

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

1600 East Golf Road, Suite 0700
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
(847) 296-9200 • Fax (847) 296-9207
www.nwmc-cog.org



*A Regional Association of Illinois
Municipalities and Townships
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

MEMBERS

Antioch
Arlington Heights
Bannockburn
Barrington
Bartlett
Buffalo Grove
Deer Park
Deerfield
Des Plaines
Elk Grove Village
Evanston
Fox Lake
Glencoe
Glenview
Grayslake
Hanover Park
Highland Park
Hoffman Estates
Kenilworth
Lake Bluff
Lake Forest
Lake Zurich
Libertyville
Lincolnshire
Lincolnwood
Morton Grove
Mount Prospect
Niles
Northbrook
Northfield
Northfield Township
Palatine
Park Ridge
Prospect Heights
Rolling Meadows
Schaumburg
Skokie
Streamwood
Vernon Hills
West Dundee
Wheeling
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Executive Director
Mark L. Fowler

**Northwest Municipal Conference
Transportation Committee
Agenda**

March 25, 2021

8:30 a.m.

Via Zoom Video Conference

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86498202675?pwd=WmwrVINaUXV1MGNueEtpWWN6S0lyUT09>

Dial by your location: (312) 626-6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 864 9820 2675

- I. Call to Order/Introductions**
- II. Approval of January 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)**
Action Requested: Approval
- III. Fair Transit South Cook Pilot Presentation**
Jesse Elam, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy with the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (CCDOH), will give a presentation on a new transit pilot program serving southern Cook County and its effects on the greater region.
Action Requested: Informational
- IV. RTA Regional Recovery Strategy (Attachment B)**
Staff will report on NWMC's response to the RTA's Regional Recovery Strategy submitted during their public comment period.
Action Requested: Discussion
- V. Agency Reports**
 - a. CMAP (Attachment C)
 - b. Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
 - c. IDOT Highways
 - d. Illinois Tollway (Attachment D)
 - e. Metra (Attachment E)
 - f. Pace (Attachment F)
 - g. RTA (Attachment G)
- VI. Other Business**
- VII. Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the NWMC Transportation Committee is scheduled for April 22, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. via video conference.
- VIII. Adjourn**

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**NWMC Transportation Committee
Via Teleconference
Thursday, January 28, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

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Members Present

Tom Dailly, President, Village of Schaumburg, *Co-Chair*
Rod Craig, President, Village of Hanover Park, *Co-Chair*
Marie Hansen, Director of Development Services, Village of Barrington
Darren Monico, Village Engineer, Village of Buffalo Grove
Bob Benton, Trustee, Village of Deerfield
Eric Heiker, Civil Engineer, City of Des Plaines
Phil Kiraly, Village Manager, Village of Glencoe
Jeff Brady, Village of Glenview
Ramesh Kanapareddy, Director of Public Works, City of Highland Park
Bill McLeod, Mayor, Village of Hoffman Estates
William Grossi, Trustee, Village of Mount Prospect
Tom Powers, Village Engineer, Village of Niles
Matt Farmer, Village Engineer, Village of Northbrook
Lou Arrigoni, Civil Engineer, City of Park Ridge
Peter Falcone, Assistant to the City Administrator, City of Prospect Heights
Lara Sanoica, Alderman, City of Rolling Meadows
Karyn Robles, Director of Transportation, Village of Schaumburg

Others Present

Cecilia Diaz, Transportation Planner, Cook County Dept. of Transportation & Highways
Sam Wright, Transportation Planner, Cook County Dept. of Transportation & Highways
Joe Cwynar, Senior Project Manager, Engineering Enterprises
Kelsey Passi, Community Relations Corridor Manager, Illinois Tollway
Rick Mack, Community Relations Representative, Metra
Katie Renteria, Community Relations Representative, Metra
Sarah Blair, Mobility Outreach Coordinator, Regional Transportation Authority
Linda Chamberlain, Mobility Outreach Coordinator, Regional Transportation Authority
Candace Jones, Mobility Outreach Coordinator, Regional Transportation Authority
Steve Andrews, Community Relations Representative, Pace
Claire Serdiuk, Public Affairs, Regional Transportation Authority
Becca Wagner, Smart Mobility Practice Lead, Stantec
Thomas Gill, President, Thomas Engineering Group
Andre Santos, Sales Representative, Traffic Control Corporation
Larry Bury, Deputy Director, NWMC
Mark Fowler, Executive Director, NWMC
Kendra Johnson, Program Associate for Transportation, NWMC
Matthew Pasquini, Program Associate for Transportation, NWMC

