



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION SUPPORTS CHICAGO'S BUS RAPID TRANSIT
DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS**

Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Gabe Klein announced today that the Rockefeller Foundation is bolstering Chicago's efforts to develop a Bus Rapid Transit system through financial support for research, technical support, project management and community engagement.

The Rockefeller Foundation has provided \$485,000 in grants to The Chicago Community Trust to support Chicago's bus service improvement efforts. The work under the grant will be jointly managed by the Trust, CDOT, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and will be used for planning, branding and community outreach projects. Other partners in the work include the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Active Transportation Alliance, the Metropolitan Planning Council, the Chicago Architecture Foundation, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, Metropolis Strategies and the Civic Consulting Alliance.

In addition, the Foundation also provided more than \$250,000 worth of technical support for planning the downtown East-West Transit and the Western/Ashland BRT corridors through grants to the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP), BusinessMinds BV, and Sustainable Mobility Finance, LLC.

"Chicago is thankful for the support of the Rockefeller Foundation for this important transportation project that will quicken our daily commutes and spur new economic growth both downtown and in our neighborhoods," Klein said. "Through our partners and Rockefeller grantees such as the Chicago Community Trust and Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, the Rockefeller Foundation brings needed additional technical and project management resources to our planning and community engagement process."

“The Rockefeller Foundation is very encouraged by Chicago’s efforts to provide higher quality bus service, and the joint commitment from community advocates, CDOT, CTA and Mayor Emanuel himself,” said Benjamin de la Pena, Associate Director at The Rockefeller Foundation. “We believe that when BRT is done right, it can provide greater transportation options for more and often underserved communities, while delivering efficient mass transit at a lower cost.”

Bus Rapid Transit improvements designed to make bus travel more reliable and appealing to customers include: colored pavement markings and enhanced signage clearly delineating the bus lanes; Signal priority for buses at key intersections; Branded bus shelters at locations served by designated routes; “Next Bus” arrival signs at bus stops and nearby locations; sidewalk improvements; and the installation of protected bicycle lanes. These improvements fulfill many of the requirements for best-of-breed BRT, and those most appropriate for Chicago, as defined by ITDP’s 2012 BRT Standard (www.brtstandard.org).

The East-West Transit Corridor bus rapid-transit plan includes designated bus-priority lanes on two miles of streets: Madison, Washington, Canal and Clinton. The corridor would serve Union Station, Ogilvie Transportation Center, the CTA Red and Blue Line subways, Streeterville and Navy Pier. A new, off-street transportation center just south of Union Station is also part of the concept.

The project would meet the goals of the Chicago Central Area Action Plan by promoting transit, bicycle use and walking, thereby making the Central Area even more of an attractive place to do business, visit and live.

The CTA is also planning bus rapid transit improvements along Jeffery Boulevard from 103rd Street/Stony Island to Jefferson/Washington, as well as working with CDOT to study the feasibility of future BRT projects on Western and Ashland Avenue corridors.

“The Chicago Community Trust is pleased to work with the Rockefeller Foundation on the BRT project,” said Ngoan Le, VP of Program of the Trust. “Chicago residents will benefit from having an efficient and affordable means to get to their jobs, homes and schools.”

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