

SSMMAATTERINGS

Spring 2007

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 Sheila Miller,
 Administrative Assistant

NEW SSMMA STAFF MEMBER

We are very pleased to announce that a new member has recently joined our SSMMA staff!

On March 1st Reggie Greenwood began as Director of Economic Development. In this position he will coordinate with the Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation to initiate, promote and implement development projects throughout the region. He will also be responsible for managing SSMMA's GIS program and fulfilling internal and external requests for data services. In addition, he will work with a variety of other programs, including the Calumet Rivers Development Project and the Calumet-Sag Trail and Safe Routes to School projects.

More accurately, Reggie is not new, but is *returning* to SSMMA. During the 1980s he served as Economic Development Coordinator, and developed and implemented financial programs to support the regional economy, including the South Town Business Growth Corporation.

Reggie has earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and is currently enrolled in the Sustainable Business Program at Illinois Institute of Technology. He resides in Flossmoor. Welcome, Reggie; we look forward to working with you.

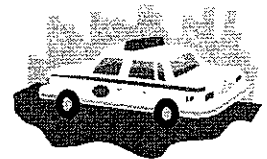
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SUBURBAN PURCHASING COOPERATIVE

The Suburban Purchasing Cooperative has awarded contracts for the following vehicles:

- 2007 Ford Crown Vic Pursuit Vehicle
- 2007 Dodge Charger Police Pursuit Vehicle
- 2007 Caravan Cargo Van
- 2007 Ford Fusion 14S
- 2007 Ford Ranger Supercab XL
- 2007 Ford Explorer XLT
- 2007 Ford Focus SE
- 2007 Ford F-150 XL
- 2007 Ford F-450
- 2007 Ford F-550
- 2007 Ford Expedition
- 2008 Ford Escape Hybrid
- 2008 Ford F-250 XL
- 2008 Ford F-350 XL



Transportation News



Southland Safe Routes to School



The Southland Safe Routes to School grant program is designed to create a 20% reduction in traffic around south suburban schools by encouraging students to walk or bicycle, thus eliminating car trips. Over a two year period, the Southland SRTS Implementation Team will provide both pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure improvements, along with educational and encouragement programming.

Nine schools in six communities have been selected for participation in the School Travel Plan Phase One:

1. **Memorial Junior High School – Lansing IL (SD 158)**
2. **Lansing Christian School – Lansing (Private)**
3. **Diekman Elementary School – Dolton (SD149)**
4. **Sandburg Elementary School – Harvey (SD152)**
5. **Kich Elementary School – Harvey (SD 147)**
6. **Central Park Middle School – Midlothian (SD 143)**
7. **Springfield Elementary School – Midlothian (SD 143)**
8. **Sixth Grade Education Center – Crete (SD 201u)**
9. **Wagoner Elementary School – Sauk Village (SD 168)**

The Implementation Team is comprised of several organizations. *South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association* will act as the administrator of the grant and will supervise grant processing and billing. *Robinson Engineering, Ltd.* will design, engineer and supervise construction of all infrastructure improvements. *The Chicagoland Bicycle Federation* will provide evaluation services, education and encouragement programs, and will carry out Phase One, the creation of School Travel Plans.

During Phase Two of SRTS, five schools will be selected for full implementation of infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements and programs based on their School Travel Plan results.

If you have any questions, please contact Leslie Phemister, Southland SRTS Coordinator, at (708) 922-4673 or email lesliephemister@biketraffic.org.

South Suburban Mayors and Managers would like to extend our thanks and appreciation for all of the wonderful work that Joe Heinrich accomplished while with SSMMA. We wish Joe the very best in his next endeavor. For questions regarding any transportation related issues, please contact Ed Paesel at (708) 922-4670 or paesel@ssmma.org.