I. Call to Order/Introductions

President Craig called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

II. Approval of December 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Trustee Grossi moved approval of the December 3, 2020 meeting minutes. Trustee Grossi seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

III. RTA Mobility Management Team Presentation

The committee received a presentation from Ms. Blair, Mobility Outreach Coordinator with the Regional Transit Authority (RTA), about an array of programs and services geared toward improving access to public transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. Programs and services include events to help people with disabilities and seniors apply for Reduced Fare and Ride Free programs and community events hosted by elected officials and municipalities with the assistance and presence of RTA staff. Ms. Blair also answered questions from members of the committee and added that information is available on the mobility management program section of [RTA's website](#).

IV. Agency Reports

A. CMAP – No report.

B. CCDOTH – Ms. Diaz reported that the Invest in Cook grant program is accepting applications until March 12. She also announced that the county has a joint workshop planned for individuals participating in the application process for both Invest in Cook and the Community Development Block Grant program. Finally, Ms. Diaz announced that the Fair Transit public survey has been wrapped up and results are being analyzed.

C. IDOT Highways – No report.

D. Illinois Tollway – Ms. Passi reported that the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors approved the 2021 budget, which includes \$1.53 Billion in capital spending. She also reported employees continue to work from home and toll collections will continue via iPass. She added that the missed toll program and been successful and is being extended to June 2021. Finally, Ms. Passi reported that the Tollway continue to moves forward with all scheduled construction projects, maintenance, and repair work.

E. Metra – Ms. Renteria reported that the Metra Board of Directors approved the purchase of up to 500 state of the art railcars at their January 13th board meeting.

F. Pace – Mr. Andrews reported that 2020 ridership was low across the board compared to 2019 levels. He also reported the RTA is working to determine how to distribute additional federal relief for transit. Finally, Mr. Andrews provided a number of capital updates, including: The Pulse

Dempster Line is nearing 100% completion of the design phase and anticipates construction to begin later this year; work continues to convert the former Allstate facility in Wheeling into the new Northwest Division maintenance facility; and, design is nearly complete for a new ADA transfer facility at the Northwest Transportation Center in Schaumburg.

- G. RTA – Ms. Serdiuk reported that the funding plan for recent federal transit relief will be available for public comment on their website prior to their February 18th board meeting. Finally, she reported that a call for community planning proposals was open alongside CMAP and is accepting applications through February 3.

V. Other Business

No other business.

VI. Next Meeting

Mayor Craig noted the next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. via teleconference.

VII. Adjourn

Trustee Grossi moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 a.m. President Dailly seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

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Executive Director
Mark L. Fowler

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Kirk Dillard
Chairman, Board of Directors
Regional Transportation Authority
175 W. Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1650
Chicago, IL 60604

RE: RTA Regional COVID Recovery Strategy

Dear Chairman Dillard:

On behalf of the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC), please accept this letter of support for a fair and equitable process to allocate federal COVID-19 relief funding amongst the region's service boards. Of particular importance to the NWMC is the issue of geographic equity and the recognition of the role that suburban transit, including Metra commuter rail and Pace suburban bus service, plays within the regional economy and in supporting essential workers.

The Conference recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic presents extraordinary challenges in allocating resources equitably and maintaining safe and effective transit services throughout the region. Pace and Metra have responded by diligently adjusting and prioritizing service during the pandemic and we share concerns that the proposal to be considered by the RTA Board does not reflect prior adjustments and may lead to future budgetary deficits. We also share concerns that the proposal would set a precedent for future COVID relief allocations and/or distribution of federal funds. Finally, we request that the RTA also prioritize funding to municipal-based transit services. For many suburban riders, these services are just as crucial in providing mobility so that transit dependent populations can make essential trips.

The NWMC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the RTA's Regional COVID Recovery Strategy and your consideration of our comments. We look forward to working together to rebuild the region safely and equitably.

Sincerely,

Kathleen O'Hara
President, Village of Lake Bluff
President, Northwest Municipal Conference

Cc: Leanne Redden
Executive Director

CMAP Updates – March 8, 2021**CMAP News**

In accordance with the stay at home order, the CMAP office remains closed for the foreseeable future, but [staff](#) are working remotely and are available via email and telephone. [CMAP committee meetings](#) continue to be conducted virtually.

