



## **Appendix C**

### **Public Involvement and Agency Coordination**

#### **C11 COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING MINUTES**



# CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

*Moving Forward Together*

75th St. CIP  
One North Franklin  
Suite 500  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
[www.75thcip.org](http://www.75thcip.org) ♦ [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org)

## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** April 19, 2011

**Time:** 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

**Place:** Chicago Public Library, Wrightwood-Ashburn Branch  
8530 S. Kedzie Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** Initial 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) West Community  
Advisory Committee Meeting

## Meeting Participants:

Members Attending	
Name	Representing
Marquette Dunn	18 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Elder Donald Meeks	The Monument of Faith Evangelistic Church
Jeannette Purnell	Triple Street Block Club
Daisy Ryan	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block Clubs
Tony Philbin	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Georgia Sanders	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Glorietta Jones	Neighborhood Interests
Others Attending	
Alderman Lona Lane	18 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Chaquita Starks	18 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Aaron Purnell	Triple Street Block Club
Carlos Nelson	Local Facilitator/Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
Project Team Members Attending	
Larry Wilson	IDOT
Jakita Trotter	IDOT
Joe Alonzo	CDOT
Doug Knuth	Jacobs
Gretchen Wahl	Jacobs
Denise Zerillo	Jacobs
Pam Miller	Jacobs
Nancy Seeger	Nancy Seeger Associates
Nick Busalacchi	HNTB



## Summary of Meeting

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has formed two advisory groups to reach out to individuals and organizations from the neighborhoods surrounding the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP study area. Given the size of the study area, it was determined that two groups (instead of one group) would provide the team with more specific information and allow for more substantive input. Therefore, a West Community Advisory Group and an East Community Advisory Group were convened, and their first meetings were held on April 19 and 20, 2011, respectively. In forming the West Community Advisory Group, invitations to participate were sent to 27 individuals and representatives from businesses, police and fire districts, not-for-profits, churches, schools and other stakeholders who work daily for the benefit of their communities.

This first meeting of the West Community Advisory Group was specifically aimed at providing information to group members about the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP and soliciting their input about project-related transportation and community concerns.

As attendees arrived they were handed a folder that contained the following information:

- Meeting Agenda
- Role of the Community Advisory Group
- Photo Release Form
- Public Involvement Fact Sheet
- Environmental Impact Statement Fact Sheet
- Ice Breaker Blank Card
- Project Brochure
- PowerPoint Presentation Printout
- Exhibits Printout

### Pre-meeting exercise

As each member entered the meeting, they were provided with an index card that read: "How would you describe your community in three words or less?" The purpose of this exercise was for the project team to better understand the context of the project. These cards were then placed on a wall for all to review. The words used to describe the community included:

- Wonderful, Happy, People
- Need More Improvement
- Clean, Large Family, Concerned
- Fluid
- Diverse, Concerned, Pro-Active
- Changing, Friendly, Beautiful
- Concerned, Active, Committed
- Capable, Concerned, Willing
- Neglected, Disenfranchised, Exploited



## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Jakita Trotter, IDOT Community Relations Manager, welcomed the group and thanked everyone for coming. She reviewed the agenda and asked each project team member to introduce themselves and their role. She then asked the attendees to introduce themselves and the group, organization or neighborhood they were representing.

## **II. Role of the Community Advisory Group**

Jakita explained that the role of the Community Advisory Group is to help the study team understand community concerns and issues as they relate to the project; build a relationship between the project team and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods; and distribute accurate and timely project information to the community. She further explained that the intent of this first meeting was to initiate dialogue about the transportation problems within the community to help develop the project's problem statement. The input obtained from this group and other stakeholder meetings will be incorporated with the technical information gathered to produce the project's official "Purpose and Need." After presenting the purpose and need to the public, the team will then develop project alternatives with these needs in mind.

## **III. CREATE Program**

Larry Wilson, IDOT's CREATE Section Chief, gave a brief description of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program and explained that the program's goals are to reduce rail and roadway congestion; improve passenger and freight rail operations; and enhance overall rail safety and service. He told the group that CREATE is a partnership between the Federal Highway Administration, IDOT, the Chicago Department of Transportation, and the Association of American Railroads.

## **IV. Project Overview**

Doug Knuth, Jacobs' project manager for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, provided members with an overview of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. He reviewed a map that showed the environmental boundaries, or study area, of the project and described the key transportation problems known to exist. He explained that while the project team understands many of the transportation issues, it is important that we incorporate the concerns and issues of those living in the surrounding neighborhoods to completely understand the area's transportation problems.

## **V. Community Profile**

Carlos Nelson led the community profile by telling the group that this exercise is a "visioning" process. He explained that the railroads have been around for 160 years and that Chicago exists in large part because of the existence of the railroads. Carlos noted that the communities now live in the shadow of trains; freight and passenger railroads are all over the South Side. He stated that there are positives and negatives to living with the railroads, and although neighborhood improvements related to the railroads





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are needed, people are happy living in this community. That fact was further demonstrated by the responses members wrote on the cards as they entered the meeting (described above).

To help the team better understand group members' thoughts on the community, the project team asked members to respond to a series of questions. These responses were summarized on large index cards and posted on the wall beneath several headings. This "visioning session" is summarized in the table below:

Questions Asked	Responses
What makes our community unique? What do you like best about where you live?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Transport</li> <li>➤ City Employees Civil Servants</li> <li>➤ Stable</li> <li>➤ Help Police (Wrightwood)</li> <li>➤ Diversity Engagement</li> <li>➤ Growing Scholars at Leo, Luther South &amp; St. Rita's</li> <li>➤ Good Elected Officials</li> <li>➤ Good Business</li> <li>➤ Community Participation</li> </ul>
What is your vision for our community in 10 years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Use Tracks at 71<sup>st</sup></li> <li>➤ Employer (Big)</li> <li>➤ Factories (better jobs)</li> <li>➤ RR Employment</li> <li>➤ Decent Stores</li> <li>➤ Vacant lots southwest of Columbus off Western. Develop? Belongs to?</li> <li>➤ Railroad Beautification</li> <li>➤ Community Effort</li> <li>➤ Monument of Faith Wants Partner for Youth Community Center (CSX is a neighbor)</li> <li>➤ Tax Dollars Spent in the Community Should Facilitate Local Job Creation</li> <li>➤ Community Centers</li> <li>➤ Help Youth</li> <li>➤ "Gary Comer" Type Facility</li> </ul>
What are the biggest strengths of our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Affordable Vibrant "Like New Homes"</li> <li>➤ Improvements</li> <li>➤ 79<sup>th</sup> Corridor Great Business Potential</li> <li>➤ Transportation</li> <li>➤ Diversity of All Kinds</li> </ul>



<p>What are you most proud of about our community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ New Retirement Home</li> <li>➤ New Charter School</li> </ul>
<p>What don't you like about your neighborhoods?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Trains Run All the Time Through the Neighborhood But Contribute Nothing to the Community</li> <li>➤ Rodents</li> <li>➤ Trains Sit</li> <li>➤ Horns</li> <li>➤ CSX Fencing Near Standing Trains</li> <li>➤ Grade Separation at Columbus</li> <li>➤ Hoyne &amp; 79<sup>th</sup></li> <li>➤ Turn Signal 74<sup>th</sup> &amp; Western</li> <li>➤ Trains Always Run/Idle</li> </ul>

## VI. Existing Condition

Doug Knuth provided an overview of what is currently known about the existing transportation problems from the project team's standpoint. He explained that the number of junctions and the short distance between them force trains to wait their turn to cross, causing delays in the system. He further explained the specific problems at the Forest Hill, Belt and 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junctions. When a train stops at one junction, it often blocks an adjacent junction, resulting in idling trains. This causes much of the noise and fumes that many members expressed as concerns during the visioning session. Metra's SouthWest Service shares track with the freight rail in sections of the study area, severely restricting freight traffic during peak times when Metra has priority.

These conditions also present environmental issues, since idling trains can cause noise and air pollution. This point was reiterated several times by group members. Additionally, train delays cause roadway delays. Vehicles must wait to cross the railroad tracks in several locations while the trains are waiting for junctions to clear. This can present safety risks to motorists and pedestrians wishing to cross the tracks, an issue also mentioned by group members.

Doug showed the group photographs of several viaducts and their current conditions. During the meeting, members expressed concern about the condition of these structures.

## VII. Community Issues

Two large aerial maps were set up on which members marked specific locations where they had project-related concerns and identified opportunities for improving their neighborhoods. Members were also asked to think about how people get to church, what challenges arise as children go to school, how emergency vehicles circumnavigate the railroad conflicts, and how people access local businesses.



The comments captured on the boards **by both groups, at both meetings**, are detailed here:

### General

- Pulaski/87<sup>th</sup> St./Columbus/Norfolk Southern (NS) – “Mess, unsafe, Metra/auto traffic”
- Columbus Ave/BRC highway-rail grade crossing – “Can’t get to church”
- West of Western, southeast of Columbus – “Clean up” vacant land
- Along east side of CSX tracks adjacent to Forest Hill Yard – “Vegetation, drainage”
- Suggestion to contact Freedom Temple Church of God (1459 W 74<sup>th</sup> St)
- Loomis at viaduct – “Surface Street”
- 73<sup>rd</sup> St. & CWI rail line – “Dangerous – free access to trains”
- 76<sup>th</sup> St. & Normal – “Bad left turn”
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. from Rock Island tracks to Dan Ryan Expressway – “Streetscaping”
- Area bound by 83<sup>rd</sup> St./Dan Ryan Expressway/Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) Tracks/NS Tracks - New Special Service Area (SSA)
- East side of BRC tracks from 87<sup>th</sup> St. to Dan Ryan Expressway – “Dumping”
- East side of NS tracks south of 79<sup>th</sup> St. – “Deterioration of the tracks, greenery between track and alley”
- St. Denis Church (8301 S St. Louis Ave) – “Trains delay services”
- East of Kedzie, south of BRC tracks – “Industrial development opportunity”
- Rockwell St. south of 74<sup>th</sup> St. – “Senior housing, noise, fumes, idling”
- 69<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX – Emergency responders have neighborhood access issues at 69<sup>th</sup> St. and the CSX tracks because the street immediately parallel to the CSX tracks—Hamilton St.—is one-way. Responders need to use the second north-south street (instead on the first), travel north, and loop back down south to be able to access certain houses on Hamilton St.
- 71<sup>st</sup> St. & CSX – “Noise, idling, vibration, fumes, beautification”
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. east of CSX – “we recently got \$513,000 in TIF money to lower street under the viaduct/bridge so trucks can get to Aldi’s and other businesses”
- South of 79<sup>th</sup> St., West of Ashland - “JOBS” written large and circled. 76<sup>th</sup> St. between viaducts – “Traffic (stop sign)”

### Viaduct-related

- “Bad Viaducts”
  - Ashland Street
  - Loomis Street
  - Aberdeen Street
  - Morgan Street
  - Union Street
  - 72<sup>nd</sup> Street (both)
  - 74<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 75<sup>th</sup> Street
  - 76<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 78<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 80<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 81<sup>st</sup> Street (both)
- Halsted Street – “Water on sidewalk”
- Union Street – “Poor” – presumably refers to condition of viaduct
- 78<sup>th</sup> Street (both) – “Lighting, dumping, concrete, water, visibility”
- 80<sup>th</sup> Street (both) – “Brick paving poor condition, dark”



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### *New Development*

- Wal-Mart – 71<sup>st</sup> St. & Western
- Wal-Mart – Lakeside metals site at 76<sup>th</sup> St. & Ashland
- Super Wal-Mart – South of 83<sup>rd</sup> St., west of Lowes
- Aldi – South of 85<sup>th</sup> St., west of ICE movie theater

### *Outside Study Area*

- Western at CSX tracks – *“Low viaduct, water on street/sidewalks”*
- 87<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX tracks – *“ER can’t get through to 95<sup>th</sup> & California”*
- 87<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX tracks – *“Trains idle, blow horns at night”*
- 95<sup>th</sup> St. & Kostner – Hospital (Advocate Christ Medical Center) trauma center labeled
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. & Central Park – *“Children crossing while train is idling. Train sits too long.”*
- 83<sup>rd</sup> St. & CSX – *“Quiet zone, train horns and fumes, beautification, viaduct, noise”*

## **VIII. Next Steps**

The first public meeting for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will be held in early June 2011. The public will be contacted with meeting details in the upcoming month. Also, the next Community Advisory Group meeting is anticipated for later this summer.

Community Advisory Group Members and the general public can contact the project team via email at [info@75thCIP.org](mailto:info@75thCIP.org) or mail at:

75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP  
One N. Franklin, Suite 500  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Attn: Doug Knuth

Additional project information and an online comment form are available on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP website at [www.75thCIP.org](http://www.75thCIP.org).

Members of the project team are also available to meet with local groups and should contact the team to arrange such a meeting.

All attendees were thanked for their participation and for setting aside their time to provide their valuable thoughts and concerns to the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team.

## **IX. Other Comments (C) and Questions (Q)**

Throughout the meeting, questions were asked and comments were made. These comments and questions are captured below:



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- Q: Why do the trains blow their horns late at night at 79th St. and Hoyne and other locations?**
- A:** There are several times when trains are required by federal law to blow their horns. For instance, if a train has been stopped for a while, then one blast of the horn signals that it is moving. Trains also sound their horns when they approach an at-grade roadway crossing to make sure vehicles know the train is coming. Communities can apply for quiet zones to help reduce the need for trains to sound their horns. Quiet zones must be applied for through the City and require federal approval.
- C: The fumes from idling trains are very strong.**
- A:** A major goal of this project is to “untangle” train tracks so that trains spend less time idling in the project study area. This would reduce fumes from idling trains.
- Q: CSX used to have barbed wire fencing up around their salt piles. Instead of protecting just the salt, why doesn't CSX fence all the tracks to prevent railcar theft on idling trains? Railcar theft happens a lot.**
- A:** Theft from idling trains certainly presents another reason to improve the flow of trains.
- C: The Wards have contacts with the railroads and we have been trying to get them to beautify the area.**
- Q: How does this project eliminate the bottleneck? That sounds like a scheduling issue to me on the part of the railroads. Why do they schedule the trains so close if they know they can't get through?**
- A:** We want to eliminate the bottlenecks. These trains are coming from all over the country and it's impossible to schedule them precisely enough so that none has to wait at the bottlenecks.
- C: You talk about the businesses in the area. Businesses are moving out of the City because of tax incentives from other municipalities.**
- C: People in Wrightwood are concerned about the need to help police keep crime down. It's the second biggest district in the City and they just can't do it all by themselves.**
- C: St. Rita's has the biggest freshman enrollment of all parochial schools. They come from inside and outside the City, even though it costs something like \$9,500 a year.**
- Q: How about jobs in the community to fix the railroads? Even if they do send people in to fix the tracks, the workers are not people from the area.**
- A:** The railroads are major employers in the area. Six hundred people living in the area work for the freight railroads.



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- Q:** Six hundred people out of a population of how many? That may not be an impressive figure. The railroads are a major inconvenience to the area. We want more than trees and grass. We want jobs so we can pay our mortgages and our children's college tuition.
- A:** We will find out more information about that statistic.
- C:** We (the project team) have to obtain and integrate input for the project's purpose and need. We need an understanding of what we want to accomplish from the railroads and the community. We will get better results if we first understand the problems, from both a technical and a community perspective. The only comparable railroad project in terms of the amount of community involvement is the Alameda Corridor in California.
- Q:** We want reinvestment in our community. Our communities do not have a money problem; it is a *distribution* problem. CSX makes so much money, it should reinvest in the community. Our church (the Monument of Faith Evangelistic Church) has 13.5 acres along the tracks and there is a lot of trash we have to clean up. We help the railroad; what is railroad doing for us?
- A:** We are hoping to be better neighbors through this project. This project is funded by IDOT, the Association of American Railroads, the City of Chicago, and the Federal government.
- C:** Our church (the Monument of Faith Evangelistic Church) has 4,500 parishioners. We need a turn signal at 74<sup>th</sup> Street. When the light is green, only one car can get through. People who take a bus to services are delayed by the train. We need an overpass or underpass.
- C:** This is a massive project funded partly by our tax dollars. Some of that money needs to go back to support local jobs.
- C:** Students trying to reach Bogan High School often walk between the cars of stopped trains.
- C:** The areas of 83<sup>rd</sup> St. and Rockwell St., Landers Yard, Forest Hill, 70<sup>th</sup> St. and Lawndale St. all have idling trains, and excessive blowing horns.
- C:** We need beautification of railroad property. There are weeds and garbage that need to be cleaned up throughout the neighborhood. The railroads could hire local people to clean that up.
- C:** Residents of the new senior housing facility at 74<sup>th</sup> and Rockwell St. [Senior Suites at 7430 S. Rockwell St.] complain about hearing the trains all the time.



