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Route 53 extension vital for growth

It's no surprise that our region ranks among the worst in the nation for traffic congestion, because we experience it every day. If you travel in Lake County, you also know that gridlock is a serious problem that not only causes headaches for motorists, but also hinders economic development.

Right now, Route 53 North ends at Lake Cook Road, and we know that extending this road into Lake County would reduce congestion and open tremendous opportunities for economic growth and jobs, as well as help diversify our tax base, resulting in less reliance on property taxes for schools and taxing bodies in Lake County.

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The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's "GO TO 2040" plan recommended the extension of Route 53 as one of five major new capital projects across the region, stating that it would have "by far the highest congestion reduction benefits." I would like to express my appreciation to the Illinois Tollway Board for recognizing the Route 53 extension as a priority for this region's transportation system, and allocating funding in its proposed capital plan to conduct planning studies for the extension.

The tollway is holding several public hearings across the region in August to get input into its proposed plan. Over the years, we have heard a clear message of support for Route 53 from Lake County elected officials, regional stakeholders, and voters.

I encourage Lake County residents to attend these hearings and voice their opinion on this project.

David Stolman

Lake County Board Chairman; Co-Chair, Illinois Route 53 Blue Ribbon Advisory Council

Buffalo Grove