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 *Dates to Remember*

- January 18** **NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee —10:00 a.m.**
NWMC Offices
- January 20** **McHenry County Council of Mayors — 2:00 p.m.**
McHenry County Division of Transportation, 1611 Nelson Road, Woodstock
- January 27** **NWMC Transportation Committee—9:00 a.m.**
NWMC Offices
- January 28** **Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee—8:30 a.m.**
Arlington Heights Village Hall, 33 S. Arlington Heights
- February 2** **CMAP Construction and Operations Coordination Meeting—9:00 a.m.**
CMAP Offices, 233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago (Willis Tower)
- February 10** **Union Pacific - Northwest Line Meeting — 9:00 a.m.**
Oakton Community College, Des Plaines Campus

 *Northwest Municipal Conference Adopts Bicycle Plan Update*

On December 8, the NWMC Board unanimously approved the 2010 Northwest Municipal Conference Bicycle Plan (for the full plan, please visit the [NWMC website](#)). Developed in conjunction with the Active Transportation Alliance (ATA), the plan recommends regional bicycle corridors, prioritizes the recommended corridors into three tiers and outlines implementation strategies. Additionally, the plan contains general recommendations for policies and practices that encourage bicycling in and between Conference member municipalities.

We thank the members of the NWMC Transportation and Bicycle and Pedestrian Committees, plus numerous municipal staff and the ATA who put in so many hours to complete this plan. Special thanks to Nathan Roseberry from *Hoffman Estates* and Carolyn Helmke and Paul Lippens from ATA for their tireless work.

For many years, the Conference has viewed bicycle planning as an important part of transportation planning, both as a mode of transportation and as a physical activity option. Various bicycle plans and maps have been prepared by the Conference previously; however, the 2010 plan represents the most detailed bicycle planning effort yet prepared by the organization and will act as a guide for designing and implementing bicycle facilities in the NWMC service area.

NWMC completed a bicycle plan in 2007, which laid some important groundwork for this update. It established a set of east-west bicycle corridors following major arterials and linking together the existing north-south regional trail system. It also provided a comprehensive update to existing bicycle facilities in a portion of the NWMC area and provided this information to CMAP. The 2007 plan was funded

through a federal Unified Work Program (UWP) grant from CMAP, which only covered bike planning for the North Shore and Northwest Council areas of the NWMC, which are exclusively in Cook County. The NWMC service territory stretches well beyond these two council areas, with members in Lake, McHenry, Kane, and DuPage counties. Therefore, almost half of the Conference’s membership was not included in the scope of the 2007 plan. The plan also offered little in the way of implementation planning.

In November 2009, the NWMC contracted with ATA to update the plan. Building on the initial work of the 2007 bike plan, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee identified a more detailed corridor analysis and an implementation strategy as the key goals of the plan update. Starting with the regional corri-

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dors identified in the 2007 plan, ATA and NWMC staff worked with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and bicycle planners from other NWMC communities to identify challenges and opportunities for each of the corridors. Additionally, a special effort was made to identify potential bike corridors in Lake and McHenry counties. The 2010 Plan identifies twenty regional bicycle corridors in the NWMC service area. The plan identifies fourteen east-west corridors and six north-south corridors including four existing north-south corridors. The table and map on page three include the identified regional bicycle corridors.

Guided by municipal input, this plan provides a more thorough evaluation of potential corridors. The evaluation began by identifying the percentage of existing bicycle facilities in each corridor. Preferred routes within each corridor were identified as well as barriers to implementation. In addition, each corridor was evaluated on connectivity to regional destinations, trail networks and transit. Equipped with the detailed knowledge gained through the corridor evaluations, the plan includes a three tier system of corridor prioritization. Tier One corridors are those with the highest regional impact and best opportunity to be implemented. All sixteen corridors are priorities of the NWMC, and the plan recommends regional bicycle facilities on each of them; however, the plan categorizes those corridors with the highest potential for implementation in the first tier. The tables to the right outline the corridor characteristics for each tier and break the corridors into the three tiers. Ultimately, implementation of these regional bicycle corridors will rely on local initiative and regional coordination. The plan highlights specific implementation recommendations for the NWMC and member communities. This will include funding opportunities for corridor and project implementation and more municipal- and corridor-based planning work.