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**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Meeting Date:** April 20, 2011

**Time:** 9:00 am to 11:00 am

**Place:** Catholic Charities' St. Leo's Residence  
7750 S. Emerald Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** Initial 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) East Community Advisory Group Meeting

**Meeting Participants:**

<b>Members Attending</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Connie Daniels	Neighborhood Interests
Ericka Hall	Neighborhood Housing Service/AmeriCorps VISTA - Auburn Gresham
Officer Maurice Thigpin	Chicago Police Dept., Sixth District
Lauren Lowery	Neighborhood Housing Service – Auburn Gresham
Edward T. McKinnie	Black Contractors United
Pastor Walter Matthews	Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church
Amanda Norman	Neighborhood Interests
Elder Willard Payton	New Birth Church of God in Christ
Pastor Lethaniel Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Betty Swanson	Neighborhood Interests
Carlos Nelson	Local Facilitator/Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
<b>Others Attending</b>	
Alderman Latasha Thomas	17 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Bert Smith	Veterans Employment Program
Eddie Taylor	St. Leo's Residence
Cheryl Johnson	Consultant to 17 <sup>th</sup> Ward & Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
Keevin Woods	17 <sup>th</sup> Ward
<b>Project Team Members Attending</b>	
Larry Wilson	IDOT
Jakita Trotter	IDOT
Laura Wilkison	CDOT





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“How would you describe your community in three words or less?” The purpose of this exercise was for the project team to better understand the context of the project. These cards were then placed on a wall for all to review. The words used to describe the community included:

- Empowered
- Potential, Historical, Promising
- Unemployed
- Challenging
- Cultural diversity
- Quality of Life
- Energy
- Confident, Proud, Revitalizing
- In need of construction





- Promising, Great Potential
- Tremendously exciting

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Jakita explained that the role of the Community Advisory Group is to help the study team understand community concerns and issues as they relate to the project; build a relationship between the project team and the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods; and distribute accurate and timely project information to the community. She further explained that the intent of this first meeting was to initiate dialogue about the transportation problems within the community to help develop the project's problem statement. The input obtained from this group and other stakeholder meetings will be incorporated with the technical information gathered to produce the project's official "Purpose and Need." After presenting the purpose and need to the public, the team will then develop project alternatives with these needs in mind.

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Questions Asked	Responses
What makes our community unique? What do you like best about where you live?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Settled, Solid, Together</li> <li>➤ Dynamic</li> <li>➤ Changes</li> </ul>
What is your vision for our community in 10 years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Knowing Impacts</li> <li>➤ Quality of Life Improvement</li> <li>➤ Economic Stimulus</li> <li>➤ Create Jobs</li> </ul>
What are the biggest strengths of our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ People Infrastructure</li> <li>➤ Mighty 17<sup>th</sup></li> <li>➤ Partnerships</li> </ul>
What are you most proud of about our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lagoon</li> <li>➤ Beautiful</li> <li>➤ Work Well Together</li> <li>➤ Friendly</li> <li>➤ SOS Village</li> <li>➤ St. Leo Residence</li> <li>➤ History</li> </ul>
What don't you like about your neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CSX Tracks</li> <li>➤ Viaduct at 78<sup>th</sup> &amp; Fielding</li> <li>➤ Viaduct at 75<sup>th</sup> &amp; Ashland</li> <li>➤ Viaduct at 79<sup>th</sup> Wallace</li> <li>➤ Viaduct at 67<sup>th</sup>-69<sup>th</sup></li> <li>➤ CTA Route 24 Bus to Mall on 83<sup>rd</sup></li> <li>➤ Metra to 79<sup>th</sup> &amp; Fielding</li> <li>➤ Viaduct at 74<sup>th</sup>- Evanston, Normal, Parnell &amp; Lowell</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Viaducts near Wal-Mart</li><li>➤ Lack of Jobs</li><li>➤ Union Non-Members</li><li>➤ Contractors Don't Hire Local</li><li>➤ Impact to Homes?</li></ul>
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## VI. Existing Condition

Doug Knuth provided an overview of what is currently known about the existing transportation problems from the project team's standpoint. He explained that the number of junctions and the short distance between them force trains to wait their turn to cross, causing delays in the system. He further explained the specific problems at the Forest Hill, Belt and 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junctions. When a train stops at one junction, it often blocks an adjacent junction, resulting in idling trains. This causes much of the noise and fumes that many members expressed as concerns during the visioning session. Metra's SouthWest Service shares track with the freight rail in sections of the study area, severely restricting freight traffic during peak times when Metra has priority.

These conditions also present environmental issues, since idling trains can cause noise and air pollution. This point was reiterated several times by group members. Additionally, train delays cause roadway delays. Vehicles must wait to cross the railroad tracks in several locations while the trains are waiting for junctions to clear. This can present safety risks to motorists and pedestrians wishing to cross the tracks, an issue also mentioned by group members.

Doug showed the group photographs of several viaducts and their current conditions. During the meeting, members expressed concern about the condition of these structures.

## VII. Community Issues

Two large aerial maps were set up on which members marked specific locations where they had project-related concerns and identified opportunities for improving their neighborhoods. Members were also asked to think about how people get to church, what challenges arise as children go to school, how emergency vehicles circumnavigate the railroad conflicts, and how people access local businesses.

The comments captured on the boards **by both groups, at both meetings**, are detailed here:

### General

- Pulaski/87<sup>th</sup> St./Columbus/Norfolk Southern (NS) – “Mess, unsafe, Metra/auto traffic”
- Columbus Ave/BRC highway-rail grade crossing – “Can't get to church”
- West of Western, southeast of Columbus – “Clean up” vacant land
- Along east side of CSX tracks adjacent to Forest Hill Yard – “Vegetation, drainage”
- Suggestion to contact Freedom Temple Church of God (1459 W 74<sup>th</sup> St)



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- Loomis at viaduct – *“Surface Street”*
- 73<sup>rd</sup> St. & CWI rail line – *“Dangerous – free access to trains”*
- 76<sup>th</sup> St. & Normal – *“Bad left turn”*
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. from Rock Island tracks to Dan Ryan Expressway – *“Streetscaping”*
- Area bound by 83<sup>rd</sup> St./Dan Ryan Expressway/Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) Tracks/NS Tracks - New Special Service Area (SSA)
- East side of BRC tracks from 87<sup>th</sup> St. to Dan Ryan Expressway – *“Dumping”*
- East side of NS tracks south of 79<sup>th</sup> St. – *“Deterioration of the tracks, greenery between track and alley”*
- St. Denis Church (8301 S St. Louis Ave) – *“Trains delay services”*
- East of Kedzie, south of BRC tracks – *“Industrial development opportunity”*
- Rockwell St. south of 74<sup>th</sup> St. – *“Senior housing, noise, fumes, idling”*
- 69<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX – Emergency responders have neighborhood access issues at 69<sup>th</sup> St. and the CSX tracks because the street immediately parallel to the CSX tracks—Hamilton St.—is one-way. Responders need to use the second north-south street (instead on the first), travel north, and loop back down south to be able to access certain houses on Hamilton St.
- 71<sup>st</sup> St. & CSX – *“Noise, idling, vibration, fumes, beautification”*
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. east of CSX – *“we recently got \$513,000 in TIF money to lower street under the viaduct/bridge so trucks can get to Aldi’s and other businesses”*
- South of 79<sup>th</sup> St., West of Ashland - *“JOBS”* written large and circled. 76<sup>th</sup> St. between viaducts – *“Traffic (stop sign)”*

### *Viaduct-related*

- *“Bad Viaducts”*
  - Ashland Street
  - Loomis Street
  - Aberdeen Street
  - Morgan Street
  - Union Street
  - 72<sup>nd</sup> Street (both)
  - 74<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 75<sup>th</sup> Street
  - 76<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 78<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 80<sup>th</sup> Street (both)
  - 81<sup>st</sup> Street (both)
- Halsted Street – *“Water on sidewalk”*
- Union Street – *“Poor”* – presumably refers to condition of viaduct
- 78<sup>th</sup> Street (both) – *“Lighting, dumping, concrete, water, visibility”*
- 80<sup>th</sup> Street (both) – *“Brick paving poor condition, dark”*

### *New Development*

- Wal-Mart – 71<sup>st</sup> St. & Western
- Wal-Mart – Lakeside metals site at 76<sup>th</sup> St. & Ashland
- Super Wal-Mart – South of 83<sup>rd</sup> St., west of Lowes
- Aldi – South of 85<sup>th</sup> St., west of ICE movie theater



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### *Outside Study Area*

- Western at CSX tracks – *“Low viaduct, water on street/sidewalks”*
- 87<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX tracks – *“ER can’t get through to 95<sup>th</sup> & California”*
- 87<sup>th</sup> St. & CSX tracks – *“Trains idle, blow horns at night”*
- 95<sup>th</sup> St. & Kostner – Hospital (Advocate Christ Medical Center) trauma center labeled
- 79<sup>th</sup> St. & Central Park – *“Children crossing while train is idling. Train sits too long.”*
- 83<sup>rd</sup> St. & CSX – *“Quiet zone, train horns and fumes, beautification, viaduct, noise”*

### **VIII. Next Steps**

The first public meeting for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will be held in early June 2011. The public will be contacted with meeting details in the upcoming month. Also, the next Community Advisory Group meeting is anticipated for later this summer.

Community Advisory Group Members and the general public can contact the project team via email at [info@75thCIP.org](mailto:info@75thCIP.org) or mail at:

75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP  
One N. Franklin, Suite 500  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Attn: Doug Knuth

Additional project information and an online comment form are available on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP website at [www.75thCIP.org](http://www.75thCIP.org).

Members of the project team are also available to meet with local groups and should contact the team to arrange such a meeting.

All attendees were thanked for their participation and for setting aside their time to provide their valuable thoughts and concerns to the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team.

### **IX. Other Comments (C) and Questions (Q)**

Throughout the meeting, questions were asked and comments were made. These comments and questions are captured below:

**Q: People in our neighborhood need jobs, and this project will obviously hire a lot of people. However, we are often told that projects like this have to hire union members, and our people are not union members. Will you hire people from our neighborhoods?**

**A:** This is a difficult problem, but we will do what we can. President Obama issued an executive order supporting project labor agreements and these can be used to encourage more focus on



training and jobs within local neighborhoods. Some federal agencies have developed policies to support these agreements; however, the US Department of Transportation has not made a ruling on this matter yet.

**C: The unions are “closed shops” right now because of the economy. They have people who aren’t working, who are “on the bench”. They aren’t allowing new people to join.**

**Q: How will this project affect the homes at 75<sup>th</sup> Street?**

**A:** We will be looking at the whole range of options and impacts. One of the goals, for example, is to move Metra’s SouthWest Service line. In the summer, we’ll come back to you with a range of alternatives and ask for your input.

**Q: We want to know how this project will impact homes. We don’t like it when you hold meetings but don’t tell us what the impacts will be. Last time, you showed us a line on a map that represented the new railroad tracks, and we went out and figured out what properties would be affected. We have the PIN numbers of those properties. If you give us alternatives, what does this mean for the homes that are by the railroad tracks? What will be the disturbance?**

**A:** We know that several years ago we showed you a drawing of where we thought new railroad tracks might go. We have since restarted the process to develop an environmental impact statement, which demands a higher level of analysis and public outreach. We will look at several alternatives later in the process, and we will show them to you for your input. We will take steps to minimize impacts to homes. If a property needs to be acquired, we will follow the standards set forth by federal law and compensate the property owner accordingly.

**Q: Will representatives of the railroads attend the June public meeting?**

**A:** Yes. The railroads are part of the project team and will be asked to attend.

**Q: So, what you are saying is that plans are not finalized and that you will ask for our input. We will have a say and we will see our input incorporated into the final plan?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Why do railroads use double-stacked cars? They increase vibration.**

**A:** Railroads use double-stacked cars to lower the cost of transporting goods. We are conducting noise and vibration studies throughout the study area. We’ll take those measurements and then design to minimize noise and vibration levels.

**Q: Please be sure to measure noise levels at night. Railroads should minimize late night activity.**

**A:** The noise level will be the same during the day and the night. It may seem that the noise level is higher at night, but that is because there is more background noise during the day.



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- C:** **But more trains come through at night, often with double stacked cars!**
- R:** We're doing studies now on noise pollution, using vibration experts.
- C:** **The foundations of our homes are affected because the structures have experienced movement. I've seen it. You cannot address railroad transportation and NOT ADDRESS VIBRATION. Make it a high priority to work with the homeowners.**
- C:** **There is no viaduct in this area that we would walk under if we had a choice. The railroads and the City of Chicago need to be better partners. Improvements are needed to clean up the area because it is hazardous to our health. Lighting is marginal to bad, too.**
- Q:** **Have there been any discussions about hospitals and response times due to the trains?**
- A:** The City of Chicago has done an exercise with emergency responders throughout the City to identify emergency access issues at grade crossings.





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## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** August 26, 2011

**Time:** 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

**Place:** Thurgood Marshall Library  
7706 S. Racine Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** **Joint Meeting of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) East and West Community Advisory Groups – Discussion of Alternates**

## Meeting Participants:

Members Attending	
Name	Representing
Joseph Bornstein	Chicago Park District
Shirley Bryant	Block Club & CAPS – 6 <sup>th</sup> District
Steve Casey	Resident
Marilyn Chappell	Resident
James T. Drake, Sr.	7700 Hermitage Block Club & CAPS – 6 <sup>th</sup> District
Deborah Echols	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Ericka Hall	Neighborhood Housing Service/AmeriCorps VISTA - Auburn Gresham
Anita Heath	Stewart Business Center
Rochelle Ingram	SOS Children's Village
Belinda Henderson	Black Contractors United
Pastor Walter Matthews	Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church
Philip Mesina	Leo High School
Carlos Nelson	Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
Amanda Norman	Resident
Elder Willard Payton	New Birth Church of God in Christ
Tony Philbin	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Jeannette Purnell	Resident
Daisy Ryan	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block Club
Rosemary Richard-Sydnor	Resident
Pastor Lethaniel Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Betty Jo Swanson	Neighborhood Interests
Others Attending	
Aaron Purnell	Resident





Alderman Latasha Thomas	17 <sup>th</sup> Ward
State Representative Mary Flowers	31 <sup>st</sup> District
<b>Project Team Members Attending</b>	
Danielle Stewart	IDOT
Jakita Trotter	IDOT
Joe Alonzo	CDOT
Doug Knuth	Jacobs
Gretchen Wahl	Jacobs
Denise Zerillo	Jacobs
Mark Rinnan	Jacobs
Nancy Seeger	Nancy Seeger Associates
Nick Busalacchi	HNTB

### **Summary of Meeting**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a combined meeting of the two advisory groups for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP study area. This was the second meeting with the Community Advisory Group members, and this joint meeting took place on Friday, August 26, 2011 at the Thurgood Marshall Library. Twenty-one members attended. The purpose of the meeting was to review the alternates for the entire project study area, which the Project Team had developed after input from the two advisory groups helped them develop the project's Problem Statement and Purpose and Need.

As attendees arrived, they were given:

- Meeting agenda
- Photo release form
- Comment form
- Name tag
- Blank card for note taking
- Other materials as requested, including
  - 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP brochure
  - Environmental Impact Statement fact sheet
  - Context Sensitive Solutions fact sheet
  - CREATE employment opportunities fact sheet
  - City of Chicago and railroad contact information

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Jakita Trotter, IDOT Community Relations Manager, welcomed the group and thanked everyone for coming. She also thanked the group for their input in April, and said that the Community Advisory Groups' insight helped the Project Team develop the Problem Statement and Purpose and Need for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. She noted that at the last Community Advisory Group meetings, the Project Team said the



groups would meet again when the Project Team had developed alternates to address the transportation-related problems advisory group members helped identify.

Jakita Trotter recognized Alderman Latasha Thomas and asked her to say a few words. Alderman Thomas reiterated the importance of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program to the region. She also noted she has long said it is important as leverage for getting some attention to work needed in the community.

Jakita Trotter then introduced Danielle Stewart, IDOT's new CREATE Program Manager. Danielle Stewart said that as someone who has worked on environmental studies in the past, she knows that input from the community is extremely important. She stated that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is a very complex and challenging project for IDOT and for Chicago. She said that the Project Team was there to listen to the members of the Community Advisory Groups, and that the meeting was an important step in the process, as the Project Team presented to the Community Advisory Groups the alternatives that the Project Team has developed.

Jakita then reviewed the agenda, noting that Doug Knuth would show a PowerPoint presentation that explained the alternates for the project, and after the presentation the group would have the opportunity to break into small groups to review the alternates in detail.

A member of the West Community Advisory Group said that Alderman Lona Lane of the 18<sup>th</sup> Ward asked him to say at the beginning of the meeting that she had received no answer on her requests to have viaducts in the ward painted and cleaned. He questioned how he could trust the process on this project if it was so difficult to get those answers. Alderman Latasha Thomas of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ward said that it was important that the community members ask questions today and use their leverage throughout the process.

## **II. Alternates Presentation**

Doug Knuth, Jacobs' project manager for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, used a PowerPoint presentation to review with the group all of the alternates that are being considered to address the transportation-related problems identified in the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. These alternates will be combined into one or more Build Alternatives and compared to each other and to taking no action, known as the No-Build Alternative. A Range of Alternatives will be presented at the next public meeting. Doug Knuth invited the members of the Community Advisory Groups to break into smaller groups to discuss the alternates further.



## VIII. Discussion

Alderman Thomas asked that the Joint Community Advisory Group discuss the issue of the viaducts before breaking into smaller groups. She said that it was obvious from the presentation that the Project Team knows the community's concerns about the viaducts, and that the team knows what is needed. She said the community knows not all of their concerns can be addressed by the project, but the community doesn't know how much money needs to be obtained from other sources.

