archi-

tectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. NWMC staff will collect comments from the committee and compose draft comments for the committee's consideration at its May 17 meeting. The deadline to submit comments is June 27, 2011. Please visit the following website for more information about the proposed rules and rulemaking process:

[http://  
edocket.access.gpo.gov/2011/2011-  
7156.htm](http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2011/2011-7156.htm).



## Education Opportunities for Bicycle Planning

### Making Complete Streets a Reality Seminar

On May 17, the American Planning Association's Chicago Metro Section will provide a presentation on Complete Streets, a movement taking place in communities across the country to increase accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians within the public right-of-way. A complete streets policy works to ensure that planners and engineers consistently design and operate the entire roadway system with not only motorists, but all users in mind—including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and pedestrians.

This event will add clarity to the issue by focusing on Complete Streets from policy to implementation. The seminar will get you started with an overview of current policy and practice at the national, state and local levels. Additionally, the seminar will include a discussion of the challenges involved in adopting a local Complete Streets ordinance. Finally, an example of Complete Streets implementation will shed light on how these policies and practices can be translated into real projects. After the event, enjoy a tour of the Hassell Road project and see complete streets in practice.

The seminar will be held on Tuesday May 17, 2011, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the *Hoffman Estates Village Hall* (1900 Hassell Road, Hoffman Estates, IL 60169). The cost of the seminar is \$15 paid at the door (or \$5 for students that RSVP by May 10), and is payable at registration. Checks should be made payable to APA-CMS. Please e-mail [apachicagometrosection@yahoo.com](mailto:apachicagometrosection@yahoo.com) by May 10 to reserve your seat. For information about the program please contact Nathan Roseberry at [nathan.roseberry@hoffmanestates.org](mailto:nathan.roseberry@hoffmanestates.org).

This event is open to the general public and will be of interest to urban planners, engineers, architects, municipal staff, transportation professionals and students.

#### Speakers:

Randy Neufeld, *Strategic Manager, National Complete Streets Coalition*

Amanda Woodall, *Policy Manager Active Transportation Alliance*

Nathan Roseberry, P.E. *Senior Transportation Engineer, Village of Hoffman Estates*

### Free Webinar: NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

On Wednesday, May 25 at 2:00 p.m., the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) is offering a free webinar to introduce practitioners to the ins and outs of the recently released National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide, a design tool for state-of-the-practice bikeways produced by and for cities throughout the United States. The goal of the presentation is to demonstrate how the guide may be best applied in urban traffic situations and to help practitioners become familiar with the contents and functions of the guide. Participants will learn how the need for the NACTO guide was identified, get a tour of its contents, and review further needs in design guidance for bicycle and pedestrian professionals. This overview will be followed by a series of shorter presentations on how the principles of the guide are being applied in cities nationwide. APBP is presenting this webinar at no cost. APBP encourages early registration as space is limited. You can register for the webinar here: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/279750106>.

(Continued on page 4)



## Willow Road Study Open House

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is holding an Open House Public Meeting concerning Willow Road from Illinois Route 43 (Waukegan Road) to Interstate 94 (Edens Expressway). The purpose of the meeting is to provide an overview of the study progress to date, including a comprehensive review of transportation needs, as well as the initial evaluation of alternative solutions.

The meeting will take place on:

Monday, May 16, 2011  
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM  
New Trier High School (*Northfield*)  
Main Cafeteria, Building C  
7 Happ Road  
Northfield, Illinois 60093

IDOT has been working with stakeholders as part of a comprehensive

study of Willow Road, from Illinois Route 43 (Waukegan Road) to I-94 (Edens Expressway) that began in the fall of 2009. The purpose of the study is to identify a long term solution that addresses the safety concerns, congestion and the aging pavement and bridge along Willow Road. The planning process includes a combination of technical analysis and stakeholder input. Defining transportation needs is the first step and is followed by developing and evaluating a range of alternatives (solutions). The planning process will conclude with the identification of a preferred plan. IDOT has completed the transportation needs step and is just beginning the alternatives development and evaluation step. For further information on the study please visit [www.willowroadfuture.org](http://www.willowroadfuture.org).



