



# CONNECTING COOK COUNTY FREIGHT PLAN

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO. 1



This newsletter provides an update on the development of the Cook County Freight Plan (CCFP). Initiated in 2016, the Freight Plan is a key recommendation from *Connecting Cook County*, the County's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The CCFP will identify goals, priorities and projects for the County to invest resources to ensure our region continues to be a freight leader, and is anticipated to be completed in mid-2018.

## Cook County Welcomes New Freight Transportation Manager

The Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH) is excited to welcome Alex Beata to his new role as the County's first Freight Transportation Manager where he will manage DOTH's freight planning and implementation efforts. Alex's deep understanding of freight issues from his previous role at CMAP has allowed him to hit the ground running. Please contact Alex at [alexander.beata@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:alexander.beata@cookcountyil.gov) or 312-603-7710.

## Freight Advisory Committee Meeting #2

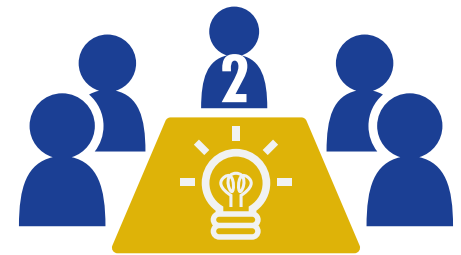
Over 20 members of the Freight Advisory Committee attended the second Committee meeting on October 26, 2017. The project team provided an overview of analysis completed to date and several challenges facing the freight industry including infrastructure needs, industrial land redevelopment and freight industry workforce needs. The meeting focused on interview results from key federal, state, regional and local leaders regarding Cook County's position within the freight sector. Several potential roles for Cook County included being a freight champion, providing coordination within the industry, communicating the benefits of freight with the public and advocating for freight funding at the federal level. The overall plan framework, which is described in this newsletter, was also discussed. The County received valuable feedback and extends a thank you to members for their continued support.



## Stakeholder Meetings Deepen County's Understanding of Freight Needs



10 Interviews with Key National, State, Regional and Local Freight Stakeholders and Policy Experts



2 Freight Advisory Committee Meetings



10 Cook County Manufacturing Firm Interviews



3 Industrial/Manufacturing Real Estate Developer Interviews

## Freight Plan Framework Provides Focus

The Cook County Freight Plan will focus on four main themes as an overall framework for the Plan. These themes will guide the County's freight-related work in the future.

### 1. Support and strengthen the **Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE)**.

Cook County recently became a partner on this innovative 70-project, \$4.4 billion investment program. The County will also be exploring other rail system investment opportunities.



### 2. Implement the new **Truck Routing, Infrastructure, and Permitting (TRIP) Program**. This new County initiative will focus on several key areas:

- Defining a cohesive truck route network linking industrial districts in Chicago, suburban Cook, and adjoining communities to the National Highway System (NHS)
- Investing in strategic corridors and last mile freight connections. Building on the success of Invest in Cook, the County will continue to leverage its dollars to support both priority projects at both the regional and local level.
- Updating the region's oversize/overweight vehicle permitting process. Almost three hundred Northeastern Illinois agencies issue these permits. The County is exploring options for a unified, streamlined system.

3. **Support freight-related development.** One-third of the County's industrial land is vacant or underutilized. The region's manufacturing base and infrastructure makes it a prime location for transportation, logistics and distribution firms. Along with infrastructure investment, site-predevelopment will be key to this strategy.

4. **Train and prepare the workforce** for freight sector jobs. Cook County has one of the largest and most educated workforces in the U.S., yet there is a growing misalignment between skills and available jobs. The County is exploring training and pre-screening program opportunities to close this gap.

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 or 312-603-7710

For more information about the Freight Plan, visit [connectingcookcounty.org](http://connectingcookcounty.org)

## Invest in Cook Supports Freight

Cook County recently awarded a total of \$7.2 million in grants for 30 transportation projects as part of the inaugural *Invest in Cook* grant program. The awardees include seven freight projects that will help enhance freight-related activities and transportation throughout the County. For more information on the *Invest in Cook* projects, visit [cookcountyil.gov/investincook](http://cookcountyil.gov/investincook).

### Invest in Cook Awarded Freight Projects

Invest in Cook Freight Project	Applicant
Proviso Drive Improvements	Village of Berkeley
Division Street Reconstruction Project	Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation
Franklin Avenue Reconstruction Project	Village of Franklin Park
Butler Drive Reconstruction Project	Illinois International Port District
Armitage Avenue Reconstruction	Village of Melrose Park
Freight Planning for the Dolton and Riverdale Gateway	South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Green Corridor	Village of Willow Springs

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