Doug Knuth acknowledged that since the viaduct issue was the newest issue the Project Team was working on, the Team was further behind on that issue than on some of the other issues. He said the team has conducted inspections on 36 viaducts, is conducting new inspections, and is pushing for viaduct improvements. He said maintenance and aesthetic improvements cannot be considered part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.

Alderman Thomas asked for a cost estimate for viaduct improvements. She said that she understands that some of this work can be attached to the project and some cannot. She asked that IDOT, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), and the railroads figure out the estimated costs so the community can start identifying and working to identify funding sources and secure funding for the viaduct improvements not covered by the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.

An attendee pointed out that many of the viaduct issues are health and safety issues, not just aesthetic issues. He stated he does not want to wait for these repairs when his son can't safely ride his bike under the viaducts now, and when there are robberies taking place under the viaducts. He pointed out that the two viaduct entrances to Hamilton Park are crime-ridden and asked how much it would cost to make them safe and operational. He said he will support the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, but not if the team cannot resolve some of these issues in the short term.

Doug Knuth pointed out that project funds will not be available until the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Environmental Impact Statement is completed. He stated that the City of Chicago is currently making improvements at two viaducts—Morgan St. and Peoria St.

Alderman Thomas said she agreed with the attendee. She said the community knows the Project Team needs to complete the study and that the Team is aware of the other community issues such as viaducts. She said the community needs to know how much viaduct improvements will cost.

A pastor stated the community needs the project team to be proactive so they can support the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. He said while they want freight to move quickly through the community and the other improvements the project will bring, there are some short-term improvements that need to be made.

Alderman Thomas said the group expected an answer at the next meeting.



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Doug Knuth asked the group what their priorities would be if they had money separate from the project.

A Community Advisory Group member pointed out that money was being spent on the project; for instance, it took money to come to the Joint Community Advisory Group meeting to present the project. She said the Project Team needs to tell its partners, "Take care of what you got; build on what you have." She said the Project Team has not given the Community Advisory Groups any new information, and the advisory groups could not be expected to discuss theoretical viaduct improvements without more information.

Alderman Thomas pointed out that there were two pockets of money to be discussed. The first was the money to address current issues. The second was the CREATE project funds. The Environmental Impact Statement has to be completed to get funding for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. It requires public involvement, and the Project Team has to spend money to present and explain the project. She stated that only some of the viaduct problems can be resolved with project money, so the community needs to go after other sources of funding. She stated that the Community Advisory Group couldn't answer questions about priorities because they don't know what the viaduct improvements cost.

Doug Knuth stated that there were many sources of funding for viaduct improvements, but that all of them are tight right now.

A resident asked that the viaduct at 83<sup>rd</sup> and Vincennes be made a priority. It is in bad shape and heavily used by students from Simeon High School, and a new Wal-Mart will be built nearby.

Joe Alonzo and Doug Knuth pointed out that viaduct inspections were added to the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP because of community input.

A participant stated that the complaints about the viaducts have been lingering for years, and that the community feels it has been treated with contempt. She asked what the community could expect from the project: safety, economic development, jobs? She said that if the community couldn't get these from the project, then the tax dollars used to support it should be spent elsewhere. She stated that the railroads are private companies, and community members are the public.

Alderman Thomas pointed out that there was no one from the meeting from the railroads. She stated that the railroads were slow to listen to the community's complaints, and that they are only interacting with the public because the federal government requires them to get community input. We are asking them to take care of their own property.

Jakita Trotter stated that the railroads were not at the meeting because it is a Community Advisory Group meeting. Railroad representatives go to public meetings, which are more formal. Since the group wants to meet with railroad representatives, they will be included in the next Community Advisory Group meeting.



A resident stated that he would not voice an opinion on the alternates until the right people were at the meeting so that they would understand the issues.

Jakita Trotter said she understood that the viaducts were a big issue, and that the group should wrap this meeting up and set another meeting with the railroads present.

Alderman Thomas said that the railroads need to respond to community issues. The community needs some commitment from the railroads and some projected costs for viaduct improvements. One issue is revenue streams that the community can go after to fund improvements. Before we give our opinions on the alternates, we need to know where we stand with the railroads. If we can spend half of a meeting on these issues, then the Community Advisory Groups will discuss the alternates.

One member stated that the railroads have beautification programs, and asked why they can't come and talk about them. Another member stated that she was disappointed in the attendance at the public meetings. Alderman Thomas said that there had been several smaller meetings, so many people may have felt they didn't need to attend the public meetings. She said she felt the project area was well represented by the Community Advisory Group members in attendance.

Danielle Stewart stated that she understood the issues the Community Advisory Group members were explaining. She said she understood the need for funds for community improvements. She said that IDOT and CDOT would sit down with the railroads and talk about lighting, drainage, aesthetics, and other community concerns at the viaducts, and come back in about two weeks to discuss with the Community Advisory Groups. Alderman Thomas said that the railroads needed to be at that meeting as well.

A community leader stated that the railroads are stakeholders in the community and need to be at the table. He said that a government agency should not be a mediator between the railroads and the public. The public should be able to deal with them directly.

A member asked who is responsible for maintaining viaducts. Doug Knuth answered that it is complicated, but that generally CDOT is responsible for the pavement and drainage (although if drainage problems are related to railroad infrastructure, the railroads are responsible), CDOT is responsible for lighting, sometimes IDOT is responsible for roads, and that the railroads are responsible for the structure itself.

Alderman Thomas said all parties need to be in the room when we discuss this issue. Whenever there is a meeting, fingers tend to point to the party who is not there.

Doug Knuth said that the railroads did attend the last public meetings, and it was very helpful and a good experience.



A community leader stated that if the Community Advisory Groups heard estimates at the next meeting, she could tell the community that the railroads have heard the concerns stated by the Community Advisory Groups. Everything the railroads do affects the community, especially children who have to walk through the viaducts.

Alderman Thomas then listed what was expected at the next meeting:

- Estimates on the repairs needed at the viaducts
- A representative for the railroads, or one from each railroad, to give some expectation on how they will treat their property
- This group will then discuss the alternates

Alderman Thomas and an East Community Advisory Group member stated that they expected the railroads to take care of their property. The East Community Advisory Group member stated that if his property looked like the railroads' property, he'd be issued a ticket. He said the railroads are affecting the health and safety of the community.

Several Community Advisory Group members asked how the team publicized public meetings. Jakita Trotter answered that the team placed ads in the *Sun-Times*, the *Defender*, the *Citizen*, and the *Southwest News-Herald*; left postcards at elected officials' offices, libraries, and businesses; put posters up in Metra stations; and mailed 2,000 postcards. The Community Advisory Group members suggested that the team consider radio notices and flyers. They also said that they would distribute flyers or postcards for the next meeting. One attendee noted it was hard to get the community to participate, pointing out that only 20% of the electorate voted in the last election. He asked that each Community Advisory Group member bring 10 people to the next public meeting.

## **IX. Closing and Next Steps**

Jakita Trotter thanked everyone for coming and said it had been a good meeting. She said that even though the Project Team did not achieve its goals for the meeting, the Project Team heard the community and will be prepared to answer their questions at the next meeting.

Danielle Stewart said the next meeting would be held on Friday, September 16 at 10:00 a.m. in the same room at the Thurgood Marshall Library. She said the group would discuss the viaduct concerns with the railroads and then go on to get community input on the alternates, with no PowerPoint presentation. She thanked everyone for coming.



## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** September 16, 2011

**Time:** 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

**Place:** Thurgood Marshall Library  
7706 S. Racine Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** **Joint Meeting of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) East and West Community Advisory Groups – Discussion of Viaducts and Alternates**

### Meeting Participants:

Members Attending	
Name	Representing
Adelle J. Brongiel	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Marilyn Chappell	Resident
James T. Drake, Sr.	7700 Hermitage Block Club & CAPS – 6 <sup>th</sup> District
Deborah Echols	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Anita Heath	Stewart Business Center
Lauren Lowery	NHS – Auburn Gresham
Rev. Donald Meeks	The Monument of Faith Evangelistic Church
Philip Mesina	Leo High School
Carlos Nelson	Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
Amanda Norman	Resident
Elder Willard Payton	New Birth Church of God in Christ
Tony Philbin	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Jeannette Purnell	Resident
Vonnie Keys for Daisy Ryan	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block Club
Rosemary Richard-Sydnor	Resident
Pastor Lethaniel Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Jack Peterson for Fire Chief Springer	Chicago Fire Department, District 5, Engine 54
Maurice Thigpen	Chicago Police Department, Sixth District
Others Attending	
Aaron Purnell	Resident
Alderman Latasha Thomas	17 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Keevin Woods	Chief of Staff to Alderman Thomas
Chaquita Stark	18 <sup>th</sup> Ward for Alderman Lane





Francis Bailey	Self
Shirley Bryant	Self
Daniel Coutee	IDOT Communications
Eugene Davis	IDOT Communications
<b>Project Team Members Attending</b>	
Danielle Stewart	IDOT
Jakita Trotter	IDOT
Joe Alonzo	CDOT
Jeff Sriver	CDOT
Tim Coffey	BRC
Tom Livingston	CSX
Nate Morriss	Metra
Chuck Allen	Norfolk Southern
Herb Smith	Norfolk Southern
Mike Payette	Union Pacific
Nick Busalacchi	HNTB
Doug Knuth	Jacobs
Pamela Miller	Jacobs
Mark Rinnan	Jacobs
Gretchen Wahl	Jacobs
John Wirtz	Jacobs
Denise Zerillo	Jacobs
Nancy Seeger	Nancy Seeger Associates

## Summary of Meeting

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a combined meeting of the two Community Advisory Groups for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP study area on Friday, September 16, 2011. This was the third meeting with the Community Advisory Group members, and this joint meeting took place at the Thurgood Marshall Library. Eighteen members attended. Since the last meeting, the Project Team developed estimated costs for improvements relating to the viaducts in the study area and broke those costs into those that may be eligible project costs and those that would not be eligible. This was done at the request of the Community Advisory Group members at the meeting on August 26. The group reconvened to review that data as well as to provide feedback on the alternates for the entire project study area.

As attendees arrived, the Project Team gave them a folder containing:

- Agenda
- Summary of August 26, 2011 Joint Community Advisory Group meeting
- Viaduct Key Map





- Viaduct PowerPoint presentation
- Maintenance Spreadsheet (not project-eligible)
- Overview of Project-Eligible Costs by Viaduct Spreadsheet
- Comment Sheet
- Photo Release Form

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Jakita Trotter, IDOT Community Relations Manager, opened the meeting and thanked guests for coming. She asked the Project Team to stand and introduce themselves. Chiquita Starks from Alderman Lona Lane's office and Keevin Woods, Chief of Staff with Alderman Latasha Thomas were acknowledged and asked to say a few words. Mr. Woods spoke briefly to the meeting participants (Alderman Thomas arrived shortly after the introductions). She then introduced Danielle Stewart, the IDOT CREATE Program Manager. Danielle explained that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Project Team had compiled the viaduct inspection results and some preliminary cost estimates for possible viaduct work in the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project study area. This information was prepared at the Joint Community Advisory Group's request. She explained that the goal of the meeting was to present the viaduct information to the Joint Community Advisory Group, then complete the discussion of alternates that the group began at the last Joint Community Advisory Group meeting on August 26, 2011.

## **II. Project Viaducts Presentation**

Jakita introduced Doug Knuth, the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project manager and he presented the viaduct inspection results and cost estimates the Project Team developed. The slides of his PowerPoint Presentation and two cost spreadsheets are attached.

Doug Knuth explained that the Project Team inspected 36 viaducts in the project study area and evaluated them in the following categories:

- Lighting
- Drainage – roadway and overhead bridges
- Roadway pavement
- Sidewalks and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps
- Bridge façade concrete

In general, viaduct lighting is the responsibility of the City of Chicago; the viaduct structure is the responsibility of the owner railroad; the roadway, pavement and ADA ramps are the responsibility of the government with the jurisdiction over the road (here, usually the City of Chicago); and drainage is the responsibility of the government with jurisdiction if the water comes from damaged or blocked drains, or the owner railroad if it comes from the viaduct structure.



The Project Team divided the work into two categories – maintenance work, which is not eligible for 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP funds, and replacement/reconstruction work, which could be part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.

For each category of work, Doug gave an inventory of potential work, divided into possible maintenance and possible project eligible work, and gave preliminary estimated costs for that work. This data is summarized in the spreadsheets distributed in the meeting folder.

In addition, this information has been shared with the entities responsible for viaduct maintenance – the City of Chicago and the railroads. City of Chicago repair crews get their work assignments from a list generated by calls to 311. All of the lighting and roadway issues have been added to that list.

Vegetation management was not included in the viaduct inspections, since it is always a maintenance issue. However, in reviewing viaduct photos, the Project Team noted that vegetation at the pedestrian viaduct at 73<sup>rd</sup> Street and Stewart was so overgrown that it posed a safety issue. The Project Team alerted the City of Chicago, which cut back the vegetation.

### **III. Project Viaducts Discussion**

One Community Advisory Group member asked if the viaduct at 73<sup>rd</sup> Street and Stewart was lighted. The Project Team said that there were no functioning lights at that viaduct. (A repair crew from the City of Chicago has since installed lights in the viaduct.) The member asked how viaduct repair had gotten so far behind. Alderman Thomas said that since 2008 the City of Chicago's electric crews have hired no new personnel. Therefore, the repair crews are half the size they were in 2007. Doug Knuth stated that community members should call 311 whenever they see lights out or other problems at viaducts. Later in the meeting, Alderman Thomas questioned the usefulness of the viaduct and the reasons for keeping it open. Doug Knuth posed the question to the group and suggested it be brought up for public input at the next public meeting. A member suggested that the viaduct should be kept open if it is used, but otherwise should be closed. Doug said people might not be using it now if they think it isn't safe. He suggested that we ask people at the public meeting in late October 2011 if money should be spent fixing the viaduct or closing it.

A Community Advisory Group member said that she felt there was a lack of communication between the railroads and the City of Chicago.

Another Community Advisory Group member stated that she had been calling 311 to report lights out at a viaduct outside the project study area for four months, and nothing has been done to repair it.

A Community Advisory Group member stated that vegetation control is important. She said that several years ago, someone dumped a body in the vegetation at 71<sup>st</sup> and Bell Ave. She said that all the



vegetation was cut down after that incident, but never again. She said that the railroads should make sure that their areas are cut and cleared. Doug stated that in these inspections the Project Team had focused on the viaducts. Chuck Allen said that NS cuts vegetation on its property every three weeks. Alderman Thomas said that the community doesn't see that maintenance. She said that is the reason the Joint Community Advisory Group wanted representatives from the railroads to be part of these discussions. She said that railroads are not only part of this project, they are part of the community. "You're part of us," she said. "You're our neighbors."

Another member asked how community members could identify specific viaducts when speaking to 311 or another entity. They asked if there was a numbering system or if signs could be installed. Doug said that there are no signs with numbers on the viaducts. Chuck Allen stated that if you call Sue Sardo at City of Chicago Streets and Sanitation with the address, she will forward the information to the correct person. Alderman Thomas asked that people call 311. She said that the 311 operators will route the call to the right person, no matter why you are calling. Alderman Thomas said that community members should not have to decide who to call. She advised that community members who call 311 write down the service request number, and call the Alderman's office with the number to expedite the maintenance process.

Alderman Thomas said that in looking at the spreadsheets, she saw some low-hanging fruit. Maintenance costs were less than \$1 million. She said that either she or a smaller group could work to identify and try to secure funding for that work. She said that the railroads could perform maintenance to the concrete bridge facades, and that she would try to secure funding to repair lighting during the City of Chicago's next budget season. Drainage could be handled by the City of Chicago and the project. She said those repairs shouldn't take more than a couple of years.

Carlos Nelson added that available access to railroad property by trespassers is a safety issue that he'd like to see added to the assessment.

Doug asked that community members notify him with problems as well as call 311. A member stated that she calls 311 and feels that she gets lost in the shuffle. She asked that placards be put on the bridges that say "This bridge is maintained by ..." Then people would know who to call. Doug, Alderman Thomas, and Chuck Allen stated that people should call 311 or the numbers on the contact sheet provided, especially Sue Sardo of the City of Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation since she is the point of contact between the City and the railroads related to railroad property issues.

Danielle Stewart thanked everyone for their comments, and told the group that the Project Team heard their concerns. She said that the Project Team arranged for this meeting, provided the reports on viaduct conditions, and brought representatives from the railroads to the meeting because the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is partners with the community. Jeff Sriver added that the comprehensive discussion of the problem had been helpful. The City of Chicago doesn't have the money to solve all the problems at all the



viaducts in the City, but this project is a chance to solve some problems here. Chaquita Starks said that the community appreciates the effort. She said they are frustrated by the ongoing situation.

Doug said that he knew people had specific issues they would like to raise with the railroads, which is why railroad representatives had come and why the project provided the railroad contact list. He said railroad representatives would be available to discuss these issues after the meeting.

Alderman Thomas stated that now that the community has the summary of inspection results and cost estimates, the community can begin to identify funding sources.

A community member asked if jobs would be available on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. Doug stated that there would be no jobs until after the Project Team developed alternatives for the project.

