



Connect Transit will livestream the Board of Trustees meetings when a YouTube link is provided on the agenda. Anyone who attends the meeting or addresses a public meeting during Public Comment time will be heard and may be seen on the livestream. Any audio and video captured will be in the recording.

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please do not attend the meeting.

AGENDA

Connect Transit Board of Trustees, Regular Session

November 28, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

Connect Transit Board Room, 351 Wylie Drive, Normal, IL 61761

YouTube Link: <https://youtube.com/live/dYKKjeFf4i0?feature=share>

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
 - a. Attendance by Other Means/Virtual – Roll Call Vote
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Public Comments
- E. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of Regular Session Minutes for October 24, 2023
 - b. Approval of Executive Session Minutes for October 24, 2023
 - c. Approval of Financial Information for October 2023
 - d. Monthly Statistical Reports for October 2023
 - e. Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
 - f. Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update
- F. New Business
 - a. Messaging Consultant Update – Informational
 - b. Fare Discussion – Informational
 - c. General Manager’s Annual Pay Increase – Roll Call Vote
- G. Chairman’s Report
- H. General Manager’s Report
- I. Trustee Comments
- J. Executive Session
- K. Adjournment

Mission:

Connect Transit provides safe, reliable transportation and access to opportunity to strengthen and enrich individual lives, our community, the economy, and the environment.



October 2023

Financial Reports



Connect Transit Cash Disbursement Report October 2023

Name	Check Number	Date	Amount	Description
A.T.U. - C.O.P.E.	00057882	06-Oct-23	\$321.85	Payroll Deduction
ABC Bus Companies	00057883	06-Oct-23	\$1,542.31	Bus Parts
Advance Auto Parts	00057885	06-Oct-23	\$949.09	Maintenance Supplies
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 752	00057886	06-Oct-23	\$7,891.20	Payroll Deduction
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 752	00057945	20-Oct-23	\$250.00	Payroll Deduction
Amazon Capital Service	00057887	06-Oct-23	\$705.71	Building Maint., Cleaning Supplies, Comp Hardware & Shop Tools
Amazon Capital Service	00057946	20-Oct-23	\$146.34	Office Supplies
Ancel Glink, P.C.	00057947	20-Oct-23	\$153.75	Legal Service
Aramark Uniform Services	00057888	06-Oct-23	\$880.48	Cleaning Uniforms & Rugs
Assurance Agency, Ltd.	00057948	20-Oct-23	\$4,125.00	Insurance
Barbara Ellison	00057889	06-Oct-23	\$104.73	Uniform Reimbursement
Best One of Central IL	00057890	06-Oct-23	\$355.26	Bus Parts & Outside Repair
Blitt and Gaines, P.C.	00057891	06-Oct-23	\$340.70	Payroll Deduction
Blitt and Gaines, P.C.	00057949	20-Oct-23	\$340.70	Payroll Deduction