For general questions, you can send an email through our [contact form](#) and remember to stay up-to-date by subscribing to CMAP's Weekly Update emails or [viewing online](#).

Meeting recordings available

Did you miss a CMAP committee meeting? You can now watch recordings of public meetings since June. CMAP will continue to post the recordings for all public committee meetings going forward. You can find them linked on each [committee page](#).

COVID-19 Response and Resources

CMAP wants to keep you updated on COVID-19 impacts to the region. Each week, we will bring you more information and analysis to help shape decision making. You can find previous analyses on our [COVID-19 Response](#) page, as well as a [list of resources](#) to aid our partners in this uncertain time. We've also updated our [transportation system analysis](#) — covering roads, trips, safety, transit, and freight rail — with the latest data.

Governor's Budget Proposal Highlights Priorities and Continued Pandemic Impacts

CMAP analyzed Governor J.B. Pritzker's budget proposal and the priorities of ON TO 2050, the region's long-range plan. The budget request includes investments and programs that address mobility, water management, and resources for local governments. CMAP explores what the proposal could mean for northeastern Illinois. Learn more [here](#).

CMAP state and federal legislative agendas now available

Each legislative session, CMAP develops strategic policy agendas based on recommendations from ON TO 2050, the region's long-range plan. The CMAP Board recently approved 2021 agendas for [state](#) and [federal](#) lawmakers. These documents reflect CMAP's legislative priorities for the region, including local government revenues, the need for vital investments in transportation, and addressing climate change. Learn more about CMAP's legislative and policy statements [here](#).

Illinois sees second-largest population loss of U.S. states

Illinois lost nearly 80,000 residents in 2020, marking the seventh straight year of population decline. In all, Illinois' population has declined almost 2 percent over the last decade according to new estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. [Learn more](#) in a new analysis of population trends across both Illinois and the metropolitan Chicago region.

Program Status Updates**Regional Transportation Call for Projects**

Funding applications for surface transportation projects closed on March 5, 2021. The deadline for Councils/CDOT to submit subregional priority points allocations is April 30, 2021.

Surface Transportation Program

The next STP Project Selection Committee (PSC) meeting will be held virtually on April 1, 2021. A full calendar of 2021 meetings is available on the [committee web page](#). Program status reports for the STP

CMAP Updates – March 8, 2021

Shared Fund, based on quarterly updates submitted by project sponsors and an accounting of available, programmed, and obligated funds is for the region are available on CMAP's [STP web page](#).

Sponsors are reminded that the next quarterly status update for STP Shared Fund and Local Active and Contingency program projects must be submitted to CMAP (Shared Fund) or your Planning Liaison (Local) between March 1 and March 31, 2021. Questions regarding specific projects, status reports, and subregional accounting should be discussed with your planning liaison.

Staff Contact: [Kama Dobbs](#) (312-386-8710)

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives (TAP)

The next CMAQ Project Selection Committee (PSC) meeting will be held virtually on April 1, 2021. The PSC will consider project change requests for the June state letting at this meeting. Change requests for projects targeting the June state letting must be submitted by March 25, 2021.

Staff Contact: [Doug Ferguson](#) (312-386-8824)

Regional Safety Action Agenda

CMAP is placing increasing attention on traffic safety as the number of fatalities and injuries continue to increase, and we've lacked progress towards meeting federally required safety performance targets. As part of our commitment to safety, CMAP is kicking off a Safety Resource Group. The group will inform a 'Regional Safety Action Agenda' to recommend safety improvements through the lenses of equity, engineering, education, enforcement and emergency services and public health. The Resource Group will include members from across these fields to prioritize actions, build consensus and develop safety tools, resources and policy for our regional partners. We will keep you informed as this work progresses.

Staff Contact: [Victoria Jacobsen](#)

Calls for Projects

Local Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Program

On February 19, IDOT Central Bureau of Local Roads & Streets released [Circular Letter CL2021-07](#), "FY 2022 and 2023 Local Rail-Highway Grade Crossing Safety Program (Section 130 Funds)."

