

Connect Illinois Network Founding Brief

Expanding access to transportation for every community in Illinois.
Revised October 2026

Who we are

Connect Illinois Network, Inc. is an Illinois nonprofit organization founded by Kyle Johansen. Our mission is to expand access to transportation for every community in Illinois. Connect Kane is our flagship program, focused on western Kane County.

Our statewide vision grows from local work: understanding the trips people need to make, researching the services available to them, and developing practical conversations with communities and transportation providers.

The access question

A transportation option is useful only if a person can complete the trip they need. Geography, operating hours, eligibility, accessible boarding, transfers, and the return journey all matter. A route on a map does not answer every access question.

Western Kane has existing transportation resources. Elburn has Metra UP-West rail service, and DeKalb operates the Route 12 Elburn shuttle. Nearby Pace On Demand services and Ride in Kane are also part of the service picture. Each has its own coverage and conditions of use. [1-5]

What we are doing

Research and documentation. We review existing services and investigate where necessary trips remain difficult to make. We are developing an Unmet Demand Registry to complement that research with resident input; registration is not open yet.

Policy and advocacy. We develop positions on transportation access using evidence that can be checked. Our goal is to make unmet needs visible while recognizing existing services and the operational work required to improve them.

Partnership development. We are preparing conversations with local governments, residents, and transit providers. Those discussions should establish the practical needs, responsibilities, and resources behind any proposed improvement.

Connect Kane: a local foundation

Our current research includes Elburn, Sugar Grove, Maple Park, Kaneville, and Big Rock. We are investigating first-mile connections to existing transit and access to work, education, healthcare, and everyday destinations.

We will develop specific service proposals through research and local conversations. Service boundaries, fares, costs, funding, and operating arrangements require provider and community input before they can be presented as a deliverable plan.

Regional change and our position

NITA began operations on September 1, 2026, replacing the Regional Transportation Authority in the Chicago region. [6] CIN advocates for planning that considers the trips people cannot currently make, alongside use of existing services. This is CIN's policy perspective, not a description of an approved project or funding allocation.

A statewide ambition

Our long-term goal is a repeatable approach that helps Illinois communities develop stronger transportation connections. Connect Kane is the foundation we are developing; statewide expansion is an ambition, not a claim of an operating statewide network.

Sources and current service information

Service information reviewed October 8, 2026. The sources below document existing services and NITA's operational launch. Provider schedules, eligibility, and booking rules should be checked before travel.

[\[1\] Village of Elburn: Metra station](#)

[\[2\] City of DeKalb: Route 12 Elburn shuttle](#)

[\[3\] Pace: St. Charles-Geneva On Demand](#)

[\[4\] Pace: Batavia On Demand](#)

[\[5\] Kane County: Ride in Kane](#)

[\[6\] NITA: September 1, 2026 launch announcement](#)

[CIN service guide](#)

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