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois	00057980	20-Oct-23	\$148,911.41	Insurance
Blue Springs, Inc	00057950	20-Oct-23	\$180.00	Portable Restrooms
Bridgestone Americas	00057892	06-Oct-23	\$2,915.70	Tires
Cardinal Infrastructure, LLC	00057951	20-Oct-23	\$18,000.00	Consulting
CDM Smith Inc.	00057893	06-Oct-23	\$11,678.86	Transit Center
Central Illinois Trucks Inc.	00057894	06-Oct-23	\$3,460.95	Bus Parts
Checkr, Inc.	00057895	06-Oct-23	\$439.90	New Hire Background Checks
City of Bloomington	00057896	06-Oct-23	\$966.53	Utilities
City of Bloomington	00057952	20-Oct-23	\$137.97	Utilities
Clark Baird Smith, LLP	00057953	20-Oct-23	\$182.50	Legal Service
Clean Exhaust Specialist	00057897	06-Oct-23	\$2,543.00	Bus Parts
Concur Technologies, Inc	00057898	06-Oct-23	\$228.75	Software
Concur Technologies, Inc	00057954	20-Oct-23	\$228.75	Software
Corn Belt Energy Corp.	00057955	20-Oct-23	\$12,909.72	Utilities
Cornerstone Government Affairs	00057899	06-Oct-23	\$3,958.33	Consulting
Cummins Sales and Service	ACH	06-Oct-23	\$123,270.82	Bus Mid-life Overhaul
Cummins Sales and Service	00057956	20-Oct-23	\$3,024.26	Bus Parts
Don Owen Tire Service, Inc.	00057900	06-Oct-23	\$248.33	Bus Parts
Dovetail, Inc.	00057957	20-Oct-23	\$2,485.00	Consulting
Eagle Automotive	00057901	06-Oct-23	\$1,849.39	Bus Parts
East Penn Manufacturing Co.	00057958	20-Oct-23	\$2,845.08	Bus Parts
Else Hall	00057902	06-Oct-23	\$111.48	Uniform Reimbursement
Engraving Express	00057903	06-Oct-23	\$29.50	Printed Materials
Evergreen FS	00057904	06-Oct-23	\$1,142.51	Fuel
Galls, LLC	00057905	06-Oct-23	\$4,690.43	Uniforms
Galls, LLC	00057959	20-Oct-23	\$1,358.52	Uniforms
Gatekeeper Systems, Inc.	00057906	06-Oct-23	\$620.00	Bus Parts
Genfare, LLC	00057907	06-Oct-23	\$3,447.21	Software and Hardware
Genfare, LLC	00057960	20-Oct-23	\$2,732.50	Software and Hardware
GMV Syncromatics Corp.	00057908	06-Oct-23	\$1,020.00	Hardware
GMV Syncromatics Corp.	00057961	20-Oct-23	\$2,700.00	Hardware
Grainger	00057909	06-Oct-23	\$16.52	Office Cabinets
Great Plains Media	00057910	06-Oct-23	\$1,600.00	Radio Advertising
Illini Fire Equipment	00057911	06-Oct-23	\$1,735.00	Safety & Training
Illinois Department of Employment	ACH	31-Oct-23	\$3,693.23	Unemployment Tax
Illinois Department of Revenue	00057912	06-Oct-23	\$17,389.17	Payroll Deduction
Illinois Department of Revenue	00057962	20-Oct-23	\$17,280.70	Payroll Deduction
Illinois Dept of Revenue Wage Levy Unit	00057913	06-Oct-23	\$170.24	Payroll Deduction
Illinois Dept of Revenue Wage Levy Unit	00057963	20-Oct-23	\$169.96	Payroll Deduction
Illinois State Disbursement Unit	00057914	06-Oct-23	\$1,522.18	Payroll Deduction
Illinois State Disbursement Unit	00057964	20-Oct-23	\$1,569.79	Payroll Deduction
JX Truck Center - Bloomington	00057915	06-Oct-23	\$193.14	Materials & Supplies
Kenneth Jones	00057965	20-Oct-23	\$139.18	Uniform Reimbursement