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA)/Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) Volume Cap Pool

Attention home-rule communities! The goal of the SSMMA/IFA Volume Cap Pool is to keep any unused Industrial Revenue Bond allocation in the southern suburbs in order to foster economic development in the region. Overall, actual Industrial Revenue Bond activity in Illinois has been historically low during the past 5 years. This lack of activity relates to (1) the post 1990's recession and owners' reluctance to expand and (2) general trends in manufacturing.

Due to the lack of demand for Volume Cap since 2001, IFA has been allocating unused Volume Cap as "Carryforward Volume Cap". Per IRS regulations, Carryforward Volume Cap may be used for up to three

additional calendar years to issue Affordable Rental Housing Bonds. Potential projects for this designated purpose include multifamily and senior affordable housing developments. During 2006 three different affordable rental housing projects were closed using a total of \$14,471,442 in Carryforward Volume Cap. As a result of these transactions, communities that ceded their unused Volume Cap to the SSMMA/IFA pool received a check for 1% of the total amount ceded. The pool still has \$16,420,130 in 2004-2006 Carryforward Volume Cap that is available for use with Affordable Rental Housing Bonds. The total amount of Volume Cap available for use for Industrial Revenue Bonds to our home-rule members is \$36,518,635 in 2007. **Please consider ceding your unused volume cap for 2007 to our pool.** The more unused volume cap we have ceded to the pool, the better the chances we have of attracting some substantial investors. Ideally, we would like to use the 2007 pool to finance a qualified industrial project within our region before the end of the year. If we are unable to produce a viable project we will once again carry the pool forward. Information on how to go about ceding to the pool will be mailed out in early March. The deadline to cede is April 30, 2007. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding the Volume Cap Pool, Industrial Revenue Bonds or Affordable Rental Housing Bonds or know of potential projects please contact Eileen Santschi at (708) 922-4676.



PUBLIC WORKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



At the last Public Works Advisory Committee meeting, presentations were given by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRDGC) on the 2007 Stream Maintenance Program, the Detailed Watershed Plan and Permitting Issues. Mr. Dick Lanyon, General Superintendent of MWRDGC also gave a presentation and answered questions from the Committee.

TRAINING GRANT

South Suburban College recently applied for and received a training grant in the amount of \$39,000 from Homeland Security. The grant focuses on the role of the Public Works Department in emergency response. However, training will include all municipal emergency personnel. The unique aspect of the training grant is the inclusion of local businesses.

EMERALD ASH BORER BEETLE

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus sponsored an Emerald Ash Borer Beetle informational meeting in January. Presenters included Edith Makra from Morton Arboretum and President Canning, Mayor of Wilmette, whose community has already been affected by the beetle.

In order to continue to inform members on identifying the Emerald Ash Borer Beetle and the effects it will have on our region, the University of Illinois/Matteson Extension will be offering a series of workshops. The first training took place on Wednesday, February 21st at the Association offices. Another training is scheduled for Tuesday, March 20th at the Orland Park Civic Center from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

FEMA MAPS



The draft Cook County FEMA maps will be mailed to municipalities during the period of March 14, 15, and 16. Public Hearings will be scheduled 30 to 45 days after the mailing for comments. Maps may be viewed beginning March 15, 2007 at www.illinoisfloodmaps.org.



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Protecting Our Water Environment

LITTLE CALUMET RIVER WATERSHED

Municipalities had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with representatives of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC) to discuss storm water issues in their community. The information gathered will be used to compile the Detailed Watershed Plan for the Little Calumet River Watershed.

COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW (CSO)

A meeting for communities with combined sewers was held with MWRDGC February 6th at the Association offices. The purpose of the meeting was to make communities aware that the EPA has agreed to accept the CSO data submitted by MWRDGC in lieu of the monthly submittals as is currently required in each community's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for CSO's. Compliance issues were also reviewed during the meeting.