IDOT continues to place a strong emphasis on crossing closure, warning device, and circuitry related projects as opposed to crossing surface and roadway approach projects. The Section 130 funds will match up to \$7,500 of a Railroad's incentive for a crossing closure. The program will work with the ICC crossing closure program and incentives where possible. A completed application, along with required attachments should be submitted to IDOT for each location where safety improvements are proposed.

Please submit applications to IDOT by **April 2, 2021** at 11:59 PM. Applicants are requested to submit their application electronically.

Invest in Cook applications being accepted

The Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways has announced a fifth round of [Invest in Cook](#), an \$8.5 million program to cover some of the cost of planning and feasibility studies, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction associated with transportation improvements sponsored by local and regional governments and private partners within Cook County. Eligible project proposals

should be consistent with the priorities set forth in Connecting Cook County and expand the County's involvement in multimodal projects, and can include proposals for transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, roadway modes of transportation and bridge improvement projects. Applications will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. CST on **March 12, 2021**.

MWRD accepting applications to address flooding and drainage problems

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) seeks project applications from local government organizations to address flooding and drainage problems through its voluntary [Flood-Prone Property Acquisition Program and Local Stormwater Partnership Program](#). Applications close **Friday, March 12, 2021**.

Diesel Emissions Reductions Act (DERA) National Grants Program

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) anticipates awarding approximately \$46 million in competitive grant funding under the [Diesel Emissions Reductions Act \(DERA\) National Grants Program](#). The program is soliciting applications nationwide for projects that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions and exposure, particularly from fleets operating in areas designated by the EPA as having poor air quality.

Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](#) no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on **Tuesday, March 16, 2021** to be considered for funding.

The EPA has hosted a series of informational webinars about the program, the last of which is scheduled for Thursday, February 11 at 1:00 p.m. CT. Please visit the [EPA's website](#) for more information about the program and webinars.

CMAP Products and Data

Download Map of Northeastern Illinois

A newly updated, [seven-county regional reference map](#) from CMAP depicts municipalities, highways, rail transit, waterways, forests, and other important features as of 2017. An earlier version of this map was last prepared by CMAP in 2008.

Share your thoughts on planning projects

Plans that reflect the values and priorities of their communities require meaningful public participation from residents and stakeholders. The [Engage with CMAP](#) website allows residents to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns on current planning projects in the region. Stay informed and connected by checking out the site. We look forward to hearing from you!

Download the new Land Use Inventory

CMAP recently released the [2015 Land Use Inventory](#), a survey of northeastern Illinois' land use in geographic information systems (GIS) format. The dataset is now available for download through the [CMAP Data Hub](#). The Inventory is based on a review of 2015 county assessor data and aerial photography, focusing on areas that have undergone change since the 2013 Inventory.

The Land Use Inventory is an essential input to CMAP's land use and transportation research. Other users of the data include county planning departments, regional transportation agencies, federal and state agencies, university researchers, non-governmental organizations, environmental consulting firms, and civil engineering firms. Visit the [Land Use Inventory](#) page for more information.

Production on the 2018 Inventory is underway, with completion anticipated in late 2021.

Public Input Opportunities

Contribute to the Green Infrastructure Baseline Inventory

The Metropolitan Planning Council, in coordination with the [Calumet Stormwater Collaborative](#), is developing the Green Infrastructure Baseline Inventory. This free and publicly available dataset documents existing green infrastructure installations in the Calumet region of Illinois. Do you have data about existing green infrastructure installations in this area? Visit the [website](#) to submit information.

Active Transportation Alliance Survey

The Active Transportation Alliance is currently conducting a [survey](#) to better understand how the state's local match requirements impact a community's ability to build pedestrian and bicycle projects on state roads. They want to know if any communities have ever had to say 'No' to including walking or biking infrastructure on a state road because of IDOT's 20% local match requirement.

From our Partners

RTA Launches Updated RTAMS Transportation Data Website

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) launched a redesigned website to house ridership statistics, interactive maps, and downloadable data from the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra, and Pace. Visit the [updated website](#) to learn more.

Training Opportunities

IDOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program workshops

It is IDOT's goal to provide assistance to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms and individuals interested in doing business with the department in ways that ensure equity, access, and transparency. This support is provided at no charge to IDOT's DBE firms, to firms seeking IDOT DBE certification, to IL UCP DBE certified firms who have an IDOT contract, and to prime contractors doing business with IDOT and includes free virtual workshops as part of its Building Blocks of Success series. Workshop information, including dates and times, is available through Eventbrite at bit.ly/DBEworkshops. Advance registration is required.