Although it is not the focus of this regional plan, the NWMC recognizes the importance of local bicycle and Com-

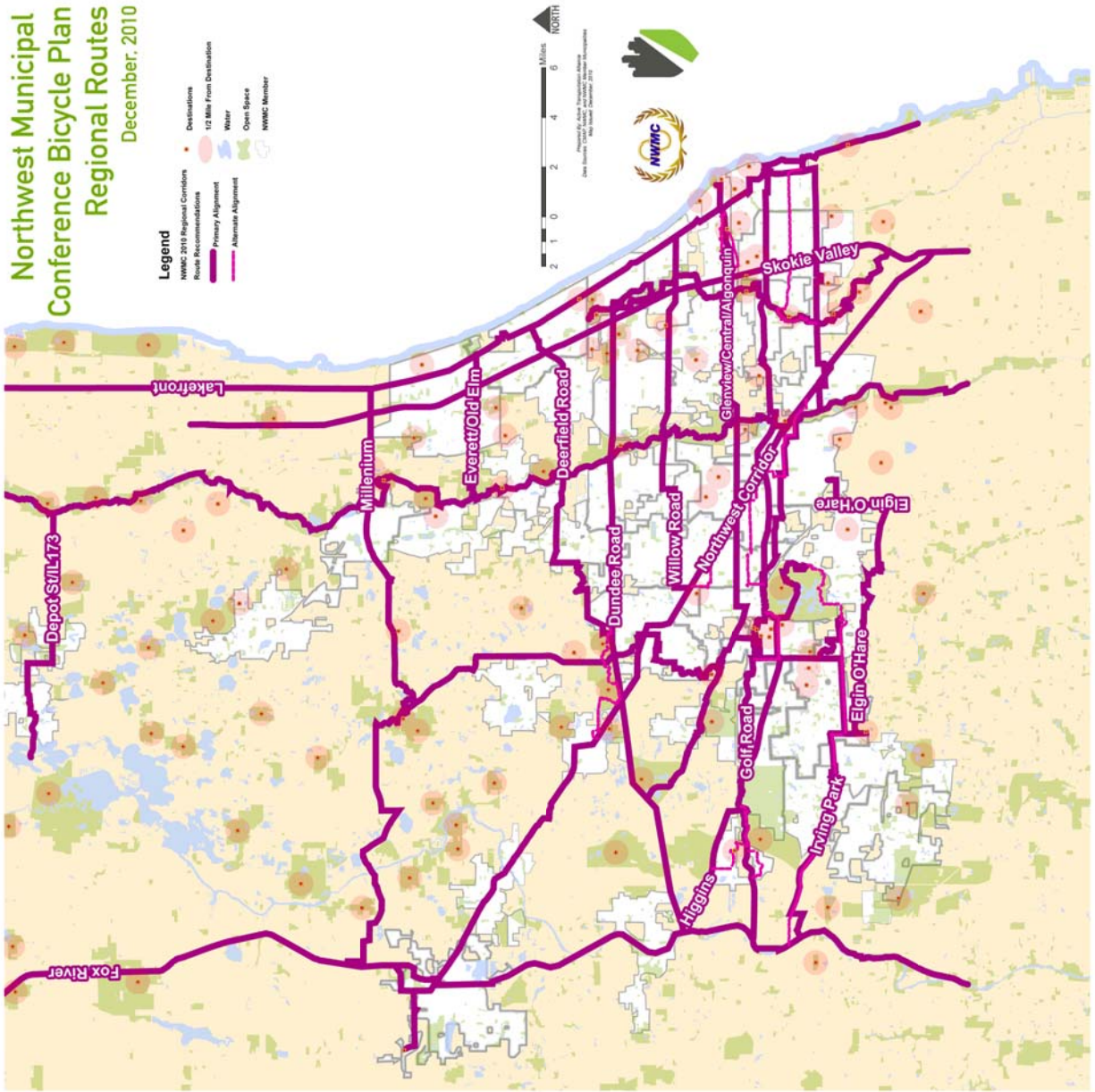
plete Streets planning. Complementing the regional corridor planning are recommendations for preparing local bike plans; creating bike safety, education, and encouragement programs; installing regional signage; and, pursuing grant opportunities. One can view the regional bicycle corridors as the equivalent to the highway network for automobile traffic. The regional bike network requires arterials, connectors and local networks to increase the attractiveness of bicycle travel throughout the NWMC service area.

With the adoption of the plan, the NWMC Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee will now turn its attention to outreach and implementation. The committee will meet on January 18 to discuss strategies to both publicize and implement the plan. NWMC staff is

hoping to present the 2010 NWMC Bicycle Plan to municipal councils, boards or bicycle committees. The 2010 plan includes municipal snapshot and presentations will focus on how your community fits into the overall regional planning effort. Please contact Chris Staron (cstaron@nwmc-cog.org) or Mike Walczak (mwalczak@nwmc-cog.org) if you are interested in receiving a presentation. Additionally, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee will pursue the 2010 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program call for projects, which is expected in the first quarter of 2011. As previously reported in this newsletter, we anticipate that the CMAQ call for projects will program five years of funding. The committee will examine ways to coordinate applications for implementation of regional bicycle corridors.

