

## Will County Transportation Blueprint 2018

### Case Statement:

The business leadership of Will County through the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) is committed to improving the quality of life for Will County residents and those who work and travel in Will County, while also advocating a business climate supportive of the expansion and attraction of business and industry to the County.

The emergence of Will County as a Global Transportation Center has dramatically increased Will County's positive economic impact on the economy of the Chicago Region, the State of Illinois and the Nation.

To this end, working with key stakeholders in furthering this critical economic activity, the CED has updated the Will County Transportation Blueprint that will serve as a guide for transportation planning and improvements throughout Will County through the year 2040.

### 2018 Will County Transportation Blueprint Guiding Principles

- **Recognize and embrace that Will County is a global leader in multi-modal transportation**
- **The CED should continue to play a leadership role in the transportation planning for Will County:**
  - Our transportation system planning needs to be **multi-modal**: air, highway, rail, water and transit with an understanding of their inter-connection.
  - Identify **priority** transportation infrastructure projects as part of the Blueprint and review annually.
  - Identify Will County Projects that are **Projects of Regional and National Significance** for state and federal planning and funding purposes.
  - Identify and support the required transportation investments for successful **business recruitment and expansion** for both freight movement and workforce supply.
  - Identify and support the expansion of public transit options for Will County residents and the labor force critical to Will County businesses.
  - Understand and work together with other organizations in the region that plan, fund, regulate and influence the maintenance and expansion of our transportation system.
- **Adequate funding is the most important element for plans and projects identified in the Blueprint:**
  - Identify and support **innovative funding** for transportation infrastructure projects.
  - Support an **equitable distribution** of infrastructure resources locally, regionally and nationally based on **performance criteria**.

- **Raise awareness** among Will County leaders and residents regarding the significance of an adequately and properly funded regional transportation system:
    - ✓ Present **unified, clear and consistent messaging** to elected officials, agencies and the public at large
    - ✓ Promote **effective collaboration** with governmental units on transportation issues.
    - ✓ Develop **strong political allies and partnerships** at the Federal, State and local levels to influence transportation planning and funding.
  - Demand that public and private entities to fulfill their commitments to Will County transportation projects.
- 
- **Understand and communicate global economic trends and their impact on of Blueprint priorities.**
  - **Understand and communicate how the regulatory environment affects infrastructure development and redevelopment.**

## **2018 Will County Transportation Blueprint**

### ***Roads and Bridges***

1. Recognition that the surface transportation situation is at critical point in Will County, potentially affecting the entire Midwest region and the Nation.
2. Improvement of local and state roads and bridges to maximize the benefit to Will County as a result of completed and proposed regional projects such as I-355, expansion of the Inland Port, the South Suburban Airport and the Illiana Expressway.
3. Elimination of surface transportation “choke points” that impede or threaten the safe and efficient movement of goods and people.
4. Identification of rights-of-way for future major local arterial routes, and adequate funding to protect them.

### ***Rail and Transit***

5. Identification and support of regional and local rail infrastructure projects to improve Will County’s position as a global rail port;
6. Support projects that reduce freight, passenger rail and automobile conflicts and improve safety throughout the region.
7. Support high-speed rail projects and service in the region.

8. Identification and support for multi-modal public transit projects, programs and transit-oriented developments which are necessary for continued economic growth in Will County and the region;

***Water***

9. Evaluation and improvement of the waterway system, including locks, dams, bridges and terminals to ensure adequacy for the efficient movement of barge traffic. Support innovative funding for identified improvements.
10. Support programs and policies that improve the efficient interface between waterway and all other surface transportation modes.

***Air***

11. Continued support for the development of the South Suburban Airport (SSA).
12. Development of a Will County Aviation Plan that addresses land use, transportation, economic development and environmental protection issues for development and expansion of airports in the county.
13. Support the expansion of existing general aviation airports to serve the increasing corporate aviation demand throughout the Will County.

**2018 Priority Transportation Action Steps**

***The Will County CED will...***

1. Update the Will County Transportation Blueprint with specific project priorities every two years.
2. Identify and support funding solutions for the Will County Transportation System;
3. Continue to meet with the Governor's Office, state legislators, U.S. Senators and Representatives, and transportation agency officials for support of Projects of National and Regional Significance that positively impact the economic development of Will County, the region and the nation.
4. Continue to host annual Global Logistics Summits bringing together all of the stakeholders in the development of Will County as an Inland Port.
5. Tell the logistics and transportation story of Will County focusing on the economic benefits of being the Largest Inland Container Port in North America

## Summary of Key Transportation Projects for Will County

### A. Introduction

What follows is a compilation of transportation projects that the CED sees as essential for the economic development future of Will County. The projects identified in no way represent all of the transportation projects that Will County and its municipalities need for their future economic success. The intent is to identify projects that will have countywide, regional and national impacts.

A number of the projects identified in the first and subsequent Blueprints have been completed or started:

- Interstate 355 Extension funded and constructed
- Interstate 55 at Arsenal Road new interchange constructed
- Illinois Route 59 widened from Shorewood/I-55 through Plainfield
- Interstate 80 lanes added from Harlem Avenue to US Route 30
- Interstate 55 at Illinois Route 59 new interchange constructed
- US Route 30 widening from Joliet to Harlem Avenue
- Interstate 57 and Interstate 294 new interchange constructed
- Interstate 57 at Stuenkel Road new interchange constructed
- US Route 30 capacity improvement from Illinois Route 59 to Interstate 55
- Interstate 55 at US Route 6 interchange reconstruction
- Interstate 55 at Weber Road interchange reconstruction
- Illinois Route 7 (159th Street) reconstruction from Interstate 355 to Will-Cook County Line

### B. Funding

The public sector will not have adequate funding to complete many of the projects identified in the Blueprint. The CED believes all infrastructure funding options must be utilized including increasing the federal and state motor fuel income taxes, use of private equity funding through Public Private Partnerships, tolling, congestion pricing, use of federal loans and grants.

