McHenry County Transit Plan Implementation Task Force

Agenda
McHenry County Transit Plan
Implementation Task Force

DATE: March 24, 2010
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: McHenry County Administration Building
Conference Room A

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1. **Call to Order**

2. **Public Participation/Open Comment Period**
   - Update from Faith in Action on the Senior Guide to Transportation

3. **Transit Grant Program Progress Report**
   - McHenry County / Pilot program
   - Algonquin Township
   - City of Marengo
   - Faith in Action of McHenry County
   - Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association
   - Veterans Assistance Commission

4. **Other Business**
   - The County DOT has drafted a map illustrating the variety of services being provided in the County.
   - Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning is planning to host a Dial-A-Ride Summit with attendees from Kane, DuPage, Lake, and McHenry Counties.
   - RTA Funding Programs will open their call for projects for Planning, JARC/NF, and ICE grants on April 7, 2010. They will also host several open houses; the closest is May 3, 2010, 3:00-5:00 p.m. at the Arlington Heights Village Hall, Community Meeting Room (3rd Fl). Visit www.rtachicago.com/programs

5. **Next Steps**
   Continued service monitoring and data gathering for grant recipients

6. **Next ITF Bimonthly Meetings**
   Next meeting: Wednesday, May 26, 2010, 2:00 p.m.
   Following meeting: Wednesday, July 28, 2010, 2:00 p.m.

7. **Adjournment**

McHenry County Transit Plan Implementation Task Force

Minutes
McHenry County Transit Plan
Implementation Task Force

DATE: March 24, 2010
TIME: 2:00 – 3:20 p.m.
LOCATION: McHenry County Administration Building
Conference Room A

Attendees

McHenry County Staff: Jason Osborn, Sarah Lutz, Joe Korpalski, John Labaj, Jeff Young
Algonquin Township Road District: Anna May Miller
City of Crystal Lake: Brad Mitchell
City of Marengo: Josh Blakemore
City of McHenry: Doug Maxeiner
City of Woodstock: Roscoe Stelford
Dorr Township: Bob Pierce
Grafton Township: Pam Fender
McHenry Township: Frank DeVita
Metra: Rick Mack
Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging: Donna Copeland Hill
Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association: Jim Wiseman
Pace: Mary Donner, Sally Ann Williams
Pioneer Center: Jeff Kurth
Thresholds: Richard Schlottman
Veterans Assistance Commission: Michael Iwanicki

Sarah Lutz called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. All attendees introduced themselves and then Ms. Lutz shared an informational item about Faith in Action's guide to Senior Transportation in McHenry County. The guide is available in paper format and is posted online at Faith in Action's website and the McHenry County Division of Transportation website. A representative from Faith in Action will be at a future meeting to provide a more info about this guide. Mary Donner shared that the Senior Guide to Transportation was gathering a lot of interest in Lake County.

Hearing no further public participation or comments, Ms. Lutz continued to the Transit Grant Program Progress Report and distributed a handout called "Transit Grant Program Summary – March 2010."

Beginning with The Veterans Assistance Commission, the discussion briefly focused on one-way trips versus round trips. Mike Iwanicki explained that the VAC had been reporting round trips based on the reporting requirements of their main funding source, but will be switching to one-way trips as of April 1

in their reports. Ms. Lutz, who prepared the handout for this ITF meeting, doubled the numbers provided by VAC for December 2009 through February 2010 to provide the average of 326 one-way trips per month evident in the handout. Mr. Iwanicki went on to explain that on any given day, some of their trips are one-way if a veteran is admitted to the hospital but that over time the trips are round trip as veterans do not seek other rides home. Mr. Iwanicki also commented that the VAC has continued to partner with Faith in Action of McHenry County to transport veterans from their homes to the VAC's designated pick-up points. The Crystal Lake pick-up point has been shifted from the train station to the Burger King to give the veterans a comfortable place to wait and the Burger King management has been happy to have them. Ms. Lutz noted that the vast majority of the VAC's trips are provided using the leased Pace Locally-Based Service van. Mr. Iwanicki indicated that this is because the clients strongly prefer this van. Mr. Iwanicki also explained that the fuel economy for the Pace van seems very reasonable and it is showing lower maintenance costs compared to the VAC's other, aging vehicles. Ms. Donner confirmed that the van is the same model that some McHenry County Townships currently lease or will lease in the future from Pace's Locally-Based Service program.

