**NWMC Bicycle Quiz Results Help Inform Multimodal Plan**

Two hundred and eighty-eight cyclists from around the region responded to the NWMC quiz asking them to rank their comfort and confidence level when it comes to biking—and the results are in! The survey showed that while many NWMC-area riders are “enthused & confident”, the vast majority of cyclists (74%) would ride more if roadways were safer and more comfortable. The results of the quiz will inform recommendations for the NWMC Multimodal Transportation Plan and help determine the types of bicycle facilities recommended for the priority corridors. Learn more about the results on the project website.
NWMC Communities to Benefit from Bicycle Path Grants

Governor J.B. Pritzker recently announced $2.6 million in grants for local communities to aid in land acquisition and development for various bicycle path projects throughout the state. Four of the selected projects will be constructed in the NWMC area, including: Des Plaines Park District’s Cumberland Terrace Bike Path; Glencoe Park District’s Connect Glencoe project; Village of Glenview’s Techny Basin Path Rehabilitation; and, Palatine Park District’s Palatine Bridge Renovation over Salt Creek. These projects will help provide additional multimodal connections for residents of NWMC communities by expanding opportunities for both commuting and recreation. The grants are administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) through its Bicycle Path Grant program. More information on the selected projects is available by visiting Illinois.gov.

Multimodal Plan Steering Committee Discusses Priority Corridors, Public Engagement Events

The NWMC Multimodal Transportation Plan Steering Committee met for a third time on August 27 to discuss potential updates to the 2010 Bicycle Plan’s priority corridors. The project team outlined the corridor updates and received feedback from committee members about data that should be included in the final plan. The committee also had a robust discussion about maintenance strategies for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, with members sharing best practices for both routine repairs and winter maintenance.

Member and public engagement will continue to ramp up throughout the fall, with an NWMC member open house slated for November 6 and public engagement events being planned for the holiday season. Additional details will be made available soon. In the meantime, members of the public can continue to engage with the project by visiting the NWMC Multimodal Transportation Plan Website. Finally, the committee discussed the results of the sidewalk and access to transit analyses, which are expected to be released within the next month, with updated priority corridors to follow in October.
Join the NWMC at CMAP’s Fall Event Series

This fall, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and its partners are conducting Small Plans, Big Ideas forums to connect local leaders and provide expert advice about some of the region’s toughest issues and advance the ON TO 2050 regional plan. NWMC staff will attend the North Chicago and Elgin events to promote the NWMC Multimodal Transportation Plan and Suburban Purchasing Cooperative as examples of regional cooperative efforts. The series coincides with the 2019 joint call for projects for the CMAP Local Technical Assistance (LTA) and Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Community Planning programs. For additional information, please contact staff or onto2050@cmap.illinois.gov or 312-386-8802.

Northwest, North Shore Councils to Consider Updated STP Methodologies

At the September 11 NWMC Board meeting, the full Northwest and North Shore Councils will consider approval of updated Surface Transportation Program methodologies. Both methodologies, which spell out the guidelines for selecting and programming new STP projects, were developed from January to August by NWMC and municipal staff, as well as each council’s Technical Committee. Each methodology was updated to include new scoring criteria and programming policies required by CMAP as part of an agreement signed between the Council of Mayors and the City of Chicago in 2017. Both methodologies were subject to a public comment period and have been approved by the appropriate Council Technical Committee. The final draft of each methodology can be found in the Transportation section of the NWMC website.
CMAQ and STP Project Selection Committee Roundup

On September 11, both the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)/Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-L) Project Selection Committees met to approve both recommended programs of active and contingency projects. Two projects from NWMC communities were included in the STP program and nine others were included in the CMAQ/TAP-L program. Two additional recommended projects sponsored by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County as well as the Glencoe Park District will benefit NWMC communities. CMAP staff will now prepare a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment incorporating the recommended programs. The Transportation Committee will consider the TIP at their next meeting on September 20, followed by the MPO Policy Committee on October 10.

Pace Cuts Ribbon on Pulse Milwaukee Line

On August 15, the new Pace Pulse Milwaukee line was celebrated with a ribbon cutting at the Touhy Avenue station in Niles. This is Pace’s first arterial rapid transit line, which runs between the CTA Jefferson Park Transit Center in Chicago and Golf Mill shopping center. Local, state and federal officials, including Niles Mayor Andrew Przybylo and Pace Board Member and former NWMC President and Wilmette Village President Chris Canning, participated in the official opening of the line, which began service on August 11. The Pace Pulse Milwaukee Line utilizes improved route design and new Transit Signal Priority (TSP) technology to offer faster, more frequent service. In addition, all-new stations are being constructed along the route, featuring raised platforms for faster boarding, real-time bus arrival information, heated shelters with seating and bike racks. For more information, please visit the Pulse website.
ITEP Applications Open October 1

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has announced that applications for the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) will be accepted from Tuesday, October 1 until Friday, December 6. ITEP provides funding for a variety of projects that help to expand alternative modes of transportation and improve the cultural, historic, aesthetic or environmental value of the state’s transportation infrastructure. New for this cycle, ITEP will no longer fund Phase I Engineering or street lighting that is not co-located with a transportation alternative facility. Applicants who have not yet completed Phase I Engineering may apply for the 2019-2020 cycle as long as a Final Project Development Report (PDR) has been submitted to IDOT for review. Potential grantees will need to include the PDR submittal date in their application. For more information, please see the IDOT website.

In addition, Metra also announced the continuation of a similar pilot on the BNSF line along with minor schedule changes on the BSNF, Heritage Corridor, and Rock Island lines. All schedule changes went into effect on September 3. For more information, please visit the Metra website.

Metra Announces Continuation of Pilot Program

Metra has announced that it will continue a pilot program on the UP Northwest line that has added weekend service to and from the City of Chicago. The pilot program added five new inbound and five new outbound trains on Saturdays and three new outbound trains on Sundays and holidays. Metra has reported strong ridership on these additional trains, and therefore the pilot program will be continued indefinitely.
CMAP Releases Sidewalk Inventory Database

To help communities prioritize investments in pedestrian infrastructure, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has developed a sidewalk inventory that documents the existence of sidewalks in Cook, Lake, Will, Kane, Kendall, DuPage, and McHenry counties. The inventory also notes whether the sidewalks are buffered or barrier-protected. The data and accompanying documentation are available on the CMAP Data Hub. For more information, please contact staff or CMAP Senior Planner Lindsay Bayley, lbayley@cmap.illinois.gov.

Metra to Host Symposium on Railroad Trespassing and Suicide Prevention

Communities are invited to attend Metra’s “Breaking the Silence, Restoring Hope, Saving Lives” event to be held on October 4 at the Illinois Institute of Technology’s Kent College of Law. Metra will be joined by representatives from the British Transport Police, Toronto Transit, Federal Railroad Administration, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, American Public Transportation Association, mental health experts and other stakeholders. Participants will share best practices and strategies to help reduce suicide and trespassing fatalities. More information is available by visiting Metra’s event registration page or contacting Hilary Konczal, Hkonczal@metrarr.com.