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Section 1
Introduction

Cook DuPage Corridor Study

The Cook DuPage Corridor study is one of several subregional, long-range planning studies led by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) of the Chicago metropolitan area. The primary objective of the RTA’s corridor studies program is to offer the region an objective and transparent planning process through which to collaboratively explore regionally significant mobility problems, to assess the likely effectiveness of potential solutions, and to develop consensus among local officials, citizens and regional planning organizations on future transportation investments.

The corridor planning study area known as the “Cook DuPage Corridor” is comprised of approximately 300 square miles of urbanized land area in the central portion of the six-county Chicago metropolitan area. The Cook DuPage Corridor study area impacts fifty-one independent municipal jurisdictions within the two most populous counties in the state of Illinois: Cook County and DuPage County. Over one million people currently reside in the study area and approximately 750,000 jobs are located within the corridor boundaries, as well.

Given the complexity of urban mobility issues and the many stakeholders in the Cook DuPage Corridor, meaningful and on-going public involvement is essential to achieve consensus on effective and suitable future transportation investments. The RTA developed an extensive public involvement program for the Cook DuPage Corridor study with the following four specific goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cook DuPage Corridor Public Involvement Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Public Awareness and Education</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) The RTA will seek to raise public awareness and understanding of the economic vitality, quality of life, residential/commercial land-use balance, and multi-modal transportation challenges of the Cook DuPage Corridor study.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Public Input and Community Dialogue</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2) The RTA will provide the public with early, ongoing, and meaningful opportunities for involvement in the Cook DuPage Corridor Study process.</td>
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<td><strong>Public and Stakeholder Outreach</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3) The RTA will maintain timely contact with the general public, government agencies, business owners, and other key stakeholders throughout the planning process.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Justice</strong></td>
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<td>4) The RTA will identify and involve traditionally underserved communities (those with high concentrations of minority and low-income, elderly, or disabled groups) in the transportation planning process.</td>
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</table>
A variety of techniques to address the four public involvement goals were carefully considered by the RTA and the study’s Citizen Advisory Committee early in the study process. A public involvement plan was crafted to provide prospective guidance to the RTA and to inform the general public on the specific strategies that the RTA intended to pursue in order to achieve the four public involvement goals.

Unlike the public involvement plan, this Public Involvement Program Summary Report is retrospective. This report describes how the strategies were employed by the RTA during the Options Feasibility phase of study; it evaluates the program’s success in meeting the four goals; and it concludes with a discussion of potential RTA actions to enhance the public involvement and communications program in the upcoming Cook DuPage Corridor System Analysis study phase.

**Cook DuPage Corridor Mobility Issues**

The purpose of the Cook DuPage Corridor Study is to identify the most effective and desired solutions to meet the most pressing mobility needs in the west suburbs. The RTA, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), has partnered with other state, regional and local agencies to conduct this study.

The need for the study arises from a significant increase in population and jobs that has occurred in suburban areas of northeastern Illinois over the past several decades. Major regional employment centers have emerged in and around the Cook DuPage Corridor, offering new work locations for both city and suburban residents. As a result, both DuPage county and Cook county are currently net importers of workers. Corridor employment growth is anticipated to far outpace population change in the next 30 years.
Cook DuPage Corridor Employment Centers
Suburban growth in population and jobs has brought about a significant change in travel patterns for which the existing transportation system is not well suited. While the traditional commute from the suburbs to Chicago remains strong, there has been a large increase in intersuburban and reverse commute travel. The existing transportation system was established to serve the traditional commute to downtown Chicago. The system does not provide a sufficient level of service or range of options to address the high growth travel patterns to major employment centers within the corridor. This deficiency is most acute for reverse and intersuburban commuters whose transit options are limited or non-existent.

Study Process

The Cook DuPage Corridor Study is an on-going corridor planning initiative that involves three key phases of study to develop consensus on preferred future transportation improvements: (1) Travel Market Analysis, (2) Options Feasibility, and (3) System Analysis.

Cook DuPage Corridor Study Program

The Travel Market Analysis study phase was completed in December 2005. The Travel Market Analysis was an intensive research effort to assess the nature and magnitude of travel patterns in the corridor, the highways and transit that are available to support each travel pattern and regionally significant mobility issues. During this first phase of study, a coordinating group of professional planning staff...
from three councils of government in the corridor served as the primary conduit of information exchange between the RTA and the many corridor communities.

The second phase of the Cook DuPage Corridor study process is called the Options Feasibility study and it is the focus of this public involvement report. The RTA designed this second study phase to develop a consensus set of goals for mobility improvements and to develop and examine potential combinations of highway and transit improvements. The Options Feasibility phase successfully concluded in May 2008 with a consensus-based selection of one future transportation system of major capital investments for further study and prioritization, as well as a set of network enhancements.

A public involvement program was developed at the onset of the Options Feasibility study phase to ensure continuous stakeholder participation and the opportunity for public input in developing potential solutions and determining study outcomes. A broad and extensive set of public involvement strategies was formalized in a Public Involvement Plan. The RTA put in place an external study committee structure to actively engage the participation of impacted governments, planning agencies and community stakeholders in the planning process.

The System Analysis will be the final study phase and it is expected to begin in mid 2009. In this last phase of the program, the proposed major capital investments within the preferred system will be further detailed, analyzed, and prioritized. The Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement program will be continued through the conclusion of the System Analysis.

**Public Involvement Program Summary Report**

The purpose of this *Public Involvement Program Summary Report* is to describe and assess the specific public involvement strategies employed during the Options Feasibility Study phase. The RTA will use the conclusions of this report to strengthen the Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement program for the System Analysis study.

Section 2 describes how each public involvement strategy contained in the Cook DuPage Corridor Public Involvement Plan was implemented to achieve the four Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement goals presented on page 1 of this report. In section 3, the effectiveness of the strategies is assessed. Finally, section 4 presents conclusions for the potential improvement of the Public Involvement Program for the system analysis study.

Public involvement program activities and public input received has been fully documented and is available for public inspection at the RTA, upon request. Information about the study process and all decisions made during the Options Feasibility study phase is presented in the *Planning Process and Technical Documentation Summary*, available from the RTA under separate cover.
Section 2
Public Involvement

The Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study was carried out in an open and collaborative process that extensively involved the public, as well as elected officials; local, state, and federal agencies; operators of the existing transportation systems; and civic, business and social organizations. The varied perspectives, expertise and insights of these many stakeholders ensured informed decisions regarding alternative transportation scenarios and the establishment of a broadly supported program of potential public investment for further consideration in the final, system analysis phase of study.

The public input and communications program for the Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study produced and executed a Public Involvement and Communications Plan with an extensive and diverse set of public involvement strategies. The Public Involvement Plan was developed to ensure continuous public input and meaningful public education/outreach materials throughout the development and evaluation of major new transportation improvement alternatives for the Cook DuPage Corridor. The plan included:

1) Clearly defined purpose and objectives for initiating public dialogue on mobility issues;
2) Identification of affected public and other stakeholder groups;
3) Development of techniques for engaging and educating the public in the transportation planning process; and
4) Measurable actions that demonstrate public input was seriously considered.

The Public Involvement Plan served as a framework for managing public outreach and communication activities during the Options Feasibility study. The Plan was frequently referenced during the course of the study to help monitor the effectiveness of the public input and communications program.

The focus of the Public Involvement Plan during the Options Feasibility Phase was to engage communities and agency stakeholders within the Cook DuPage Corridor study area to keep them apprised of the planning activities, schedule and progress and to ensure their issues and concerns were fully addressed by the RTA and its planning partners. The heart of the Plan was a diverse set of techniques for effective communications, assertive outreach, and education to ensure that agency and public participation in the study was broad and inclusive.
**Public Involvement Goals and Strategies**
The Public Involvement Plan presents nineteen traditional and innovative strategies to inform, invite and involve the public in early, ongoing and meaningful dialogue about transportation and quality of life issues facing the Cook DuPage Corridor. Each specific public involvement strategy was intended to achieve at least one of four overall goals of the public involvement program. The four goals and the corresponding public involvement strategies are presented below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>PIP Strategy Number (for cross-reference)</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Public Awareness and Education** | • Public Involvement and Communications Plan  
• Branding  
• Website  
• Cook DuPage Corridor Committees  
• Special Meetings and Workshops  
• Newsletters  
• Public Information and Input Materials  
• Media Relations Program  
• Speaker’s Bureau for Special Presentations  
• Regional Public Involvement Coordination  
• Public Outreach and Involvement Report | 1  
NA  
2  
4  
8  
3  
13  
15  
12  
17  
19 |
| **Public Input and Community Dialog** | • Options Phase Kickoff  
• Cook DuPage Corridor Committees  
• Special Meetings and Workshops  
• Public Information and Input Materials  
• Website  
• Public Involvement and Communications Plan  
• Effectiveness Monitoring  
• Public Outreach and Involvement Report | 6  
4  
8  
13  
2  
1  
18  
19 |
| **Public and Stakeholder Outreach** | • Cook DuPage Corridor Committees  
• Mailing List  
• Public Announcements and Notices  
• Media Relations Program  
• Media Kits  
• Website  
• Special Meetings and Workshops  
• Speaker’s Bureau for Special Presentations | 4  
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12 |
<table>
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<th>Goal</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Justice</strong></td>
<td>• Environmental Justice Outreach</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Cook DuPage Corridor Committees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Special Meetings and Workshops</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Effectiveness Monitoring</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The remainder of this section recounts how the RTA implemented each of the above strategies to achieve the four public involvement goals during the Options Feasibility Study. The implementation of these strategies is presented in the context of the four corresponding public involvement goals to facilitate the assessment of effectiveness in section 3. It is important to note, however, that several of the strategies are addressed under more than one goal. In these cases, a “see also” page reference is provided so that the reader may attain a more comprehensive picture of a specific strategy. Also, the following three strategies that were not used during the Options Feasibility Study, but were included in the Public Involvement Plan, are addressed at the end of section 2: Scoping Meetings, Public Hearings, and Interviews.