Doug added that the Project Team has to complete the environmental study before any construction work can begin on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. The longer the study process takes, the longer it will take to get funding for the project.

### **III. Next Steps and Introduction to Alternates Breakout Session**

Before asking the Joint Community Advisory Group to divide into working groups to discuss alternates, Doug mentioned that a public meeting is planned for late October. The goal of that Public Meeting will be to present a Range of Alternatives and gather public input on them. The next Community Advisory Group meeting will be held in the late Fall. In that meeting, we will review input from the public meeting and discuss the Improvement Alternatives.

Doug then asked for people to divide into two groups, one for people mostly interested in the east side of the project area, and one for people mostly interested in the west side of the project area. He also offered the opportunity for people to continue discussing the viaduct issues, but the members of the Joint Community Advisory Group all chose to discuss the alternates. The detailed alternates for each improvement area were reviewed with each group.

### **IV. West Alternates Breakout Session**

John Wirtz from the Project Team reviewed the problems identified in two key areas on the western side of the study area with the group. He then explained what alternates had been developed to address the problems.



## 1. Metra Reliability

Metra SouthWest Service (SWS) trains run on only one track from Wrightwood Station to Western Avenue. As a result, only one Metra train at a time can pass through this section of track. This limits the flexibility and reliability of Metra service. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP team is considering adding a second track to address this issue.

**Alternate 1:** A track would be added closer to Columbus Avenue to allow Metra trains to travel in both directions. Trains and their headlights would be closer to Columbus Avenue traffic, and there would not be space for roadway and railroad maintenance, roadway lighting and railway signals.

**Alternate 2:** A second Metra track would replace one of the NS yard tracks to allow Metra trains to travel in both directions. Trains and their headlights would only be one foot closer to Columbus Avenue traffic than they are now. This alternate allows space for roadway and railroad maintenance, roadway lighting and railway signals.

*Discussion:* One CAG member asked about the feasibility of the Metra second track east of the existing track (Alternate 2) due to the presence of the yard. John explained that the tracks in the yard would be reconfigured to accommodate Metra.

*Summary:* There seemed to be consensus that Alternate 2 would be preferable since there would be fewer safety and maintenance concerns than with Alternate 1.

## 2. Forest Hill Junction and 71<sup>st</sup> Street – Problem

At Forest Hill Junction, the two north-south railroad tracks cross the four east-west tracks, causing delays for freight and passenger trains waiting for other trains to cross. At the nearby 71<sup>st</sup> Street road-rail crossing, drivers and pedestrians using 71<sup>st</sup> Street must wait for trains to pass, presenting a potential safety risk. Since actions taken at one location could affect actions taken at the other, they are both considered part of one improvement area. Two alternates were developed to address the problems in this area.

**Alternate 1:** The two east-west Metra tracks would be raised over the two north-south freight railroad tracks. The remaining east-west freight tracks would still cross the north-south tracks at the same level. At 71<sup>st</sup> Street, a new roadway bridge would be built over the train tracks.

A total of 48 single-family homes and one business would have to be acquired to allow for construction of the 71<sup>st</sup> Street roadway bridge. Access to 71<sup>st</sup> Street from Bell Avenue and Hamilton Avenue would be eliminated. This alternate would eliminate only the Metra-freight train conflicts at Forest Hill Junction; freight trains would still have to wait on other crossing freight trains. Also, the pounding noise from trains passing over the junction would still be heard.



**Alternate 2:** The two north-south freight tracks would be raised over 71<sup>st</sup> Street and the four east-west tracks at Forest Hill Junction. No homes or businesses would need to be acquired for this alternate and no streets would be closed. It would eliminate all rail-rail conflicts at Forest Hill Junction and the resulting delays and the pounding noise from trains passing over the junction.

*Discussion:* A representative from the 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, 78<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block club voiced concern about Alternate 2, which would move the tracks about 20 feet closer to her home and 30 feet higher. She is also concerned about the train noise, vibration, and horns blowing. John explained that the noise she hears now is mostly from the diamond crossing. If the diamond crossing were eliminated with Alternate 2, the pounding noise from the crossing would be eliminated. Also, trains would not need to sound their horns as often from restarting since they won't have to stop at the crossing.

Given the impact of the economy on home prices, concern was expressed by another member about those homeowners who would be displaced under Alternate 1, which calls for 50 homes to be acquired. Nick Busalacchi, HNTB, explained that under federal rules, homeowners have to be made "whole". Some members expressed disbelief in the federal government compensating homeowners appropriately. Jakita said that while she understood the concerns expressed, she suggested that it was premature to discuss acquisitions, which have not even been decided and would be several years away.

A member asked if the Project Team could consider a sound insulation program, similar to one at Midway Airport. John responded that noise analysis was being completed, and if noise were found to increase by a certain amount, mitigation methods would be considered. Noise walls are probably the most common mitigation method. These would be considered later in final design, at which time homeowners will provide input.

A representative from the 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, 78<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block club noted a concern about the lack of a physical barrier between homes and the existing railroad tracks. John explained that in Alternate 2, the tracks would be elevated, which would reduce the possibility for people to walk onto the tracks, cross the tracks on foot, or steal from idling trains in this area. It was also noted that the community may want to consider whether they would want pedestrian access across the tracks at certain locations, such as 73<sup>rd</sup> Street.

An area pastor explained his continuing concern about a lack of a northbound left turn arrow on Western at Columbus, and the mechanical problem with the gates at the Columbus Avenue grade crossing. Tim Coffey of the Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) railroad was brought over and the situation was explained to him. He will follow up.





A member from the Hamilton/75<sup>th</sup> St. area indicated that many of her neighbors were not notified of the last meeting. She thinks they all should get notices. She also offered to help distribute flyers in the area. Denise Zerillo, Jacobs, said that after the Project Team had heard that some people didn't receive postcards for the first Public Meeting, she had gone back to the Cook County Assessor's office to get the addresses of most of the homes in that area. She will send this member the list of addresses and ask if any were missed.

*Summary:* Some members said that Alternate 2, which eliminates all the conflicts and doesn't require property acquisition, made the most sense. Some members were concerned about the tracks moving closer to some homes in Alternate 2. Some members wanted more time to think about the alternates and send in comments later.

#### **IV. East Alternates Breakout Session**

Doug Knuth reviewed with the group the problems identified in two key areas on the eastern side of the study area. He then explained what alternates had been developed to address the problems.

##### **1. 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction**

Six tracks converge onto two tracks at this location. The total train traffic is more than the railroad tracks can handle, causing delays for freight and passenger trains.

**Alternate 1:** Two additional tracks would be provided and the 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction would be reconfigured with new tracks and additional connections between them. No changes would be made south of Vincennes Avenue. The conflicts between the Union Pacific (UP), CSX and Norfolk Southern (NS) trains would remain unchanged, but more track capacity would be able to handle them.

**Alternate 2:** Two additional tracks would be provided through 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction and train crossing conflicts would be addressed by doing the following:

- Shifting Amtrak and UP trains to the existing NS bridge at 87<sup>th</sup> Street over the BRC;
- Shifting Amtrak and UP tracks to the east side of the embankment north of 80<sup>th</sup> Street;
- Constructing a new NS track northward and westward to Landers Yard; and
- Building a new bridge at 88<sup>th</sup> Street between the existing railroad bridges.

Conflicts between UP, CSX and NS would be greatly reduced by making better use of the existing bridge to route the trains.

*Discussion:* Several members of the group asked if any property would need to be acquired for either alternate. Doug said that all work would be done on the railroad's right-of-way.



*Summary:* The consensus of the group was that Alternate 2 would be preferable, because it best solves the rail problems without requiring any property acquisition.

## 2. Metra SWS Line Connection to Rock Island Line

Metra's SWS line shares its tracks with freight traffic along the 75<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and north to Union Station, and must cross freight tracks at Belt Junction. To avoid these conflicts, the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP would connect the SWS tracks to Metra's Rock Island District Line, which arrives downtown at LaSalle Street Station.

Doug pointed out that an alignment to minimize the residential impacts would put the tracks through the center of Hamilton Park. Because Hamilton Park is on the National Register of Historic Places, it is protected by federal law as both a park and for its historic nature. As a result, it is unlikely that tracks through the park would be allowed.

Doug also pointed out that a connection to the north of the park would affect almost three times as many properties as one to the south. It would be difficult to justify affecting that many more properties.

Doug explained that the alternates south of Hamilton Park had fewer impacts to residential properties and would require little or no park land.

The Project Team identified three track alignments to connect Metra SWS tracks to the Rock Island tracks by building a flyover south of Hamilton Park.

**Route A:** In this track alignment, trains would be able to travel at speeds of up to 40 miles per hour, meeting the design criteria for the project. No land from Hamilton Park would need to be acquired. A total of 21 properties would need to be acquired: 5 are vacant, 15 are residential, and 1 is institutional (a church). A total of 25 dwellings would be involved. The track would enter the residential area south of 75<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and connect to the Rock Island tracks at 74<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Route B:** In this track alignment, trains would only be able to travel at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour, slower than the design criteria for the project. No land from Hamilton Park would need to be acquired. A total of 21 properties would need to be acquired: 7 are vacant, 14 are residential, and none is institutional. A total of 23 dwellings would be involved. The track would enter the residential area just north of 75<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and connect to the Rock Island tracks at 74<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Route C:** In this track alignment, trains would be able to travel at speeds of up to 40 miles per hour, meeting the design criteria for the project. A sliver of land from Hamilton Park would need to be acquired (0.032 acres). The Project Team is working with the Chicago Park District and the State Historic Preservation Office to make sure that property transfer is acceptable to the public. A total of 20





properties would need to be acquired: 8 are vacant, 12 are residential, and none is institutional. A total of 18 dwellings would be involved. The track would enter the residential area just north of 75<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and connect to the Rock Island tracks at 74<sup>th</sup> Street.

Doug pointed out that each of these routes would be acceptable from a technical point of view, as each would meet the Purpose and Need of the project slightly differently. Since each affects the community differently, this is one area where public input is especially important.

*Discussion:* The pastor of the church south of 75<sup>th</sup> Street that would be acquired under Route A stated that he was very concerned about the flyover. He expected that there would be theft, traffic, dumping, noise, and other negative impacts. For this reason, he supported Route A, so that his church could be relocated away from the flyover.

Doug clarified that the bridge would be a high structure on concrete piers. Because the structure would be new, noise and vibration could be minimized using new technology. The tracks would not be on an embankment, so dumping would be unlikely. The underside of the structure could be brightly lit. The flyover would be more like the new bridge in Chinatown than like existing tracks in the neighborhood.

A member asked about damage to the neighborhood properties during construction. Doug explained that the State of Illinois would hire a firm (probably a local business) to inspect and photograph every house in the area and assess foundations. Because of the dense urban setting, excavation for the project would be performed by an auger rather than a pile driver, which would keep vibrations to a minimum. The member then asked if residents would be notified when construction activities occurred. Doug said that the Context Sensitive Solutions process being used to plan the project would continue through construction if a Build Alternative is selected.

A member asked how the community could know that the Project Team would honor its commitments to the community. Doug said that commitments would be put in writing and would be part of the Environmental Impact Statement. Community members will be able to review and comment on both the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement.

A member asked how the flyover would be secured against trespassers. Doug said that it would be difficult to access the flyover because of its height. Other safety elements will be incorporated, such as lighting.

A community organizer asked if property assessments can be reduced for properties near tracks. Herb Smith from NS said that a recent study showed that there was no difference in property assessments near rail yards.



*Summary:* There was no consensus on which of the routes south of the park would be best for the Metra flyover. The Project Team will seek further community input on this topic during the public meeting to discuss the Range of Alternatives in late October 2011.

### 3. Union Avenue Viaduct

Doug explained that the construction of the flyover would mean that the viaduct at Union Avenue and the 75<sup>th</sup> St. corridor would no longer be wide enough to accommodate the tracks. There are two alternates:

**Alternate 1:** Rebuild the viaduct. Union Avenue would remain one-way. The viaduct would be wider than it is now.

**Alternate 2:** Close the viaduct. A cul-de-sac would be built on either side of the tracks, and Union Avenue would become a two-way street.

Doug stated that from a technical point of view, it doesn't matter which is chosen, although it would cost less to close the viaduct than reconstruct it. However, it would affect the community, and it is important to get community input.

A community organizer commented that it might be possible to take the money Alternate 1 would cost and spend it elsewhere in the project area.

A community member asked that the Project Team consult with police and fire officials to get their input. Another community member stated that the viaduct is now a hot spot for crime, and that the viaduct is a safety issue. Doug noted that the railroad right of way is the border between police and fire districts, which means there is not as much use of the roadway underneath for emergency vehicles.

*Summary:* There was no consensus regarding the possible closing of Union Avenue. The Project Team will seek further community input on this topic during the public meeting to discuss the Range of Alternatives in late October 2011.



# CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

*Moving Forward Together*

75th St. CIP  
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## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** January 12, 2012

**Time:** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

**Place:** Thurgood Marshall Library  
7706 S. Racine Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** **Joint Meeting of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) East and West Community Advisory Groups – Presentation and Discussion of the Preferred Alternative**

### Meeting Participants:

Members Attending	
Name	Representing
Shirley Bryant	Block Club and CAPS-6 <sup>th</sup> District
Connie Daniels	Resident
James T. Drake, Sr.	7700 Hermitage Block Club & CAPS – 6 <sup>th</sup> District
Deborah Echols	Wrightwood Improvement Association
Ericka Hall	Neighborhood Housing Service – Auburn Gresham
Anita Heath	Stewart Business Center
Rochelle Ingram	SOS Children’s Village
Vonnie Keyes	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> and Hamilton Block Club
Lauren Lowery	NHS – Auburn Gresham
Carlos Nelson	Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
Amanda Norman	Resident
Jeannette Purnell	Resident
Rosemary Richard-Sydnor	Resident
Daisy Ryan	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block Club
Pastor Lethaniel Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Jack Peterson for Fire Chief Springer	Chicago Fire Department, District 5, Engine 54
Maurice Thigpen	Chicago Police Department, Sixth District
Jean-Paul Thomas	Black Contractors United
Others Attending	
Adelle J. Brongiel	Resident
Dan Knight	Resident
Deidre Perry	Resident



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Erma Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Chaquita Starks	18 <sup>th</sup> Ward for Alderman Lane
Tamara Whitney	Resident
<b>Project Team Members Attending</b>	
Danielle Stewart	Illinois Department of Transportation
Jakita Trotter	Illinois Department of Transportation
Joe Alonzo	Chicago Department of Transportation
Tom Livingston	CSX
Tanya Cohn	Metra
Bill Wettstein	Metra
Adin McCann	HNTB
Doug Knuth	Jacobs
Pamela Miller	Jacobs
Joe Voldrich	Jacobs
Gretchen Wahl	Jacobs
John Wirtz	Jacobs
Denise Zerillo	Jacobs
Nancy Seeger	Nancy Seeger Associates

## Summary of Meeting

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a combined meeting of the two Community Advisory Groups for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP study area on Thursday, January 12, 2012. This was the fourth meeting with the Community Advisory Group members, and this joint meeting took place at the Thurgood Marshall Library. Eighteen Community Advisory Group members or their representatives attended, along with six other community members.

The purpose of the meeting was twofold:

- The Project Team provided the Joint Community Advisory Group with an overview of community input gathered at the Range of Alternatives Public Meeting on October 27, 2011. Over 230 people attended that meeting, and over 50 people submitted comments on the Range of Alternatives that the Joint Community Advisory Group helped develop.
- The Project Team presented the Preferred Alternative that is being recommended for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and asked the Joint Community Advisory Group for their questions and input. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available to the public for review and comment at a public hearing in summer 2012.

As attendees arrived, the Project Team gave them a packet containing:

- Agenda



- Summary of October 27, 2011 Range of Alternatives Public Meeting
- One-page cover memo summarizing the Preferred Alternative, attached to Range of Alternatives Brochure

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Jakita Trotter, IDOT's CREATE Public Involvement Administrator, opened the meeting and thanked guests for coming. She asked the Project Team to stand and introduce themselves. She then introduced Danielle Stewart, the IDOT CREATE Program Manager. Danielle explained that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Project Team had presented the Build Alternative for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP to the community at the October 27, 2011 Public Meeting, and asked for their input, particularly in those areas where more than one solution met the rail operational needs for the project. Danielle pointed out that Joint Community Advisory Group members had been given copies of the public meeting summary as they came in. Danielle then explained that the Project Team was going to present the Preferred Alternative. The Study Team intends to further study this alternative in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be available for public comment at a public hearing this summer. The analysis in the DEIS will be used to confirm the Preferred Alternative for the project.

Danielle then announced that Doug Knuth, who had been the Project Manager for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP for Jacobs, had recently retired, but would continue working on the project as a consultant. Danielle introduced Joe Voldrich, Jacobs' new Project Manager. Joe said that he was joining Jacobs and the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP team after over 30 years at the Chicago Department of Transportation, and that he looked forward to working with the Joint Community Advisory Group. He explained that Doug Knuth would present the Preferred Alternative, and that he (Joe) would explain the next steps in the process.