#### **Federal: FAST Act**

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act." It is the first law enacted in over ten years that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation, allowing States and local governments to move forward with critical transportation projects with the confidence that they will have a Federal partner over the long term. For the first time the FAST Act establishes both formula and discretionary grant programs to fund **critical transportation projects that would benefit freight movements**. These programs provide a dedicated source of Federal funding for freight projects, including multimodal projects. The Act emphasizes the importance of Federal coordination to **focus**

**local governments on the needs of freight transportation providers.** It is critical that Will County governments do the necessary planning and preparation to qualify for these new freight infrastructure programs.

As a result of Will County's emergence as the largest inland container port in North America, a number of the transportation projects needed in Will County are projects of regional and national significance and will qualify for federal funding.

**State:**

The State of Illinois has not had a capital bill for transportation projects since 2011. State revenues for transportation projects today are not enough for maintenance of the existing infrastructure, much constructing new capacity. While P3 legislation has been enabled for state infrastructure, not one project has been built using this funding mechanism.

The State of Illinois needs to pass a capital bill to fund repairs to existing transportation infrastructure and expand over all capacity for future economic growth.

**Local**

Will County, its municipalities and townships must work together and maximize use of local resources (state and local motor fuel taxes, RTA sales tax, dedicated road taxes) to bring the local networks to a state of good repair, improve accessibility and where needed, add capacity.

**C. State/Federal Road Projects** *(priority is based on next best available funding source)*

***New Construction***

- Illiana Expressway connecting Interstates 55, 57, and 65
- Interstate 80 Houbolt Road interchange redesign and Houbolt Parkway Extension connecting I-80 with CenterPoint Intermodal Center (P3)
- Interstate 55 full interchange at Airport/Lockport Road
- Interstate 55 full interchange at Illinois Route 126

***Add Lanes***

- Illinois Route 394/Illinois Route 1 from US Route 30 to the Illiana Expressway
- Interstate 55 from I-80 to Coal City Road
- Interstate 55 managed lanes from I-355 to I-90/94
- Interstate 80 from Ridge Road to US Route 30
- Interstate 80 managed lanes, US Route 30 to I-294

***Capacity Improvements:***

- Illinois Route 53 from US Route 52 to West Arsenal Road
- Interstate 55 from I-355 to I-90/94

***Reconstruct***

- Interstate 55 from Weber Road to I-80
- Interstate 55 at US Route 59 interchange
- Interstate 55 at IL Route 129 interchange
- Interstate 55 at Lorenzo Road interchange
- Interstate 80 at US Route 30 interchange

**D. Local Road Projects**

- Improve the local arterial roads along the I-355 corridor to handle the influx of traffic.
- Wilmington-Peotone Road, add capacity from Illinois Route 53 to Drecksler Road (CMAP RSP 56)
- Laraway Road, add capacity from US Route 52 to Harlem Ave (CMAP RSP 55)
- Continue work on planning critical corridors such as the Caton Farm Road/Bruce Road corridor.

**E. State and Federal Aviation Projects**

- Complete airport master plan and Tier II EIS for South Suburban Airport.
- Complete land acquisition for the SSA Inaugural Airport.
- Support the construction of the SSA.
- Identify and support infrastructure that will be required in the areas adjacent to the airport.

**F. Local Aviation Projects**

**Lewis University Airport (KLOT)**

- Reimbursement for Phase 1 construction of air traffic control tower (VFR) with equipment to complete entry to FAA contract tower program
- Install Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System (MALSR) on Runway 2
- Rehabilitate Taxiway B

**Joliet Regional Airport (KJOT)**

- Land acquisition for runway approach protection
- T-hangar site improvements and pavements
- Environmental and engineering studies for airfield drainage improvements

**Bolingbrook Clow International Airport (1C5)**

- Rehabilitate deteriorating apron pavements, phase 2
- Reimburse for RPZ easements, Runway 18 and 36, phase 3
- Install Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI) and Runway End Identifier Lights (REIL) for runway 18-36

**Bult Field (C56)**

- Install rotating beacon and primary wind cone; develop airport electrical plan
- Install REIL, PAPI, and supplemental wind cones on Runway 9-27
- Install perimeter fencing per USDA-APHIS-WS recommendation

**South Suburban Airport (SSA)**

- Pursue P3 development in accordance with Illinois Statute PA98-0109, Economic Development Act of 2013
- Complete Master Plan and EIS
- Complete inaugural land acquisition and relocation

**G. Rail/Transit Projects**

- Illinois Route 53/Illinois Route 113 Intersection/Rail Crossing improvements (High Speed Rail).
- Support additional intermodal and trans-load facilities on the CSX line at Crete
- Support the Chicago region CREATE rail program
- Increase Metra service along the Heritage Corridor
- Extend Metra service from Chicago Southland to the South Suburban Airport.
- Support Pace in their planning to improve bus service throughout the region.
- Identify and promote non-traditional transit alternatives such as van/carpooling, Arterial Rapid Transit and locally based bus service.

**H. State and Federal Water Projects**

- Support invasive species abatement solutions that keep the flow of commerce open on the rivers
- Support funding for needed improvements to the lock and dams on the Des Plaines and Illinois Rivers including keeping the inland waterway open to the Great Lakes
- Support the expansion of barge terminal facilities to increase the movement of commodities