Ms. Lutz went on to provide a brief summary of the Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association data, which had been submitted for December 2009. Jim Wiseman explained that Crystal Lake was the main origin and destination mainly due to the fact that NISRA's headquarters is located there and it is a logical and convenient pick-up and drop-off point for many of their programs. He noted that Woodstock is also a common source for trips because of the number of group homes in that area. Elgin is the southernmost end of NISRA's service area and has many program registrants as well as having several programs located there. Schaumburg was an especially popular destination in December for holiday events.

Faith in Action of McHenry County has submitted data for December 2009, and Ms. Lutz provided a brief summary of the data. It was noted that Crystal Lake is a popular origin and destination for Faith in Action as well. Faith in Action is headquartered in Crystal Lake and Crystal Lake also has a very active senior center as well as other active outreach and service groups that might help raise the visibility of services that are available in Crystal Lake.

Mr. Osborn provided a summary of service startup for the County pilot program, which began on February 12 and 13. He described that there were issues tied to the computerization of scheduling and dispatch that caused some problems for riders. Sally Williams from Pace then provided more detail on the startup including that there was a shortage of phone capacity mostly due to the fact that all calls took longer than usual because all riders needed to be entered into the system. Pace added phone lines to the call center and feels that the phone capacity should no longer be an obstacle. Additionally, some local streets needed to be geocoded because they were initially missing in the computer's database. Over time, the call center builds information about each regular client including common destinations. This information helps reduce the length of each call and improves the overall efficiency of scheduling for all customers. Some regular riders were set up with subscription services, eliminating the need for them to call every day for the same ride.

Additionally, the firming up of service area boundaries has meant that some people erroneously receiving service before are no longer eligible. Ms. Lutz indicated that the County is planning on using Pace's client database to identify these riders and contact them to discuss their transportation options. She also indicated that the service area has been tweaked in some areas to provide a consistent service area boundary for the pilot program. The updated map is available on the County Division of Transportation website.

Pam Fender from Grafton Township asked a few questions about the coverage of the pilot program because she was exploring options for a Grafton Township resident that needs transportation from Lakewood to the Pioneer Center in McHenry. Ms. Lutz then distributed a draft transit services map for McHenry County to help guide the discussion of what services are available for residents in the County. The map displays publicly provided transportation services, such as Township services and Pace services, including those funded by municipalities and the County. The map should provide a basic picture of what's available and might help facilitate coordination among existing providers. Ms. Fender also clarified that Huntley provides some funding for Grafton Township to pick up passengers in Huntley on the Kane County side. She mentioned that riders are often looking for trips to Sherman and St. Joseph Hospitals in Kane County.

Josh Blakemore from the City of Marengo provided an update on the grant for the Marengo area dial-a-ride and indicated that a recent meeting with Pace may enable a May 1 service start date for their expanded service. Contract updates had taken some time to finalize.

Anna May Miller described that the Algonquin Township Road District was seeing more riders during their additional hour of service, and that they were also seeing more registrations. Additionally, Algonquin Township and Grafton Township will be providing service to some of the Village of Algonquin's former riders, as the Village will be discontinuing their service in the near future.

In other business, Ms. Lutz announced an upcoming Dial-A-Ride summit for the collar counties that are all providing some sort of paratransit transportation. The summit will take place at the offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and will have representatives from Pace, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), Kane County, DuPage County, Lake County, and McHenry County. The summit is tentatively scheduled for April 19 and more details will be provided to this Implementation Task Force as they become available.

Mr. Osborn distributed a draft of possible grant applications to the RTA. The call for projects will open on April 7 and applications will be due in early June. These grants, some federal and some funded directly by the RTA, have a wide range of eligible capital costs, operating expenses, and planning functions. Mr. Osborn provided some background info on the grants overall and explained that the information presented today is truly the first draft of concepts for applications. Additional input will be sought from the County's Transportation Committee and from the Implementation Task Force. In

addition, consultation with RTA will help determine which applications will score most favorably compared to other agencies' applications. In addition, the County can indicate to the RTA which applications are the County's priority for funding. Mr. Osborn asked for thoughts, comments, and questions from the attendees.

Beginning with Application 5, Ms. Miller indicated that she would support this planning study to further investigate what is available and what is needed and to explore opportunities for coordination in the southeastern portion of the County. Ms Williams added that Pace is also planning on evaluating the Midday 805 service in that portion of the County. Ms. Lutz added that the idea of the planning study would be to explore the service opportunities including Township, non-profit, and adjacent County services including integrating transfer points to Ride in Kane, the pilot program area, and Lake County services.