SOUTH SUBURBAN BROWNFIELD NEWS



BROWNFIELDS REVOLVING LOAN FUND

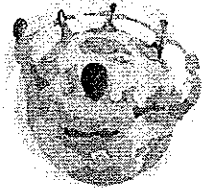
SSMMA's revolving loan fund program is gaining momentum. Last fall a loan was made to the City of Chicago Heights for clean up at the Bloom Plaza property, 1020 Dixie Highway. The work is expected to get underway soon, following a delay caused by the need to revise documents to reflect a new scope of work after confirmatory sampling revealed the depth of contamination greater than original test results. Recently two private sector developers requested loan applications, one for another property in Chicago Heights, and one for a brownfield site in South Chicago Heights. In addition, properties in Calumet City and Ford Heights are expected to be ready to apply for loans for clean up in the near future.

SSMMA's revolving loan fund was established with a \$1 million grant from the U.S. EPA to provide critical low interest financing for the clean up of brownfield sites in the south suburban region. Brownfield sites are defined as "real property, the redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." To be eligible for a loan, a public or private sector borrower must own or have control over a property, must have acquired it after it became contaminated, and must not have caused, permitted or contributed to the hazardous substance on the site. The site to be cleaned up must have strong potential for economic redevelopment so that a revenue stream for repayment of the loan can be identified.

For more information about the revolving loan fund, potential applicants are urged to contact Karen Hoffschmidt at SSMMA (708-922-4677 or hoffschmidtk@ssmma.org).



DIVERSITY, INC. NEWS



THE BUSINESS CASE FOR Diversity, Inc.

Diversity, Inc. has scheduled several presentations that are intended to further the goal of providing useful and easy to use information to municipalities.

Diversity, Inc. has compiled useful information on mortgage lending in our communities, information illustrating the rate of sub-prime lending, as well as default and foreclosure information on FHA insured mortgages. Diversity, Inc. also explored, with the Woodstock Institute and the South Suburban Housing Center, issues related to predatory lending and other sub-prime mortgage markets at the February meeting of the group.

Coming in March Diversity, Inc. is hosting a meeting with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Department will address FHA issues, including foreclosed properties and their maintenance. Department personnel will also demonstrate the use of their "Neighborhood Watch" web page that provides in-depth information concerning FHA lending community by community.

In April Diversity, Inc. will host a special seminar that each community is encouraged to attend. In recognition of "National Fair Housing Month," Maria Krysan, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will present her perspectives on diversity in the metropolitan region. Dr. Krysan's research focuses on the factors underlying racial residential preferences, trends in racial attitudes, and the sources of racial policy attitudes. Diversity, Inc. encourages each member community to invite their elected officials, planning department staff and Community Relations or Human Relations Commissioners.

We are currently in discussions with a local diversity trainer, the Community Media Workshop and the Center for Conflict Resolution, regarding future presentations.

The Executive Director Joe Martin and Diversity, Inc. President Paul Gibson continue to visit with the member communities, Managers or Mayors.

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ANNUAL DINNER

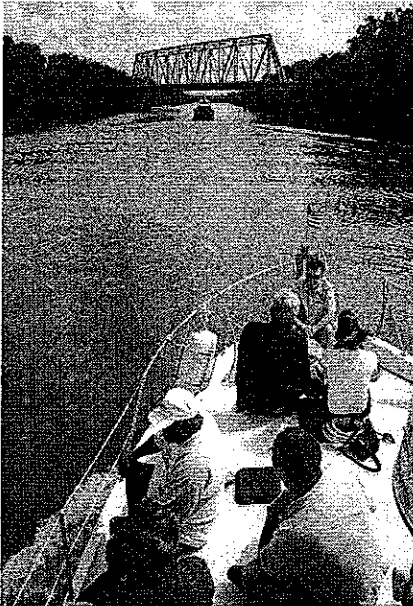
Planning for the 12th Annual Dinner for Diversity, Inc. and Awards Program has begun. We are pleased that a former aid to President Bill Clinton has agreed to join us. Janis F. Kearney, former personal diarist to President William Jefferson Clinton, grew up in a sharecropping family in the southeast Arkansas delta. She is a writer, lecturer and oral historian. Kearney's first book, **COTTON FIELD OF DREAMS: A MEMOIR**, chronicled her journey from the southeast Arkansas delta and offered readers a vivid picture of the roles of women, children and families in the Arkansas delta, and the lessons the Kearney children learned from cotton sharecroppers, parents of 19 children. This past September she published her second book, **CONVERSATIONS: WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, FROM HOPE TO HARLEM**.