## **II. Preferred Alternative Presentation**

Doug began the presentation by explaining how the Project Team developed the Preferred Alternative. The Project Team presented alternates to the Joint Community Advisory Group meetings in August and September 2011. Using the Joint Community Advisory Group's input, the Project Team developed the Build Alternative, and presented it at a Public Meeting on October 27, 2011. Based on input received at that meeting, the Project Team refined the Build Alternative in three specific areas:

- Viaduct Improvements
- The Location of the Metra Flyover South of Hamilton Park
- Union Avenue Viaduct Design Options

The Build Alternative and these refinements make up the Preferred Alternative.



## **Viaduct Improvements**

*The Project Team recommends that capital improvements to 37 railroad viaducts in the project study area be included in the Preferred Alternative.*

Early in the public involvement process, elected officials, Community Advisory Group members and local residents noted poor conditions at some viaducts cause safety issues for drivers and pedestrians. As a result, the Project Team added a local mobility element to the Purpose and Need statement for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.

The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP team inspected 37 railroad viaducts in the project study area and developed estimates for all needed maintenance and capital improvement (i.e., replacement or reconstruction) work. The Project Team provided these estimates to local elected officials and the Joint Community Advisory Group. Because maintenance work is not eligible for 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP funds, the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP team submitted a list of needed maintenance work to the City of Chicago and the railroads. Maintenance work was recommended at 26 of the 37 viaducts. In response to this list, the City of Chicago repaired all lighting in viaducts under their jurisdiction in the project study area, repairing 108 light fixtures at 26 viaducts. The City of Chicago has also cleared vegetation from the pedestrian viaduct on the east side of Hamilton Park at 73<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Capital improvement (i.e., replacement or reconstruction) is eligible for project funds. The preliminary planning-level cost estimate to correct the identified deficiencies in lighting, roadway pavement, sidewalk pavement, drainage, and bridge structure at the 37 viaducts in the study area is \$10,979,000. Substantial structural work is anticipated at 10 of the 37 locations as part of other project-related construction. At those locations, viaduct improvements would be completed in conjunction with the structural work. The estimated total for those viaducts is \$3,225,000. This figure represents about 30 percent of the total work identified. The remaining \$7,754,000 for project-related work at other viaducts will be included as part of the project to improve local mobility. The inclusion of all viaduct capital improvement work in the Preferred Alternative helps fulfill the project's Purpose and Need statement, and these improvements would provide direct positive benefits to the community.

## **The Location of the Metra Flyover South of Hamilton Park**

*The Project Team recommends Alternate 1 (earlier presented as Alternate A) for inclusion in the Preferred Alternative. It meets the desired design speed for Metra, had the most support from the public, and does not require the acquisition of land from Hamilton Park.*

The Project Team identified three possible alternates for the connection of the Metra SouthWest Service Line to the Rock Island District Line in the area south of Hamilton Park, and presented them at the public meeting on October 27, 2011. Each meets the identified transportation needs, but each has different





potential impacts to the community. Most comments regarding the location of the rail flyover structure supported Alternate 1, which is the southernmost route. This route runs south of and then crosses 75<sup>th</sup> Street, and requires the acquisition of the I Care Christian Center Ministries church. Many comments received at the public meeting concerned the impacts to property immediately adjacent to the flyover. There are no buildings on the properties immediately adjacent to the properties that would need to be acquired for Alternate 1.

### **Union Avenue Viaduct Design Options**

*The Project Team recommends closing the viaduct at Union Avenue and the 75<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, as it would reduce project construction costs by approximately \$8 million and reduce future maintenance costs while having little impact on traffic flow in the area.*

The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will require the reconfiguration of the tracks over Union Avenue at the 75<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, because the proposed tracks will not fit on the current viaduct structure. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Project Team developed two alternates: 1) closing the Union Avenue viaduct, building cul-de-sacs to close the street, and making Union Avenue two-way on both sides, or 2) constructing a new railroad bridge structure and lowering Union Avenue. Each option meets the identified transportation needs, but has different potential mobility and community impacts. Extensive public outreach was conducted in the neighborhood surrounding the Union Avenue viaduct, but there was no clear stakeholder consensus for either of the two Union Avenue design options.

### **Review of the Build Alternative**

The elements of the Preferred Alternative that were presented at the Community Advisory Group meetings in August and September 2011 and at the Range of Alternatives Public Meeting on October 27, 2011 were briefly reviewed.

At the single Metra track that runs along Columbus Avenue, an additional track would be built east of the existing track, requiring the removal of one track in Landers Yard. At Forest Hill Junction, a bridge structure would be built that would take the north-south CSX tracks over the east-west tracks in the 75<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and above 71<sup>st</sup> Street. Temporary tracks will be constructed east of the existing tracks while the new bridges are constructed. It is anticipated that these temporary tracks will be needed for approximately one year. At 80th Street Junction, the Union Pacific railroad tracks would be re-routed over an existing rail bridge, and extra space and additional tracks would be added through the junction. This, combined with the Metra Rock Island Connection, would also eliminate conflicts at Belt Junction.





### **III. Next Steps**

Joe Voldrich explained that the Project Team would now refine the Preferred Alternative, evaluating potential benefits, impacts, and costs for comparison to the No Build Alternative. The Project Team is preparing a DEIS, which will be made available to the public for review. A public hearing on the DEIS will be held in summer 2012.

Community Advisory Group members and the public can continue to be involved in the project by:

- Requesting speakers for local group meetings
- Reading brochures, website, and other project publications
- Reading the DEIS on the project website or at libraries when it is available later this year
- Attending the upcoming public hearing. The Project Team will publicize the public hearing as they have publicized the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP's public meetings, using methods including:
  - Newspaper advertisements
  - Postcard mailing
  - Distribution of postcard packets to local organizations, elected officials, and Joint Community Advisory Group members
  - Door hangers
  - Notice on 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP website
  - Email blast
  - Posters at Metra stations
- Sending comments through
  - Online comment form at [www.75thCIP.org](http://www.75thCIP.org)
  - Project Team email at [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org)
  - Mail—1 N. Franklin, Ste. 500, Chicago, IL 60606 [Starting February 20, 2012, the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP mailing address will be 525 W. Monroe St., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60661.]

### **IV. Preferred Alternative Discussion**

The members of the Joint Community Advisory Group did not express any objections to the Preferred Alternative. Discussion, questions, and concerns following the presentation were related to the viaduct work, the property acquisition process, impacts to neighborhoods in the Hamilton Park and Forest Hill Junction areas (including property impacts, noise, vibration, and air quality), the rail yard north of 71<sup>st</sup> Street, and the Columbus Avenue grade crossing.



## **Viaduct Work**

The first question the group asked was if capital improvements (replacement or reconstruction) would be made to all 37 viaducts included in the project viaduct inspections. Doug Knuth replied that, yes, the identified replacement or reconstruction work would be performed at all 37 viaducts.

Later, a member asked if the viaducts would be fixed last, after other work was performed. Doug explained that the timing of the work to be performed would depend on the availability of funding and the sequencing of the work. If other sources of funding are identified, some viaduct work could begin before any of the work on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, which will not start for several years. Joe Alonzo pointed out that work at the viaducts at Morgan Avenue/75<sup>th</sup> Street and Peoria Avenue/75<sup>th</sup> Street will be performed by the City in 2012 using a TIGER (i.e., federal stimulus funding) grant. Joe asked that members of the community call 311 if they notice problems at viaducts, such as broken or missing light fixtures. The same group member asked if the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is funded. Doug said no, but that the project is in the state capital improvement program. Funds are not allocated until the Environmental Impact Statement process is completed.

Another group member asked if work at viaducts would be only partially completed once the project work began. Doug said that if the project is doing work at a viaduct, the project would do all identified work in that area. He said that other sources of funding might work differently. For example, if the City of Chicago got a grant to repair lighting, it might repair all lighting at a viaduct without doing sidewalk or drainage work at that viaduct. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will complete all work it begins.

## **Property Acquisition**

The group asked for some clarification regarding which properties would be acquired in the area south of Hamilton Park for the Metra connection to the Rock Island District Line. Doug reviewed the map in the presentation in more detail. One member asked why the number of residential properties didn't match the number of dwelling units. Doug explained that some of the residential properties are multi-family buildings, so that one residential property can contain two or more separate dwelling units (e.g., two-flat, apartment building, etc.).

A member asked if homeowners would have adequate notice before they had to move. Doug explained that the property acquisition process could take up to two years, and that time is allowed for an orderly relocation process. Property owners are paid fair market value for their homes, plus relocation assistance, and moving expenses. The market value is based on two independent appraisals. Homeowners can also have their own appraisal done.



### **Work Near Forest Hill Junction**

The group asked for clarification regarding the work near Forest Hill Junction. Doug went back to that part of the PowerPoint presentation and explained the scope of work. One member asked if there would be property acquisition in the area. Doug said no. The member stated that she was concerned about a reduction in property values caused by the train moving closer to the property lines when the temporary tracks are in place, and by the new structure. She stated that she was concerned about air quality, idling trains, and noise issues, particularly horns. She asked if there would be sound barriers to block construction and train noise. Doug said that now that the Project Team has identified a Preferred Alternative, they are analyzing the potential noise impacts of that alternative. Where noise increases by a certain amount, Federal rules require the Project Team to consider noise walls to mitigate those effects. The results of the noise analysis will be part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review later this year.

Another member asked if vibration analysis would be part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Doug replied that both vibration and air quality analysis would be part of the document. He pointed out that part of the benefit of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will be the elimination of the Forest Hill Junction, which means that there will be no idling trains, no horn blowing, and no loud banging as trains cross the diamond crossing.

A member asked if the noise analysis would be done near Parnell Avenue, and Doug replied that the analysis would cover the entire 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project study area. Another member asked if there are federal guidelines for noise thresholds, and Doug said yes.

Later, a member asked how the County Assessor would assess homes that remained behind. Doug said that he was not familiar with the process used by Cook County to assess taxes. Another member stated that generally assessments are based on “comps” or comparisons of similar properties in the area.

### **Rail Yard North of 71<sup>st</sup> Street**

A group member asked if the rail yard north of 71<sup>st</sup> Street would be affected. Doug said that the temporary tracks would be constructed east of the existing tracks, using part of the CSX intermodal yard’s space. There will be no impacts outside the rail yard.

### **Columbus Avenue Grade Crossing**

A member asked for the status of the Columbus Avenue grade crossing project, where trains block automobile traffic for long periods of time. Doug stated that the Columbus Avenue crossing is part of a separate CREATE project. Joe Alonzo of CDOT said that funding is available for a Phase I engineering study of the Columbus Avenue crossing, and that CDOT could be advertising for qualifications from



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consultants this summer. The Preferred Alternative for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP includes the addition of a track to the Metra SouthWest Service Line that runs along Columbus Avenue, but does not include the Columbus Avenue grade crossing.

### **V. Closing**

Danielle thanked everyone for their comments, and for coming to the meeting. Project Team members stayed and continued to answer questions after the meeting was over.



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## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** December 12, 2013

**Time:** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

**Place:** Thurgood Marshall Library  
7706 S. Racine Avenue, Chicago

**Subject:** Joint East and West Community Advisory Group Meeting of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP)

## Meeting Participants:

Members Attending	
Name	Representing
Sergeant Paul Gregore	Representing Deputy Chief Leo Schmitz, Chicago Police Department, 7 <sup>th</sup> District
Anita Heath	Stewart Business Center
Edward McKinnie	Black Contractors United
Elder Donald Meeks	Monument of Faith Evangelistic Church
Elder Willard Payton	New Birth Church of God in Christ
Jeannette Purnell	Resident
Daisy Ryan	76 <sup>th</sup> , 77 <sup>th</sup> , 78 <sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Block Club
Janece Simmons	NHS
Pastor Lethaniel Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Betty Jo Swanson	Resident
Rosemary Richard-Sydnor	Resident
James H. Thomas	First Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church
Others Attending	
Charles Bridgeman	Resident
Glinda Bridgeman	Resident
Shirley J. Bryant	NHS
Ira Campbell	Resident
Ruthette Campbell	Resident
Erma Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Robert Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries
Teretha Smith	I Care Christian Center Ministries



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Nichole Smith-Lashley	Resident
Tommie Talley	Resident
Keevin Woods	17 <sup>th</sup> Ward – Alderman Thomas
<b>Project Team Members Attending</b>	
Sam Tuck	Illinois Department of Transportation
Emily Kushto	Illinois Department of Transportation
Jakita Trotter	Illinois Department of Transportation
Joe Alonzo	Chicago Department of Transportation
Jeff Sriver	Chicago Department of Transportation
Tom Livingston	CSX
Tanya Cohn	Metra
Bill Wettstein	Metra
Herbert Smith	NS Railway
Gretchen Wahl	Jacobs
John Wirtz	Jacobs
Tom Underwood	Jacobs
Michael Hurley	HNTB
Tim Johnson	HMMH
Lillian Yan	CivCon
Nancy Seeger	Nancy Seeger Associates
Donna Spicuzza	Nancy Seeger Associates

## Summary of Meeting

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a combined meeting of the East and West Community Advisory Groups for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP study area on Thursday, December 12, 2013. This was the fifth meeting with the Community Advisory Group members, and this joint meeting took place at the Thurgood Marshall Library. Twelve Community Advisory Group members or their representatives attended, along with eleven additional community stakeholders.

The purpose of this meeting was threefold:

- The project team reviewed the Preferred Alternative developed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS will be available to the public for review and comment in spring 2014.
- The project team presented the potential benefits and the environmental impacts of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. The project team also presented the recommended mitigation measures and additional mitigation measures that are under consideration. The Community Advisory Groups and the



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project team discussed these benefits, impacts, and mitigation measures so that their input could be incorporated into the DEIS.

- The Project Team explained the next steps in the Phase I study process.

As attendees arrived, the Project Team gave them a packet containing the following:

- Agenda
- A copy of the meeting's PowerPoint presentation
- January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 memo summarizing the Preferred Alternative, attached to the Range of Alternatives Brochure dated Fall 2011
- 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Community Advisory Group Comment Form

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Gretchen Wahl of Jacobs gave a safety briefing for meeting attendees. Jakita Trotter, IDOT's CREATE Public Outreach Manager, then opened the meeting and thanked the Community Advisory Group members and other attendees for coming. She also thanked the Thurgood Marshall Library for hosting the meeting. She then introduced Tom Underwood, Jacobs' project manager for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.

### **II. Project Status**

Tom reviewed the status of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP for the Community Advisory Group members. This project is part of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program, a partnership between IDOT, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Association of American Railroads (AAR) to increase the efficiency of the region's passenger and freight rail infrastructure and enhance the quality of life for Chicago-area residents. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is in the Phase I study part of the project development process. During Phase I, the partners and consultants on the project, Jacobs, are currently conducting preliminary engineering work and studying the impact the project would have on the natural and human environment. The project team is finalizing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will soon be available for public review and comment. A Public Hearing on the DEIS is planned for Spring 2014.

### **III. Review of Preferred Alternative**

John Wirtz reviewed the Preferred Alternative, which was presented previously at the Community Advisory Group meetings in January 2012. A summary of project improvements are listed below:

1. All capital improvement work identified during the inspection of the 37 viaducts would be performed as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. (The viaduct at 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Union Avenue would be closed.)





2. At the single Metra track that runs along Columbus Avenue, an additional track would be constructed east of the existing track, requiring the removal of one track in Landers Yard.
3. At Forest Hill Junction, a bridge structure that would take the north-south CSX tracks over the east-west tracks in the 75<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and above 71<sup>st</sup> Street would be constructed. Temporary tracks would be constructed east of the existing tracks while the new bridges are constructed. It is anticipated that these temporary tracks would be needed for approximately one year.
4. The Metra SouthWest Service tracks would connect to Metra’s Rock Island District tracks on a flyover bridge that would be south of Hamilton Park. The tracks would follow Alignment A, which was the alignment that received the most positive input at the October 2011 public meeting.
5. At 80th Street Junction, the Union Pacific railroad tracks would be re-routed over an existing rail bridge, and extra space and additional tracks would be added through the junction.
6. The work at 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction, combined with the Metra Rock Island Connection, would eliminate conflicts at Belt Junction.

#### **IV. Impacts and Mitigation**

Tom Underwood explained that the purpose of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP’s Draft Environmental Statement is to describe the project alternatives, describe the benefits and impacts of the alternatives, identify a preferred alternative, and describe proposed mitigation measures. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be finalized after a public comment period and public hearing are held.

##### **A. Benefits of the Preferred Alternative**

Tom then reviewed the benefits of meeting the Purpose and Need for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, as summarized in the following chart:

<b>Benefits of Meeting Purpose and Need for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP</b>	
<b>Reduces rail-rail crossing conflicts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decreased train idling</li> <li>2. Decreased air emissions from locomotives</li> <li>3. Improved safety</li> </ol>
<b>Reduces road-rail crossing conflicts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elimination of the at-grade crossing at 71<sup>st</sup> Street and CSX tracks</li> <li>2. Eliminates 3 ½ hours of daily road closure</li> </ol>



	3. Improved safety
<b>Improves Rail Passenger Service Reliability</b>	Faster and more reliable Metra and Amtrak service
<b>Reduces Local Mobility Problems</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Major improvements at 36 viaducts in the project area</li> <li>2. Improved mobility, safety, and security for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists</li> <li>3. Improved appearance of viaducts</li> </ol>

**B. Impacts of the Preferred Alternative and Recommended Mitigation**

Tom explained that the DEIS examines the benefits and impacts of projects in many categories, including:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Physical Characteristics             | 7. Energy            |
| 2. Socioeconomics                       | 8. Air Quality       |
| 3. Transportation                       | 9. Natural Resources |
| 4. Cultural Resources and Special Lands | 10. Water Resources  |
| 5. Noise                                | 11. Special Waste    |
| 6. Vibration                            | 12. Visual Resources |

John Wirtz then reviewed the impacts of the project in each of these categories, the environmental commitments and mitigation for each impact, and additional mitigation measures under consideration. These additional mitigation measures go beyond those required by typical IDOT and CREATE policy and are intended to provide additional project benefits to the local community. The additional mitigation measures are still under investigation and will be finalized by the CREATE partners after community involvement and input.

