Regional Transportation Authority
Community Planning Program

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Local Technical Assistance Program

Application form:
Community Planning program and
Local Technical Assistance program

DEADLINE: **Noon on Wednesday, June 26, 2013**

This application form is online at www.rtachicago.com/applications. You may submit the form by email to applications@rtachicago.com.
Upon receipt of application, you will receive an e-mail verifying that your application has been received.

1. Name of Applicant: City of Joliet

2. Main Contact for Application (please include name, phone number and email): Kendall Jackson, (815) 724-4047, kjackson@jolietcity.org

3. Type of Applicant (please check any that apply):

__X__ Local government

____ Multijurisdictional group* → Please list the members of the group (including government and nongovernmental organizations):
_____
_____
_____

____ Nongovernmental organization* → Name of local government partner(s):
_____
_____
_____

*Applications submitted by multijurisdictional groups and nongovernmental organizations must include a letter indicating support from each relevant local government. See the FAQs for more information. Nongovernmental applicants are strongly encouraged to contact CMAP or the RTA prior to submitting their application to discuss their project and the demonstration of local support.

4. Project Type (please check any that apply):

Please check all statements below that describe characteristics of your project. (This will help us determine whether your project is best handled by CMAP or RTA.)

_X___ My project involves preparation of a plan.
_X___ My project helps to implement a past plan.
_X___ My project links land use, transportation, and housing.
__X__ My project has direct relevance to public transit and supports the use of the existing transit system.
____ My project is not directly related to transportation or land use, but implements GO TO 2040 in other ways.

5. Project Location:

Please provide a brief description of the location of your project. You may include a map if that helps to describe location, but this is not required. If your project helps to implement a past plan, please include a link to that plan.

This project will focus on the Chicago Street (Route 53) Corridor from the I-80 Interchange, north, through Downtown Joliet. The attached maps show the corridor within both a local and regional context.

6. Project Description:

Please tell us what you would like to do in your community, and what assistance is needed. If you have more than one idea, please submit a separate application for each project. Please be specific, but also brief (less than two pages per project idea)—we simply want to have a basic understanding of what you want to do. CMAP and RTA staff will follow-up with you if we need any additional information to fully understand your proposed project.

(Please include any additional information that is relevant, preferably by providing links to online documents.)

INTRODUCTION

The City of Joliet is applying for a grant through the CMAP -Local Technical Assistance Program/RTA - Community Planning Program process. Joliet desires to utilize the grant to contract with a qualified consultant with demonstrated expertise in transportation planning, urban planning, urban design, and citizen and stakeholder engagement, to develop a Chicago Street Corridor Plan. The Plan will assess options for better access and linkage to the new multi-modal Joliet Gateway Transportation Center, which is currently under construction.

The Plan is also needed to optimize the gateway opportunity from the I-80 interchange into downtown Joliet via Chicago Street (Route 53). Further, the Plan should focus on Chicago Street, within the downtown proper, as it relates to creating a pedestrian focused spine that will be supportive of the redevelopment of downtown and assess opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) adjacent to the new transportation center.

The Plan will consist of the following elements: Establish and recognize an innovative and distinct transportation corridor; Identify TOD opportunities along the corridor; Create pedestrian and bike trail connections; Design new streetscapes and appropriate roadway cross-sections, and develop a way finding plan, with each component containing recommendations for specific action items to implement.

BACKGROUND

Construction of the Joliet Gateway Center is a major component in the revitalization of the downtown area. The RTA funded a Community Planning grant in 2009 to assess the feasibility of a new multi-modal transportation center in Joliet and develop a conceptual plan. That grant helped leverage a $32 million Illinois Jobs Now grant, which is funding the construction of the transportation center along with a local match of $7.5 million from the City of Joliet, $2.2 million from BNSF railroad, and a $1.7 million grant through Pace Suburban Bus.

