



**Regional
Transportation
Authority**

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RTA FUNDED PLANNING STUDY MOVES FORWARD IN PLAINFIELD *Station area plan aims to improve access to public transit*

Chicago -- The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) announced today the launch of a transit supportive planning effort for the Village of Plainfield. The development of a long range plan for two potential Suburban Transit Access Route or STAR Line station areas was approved as part of the RTA's 2007 Regional Technical Assistance Program, a grant program that has been renamed the Community Planning program to better reflect the program's focus on planning assistance for local communities. The Village of Plainfield will develop transit supportive land use plans and policies to maximize transit ridership and enhance the community benefits of the potential transit stations. The Village received a \$125,000 grant to fund the study.

"This grant enables the Village of Plainfield to put the necessary framework in place to capitalize on a regional transit investment even before construction ever begins," commented Leanne Redden, Senior Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Regional Programs. "This type of forward thinking is just one of the many ways the RTA is working to advance our Moving Beyond Congestion strategic plan and increase mobility in northeastern Illinois."

The Village of Plainfield is in a unique position to be able to plan proactively in the event that transit service is implemented in the future. The Village has the opportunity to implement transit-supportive policies and design guidelines for the areas adjacent to the downtown station and a second station area near Interstate-55 at Renwick Road. Currently, much of land in both areas is undeveloped. The concept plans will help guide future development that contains a mix of residential and commercial uses, is pedestrian-oriented and has higher densities that are necessary to create and promote transit ridership once it arrives. As an interim step, the Village is looking to design a park and ride facility near the downtown station area that could shuttle residents to the Aurora Metra Station on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Line.

"This study is an important component in our efforts to bring convenient and affordable access to transportation alternatives in our community," commented Jonathan Proulx, a long range planner for the Village of Plainfield. He added, "By developing this plan now, we can work to increase Plainfield's economic strength and competitiveness by growing and expanding a strong, multi-modal transportation network that will support businesses, residents and the industry of our Village."

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As part of the planning project, the Village's project team has created a website – www.plainfieldtransit.com – to engage the public in this important effort. From the website, visitors are able to access project plans, provide comments to the project team, and access valuable resources about transit.

The RTA is continuing to work with Illinois lawmakers to develop and pass a comprehensive capital plan that would enable the transit system to be maintained, enhanced and expanded. Currently, with no capital program in place, projects like the STAR line are threatened if a capital bill isn't passed.

About the Community Planning Program

The Community Planning Program provides funding and planning assistance to communities for planning projects that benefit both the local communities and the RTA transit system. Launched in 1999 under the name Regional Technical Assistance Program (RTAP), the program was renamed and launched as Community Planning in June 2008 to better reflect the program's focus on planning assistance for local communities.

Community Planning offers units of local government such as municipalities, townships, and local planning agencies an opportunity to participate in the planning of local transit and transit related opportunities. The program funds projects that increase transit usage and multi-modal connectivity, improve access and circulation in and around transit facilities, promote pedestrian and transit friendly environments, develop local transit options and create coordinated paratransit plans.

Through this program, the RTA seeks projects that are consistent with the four primary goals of its strategic plan, provide transportation options, ensure financial viability, enhance livability and economic vitality, and demonstrate value. For more information, visit the program website at www.rtachicago.com/cp.

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About the RTA: The RTA provides financial oversight, funding and regional planning for the three public transit operators in northeastern Illinois: The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus and train, Metra commuter rail and Pace suburban bus and paratransit. For more information, visit www.rtachicago.com and www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org.