NEWSCLIP (312) 751-7300

Daily Herald

Arlington Hts, IL Published: Daily Circ: D-13,190

MAR 15, 2008

Incentives to ease traffic congestion

The Daily Herald's recent coverage has shed light on new ways being considered to relieve traffic congestion. This is a chronic and growing problem that costs our region billions in wasted fuel, time, and productivity. Each person traveling during peak hours in northeastern Illinois pays an average of more than \$1,000 per year in wasted time and fuel due to congestion. Those commutes will get longer as the region grows, and they could cause serious economic harm unless steps are taken now.

As a resident, would you rather buy more gas to sit longer in traffic or pay a toll that helps reduce your rush-hour commute time? Not every trip taken during peak hours is necessary. Given incentives to find other alternatives — whether to travel at a different time or to use alternative transportation — people may avoid rush-hour travel in numbers great enough to significantly reduce congestion

The federal government is considering a \$300 million grant for our region to see if it makes sense to implement managed lanes and other low-cost options that are working elsewhere. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning believes strongly that this public discussion is worthwhile. If funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation, that project would provide significant opportunities for such debate to occur.

Our agency was created to help decision makers and the public take a long-term approach to maintaining the region's quality of life. Metropolitan Chicago's transportation system is the engine of our economic prosperity, but right now, that engine needs fine-tuning to ensure that we're getting the most out of our

Fence Post

highway and transit investments.

Randy Blankenhorn
Executive Director
Chicago Metropolitan Agency
for Planning