**1. and 2. Physical Characteristics and Socioeconomics**

*Impacts:* The major impact to physical characteristics and socioeconomics would be the acquisition of land for the project. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP would require the acquisition of 42 parcels of land. Of that land, 15.9 acres would be private, and 0.6 acres would be public. No businesses or commercial establishments would need to be displaced.



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*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* All property acquisition would follow federal and Illinois property acquisition and relocation policies. Owners would be offered fair market value for their properties, and would be given relocation assistance under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act (1970)

*Mitigation under Consideration:* Some affected residential property owners who owe more on their property than its market value (negative equity) could receive assistance in settling their mortgage balance. Opportunities would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis when appropriately justified

### 3. Transportation

*Impacts:* The Metra SouthWest Service terminus in downtown Chicago would be moved from Union Station to LaSalle Street Station. In addition, the viaduct at Union Avenue & 75<sup>th</sup> Street would be closed.

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* The cul-de-sacs at Union Avenue to be designed in consultation with the community. For instance, they could be designed to deter loiterers.

### 4. Cultural Resources and Special Lands

*Impacts:* The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP would cause a decrease in noise at Lily Gardens Park, and an increase in noise at three other parks. In addition, work at Damen Avenue's historic bridge could affect its façade. These four parks are the only cultural resources or special lands where impacts of the Preferred Alternative were identified.

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* A noise barrier at Leland Giants Park would mitigate noise impacts at that park. In addition, the project would replace or replicate the façade and railing at the Damen Avenue viaduct.

*Mitigation under Consideration:* The City of Chicago could apply for a Quiet Zone at three crossings in the area (95<sup>th</sup> Street, 97<sup>th</sup> Street, and 101<sup>st</sup> Street). This would reduce train horn noise at the other two parks.

### 5. Noise

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement compares existing noise levels to the noise levels that would exist in the future if the project were built (the Preferred Alternative) and if the project were not built (No Build Alternative). The following chart gives the numbers of residences and institutions that would experience higher sound levels under each alternative.



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## Comparisons to Existing Noise Levels

	<b>Preferred Alternative</b>	<b>No Build Alternative</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Residences above the FTA moderate impact threshold	1,150	982	<b>168</b>
Residences above the FTA severe impact threshold	210	90	<b>120</b>
Institutional facilities above FTA moderate impact threshold	3	1	<b>2</b>
Institutional facilities above FTA interior impact threshold	7	7	<b>0</b>

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* The Project Team studied the feasibility and cost effectiveness of constructing noise barrier walls in order to reduce the noise impacts of the Preferred Alternative. Preliminary evaluation has shown that four noise barriers are feasible and provide enough noise reduction benefit to residents and institutions to make them cost effective. These walls would provide benefits to 66 residents with moderate impacts, 123 residences with severe impacts, and one park with moderate impacts.

*Mitigation under Consideration:* An additional feasible noise barrier came close to meeting the CREATE program cost-effectiveness criteria and could be constructed. It would provide noise reduction benefits to 50 additional residences with moderate impacts and 34 additional residences with severe impacts. In addition, the City of Chicago could apply for a Quiet Zone at three crossings in the area (95<sup>th</sup> Street, 97<sup>th</sup> Street, and 101<sup>st</sup> Street). This would reduce train horn noise at those locations.

## 6. Vibration

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement compares existing vibration levels to the vibration levels that would exist in the future if the project were built (the Preferred Alternative) and if the project were not built (No Build Alternative). The following chart gives the numbers of properties that would experience higher vibration levels under each alternative.



### Comparisons to Existing Vibration Levels

	Preferred Alternative	No Build Alternative	Difference
Properties with ground-borne vibration levels above the FTA threshold	755	28	<b>727</b>
Properties with ground-borne noise levels above the FTA threshold	77	58	<b>19</b>

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* The project team evaluated several measures for mitigation of vibration impacts. Many of them, including establishment of buffer zones, special trackwork, proved to be ineffective. Vibration impacts can be partially reduced via normal train maintenance, including:

- Rail grinding
- Wheel truing
- Wheel-flat detectors
- Vehicle reconditioning

However, these measures will not completely eliminate the predicted vibration impacts.

### 7. Energy

*Impacts:* Less locomotive idling will result in a 20% reduction in fuel usage compared to the No Build alternative.

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* Because reduction in fuel usage is a benefit, no mitigation is needed.

### 8. Air Quality

*Impacts:* Less locomotive idling will result in fewer emissions due to reduction in fuel consumption

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* Because reduction in air emissions is a benefit, no mitigation is needed.

### 9. Natural Resources

*Impacts:* Forty-three street trees would need to be removed to construct the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.



*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* These trees would be replaced on a one-for-one basis according to IDOT policy.

## **10. Water Resources**

There would be no impacts to water resources.

## **11. Special Waste**

*Impacts:* The project team has performed preliminary database searches and investigations of the project area to identify any locations where existing waste could be disturbed during construction activities. The Project Team has found the following numbers of potentially affected sites:

- 7 high-risk sites potentially affected
- 33 medium-risk sites potentially affected
- 48 low-risk sites potentially affected

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* Environmental investigation would be performed before any soil is disturbed at any high- or medium-risk sites. If issues are identified, the required soil management and/or remediation would be completed by the responsible agency. No mitigation is possible before the investigations are complete

## **12. Visual Resources**

*Impacts:* Two new railroad flyover bridges would be constructed: the Metra Rock Island flyover south of Hamilton Park and the CSX flyover at 71<sup>st</sup> Street/Forest Hill Junction.

*Environmental Commitments and Mitigation:* Landscaping, tree planting and public art would be used to mitigate the visual impact of the flyovers.

## **C. Temporary Construction Impacts and Recommended Mitigation**

Tom Underwood explained that in addition to permanent impacts, there would also be temporary impacts to the environment while the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP was being built. These impacts would include:

*Traffic:* The construction of a major project like the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP can disrupt traffic in the area. To plan for and minimize impacts to traffic during construction, Traffic Management Plans would be developed and filed with the City of Chicago.



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*Construction Noise and Vibration:* Major construction projects can result in noise and vibration, primarily from trucks and heavy machinery. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP would be required to comply with all City of Chicago ordinances for noise and vibration. In addition, contractors would be required to coordinate with schools so that pile driving would not occur during test periods.

*Nuisance Species (Rodents, etc.):* Clearing of existing structures and vegetation can cause the disturbance and relocation of rodents and other nuisance species. The community has expressed this concern throughout the public outreach process. Contractors would be required to comply with all City of Chicago ordinances regarding the control of pests. Contractors would be required to control nuisance species during the land-clearing and through construction to protect residential areas.

*Retaining Walls near Hamilton Park and Leland Giants Park:* Construction of retaining walls near these parks will require some construction activity to take place on park land, even though no park land will be permanently required for the project. Permits would be obtained from the Chicago Park District, and the areas would be landscaped after construction is complete.

### **D. Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration**

Tom Underwood explained that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is also considering the following additional mitigation measures. These additional mitigation measures go beyond those required by typical IDOT and CREATE policy and are intended to provide additional project benefits to the local community. The additional mitigation measures are still under investigation and will be finalized by the CREATE partners after community involvement and input. He asked the Community Advisory Group to give their input, and he explained that the Project Team will also present these measures at the Public Hearing and solicit input.

*Employment and Job Training Programs:* The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP could provide additional funding to support current IDOT and CREATE strategies to encourage participation of small and disadvantaged businesses, as well as to support existing employment and job training activities. The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP could use contracting strategies that would make it easier to divide the project into smaller contracts.

*Bicycle Improvements:* The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP could include improvements to bicycle facilities in the project area.

*Remnant and Vacant Parcel Improvements:* About 1.39 acres of vacant land will be left after the Metra flyover is built in the neighborhood south of Hamilton Park. The project could improve those properties and other city-owned vacant properties across the study area. This program would be developed with community input.





*Streetscape Improvements:* The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP could provide funding to the City of Chicago to add trees, benches, signs, decorative pavement at crosswalks, bike racks, and other amenities in the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project area.

*Maintenance of Railroad Property and Infrastructure:* The viaduct improvements included in the project will partially address this community concern. In addition, residents should continue to call 311 for maintenance needs and 911 to report emergencies.

## **V. Discussion of Impacts and Mitigation**

The Project Team asked the Community Advisory Group members to share their opinions and ideas about the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, its impacts, and the mitigation measures put forward in the presentation.

One resident asked where trees would be planted to meet IDOT's requirement that street trees removed for construction be replaced on a one-for-one basis. John Wirtz said that trees would be replaced on the existing parkways or on the remnant properties near the railroad tracks that would be left after construction is complete.

Another resident asked how much the project will cost. John Wirtz responded that it will cost between \$800 million and \$1 billion.

A Joint CAG member who lives south of Forest Hill Junction asked if houses were going to be purchased in the area, because the train tracks are going to be moving closer to homes. She said that the measurements that the project originally had were inaccurate, which she had explained to John Wirtz and Tom Livingston when they met with her block club in 2012 to see the properties. The project team said that houses were not going to be purchased in the area. She asked if a noise barrier would be built. The project team said that because the project would not increase sound levels in the area, no noise wall would be built. Tim Johnson said that the analysis of the Preferred Alternative found that sound levels would actually be lower if the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP were constructed than if it were not. This is because there would be no banging noise from Forest Hill Junction, and there would be fewer idling trains. After this explanation, the resident said that bringing trains closer to people's houses would cause noise and vibration problems. [At this location, the vibration analysis indicates that there would be no vibration impact with the Build Alternative.]

A resident who lives near 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Parnell Avenue said that Amtrak and freight trains cause a horrible squeaking noise in her neighborhood. The project team noted this concern.

A resident asked for a list of properties to be acquired. The project team said that they would show her the exhibit at the close of the meeting, and that the list would be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. [IDOT typically does not release detailed property information. All property



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Suite 200  
Chicago, Illinois 60661

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acquisition will be completed in accordance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the IDOT Land Acquisition Manual. Maps of property acquisition locations are included in the CAG meeting presentation, attached. Further information about specific properties can be obtained at the upcoming public hearing or by emailing [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org).]

A CAG member said that at the last meeting the project team showed a photograph of a viaduct on the north side of Chicago with new bright lighting, and asked if there would be a viaduct like that on the south side. The project team said that the picture was of the viaduct under the Kennedy Expressway at Irving Park Road, and that it was a test site for new lighting technology. The CAG member asked if there would be a test site similar to that on the south side. The Chicago Department of Transportation team said that the CREATE program had rehabilitated two viaducts in the project area in 2012: one at 75<sup>th</sup> Street & Peoria Street, and one at 75<sup>th</sup> Street & Morgan Street. In 2014, two more viaducts will be rehabilitated at 78<sup>th</sup> Street & Fielding Avenue and 80<sup>th</sup> Street & Wallace Street.

A CAG member stated that she has problems with broadcast television reception when trains are in the area. She asked if this would be considered during the project. Tom Underwood said that he couldn't answer now, but that he will look into it. [Preliminary research into the issue is underway.]

A CAG member said that there are problems at the Columbus Avenue grade crossing near 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbus Avenue near the Monument of Faith Church. Jeff Sriver of CDOT said that a study has begun to evaluate the feasibility of grade separating the roadway from the track at that location. The CAG member said that there are problems that need to be addressed immediately. He said that often the safety gates come down and stay down when there are no trains crossing. He said this is dangerous because people become frustrated and drive around the gates. He also said that trains take too long to cross Columbus Avenue, and often people have to wait for two trains to cross. He said that there is no contact information at the crossing, and he asked for a name and number to call when there is a problem. Sam Tuck of IDOT said that he would work to address the problem. Herbert Smith of NS said that he would provide the CAG member with a contact name and number for the Belt Railway Company of Chicago, which is responsible for the crossing. [Herbert Smith emailed the information to the CAG member during the course of the meeting.]

A community member who lives near 75<sup>th</sup> Street and Normal said that her house is surrounded by viaducts and their appearance makes the area very uninviting for visitors. She said that there is frequent flooding under the viaducts. She asked if there was a way the appearance of the viaducts could be temporarily improved before the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project begins, because the project will take years. She said that her neighborhood has considered buying paint and painting them themselves, or painting murals. Herbert Smith of NS said that improper painting can make the problem worse. Water can build up and run down behind the paint. If there is a safety problem at an NS viaduct, community members should call Herbert Smith directly or call 311. Tom Livingston of CSX also encouraged people to call him directly or call 311, and said to keep calling if the problem is not solved.



A resident at 74<sup>th</sup> and Normal said that she worries her house will be damaged by vibration if the project is completed. She said that the house is 100 years old, and she is afraid it will be shaken down. Tim Johnson from HMMH said that the vibration resulting from this project may be at the level that is an annoyance to people, but the vibration would have to be 10, 100, or even 1,000 times greater to cause structural damage to even a fragile building. John Wirtz said that he thought the resident's house would be acquired if the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project is built. [Later John Wirtz confirmed with the resident that her house would be acquired if the project goes forward.]

A community member who lives near 75<sup>th</sup> and Parnell said that fly dumping and other criminal activity are a problem on railroad property. She said that they call the police when they see illegal activity, but that the trespassers are almost always gone by the time the police arrive. She asked if the railroads could put a surveillance camera there so that they could catch the people who are trespassing. Herbert Smith of NS said that the police patrol the area, and that he would give them the police officer's phone number. [Herbert Smith provided the phone number to the CAG member after the meeting.]

Another resident asked the project team to imagine living in the project area. She asked the project team to think about the issues they would have, and to put themselves in the residents' shoes. The project team said that the reason the project holds Community Advisory Group meetings is to find out what the community thinks, and to discover what the stakeholders' issues are.

## **VI. Public Hearing and Next Steps**

Tom Underwood explained that the next steps in the process are for the Project Team to consider the Community Advisory Group's input while finalizing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be posted on the project's website and placed in area libraries. The project team will then hold a public hearing and a public comment period to collect public input. Input from the public and from other agencies will be considered while the team completes the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and a Record of Decision is signed for the project.

Community Advisory Group members and the public can continue to be involved in the project by:

- Requesting speakers for local group meetings
- Reading the DEIS on the project website or at libraries when it is available later this year
- Attending the upcoming public hearing. The Project Team will publicize the public hearing as they have publicized the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP's public meetings, using methods including:
  - Newspaper advertisements
  - Postcard mailing
  - Distribution of postcard packets to local organizations, elected officials, and Joint Community Advisory Group members



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- Door hangers
- Notice on 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP website
- Email blast
- Posters at Metra stations
- Sending comments through
  - Online comment form at [www.75thCIP.org](http://www.75thCIP.org)
  - Project Team email at [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org)
  - Mail—75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP, 525 W. Monroe St., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60661

In closing, Tom Underwood thanked everyone for their comments, and for coming to the meeting. Project Team members stayed and continued to answer questions after the meeting was over.



## **Appendix A – Results from Comment Form**

Seven Community Advisory Group meeting participants filled out the comment form that the project team distributed with the meeting packet. Not every comment form was completely filled out.

The first section asked participants to rank the importance to them of the benefits of meeting the Purpose and Need of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. The three benefits receiving the highest number of 1s were:

1. Reduces Local Mobility Problems – Improved mobility, safety, and security for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists (Three #1 rankings)
2. Reduces Local Mobility Problems – Major improvements at 36 viaducts in the project area (Two #1 rankings)
3. Reduces Road-Rail Crossing Conflicts – Elimination of the at-grade crossing at 71<sup>st</sup> Street and CSX tracks (One #1 ranking)

The second section asked participants to rank the top three Impact Categories of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP in order of importance to them. The three impact categories receiving the highest number of 1s were:

1. Transportation (Two #1 rankings)
2. TIE – Physical Characteristics, Socioeconomics and Property Acquisition, and Vibration all received one #1 ranking.

In the second section, the category with the highest number of votes (all 2s and 3s) was Noise with 5 votes.

In the third section, participants were asked to rank the additional mitigation measures and benefits under consideration from 1-6. Because six participants ranked the six mitigation measures, the rankings were added. A lower score (more #1 rankings) means that the measure was important to more participants. The mitigation measures and benefits in order of importance are:

1. Remnant and Vacant Parcel Improvements (score of 13)
2. Employment and Job Training Programs (15)
3. Maintenance of Railroad Property and Infrastructure (17)
4. Sidewalk Improvements (21)
5. Bus Stop Improvements (25)
6. Bicycle Mobility Improvements (35)

The fourth section asked people to write any additional information in the space provided. Comments included:

1. Please provide a list of the property acquisitions as soon as possible. [IDOT typically does not release detailed property information. All property acquisition will be completed in accordance



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with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the IDOT Land Acquisition Manual. Maps of property acquisition locations are included in the CAG meeting presentation, attached. Further information about specific properties can be obtained at the upcoming public hearing or by emailing [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org).]