**Goal 1 – Public Awareness and Education:**
“RTA and its planning partners will seek to raise public awareness and understanding of the Cook DuPage Corridor Study, its benefits and impacts.”

**Public Involvement and Communications Plan**
See also Goal 2, p.22

The *Cook DuPage Corridor Public Involvement Plan* (PIP) was one of the first items developed in the Options Feasibility study process. The plan defined a wide range of public involvement strategies to be employed by the RTA during the Options Feasibility Study and the System Analysis study of the Cook DuPage Corridor. The intention of the *Public Involvement Plan* was to facilitate public awareness of the Cook DuPage Corridor study and the RTA’s public involvement goals for the study. The plan presents four primary public involvement goals; lists all identified stakeholders; presents a strategic framework for identifying appropriate techniques based on each stakeholder’s anticipated, desired level of involvement; describes nineteen selected public involvement techniques; and presents an implementation schedule.
**Branding**

To facilitate public awareness of materials and public input opportunities, the RTA engaged a communications/public relations consultant team to develop a unique identity for the Cook DuPage Corridor study. This unique identity, or “branding”, of the Cook DuPage Corridor study was conveyed through a project logo, a web site and a set of template collateral materials that would help stakeholders readily identify study information associated with the Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study.

The Cook DuPage Corridor logo is comprised of three concentric circles. The two blue, half circles suggest the initials “C” and “D” of Cook and DuPage counties and the camaraderie between the two portions of the corridor. The two gold circles reflect the geographic significance of the Cook DuPage Corridor: the largest, outside circle reflects the corridor’s location as completely surrounded by other areas of the Chicago metropolitan region. The smallest, inside circle reflects the fact that the geographic and population centroids of the Chicago metropolitan region are found within the Cook DuPage Corridor. The alternating rings of the logo also subtly suggest a target, or focal point, of this study being led by a regional entity.

The Cook DuPage Corridor logo was featured on all official correspondence from study committee chairs, as well as draft and preliminary study materials for committee and public review. Both the Cook DuPage Corridor logo and the RTA logo were included on final report publication; the addition of the RTA logo on Cook DuPage Corridor final reports helped ensure public awareness of the permanent or “official” entity responsible for the study.

Custom templates were designed for study collateral material, including: study reports, information folders, press releases, newsletters and PowerPoint presentations. The images incorporated in these materials were selected to portray multimodal, access, mobility and connectivity. When combined, all of the graphical elements form a cohesive visual identity.

**Web Site**

See also Goal 2, p.22 and Goal 3, p.26

A dedicated project web site (cook-dupagecorridor.com) was created to provide convenient, round-the-clock access to project information for the Cook DuPage Corridor Study. The website was linked to the main RTA web site (rtachicago.com) and enabled the general public, government agencies, businesses and other stakeholders to receive a wide range of background and technical information. The website was promoted to the public and the media in correspondences and public information materials.

A site index and brief description of each content area is listed below.

- **Home Page** - The Home page was designed as a Flash animation page with subtle sound effects and prominently displayed the Cook DuPage Corridor logo. A left panel navigation bar with drop down menus and a bottom panel navigation bar provided multiple paths to quickly access desired content.

- **Corridor Overview** - The Corridor Overview page provided a high level description of the Cook DuPage Corridor. It presented the geographic study area
boundaries; population, employment and travel-related facts; major employment
centers in and around the Cook DuPage Corridor; and communities impacted by
the study. This page also described the RTA’s purpose for undertaking the study;
funding agencies; partnering agencies; and a study schedule.

**Problem Statement** - This page presented the formally approved Problem
Statement, as adopted by Corridor Technical and Policy Committees in January
2006 at the kick off meeting for the Options Feasibility study.

**Purpose and Need** - This page summarized the three parts of, and provided a
link to, the full study document, “Preliminary Statement of Purpose and Need for
Corridor Mobility Improvements.”

**Getting Involved** - This page originally included a description of the overall
Public Involvement Program and activities, how to join the mailing list and ways
to participate in the Cook DuPage Corridor Study. Site visitors were also able to
complete an online form to submit a question or comment. The online forms
generated an email that was sent directly to the RTA project manager. The
content was updated extensively before and after public comment periods to
include information about public meetings, provide downloadable documents for
public review and comment, to offer background information and to provide
information on the different ways to comment. The RTA also updated this page
immediately following public comment periods with verbatim comments received
from comment forms, emails and letters.

**Committees** - This page described the roles and responsibilities of the three
Cook DuPage Corridor study committees and the Corridor Planning Standards
working group; presented membership rosters, meeting schedules, recent actions
and activities; provided downloadable full meeting packets one week in advance
of all committee meetings and an archive of all approved meeting summaries for
each committee.

**Publications** - This page provided the final, published version of Cook DuPage
Corridor documents in PDF format including: *Travel Market Analysis: Executive
Summary*, *Public Involvement Plan*, *Connections* newsletters, and other reports.

**Newsroom** - The Newsroom page offered RTA press releases and contact
information for media inquiries and/or interview requests.

**Resources** - The Resources page provided links to related local, regional, state,
and federal governments and public transportation agencies.

**Contact Us** - This page provided contact names and e-mail addresses for key
project and communications staff of the RTA, RTA postal address, main phone
number and agency website.

**Travel Market Analysis, Options Feasibility study and System Analysis** -
Three buttons on the right hand panel of the Home Page provided direct access
to a single, bookmarked web page that provided a brief overview of the purpose,
technical analyses and anticipated decisions to be made during each of the three
phases of study.
The website was designed and initially maintained by external consultants; however, the responsibility for website maintenance was assumed by the RTA in February 2007 to address issues related to timing, flexibility and cost. The electronic comment form capability was lost in this transition and was replaced by a direct e-mail link to the RTA project manager for comments and questions.

**Cook DuPage Corridor Committees**

*See also Goal 2, p.18 and Goal 3, p.23 and Goal 4, p.27*

The RTA established an external committee structure to guide the Cook DuPage Corridor Study: Policy Committee, Technical Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee and Planning Standards Working Group. The active engagement of approximately fifty committee members ensured a high level of awareness of the Cook DuPage Corridor study among elected officials in the corridor, transportation and planning professionals at all levels of government, and a broad range of community and civic organizations.

The composition of the Policy, Technical and Citizen Advisory Committee, and Planning Standards Working Group is described below. Committee roles are further described on page 18, in conjunction with Goal 2: Public Input and Community Dialogue.

