

Amy Salamon

From: R1 Planning Council <info@r1planning.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 6, 2024 3:49 PM
To: Amy Salamon
Subject: [Test] R1 Nov Newsletter - 2 Clean Energy Grants Invigorate N. IL

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Clean, Reliable Power for Rockford

Grant Win Supplies \$116 Million Investment to Enhance Grid Technology

Rockford will soon be a test site for cutting-edge electricity developments. These innovations will prepare the grid for challenges brought on by severe weather and expand access to carbon-free energy.

In short, the work done in Rockford will set a precedent for future energy generation, potentially to be adopted by power companies across the country.



The \$50 million Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership (GRIP) grant, issued by the U.S. Department of Energy, will use cutting-edge technology to better respond to severe weather and encourage renewable energy generation.

*In attendance for the announcement were (l to r) **Michael Dunn**, R1 Executive Director; **Tom McNamara**, Mayor of Rockford; **Gil C. Quiniones**, ComEd CEO; **JB Pritzker**, Governor of Illinois; **David M. Turk**, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy; **Arjun Krishnaswami**, U.S. Senior Policy Advisor for Clean Energy Infrastructure; and **Doug Scott**, Illinois Commerce Commission Chairman.*

It's all made possible by a \$50 million U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Smart Grid grant awarded to ComEd and R1 and announced on October 24. With a funding match from ComEd, a total \$116 million will be invested by 2029 in innovations to Rockford's energy grid. As a partner, R1 will work with ComEd over the next 12 months to identify target areas and energy needs for future advanced grid equipment installations and workforce development programs.

This grant will develop and test technologies that will:

- Allow power restoration quicker after severe weather events
- Accelerate the state's transition to clean energy
- Create clean energy job training programs
- Manage the energy load as more electric vehicles and solar energy panels connect to the grid

- Expand residential EV charging access, solar options, and vehicle-to-grid charging capabilities

This investment is made possible by the federal Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership (GRIP) program—the largest U.S. grid investment in history. Additionally, it supports the State of Illinois’s goal to reach 100 percent clean energy by 2050.



Northern Illinois
Council of Governments

Annual Legislative Luncheon

Wednesday, December 11, 2024	Ticket Costs:
11:00 am to 2:00 pm	\$60 per person
Hoffman House	\$600 per table of 10
7550 East State St. Rockford, IL 61108	

To reserve tickets, please contact Paige Witherow at pwitherow@r1planning.org by 5:00 pm on Wednesday, December 4.

About the Event

Northern Illinois state lawmakers will preview state legislation and policies that local governments should expect in 2025.

The panel discussion will include Representatives John Cabello, Joe Sosnowski, Dave Vella, Maurice West, and Senators Andrew Chesney, Steve Stadelman, and Dave Syverson.

Presented by:

FEHR GRAHAM
ENGINEERING & ENVIRONMENTAL

**CEJA Funding Brings Training for Solar, EV, Construction,
Advanced Manufacturing Careers**



*Rockford regional leadership showed strong support for the CEJA workforce training programs that are beginning now. In attendance at the press conference were (front, l to r) **Pastor Marvin Hightower**, CEO of Zion West Enterprise; **Jurea Crudup**, CEO of Awaken Foundation L3C; **Gina Caronna**, Executive Director of The Workforce Connection; (back, l to r) **Tianna McCall**, Senior Regional Economic Development Manager of IL DCEO; **Maurice West**, Illinois State Representative; **Tom McNamara**, Mayor of Rockford; **Dr. Howard Spearman**, President of Rock Valley College; **Michael Dunn, Jr.**, Executive Director of R1; **Steve Stadelman**, Illinois State Senator; and **Ben Bernsten**, President of Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois.*

Individuals in Winnebago, Boone and Stephenson Counties who are interested in solar panel installation; electric vehicle charging station installation, repair, and maintenance; and clean energy construction methods can receive job training now. These job and business development opportunities are only expected to increase in the coming years as the nation shifts toward clean energy production.

Green collar jobs and business development opportunities are now available thanks to millions of dollars that the State of Illinois has awarded to The Workforce Connection, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois and other Northern Illinois government and nonprofit organizations.

Funding and training are part of the State of Illinois' Climate & Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) legislation, which provides millions of dollars for a suite of programs that aim to make Illinois a nationwide leader in the clean energy sector while transitioning the state to 100% clean energy by

the year 2050.

This grant award and green collar job expansion was announced at a press conference on October 28 at the UW Health Sports Factory in downtown Rockford. The Workforce Connection, R1, Goodwill, Rock Valley College, Awaken Foundation and Zion West Enterprise are the cohort of organizations that will play key roles in conducting awareness and job training in Northern Illinois.