## Answer the RTA and CMAP Call for Projects

On April 6, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) launched the 2011 call for projects for community planning, sub regional planning and JARC/New Freedom grants. The RTA Community Planning Program provides funding for transit oriented development (TOD) plans and transit improvement plans while the CMAP funding is intended for projects that inte-

grate transportation and land-use plans. All applications are due by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 9. Please visit [www.rtachicago.com/programs](http://www.rtachicago.com/programs) for the application forms and additional information. The RTA Board is expected to approve successful applications in December with the grant process to begin in the 2012 calendar year.



## University of Illinois-Chicago Class Looking for Volunteer Municipalities for Bike Plans

Each May and June, the League of Illinois Bicyclists' Ed Barsotti co-teaches a bike planning mini-course in the University of Illinois-Chicago's urban planning program. Students have a group project to write a brief (10 page) bike plan for actual places – including Chicagoland suburbs without a current bike plan. Mr. Barsotti is seeking “volunteer municipalities” for coming years. Municipal representatives will meet once with a few students, either at your office or by

phone, and provide GIS layers and selected road data. Municipal representatives can attend the group's oral presentation at UIC. Note that this is only a four-week course for students with no prior background in the subject. While the product may not be fully professional grade, it might provide some good ideas for your town. Please contact [ed@bikelib.org](mailto:ed@bikelib.org) if you are interested.

## Education Opportunities for Bicycle Planning Continued)

*(Continued from page 3)*

### New Ideas for Bike-friendly Communities Webinar

On Thursday, May 19, 2011 at 12:00 p.m., the Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association is hosting a webinar entitled “New Ideas for Bike-friendly Communities.” Bicycling is continuing to grow as a viable option for both recreation, as well as transportation. While many communities have enjoyed growth in recreational bicycling, there are many trends for bicycle facilities that improve the climate for the bicycle as transportation. This webcast will explore new ideas for planning, designing and implementing bicycle facilities that planners can use right now in their communities. Attendees will discover the qualities that define bicycle-friendly communities in Europe, Canada and the United States. Speakers will show examples of successful bike planning efforts and built bicycle facilities while discussing in detail the appropriateness of various solutions for a range of applications and plans. The session will show how planning for bikes can be an integral part of a multi-modal transportation system. Attendees will hear about two case studies, one for a plan and implementation of a multi-use bike path in a downtown urban setting and another about how Indianapolis has created a city-wide bike network and achieved bronze level Bike-friendly Community recognition. Attendees will learn how these communities worked with local stakeholders and planners to bring new ideas to successful implementation and take away new approaches that they can immediately use in their communities. You can register for this webinar by visiting:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/790070123>.

## TMA of Lake Cook Annual Meeting

The TMA of Lake Cook will hold its annual meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, June 10 at Baxter Healthcare (1 Baxter Parkway, *Deerfield*, IL 60015). United States Congressman Robert Dold of the Tenth District will be the keynote speaker. Robert Dold was elected to the US House of Representatives in the Tenth Congressional District in 2010 and assigned to serve on the Financial Service Committee. He has had experience in both Washington and business serving as investigative counsel for the Government Reform and Oversight Committee as well as recently running a family small business. The TMA of Lake Cook hopes to have an update on federal budgetary issues as well as an update on transportation issues including the reauthorization of federal transportation programs known as SAFETEA-LU.



## Illinois Receives Additional Rail Funding

Florida's rejection of \$2.4 million in federal funding for high-speed passenger rail has brought Illinois an additional \$186 million for the Chicago to St. Louis line. Illinois originally received funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Illinois plans to upgrade the current Amtrak service between Chicago and St. Louis to run at 110 mph.

This is the second time Illinois has received additional funding for the Chicago to St. Louis project. Last December, Illinois received \$42.3 million in high speed rail funding that was rejected by the governors of Ohio and Wisconsin. So far the federal government has awarded more than \$1.4 billion in high-speed rail funding to Illinois.

## Municipal Spotlight

If your municipality is undertaking a transportation plan or project of note, please contact NWMC staff to be featured in an upcoming edition of the NWMC Transportation Newsletter.



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