2. Illegal dumping and delays in railroad cleanup time.
3. Please use a camera to catch illegal dumpers.
4. Rodent issues from debris.
5. Noise is already an issue and will get worse.
6. Vibration is already an issue and will get worse.
7. Viaduct cleanliness and beautification at 74<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, and 76<sup>th</sup> Streets.
8. Train interference with TV and radio signals.
9. Please use a public facility for public meeting rather than a church.
10. Will this project create permanent economic ventures?
11. Thank you for your consideration for local issues and concerns.
12. Please provide information regarding employment training and opportunities.




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## **Appendix B – PowerPoint Presentation**





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## Joint East/West Community Advisory Group Meeting

**December 12, 2013**  
**1:00-3:00 p.m.**  
**Thurgood Marshall Public Library**



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## Today's Meeting

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Meeting Packet
- Project Status
- Review of Preferred Alternative
- Impacts and Mitigation
- Discussion of Impacts and Mitigation
- Public Hearing and Next Steps




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Welcome and Introductions

## Welcome from the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project Study Group

- Illinois Department of Transportation
- Chicago Department of Transportation
- Federal Highway Administration
- Association of American Railroads, including:
 

BRC	UP
CSX	Metra
NS	Amtrak
- Jacobs, Project Consultant leading a team of subconsultants




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Welcome and Introductions

## Chicago Region Environmental And Transportation Efficiency Program

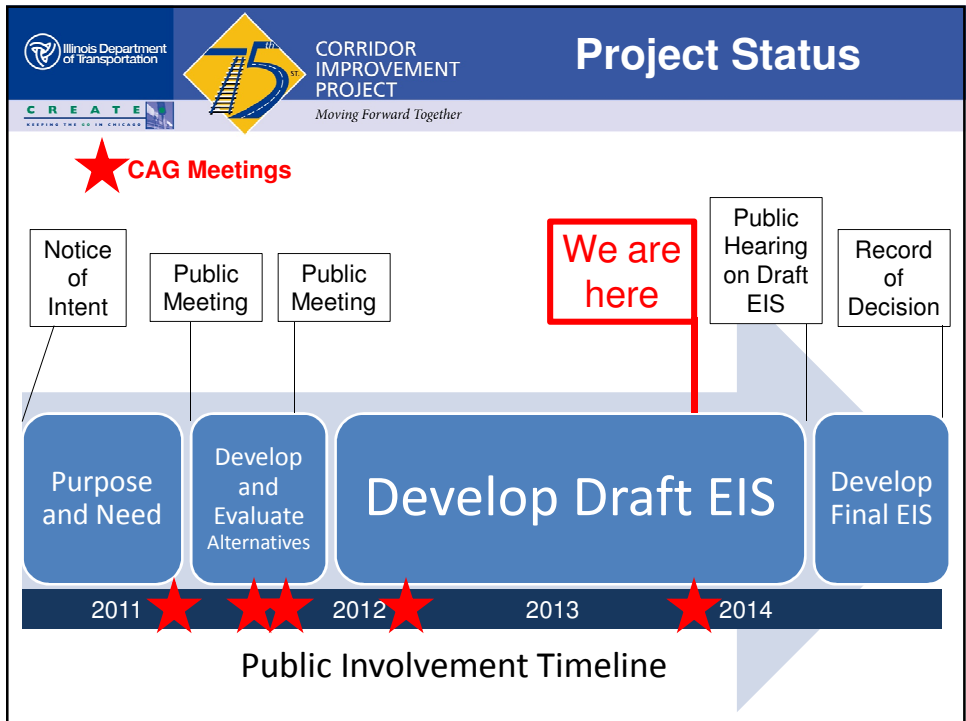




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# Project Status

## Project Status

- Project Team completed the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including:
  - Impact Evaluation of No Build and Build Alternatives
  - Identification of potential mitigation measures
- Draft EIS is being finalized



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# Review of Preferred Alternative



## Project Purpose

- To improve mobility for rail passengers, freight, and motorists

## Project Needs

- Reduce rail-rail crossing conflicts
- Reduce road-rail crossing conflicts
- Improve Metra reliability
- Reduce local mobility problems



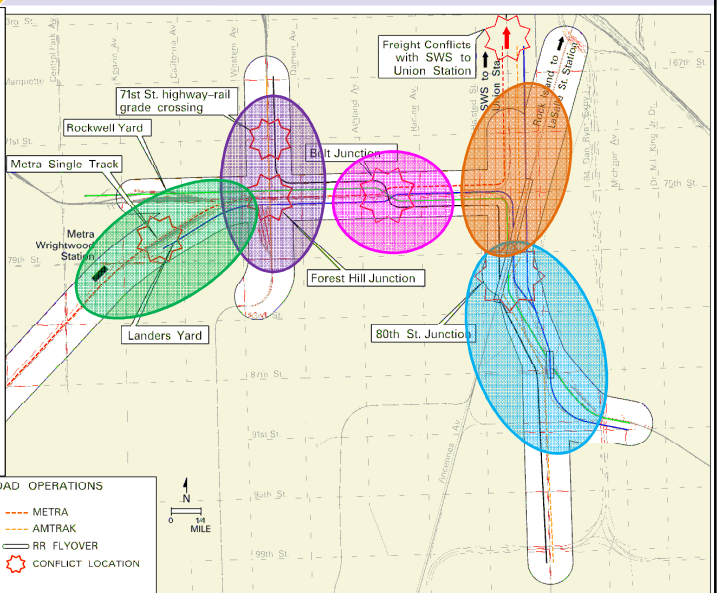





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# Review of Preferred Alternative

- Local Mobility (Viaducts)**
- Metra Reliability Columbus Ave.**
- Forest Hill Junction**
- Metra Rock Island Connection**
- 80th Street Junction**
- Belt Junction**




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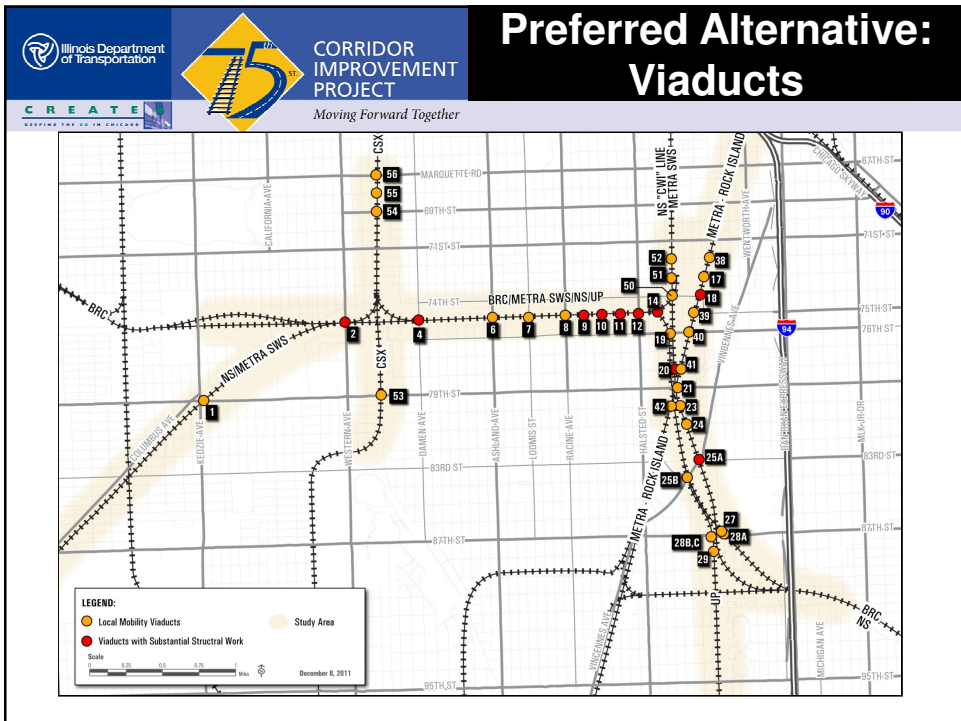
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# Review of Preferred Alternative





## How the Project Team Developed the Preferred Alternative:

1. Presented alternates for each improvement area to Joint Community Advisory Group in August and September 2011
2. Developed Build Alternative, presented at October 2011 Public Meeting
3. Build Alternative became the Preferred Alternative
4. Refined Preferred Alternative
5. Presented Preferred Alternative at January 2012 Joint Community Advisory Group meeting






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Preferred Alternative:  
Viaducts

**The Project Team:**

1. Inspected all 37 viaducts
2. Evaluated conditions of:
  - Lighting
  - Drainage
  - Roadway
  - Sidewalks and ramps
  - Bridge façades




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Preferred Alternative:  
Viaducts

**Preferred Alternative**

All viaduct replacement and reconstruction work identified during the inspection of the 37 viaducts will be done as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP.



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Preferred Alternative:  
Viaducts




## Viaduct Replacement and Reconstruction

- Foundation work, including streets and sidewalks
- Bridge work
- Waterproofing of bridge decks (at the 10 viaducts requiring track work)
- Replace all lighting





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Preferred Alternative:  
Viaducts

## Timing of Project-Related Viaduct Work Depends on Funding

Project funding for replacement and reconstruction would likely become available over several years as 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP progresses. The earliest construction could begin would be in 2017, if project funding becomes available.





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## Preferred Alternative: Viaducts


### Maintenance Needs Reported to City of Chicago and Railroads

The City of Chicago:


- Repaired 108 light fixtures at 26 viaducts throughout the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project study area
- Cleared vegetation at the Hamilton Park pedestrian underpass at 73<sup>rd</sup> Street









Before



After



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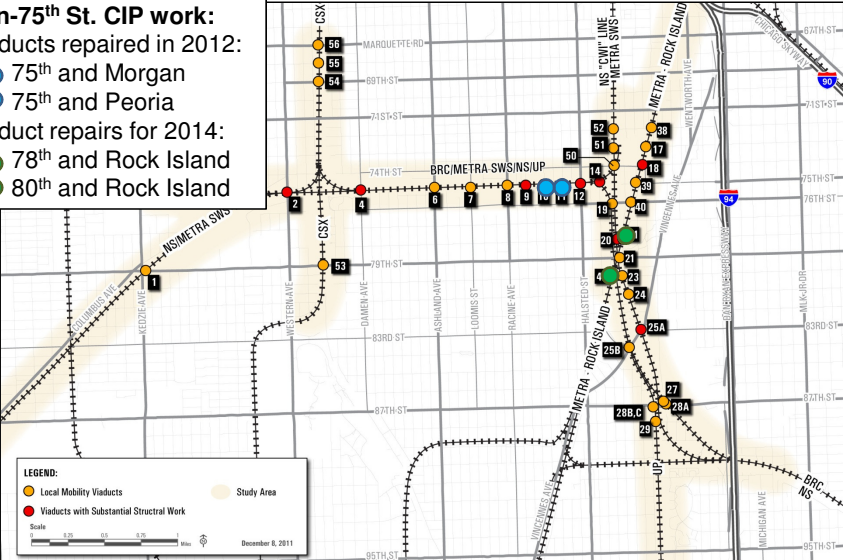
## Preferred Alternative: Viaducts

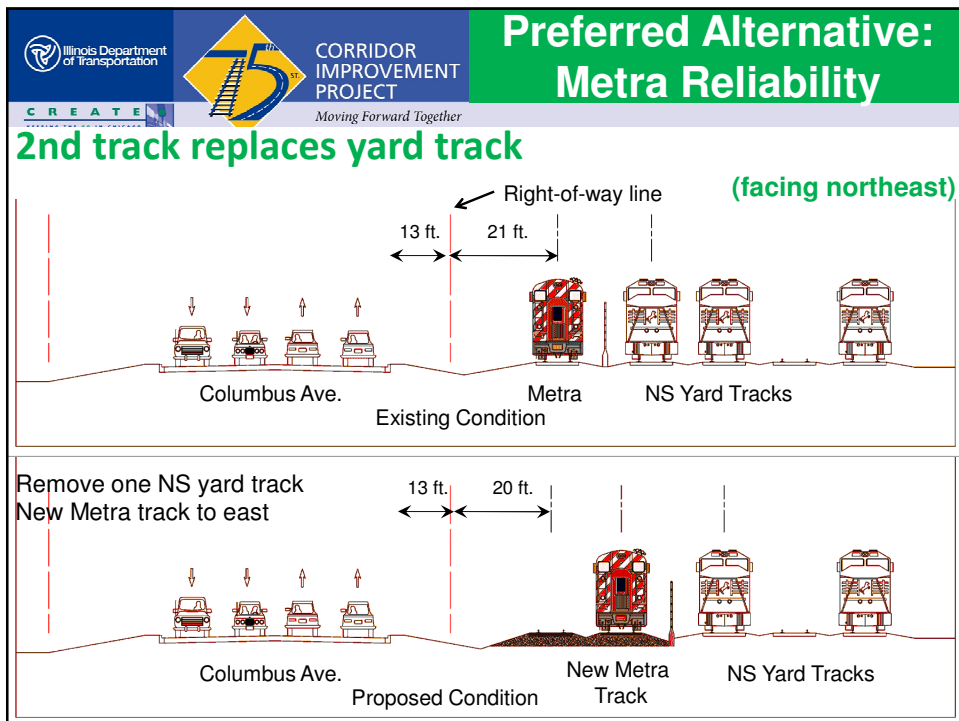
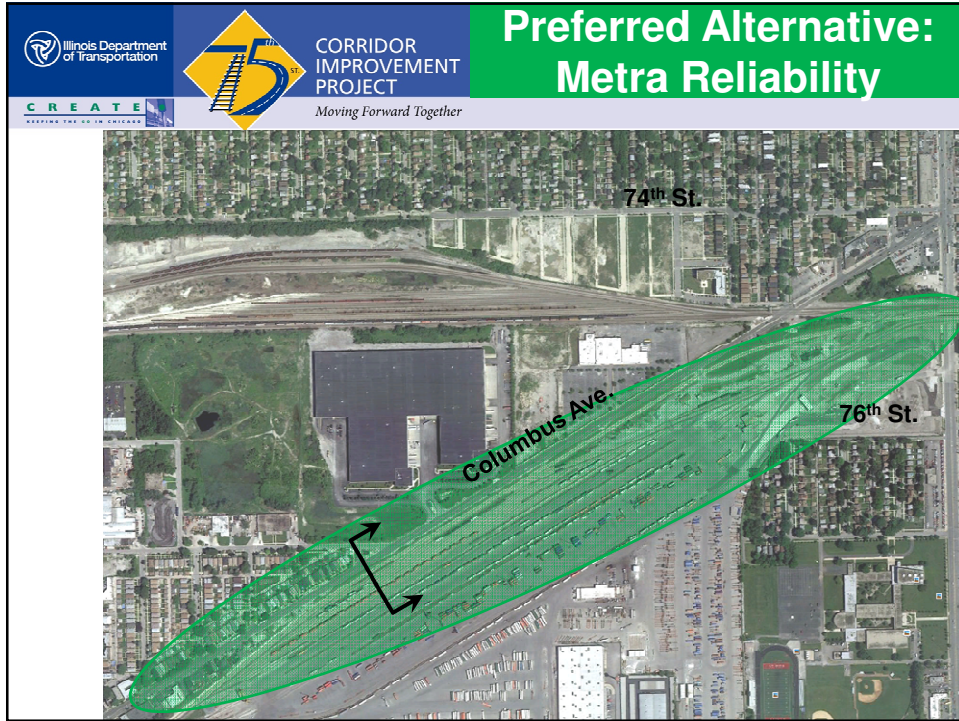
**Non-75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP work:**  
Viaducts repaired in 2012:


- 75<sup>th</sup> and Morgan
- 75<sup>th</sup> and Peoria

Viaduct repairs for 2014:


- 78<sup>th</sup> and Rock Island
- 80<sup>th</sup> and Rock Island







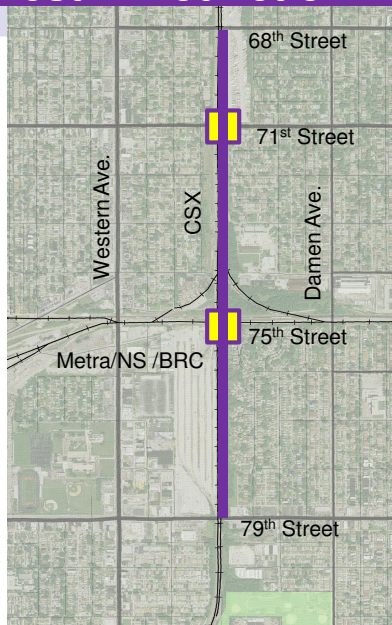
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## Preferred Alternative: Forest Hill Junction

- Elevate north-south CSX tracks over east-west tracks and 71<sup>st</sup> Street
- Bridge extends from 68<sup>th</sup> Street to 79<sup>th</sup> Street
- 1 parcel of City-owned land to be acquired





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## Forest Hill and 71<sup>st</sup> Street

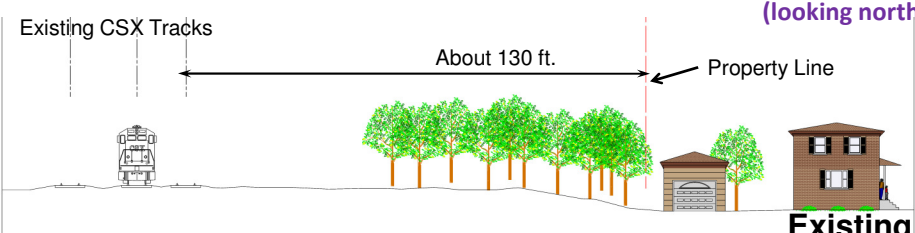
### CSX over Metra, BRC, & NS – Near 75<sup>th</sup> Street

(looking north)

Existing CSX Tracks

About 130 ft.

