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To: Board of Directors
From: Leanne P. Redden, Executive Director
Date: February 7, 2022
Re: Presentation of the 2022 Community Planning Program of Projects

On October 8, 2021, the RTA, in cooperation with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), issued a Call for Projects for the 2022 Community Planning program. This Call targeted and prioritized high need and very high need communities and offered a mix of planning and plan implementation activities.

The Call closed on October 28 and the RTA received 16 requests for technical assistance from 15 applicants. Each request was reviewed by RTA staff and feedback on the applications was solicited from the Service Boards and various partner agencies. Staff also followed up with applicants and corresponding municipalities to discuss their application in more detail. Applications were evaluated based on each project's alignment with *Invest in Transit*, ON TO 2050 (the region's comprehensive plan), and feasibility of the proposed project.

After reviewing each application, staff selected seven projects to pursue as part of the 2022 Community Planning program. Three projects will support transit-oriented development (TOD) planning efforts in the transit served areas of Homewood, LaGrange, and Richton Park; two projects will be to conduct transit corridor studies in Sauk Village and along the far south Halsted Street; and two projects will support Cary and Cicero with obtaining feedback from the private developer community on strategies to attract TOD. A [full listing of the 2022 projects](#), including brief project descriptions, is attached.

The RTA held a Public Comment Period for the 2022 Community Planning Preliminary Program of Projects from January 14 – 28, during which time no comments were received.

The preliminary program budget is \$822,000 comprised of \$708,500 in RTA funds and \$113,500 in local contributions from the applicants. Four out of seven projects, totaling 70% of the RTA funding, are being awarded to very high need communities.

Prepared by: Capital Programming and Planning

LPR/JL/HM/MH

Attachment

2022 Community Planning Program of Projects

Applicant	Project Type	Project Description
Cary	Developer Discussion Panel	The RTA will convene a half-day developer discussion workshop with Village of Cary officials to provide enhanced development recommendations from a panel of private sector developers. The discussion will be focused on three key areas in the downtown core as identified in the recently completed Cary Downtown Strategic Plan. The goal of the developer discussion is to provide direct insight to local public officials and Village staff on the current market for development within the downtown area and ways in which the Village can attract reinvestment. The panel will build upon directives of the recently adopted Downtown Strategic Plan.
Cicero	Developer Discussion Panel	The RTA will convene a half-day developer discussion workshop with the Town of Cicero officials to provide enhanced development recommendations from a panel of private sector developers. The discussion will be focused on the former Town Hall building located on 50th Ave and 26th St., and nearby surrounding areas close to the Cicero Metra station. The goals of the developer discussion are to expand on recommendations of the Cicero Connections Plan and the Cicero Comprehensive Plan and provide a development strategy to Town officials for the former Cicero Town Hall property adjacent to the Cicero Metra Station.
Homewood	TOD Plan	The RTA will assist the Village of Homewood to prepare a transit-oriented development plan for downtown Homewood and areas surrounding the Metra and Amtrak Homewood station. Leveraging the ongoing station renovations, the goals of the planning study include identifying strategies to attract investment and development, retain existing character/historic preservation and increase access to transit services in the downtown. With a locally-driven planning vision, the Village hopes to continue to foster population growth, identify new uses for vacant buildings, increase transit ridership and increase the downtown population.
LaGrange	TOD Plan	The RTA will assist the Village of LaGrange to update their current transit-oriented development plan adopted in 2005. By updating this plan, the Village seeks to address current construction market dynamics, changes in the retail industry, and changing commuting habits to poise the community to take advantage of future redevelopment opportunities. In particular, the Village seeks to invite redevelopment on the West End, which has seen no new development since 2005. The proposed study area encompasses the Central Business District of La Grange, the

		West End Business District, and other properties within less than one quarter mile from each Metra Station in La Grange.
Pace Suburban Bus	Corridor Study	The RTA will assist Pace with preparing a corridor study of the far South Halsted Ave. corridor between the Pace/Metra Harvey Transportation Center and the Pace Chicago Heights Terminal. Goals of the study are to increase transportation resilience, encourage transit-oriented development (TOD), improve pedestrian accessibility, sidewalks, crosswalks, access to developments, and connectivity. The study includes coordination with Harvey, South Holland, East Hazel Crest, Homewood, Glenwood and Chicago Heights. The study will include strategies to prepare the corridor for Pace Pulse service, improve corridor accessibility and identify future high frequency service station locations.
Richton Park	TOD Plan	The RTA will assist the Village of Richton Park to update their current transit-oriented development plan (TOD), covering the 1/2-mile area surrounding the Richton Park Metra station. The goals for the project are to update, consolidate, and refresh the current TOD plan (adopted in 2004) with updated recommendations, imagery, and graphics. The plan will also address a modernized strategy to increase density near the Metra station and offer more housing options, especially for residents who are becoming empty nesters and wish to age in place. The updated plan will focus on ways to retain existing character, historic preservation, and create an appealing aesthetic for the community.
Sauk Village	Corridor Study	The RTA will assist the Village of Sauk Village to prepare a corridor study focused on both Sauk Trail (from Cottage Grove to Burnham Avenue) and Torrence Avenue (from Sauk Trail to US 30). The goals of the study include developing strategies to improve pedestrian safety, access to transit services, attract investment and development and address the primary safety challenges of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, speeding and crashes.