

Transportation Newsletter

August 2020
Volume 12 Issue 08

Northwest Municipal Conference
1600 E. Golf Rd. Suite 0700 Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: 847-296-9200 www.nwmc-cog.org
Cover Photo: Village of Elk Grove Village



Northwest Municipal Conference

Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, August 11, 10:30 a.m. – NWMC
Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

Thursday, August 20, 8:30 a.m. – North
Shore Council of Mayors Technical
Committee

Friday, August 28, 8:30 a.m. – Northwest
Council of Mayors Technical Committee

Local STP Programs Nearing Final Approval

As previously reported, the North Shore and Northwest Councils of Mayors completed their public comment period at the end of June. Since then, staff have compiled public comments for presentation to their respective Technical Committees at their next meetings.

Pending Technical Committee approval, the recommended programs will go before both of the full Councils of Mayors at the September NWMC Board meeting. The programs will then be integrated into the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's annual Transportation Improvement Program carryover process, completed at the start of every Federal Fiscal Year.

Arlington Heights Trustee Canty Appointed to RTA

Congratulations to *Arlington Heights* Village Trustee Mary Beth Canty, who has been appointed to the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board of Directors. Her appointment was approved by the Cook County Board's Suburban Caucus last month, along with that of Jamie Gathing, a managing vice president at the Northern Trust Co. They are the first Black women appointed to the 16-member board.

Canty, who was elected to the village board in April 2019, is an attorney who also serves as co-chair of programming for the League of Women Voters of Arlington Heights, first vice president of Olive-Mary Stitt Parent Teacher Association and the School District 25 Cultural Awareness Committee. We congratulate Trustee Canty and pledge our assistance and support in her new role!

Last Chance to Apply for Railroad Trespassing Suicide Prevention Grant

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has published a [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) to implement suicide prevention projects. Railroad trespass-related suicides account for nearly a third of all fatalities related to railroad operations in the U.S. and has increased over 10% in the last 5 years. The purpose of the Railroad Trespassing Suicide Prevention Program is to implement an outreach campaign to reduce the number of rail-related suicides that involve or result from railroad trespassing. Applications are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 10. FRA's [Competitive Discretionary Grant Programs Webpage](#) has been developed to provide additional information on this and other grant opportunities.



Trustee Mary Beth Canty
(photo credit: RTAChicago.org)

Metra Seeks Injunction to Maintain UP Service

On July 21, Metra issued a formal request for a preliminary injunction by the Surface Transportation Board to prevent Union Pacific Railroad (UP) from taking planned steps that would “degrade or halt commuter rail service on its three lines in the Metra system.” A preliminary injunction would require UP to continue to perform all the functions it has been providing under the current purchase-of-service agreement on the UP North, Northwest and West lines, thereby guaranteeing uninterrupted service for nearly 45,000 riders (pre-COVID 19).

For more information, please see the press release available on [Metra's website](#).

Rebuild Illinois Bond Grants Second Installment

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has provided local public agencies with the second installment of the \$1.5 billion grant program from the local government component of the REBUILD ILLINOIS capital bill program. This second installment consists of \$250 million distributed based on the regular Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) formula. The \$250 million is not MFT distributions, rather, it consists of grants made from bond sale proceeds that must be deposited into the local public agencies' MFT account and expended as directed in [CL 2020-11](#). Communities should have received their disbursements through mailed checks from the Illinois Comptroller's Office by the end of July.

To view distributions by agency, please visit the [IDOT website](#).

Metra Launches Ridership Dashboard

Metra unveiled the first test of a dashboard tool that riders can use to see how crowded trains are on each Metra line. The tool is intended to help passengers who have the flexibility to do so travel more safely and comfortably on less crowded trains. The current test version provides information on weekday trains only, showing the latest five-day average ridership on a four color scale to indicate how much space will likely be available on each train.

For more information, please see Metra's [press release](#), or check out the [dashboard tool](#) itself. Metra has asked for suggestions and feedback to be sent to dashboard@metrarr.com.

CMAQ Offers Updated Community Data Snapshots

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAQ) announced that [Updated Community Data Snapshots](#) are available for all municipalities, counties and Chicago Community Areas in the CMAQ region. The Community Data Snapshots are a series of data profiles that feature demographic, housing, transportation, employment, land use and water data from multiple sources.

The raw data used in the snapshots are publicly available on the [CMAQ Data Hub](#). CMAQ is also looking for feedback on the data snapshots via an online survey. Questions and comments can also be submitted to info@cmap.illinois.gov.



Village of Barrington

IDOT Announces 2020 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will be accepting applications for the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) beginning on August 21. The ITEP provides funding for community-based projects that expand travel options and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure.

Applications are due to IDOT by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, November 2. Further guidance and requirements for the upcoming cycle is available on the [ITEP website](#). Interested applicants can also attend one of several [webinars](#) in late August and September hosted by the Active Transportation Alliance and the Illinois Public Health Institute. All other ITEP questions may be directed to DOT.ITEP@Illinois.gov.



Village of Lincolnwood

IDOT FY 2021-2026 Proposed Highway Improvement Program Released

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) recently released their latest Multi-Year Improvement Program (MYP), which provides Illinoisans and IDOT stakeholders with a proposed six-year improvement plan for Illinois' transportation system. As part of the planning process, IDOT looks at a full range of transportation options, evaluates how they affect mobility for users, assesses the current infrastructure, prioritizes needed improvements based on system performance metrics and then, with available revenue sources, strives to integrate them into the overall IDOT transportation strategy. More information, along with the full FY 2021 – 2026 MYP is available on [IDOT's website](#).

IDOL Alert Regarding Hiring for Public Works Projects

Due to the high unemployment rate caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Employment of Illinois Workers on Public Works Act took effect beginning July 1st. The state law requires the workforce on all public works projects to be comprised of a minimum of 90% Illinois residents. The law comes into effect after two consecutive months of a state unemployment rate above 5 percent. The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) is tasked with administering the law and reminding local officials of its requirements. More information is available in [IDOL's press release](#).



Village of Skokie

Northwest Municipal Conference
1600 E. Golf Rd Suite 0700 Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: 847-296-9200 | www.nwmc-cog.org

Kendra Johnson: 847-296-9200 ext. 131
KJohnson@nwmc-cog.org

Matthew Pasquini: 847-296-9200 ext. 128
MPasquini@nwmc-cog.org

RTA Seeking Public Comments on New Capital Improvement Framework

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is seeking public comment on its new regional [Framework for Transit Capital Improvements](#) through Friday, August 28. Prepared by RTA staff in partnership with the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace, the [draft framework](#) is intended to improve transparency in how public transit projects are chosen and funded in northeastern Illinois. Comments can be submitted to Communications@RTAChicago.org.