Gateway Center currently serves an estimated 800,000 transit users annually and planned improvements will provide for better connections between transit modes, increased passenger safety, better rail traffic accommodations, and help boost redevelopment in downtown Joliet. The downtown currently has a daytime population of 8,000 workers and serves as the Will County Seat with courthouse functions and administrative offices. The historic Rialto Square Theatre welcomes over 50,000 patrons a year and the Joliet Area Historic Museum is seeing a growing number of international visitors who are making local stops along the Route 66 corridor. Joliet Junior College (JJC) recently broke ground on the redevelopment of its downtown campus. The $50 million JJC City Center Campus is located at Chicago and Webster and will help anchor the north sector of the corridor by serving an estimated 500 students.

THE CHALLENGE

Chicago Street is the main thoroughfare for northbound traffic from the I-80 interchange into downtown Joliet with connections to Route 30 and Route 6. The street is currently cut-off, between Washington and Jefferson, by a parking lot that serves the County courthouse. The City of Joliet is working on an agreement with the county that will convey the parking lot property to the municipality. The city wants to re-open the Chicago Street connection through that land. The re-opening of Chicago Street will create an opportunity to improve mobility, increase pedestrian and vehicular access to the new transportation center, and help identify the street as the main downtown spine.

The re-opening of Chicago Street will help traffic flow, but challenges presented by the existing one-way street configuration in downtown Joliet need to be assessed. Vehicular traffic flow requirements should to be balanced with the need to provide for a better pedestrian and street-level environment and bike route connections as well as way finding through downtown.

Bus routes are another factor in downtown Joliet. Pace operates a total of nine bus routes that provide local and regional service, all with a major pulse point in front of the courthouse on Jefferson Street and stops along the curb adjacent to the existing train station. All downtown bus pulse points will be consolidated and relocated to a new bus turn-around at the Gateway Center transportation campus. Bus access to the transportation center and mobility within downtown Joliet should be considered along with pedestrian, other vehicular movements, and bikes.

There are 130 miles of portions of the regional bike trail system within Joliet (Wauponsee Trail, I & M Canal State Trail, and Old Plank Road Trail). All of these trails converge on the downtown area, but there are no signage or bike lane designations through the area. A plan is needed to assess and designate appropriate bike trail connections through the downtown as well as to the transportation center, where a bike hub facility is envisioned.

This corridor plan would also help resolve critical linkages between emerging open space and redevelopment opportunities north and south of downtown Joliet. The Old Joliet Prison located north of downtown was the subject of a 2012 CMAP - LTA grant. That grant funded the "Joliet Correctional Center Redevelopment" Technical Assistance Panel Report, which recommended a direct connection from the prison site to the I&M Bike Trail as a means of "opening up" the property to pedestrian and bike access. South of downtown, a major CMAP - funded initiative, the Route 53 Corridor Plan is taking shape. Together, these plans have sharpened the focus on redevelopment, tourism, open space access, and the importance of multi-modal transportation connections between the new Gateway Center hub and local and regional destinations.

Chicago Street is the main core for the revitalization of downtown Joliet. The County Courthouse, Rialto Square Theatre, Joliet Area Historic Museum, JJC City Center Campus, Silver Cross Ballpark, and riverfront are within ¼ - ½-mile walking distance of the transportation center, with Chicago Street acting as the main pedestrian connection. Regionally, Chicago Street (Route 53) serves as a connection for jobs, commerce, and link between downtown Joliet, Elwood, Wilmington, the Midewin Tall Grass Prairie and Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery. Chicago Street (Route 53) is also a point of destination for international Route 66 tourism. A plan is needed to engage stakeholders, assess options, and develop recommendations for an active multi-modal corridor.

Supportive Documents Links

Joliet Gateway Center –
http://cityofjoliet.info/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=2505
Old Joliet Prison Redevelopment TAP Report
http://cityofjoliet.info/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=2503
Will County 2030 Transportation Plan –
http://www.willcountyboard.com/Will_County_2030_TP.pdf
Heritage Park Plan –
http://cityofjoliet.info/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=2519
IL Route 53 Corridor Plan –
http://cityofjoliet.info/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=2521