Housing Coordination Plan

R1 is seeking public input on regional and community housing needs in order to create a Housing Coordination Plan, a playbook of tactics regional leadership can follow to increase available housing and preserve existing housing over the next 5-10 years. Its aim is to provide housing choices that are affordable, accessible, healthy, safe, and equitable while making sure they are adaptable to each community's needs and character.

Fill out the Housing Needs Survey online at [Engage R1](#). It will be available through December 9.

Watch our tutorial, [How to Navigate Engage R1](#), for instructions on navigating the public engagement site and using its features.

Rockford Homeowners: Get Assistance with Lead Pipe Replacement



Join R1 and the Metropolitan Planning Council at a **November 20** event, Investing in Clean Water: Let's Get the Lead Out. This event will be held at 3:30 pm at the R1 office and will discuss solutions to reduce the financial burden to homeowners for lead pipe replacement.

The Metropolitan Planning Council is an independent Chicago planning organization that addresses equity issues within the urban built environment.

***Featured Policy:* Complete Streets**

Dedicated bus or bike lanes? *That's a complete street.*

Road resurfacing with wider sidewalks in an underserved neighborhood? *That's a complete street.*

A well-lit, protected pedestrian walkway alongside Main Street? *That's a complete street.*

Complete Streets are designed to enable safe use and support mobility for all users, regardless of age or ability. Along with those clear benefits, they improve public health and air quality, increase access to outdoor recreation, reduce roadway and vehicle maintenance costs, increase property values, enhance aesthetics, and improve neighborhood safety.



This complete street on Harlem Blvd. in Rockford contains a wide sidewalk over a median separating opposite lanes of traffic, making this neighborhood safer and more attractive.



State Street in downtown Belvidere is another recent Complete Streets project, featuring inviting storefronts, street lighting, protected walkway, and planters.

Why does it matter?

There are complete streets throughout the region, but still room for improvement. With that end in mind, the MPO Policy Committee formally adopted these standards into the MPO's planning and programming process earlier this year. The resulting Complete Streets policy requires that Complete Street design standards be incorporated in every transportation plan within the Metropolitan Planning Area. When feasible, they also must be included in any regional project that receives federal formula funding.

The ultimate goals of this policy are to:

- Create a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation system that supports compact, sustainable development as well as livable communities.
- Ensure all means of transportation are safe and easy to use for all users.
- Provide flexibility for different types of streets, areas, and travelers for an enhanced experience.

R1's Complete Streets policy also includes detailed design standards that municipalities can use when planning their roadway projects. This document can be found on Engage R1.

<https://engager1.mysocialpinpoint.com/complete-streets-design-standards>

R1 Website Receives Facelift



Collaborative Planning for Northern Illinois.
Region 1 Planning Council is empowering collaborative government planning, analytics, and outreach across Northern Illinois.

- Properties for Sale
- Events
- Projects at Engage R1
- Data
- Grants
- Procurement

Sustainability

About

Sustainability plays a pivotal role within R1, as it relates to all planning and program activities within the agency. Sustainability intersects with various disciplines including transportation, land use, housing, environment, economic development, community revitalization, and resiliency. The agency has long upheld and promoted sustainable development across the Rockford Region. In light of the escalating impacts of climate change, sustainability has now assumed an even greater prominence and priority within the agency.

R1 supports sustainability through:

- Comprehensive regional planning efforts that promote the preservation, protection, and enhancement of natural resources;
- Economic development that promotes the region's transition to a green economy and prioritizes the protection of the environment and its natural resources to improve quality of life and access to well-paying jobs;
- Revitalization of blighted properties to create healthier, more sustainable communities better equipped to handle the impacts of climate change.



Sustainability Projects

- Air Quality
- Climate Action Planning

Our website got a new look and we're excited to show it off!

We've revised and rebuilt r1planning.org to bring you a site that's more convenient with a fresh, modern feel. All the resources you typically use are still available, but they may be moved or need an updated bookmark.

Please be patient in the coming weeks as we make final changes. If you are having issues using the site or want to share comments, please send a message to info@r1planning.org.

Call for Projects

Submit Transportation Infrastructure Priorities Now



As the federally-designated Rockford Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), R1 is seeking eligible projects for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds.

This Call for Projects is open until November 29. At this time, the MPO intends to review applications for FY 2025-2029 apportionments allocated to the Rockford Urbanized Area.

See <https://r1planning.org/call-for-projects> for more information and eligibility for each of these programs.

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