



**Regional
Transportation
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For immediate release

DATE: October 3, 2008

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RTA FUNDED STUDY LOOKS AT THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED RED LINE EXTENSION

Study to Identify Transit-Linked Opportunities for Community Development

Chicago -- The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) announced today the launch of a study to identify economic and community development opportunities that can result from the proposed Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Red Line extension from 95th to 130th Street. Developing Communities Project (DCP) will oversee the project deliverables of the study performed by the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The RTA awarded a \$150,000 grant to fund the study through the RTA's Community Planning program, a grant program that focuses on planning assistance for local communities.

The study will look at the impact and collateral benefits that mass transit will have on housing, economic and workforce development, and environmental justice in a low or mixed-income community like Greater Roseland (Roseland, Pullman, West Pullman, Riverdale and Morgan Park).

"As the RTA works with lawmakers to secure capital funds for important projects such as building the Red Line extension, this study is one of the first steps in helping understand the impact of bringing rapid transit to these neighborhoods," commented Leanne Redden, Senior Deputy Executive Director of Planning and Regional Programs. "We are excited to be working with Developing Communities Project and the Voorhees Center in identifying improvements related to the Red Line extension that can benefit so many people."

Developing Communities Project, Inc., a faith-based community development organization that serves the far south side of Chicago, will lead the study. DCP's mission is to empower communities through leadership training, community organizing, education, public policy and advocacy programs that promote an improved quality of life, educational achievement, youth self-esteem, and financial independence. For over four years, DCP has led the charge for extending the Red Line from its current terminus at 95th/Dan Ryan to near 130th/Stony Island.

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“Helping our neighborhoods prepare for the Red Line extension is just as important as building it,” commented Reverend Michael Evans, Executive Director of Developing Communities Project. He added, “This study will help put in place a community-based blueprint from which can guide many decisions to come that will ultimately have a positive impact on these neighborhoods as well as the greater far south Chicago area.”

The Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago will complete many of the tasks including researching existing methods to compare transit supply and demand, analyzing existing assessments of transit need, and developing a regional equity index to perform a comparative analysis of the impacts of transit improvements in the region. In conjunction with the Voorhees Center, DCP has established a Technical Advisory Panel of regional planners, transportation planners and academics, as well as community stakeholders to evaluate the project deliverables.

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 state capital program is in place and many transit projects around the region including an extension of CTA’s Red Line 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.

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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.