Mr. Osborn discussed the focus of Application 4, which is to raise the profile of all existing transit options in the County. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea.

Regarding Application 3, Ms. Williams shared that Pace does provide a mobility manager for both Ride in Kane and DuPage services. This mobility manager provides info for Pace services, which is fairly comprehensive in both of those counties. Also, coordination studies in Will and Lake Counties are exploring the concept of a mobility manager for their services. Will County also provides information about all services in one instrument. John Labaj asked if the mobility manager would enable access to a live person that could help answer questions. Ms. Lutz indicated that the option might provide some person-to-person assistance as well as increase the visibility of services overall by centralizing information about all services in the County.

Mr. Osborn described Application 2 as providing additional mobility options throughout the County. Ms. Lutz added that the language describing the program was taken directly from the County's 2005 Transit Plan.

Mr. Osborn explained the options for Application 1, which has several aspects that are all focused on expanding the pilot program. Expansion options include expanded geography, eligibility, and subscription service. Mr. Labaj indicated that he thought enabling subscription trips for employment-related activities for low-income individuals would be a valuable service option. Ms. Williams added that enabling subscription trips could also be sought for a larger audience by using the New Freedom grant. Mr. Osborn indicated that the County would work with RTA to determine which program (JARC or NF) would be the best fit for applications, and indicated that an application for subscription-type service could be submitted to both programs, as this is allowed in the application process.

Mr. Osborn described that the County will move forward on preparing applications, seeking additional guidance from the County's Transportation Committee and consulting with Pace as an application

partner. The applications will be brought back to the Implementation Task Force one more time before being submitted to the RTA.

The next meeting of the Implementation Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at 2:00 p.m., at the County Administration Building – Conference Room A. The following meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 28, 2010 also at 2:00 p.m. also in Conference Room A of the County Administration Building. Ms. Lutz adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Transit Grant Program Summary – March 2010

Veterans Assistance Commission

- Full trip data received for December 2009 through February 2010
- Average of 326 trips per month
- Approximately 85% of trips are for seniors age 55 and over
- Over 70% of trips are provided using Pace's locally-based service van

Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association

- Full trip data received for December 2009
- Trips are arranged for recreational programs, over 750 trips scheduled in December 2009
- The top four origin/destination cities are Crystal Lake (38%), Woodstock (15%), Elgin (13%), Schaumburg (7%)

Faith in Action of McHenry County

- Full trip data received for December 2009
- Scheduled over 675 trips in December 2009
- Almost 80% of trips were medical trips, 12% were shopping/personal trips
- Crystal Lake is the largest origin and destination for trips, at 43% of each; next largest is Woodstock with 15% of origins and 12% of destinations
- Top four locations for trip origins and destinations are Crystal Lake, Woodstock, Huntley, and McHenry

Pilot Program

- Data received for February 2009 (beginning February 12)

02/12/10 - 02/28/10	Disabled	Senior	Student	Total Passengers	Capacity Denials	Eligibility Denials	Total Trips
CRYSTAL LAKE	**218**	**103**	**175**	**2097**	**1**	**5**	1849
MCHENRY COUNTY				**229**	**9**	**2**	205
MCHENRY	**529**	**248**	**5**	**1153**	**6**	**13**	889
PACE MCHENRY TOWNSHIP	**36**	**9**		**55**	**0**	**0**	NR
WOODSTOCK	**260**	**164**	**210**	**895**	**5**	**6**	823
MCHENRY TOWNSHIP		**279**		**279**			NR
Grand Total				**4,429**	**21**	**26**	3766

02/12/10 - 02/28/10	Days in Service	Average Daily Passengers	Average Daily Trips	Average Direct Distance
CRYSTAL LAKE	**14**	**150**	**132**	**2.61**
MCHENRY COUNTY	**14**	**16**	**15**	**8.78**
MCHENRY	**14**	**82**	**64**	**2.58**
PACE MCHENRY TOWNSHIP	**14**	**4**		**3.01**
WOODSTOCK	**14**	**64**	**59**	**1.80**
MCHENRY TOWNSHIP	**9**	**31**		

