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CMAQ GRANTS TO REDUCE CONGESTION, ENHANCE AIR QUALITY

CHICAGO – The Policy Committee of the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) has awarded more than \$17.7 million to fund 39 projects under the fiscal year 2007 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program.

The grants will pay for items such as sidewalks in Addison and Harwood Heights, commuter parking lots in Aurora and Will County, bike paths in Woodridge and Rolling Meadows, intersection improvements in Richton Park and River Forest and traffic signal interconnects in Chicago and Waukegan.

CMAQ is a federally-funded program of surface transportation improvements designed to improve air quality and mitigate congestion. CMAQ was created in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), and has been continued under each subsequent federal transportation bill.

The CATS CMAQ Project Selection Committee recommends projects in northeastern Illinois to the CATS Work Program Committee. After considering the recommendations, the Work Program Committee releases a list of proposed projects for public comment. After reviewing the comments, the Work Program Committee recommends a proposed program to the CATS Policy Committee. The Policy Committee considers the proposed program and approves a final program for funding.

CMAQ finances transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facility projects, bicycle parking projects, and other projects that result in emissions reductions that can be estimated and are otherwise eligible for CMAQ funds.

The full list of approved projects for northeastern Illinois can be read at the CATS website, www.catsmpo.com. Questions or comments about CMAQ should be directed to Ross Patronsky, Chief of the CMAQ Program, at 312/386-8796.

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CATS is currently seeking project proposals for the FY 2008 CMAQ program. The deadline for submissions is Friday, February 2, 2007. Complete details are available on the CATS website.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the CATS Policy Committee, in partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), carries out the urban transportation planning process in northeastern Illinois. The area covered by CATS includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties and a portion of Grundy County.

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