LAKE MICHIGAN
O'HARE
CHICAGO
MIDWAY
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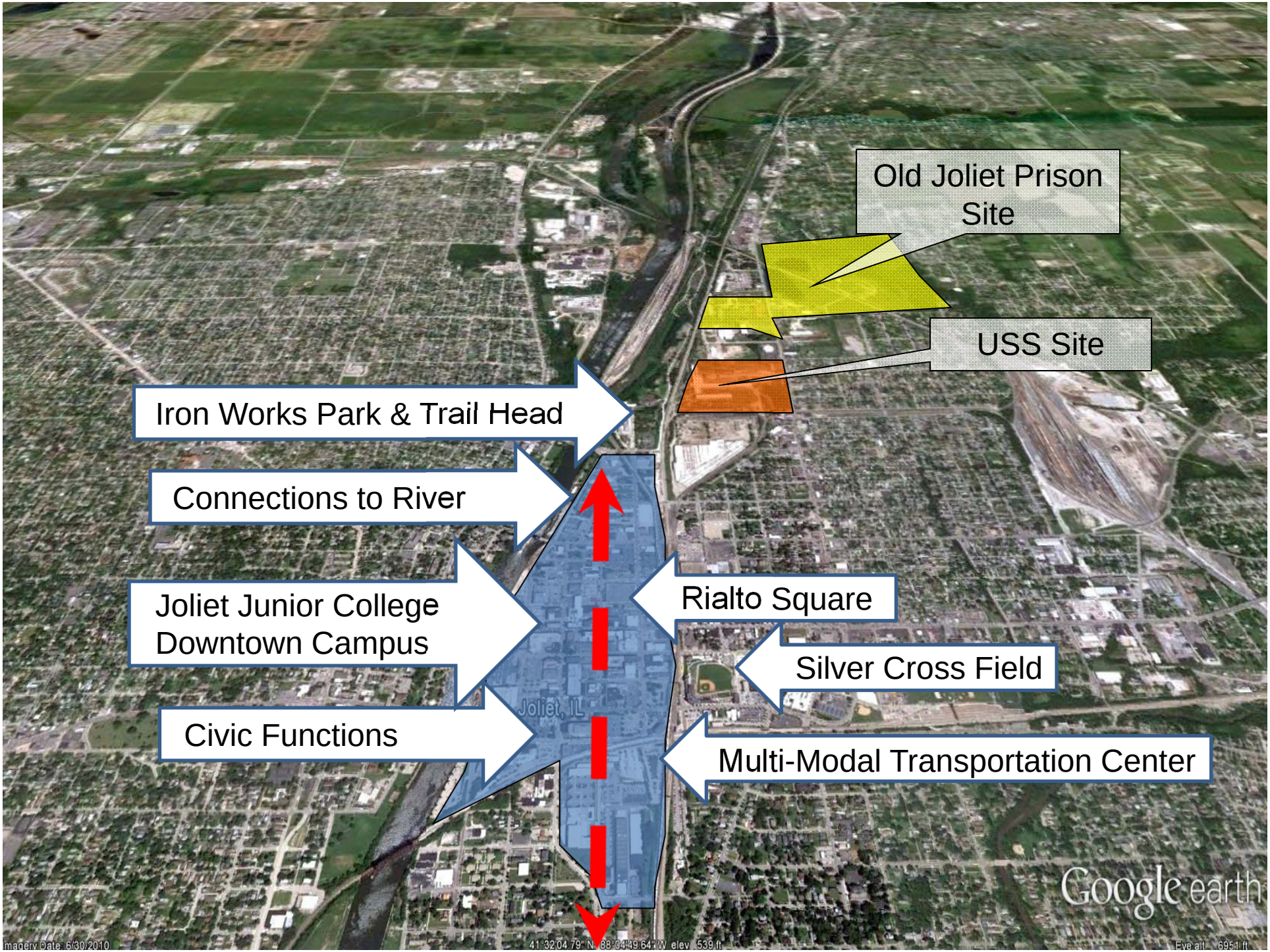
WILL COUNTY
LEWIS UNIVERSITY AIRPORT
JOLIET
JEFFERSON ST.
PARK DISTRICT AIRPORT
HOWELL NEW LENOX AIRPORT
WILL COUNTY
MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE
THE GREATER JOLIET/ CHICAGOLAND AREA MAP