Connect Transit Cash Disbursement Report October 2023

Name	Check Number	Date	Amount	Description
Ken's Oil Service, Inc	00057916	06-Oct-23	\$28,286.39	Bus Parts, Fuel & Lubricants
Ken's Oil Service, Inc	00057966	20-Oct-23	\$50,121.54	Bus Parts, Fuel & Lubricants
Kirk's Automotive, Inc	00057917	06-Oct-23	\$792.00	Bus Parts
LeeAnn Biddle	00057918	06-Oct-23	\$14.00	Travel & Meetings
Lewis, Yockey & Brown, Inc	00057967	20-Oct-23	\$1,045.00	Bus Stops
McLean County Chamber of Commerce	00057919	06-Oct-23	\$175.00	Dues & Subscriptions
McLean County Recorder	00057968	20-Oct-23	\$610.00	Bus Shelters
Menards	00057920	06-Oct-23	\$257.96	Building Maintenance
Michelin North America, Inc	00057921	06-Oct-23	\$37.02	Tires
Midwest Transit Equipment, Inc.	00057969	20-Oct-23	\$280.60	Bus Parts
Miller Janitor Supply	00057922	06-Oct-23	\$491.90	Maintenance Supplies
Missionsquare	ACH	05-Oct-23	\$35,417.37	Retirement Payment
Missionsquare	ACH	20-Oct-23	\$35,491.36	Retirement Payment
Morris Avenue Garage	00057923	06-Oct-23	\$320.00	Vehicle Inspection
Motion Industries, Inc.	00057924	06-Oct-23	\$185.36	Bus Parts
Mutual of Omaha	00057982	23-Oct-23	\$18,738.01	Life, AD&D, STD & LTD
Napa Auto Parts	00057925	06-Oct-23	\$65.30	Bus Parts
Nicor Gas	00057926	06-Oct-23	\$282.49	Utilities
Norman Ellison	00057927	06-Oct-23	\$157.09	Uniform Reimbursement
Oberlander Alarm Systems, Inc.	00057928	06-Oct-23	\$230.00	Security Alarm Service Fee
OSF Medical Group - Occupational Health	00057929	06-Oct-23	\$625.00	Drug Testing
Pantagraph	00057930	06-Oct-23	\$3,553.90	Advertising- Media
Pat Boylan	00057970	20-Oct-23	\$39.15	Uniform Reimbursement
Payroll	ACH	05-Oct-23	\$279,844.04	
Payroll	ACH	19-Oct-23	\$287,751.09	
Pitney Bowes Global Finance Services LLC	00057971	20-Oct-23	\$289.14	Office Equipment
Protterra, Inc.	00057931	06-Oct-23	\$2,878.30	Bus Parts
Protterra, Inc.	00057972	20-Oct-23	\$2,131.70	Bus Parts
Purchase Power	00057932	06-Oct-23	\$300.00	Postage
Redbird Sports Properties, LLC	00057973	20-Oct-23	\$1,550.00	Advertising- Media
Republic Services # 368	00057933	06-Oct-23	\$613.71	Garbage Disposal
Safety-Kleen Systems, Inc	00057934	06-Oct-23	\$330.60	Solvent Tank
SAIL Loans	00057974	20-Oct-23	\$77.06	Payroll Deduction
Southtown Wrecker Service, Inc.,	00057935	06-Oct-23	\$622.50	Towing
Sportworks Global, LLC	00057975	20-Oct-23	\$4,856.63	Bus Parts
Stratus Networks	00057936	06-Oct-23	\$3,312.29	Internet
The Aftermarket Parts Company LLC	00057938	06-Oct-23	\$10,643.96	Bus Parts
The Aftermarket Parts Company LLC	00057976	20-Oct-23	\$2,185.29	Bus Parts
Town of Normal	00057939	06-Oct-23	\$638.97	Utilites
TransitTalent.com	00057977	20-Oct-23	\$125.00	Advertising- Employment
TRAVELERS	00057940	06-Oct-23	\$561.13	Property Damage
Uline	00057941	06-Oct-23	\$208.77	Office Supplies
United States Treasury	ACH	10-Oct-23	\$95,146.31	Federal Tax Payment
United States Treasury	ACH	23-Oct-23	\$95,280.65	Federal Tax Payment
Ventura Systems, Inc.	00057944	12-Oct-23	\$13,057.30	Bus Parts
Verizon Wireless	00057942	06-Oct-23	\$3,767.34	Mobile Data Terminals for SS
Vestige Group CID 253	00057978	20-Oct-23	\$485.88	Safety & Training
Via Mobility, LLC	00057979	20-Oct-23	\$4,800.00	Consulting
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	(\$90.86)	Cash Back Rebate
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$30.00	Legal
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$74.97	Building Maintenance
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$822.12	Advertising- Employment
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$485.84	Bus Parts
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$299.78	Materials & Supplies
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$910.68	Cleaning Supplies
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$339.90	Office Supplies
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$616.82	Computer Hardware
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$604.45	Software Licensing
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$2,531.79	Dues & Subscriptions



**Connect Transit
Cash Disbursement Report
October 2023**

Name	Check Number	Date	Amount	Description
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$1,587.44	Travel & Meetings
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$94.87	Employee Recognition
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$85.67	Advertising- Promotions
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$402.48	Safety & Training
VISA-Commerce Bank	00057943	06-Oct-23	\$199.00	Misc
VSP of Illinois, NFP	00057981	20-Oct-23	\$1,150.62	Vision Insurance
		Total	\$1,420,723.30	

Bloomington Normal Public Transit

Balance Sheet

Division: 99 Board Reports

As of: 10/31/2023

Fiscal Year: 2024 Period: 4 Oct-2023

Assets

Current Assets

Checking and Savings	\$5,729,986.21
Accounts Receivable	\$5,856,913.81
Inventory Asset - Fuel	\$79,477.75
Inventory Asset - Parts	\$372,596.83
Inventory Asset - Tires	\$0.00
Other Current Assets	\$410,836.68

Total Current Assets **\$12,449,811.28**

Fixed Assets \$30,977,966.63

Total Assets **\$43,427,777.91**

Liabilities & Equity

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$338,744.34
Payroll Liabilities	\$1,431,097.99
Contracts	\$0.00
Due to Illinois Funds Account	\$0.00
Deferred Revenue	\$386,242.39
Deficit Funding Advance	\$0.00

Total Liabilities **\$2,156,084.72**

EQUITY

Fixed Asset Equity	\$12,483,532.77
Unreserved Fund Equity	\$6,750,412.62
Underground Petroleum Storage	\$20,000.00