Administered by IDOT, the DBE program provides minorities, women and other eligible small businesses an opportunity to participate in highway, transit and airport contracts that are federal and state funded. For more information on becoming a certified DBE and learning more about IDOT resources that are available, visit www.idot.illinois.gov/dbe.

National Highway Institute (NHI) Web-based Training

The NHI has no-cost trainings available that are recommended for engineers and construction workers. These includes topics such as such as Introduction to Safety Inspection of In-Service Bridges, Chip Seal Best Practices, Pipe Installation, Inspection, and Quality, Introduction to a Transportation Asset Management Plan and Hot In-Place Recycling. To browse courses and register visit <http://bit.ly/nhitraining> and enter your government email.

IL Tollway Updates – March 2021

Board of Directors

Governor JB Pritzker has appointed Jacqueline Gomez Fuentes to fill an open seat on the Tollway's Board of Directors. Gomez Fuentes serves as the Director of Supplier and Workforce Diversity at the Obama Foundation where she is responsible for the implementation and management of the Foundation's diversity and inclusion programming. Previously, she worked as the Director of Contract Compliance for Cook County and the Vice President of Business Development and Marketing at SUMAC Inc. In 2018, Gomez Fuentes received the Advocacy Award for business diversity and inclusion from the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association.

Cashless Tolling – What Customers Need to Know

In March 2020, the Illinois Tollway halted cash toll collection in an effort to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, protecting its customers and employees from exposure points to the rapidly-spreading virus. Since then, the Illinois Tollway has taken extensive measures to better serve customers who previously relied on cash payments, including measures to provide relief during the pandemic.

Moving forward, Illinois Tollway drivers will continue to have the option to pay tolls with I-PASS, E-ZPass or pay online with the Tollway's Pay By Plate service. The Tollway continues to maintain a 14-day grace period – one of the longest in the nation – allowing customers to pay unpaid tolls without additional fees or fines prior to being mailed an invoice.

Using Pay By Plate, customers simply enter their license plate, payment method and dates of travel, and the Pay By Plate system takes care of the rest. This service has been leveraged by over 650,000 customers to date demonstrating the quick and seamless transition for many cash customers to the new service.

Operations during COVID-19

Since March 2020, extensive protocols have been in place to protect employees, keep our essential and front-line workers safe and the entire agency working. The Illinois Tollway Board of Directors has continued to meet virtually each month to keep all business, roadway services and construction activity moving.

The agency is continuing to work closely with contractors to ensure the proper safety precautions are taken to protect workers engaged in outdoor construction activities along our system. Tollway contractors and consultants continuing their work are always required to have comprehensive safety plans in place, and those plans have been updated to account for the safety precautions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-person customer service centers are currently offline; however, we are working on a plan for reopening service. In the meantime, the Tollway Customer Service Call Center is operational and assisting customers.

Move Over Law

Once again, we are asking for your support to help draw attention to the state's Move Over laws. Two years ago, the Illinois State Police lost three troopers in one year, two of which were members of the Tollway's own ISP District 15. Trooper Christopher Lambert and Trooper Gerald Ellis – were lost in senseless accidents serving our agency as well as the overall mission of the Illinois State Police.

When driving, we must take care for everyone who works on our roadways, from our troopers, to our roadway and HELP Truck drivers. And remember Illinois' Move Over Law requires drivers to slow down, move over and change lanes, if possible, to make extra room when approaching ANY vehicle with lights flashing, stopped on a roadway.

Construction

The Illinois Tollway has kicked off the 2021 construction season as the 10th year of the Move Illinois capital program begins with some of the biggest and most challenging projects lying ahead.

The Tollway's 2021 capital program calls for investing \$1.53 billion in the region's infrastructure. This includes more than \$451 million to continue planning and advance construction for the new I-490 Tollway and new interchanges connecting to the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), Tri-State Tollway (I-294), the Illinois Route 390 Tollway, as well as providing direct access in and out of O'Hare International Airport as part of the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project.

Work to reconstruct and widen the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) will continue in 2021 with more than \$690 million budgeted to continue design and construction of the roadway, as well as the new BNSF Railway Bridge, the new Mile Long Bridge and to begin work to reconfigure the I-290/I-88 Interchange at I-294. In addition, \$78 million is allocated in 2021 for ongoing work to complete the final ramps for the I-294/I-57 Interchange.