Old Joliet Prison Site
USS Site
Iron Works Park & Trail Head
Connections to River
Joliet Junior College Downtown Campus
Civic Functions
Rialto Square
Silver Cross Field
Multi-Modal Transportation Center
Joliet, IL
Google earth
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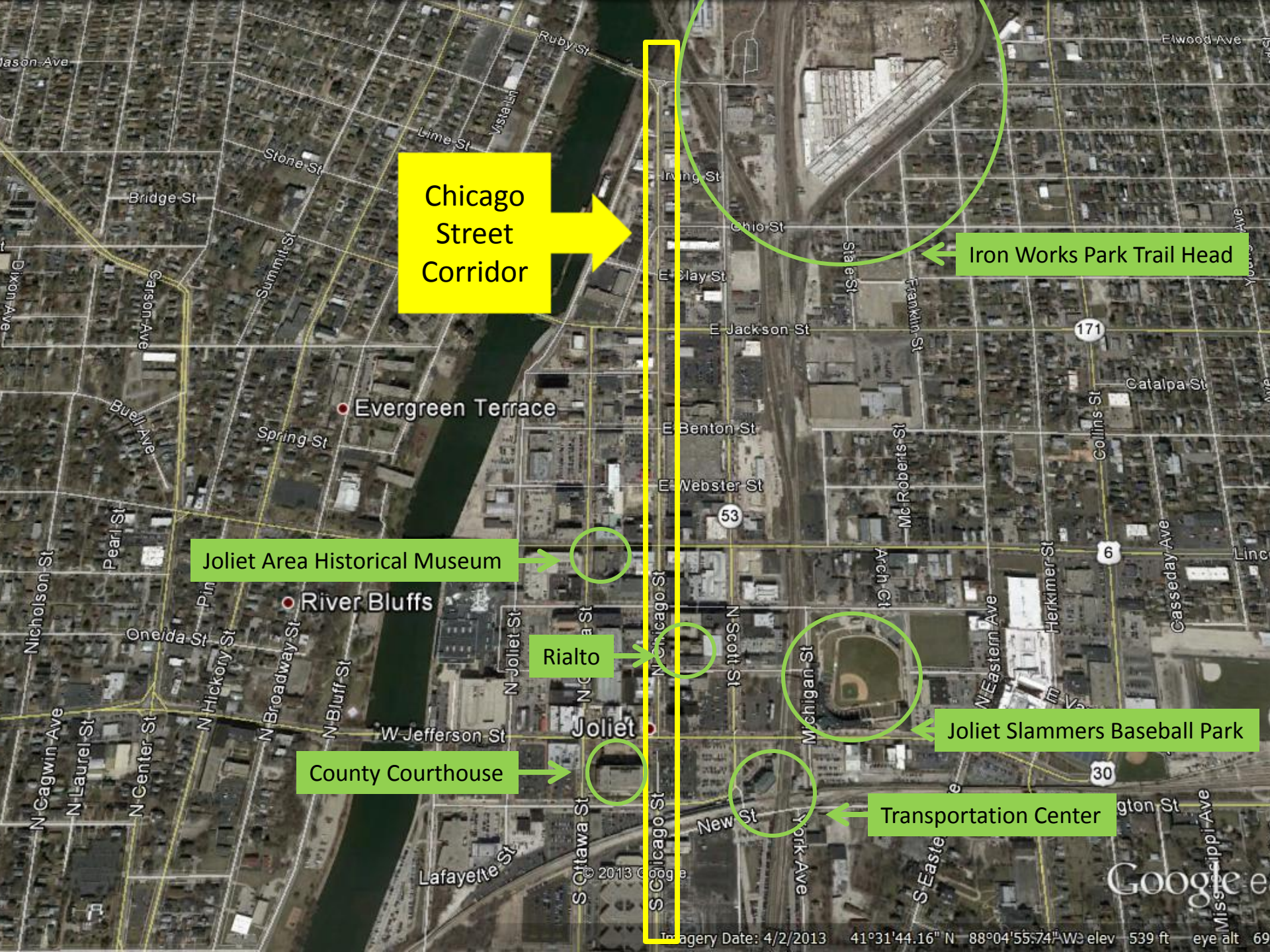
Eye alt 6951 ft


