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LONG GROVE AND HAWTHORN WOODS, IL – Mayors of Long Grove and Hawthorn Woods unite; ask Governor and Tollway to stop the \$50 Million Rt. 53 EIS

The consensus in Lake County opposing the Route 53 extension continues to grow among key stakeholders that had originally endorsed the road expansion into Lake County, but now have reversed their support based on financial, environmental, and taxation repercussions. Several members of the Blue Ribbon Advisory group, a consortium assembled to work with the Tollway, have withdrawn their support of the Route 53 extension including:

- Lake County Board Chairman Aaron Lawler who was also the chairman of the BRAC report
- Senator Terry Link who was also a member of the BRAC committee
- State Representative Rita Mayfield, also a member of the BRAC committee
- The Sierra Club, BRAC committee member
- Openlands, BRAC Committee member
- Liberty Prairie Foundation, BRAC committee member
- The Village of Long Grove

Additionally, over half of the municipalities along the Route 53 path now oppose endorsing the continuation of the expenditure of \$50 Million dollars, especially with the breaking news that IDOT projects will be suspended as a result of the state budget crisis. The following municipalities have declined to sign a letter of endorsement for the EIS:

- The Village of Long Grove
- The Village of Hawthorn Woods
- The Village of Mundelein

“It has become increasingly clear that the Route 53 project should not proceed now that the major stakeholders who worked to bring the road through our towns, farms, forests, and wetlands now oppose Route 53,” stated Mayor Joseph Mancino of Hawthorn Woods. “They have seen how the road would affect our business districts, what it would cost each taxpayer in Lake County, and the increased tolls that all users would need to pay. The strongest supporters from the BRAC planning group have now reversed their support,” Mancino remarked.

“With a growing lack of support from Lake County leadership, state senators and representatives, statewide environmental groups, and BRAC committee members, this project should not move forward,”

said Village President Angie Underwood of Long Grove. "Local road congestion needs to be addressed, but my board does not support the extension of Route 53 as the solution," she said.

Since the announcement from Lake County Board Chairman Aaron Lawlor that he will be joining other state officials and BRAC committee members in withdrawing support for the Route 53 extension, the State of Illinois is suspending new spending programs for road projects as a part of the state budget crisis fallout.

Village President Angie Underwood of Long Grove stated, "There are five municipalities in the direct path of this new road. With Mundelein's vote on record, we now have a strong consensus of communities against the endorsement of the EIS." President Underwood added, "Route 53 would have detrimental financial impacts for our residents and could result in new taxes and higher tolls for all Lake County residents. Long Grove has grave concerns with the impact of this road on our environment. In light of the growing state financial crisis, we are concerned that the strict environmental standards will be sacrificed," she added.

Mancino added, "The advisory group (BRAC) worked under an assumption that certain environmental standards would be in place to protect Lake County's most sensitive natural areas, and that the design and finances would be subject to local input. Those assumptions have been invalidated, leading to a mass exodus of support for a project that will increase taxes, increase tolls, devastate downtown businesses, and permanently destroy our environment. This project has become too expensive, the BRAC recommendations have been ignored, and the consensus to build the road has eroded," he stated. With Illinois Department of Transportation road projects now suspended because of the State budget crisis, Lake County leaders call upon the Governor and the Tollway Board to suspend the hiring of consultants, scheduled for August, for yet another \$50 Million study.

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