Corridor Characteristics		
Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
High percentage of existing bicycle facilities	High or lower percentage of existing bicycle facilities	Low percentage of existing bicycle facilities
High percentage of planning facilities	High percentage of planned bicycle facilities	Lower percentage of planning bicycle facilities
Good connectivity to regional destinations, transit and existing bicycle network	Good or fair connectivity to regional destinations, transit and existing bicycle network	Fair connectivity to regional destinations, transit and existing bicycle network
No significant barriers	May have significant barrier(s)	Significant barriers
Serves multiple NWMC members (regional in scope)	Serves multiple NWMC members (regional in scope)	Serves a smaller number or percentage of NWMC members
Implementation Tiers: Corridors		
Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
Deerfield Road	Glenview/Central/Algonquin	ComEd
Golf Road	Irving Park Road	Depot/IL 173
Higgins Road	North Shore – Millennium Trail	Elgin-O’Hare
Howard/Sibley	Dundee Road	Everett/Old Elm
Fairfield/Quentin	Northwest Highway	Willow Road
Skokie Valley Trail		

Northwest Municipal Conference Bicycle Plan Regional Routes December, 2010



East-West Corridors	
Depot/IL 173 Corridor	
ComEd Corridor	
North Shore/Millennium Trail Corridor	
Everett/Old Elm Corridor	
Deerfield Road Corridor	
Dundee Road Corridor	
Willow Road Corridor	
Glenview/Central/Algonquin Corridor	
Golf Road Corridor	
Irving Park Road Corridor	
Elgin-O'Hare Corridor	
Howard/Sibley Corridor	
Higgins Road Corridor	
Northwest Highway Corridor	
North-South Corridors	
Fairfield/Quentin Corridor	
Skokie Valley Trail Corridor	
Fox River Trail/Prairie Trail (Existing)	
Des Plaines River Trail (Existing)	
North Branch Trail (Existing)	
Lakefront Corridor (Existing)	



News from the North Shore Council of Mayors

On December 15, the North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee met at the *Skokie* Village Hall to discuss its Surface Transportation Program (STP). The committee voted to move Phase II Engineering for the *Village of Glenview's* West Lake Avenue project from federal fiscal year 2011 to 2012. Additionally, the committee reviewed and updated the council's multi-year B (MYB) list. The MYB list includes projects currently outside the multi-year program, but with the potential to receive future STP funding. Because the North Shore Council has a negative program balance, no projects have moved off the MYB list in over three years. Municipalities completed a number of MYB list projects using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and local funding.

Consequently, the MYB list no longer accurately reflected the available projects, and just over \$3 million was trimmed from the list. Given the North Shore Council's negative balance and the number of projects currently in the program, it is unlikely that MYB list projects will move into the active program in the next three to four years.

In addition to STP related items, staff presented the draft North Shore Council of Mayors annual report to the Technical Committee. Staff will present the annual report to the North Shore Council in February for approval.

The next North Shore Council of Mayors Technical Committee is scheduled for March 16 at the *Skokie* Village Hall.

News from the Northwest Council of Mayors

The next Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee will take place January 28 at 8:30 a.m. at the *Arlington Heights* Village Hall. Applications for new projects or changes to existing projects are due to Mike Walczak by Friday, January 14.

Two projects from the Council area are expected to be let in January: intersection improvements at Busse Road (Illinois 83) and Greenleaf Avenue and Busse Road and Pratt Boulevard in *Elk Grove Village* (STP funds). Projects targeting the March letting include bike path projects on Irving Park Road and Higgins Road in *Schaumburg* (CMAQ funds), Golf Road and Plum Grove Road lighting projects in *Schaumburg* (STP funds) and the Golf Road at New Wilke Road intersection improvement project in *Rolling Meadows* (STP funds).



RTA Releases Transit Market Analysis

Last month, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Board approved a market analysis report. In 2009, the RTA conducted a market analysis of travel in the six-county region. The study entailed examining the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Household Travel Tracker database and a 2009 RTA commissioned survey of riders and non-riders of transit that explored people's attitudes and behaviors about travel. The RTA concluded its data collection effort at the end of August 2009. Between the CMAP and RTA surveys, input from nearly 13,000 households across the region was captured to help paint a picture of regional travel.