Total Equity **\$19,253,945.39**

Retained Earnings \$22,017,747.80

Total Liabilities & Equity **\$43,427,777.91**

Bloomington Normal Public Transit

Income Statement With Approved Budget

From Fiscal Year: 2024 Thru Fiscal Year: 2024	From Period 4 Thru Period 4	Division: 98 Operating Profit/Loss		As of: 10/31/2023	
		Oct-2023		Jul-2023 Oct-2023	Approved Budget
Operating Revenue					
Passenger Fares		\$56,594.81	10.43%	\$173,649.22	32.01% \$542,500.00
ISU Contract Fare		\$48,670.68	8.33%	\$194,682.72	33.33% \$584,048.00
Other Contract Fares		\$23,037.15	11.52%	\$87,213.42	43.61% \$200,000.00
Advertising Revenue		\$9,775.00	8.33%	\$44,350.00	37.81% \$117,300.00
Miscellaneous Revenue		(\$37.51)	-0.39%	\$21,840.66	229.90% \$9,500.00
Total Operating Revenue		\$138,040.13	9.50%	\$521,736.02	35.90% \$1,453,348.00
Operating Expenses					
Operators Wages		\$651,759.85	8.18%	\$2,607,702.73	32.73% \$7,967,560.00
Maintenance Wages		\$105,191.79	6.68%	\$421,371.23	26.78% \$1,573,647.00
Administration Wages		\$95,803.16	8.13%	\$381,237.91	32.37% \$1,177,806.00
Employer Payroll Tax Expense		\$66,168.23	7.61%	\$264,794.09	30.45% \$869,722.00
Retirement Plan		\$31,249.78	5.83%	\$128,321.00	23.94% \$535,951.00
Group Insurance		\$156,251.19	6.98%	\$661,030.82	29.54% \$2,237,512.00
Uniform Expense		\$3,943.77	6.22%	\$18,313.45	28.90% \$63,375.00
Professional Services		\$36,207.77	16.20%	\$95,743.69	42.84% \$223,500.00
Outside Repair-Labor		\$3,398.00	2.43%	\$1,917.70	1.37% \$140,000.00
Contract Maintenance Services		\$14,741.19	6.29%	\$34,235.69	14.60% \$234,476.00
Custodial Services		\$835.92	4.39%	\$10,323.68	54.16% \$19,060.00
Employee Recruiting/Testing/Temp Help		\$2,043.95	4.54%	\$8,423.16	18.72% \$45,000.00
Fuel		\$98,802.39	6.11%	\$378,693.18	23.43% \$1,616,224.00
Lubricants		\$2,277.53	2.64%	\$9,572.05	11.09% \$86,285.00
Tires		\$2,391.75	3.88%	\$12,859.22	20.85% \$61,680.00
Bus Repair Parts		\$37,320.19	7.79%	\$208,850.33	43.57% \$479,362.00
Other Materials & Supplies		\$6,707.96	8.08%	\$24,916.98	30.02% \$83,000.00
Shelters/Signs/Shop Tools		\$3,572.54	17.86%	\$7,715.34	38.58% \$20,000.00
Computer and Office Supplies		\$15,510.03	3.55%	\$128,859.68	29.53% \$436,362.00
Utilities		\$8,654.03	6.71%	\$37,999.07	29.46% \$129,000.00
Corporate Insurance		\$49,174.41	9.32%	\$181,640.04	34.42% \$527,725.00
Dues/Subscriptions/Fees		\$1,930.60	4.32%	\$21,082.04	47.22% \$44,650.00
Printing/Marketing/Training		\$21,368.99	5.70%	\$100,120.16	26.71% \$374,850.00
Total Operating Expenses		\$1,415,305.02	7.47%	\$5,745,723.24	30.33% \$18,946,747.00
Operating Assistance					
Operating Deficit Before Subsidies and Grants		(\$1,277,264.89)	7.30%	(\$5,223,987.22)	29.86% (\$17,493,399.00)
City of Bloomington Operating Assistance		\$75,833.33	0.00%	\$303,333.32	0.00% \$0.00
Town of Normal Operating Assistance		\$49,166.66	0.00%	\$196,666.64	0.00% \$0.00
Illinois Downstate Operating Assistance		\$913,475.00	0.00%	\$3,707,111.00	0.00% \$0.00
FTA 5307 Operating Assistance		\$227,520.00	0.00%	\$963,115.00	0.00% \$0.00
Total Operating Assistance		\$1,265,994.99	0.00%	\$5,170,225.96	0.00% \$0.00