Chicago Street Corridor
Iron Works Park Trail Head
Joliet Area Historical Museum
Rialto
Joliet Slammers Baseball Park
County Courthouse
Transportation Center
Evergreen Terrace
River Bluffs
Joliet
Ruby St
Lime St
Stone St
Bridge St
Summit St
Carson Ave
Buell Ave
Spring St
Pearl St
Nicholson St
Oneida St
N Hickory St
N Broadway St
N Bluff St
N Joliet St
N Chicago St
N Scott St
W Jefferson St
N Cagwin Ave
N Laurel St
N Center St
Lafayette St
S Ottawa St
S Chicago St
New St
Irving St
Ohio St
E Clay St
E Jackson St
E Benton St
E Webster St
Franklin St
Mc Roberts St
Arch Ct
Michigan St
Eastern Ave
Herkimer St
Collins St
Catalpa St
Casseday Ave
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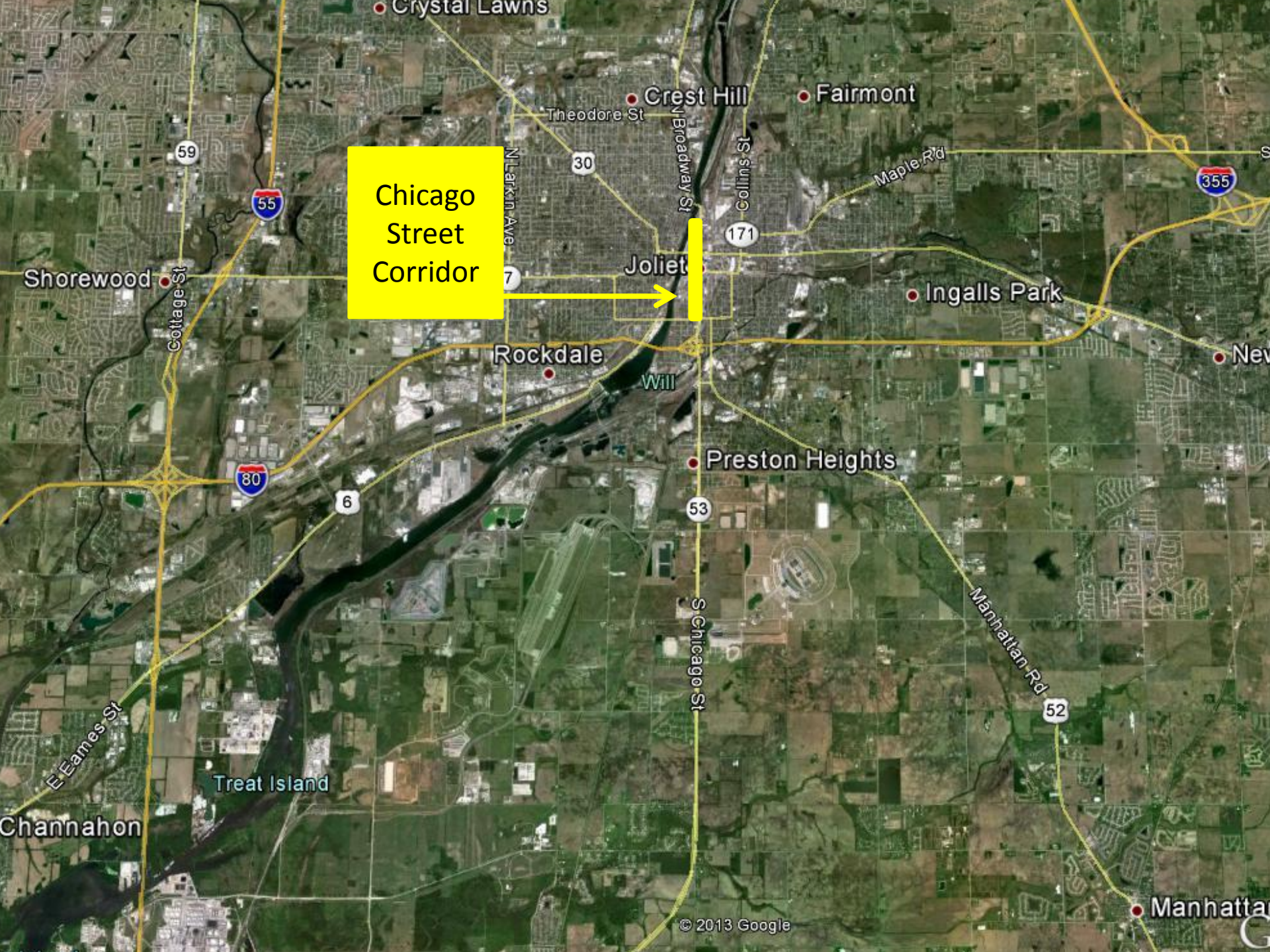
Chicago Street Corridor
Crystal Lawns
Crest Hill
Fairmont
Theodore St
N Larkin Ave
N Broadway St
Collins St
Maple Rd
Joliet
Shorewood
Cottage St
Ingalls Park
Rockdale
Will
Preston Heights
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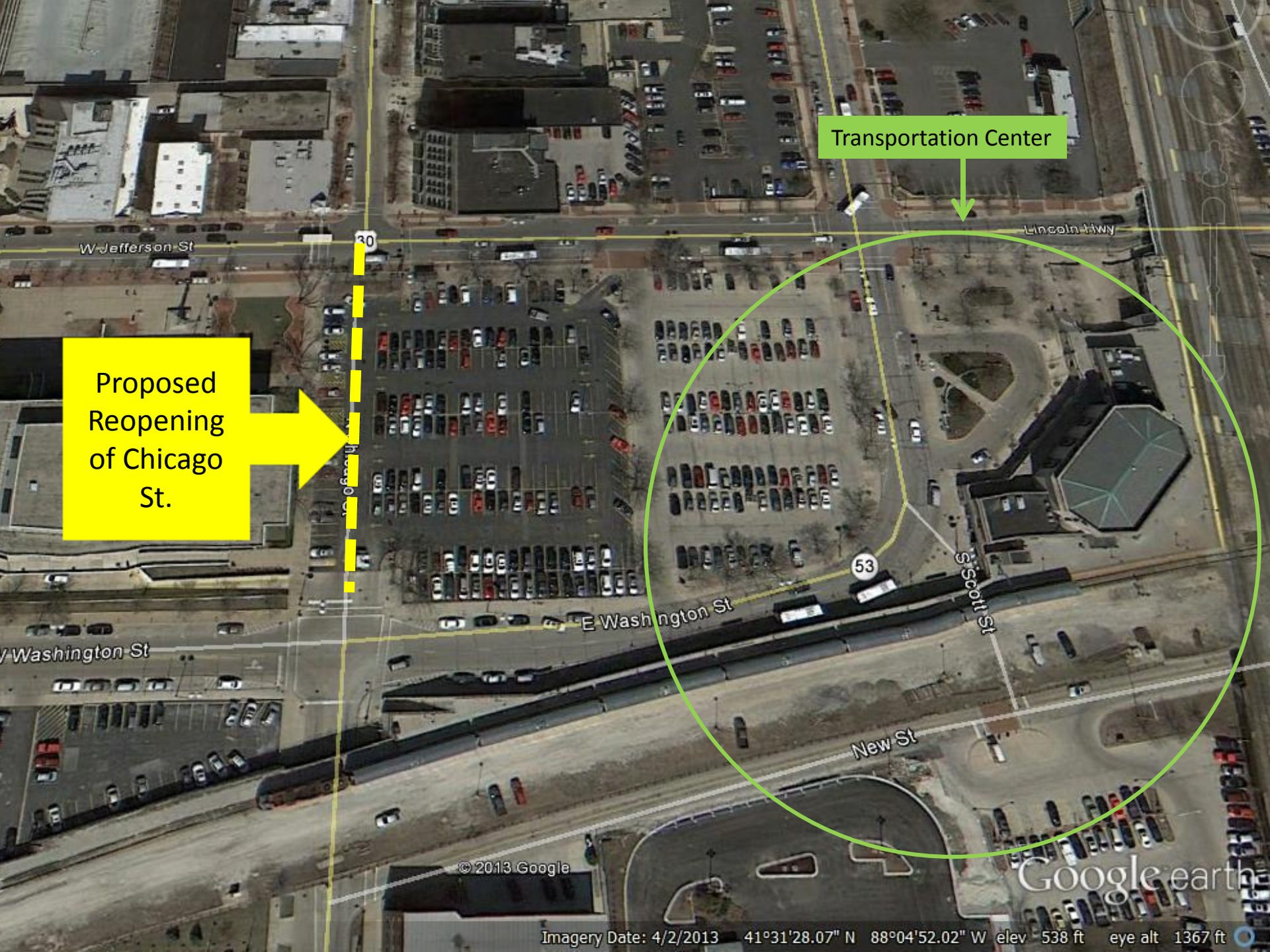
Transportation Center
Proposed Reopening of Chicago St.
W Jefferson St
Lincoln Hwy
30
53
E Washington St
W Washington St
S Scott St
New St
© 2013 Google
Google earth
Imagery Date: 4/2/2013 41°31'28.07" N 88°04'52.02" W elev 538 ft eye alt 1367 ft

