



**Regional
Transportation
Authority**

For Immediate Release

DATE: October 22, 2009

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AGENCIES COLLABORATE TO DEVELOP GREEN TRANSIT PLAN RTA IS GRANT RECIPIENT, PARTICIPANT IN NEW INITIATIVE

CHICAGO – The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has teamed up with several transportation partner agencies to increase public transportation's role in protecting the environment.

It's the latest initiative by the Regional Sustainability Working Group, consisting of representatives from the RTA, Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra, Pace, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). The group is developing the Regional Green Transit Plan, which will guide the development of an eco-friendly transit system in northeastern Illinois.

"While the use of public transportation lessens our region's impact on the environment by taking cars and their exhaust off the road, we also need to work at "greening" the entire transit system," said Steve Schlickman, RTA Executive Director. "Having this plan in place will help our region work together to address climate change and improve the air we breathe while helping to reduce traffic congestion."

The Regional Green Transit Plan is funded by an Illinois State Planning and Research grant awarded by IDOT to the RTA. Scheduled for completion in Fall 2010 the plan will recommend strategies to improve the energy efficiency of the region's public transportation system and reduce the overall impact of transportation on the region's environment. Additionally, the Plan will educate the public about the environmental benefits of transit and demonstrate the ability of transit to reduce regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This initiative will also position the RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace to receive future funding for "green" projects.

"I applaud the Chicago region's initiative to make public transit even more viable as a mobility option," said William Millar, president of the American Public Transportation Association. "The northeastern Illinois region can look forward to further decreasing energy consumption. RTA and the Chicago region's plan will serve as a model for other public transportation systems that are developing and implementing sustainability programs."

The Regional Sustainability Working Group cites similar "green" transit plans have already been developed in regions across the country, including by the New York Metropolitan Transportation

Authority (MTA). The group will review these plans to learn about successful strategies and initiatives that have been implemented as part of “green” transit plans.

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About the RTA: The RTA provides financial oversight, funding and regional planning for the three public transit operations 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.