October 2023	Current Month	Month in Prior Year	Percent Change	Year to Date	Prior Year to Date	% Change YTD
System Statistics:						
System Ridership	247,254	219,207	12.79%	827,268	733,808	12.74%
Fixed Ridership	230,921	210,416	9.74%	770,787	700,538	10.03%
Mobility Ridership	10,354	8,791	17.78%	42,450	33,270	27.59%
FLEX Ridership	5,979	*	*	14,031	*	*
System Service Hours	15,595	13,267	17.55%	61,595	51,176	20.36%
Fixed Service Hours	10,378	9,572	8.42%	41,060	36,755	11.71%
Mobility Service Hours	4,177	3,695	13.04%	16,834	14,421	16.73%
FLEX Service Hours	1,040	*	*	3,701	*	*
System Service Miles	191,969	161,260	19.04%	707,857	628,215	12.68%
Fixed Service Miles	126,031	115,833	8.80%	463,688	451,395	2.72%
Mobility Service Miles	52,342	45,427	15.22%	208,570	176,820	17.96%
FLEX Service Miles	13,596	*	*	35,599	*	*
System Revenue Vehicles	63	58	8.62%	63	59	6.78%
Fixed Revenue Vehicles	38	40	-5.00%	38	40	-5.00%
Mobility Revenue Vehicles	20	18	11.11%	20	19	5.26%
FLEX Revenue Vehicles	5	*	*	5	*	*
System Miles/Revenue Vehicle	3,047	2,780	9.60%	11,236	10,648	5.52%
Fixed Miles/Revenue Vehicle	3,317	2,896	14.53%	12,202	11,285	8.13%
Mobility Miles/Revenue Vehicle	2,617	2,524	3.70%	10,429	9,306	12.06%
FLEX Miles/Revenue Vehicle	2,719	*	*	7,120	*	*
System Efficiencies:						
System Ridership/Service Hour	15.85	16.52	-4.04%	13.43	14.34	-6.33%
Fixed Ridership/Revenue Hour	22.25	21.98	1.22%	18.77	19.06	-1.51%
Mobility Ridership/Revenue Hour	2.48	2.38	4.19%	2.52	2.31	9.30%
FLEX Ridership/Revenue Hour	5.75	*	*	3.79	*	*
System Percent On-Time Trips	90.17%	90.32%	-0.17%	90.74%	93.48%	-2.93%
Fixed Percent On-Time Trips	90%	90%	0.00%	90%	93%	-3.03%
Mobility Percent On-Time Trips	97%	98%	-1.02%	97%	98%	-0.78%
FLEX Percent On-Time Trips	85%	*	*	88%	*	*
System Subsidy/Passenger	\$5.17	\$5.43	-4.77%	\$6.35	\$6.31	0.68%
Operator Pay Hours/Service Hour	1.23	1.32	-6.50%	1.26	1.33	-5.39%
Vehicle Maintenance Expense/Mile	\$0.81	\$0.94	-13.42%	\$1.07	\$0.86	23.60%





600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001

Monthly Federal Update for Connect Transit

Prepared by Cardinal Infrastructure

Prepared November 20, 2023

Appropriations

The House passed a temporary spending bill on Nov. 14, avoiding a looming government shutdown and ending ten weeks without a break on Capitol Hill. As of this writing, the bill is headed to the Senate and White House, [which are both on board with the stopgap measure](#), according to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

The clean CR (without policy changes or supplemental funding for Israel, Ukraine, or other domestic or foreign spending) extends current FY23 funding levels for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, Agriculture, Military Construction, and Energy and Water through January 19, 2024. The remaining eight appropriation measures will be extended until February 2, 2024.

Divisions within the House Republican Conference that surfaced over the last six weeks continue. With 93 House GOP members voting against the bill, Speaker Johnson relied on 209 yeas from Democrats to get the legislation out of the House; much like former Speaker McCarthy needed to do back in September.

The Senate is expected to move quickly on the legislation and get it to the president's desk in advance of the Friday deadline. If for some unforeseeable reason the Friday deadline is not met it is important to note that both FHWA and FTA personnel are funded by the Highway Trust Fund allowing them to stay operational and avoid major delays.

Transit safety webinar hosted by FTA

[Register now](#) for the Developing Community-Based Public Safety Programs for Transit webinar on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 1pm ET. Attendees will learn from a panel of three transit agencies about how community-based public safety programs can address public safety concerns and improve the rider experience. The webinar will include perspectives from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Central Ohio Transit Authority and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority who will share their experiences establishing a community-based program, including best practices and lessons learned.

Transit worker hours and fatigue

FTA is considering making a new rule to set minimum rest standards for transit workers to reduce the risk of fatigue-related safety incidents. In a [Federal Register notice](#), the agency is seeking public input on hours of service and fatigue risk management programs to better understand current practices and the costs and benefits of such a rule.



600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001

State legislative scorecard on transit policy

NRDC came out with a [report ranking the 50 states](#) on their transportation policies. States that prioritized transit and other modes of travel did better than those that passed laws requiring state DOTs to only spend money on highways.