pace
A Fresh Approach To Public Transportation

Thomas J. Ross
Executive Director

June 12, 2013

Kendall B. Jackson
City of Joliet
Community & Economic Development
150 W. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60432

Dear Mr. Jackson:

Pace Suburban Bus is pleased to provide this letter of support for the City of Joliet's application for the CMAP Local Technical Assistance Program/RTA Community Planning Program.

The City proposes to develop a Chicago Street Corridor Plan to assess options for better access and linkage to the new multi-modal Joliet Gateway Transportation Center, which is currently underway. Pace Heritage Division routes serving downtown Joliet will be consolidated and relocated to a new bus turn-around at the Gateway Transportation Center. Pace strongly supports this corridor plan.

Pace Suburban Bus confirms its support for the City of Joliet's application for the CMAP Local Technical Assistance/RTA Community Planning Program.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Snorden, Manager
Planning Services Department

Forest Preserve District
OF WILL COUNTY

Bringing People and Nature Together

17540 W. Laraway Road / Joliet, IL 60433
815.727.8700 / fax 815.722.3608
ReconnectWithNature.org

JOSEPH M. BABICH, President
DONALD GOULD, Vice President
LEE ANN GOODSON, Secretary
STEPHEN M. WILHELMI, Treasurer
MARCELLA M. DEMAURO, Executive Director

June 24, 2013

Kendall B. Jackson
City of Joliet
Community & Economic Development
150 W. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60432
(815) 724-4047

RE: Letter of Support - Planning Grant

Dear Mr. Jackson,

The Forest Preserve District of Will County (District) is very pleased to learn that the City of Joliet is applying for a grant through the CMAP/RTA Local Technical Assistance Program to assist with planning transportation improvements in Downtown Joliet. The District has always recognized Joliet as a hub for the multiple regional trails intersecting downtown including the Old Plank Road Trail, I&M Canal Trail and the Wauponsee Glacial Trail. These trails are also part of statewide bike routes including the Route 66 Bikeway and the Grand Illinois Trail and link adjacent counties and communities across the metropolitan area. Together they provide numerous non-motorized transportation alternatives for residents and economic benefits from tourism.

As you know, the District has been working with the City to enhance these trail connections to the maximum extent possible. The City's plan to create a multi-modal corridor plan through downtown Joliet from I-80 to Route 30 will provide a critical link that will tie all of the bicycle trails together and create a great opportunity for a bicycle hub at the new transportation center.

We applaud your efforts to better integrate the downtown as part of one continuous multi-modal corridor. Please let us know how we can be of assistance to make this happen. Best Wishes on the success of your grant and your vision for Joliet.