**Policy Committee**

The Policy Committee served as the executive group for the study and it was comprised of elected officials from municipal and county governments in the Cook DuPage Corridor, including the city of Chicago. Due to the number of political jurisdictions and districts impacting the corridor, membership on the committee was representative; its composition was designed to ensure equitable representation between the Cook and DuPage portions of the corridor, as well as to encompass both county and municipal officials. Specifically, the committee was comprised of:

- Two (2) Cook County Commissioners
- Two (2) DuPage County Board Members
- Three (3) Mayors/Presidents appointed by West Central Municipal Conference
- Three (3) Mayors/Presidents appointed by DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference
- One (1) representative from City of Chicago, Office of the Mayor

**Technical Committee**

The Technical Committee provided continuous and regular guidance for the Cook DuPage Corridor study, and provided high level technical recommendations to the Policy Committee on decision-making matters. The composition of the Technical Committee facilitated on-going dialogue and constructive collaboration among local, regional, state and federal entities; and encompassed operational, planning and governance perspectives. The twenty-four members of the Technical Committee were as follows:

- Three (3) municipal representatives appointed by Central Council of Mayors (COM), including the Central COM Planning Liaison
- Three (3) municipal representatives appointed by DuPage Council of Mayors, including the DuPage COM Planning Liaison
• Three (3) municipal representative appointed by North Central Council of Mayors, including the North Central COM Planning Liaison
• One (1) city of Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communication; One (1) city of Chicago Dept. of Transportation (CDOT)
• One (1) Cook County
• One (1) DuPage County
• Two (2) Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) (Note: initially, 1 Chicago Area Transportation Study and 1 Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission)
• One (1) Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)
• One (1) Metra
• One (1) Pace
• One (1) Illinois Dept. of Transportation (IDOT), Div. of Highways–District 1
• One (1) IDOT, Division of Intermodal and Public Transportation
• One (1) IDOT, Office of Planning and Programming
• One (1) Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA)
• One (1) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
• One (1) Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Citizen Advisory Committee
Established in March 2006, the Citizen Advisory Committee helped to promote public awareness and participation, provide input from a non-technical perspective, and assist in the dissemination of public materials when possible. Invitations to participate on the Citizen Advisory Committee were extended to leaders of more than 80 civic organizations, chambers of commerce, visitors’ bureaus, social/human service organizations and professional organizations that were identified early in the study process by the RTA as potential stakeholders. A total of 17 organizations agreed to serve on the committee:

• American Institute of Architects
• Center for Neighborhood Technology
• Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
• Citizens for Appropriate Transportation
• The Civic Federation
• Downers Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry
• DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau
• Easter Seals DuPage
• Glendale Heights Chamber of Commerce
• IL Society of Professional Engineers, Chicago Chapter
• Lisle Convention and Visitors Bureau
• Metropolitan Planning Council
• Oak Park Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
• Ray Graham Association
• Urban Land Institute, Chicago District Council
• Village of Downers Grove, Tourism & Events
• Westside Health Authority

Planning Standards Working Group
One working group was established on a task-specific basis: the Planning Standards Working Group. Participation on the working group was open to all corridor communities. Ultimately, the working group was comprised of the nine local government representatives serving on the Technical Committee, a representative from Downers Grove, and a representative from DuPage County
(although not the same representative as that on the Technical Committee). One representative of CMAP and one from the Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR) frequently participated in the working group meetings, while not formal members of the Working Group.

**Special Meetings and Workshops**

*See also Goal 2, p.20 and Goal 3, p 26 and Goal 4, p.27*

The RTA held four sets of special meetings during the Options Feasibility phase of study:

1) Public Meetings (June 2006)
2) Public Meetings (March 2008).
3) Special Topic Sessions (August 2006)
4) Get SET Workshop (September 2006)

The Public Meetings listed as 1 and 2 above were an important strategy to help bring awareness to the Cook DuPage Corridor Study, its benefits and impacts. These meetings are further described in the paragraphs that immediately follow. In addition, all four sets of the special meetings listed above were implemented to advance Goal 2: Public Input and Community Dialogue, and are addressed with the corresponding discussion of Goal 2 strategy implementation, beginning on page 20.

**First Round of Public Meetings (June 2006)**

Three public meetings were held in June 2006 to coincide with the first 30-day public comment period of the Options Feasibility study. These meetings were conducted in the evening in Wheaton, Cicero and Downers Grove on June 27, 28 and 29 respectively. Over sixty people attended the public meetings.

This first round of public meetings had two primary objectives: 1) to educate the public about the Cook DuPage Corridor Study; 2) to obtain input on specific study matters and materials; and 3) to inform the public of the 30-day opportunity for review and comment. During the first round of public meetings, participants were shown a PowerPoint presentation describing the Cook DuPage Corridor study and identified mobility issues. The study steps, schedule and ways to participate were also presented. An overview of the specific materials for which public input was requested was also provided, followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion. Meeting participants were informed of the dates/locations of future public meetings and asked to help get the word out. Participants were also provided with the first issue of the project newsletter, *Connection* and invited to join the mailing list.

**Second Round of Public Meetings (March 2008)**

Five public meetings were held in March 2008, in conjunction with the second 30 day public comment period for the Options Feasibility study phase. The purposes of the March 2008 public meetings were: 1) to educate the public about the Cook DuPage Corridor Study; 2) to inform the public about the Policy Committee’s preliminary system recommendations and preliminary supporting recommendations; 3) to assist the public’s understanding of the materials, decisions and process through an open question and answer session; and 4) to inform the public of the 30-day opportunity to provide comment.

The RTA hosted the public meetings at various locations in and around the corridor to obtain public input during the March 2008 public comment period. The first meeting was conducted at the RTA’s main office in downtown Chicago at midday on
March 10. Meetings also were conducted in Cicero, Oak Park, Lombard and Addison on the evenings of March 11, 12, 13 and 18, respectively. Altogether, approximately 150 people attended the five public meetings.

**Newsletters**
The RTA developed a project newsletter to help raise public awareness and understanding of the Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study. The main purpose of the newsletter, *Connection*, was to provide accurate, timely and relevant information on the Cook DuPage Corridor study. The RTA distributed the newsletter in hard copy to all parties on the corridor and media mailing lists, and e-mailed it to Corridor Committee members for their further distribution. The newsletters were also made available at public meetings and in electronic form from the project website.

Two issues of the newsletter were published during the Options Feasibility phase of the study: Issue #1 (June 2006) and Issue #2 (April 2008). The newsletters explained mobility issues impacting the corridor; described the Cook DuPage Corridor study process, study milestones and pending decisions; introduced key leaders accountable for the study; and communicated how to participate and how to obtain further information.

**Public Information and Input Materials**
See also Goal 2, p.21 and Goal 4, p. 28
In addition to the newsletters described above, the RTA developed a number of public information materials to increase on-going public awareness and understanding of the Cook DuPage Corridor study planning process and results.

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** - were developed to provide information about the Cook DuPage Corridor study for first-time participants.

- **Study timeline** - a visual time line was developed by the RTA to: 1) communicate the order of the Options Feasibility study phase in the three phase study process, and 2) the schedule of activities and key milestones within the Options Feasibility study.

- **Glossary of Acronyms and Terms** - The RTA and Citizen Advisory Committee developed an extensive glossary to help explain transportation and study-related jargon to non-technical parties.

- **A Purpose and Need Fact Sheet** - this piece was developed by the communications consultant team to help explain the purpose of the document in the context of the Cook DuPage Corridor Study.

- **Travel Market Analysis Key Findings** - this was developed at the end of the Travel Market Analysis study phase and widely distributed in the Options Feasibility study for context.

- **Cook DuPage Corridor Study Overview** - this one page overview sheet was developed by the consultant team for inclusion in media packets and for distribution at public events.

- **Problem Statement** - the formally approved problem statement was reformatted for public information and posterboard display
**Study Area Map** – was created for use by technical team members and the RTA and included the following: 1) municipal boundaries; 2) county boundaries; 3) Cook-DuPage Corridor boundaries; 4) interstate and state highways; 5) Metra commuter rail and CTA rapid transit network; 6) major points of interest such as O’Hare and Midway airports; and 7) names of municipalities over 30,000 population in the 2000 census.

**Travel Markets & Major Employment Centers** – this piece was developed by the RTA as a conceptual depiction of the direction and proportional magnitude of the corridor’s nine major commute travel markets, and the location and relative size of the six major employment centers.

The public information materials described above were posted on the study web site and distributed at all public meetings.

Poster boards and visual representations were used extensively at the special public meetings to present key information and to make technical concepts more understandable to the general public. PowerPoint presentations were also offered to help educate and inform the public. Members of the Citizen Advisory Committee previewed and improved the RTA’s presentations and public materials in advance of the general public to help ensure suitability of content and presentation.

**Media Relations Program**
*See also Goal 3, p.24 and Goal 4, p.28*

The RTA also relied on mass media and communications outlets to bring awareness of the Cook DuPage Corridor study to the general public. The RTA’s media strategies included the following:

- Maintenance of a targeted media list of print and broadcast media in the Chicagoland area.
- Personal outreach to media representatives using telephone, email and fax communication to transmit the key messages, study progress and recommendations.
- Availability of study spokespersons with detailed knowledge of the agency and activities for in-person, telephone, print, broadcast and public interviews.
- Issuance of pre- and post-meeting press releases to raise awareness of study milestones, agency and committee decisions, and public events.
- Distribution of comprehensive press kits to provide additional background and reference materials for potential editorial coverage. The press kits contained various informational papers including fact sheets, press releases, newsletters, and study overview.
- Provision of a special media briefing on June 12, 2006, with journalists from the three newspapers with the largest circulation in the region, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *Daily Herald*. 
**Key Messages**

A core strategy of the communications program was the development of key messages about the Cook DuPage Corridor Study preceding the implementation of major study milestones such as public comment periods and public information meetings. The key and supporting messages were central to all communications by spokespeople involved with the study.