CONVERSATIONS: WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON, FROM HOPE TO HARLEM, introduces new and vastly important voices to the dialogue around America's 42nd President. Black Americans were invited by the Clinton diarist to share their insights, memories, and opinions of William Jefferson Clinton - the man, the leader.

The dinner is scheduled for September 27th at Olympia Fields Country Club.

CALUMET RIVERS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



A vision statement that integrates economic development, community quality and environmental resources has been completed. This document is the primary outcome of the Calumet Rivers Development Project, an effort funded by a grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation designed to stimulate economic development in seven south suburban communities linked by the Calumet River system – Blue Island, Burnham, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale and Robbins.

The following statements introduce the economic development vision for the area: “As the northern gateway to the Chicago Southland, the Calumet River Corridor will play a central role in the metropolitan region’s economy. It will offer a unique blend of opportunities for industrial development, commerce, and recreation that will transform its economic base, expand individual employment and career opportunities, and enhance the quality of life.”

The vision for economic development within the corridor will take advantage of the natural features of the river system, the corridor’s economic geography and transportation assets, and the region’s capacity for research and development. There are four components:

- *Industrial development.* This component will build on the area’s industrial history and geography, and will be comprised of a mix of traditional and emerging businesses that serve growing markets for green products and services. Industrial development will be concentrated in three general locations, the Robbins Energy Park, the Riverdale Industrial Park, and a large high potential area shared by Dolton and Calumet City. Industrial development will have access to multiple modes of transportation, communication infrastructure and alternative energy resources, and will be able to access research and technical expertise provided by various metropolitan area universities and research institutes.
- *Commercial and retail development.* A mix of goods and services will serve local residents and attract consumers from outside the area. Commercial small business development based on regional and national investment will be clustered along the river, on main streets, and in transit-oriented districts, and will be aligned with public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle access.
- *Open space and recreational development.* The third component will place a priority on improving and maintaining open spaces and cultural, recreational and other natural areas to create a positive image, a high quality of life and attract visitors. The key features will include a multi-use pathway along the river, a signature festival or event that involves all seven communities, and multiple access points to the river.
- *Residential development.* The fourth component will include an attractive mix of housing types to serve current and future residents, featuring a variety of price points, following established design guidelines, and having a strong connection to the riverfront, transportation and commercial opportunities.

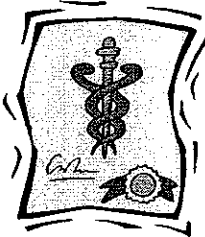
Finally, the statement recommends that the seven river front communities establish a Calumet River Corridor Council to enable them to work cooperatively and efficiently on economic development initiatives in general, and specifically to promote and implement the components of the vision. The Calumet River Corridor Council will create a single voice to advocate for and organize projects; assure excellent communication; sponsor a Planning and Development Academy to build capacity within communities to promote economic development; provide technical assistance to seek public and private sector financial resources; and establish and coordinate relationships with external organizations such as the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and the U.S. EPA.

The next step is for the Steering Committee to review, comment on and approve the vision statement. A Steering Committee meeting for this purpose is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. Thursday, March 22, 2007 at the Robbins Community Power facility, 13400 S. Kedzie Avenue, in Robbins. On the following Thursday, March 29th, the vision statement will be presented to the Mayors of the seven participating communities at a dinner

meeting in a newly completed and furnished town home in the Fay's Point development on the Calumet River in Blue Island. In addition, at these meetings the Steering Committee and Mayors will review a draft Intergovernmental Agreement to establish the Calumet River Corridor Council, and a project report that has been produced for the Grand Victoria Foundation.