The 2021 capital program also provides \$312.2 million for systemwide roadway and bridge repairs to keep the existing Tollway system in good repair. Several local projects include replacing the Deerpath Road Bridge over the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88) in Aurora, rebuilding the Stearns School Road Bridge over the Tri-State Tollway (I-94) in Gurnee, and building a new Windsor Road Bridge at I-88 and I-294 in coordination with roadway improvements by the Village of Oak Brook and

Northwest construction projects:

- I-490 Tollway Project includes interchange construction for ramps to westbound I-90, the I-490 bridge that will carry traffic over the Touhy Avenue Reservoir and collector-distributor roads along I-90.
- Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project mainline roadway construction and widening continues between the O'Hare Oasis and North Avenue. Additional bridge, sewer and ramp work is underway throughout the rest of the corridor to prepare for mainline work.

If you have any questions please reach out to Kelsey Passi at kpassi@getipass.com

###



Metra Media Relations 312-322-6776

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High-tech air purification system to be installed on Metra railcars

Ultraviolet light, better filters to improve onboard air quality

CHICAGO (March 17, 2021) – As part of its continued efforts to create safety and build rider confidence, Metra is significantly upgrading the ventilation system on its railcars with a new three-stage filtration and purification process, the agency announced today. The new system uses ultraviolet light, electrical fields and stronger filters to create the safest possible environment for its customers. Leading the way, Metra is among the first agencies to adopt such a comprehensive system for its railcars.

The new system is expected to remove and eliminate 99 percent of all airborne particulates, bacteria and viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19. Metra already refreshes the air every four minutes and uses hospital-grade MERV 13 filters on its train cars; the new system will be the equivalent to or better than MERV 17 or HEPA standards.

“The air in our trains is already proven safe and healthy, but this new cutting-edge system sets the highest industry standard for quality,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski. “Combined with all the other steps we have taken to clean, disinfect and sanitize our system, and to promote healthy behavior by riders and workers, this is just one more reason our customers can ‘Commute with Confidence.’”

The Metra Board of Directors today approved a contract with Transitair Systems LLC, of Hornell, N.Y., to provide the new air filtration and purification system on nearly 700 railcars for \$6.6 million. The contract will cover all cars that are not due to be replaced when new cars (with a similar or better system) enter the fleet. The system, designed to fit in the same space as the existing HVAC system, will be tested on 50 cars before options for additional units are approved.

Under the new system, air will be cleaned in a three-step process:

- 1) The first step relies on an electrical attraction between airborne particles and the interior surfaces of a filter. Air will pass through one filter, and then through a unit that charges particles in the air, which are attracted to oppositely charged surfaces as the air passes through a second filter.
- 2) The second step uses ultraviolet light to kill or inactivate bacteria, mold and viruses.

- 3) In the final step, air passes through a unit with electrically charged ions and electrons, which react with airborne particles to remove or inactivate pollutants and viruses.

The upgraded air filtration and purification system is just one of the many ways Metra has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Metra also adopted a new regimen to clean, sanitize, disinfect and inspect all cars and Metra-maintained stations at least once a day, with an extra emphasis on disinfecting high-touch areas as frequently as possible, including the use of electrostatic disinfecting foggers.

Metra has also installed an abundance of signs in stations and on trains that remind riders that masks or face coverings must be worn, and that they should practice physical distancing. Metra also installed two new touchless hand sanitizer dispensers in every car, and customers can use the Ventra app to buy and display tickets, which eliminates close interactions with crews.

###

About Metra

Metra is an essential resource that safely and reliably connects individuals to the things that matter most in their lives — their work, their homes and their families.

Connect with Metra: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | metrarail.com



NWMC Updates for March 25, 2021

Passenger Load Data

Your safety is Pace's top priority. For that reason, we are committed to giving you the information you need to be comfortable using our system. We are posting passenger load data, for specific routes and trips, on our [website](#) for our riders to view. The Covid-19 pandemic has reduced public transit ridership, and at this time, riders will not encounter crowded buses on the vast majority of trips throughout our system. However, some segments of a few routes still see elevated ridership at certain times of day. Riders and operators are legally required to wear masks and seats are blocked off for social distancing. (See an overview of all the steps Pace is taking to keep buses clean and safe [here](#).)