For the first round of public meetings (June 2006) the messages were:

**Primary Message**

- The Cook-DuPage Corridor Study is addressing the extreme transportation problems caused by increasing population and job opportunities in west suburban Chicago.

**Secondary Messages**

- Public participation is imperative to the success of the Cook-DuPage Corridor Study planning process in order to create transportation solutions that will be embraced and supported by the communities in the study area.

- The Cook-DuPage Corridor study will equip decision makers with complete knowledge of available transportation options so well-informed and broadly supported transportation decisions can be made.

- The Cook-DuPage Corridor Study end results will improve travel options for residents, commuters and visitors now and in the future.

Prior to the final round of public meetings (March 2008), the RTA worked with the members of the Citizen Advisory Committee to update the key messages as follows:

**Primary Message**

- The Cook DuPage Corridor Study has developed broad consensus among elected and agency officials on a set of effective solutions that best meet the most pressing mobility needs in the west suburbs that have arisen from high growth in job opportunities and population.

**Secondary Messages**

- The Corridor is home to over 1.1 million residents, houses more than 750,000 jobs and accounts for over 1.5 million daily work trips in the area. Employment is expected to increase by 20 percent over the next 25 years, increasing congestion on the roadways within the Corridor for both intersuburban and reverse commuters.

- Public participation is critical in finding the best solutions to address the Corridor’s mobility needs. The Cook DuPage Corridor study is following a Public Involvement Plan with a list of goals for public outreach to ensure that the public has a voice in the decisions that will affect their travel patterns and how public dollars are spent for those needs.
The Cook DuPage Corridor study is undertaking a new and innovative approach to planning transportation improvements. The process involves an integrated approach that considers all travel modes and how they can better serve a particular market. In this case, both intersuburban and reverse commuters. Three key phases are incorporated within this planning approach: Travel Market Analysis, Options Feasibility and System Analysis.

- **Travel Market Analysis** – The first phase assesses the nature, magnitude and need for the corridor mobility improvements.
- **Options Feasibility** – This creative phase develops and evaluates various combinations of potential transit and highway options to determine which will best meet the Corridor’s mobility needs and goals. The best option(s) will proceed to the third and final stage.
- **System Analysis** – This stage is the most intensive, as computer modeling and very detailed analysis will assist in understanding the regional and local impacts of the chosen option.

The Cook DuPage Corridor study is equipping decision makers with the knowledge to make well-informed and broadly supported transportation decisions through its three committees - Policy, Technical and Citizen Advisory – created to provide strong and balanced leadership, technical expertise and insight into the diverse perspectives represented within the Corridor.

The Cook DuPage Corridor study will be important input to the RTA’s Strategic Plan for the short- and long-term transportation needs of the region.

**Speaker’s Bureau for Special Presentations**

*See also Goal 3, p.27*

Corridor Planning Studies staff offered presentations to parties with special or localized interest, at the convenience of the requester. The content of each special presentation provided was customized to address any area(s) of interest specified by the requesting group, and also included general information, such as study progress, results to-date and upcoming opportunities for input. Special presentations were provided at the request of the following parties:

1) Oak Park I-290 Citizen Committee (Oak Park, January 24, 2007)
2) Forest Park village manager and staff (Forest Park, July 24, 2007)
3) DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference Transportation Policy Committee (Oak Brook, February 26, 2008)
4) Greater Oak Brook Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee (Oak Brook, March 19, 2008)
5) Oak Brook Board of Trustees Committee-of-the-Whole (Oak Brook, March 24, 2008)
6) John Noel Public Transit Discovery Conference VIII (unincorp Addison, DuPage County, October 10, 2008)

While a formal speaker’s bureau was not established, RTA corridor planning staff also organized, facilitated and prepared committee leaders and the RTA Communications Department to provide study information to citizens and the media at key study milestones. As the study progressed, the Cook DuPage Corridor Committee chairs and vice chairs became very active speakers. RTA staff encouraged and assisted committee leaders communicate about the study in print, radio and television interviews and panel discussions. Four members of the Policy Committee, including the committee chair and vice-chair, discussed the Cook DuPage Corridor study and preliminary recommendations for Comcast Network’s Political Update program. The vice chair of the Technical Committee also discussed preliminary recommendations in an extended interview with 90.9 FM WDCB Public Radio.

Regional Public Involvement Coordination
On-going coordination of public involvement programs was accomplished through the members of the Technical Committee to avoid scheduling conflicts and confusing the public with too many meetings on different studies at one time. The RTA apprised Technical Committee members of all potential public meeting dates. Committee members assisted the coordination of public involvement events by identifying potential conflicts with other scheduled public participation activities.

The Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study was one of at least five major transportation studies underway in and around the Cook DuPage Corridor during 2006-2008. A number of ongoing studies conducted public meetings in spring and summer 2006 as indicated below, but with sufficient separation of time and geography to avoid conflict:

- May 2006; CTA’s Circle Line AA
- June 2006; RTA’s Cook DuPage Corridor, Metra’s UP-W upgrade AA
- July 2006; Metra’s STAR Line AA
- September 2006; CTA’s Circle Line AA

Other studies monitored for potential conflicts in public involvement schedules included: Metra’s federal Alternatives Analyses for the Union Pacific West Line upgrade, and Suburban Transit Access Route (STAR Line); CTA’s federal Alternatives Analysis for the Circle Line; and IDOT’s Environmental Impact Statement for the Elgin-O’Hare West Bypass.

Public Outreach and Involvement Report
See also Goal 2, p.23
This Public Involvement Program Summary Report describes how the planned public involvement strategies contained in the Public Involvement Plan were executed during the course of the Options Feasibility study. Hard copies of all public involvement and communications program materials are available for further inspection at the RTA.
Goal 2 – Public Input and Community Dialogue
“The RTA will provide the public with early, ongoing, and meaningful opportunities for involvement in the Cook DuPage Corridor Study process.”

Options Phase Kickoff
The official public kickoff of the Options Feasibility Study was held as a joint meeting of the Cook DuPage Corridor Policy and Technical Committee at the RTA main office in downtown Chicago on January 26, 2006. At this meeting, the RTA Executive Director formally introduced the study purpose, schedule approach, goals, and committee structure for the Cook DuPage Corridor study. The Policy Committee and the Technical Committee were formalized through the approval of respective membership rosters and the selection of committee officers (chair and vice chair).

As part of the Options Phase Kick-off, the two committees approved a Cook DuPage Corridor Problem Statement to serve as the foundation of the Options Feasibility study. The kick-off meeting was also an opportunity for members of the Policy Committee and Technical Committee and the public to review a list of and suggest additional local organizations and stakeholder groups for potential participation on the Citizen Advisory Committee (subsequently established in March 2006).

Cook DuPage Corridor Committees
See also Goal 1, p.10 and Goal 3, p.23 and Goal 4, p.27
The Cook DuPage Corridor Committees played a key role in providing meaningful and continuous opportunity for stakeholder and public involvement throughout the study process. All meetings were open to the public and were held and announced in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Meeting agendas and attachments were also posted on the project website approximately one week prior to each meeting in an effort for convenient electronic availability. Meeting materials were also distributed to committee members and to any interested individual in both hard copy and electronically, unless a request to receive only one of these formats was made.

Policy Committee
The Policy Committee was convened at major decision points in the Options Feasibility study. The Policy Committee was the most formal of the three committees, having voted to adopt Roberts Rules of Order as standard operating procedure and a ¾ majority rule for formal actions. The Policy Committee agendas included a standing item of public comment to ensure that stakeholders and interested persons had an opportunity for input. Five Policy Committee meetings were held at locations that alternated between the Cook and DuPage portions of the Corridor:
- January 26, 2006
- May 25, 2006
- December 5, 2006
- February 13, 2008
- May 14, 2008

Technical Committee
The meetings of the Technical Committee were regularly scheduled for the third Thursday of the month at 10:30 a.m. in the DuPage conference room at Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the metropolitan planning organization
for the Chicago region. Nineteen business meetings of the Technical Committee were held during the Options Feasibility Study:

- January 26, 2006
- February 23, 2006
- March 8, 2006
- March 23, 2006
- April 27, 2006
- May 4, 2006
- May 18, 2006
- July 27, 2006
- August 3, 2006
- August 24, 2006
- October 26, 2006
- November 16, 2006
- January 25, 2007
- March 29, 2007
- May 3, 2007
- May 24, 2007
- May 31, 2007
- April 24, 2008
- August 28, 2008

All business meetings of the Technical Committee were held as working meetings, with questions and comments from the audience integrated into the discussion of each agenda item.