Public engagement resource from DOT

USDOT published an updated version of the technical assistance resource [Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making](#). Public involvement from the beginning and throughout a project's lifecycle has the potential to help projects come to life faster and to better meet the needs of the community. This guide, first released in October 2022, provides a shared definition of meaningful public involvement and promising practices to help DOT funding recipients across all modes of transportation address barriers to inclusion in decision-making.

Conversion of commercial properties for residential use

The White House released a [guidebook](#), developed in partnership with HUD and other federal agencies, that will help communities and housing providers identify federal resources to finance the conversion of commercial properties to residential uses and mixed-use development. As part of this announcement, HUD is releasing an updated notice on how its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, \$10 billion of which has been allocated during this Administration, can be used to boost housing supply – including acquisition, rehabilitation, and commercial-to-residential conversions. This notice is the latest update on how to use CDBG resources to support the development of affordable housing. States and localities can also access up to five times their annual CDBG allocation in low-cost loan guarantees to fund projects such as the conversion of properties to housing or mixed-use development.

Construction costs keep climbing

After a brief respite in the October-December 2022 quarter, [highway construction costs rose](#) 2.7 percent in the January-March 2023 quarter, an annualized increase of 10.8 percent per year, according to the National Highway Construction Cost Index kept by the Federal Highway Administration.

“Safe Streets and Roads for All” grant awards announced

the U.S. Department of Transportation [announced \\$86 million](#) in Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grants to 235 regional, local and Tribal communities for planning and demonstration projects to improve safety and help prevent deaths and serious injuries on the nation's roadways.



600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20001

DOT grant program at center of Congressional Review Act inquiry

DOT's notice of funding opportunity for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant met the Congressional Review Act's definition of a rule that is subject to the Congressional Review Act, the Government Accountability Office [determined](#) — giving congressional Republicans an opportunity to overturn it. Commerce Committee Ranking Member Ted Cruz (R-Texas) said he intends to introduce a resolution that would effectively block the grant after the GAO's decision. He said the grant program is an effort to “tie up federal funding with radical environmental and racial equity requirements.”



TO: Connect Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Cornerstone Government Affairs – Illinois Team
SUBJECT: Legislative Update
DATE: November 28th, 2023

Summary

This month, we monitored Veto Session for activity which may impact Connect. In particular, our team continued discussions with legislative leaders, staff, and stakeholders regarding amendments that were introduced to exclude various governmental units in the Paid Leave Act that previously passed. While changes to this policy did not pass during the Veto Session, we will continue to advocate for changes on behalf of Connect in the spring.

Additionally, our team continued to follow up with House leadership and staff regarding the release of Connect's appropriation. We compiled a report regarding the recently announced hydrogen hubs that will impact the Midwest and the currently outlined development plans. We also scheduled a meeting for Connect to meet with Senator Dave Koehler to discuss recent project updates.

Bill Tracking

While various bills were discussed during the fall Veto Session, paid leave amendments and legislation mandating zero-emission government vehicles by 2030 were the two most prominent items for Connect that were considered.

Paid Leave for All Workers Act: Senator Harmon filed Senate Floor Amendment #2 to [SB 509](#), which removes certain exemptions granted under the current law (including for airline workers); clarifies the definition of park districts; and makes the law applied to certain contractors who offer recreational programs for persons with disabilities. This amendment was not considered this week and remains in the Committee on Assignments.

Senator Glowiak Hilton filed [SB 2642](#) which would delay the effective date for the Paid Leave for All Workers Act from January 1, 2024 to July 1, 2024. That bill was filed too late to move through the legislative process during Veto Session and remains in the Committee on Assignments.

Also note, the Department of Labor published rules to implement the Paid Leave for All Workers Act which takes effect January 1, 2024. Read the rules [here](#).

Government Zero Emission Vehicle Act – The Senate concurred, by a vote of 37-18, with HFA # 2 to [SB 1769](#) (Ventura/Hoffman) which requires all vehicles purchased or leased by government entities, except law enforcement and IEMA vehicles, to be zero-emission by 2030. HFA # 2 exempts vehicles

purchased by the Department of Transportation as part of their consolidated vehicle procurement program. SB 1769 now heads to the Governor’s desk.

General Legislative Updates

103rd ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Illinois General Assembly stands adjourned. The Legislature will begin its 2024 Spring Legislative Session (the second year in the two-year 103rd General Assembly) on January 16, 2024. The House calendar is [here](#). The Senate calendar is [here](#). Adjournment is scheduled for May 24, although legislators are asked to block off the remainder of May in the event session has not concluded. The House is scheduled to be in session 51 days while the Senate is scheduled to be in session 46 days.