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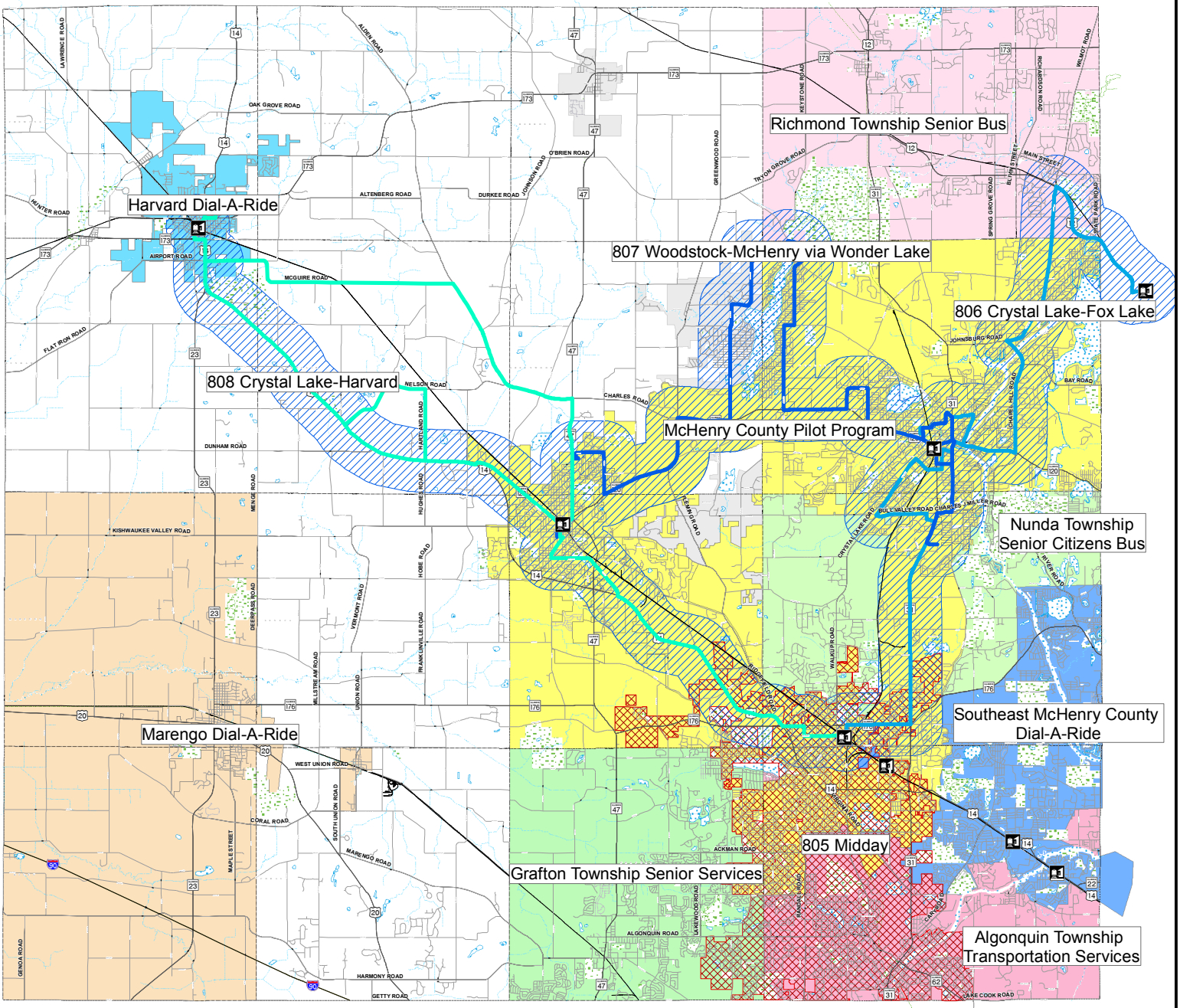

DATE
March 22, 2010

SOURCE
McHenry County DOT GIS

PROJECTION
Transverse Mercator
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East

DISCLAIMER
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LEGEND

- County Route
- State/US Route
- Interstate Route
- Municipal/Township Route
- Rail Road
- Hydrography

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet

SCALE
1 inch = 18,394 feet

TRANSIT SERVICES IN MCHENRY COUNTY

McHenry County
Division of Transportation

Current Service Summary - Contact Information

Harvard Dial-A-Ride
815-943-7700

Marengo Dial-A-Ride
800-273-5939, (TTY) 888-454-4724
Marengo Township, Riley Township, City of Marengo, Village of Union

Pace Fixed Routes
www.PaceBus.com or Pace Customer Relations: (847) 364-PACE (7223)
808 Crystal Lake-Harvard
807 Woodstock-McHenry via Wonder Lake
806 Crystal Lake-Fox Lake