Sincerely,

Marcella M. DeMauro
Executive Director

openlands
conserving nature for life

Suite 1650 | 25 East Washington Street | Chicago, IL 60602-1708 | Tel: 312-863-6250 | Fax: 312-863-6251 | www.openlands.org

June 24, 2013

Mr. Kendall B. Jackson
Director of Planning
City of Joliet
150 W. Jefferson Street
Joliet, Illinois 60432

Re: CMAP Local Technical Assistance Grant Program application

Dear Mr. Jackson,

Openlands is pleased to hear that the City of Joliet is pursuing transportation planning assistance for the Chicago Street Corridor Plan through the CMAP/RTA Local Technical Assistance Program. Since 2008 Openlands has been working cooperatively with the Cities of Joliet and Lockport, Forest Preserve District of Will County, and Lockport Township Park District to implement the recommendations in the Heritage Park Plan – Volume 2. A key transportation element of the Heritage Park Plan is achieving connections between the existing I&M Canal, Old Plank Road, and Wauponsee Glacial Trail systems into and through downtown Joliet, including connection to the City's new transportation center. These connections would also link downtown Joliet to the wider Grand Illinois Trail system which connects numerous communities throughout northern Illinois.

Openlands is happy to support Joliet's proposed grant application as it will facilitate the City of Joliet and its partners in realizing the trail/transportation connections mentioned above. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gerald W. Adelmann
President & CEO

WILL COUNTY LAND USE DEPARTMENT
58 E. Clinton Street, Suite 500 • Joliet, Illinois 60432
815/774-3321 • Fax 815/727-8638

June 24, 2013

Mr. Randy Blankenhorn
Executive Director
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
233 South Wacker (Willis Tower), Suite 800
Chicago, Illinois, 60606

Re: Local Technical Assistance Program/Chicago Street Corridor Plan

Dear Mr. Blankenhorn:

As Will County Executive, I oversee the operations of the Will County Land Use Department. The City of Joliet is submitting an application that is seeking assistance from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) through the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program. The project as outlined would help develop a Chicago Street Corridor Plan, assess options for better access and linkage to the new multi-modal Joliet Gateway Transportation Center, and to provide improved access from the I-80 interchange into downtown Joliet connecting to Route 30. Additionally, the City of Joliet would like to see the re-opening of Chicago Street to increase mobility, pedestrian, and vehicular access to the new transportation center, and help identify Chicago Street as the main downtown spine. Not only does this plan help Joliet, but it also ties together the Illinois Route 53 plan that CMAP is currently working on for Will County with the Unified Work Program.

I would like to express my support for and to strongly urge you to approve the attached application. Should you have any questions regarding the application, please contact Curt Paddock, Will County Land Use Department Director at (815) 774-4353.

Sincerely,

Curt Paddock
Director, Will County Land use Department

JOLIET CITY CENTER PARTNERSHIP
A Division of the Joliet/Will County Center for Economic Development

Two Rialto Square, 116 N. Chicago St., Suite 101, Joliet, IL 60432-4204
(815) 723-1800 • FAX (815) 723-6972

June 24, 2013

Kendall B. Jackson
City of Joliet
Community & Economic Development
150 W. Jefferson St.
Joliet, IL 60432

Dear Kendall,

Joliet City Center Partnership strongly supports the City of Joliet's request for a Local Technical Assistance Program/RTA - Community Planning Program Grant to identify options for solutions to improve access and linkage to the new multi-modal Joliet Gateway transportation center.

Working together, the City of Joliet and Joliet City Center Partnership have been actively involved in the revitalization of downtown Joliet. Through the collaborative efforts of business and property owners, city staff, and the downtown organization, a series of strategies have been created to spur on the downtown renaissance and improve the economic climate in downtown Joliet. The transportation center planning process will further engage downtown Joliet stakeholders as well as other community members in making decision which will have a lasting and positive impact on the future of downtown Joliet. The development of a Chicago Street Corridor Plan will ensure that multiple long-term benefits will be produced from the multi-modal transportation center project.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter of support.

Respectfully,

Pam Owens, Executive Director
Joliet City Center Partnership
116 N. Chicago St.
Joliet, IL 60432