

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kane County Transit Opportunity Assessment Study defines niche markets for transit use in this urban, suburban and rural environment, typically dominated by the automobile.

I. Areas of Study

In this study, Kane County has been divided into what are called *transit areas* and *transit corridors*. The transit areas have been established in order to formulate transit ideas for municipalities contiguous with each other. They provide an opportunity to pool ideas and resources to lessen their reliance on the automobile. The transit areas are the Upper Fox Transit Area, Greater Elgin Transit Area, Tri Cities Transit Area, Greater Aurora Transit Area, and the Rural Villages Transit Communities. The transit corridors are the Randall/Orchard Road corridor and the Kirk Road corridor.

II. Transit Market Characteristics

A potential transit market in Kane County is defined by the characteristics of the people that live or work there. These characteristics include demographic information such as income, employment, population and household data. Yet they are also characterized by land use characteristics and density. These characteristics all have an effect on how, why and where people travel.

III. Transportation Characteristics

Transit in Kane County is primarily served by: **Metra**, the commuter rail division of the RTA, providing daily passenger rail service for the Chicago Region; **Pace**, the suburban bus division of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), providing fixed route bus service, express bus service, dial-a-ride paratransit opportunities and vanpool/subscription bus service; and **The Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS)**, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Chicago region, (CATS created a carpool program called *Share the Drive*). The existing road system in Kane County contains toll highways I-90 and I-88, and eight Strategic Regional Arterials (SRAs). These 10 corridors are planned to carry the majority of regional traffic and are projected to be moderately to severely congested by 2020.

IV. Traveler Characteristics

This study details the traveler and trip characteristics in Kane County and found that Kane County is experiencing higher than the average trip lengths in the region for the home to work and the home to other trip.

V. Transit Supportive Programs

Transit supportive programs focus on capitalizing on already existing transit services. The following programs are detailed in the report:

- Employee Sponsored Programs
- Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)

VI. Transit Supportive Land Planning

Land use development patterns in Kane County have a distinct separation of land uses. This separation of residential, industrial and commercial uses, coinciding with development design that does not connect these land uses, prohibits an environment of walking, bicycling and transit use and forces a reliance solely on the automobile. The following are land use planning and policy recommendations to support transit in Kane County:

- *Apply Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Transit Corridor Planning (TCP) methods to new developments by incorporation in local comprehensive plans, subdivision ordinances, and zoning ordinances, including incentives such density bonuses*
- *Share local tax revenue for new (commercial) developments through intergovernmental agreements.*
- *Enact parking limitations by implementing parking fees or by providing a minimum parking space allotment, not maximum.*

VII. Transit Recommendations

Kane County requires a comprehensive system of transit opportunities in order to provide transportation options for its citizens. These options can be realized by: encouraging and requiring government agencies and employers to cooperate with CATS and Pace in their carpool and vanpool efforts; encouraging and supporting communities to adopt land use planning policies to support walking, biking and transit; and establishing a comprehensive, county-wide system of transit opportunities. This would include establishing Transportation Hubs, Transit Centers and park-n-ride lots strategically placed throughout the county to support a multi-modal transit system that includes walkers, bicyclists, taxi service, carpool, vanpool, a variety of bus service, light rail and commuter rail. The following recommendations are detailed in the full report.

Recommendations that can be applied to all of the Transit Areas:

- *Plan and develop a system of park-n-ride lots throughout Kane County.*
- *Implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Kane County.*
- *Establish Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) for both Kirk and Randall/Orchard corridors. Consider TMAs for each transit area.*
- *Encourage Pace and CATS to coordinate carpooling and ridesharing programs. Enact employer-based trip reduction strategies.*
- *Share employee address information with Pace and CATS to create a viable countywide database of potential system users.*
- *Employ professional marketing firms to promote carpooling, vanpooling and transit use in Kane County.*
- *Support Pace's Vision 2020 planning concepts to improve mobility in the region.*
- *Work with CATS and Pace on potential park-n-ride lot locations and operations.*
- *Provide shuttle service from remote park-n-ride lots to Metra stations.*

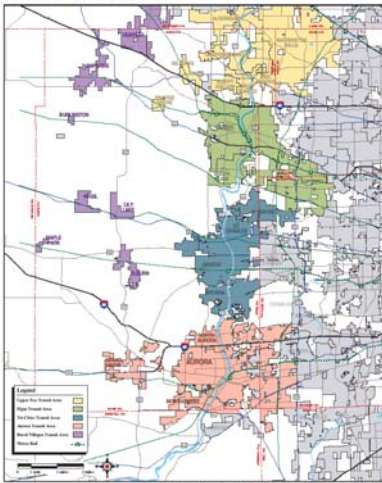
Kane County Transit Opportunity Assessment Study

- *Petition the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority to investigate the feasibility of HOV lanes or HOV by-pass lanes.*
- *Establish an express bus service from the transit area to O'Hare Airport, Schaumburg, and other high demand travel destinations in the Chicago region.*
- *Promote transit system expansion to include Metra commuter rail service at new stations.*
- *Design new Fox River Bridge crossings to accommodate walking, biking and using transit.*
- *Establish transit connections to the proposed EJ&E passenger line.*

Recommendations for the retail, recreational and institutional centers throughout Kane County in traditional downtowns such as Geneva and Elgin, and the high suburban growth areas on Randall Road include:

- *Provide on-demand paratransit to and from major shopping centers. Direct paths to and from these centers for walking and biking.*
- *Provide shuttle service between these centers and residential markets. Incorporate incentives to utilize the service such as discount vouchers.*
- *Provide a local shuttle service to the activity centers that would also connect other activity points in the transit areas.*
- *Use excess parking capacity as park-n-ride lots.*

EXHIBIT 1 – TRANSIT AREAS



Recommendations for individual Transit Areas (Exhibit 1) are found on the following pages in the full report:

The Kirk Road Corridor	Page 60
The Randall/Orchard Corridor	Pages 59-60
The Greater Elgin Area	Page 63
The Greater Aurora Area	Pages 63-64
The Tri Cities Area	Pages 64-65
The Upper Fox Area	Page 65
The Rural Villages Area	Pages 65-66

Funding

The report includes a table that represents funding opportunities for Kane County on a Federal, State and Local level. This study recommends that Kane County should coordinate with the Transit Area TMAs and local communities to secure appropriate funding mechanisms for transit projects.