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## **Public Concerns grow over the Route 53 extension planning process**

**HAWTHORN WOODS, IL** – For the second time in as many months five Village Mayors and Presidents from Lake County communities expressed their concerns regarding the extension of Route 53 through their communities in a July 28th letter sent to the Illinois Toll Authority and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). The letter, which was co-signed by Hawthorn Woods Mayor Joseph Mancino, Kildeer President Nandia Black, Long Grove President Angela K. Underwood, Mundelein Mayor Steve Lentz, and Round Lake Mayor Daniel A. MacGillis, communicates seven specific concerns regarding the planning process being pursued by outside agencies planning the Route 53 Tollway. These mayors represent five communities who will be directly affected by the plans to build the road, as they all lie within the proposed Route 53 road corridor. The proposed Tollway includes measures never seen before in Illinois, including a request for local villages to fund a portion of the regional tollway via local commercial property taxes and for a multi-agency regional planning council to oversee local land use on private property, statutorily within municipal planning control.

Several concerns with the process remain, including the lack of detailed information necessary to make an informed recommendation to the working groups. The Illinois Tollway and CMAP will be asking all communities and their taxing bodies to help fund the road from local property tax revenues in an anticipated TIF model, affecting school districts, fire districts, and other taxing bodies. Many municipalities wish to have these financial discussions with their respective agencies before committing any consideration of local revenues for a regional road.

The Tollway working groups are also requesting corridor communities to sign documents supporting the concept of prescribed land use planning, open space and density quotas, and other prescribed uses where regional planning guidelines would dictate land use on public and private property. Municipalities wish to have discussions with the private property owners affected, as this private property issue is of great concern to many Lake County families.

While these municipalities in the corridor have not taken a position of support or rejection of the Tollway itself, they have rejected the idea of a regional plan concept and local funding request. The municipalities also will not consider adopting any regional Corridor Plan as an addendum to their respective comprehensive plans as it would permanently limit the local jurisdictional authority of Mayors, Trustees, and the local citizens who wish to direct future land use. Information regarding these agreements has not been made available to the municipalities who will be asked to sign these documents, yet they are being asked to agree in concept to these scenarios. Any recommendations to the Tollway Authority would need to be vetted to all affected property owners, school and other taxing districts, and citizens impacted by the proposed alignment.

The committees are set to make a recommendation to the Tollway Authority to move forward with a \$100 million Environmental Impact Study and Phase One Engineering work. The letter makes clear this is of concern to the entire group. Hawthorn Woods Mayor Joseph Mancino stated “With the current fiscal condition of the state, why would we ask for this expenditure while all of these serious questions from the most critical stakeholders linger? To me that would be irresponsible to say the least.”

These five communities, Hawthorn Woods, Kildeer, Long Grove, Mundelein, and Round Lake, are the communities of Lake County which will be most seriously impacted by the extension of the Route 53 highway. The Blue Ribbon Advisory Council report stated that the Tollway would not move forward without a consensus. At the current state of the project planning process, these mayors and presidents state they cannot move forward with the process of consensus and recommendations until the issues are fully vetted by each municipality and their affected taxing districts, local land use authority is maintained, financing is in place from the Tollway and not from municipalities, and impacts, including elevated bridges spanning over communities, are publicly discussed with local residents and impacted taxing districts.

The five signees are members of either the OSNR Working Group and or the Cooperative Planning Strategy Working Group. The letter states, “Regrettably, absent the documentation and vetting of the above concerns, we cannot further support the actions of the working groups.”

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## **ABOUT THE VILLAGE OF HAWTHORN WOODS**

In 1958, Hawthorn Woods became Lake County's 31st municipality and distinguished itself as an upscale, friendly community that placed a high value on the protection of natural resources. Hawthorn Woods is recognized for its beautiful open spaces and park amenities as well as great schools, friendly business districts, and professional services. A full service Police Department, Public Works Department, Finance Department, Building Department, and Parks and Recreation Department all work together to provide excellence in service to the citizens, visitors, and business community of Hawthorn Woods. For more information, visit [www.vhw.org](http://www.vhw.org).