**Citizen Advisory Committee**

Meetings of the Citizen Advisory Committee were scheduled to coincide with study milestones, with heightened activity generally occurring before and after public comment periods. The Citizen Advisory Committee met seven times during the course of the Options Feasibility Study:

- April 27, 2006
- May 11, 2006
- June 9, 2006
- September 25, 2006
- January 12, 2007
- June 5, 2007
- April 24, 2008

Individual committee members hosted several of the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings. Meeting locations and start times varied with each respective meeting. Most meetings of the Citizen Advisory Committee were run as roundtable discussions facilitated by the committee chair that resulted in consensus among those present. Formal action was generally not taken, due to a lack of quorum. Questions and comments from the public were entertained as part of each agenda item.

To facilitate committee involvement by the public, study materials and meeting packets were provided to any interested party, and posted on the project website on an on-going basis, approximately one week prior to each meeting. The RTA also posted current committee rosters on the website to assist the public with whom they could contact on a local or personal interest basis.
Special Meetings and Workshop
See also Goal 1, p. 12 and Goal 3, p. 26 and Goal 4, p. 27

The RTA held a total of thirteen special meetings within the following four groupings during the Options Feasibility phase of study:

1) Public Meetings (June 2006, three meetings)
2) Public Meetings (March 2008, five meetings)
3) Special Topic Sessions (August 2006, four meetings)
4) Get SET Workshop (September 2006, one meeting)

All four sets of these special meetings were implemented to advance Goal 2: Public Input and Community Dialogue and Goal 3: Public and Stakeholder Outreach, and are described in the paragraphs that immediately follow. The public meetings (listed as 1 and 2) were also implemented to achieve Goal 1: Public Awareness and Education and are further described on page 12.

First Round of Public Meetings (June 2006)
The RTA held a formal 30-day public comment period in June 2006 to allow the public the opportunity to review and comment on the following draft and preliminary study materials that would essentially serve as the foundation for the Options Feasibility Study:

- Draft goals and objectives for corridor mobility improvements
- Draft purpose and need for mobility improvements
- Evaluation framework
- Anticipated evaluation measures
- Preliminary public involvement plan
- General mobility concepts

Three public meetings were held during the public comment period as an opportunity to inform the public about the study materials, as well as to obtain feedback. The format for the public meetings was open, hands-on and interactive. Recognizing that some of the materials were unlikely to be of interest or comprehension to the majority of the public given their rather technical substance, meeting attendees were asked to stop at interactive display stations designed to gather public input on the goals and objectives for corridor mobility improvements, and conceptual transportation system options.

At Station 1 boards of the Cook DuPage Corridor study area, Problem Statement, and proposed Goals and Objectives for corridor mobility improvements were displayed. Members of the project team were available to answer questions and facilitate the exercise. Each participant was provided three blue dots and requested to place a dot next to the three goals that they believed were the most important.

At Station 2 a board describing the general attributes of each of five Conceptual Options was prominently displayed. Participants were asked to place a green dot next to the concept that appealed to them most and to place a red dot next to the concept that appealed to them least. Participants were also given a supply of post-it notes to write an explanation for their choices or provide additional comments.

Input from the meeting display boards, comment forms and written letters were compiled and reviewed by the three study committees. Feedback on the mobility
concepts helped shape the development of detailed options and comments on the goals and objectives, as well as several of the technical documents, led directly to their revision.

**Second Round of Public Meetings (March 2008)**

A second formal public comment period was offered in March 2008 to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the outcome of the technical evaluation process and the preliminary decisions of the Policy Committee. Five public meetings were held during this second public comment period of the Options Feasibility study. The primary purpose of these meetings was to help the public understand the preliminary results and the pending decisions.

The meetings during the March 2008 comment period were formatted as a classroom style presentation, followed by an open-ended question and answer session. In addition to the public meetings, the project website was enhanced to include an interactive graphic representation of the preliminary Policy Committee recommendation, background context and technical materials, and links for comments.

**Special Topic Session (August 2006)**

In addition to the public meetings described above, a set of special technical working sessions was held on August 7 and 8, 2006 at the RTA to discuss each of four topics: I-290 Corridor; Transportation Management and Operations (TM&O); DuPage J Route Tail and West Termiini (west/southwest segment); and Circulation/Distribution Systems. The purpose of these sessions was to convene agency and local experts with working and field knowledge to exchange professional insight, information and ideas. The goal of the sessions was to clarify particularly challenging or undefined aspects of the current working version of the detailed options.

**Get SET Workshop (September 2006)**

In September 2006, the RTA conducted the Get SET (Standards for Excellence in Transportation) Workshop to bring awareness of Corridor Planning Standards – local criteria to be used in developing and evaluating transportation system options for the Cook-DuPage Corridor – to community planners and economic development professionals. The half-day workshop was conducted in Oak Brook and involved a series of activities designed to inform attendees about the Cook DuPage Corridor study, collaboratively identify key issues and assets in corridor communities, outline guiding principles, and establish priorities. This workshop was professionally facilitated by Winter & Company, with assistance by Wilbur Smith Associates.

**Public Information and Input Materials**

*See also Goal 1, p.13 and Goal 4, p.28*

Public materials developed for the Options Feasibility study were designed to be informative, engaging, objective, and comprehensible to non-technical audiences in order to encourage dialogue and facilitate meaningful participation. The RTA made a concerted effort to: provide introductory context for complex technical materials; summarize findings and decisions; reduce or explain technical jargon; and carefully review and respond to public input throughout the course of the study.

The first public comment period included interactive display stations to engage participants on substantive topics. The display stations are described on page 20 of this summary. In addition, a public comment form developed for the first round of
formal public comment guided participants toward specific and timely topics, while also encouraging comment on any other topic.

During the second public comment period toward the end of the study, the RTA developed an informational overview of the recommended system and all of the projects that it contained. The overview included a graphic representation of the proposed system and projects that was digitized and posted on the project website. The RTA designed an interactive web interface so that the public could review the entire proposed system with system-level information, or click on to a specific project with “pop-up” project-level information. To facilitate specific and meaningful input for the further consideration of study decision-makers, the comment form requested comment on the system as a whole, as well as each project. The comment form was available at the public meetings as well as on the website.

The RTA also implemented a special survey for the early development of corridor planning standards. The purpose of this “About Your Town” survey was to obtain information from municipal elected officials about changes, major development actions, unique features/assets, top priorities and transportation in each of the Cook DuPage Corridor communities. The survey was mailed with a letter from the RTA to mayors and village presidents of the 52 corridor communities and over half of the communities completed and returned their survey. The results of the survey were incorporated into the work of the Planning Standards Working Group and discussed by the Get SET workshop participants.

Website
See also Goal 1, p.8 and Goal 3, p.26
The project website was a communications strategy to provide the public an ongoing opportunity for public input. The Getting Involved page and the Contact Us page provided a direct link for submitting comments or questions to the RTA project manager. Comments received from the website were immediately acknowledged and all questions were provided a personal response. The website also encouraged visitors to participate in upcoming public events and committee meetings, and provided detailed information on dates and locations.

Public Involvement and Communications Plan
See also Goal 1, p.7
The RTA developed a formal Public Involvement Plan to encourage meaningful participation and public dialogue during both the Options Feasibility and the System Analysis phases of the Cook DuPage Corridor Study. The draft version of the plan was initially developed by the RTA, with significant contribution by the Citizen Advisory Committee and Policy Committee. Public comment on the draft version was requested in June 2006. The Policy Committee formally approved the Public Involvement Plan in December 2006, along with final study goals and objectives and other “foundation” study materials.

Effectiveness Monitoring
See also Goal 4, p.28
The RTA and the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) shared the responsibility of monitoring the overall effectiveness of the Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement program. The Public Involvement Plan and the effectiveness of its implementation were regularly discussed at the CAC meetings.
Public Outreach and Involvement Report
See also Goal 1, p.17
The RTA prepared this Public Involvement Program Summary Report to review the public involvement and communication strategies as executed, and to identify potential improvements for strengthening and enhancing public involvement in the next (System Analysis) phase of study.

Goal 3 – Public and Stakeholder Outreach
“The RTA will maintain timely contact with the general public, government agencies, business owners, and other key stakeholders throughout the planning process.”

Cook DuPage Corridor Committees
See also Goal 1, p.10 and Goal 2, p.18 and Goal 4, p.27
The standing committees and working group established by the RTA provided continuous input and guidance throughout the study: Policy Committee, Technical Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee and Planning Standards Working Group. The committee structure, schedule and meeting substance ensured timely input and collaborative participation on the part of transportation planning and funding agencies, elected officials, business community and civic organizations in all aspects of the Options Feasibility study.

The committee structure/participants are described in conjunction with Goal 1: Public Awareness and Education on page 10 and their meeting schedules are described with Goal 2: Public Input and Community Dialogue on page 18.

Mailing List
This strategy involved the development of an extensive contact list/database of individuals, communities and counties, government agencies, businesses, faith, civic groups, special interest groups, professional organizations and other interested parties that may be impacted by the Cook DuPage Corridor Study.