Both chambers are now in the process of forwarding to the Governor all legislation passed during the recent Fall Veto Session. As a reminder, the General Assembly has 30 days (from the date of passage) to forward the bills to the Governor for his consideration. The Governor then has 60 days from receipt of the legislation to act. If the Governor fails to act during that time, the bill automatically becomes law.

2024 Key Dates and Session Deadlines:

January 19: House and Senate LRB Request Deadline

January 19 - February 9: LRB Blackout Period – No Requests Will Be Accepted

February 9: Senate and House Bill Filing Deadline and LRB Amendment Requests Begin

February 21: Governor’s Budget and State of the State Address

March 15: Senate Committee Deadline for Senate Bills

March 19: Primary Election

April 5: House Committee Deadline for House Bills

April 12: Senate Third Reading Deadline

April 19: House Third Reading Deadline

May 3: Committee Deadline for Bills in the Opposite Chamber

May 17: House and Senate Third Reading Deadline for Bills in the Opposite Chamber

May 24: Adjournment

May 25 – 31: Contingent Session Days

GOVERNOR’S HIGHLIGHTS:

ICC Decisions: The Illinois Commerce Commission disallowed funding and paused the Peoples Gas System Modernization Program (a pipeline replacement program) pending a new investigation into the best approach to modernization of the outdated underground infrastructure. The ICC also approved smaller-than-requested rate increases next year for Peoples Gas, North Shore Gas and Nicor Gas. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

The Illinois Commerce Commission also disallowed \$36.34 million to Ameren Illinois' rate request for its natural gas delivery services in Illinois. The decision is around 50 percent lower than Ameren's initial request for a \$71.57 million increase. Read more [here](#).

Back to Business Grants Available: The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is offering \$25 million in grant funding through the Back to Business (B2B) NewBiz program. This latest ARPA-funded opportunity is designed to provide additional support for businesses in hard-hit sectors who launched during the pandemic. Businesses that launched in 2020 or 2021 and remain in operation have faced significant impacts during the pandemic, but they have not been eligible for other federal or state relief programming since they were not operational prior to the pandemic. Read more [here](#).

Fire Truck Revolving Loan Program and Ambulance Revolving Loan Program: Nearly \$7.2 million in no interest or low interest loans were awarded to emergency responders through the Fire Truck Revolving Loan Program and Ambulance Revolving Loan Program. More information and the full list of recipients is [here](#).

Gubernatorial Appointments: Roxanne Nava will continue to serve as a Member of the Illinois Finance Authority.

Snowmobile Trail Grants: Seven snowmobile trail projects in Illinois were recently awarded \$392,150 for the development, rehabilitation, and maintenance of the trails. Read more [here](#).

Wildlife Preservation Fund Grant: Willowbrook Wildlife Center, which is within the Forest Preserve of DuPage County, received a \$4,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Preservation Fund to install a shallow pool drain in the rehabilitation bird enclosure to facilitate the drainage, cleaning, and refilling of the water source within that enclosure. Willowbrook Wildlife Center rehabilitates about 10,000 sick, injured, or orphaned wild animals annually. More information, including how to apply for the grant, is [here](#).

Wildlife Habitat Restoration Grants: Seven organizations were awarded state Habitat Fund Project grants from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This grant program enhances game and non-game wildlife habitat through projects developed by non-profit organizations and governmental entities. Read more, including how to apply for grants, [here](#).

OTHER NEWS:

Chicago Budget Approved: The Chicago City Council approved a \$16.77 billion budget on Wednesday, the first of Mayor Brandon Jonhson's tenure. Read more [here](#).

Ige Appointed Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health: Mayor Brandon Johnson selected Dr. Olusimbo "Simbo" Ige to serve as the Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health, replacing Dr. Allison Arwady whom Johnson fired three months ago. Ige most recently worked at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation where she was the managing director of programs since

January. Prior to that, Ige was the Assistant commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Updated Response to Migrant Crisis: Governor Pritzker announced Thursday that the state of Illinois (through the Department of Human Services) will provide an additional \$160 million to help care for the thousands of migrants in Chicago. The new funding will be allocated as follows: \$30 million to create a “large intake and welcome center” at an undisclosed location, \$65 million to help Chicago establish a tent base camp to provide shelter for up to 2,000 people at a time and another \$65 million to help coordinate the resettlement of migrants, including rental assistance. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

When asked why the General Assembly did not appropriate supplemental funding for this purpose, the Governor’s office argued that this is “humanitarian emergency” and a spokesperson said “the state has authority within the Illinois Department of Human Services budget to reallocate dollars.”

