

Illinois Tollway's Congestion-Relief Program
Public Hearings
Metropolitan Planning Council Testimony
Peter Skosey
Vice President of External Relations

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Good afternoon. My name is Peter Skosey and I am the Vice President of External Relations for the Metropolitan Planning Council. MPC supports the \$1.8 billion investment in the 'Green Lanes' proposal on Illinois toll roads as it will provide quicker mobility, increased transit options, and a cleaner, more sustainable region.

In the past 20 years, our region added 2,000 new lane miles and yet congestion has doubled during that same period. The region can't keep building its way out of congestion. MPC's recent *Moving at the Speed of Congestion* study identified a \$7.3 billion loss to northeastern Illinois' economy every year in wasted time, fuel, and environmental damages. By providing drivers with alternative travel options, increased transit investments, and speedy travel throughout the region, Illinois can significantly reduce its losses to congestion.

The \$1.8 billion Green Lane investment will provide several benefits for the region. Carpool lanes in other states including California -- which accounts for 40 percent of all carpool lanes in the country -- successfully reduce emissions by decreasing stop-and-go traffic and providing smooth, steady-flowing travel. Increased express bus services and transit amenities will complement the 80-miles of Green Lanes and provide people with speedy, efficient alternatives to being stuck in traffic. By designating Green Lanes, more cars will be able to bypass the bottlenecks choking our region.

Some have argued additional fees increase burdens on the less affluent and disproportionately benefit the wealthy. However, the proposed Green Lanes benefit all because they provide the option to travel on a dedicated lane quickly and efficiently when it is necessary. The fee incurred by a solo driver may be worth more to the parent stuck in traffic who would otherwise be forced to pay hefty late fees at a daycare. Additionally, increased bus service and better transit connections -- with park-and-ride facilities or express routes -- enable riders to bypass heavy traffic congestion altogether and provide a quick, more reliable trip to their destination.

Carpool lanes like the Green Lanes are helping regions across the country alleviate congestion, reduce the amount of exhaust emissions polluting the air and provide for a better, cleaner environment. There are currently more than 100 carpool lanes in the U.S. covering approximately 2,300 lane miles. The Chicagoland area anticipates a growth of more than 2 million additional residents in the next 20 years so the Green Lanes are exactly the type of innovative solution the region needs to get people out of daily bumper-to-bumper traffic and into a healthier and higher quality life.

Thank you.

Peter Skosey
pskosey@metroplanning.org
Metropolitan Planning Council
www.metroplanning.org