An initial contact list/database was developed by the RTA, consisting of over 130 known stakeholders including: businesses; municipalities and counties; regional, state and federal agencies and transportation system operators, chambers of commerce; workforce boards; visitors bureaus; regional environmental, social service, and civic organizations; and transportation planning related professional organizations and associations.

The database was expanded through dedicated research undertaken in the spring of 2007 resulting in over 5,000 contacts, including:

- Elected Officials
- Public Schools
- Chambers of Commerce
- Major Employers
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Other Organizations
- Individuals/Citizens

The expanded public outreach database was found to be inconsistent across the corridor, particularly with respect to public schools, employers, and non-profits. To
avoid potential perceptions of bias on the part of the RTA, only categories/subcategories of contacts that seemed consistently “complete” across the corridor were drawn upon in sending personalized letters of invitation to the March 2008 public meetings. These categories included: elected officials, governments and agencies, chambers, visitors’ bureaus, and civic and professional organizations. The RTA issued over 250 personalized invitations to the March 2008 public meetings.

Additionally, a mailing list of “Interested Parties” was maintained for each of the Corridor committees. Meeting notices, agendas and discussion materials were provided to any interested individual at the same time as committee members. The RTA distributed the meeting information via e-mail, unless otherwise requested.

**Public Announcements and Notices**

*See also Goal 4, p.28*

The RTA used a variety of techniques to notify the public of upcoming meetings and opportunities for input. These included: 1) on-site postings of all scheduled meetings with 48 hour advance notice; 2) legal notices and display advertisements of special public meetings published in local general circulation newspapers: *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun Times*, *Chicago Defender* and *Hoy*; 3) a meeting announcement in the project newsletter (*Connection*); 4) web site postings of meeting information, public meeting materials, and methods to submit input; and 5) public meeting notice flyers and study backgrounders mailed with an outreach letter to local elected officials, social service and civic organizations, and chambers and visitors bureaus. The RTA’s March 2008 *InTransit* newsletter featured an article about the proposed transportation system and the public comment opportunity. The RTA also relied on the Citizen Advisory Committee and council of government representatives to the Technical Committee to notify colleagues and associates of study progress and public input opportunities.

**Media Relations Program**

*See also Goal 1, p.14 and Goal 4, p.28*

The RTA conducted media outreach with many local and regional newspapers to help educate the public about the study, its findings, and to increase public awareness of public input opportunities. RTA staff members also participated in many print and broadcast media events in the days preceding and following public meetings. The media coverage is presented in the two tables that follow.

**Table 1. Media Coverage (June-July 2006)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Outlet</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Interviewer / Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Herald</td>
<td>6/13/06</td>
<td>&quot;What to do about I-88 jams&quot;</td>
<td>Joseph Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Ellyn News</td>
<td>6/15/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA to unveil transportation study&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Cressman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheaton Leader</td>
<td>6/15/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA to unveil transportation study&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Cressman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naperville Sun</td>
<td>6/22/06</td>
<td>Sun Calendar Event Listing</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDCB-FM</td>
<td>6/22/06</td>
<td>Interview with John DeLaurentis</td>
<td>Gary Zidek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naperville Sun</td>
<td>6/23/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA seeks public input about traffic&quot;</td>
<td>Ann Hanson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cicero Life</td>
<td>6/25/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA to unveil transportation study&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Cressman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>6/27/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA asking for ideas on DuPage-Cook travel&quot;</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBIG-AM</td>
<td>6/27/06</td>
<td>Interview with Bill Lenski</td>
<td>Rose Lewis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naperville Sun</td>
<td>6/30/06</td>
<td>&quot;Time is of the essence&quot;</td>
<td>Ann Hanson</td>
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</table>
### Table 2. Media Coverage (February - May 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Outlet</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Interviewer / Author</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest Park Review</td>
<td>7/4/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA outlines five transportation solutions&quot;</td>
<td>Bill Dwyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>7/4/06</td>
<td>&quot;RTA outlines five transportation solutions&quot;</td>
<td>Bill Dwyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naperville Sun</td>
<td>7/6/06</td>
<td>&quot;Residents offer input on transportation study&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Cressman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheaton Leader</td>
<td>7/6/06</td>
<td>&quot;Residents offer input on transportation study&quot;</td>
<td>Joe Cressman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medill News Service</td>
<td>2/21/08</td>
<td>&quot;RTA studies new transit routes to and in DuPage&quot;</td>
<td>Christina Zdanowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Herald</td>
<td>2/22/08</td>
<td>&quot;RTA plan would extend Blue Line to Yorktown&quot;</td>
<td>Marni Pyke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>2/22/08</td>
<td>&quot;Cook-DuPage Corridor project would extend Blue Line&quot;</td>
<td>Richard Wronski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times</td>
<td>2/22/08</td>
<td>&quot;RTA outlines suburban wish list&quot;</td>
<td>Mary Wisniewski</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBBM Newsradio 780</td>
<td>2/22/08</td>
<td>&quot;Blue line to wind through more suburbs&quot;</td>
<td>Bob Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBEZ FM</td>
<td>2/22/08</td>
<td>&quot;Blue line extension gathers steam&quot;</td>
<td>Shawn Allee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>2/26/08</td>
<td>&quot;Blue line extension gathers steam&quot;</td>
<td>Bill Dwyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>2/27/08</td>
<td>&quot;Blue skies and the Blue Line&quot;</td>
<td>Our Views/Editorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Leaves</td>
<td>3/5/08</td>
<td>&quot;RTA comes to town for reaction on Blue Line plan&quot;</td>
<td>Bill Dwyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Leaves</td>
<td>3/5/08</td>
<td>&quot;Meeting planned on Eisenhower options&quot;</td>
<td>Chris Lafortune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>3/5/08</td>
<td>&quot;More trains, not more lanes&quot;</td>
<td>Our Views/Editorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>3/5/08</td>
<td>&quot;Say 'No' to widening Ike&quot;</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor, Kuner/Brubaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naperville Sun</td>
<td>3/9/08</td>
<td>&quot;RTA to host meetings on commuter options&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WBEZ FM</td>
<td>3/10/08</td>
<td>&quot;Blue line extension gets RTA hearing&quot;</td>
<td>Shawn Allee</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBEX public radio</td>
<td>3/11/08</td>
<td>&quot;Western suburbs get glimpse of Blue Line plan&quot;</td>
<td>Shawn Allee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Journal</td>
<td>3/11/08</td>
<td>&quot;Extending the Blue Line is Oak Park's best option&quot;</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor, Kuner/Brubaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times</td>
<td>3/13/08</td>
<td>&quot;Meeting planned on Eisenhower options&quot;</td>
<td>Chris Lafortune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDCB Public Radio</td>
<td>3/13/08</td>
<td>Interview with Tam Kutzmark [Daylight Edition 5:00 AM / Evening Edition 6:00 PM]</td>
<td>Gary Zeidig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Herald</td>
<td>3/18/08</td>
<td>&quot;Final public meeting on Cook-DuPage Corridor tonight&quot;</td>
<td>Marni Pyke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The preliminary recommendations and the public input events received extensive media coverage in print and radio. Much of the media focus was on the Blue Line extension. Media interest was strongest among the *Daily Herald*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Wednesday Journal* (Oak Park / River Forest) and WBEZ-FM Chicago Public Radio.

**Media Kits**
Media kits were prepared for both rounds of public meetings, in June 2006 and March 2008. The media kits were distributed to the press in advance of the public comment periods and were available to reporters at the public meetings. The content of the media kits included press releases, fact sheets, study overviews, corridor maps, frequently asked questions, newsletters, PowerPoint slides and other key study, documents presented at the public meetings.

**Website**
*See also Goal 1, p.8 and Goal 2, p.22*
The project website also served as an outreach strategy to engage the interest of the general public. The website provided electronic means for joining the project mailing list, submitting comments and obtaining further information about the study. The website informed website visitors of upcoming study milestones, public participation opportunities, and meeting dates and locations.

**Special Meetings and Workshop**
*See also Goal 1, p. 12 and Goal 2, p.20 and Goal 4, p. 27*
The RTA held a total of thirteen special meetings to engage the public and stakeholders at specific and timely points of the Options Feasibility phase of study:

- Public Meetings (June 2006, three meetings)
- Public Meetings (March 2008, five meetings)
- Special Topic Sessions (August 2006, four meetings)
- Get SET Workshop (September 2006, one meeting)

All four sets of these special meetings were implemented to also advance Goal 2: Public Input and Community Dialogue and are fully described beginning on page 19.
**Speaker’s Bureau for Special Presentations**
*See also Goal 1, p.16*
Corridor Planning Studies staff offered customized presentations on a request basis to local government bodies and organizations with specific or special interests related to the Cook DuPage Corridor study. The availability of special presentations was indicated on the project website, project newsletters and at public meetings.

