

Bellwood Gets \$300K For Roadway Improvements Along Washington Blvd.

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Featured image: A section of Washington Boulevard in Bellwood, near Addison Creek. | File

The village of Bellwood recently received federal grant money and technical assistance for some major roadwork it's planning for two critical village corridors.

The village recently received \$300,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, to help fund improvements along the stretch of Washington Boulevard, between Addison Creek and Eastern Avenue. Work on those improvements will kick off in Sept. 4 and wrap up by Oct. 26.

During a recent interview, Bellwood Mayor Andre Harvey said that the Washington Boulevard improvements will include "grinding and resurfacing new sidewalks, new driveways, ADA-accessible crosswalks, curb and gutter replacement, storm sewer structure repair, asphalt replacement and pavement markings [repainting]."

In addition, a Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) pilot program that helps municipalities improve pavement conditions will provide engineering services at no cost for improvements along the section of St. Charles Road, between Mannheim Road and 25th Avenue. Work on this project isn't expected to start until the spring of 2019 at the earliest.

The village had originally went out to bid for the engineering services before signing up for the CMAP assistance. It's so far not known how much that assistance costs and whether or not the village will allocate the money it saved by utilizing CMAP for other purposes.

The St. Charles Rd. improvements are part of Bellwood's ongoing effort to create a "downtown" area. Earlier this year, the village received a \$600,000 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement grant and a \$150,000 grant from the Regional Transportation Authority.

Earlier this year, CMAP invited municipalities, county governments and other taxing bodies responsible for maintaining roads to apply for the funding. The agency received a total of 69 applications, and 12 communities, including Bellwood, were ultimately chosen. The memo stated that CMAP considered the size of the roadways, the community needs and what agencies were operating in the area.

The Bellwood Board of Trustees approved both the Washington Boulevard contract and a resolution approving the village's participation in CMAP's pilot program during a regular meeting on Aug. 15. **VFP**