



## **Regional Transportation Authority**

### **For immediate release**

**DATE:** October 3, 2008

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### **RTA AWARDS GRANT TO IMPROVE LAND-USE AND TRANSIT** *Three 'L' station areas targeted for coordinated development*

Chicago -- The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) announced today the launch of a study for the development of comprehensive land-use and transportation plans for three elevated train station areas in Chicago. The City of Chicago, in conjunction with the Chicago Transit Authority, has been awarded \$250,000 to fund the study through the RTA's Community Planning program, a grant program that focuses on planning assistance for local communities.

The City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development will lead the project as an important first step in a citywide effort to strengthen the relationship between land-use and transportation, plan for neighborhood growth and enhancement, inform future development and redevelopment decision-making, and guide public and private investment in three station areas.

"Working to tie land-use and transportation together is so important as we look to maximize investments not only in our transit system – but our neighborhoods as well," commented Leanne Redden, Senior Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Regional Programs. "Greater planning coordination is key as we work to implement the Moving Beyond Congestion strategic plan by increasing access to the transit network, which will increase mobility and ultimately increase ridership."

The study's objective is to prepare three station area master plans that focus on improving the connection between land-use and transportation and recommend concepts, principles, and strategies to the specific contexts of the three stations. These plans would provide direction to private developers, public agencies, and community groups as specific redevelopment and community enhancement projects and programs are considered. The process and study documents are intended to educate residents, developers, and the metropolitan community as to how good planning principles and implementation strategies can be applied to transit station areas to produce a more sustainable and meaningful urban environment.

"The City recognizes that the continued development around transit stations will require an overall redevelopment strategy as well as specific recommendations tailored to each community to guide future private and public investment," commented Arnold Randall, City of Chicago Commissioner of Planning & Development. He added, "With careful planning and appropriate implementation, the station areas can become places where social interaction is casual, making the area around the station a focus for social interaction, living, and commerce."

Relatively higher densities of retail, residential and commercial mixed-use developments, combined with the strategic introduction of other essential services in close proximity to rail stations will not only contribute to more complete neighborhoods but will also contribute directly to increases in transit ridership, and pedestrian and bicycle activity.

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## RTA AWARDS GRANT TO IMPROVE LAND-USE AND TRANSIT – Page 2

Specific areas of study will include existing/future transit use and facilities, appropriate residential densities and pedestrian environment enhancements, improvement physical linkages, and retail/service needs. Those three station areas include:

**Berwyn Red Line Station:** The study area for this station area will be bounded by Winthrop Avenue on the east, Balmoral Avenue on the North, Foster Avenue on the south, and Magnolia Avenue on the west. Although largely developed, several big box and auto oriented retail facilities may be undergoing redevelopment in this area.

**Potential Green Line Station at 18th Street or Cermak:** This study would identify potential uses and design in areas adjacent to the Green Line at 18th Street and Cermak Road and address development on these key east-west corridors in the south loop. Through the study we will chose to focus on one of the alternatives over the other and develop a more refined corridor plan for the appropriate corridor.

**43rd Street Green Line Station:** The study area for this station area will be bounded by 42nd Street on the north, 44th Street on the south, King Drive on the east, and Prairie Avenue on the west. The development patterns in this area are relatively inconsistent and there is potential for strategic infill development to act as a catalyst for neighborhood enhancement.

The RTA continues to work with Illinois lawmakers to develop and pass a comprehensive capital plan for the region that would enhance and expand the transit system. Currently, no capital programs are in place, and many transit projects around the regions are threatened if a capital bill isn't passed.

### *About the RTA's 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 the Community Planning program 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](http://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](http://www.rtachicago.com) and [www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org](http://www.MovingBeyondCongestion.org).*