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CHICAGO AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY 233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois 60606

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CATS SPRING PRESS CONFERENCE PREPARES REGION FOR 2006  
CONSTRUCTION SEASON**

CHICAGO - The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) hosted its fifth annual Spring Construction and Transit Press Conference on Tuesday, March 7, at CATS headquarters in the Sears Tower, located at 233 South Wacker Drive, Suite 800, in Chicago.

Representatives from the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois Tollway, Metra, Pace and the Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee (GCM) Corridor Traffic Information Center provided information regarding this year's monumental Chicago and suburban construction projects, and provided tips for alternative travel and ways to cope.

The Honorable Zenovia Evans, president of the Village of Riverdale and a member of the Regional Planning Board, served as emcee. The press conference was held in the Cunningham-Williams Conference Room at CATS.

Following is a brief summary of information provided by agency representatives regarding spring 2006 construction projects in the Chicagoland area:

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•**Kathleen Cantillon**, chief of communications for the Illinois Tollway, presented the Tollway's construction plans for the second year of its \$5.3 billion Congestion-Relief Program to reduce congestion and travel times. This year's program includes a continuation of the conversion of 20 mainline toll plazas to Open Road Tolling. Nine plazas were converted in 2005 and are already reducing travel times for I-PASS customers. Work to rebuild and widen the South Tri-State from 167th Street to IL Route 394 continues with completion by fall 2006, and work on crossroad bridges and interchanges at I-80 and I-55 will begin on the I-355 South Extension project in early 2006. Cantillon also outlined new projects scheduled to begin in 2006, including rebuilding and widening the northbound lanes of the Central Tri-State Tollway, and advance work for rebuild/widen projects on I-88 and the South Tri-State Tollway.

•**David Zavattero**, IDOT representative to the Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee Corridor Coalition, discussed the coalition's traveler information Web site. The site is a source for real-time traffic information in Chicago and throughout the G-C-M Corridor.

•**Judi Kulm**, manager of media relations for Pace Suburban Bus Service, introduced Pace's latest online tool, WebRoute, a convenient means for creating, viewing and printing customized maps to locate convenient alternate routes.

•**David Seglin**, legislative and policy analyst for the Chicago Department of Transportation, discussed CDOT's anticipated 2006 capital projects. CDOT expects to continue the reconstruction on 63<sup>rd</sup> Street; rebuild viaducts over the Kennedy and Dan Ryan expressways at Monroe, 91<sup>st</sup>, 71<sup>st</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> streets; and resurface and reconstruct the roadway on Grand Avenue from Central to Lamon. CDOT also plans to undertake a number of neighborhood improvements, including resurfacing 510 blocks of residential streets and 128 blocks of alleys, and reconstructing 200 blocks of sidewalks and 225 blocks of curbs and gutters.

•**Robyn Ziegler**, manager of media relations for the Chicago Transit Authority, discussed the continuation of the CTA's Brown Line Capacity Expansion Project and the Dan Ryan Red Line Rehabilitation Project, and the agency's new Howard Station Project, which involves installing elevators and new escalators, lengthening platforms, viaduct repairs and track work.

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•**Patrick Waldron**, media relations specialist for Metra, discussed the commuter rail agency's plans to complete construction of new stations in northwestern Chicago and New Lenox. The station projects wrap up a \$508 million multi-year construction program that brought stations to Elburn and LaFox in Kane County, Manhattan in Will County, Grayslake in Lake County and Rosemont, Schiller Park and Franklin Park in Cook County.

•**Jacek Tyszkiewicz**, engineer of project implementation for the Illinois Department of Transportation, provided information about upcoming projects in IDOT District One, which includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. The agency will continue the reconstruction of the Dan Ryan and the Kingery/Bishop Ford expressways, I-90/Kennedy Expressway nighttime resurfacing from East River Road to I-94/Edens Expressway; advance work on I-55/Stevenson Expressway from Weber Road to I-80 in preparation for adding lanes; reconstruction and widening of US 20/Lake Street east of Rohlwing Road to east of Addison Road; and total reconstruction of Route 22 from west of US 12 (Rand Road) to Quinten Road in the Lake Zurich area.

The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for northeastern Illinois, designated by state and local officials to administer the urban transportation planning process for the region. The area serviced by CATS includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties, plus a portion of Grundy County.

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