**Goal 4 – Environmental Justice**
“The RTA will identify and involve traditionally underserved communities (those with high concentrations of minority and low-income, elderly, or disabled groups) in the transportation planning process.”

**Environmental Justice Outreach**
Environmental Justice populations are concentrated in several communities within the Cook DuPage Corridor. The RTA employed a number of strategies to engage Environmental Justice (EJ) communities in the Options Feasibility study:

- Special outreach to elected officials and community organizations representing disadvantaged communities.
- Conducting public meetings in or near communities with significant populations of low income and/or minority populations.
- Producing meeting notice flyers, select public meeting materials and public comment forms in Spanish.
- Publishing meeting notices in Spanish language newspapers.
- Enlisting members of the Technical Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee to assist the RTA with outreach to Environmental Justice communities through the organizations they represent.

For the June 2006 public meetings, the RTA assisted the office of State Senator Don Harmon (D-39) mobilize his constituents to a public meeting in Cicero. In addition, the RTA sought out and extended a personal invitation to the leaders of Latino’s United (now the Latino Policy Forum).

**Cook DuPage Corridor Committees**
*See also Goal 1, p.10 and Goal 2, p.18 and Goal 3, p.23*
The RTA paid close attention to identifying and including social, business and cultural organizations of environmental justice communities for potential participation on the Citizen Advisory Committee. Once the Citizen Advisory Committee was established, the committee further focused their attention on obtaining input from minority or economically disadvantaged communities through the announcement and location of the special public meetings. Technical Committee members representing communities with significant Latino, African-African and/or low-income populations attended several Citizen Advisory Committee meetings and provided assistance at special public meetings.

**Special Meetings and Workshops**
*See also Goal 1, p.12 and Goal 2, p.20 and Goal 3, p.26*
All RTA special meetings and workshops were accessible by transit. Special public meetings in particular were held in areas proximate to identified environmental justice populations impacted by the Cook DuPage Corridor:

- Addison (round 2 meetings: Village Hall)
- Chicago Loop (round 2 meetings: RTA headquarters)
• Cicero (round 1 meetings: Town Hall and round 2 meetings: community center);
• Oak Park (round 2 meetings: Village Hall); and
• Wheaton (round 1 meeting: County Government Center).

**Public Information and Input Materials**
*See also Goal 1, p.13 and Goal 2, p.21*
All public information and involvement materials were developed to be comprehensible to those unfamiliar with transportation issues and urban planning processes. Comment forms and input instructions were translated into Spanish for the first round of public meetings. The materials were not translated into Spanish for the second round of public meetings due to the apparent lack of cost-effectiveness. However, for the second round of public comment, additional public meetings were held in Latino communities and at locations perceived as potentially more conducive to participation.

**Public Announcements and Notices**
*See also Goal 3, p.24*
The RTA developed Spanish versions of the meeting flyers for public meetings and submitted public notices to La Raza, Chicago Defender and the Chicago Sun-Times.

**Media Relations Program**
*See also Goal 1, p.14 and Goal 3, p.24*
The media relations program included outreach to Latino newspapers Hoy and La Raza, as well as three general circulation newspapers and two locally focused newspapers covering the Cook DuPage Corridor Study area.

**Effectiveness Monitoring**
*See also Goal 2, p.22*
The RTA monitored and continuously attempted to improve its environmental justice outreach throughout the study process. Members of the Citizen Advisory Committee, Technical Committee and Policy Committee were also highly aware of and wished to achieve greater participation of disadvantaged and minority communities.

**Anticipated Public Input Strategies Not Employed**
The *Cook DuPage Corridor Public Involvement Plan* is intended to serve both the Options Feasibility study and the System Analysis study phases. Three public involvement strategies anticipated in the Plan were not employed during the Options Feasibility study phase and are described in the following paragraphs. The RTA anticipates that these strategies will be implemented during the System Analysis.

**Scoping Meetings**
Scoping meetings were not held for this early-concept, planning phase of study. However, the Options Feasibility kick off meeting (January 2006) and the June 2006 public comment period (and three related special public meetings) provided study information to study stakeholders and the general public, and also obtained early public input on evaluation criteria, mobility issues and conceptual solutions.

**Public Hearings**
The focus of public involvement activities during the Options Feasibility study phase was on developing public awareness of the Cook DuPage Corridor planning process.
and generating meaningful, informed dialogue. The RTA held a total of eight public meetings during two formal 30-day public comment periods. The public meetings were designed to provide information about the Cook DuPage Corridor Options Feasibility study and to generate interest, interaction and input. Public meeting participants were informed of various avenues for submitting written comments during the 30 day public comment period and provided means for making written comment (comment forms, etc.). While the RTA encouraged and accepted written comments at the meetings, no oral testimony was taken.

**Interviews**
The strategy of undertaking interviews to fill in gaps or to obtain additional information was included in the Public Involvement Plan. The RTA did not conduct interviews during the Options Feasibility study.
Section 3
Program Effectiveness

The focus of the public input and communications program during the Options Feasibility phase was to engage communities and agency stakeholders within the Cook DuPage Corridor study area; to keep them apprised of the planning activities, schedule and progress; and to ensure their issues and concerns were fully addressed by the RTA and its planning partners. The public input and communications program resulted in a high degree of collaboration and broad consensus in the study’s outcome.

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and the Cook DuPage Corridor Citizen Advisory committee monitored the effectiveness of the public input and communications program on an on-going basis during the Options Feasibility Study through the framework of the Cook DuPage Corridor Public Involvement Plan. The public involvement goals in the plan served as guiding principles for seeking input from planning partners and the general public during the Options Feasibility Phase, as well as responding to input received.

The contribution of the goals and specific strategies to the overall effectiveness of the program varied. Strategies employed for the public input and community dialog goal and the public and stakeholder outreach goal proved to be highly effective, generating active participation by over fifty governmental leaders and stakeholder organizations through Cook DuPage Corridor Committees. Strategies directed toward the environmental justice goal had a low level of effectiveness as evidenced by the low participation of members of environmental justice communities in the Options Feasibility planning process.

Upon conclusion of the Options Feasibility study, the RTA qualitatively evaluated the overall effectiveness of the public outreach and communication strategies in achieving the four public involvement goals of the Cook DuPage Corridor study. The results of this evaluation provide insight to the RTA and Cook DuPage Corridor study participants on how to sustain and improve program effectiveness in subsequent phases of study.

The table on the following pages presents the results of the RTA’s assessment of the contribution of the major public involvement techniques to the achievement of the Public Involvement Plan goals and objectives. Within each goal, the effectiveness of the strategies is collectively assigned a rating of High, Medium or Low.

Key outcomes are additionally presented to offer insight on the RTA’s assessment regarding level of effectiveness. Future considerations are listed to highlight opportunities for improvement in the follow-on study phase.
<table>
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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Outcomes:</th>
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| **Public Awareness and Education** | • Public Involvement and Communications Plan • Branding • Website • Corridor Committees • Special Meetings and Workshops • Newsletters • Public Information and Input Materials • Media Relations Program • Speaker’s Bureau • Regional Public Involvement Coordination • Public Outreach and Involvement Report | **Medium**    | • Extensive and proactive involvement of study committees resulted in a very high level of awareness and constructive participation among government/public body stakeholders. It also enabled local elected officials to serve as effective spokespersons on behalf the Cook DuPage corridor study.  
• The public information materials and media relations strategy enhanced public awareness and education of multi-modal transportation challenges and solutions.  
• Branding and templates brought familiarity and consistency to project materials. As a result, study information was readily identifiable to stakeholders and media.  
• The project website provided study information, committee materials, public input materials and public comments in a timely manner after website hosting and maintenance was brought in-house.  
• The media relations strategy resulted in significant coverage of key proposed projects, particularly in communities where controversy may exist. |
| Future Considerations:     | • Awareness strategies for the general public and communities that are not directly participating on the study committees should be expanded in follow-on studies.  
• The Citizen Advisory Committee was typically unable to achieve quorum due to schedule conflicts; alternative strategies to educate and engage these stakeholders may be more effective than participation in a formal committee.  
• Explicit focus in future study on economic vitality, quality of life and residential/commercial land use balance will likely increase awareness of Cook DuPage Corridor challenges by the public and impacted communities.  
• Archiving of information on the website would enable a continuous stream of new participants to educate themselves on the study and the planning process. |
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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
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</table>
| Public Input and Community Dialogue | • Options Phase Kickoff  
|                                  | • Corridor Committees                               | High          |
|                                  | • Special Meetings and Workshops                    |               |
|                                  | • Public Information and Input Materials             |               |
|                                  | • Website                                            |               |
|                                  | • Public Involvement and Communications Plan         |               |
|                                  | • Effectiveness Monitoring                          |               |
|                                  | • Public Outreach and Involvement Report             |               |

### Outcomes

- Effective and meaningful stakeholder participation was achieved through the representative committee structure. Committees proved to be a very good way to communicate varied perspectives and develop consensus.
- Small group discussions and interactive exercises during technical committee meetings enabled committee members to brainstorm, debate and explore alternative ideas; identify issues; solve problems; and generate consensus.
- The committees provided a strong opportunity to make sure public input was used in the technical planning work.
- Committee discussion and public input contributed greatly to the progressive development of goals and objectives, and systems and options.
- There was significant public dialog and public input generated in one community - Oak Park - where there was a high level of awareness of two projects. Minimal dialog and feedback was generated in other communities in the corridor.
- Structured public comments forms allowed the public to respond to questions about the proposed transportation system and recommended projects; and provided the ability to quickly and succinctly summarize, synthesize and utilize public comments.