The analysis shows that more than 26 million trips are made on an average weekday in the region. The region's travel patterns are highly geographically dispersed with over 60 percent of travel occurring within the suburban region. While transit accounts for approximately 6 percent of all trips, 38 percent of households in the region report using transit over the course of a regular week. Transit serves a critical role in the region's economy as it connects people with jobs, serving 14 percent of work trips. Survey findings indicate a broad base of support for transit invest-

ment. This support was even found to be true among those who do not take transit, pointing to the growing appreciation that the general public has for the broad reaching benefits of transit.

The report draws two major findings from the market analysis:

First, the travel needs of the Chicago region are both tremendous and diverse. The region experiences over 26 million daily trips, the bulk of which occur in a dispersed pattern within the suburban parts of our region. The region remains active through the mid-day and evening hours with trips that are related to a wide variety of activities.

Second, the report finds that the region has developed beyond the reach of the existing transit system. Planners and politicians designed the current transit system to connect people to the concentration of economic, social and cultural activities centered in Chicago's downtown core or central business district. The report notes that the transit system remains very effective in achieving this critical travel need. Nonetheless, the report recognizes that as development has taken place in the outer reaches of the region, the region's travel needs have changed and expanded. Further-

more the report acknowledges that "Transit has not been as successful in keeping pace with the dynamic needs of the region." As a result, transit's role in achieving regional mobility has narrowed over time.

The report's recommendations stemming from the market analysis findings fall under one of three broad strategies:

First, the report recommends that the region should continue to invest in transit's core competency, namely, making regional connections to downtown and making connections within Chicago, especially during periods of congestion when transit is most competitive with auto.

Second, the report recommends that the region should seek to broaden the utility of our existing system through marginal improvements that will allow transit to better tap markets other than the downtown commute. The report recognizes that the transit system is designed and sized to accommodate the rush hour commute; however, marginal enhancements can leverage existing infrastructure and maximize available capacity to better serve other travel markets.



RTA Transit Market Analysis Continued

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Third, the report recommends that the region should lay the groundwork for an expanded regional transit system supportive of our region's long-term vision for livable communities and sustainable prosperity. The report states, "The sheer magnitude of travel occurring within the suburban parts of our region begs for transit to play a greater role in meeting that market need." To overcome the challenges to suburb-to-suburb travel,

the report recommends a strategic and holistic approach that encourages coordinated planning and policy on matters such as land use and zoning, bike and pedestrian initiatives and long-term financial planning.

The full market analysis report can be found by following the link below.

[RTA Travel Market Analysis Final Report 092110.pdf](#)

News from the McHenry County Council of Mayors

The McHenry County Council of Mayors will meet on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. at the McHenry County Division of Transportation – 16111 Nelson Road in Woodstock. A discussion about the Council's current program, advance funding status and future programming is on the agenda.



CMAP Offering Local Technical Assistance

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is offering planning assistance to communities within the region. The Local Technical Assistance program will support planning activities that advance the implementation of GO TO 2040, the recently adopted regional comprehensive plan. Overall, local planning projects that address issues of transportation, land use, and housing in some way are eligible for assistance; those that treat these issues comprehensively and also address the natural environment, economic growth, and community development are ideal.

Examples of projects that could be undertaken through the program include:

- Preparation or updates to a local comprehensive plan, either in whole or in part. This could include expanding an existing plan to cover new topics such as energy and water conservation, local food, public health, workforce training, arts and culture, and others.
- Revisions to ordinances or other land use regulations. This could include revising outdated ordinances that are inconsistent with the comprehensive plan, updating codes to address water and energy conservation, updating parking regulations in a downtown, or many others.
- Activities that help to implement previously-adopted plans. For example, this could include advancing Transit Oriented Development

(TOD) plans or other small-area plans by making recommended ordinance changes, analyzing financing needs, or similar activities.

- Studies or specific plans related to important local issues. This could include planning for stormwater management in areas that experience flooding, projecting future housing supply and demand, studying local parking policies, identifying local open space needs, and others.
- Projects that involve inter-jurisdictional coordination, such as planning for housing cooperatively across several communities, planning for improvements along a transportation corridor, or preparing watershed plans that cross municipal boundaries.
- Assisting with public participation related to challenging local projects, including meeting facilitation or communication of complex planning issues to the public.

Staff assistance is geared toward planning activities at a larger scale than an individual site. Some site level projects may be undertaken, but these would be in the context of larger planning activities. Because the purpose of the program is to build local capacity in addition to assist with projects, the staff assigned to work on local projects will be based within the community, if desired by the project sponsor.