For more information about the Calumet Rivers Development Project, please contact Karen Hoffschmidt at 708-922-4677 or hoffschmidt@ssmma.org.

HEALTH CARE COOPERATIVE



The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Employee Benefits Plan Review Committee has been exploring the feasibility of establishing a Caucus-sponsored employee benefit plan. The Caucus is now pleased to announce that it is partnering with the McHenry County Council of Governments (MCCG) to offer municipalities the opportunity to participate in a self-funded health insurance cooperative. A meeting was held on February 26th at the Lombard Village Hall to review the details of the Plan.

EDUCATION REFORM: 2007 PRIORITY

The South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association and indeed mayors from across the Chicago metropolitan region and the State of Illinois have recognized the critical importance quality schools play in creating and sustaining quality communities.

Since 2003, south suburban mayors working in conjunction with the 272 Mayors from northeastern Illinois including Mayor Daley of Chicago, through the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, have met to study education related issues.

The issues involved in reforming the Illinois education system require thoughtful consideration. The Mayors Caucus over the last three years has created education reform principles based upon the two major principles of funding reform and school accountability. We have concluded that while increasing the funding available to schools and ensuring a stable source of funds is important, schools must be held to standards which demonstrate that they have employed fiscal accountability and worked to improve management practices and control costs.

In addition, we must also create long-term, sustainable reforms that reduce our reliance on the property tax to fund public education and eliminate the inequities in the quality of education that exist between property poor and wealthier districts. The quality of a child's education should not depend upon where he or she resides.

To that end, the Mayors of the southern suburbs, in partnership with our fellow mayors from throughout the state will work to make 2007 the year the State Legislature and the Governor take action on long overdue education reform, both on the funding side and the accountability side. For decades we have heard too many excuses why this can't be done and have been told, wait until next year. Well, 2007 is next year and it is the year we must act.

To be sure, the decisions we face are difficult, but it is time for leaders to act to solve our crisis. We pledge to work with Governor Blagojevich, the South Suburban Legislative Caucus, Legislators from throughout the State and other organizations and citizen groups who have long advocated for change.

We can succeed, indeed we must succeed, so that students throughout Illinois have equal opportunity to receive a quality education no matter where they may live and so our antiquated system of paying for our public schools can be reformed. Please join with us in making 2007 the year of education reform in Illinois.

Important Dates

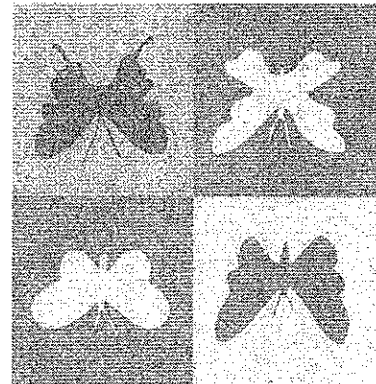
March 6	Transportation Committee Meeting (Matteson Village Hall)
March 15	SSMMA Dinner Meeting (Scrementi's Restaurant, 3760 Chicago Road, Steger, IL) - Associate Member Appreciation Dinner
March 20	Diversity, Inc. Monthly Meeting (Association Offices)
March 22	Public Works Advisory Committee (Hazel Crest Village Hall)
APRIL	Fair Housing Month
April 3	Transportation Committee Meeting (Matteson Village Hall)
April 17	Diversity, Inc. Monthly Meeting (Association Offices)
April 19	SSMMA Business Meeting (Association Offices)
April 26	Public Works Advisory committee (Hazel Crest Village Hall)
May 1	Transportation Committee Meeting (Matteson Village Hall)
May 15	Diversity, Inc. Monthly Meeting (Association Offices)
May 17	SSMMA Dinner Meeting (Lansing Country Club, 186th & Wentworth, Lansing, IL) - Election of 2007-08 Officers
May 24	Public Works Advisory Committee (Hazel Crest Village Hall)

For more information on these events please contact
SSMMA at 708-206-1155 or info@ssmma.org

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