### Future Considerations:

- Interactive input opportunities should continued to be used during public meetings to obtain public input.
- Traditional public meetings should be augmented with smaller focus groups targeted to members of specific travel markets, specific sets of users or other desired audience to consult with and gather insights on issues and concerns ranging from transportation needs and priorities to level of support for study recommendations to concerns about community and environmental impacts.
- Promote the project website more to the public as a source of information and forum of interactive communication.
- The envisioned Main Line system of major projects should enable meaningful and detailed dialogue/input with a wider audience and more communities.
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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public and Stakeholder Outreach</td>
<td>• Corridor Committees</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mailing List</td>
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<td>• Public Announcements and Notices</td>
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<td>• Media Relations Program</td>
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<td>• Media Kits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Special Meetings and Workshops</td>
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<td>• Speaker’s Bureau</td>
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Outcomes:
- The broad extent of stakeholder outreach and consultative planning process provided a strong foundation for achieving consensus.
- Stakeholder outreach bolstered by the committee structure was much more effective than outreach to the general public.
- Outreach was timelier, especially posting of agenda packets in advance of committee meetings, once the RTA took over hosting of the project website.
- Public meetings with interactive input opportunities and a formal presentation allowed people to participate on their own schedule and provide input/comments on their own time.
- The Citizen Advisory Committee and committee leaders provided a good resource to review committee and public involvement materials to make sure they were meaningful for peers/colleagues.
- Media coverage was good considering the study was in a very conceptual phase.
- Interest from radio outlets was surprisingly strong and was very positive.
- The expanded public outreach mailing list was not consistent or equitable across the corridor and was not used.

Future Considerations:
- Issue press releases in advance of public meetings to attract attendance.
- A formal speaker’s bureau could allow more proactive outreach including active solicitation of speaking opportunities.
- Editorial coverage in newspapers and radio should be relied upon more extensively for advance notice of meetings and to attract attendance.
- A more strategic mailing list could target specific purposes such as environmental justice outreach and individuals who have expressed direct interest by attending a meeting or submitting comments.
- The online comment form and join the mailing list form should be reposted to the Getting Involved page of the project website.
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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Justice</td>
<td>• Environmental Justice Outreach &lt;br&gt;• Corridor Committees &lt;br&gt;• Special Meetings and Workshops &lt;br&gt;• Public Information and Input Materials &lt;br&gt;• Public Announcements and Notices &lt;br&gt;• Media Relations Program &lt;br&gt;• Effectiveness Monitoring</td>
<td>Low</td>
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**Outcomes:**
- Participation from environmental justice communities remained significantly underrepresented.
- Traditional broad brush techniques of public meetings did not engage environmental justice populations.
- The African American population indicated a strong interest through Eyes on Austin which mobilized over a dozen residents to attend the June 2006 public meeting held in Cicero, and provided transportation to the meeting.
- Environmental justice outreach focused too narrowly on the Latino community, which proved to be ineffective as it was learned that transportation is not a high priority of area Latinos.
- State level representatives can be an effective conduit to EJ communities.

**Future Considerations:**
- Initial efforts to identify and involve environmental justice communities need to be expanded and broadened toward a much wider audience including African Americans, low income, disabled, etc.
- The Citizen Advisory Committee should be relied upon more to improve communication with their respective group membership/constituencies.
- A more strategic mailing list could target environmental justice communities and religious organizations.
- The metropolitan planning organization CMAP is a potential resource that could help plan and execute environmental justice outreach.
- Small focus group discussions should be used to engage environmental justice populations. Future efforts should consider how to develop a representative or balanced focus group, and what kinds of incentives, locations, etc are needed to obtain participation.
- The Cook DuPage Corridor Existing and Future Conditions report should be used to identify areas with high concentrations of environmental justice populations in order to target outreach and select future meeting locations.
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Section 4
Conclusion

Based on three years experience during the Options Feasibility Study, the Public Involvement Plan provides a strong foundation for an open and collaborate planning process that actively involved the public, as well as elected officials; local, state and federal agencies; and operators of the transportation system. The number of people involved ensured that stakeholder issues were considered in every step of the planning process. As a result, study participants were able to achieve consensus on a future transportation system to serve the corridor; a strong measure of success of the Public Involvement Plan. Feedback from participants indicates a high level of satisfaction with their contributions to and the responsiveness of the Options Feasibility study process.

Specific public involvement strategies and techniques detailed in the plan appear to be the right strategies to achieve the four key goals of the Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement program. The contribution of the goals and specific strategies to the overall effectiveness of the program varied. Strategies employed for the public input and community dialog goal and the public and stakeholder outreach goal proved to be highly effective, bolstered by the active participation of over fifty leaders in Cook DuPage Corridor Committees. This representative committee structure was critical to the high level of effectiveness of the public involvement program. Committees contributed to a very high level of awareness and constructive participation among stakeholders; and were a good means of communicating varied perspectives and achieving consensus. Committees also provided the strongest opportunity to ensure that public input was actually used in the technical planning work. Strategies directed toward the environmental justice goal had a low level of effectiveness as evidenced by scant participation of environmental justice communities in the planning process.

From what we have learned in the Options Feasibility study phase, some adjustments in execution of the strategies will improve the effectiveness of the public input and communications program. Outreach to, and engagement of, environmental justice populations should be broadened and expanded to include a wider audience including African Americans, low income households, and people with disabilities. For the next phase of study, it is suggested to further expand the list of organizations and publications for potential future outreach, focusing on religious and non-governmental organizations. Some of these organizations that are based in the city of Chicago are: Latino’s United, Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Westside Health Authority and Eyes on Austin. High priority should also be placed on identifying suitable organizations and publications to reach environmental justice populations in suburban communities. Small focus group discussions should also be used to engage environmental justice populations. Finally, the metropolitan planning organization (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning) is a potential resource that could be used to help plan and execute environmental justice outreach.

Alternative participation strategies to formal committee meetings could potentially increase the participation of social, community and business organizations. Small
group guided discussions should be used to present key information, share perspectives and concerns, and to obtain input. If a more structured formal approach is desired, a facilitated focus group could be used to observe and record discussion in detail. A speaker’s bureau could also allow more proactive outreach to these groups.

Strengthening the media relations program could significantly increase awareness of the general population about the Cook DuPage Corridor Study. A more consistent approach to special media briefings at major study milestones could better communicate key messages and help shape editorial coverage. A special media briefing was held in conjunction with the June 2006 public meetings, but no such briefing was held in March 2008 to coincide with the preliminary recommendations of the Policy Committee. The preliminary recommendations and the March 2008 public input events received extensive media coverage. However, much of the media coverage focused on one single proposed project, rather than the full range of proposed major capital projects, network enhancements, and the idea of projects working together as a system.

For the next study phase, it is recommended that the RTA work more closely with each corridor community to increase local awareness and encourage participation in all fifty-two communities. As the village of Oak Park demonstrated, a concerted local effort to encourage community participation in public meetings can have a very positive and beneficial effect. In addition, the envisioned Main Line system of major capital investment should enable more meaningful and detailed dialogue and input with a wider audience and more communities.

The Cook DuPage Corridor study provides an informed, transparent process for determining the most desired and effective future transportation investments to improve mobility for this heavily travelled portion of our region. The study reached an important milestone in May 2008 when the study’s Policy Committee unanimously recommended a future transportation system of major capital investment and a set of enhancements to the existing transportation system for further study. These recommendations are the result of broad collaboration among over fifty leaders across the corridor, and the public’s input obtained through the RTA’s extensive public involvement program for the Cook DuPage Corridor Study. The System Analysis will be the final phase of the Cook DuPage Corridor study and it is expected to begin in mid 2009. In this last phase of the program, the proposed major capital investments within the preferred system will be further detailed, analyzed, and prioritized. The Cook DuPage Corridor public involvement program is intentionally dynamic and will be continued expanded and improved upon through the conclusion of the System Analysis.