Applicants' projects will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Alignment of the project with the recommendations of GO TO 2040
- Local need for assistance
- Feasibility and ability to implement
- Collaboration with other groups, including neighboring governments and nongovernmental groups
- Input from relevant Counties and Councils of Government (COGs)
- Geographic balance

Selected projects will be announced in March. All applicants will be notified via phone/letter/email as to whether or not their project was selected. Upon selection, applicants will be assigned a CMAP contact who will work with the designated applicant to scope out the details of the project. At the same time, sponsors of applications that showed promise but could not be pursued immediately will be scheduled for future planning phases, or will be advised on ways that their applications could be further scoped, improved, and resubmitted during the next call for projects.

Please visit [The CMAP website](#) for the application and more details. The deadline for applications is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 28, 2011. For additional information contact Pete Saunders at psaunders@cmap.illinois.gov or 312.386.8654. NWMC staff is also available for assistance with applications.



Union Pacific to Host Meeting on Northwest Line

On February 10, the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad, in conjunction with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) and the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) will host a half-day meeting to take a comprehensive look at the whole UP-Northwest Line and address safety issues. UP-North Line communities are also welcome to attend. Wes Lujan, Arnold Robinson and UP's Commuter and Freight Safety teams will be present.

The meeting will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and will include the following agenda items:

1. Safety Briefing
2. Statistics and Data Review – Scope of the problem(s) to be addressed
3. Education Initiatives
4. Enforcement Initiatives
5. Engineering Opportunities
6. Special Event Planning

The meeting will be held at the *Des Plaines* Campus of Oakton Community College (1600 E. Golf Road, *Des Plaines*). The Union Pacific and Northwest Municipal Conference will provide more information about the meeting in the near future.



US DOT Redirects High Speed Rail Funding

On December 9, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation will be redirecting nearly \$1.2 billion in high speed rail funding from Wisconsin and Ohio to other states. Illinois will receive approximately \$42 million for its rail projects between Chicago and St. Louis and Chicago and Milwaukee. In November, Ohio and Wisconsin elected Republican Governors that opposed the rail projects in their states and wanted to redirect the funding to other transportation projects. California and Florida, states planning true high speed rail service of over 160 miles per hour (mph), are receiving the largest amounts of the

redirected funding. California is receiving \$624 million and Florida is receiving \$342 million. Illinois comes in fourth behind Washington (\$161 million). In all, fourteen states are in line to receive the redirected high speed rail funding.

Although the additional funding benefits Illinois directly, the opposition from Wisconsin and Ohio limits the Midwestern rail connections available from Chicago. By abandoning the rail link between Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin has removed the possibility of a linking Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison and Minneapolis-St. Paul with 110 mph service.



Congress Extends SAFETEA-LU to March 4

On December 22, President Obama signed legislation extending government funding and the federal surface transportation authorization. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) originally expired on September 30, 2009 and has now been extended six times. On December 21, Congress passed appropriation and authorization legislation that keeps federal surface transportation afloat until March 4, 2011. The House previously voted to extend the surface transportation authorization through federal fiscal year 2011 (September 30); however, the Senate version of the package shortened

the extension.

As reported last month, prospects for a multi-year surface transportation authorization appear poor. In the fifteen months since the expiration of SAFETEA-LU, Congress has not been able to agree on how to fund a multi-year surface transportation program. Gas tax revenues, which have remained constant since 1993, fail to keep pace with inflation and national needs. With Democrats holding narrow control of the Senate and Republicans in control of the House of Representatives, it remains unclear if Congress can pass a new multi-year authorization.

CMAP to Host Coordination Meeting

The Regional Transportation Operations Coalition for Northeastern Illinois is holding its annual construction and operations meeting on Wednesday, February 2, 9:00am to 12:00pm at CMAP's offices. This meeting will provide operators of the region's transportation system an opportunity to hear about each others' projects and to present information on their own projects.

If your municipality is planning a construction project this coming year which others in the region should know about, please send a representative(s) who can present information about your agency's planned 2011 construction projects and who will benefit from the ability to formulate operations plans in response to others' proposed construction. Construction staging schedules to be shared should include road, lane, ramp, and bridge closures; height and weight restrictions; planned detours; and other expected community and transportation operations impacts. This may require sending more than one representative.

If you have material to be posted to the CMAP webpage, please provide it to Claire Bozic by January 21 to be posted the week prior to the meeting. Please see last year's [construction webpage](#) for examples.

RSVP by email to Claire Bozic, Cbozic@cmapp.illinois.gov so your name can be added to the Willis Tower visitor list for faster access to the CMAP offices. If you know who will be presenting, please include the presenter's name with your RSVP.



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