Mayor Brandon Johnson indicated that his administration will be implementing a 60-day limit on shelter stays, which will be paired with intensified case management and housing assistance from the State. Read more [here](#).

Cook County will also offer additional funds to address the migrant crisis. About \$70 million will be allocated to provide medical care for migrants and another \$20 million will be available to suburban communities to help cover costs related to providing services for migrants.

2024 Election Update: Senator Willie Preston will face Lamont Williams in the Democratic Primary in the 16th Senate District.

Representative Mary Flowers will be engaged in a three-way primary race, facing fellow Democrats Michael Crawford and Mark Hamberlin, in the Democratic primary in the 31st House District.

Representative Cyril Nicols will face Lisa Davis in the Democratic primary in the 32nd House District.

Attorney Rick Ryan will face Sonia Ann Khalil in the Democratic primary in the 36th House District to replace retiring Leader Kelly Burke.

Faye Abushaban will challenge Representative Keivin Olickal in the 16th House District Democratic primary.



MEMO

DATE: November 28, 2023
TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: Aubrey Staton, Marketing Manager
CC: David Braun, General Manager
SUBJECT: Messaging Consultant Update - Informational

Background:

In September 2022, this Board approved staff to move forward with strategic messaging consultant services provided by Dovetail and their subconsultant Creative Entourage, who would engage community partners, build public confidence in Connect Transit, establish a positive value image that may lead to increased ridership, and maintain or improve positive public perception. In June 2023, an update was provided to the Board detailing completed and next steps in the consulting process.

Discussion:

Dovetail and Creative Entourage have completed the information gathering and research process. They have also started developing messaging and creating deliverables to be used by Connect Transit.

Completed steps:

- Identified key stakeholders
- Conducted key stakeholder interviews
 - This process was delayed by two weeks as we struggled to identify times when those who were willing to share their perception of Connect Transit were available.
- Developed input session discussion guide
- Identified input session participants
- Conducted input sessions
 - An additional six weeks were added to the project timeline as we struggle to identify participants and common availability to host these sessions.
- Developed phone survey
- Conducted 401 phone surveys
- Reviewed input session and phone survey results
- Created rider survey questions
- Conducted rider survey on vehicles and online

- This process was scheduled to take two weeks but required six weeks because the method used for the survey did not yield an appropriate number of survey responses to provide a well-rounded sampling of our rider's opinions. Typical posting to our website and on-board vehicles garnered 100 survey responses. Rider alerts placed at stops and cards handed out on board the vehicle resulted in an additional 300 responses.

Unforeseen scheduling delays with key interviewees and public input sessions required an additional three to four months in the beginning steps of phase one. This delay caused a further delay in the rider survey, which we asked not to be done in the summer months when colleges were not in session. A lack of responsiveness during the rider survey slowed this project down even further than expected.

Creative Entourage and Dovetail will present results and updates, answer questions, and explain next steps during the November 28 Board of Trustees meeting.

Financial Impact:

As of September 2023, Dovetail has invoiced 28% of the total project not to exceed value of \$150,000 as approved by the Board.



MEMO

DATE: November 28, 2023

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: David Braun, General Manager

Subject: Fare Simplification and Modernization (Informational)

Background:

When staff introduced Connect FLEX, one of the main challenges was how to collect a fare. The large GFI/Genfare boxes on our other services would not fit on a FLEX van without impacting seating capacity and wheelchair movement.

At the same time, we were considering how to collect fares on FLEX, we had issues with the Transit and Mobility fareboxes that prevented us from collecting fares for over a month. We quickly recognized that Connect Transit's current fare collection system is costly to maintain and affects the reliability of our service.

Upon researching other fare collection systems, we discovered capabilities that would improve the passenger experience that weren't available when we purchased our existing system and would require a substantial upgrade to our existing fareboxes were we to implement them.

Additionally, our fare structure is somewhat complicated and difficult for new riders to use. The cost of the fare is not the issue, but the understanding of how to use the farebox, how and where to purchase a pass, or what the fare will be is an impediment to riding.

Discussion:

After months of consideration and continued research, staff have developed a proposal that would modernize our fare collection system and make riding easier for cash riders and pass users alike. Finally, the proposal improves the efficiency of our fare collection process and improves service reliability.

We will propose the new fare in a presentation to the Board at its November 28, 2023, meeting. If the Board agrees to move forward with the proposal, staff will conduct a series of public meetings, as required by the Federal Transit Administration, for any fare change. Public engagement will be sought in person, and through an on-line portal describing the changes, and allowing for comments from the public from December through mid-February. Once we have received and reviewed public comment, we will provide a recommendation to the Board at its February meeting.