Pulse Dempster Line

Pace has released an IFB for construction of Pulse Dempster Line stations.

Steven Andrews
Community Relations Representative
847-997-1509
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Regional Transportation Authority February-March Update

The RTA remains committed to keeping elected officials and stakeholders up to date about transit funding and policy in Northeastern Illinois as well as information regarding the impact COVID-19 is having on the region's transit system. The RTA is in the process of implementing a three-step regional transit recovery plan, visit the [COVID Recovery web page](#) for more information. Additionally, the RTA has been sending out a bi-weekly COVID-19 service and funding impact update. We encourage you to [subscribe](#) here to receive those regular communications

Public comment period begins for COVID recovery methodology

Step 2 in the regional transit system's [three-step COVID recovery strategy](#) is in progress, with a focus on sustaining critical transit during the pandemic. Late last year then President Trump signed the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSAA) into law. The intent of this relief funding is to sustain critical transit services and to make certain that it is available for those riders who are most likely to need it through the remainder of the pandemic and over the next year. The \$486 million in CRRSAA funding the RTA region will receive will help close a nearly \$500 million estimated regional budget deficit for 2021. The table below shows the proposed allocation amongst the three Service Boards as well as funding for the ADA paratransit system. The additional "RTA Funding Change" noted below incorporates statutory/formula distribution to the Service Boards of additional funding due to higher than budgeted sales tax revenue projected for 2021.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Total	Fund ADA off the top	CTA	Metra	Pace
CRRSAA Allocation	\$486	\$20	\$361	\$83	\$22
RTA Funding Change	\$106	---	\$60	\$33	\$13
Total Funding Change	\$592	\$20	\$421	\$116	\$35

A description of the process the RTA used to recommend distribution of the CRRSAA funding can found [here](#) along with an [interactive RTA Story Map](#). The RTA Board plans to vote on allocating these funds at the March 18th Board meeting.

Public comments on these recommendations are invited through March 5, 2021. Send comments by email to communications@rtachicago.org or U.S. Mail to RTA Administrative Offices, 175 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1650, Chicago, IL 60604. Requests for translated materials or other requests to enhance the accessibility of this content should also be sent to communications@rtachicago.org.

All public comments will be provided to the RTA Board for its meeting at 9:00 a.m. on March 18, 2021. The public can view all RTA Board meetings via WebEx or [YouTube](#). See the [RTA Board Meetings](#) web page for details.

Federal Update

On February 8, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) released [a COVID-19 emergency relief funding package](#) which included \$30 billion of funding for public transit nationwide. The transit proposal is part of a larger \$1.9 trillion relief and stimulus package that President Biden and Democratic leaders are hoping to pass through Congress in upcoming weeks through the budget reconciliation process, which would allow the legislation to pass the Senate with a simple majority. The new proposed transit funding would be distributed primarily through a formula to urbanized areas across the country ensuring that each urbanized area is able to secure 132% of its total annual operating costs when combining the funding received under this proposal with the funding previously received under the CARES Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. APTA President and CEO Paul Skoutelas issued a [statement applauding the effort](#) and thanking the Biden Administration and Congressional leaders.

In addition to funding for transit, the House reconciliation package currently includes \$350 billion of COVID relief funding for state and local governments across the country. As the bill is currently structured, 60% of the funding available would be directed to states with 40% directed to municipalities. Early estimates suggest that Illinois could receive up to \$7.5 billion in relief funding pursuant to the proposal, with Illinois municipalities receiving an additional \$5 billion.

State Update

On February 17, Governor Pritzker delivered his annual budget address and released his state fiscal year 2022 proposed budget. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget has projected that the State will need to fill a more than \$2.6 billion budget hole in FY 2022 without additional relief from the federal government.

The Governor's proposed budget reduces spending across multiple agencies and state programs in order to partially close the budget gap. This includes reducing funding for the RTA over the previous year with the 5% reduction to the RTA's state sales tax matching funding implemented in FY 2021 increased to a 10% reduction in FY 2022.

COVID Transit Dashboard

The RTA COVID Transit Dashboard (<https://rtachicago.org/covid-dash>) has been updated with ridership data through February 4, which shows region-wide ridership is 73 percent lower compared to the previous year. Also see the new and improved RTAMS (<https://www.rtams.org/>), which has the raw data that drives our dashboard and many other RTA data tools.