Pace Midday
800-451-4599, (TTY) 888-454-4724
Midday 805, 806, 807, and 808

Southeast McHenry County Dial-A-Ride
800-451-4599, (TTY) 888-454-4724

McHenry County Pilot Program
800-451-4599, (TTY) 888-454-4724
815-363-4305

- City of Crystal Lake Dial-A-Ride
  800-671-6717, (TTY) 888-454-4724
  815-363-4320
- City of McHenry Dial-A-Ride
  800-451-4599, (TTY) 888-454-4724
- City of Woodstock Dial-A-Ride
  815-338-5240
- McHenry Township Senior Express

Richmond Township Senior Bus
815-678-0077

Nunda Township Senior Citizens Bus
(815) 459-4410

Grafton Township Senior Services
847-669-3328

Algonquin Township Transportation Services
847-639-2700 ext. 6

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Possible Grant Applications to the Regional Transportation Authority
The 2010 call for projects opens April 7; grant applications due June 10.

Program Overview
Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grants support the "development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment and to support reverse commute projects."

New Freedom (NF) grants support "new public transportation services and alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) designed to assist individuals with accessing transportation services, including to and from jobs and employment services."

For both JARC and NF programs, operating assistance grants require a 50% local match (capital requires 20% local match).

Subregional Planning grants provide "funding and planning assistance for county, subregional or corridor level transit and land use focused planning studies. Projects within the program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by providing useful data and analysis to support informed transportation investment decisions; ensuring that regional and local governments understand mobility needs, transportation system deficiencies, and existing and emerging travel markets within the subregion; exploring and assessing a range of corridor transportation options and their impacts; and identifying alternatives that offer the best net advantage to corridor communities and the region."

Innovation, Coordination, or Enhancement (ICE) grants provide "operating and capital assistance to enhance the coordination and integration of public transportation and to develop and implement innovations to improve the quality and delivery of public transportation. Projects funded through this program advance the vision and goals of the RTA Strategic Plan by providing reliable and convenient transit services and enhancing efficiencies through effective management, innovation and technology."

Application 1
This application is a one-year request for expansion of County's Pilot Program to increase the number of vehicles available to provide service. Increasing the number of vehicles would enable the pilot program to expand its geographic coverage as well as better support employment related trips. Because the expansion serves purposes that fall under two different funding programs, it would be broken into two applications. The total request would specify the additional vehicle capacity in terms of hours of service or number of vehicle hours of service.

Application 1A (New Freedom): An additional vehicle in service in the pilot program physically enables service expansion into Greenwood Township and Bull Valley where the population served would likely be limited to seniors and people with disabilities.

Application 1B (Job Access and Reverse Commute): Subscription trips are not currently allowed on the pilot program, making it difficult for riders needing regular trips to work to have schedule assurance. This application would fund one or two additional vehicles to enable the pilot program to allow subscription trips. Additional vehicles would also enable general public coverage in McCullom Lake.

Application 2

To further implement the Transit Plan, a two-year request for federal assistance to operate a Subsidized Taxi Program would be submitted to either the JARC or NF program. This Subsidized Taxi Program is a supporting general public service available throughout the county. Depending on the grant program award, first priority for vouchers would be given to low-income individuals or to people with disabilities. In this program, the County would work with sponsor agencies (or municipalities) to distribute or sell vouchers to eligible riders at a discount. Riders would use the tickets or vouchers to purchase taxi trips from participating taxi operators. Taxi operators would then be reimbursed for the full cost of each trip. The main role of this service is to provide a transportation option for those areas of the county not directly eligible for other transit services.

Application 3

An application to the New Freedom or the JARC program would request funds to provide mobility management services including promotion of services and a centralized information location for all transportation/transit services in the County, including Township, Pace, human service, and other providers. Mobility management services will be provided to County residents to find solutions to their mobility needs and provide travel training for riders when necessary.

Application 4

An Innovation, Coordination, or Enhancement application would be coordinated with Pace and Metra to increase the visibility of existing transit services in the County. The application would request funding for signs and waiting pads at appropriate locations. At Metra stations in particular, new or improved Pace Route and Dial-A-Ride information and bicycle racks will be installed.

Application 5

An application to the Subregional Planning grant program would be coordinated with Pace and would seek to evaluate the Southeast McHenry County Dial-A-Ride and 805 Midday services to explore opportunities for improving and expanding existing service, creating new service where appropriate, and investigate coordination with adjacent counties' services. A sub-regional transit services plan would be created for southeast McHenry County.