Property Line

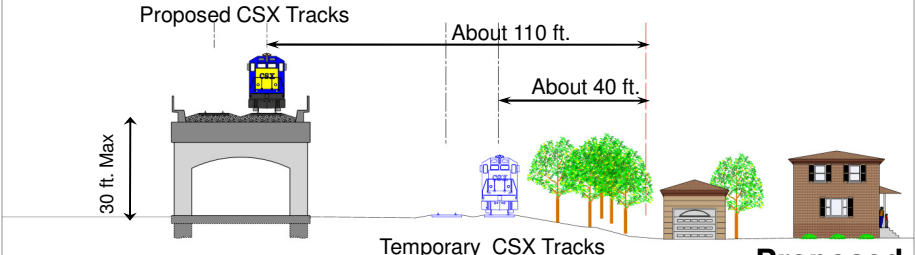


**Existing**

Proposed CSX Tracks

About 110 ft.

About 40 ft.



**Proposed**








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Forest Hill and 71st Street



**Partial Rendering of CSX Flyover**

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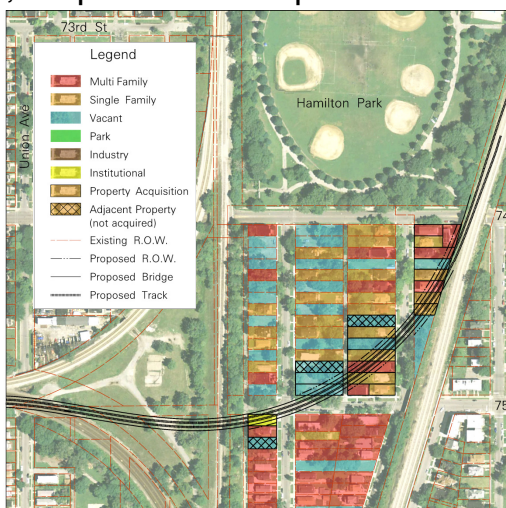
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Preferred Alternative:  
Metra Connection

**Bridge South of Hamilton Park - Alternate 1**  
40 mph design speed; no park land acquisition

Properties to be acquired:

Vacant	4
Residential	15
Institutional	<u>1</u>
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>20</b>
Dwelling Units	25
Residences on Adjacent Property	0



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### Preferred Alternative: Metra Connection

#### Union Avenue

- Close bridge, cul-de-sac street
- Make Union Ave. two-way
- Acquire 3 parcels w/4 dwellings

Union Ave

Legend


- Multi Family
- Single Family
- Vacant

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### Preferred Alternative: Metra Connection

Partial Rendering of Metra Flyover



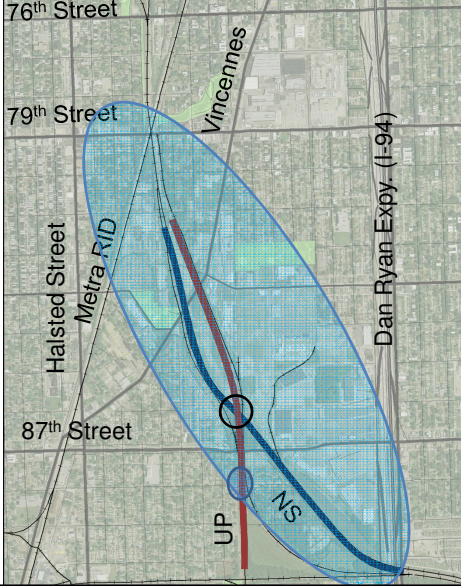
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## Preferred Alternative: 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction

- Eliminates conflicting rail movements
- All tracks on existing railroad embankments
- 18 vacant properties to be acquired in this area





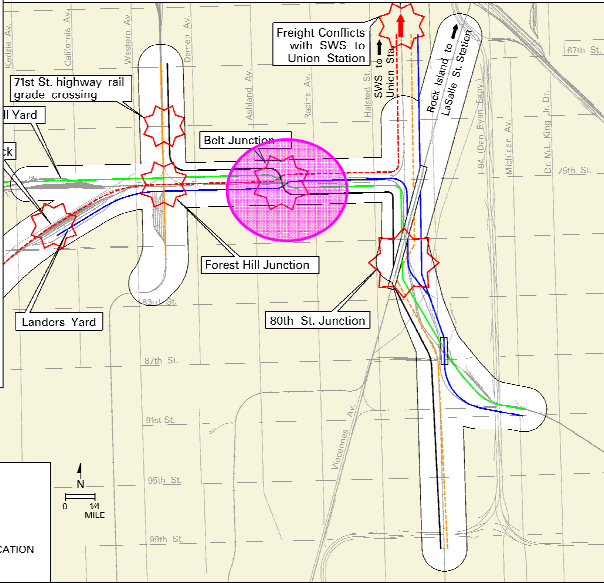
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## Preferred Alternative: Belt Junction

- Metra connection to Rock Island eliminates Metra–freight conflicts
- Improvements at 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction eliminate freight–freight conflicts
- Belt Junction eliminated




RAILROAD OPERATIONS	
<span style="color: green;">—</span> RRC	<span style="color: red;">—</span> MFTRA
<span style="color: blue;">—</span> NS	<span style="color: orange;">—</span> AMTRAK
<span style="color: yellow;">—</span> CSX	<span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">—</span> RR FLYOVER
<span style="color: black;">—</span> UP/CSX	<span style="color: red;">★</span> CONFLICT LOCATION



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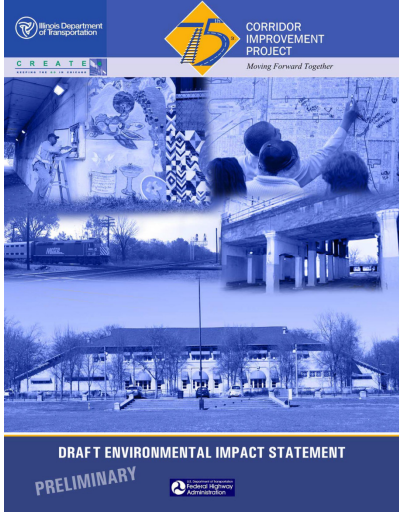
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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Describes alternatives, including the “No Action” alternative
- Describes benefits and impacts
- Describes mitigation
- Will be finalized after public hearing and comment period




DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
PRELIMINARY



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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation


### Overview

1. Benefits of the Preferred Alternative
2. Impacts of the Preferred Alternative and Recommended Mitigation
3. Temporary Construction Impacts and Recommended Mitigation
4. Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration






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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation




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**Benefits of Meeting Purpose and Need for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP**

<b>Reduces rail-rail crossing conflicts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decreased train idling</li> <li>2. Decreased air emissions from locomotives</li> <li>3. Improved safety</li> </ol>
<b>Reduces road-rail crossing conflicts</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elimination of the at-grade crossing at 71<sup>st</sup> Street and CSX tracks</li> <li>2. Eliminates 3 ½ hours of daily road closure</li> <li>3. Improved safety</li> </ol>
<b>Improves Rail Passenger Service Reliability</b>	Faster and more reliable Metra and Amtrak service
<b>Reduces Local Mobility Problems</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Major improvements at 36 viaducts in the project area</li> <li>2. Improved mobility, safety, and security for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists</li> <li>3. Improved appearance of viaducts</li> </ol>

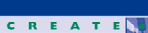


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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation





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**Impact Categories**


1. Physical Characteristics	7. Energy
2. Socioeconomics	8. Air Quality
3. Transportation	9. Natural Resources
4. Cultural Resources and Parks	10. Water Resources
5. Noise	11. Special Waste
6. Vibration	12. Visual Resources

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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation



## Physical Characteristics and Socioeconomics

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private right-of-way to be acquired (15.9 acres)</li> <li>Public right-of-way to be used (0.6 acres)</li> <li>42 parcels of land to be acquired</li> <li>No businesses or commercial establishments to be displaced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal and Illinois property acquisition and relocation policies followed</li> <li>Fair market value</li> <li>Relocation assistance</li> </ul> <div style="background-color: #fce4d6; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Mitigation Under Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some affected residential property owners who owe more on their property than its fair market value (negative equity) could receive assistance in settling their mortgage balance. Opportunities would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis when appropriately justified.</li> </ul> </div>




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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation



## Transportation

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metra SouthWest Service terminus moved from Union Station to LaSalle Street Station</li> <li>Union Avenue at 75<sup>th</sup> Street closed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cul-de-sacs at Union Avenue to be designed to deter loiterers</li> </ul>








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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

### Cultural Resources and Special Lands

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease in noise at Lily Gardens Park</li> <li>Increase in noise at three parks</li> <li>Work at Damen Avenue's historic bridge façade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise barrier at Leland Giants Park</li> <li>Damen Avenue viaduct façade and railing replaced and replicated</li> </ul> <div style="background-color: #ffcc99; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p><b>Mitigation Under Consideration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiet zone could benefit other two parks</li> </ul> </div>





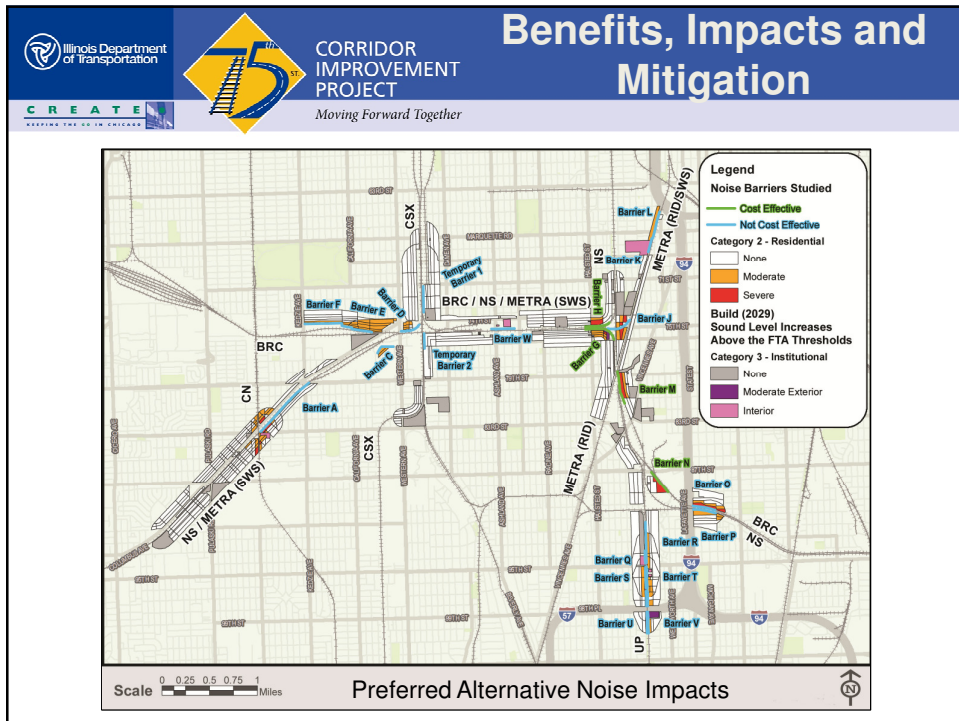
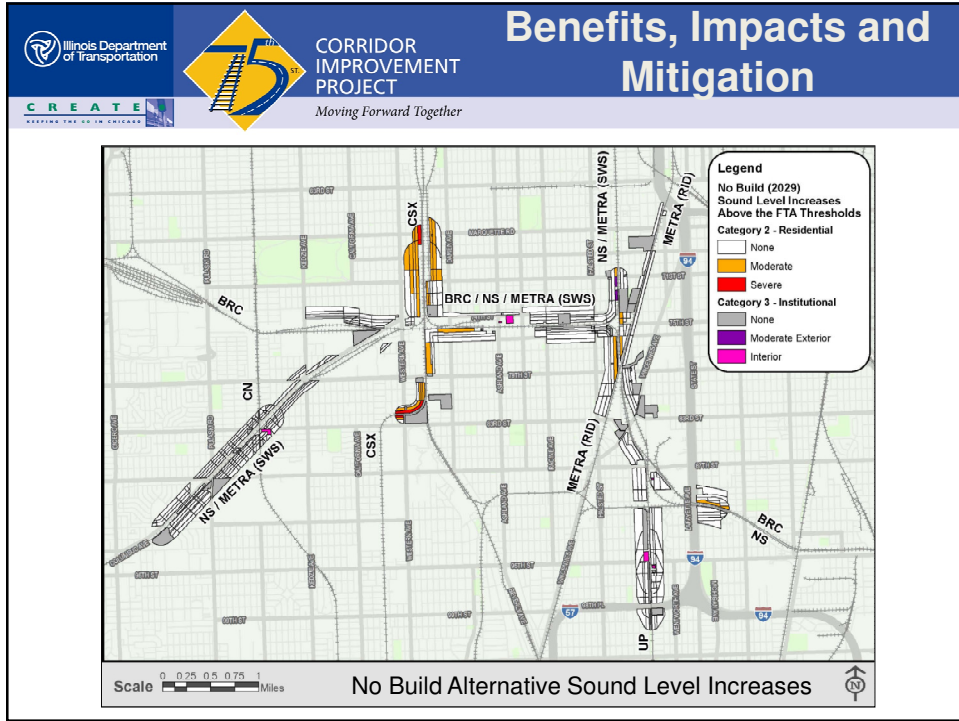




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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

### Comparisons to Existing Noise Levels


	Preferred Alternative	No Build Alternative	Difference
Residences above the FTA moderate impact threshold	1,150	982	<b>168</b>
Residences above the FTA severe impact threshold	210	90	<b>120</b>
Institutional facilities above FTA moderate impact threshold	3	1	<b>2</b>
Institutional facilities above FTA interior impact threshold	7	7	<b>0</b>





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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

## Noise Commitments and Mitigation

Four recommended noise barriers would provide benefits to:


- 66 residences with moderate impacts
- 123 residences with severe impacts
- 1 park with moderate impacts

**Mitigation Under Consideration**

One additional noise barrier would provide benefits to:

- 50 residences with moderate impacts
- 34 residences with severe impacts

Quiet Zones at three crossings in the area (95<sup>th</sup> Street, 97<sup>th</sup> Street, and 101<sup>st</sup> Street) would reduce horn noise at those locations



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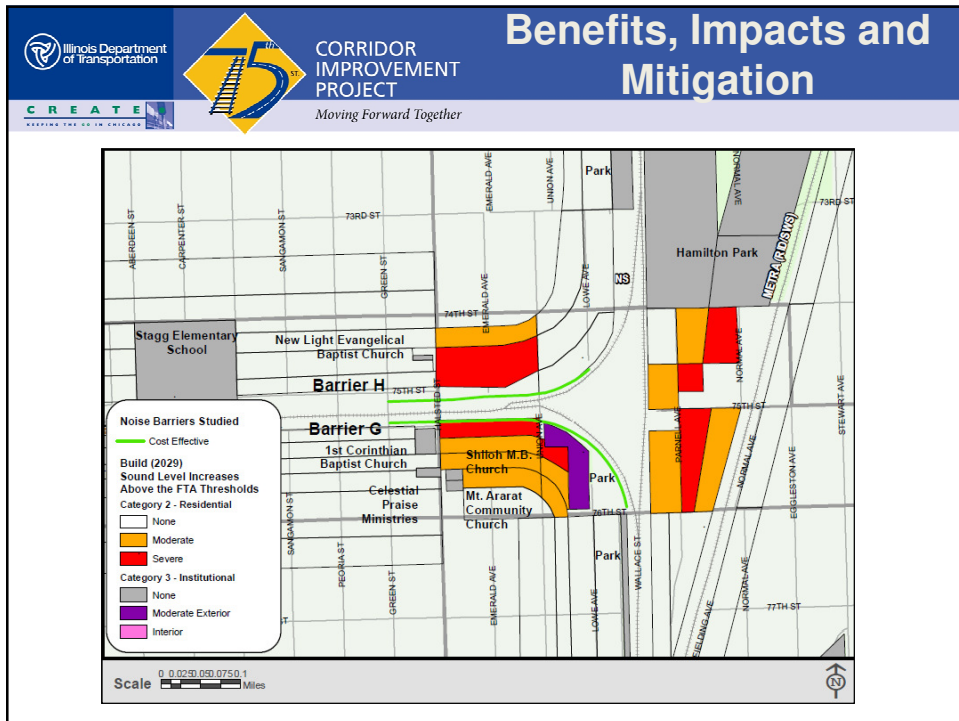
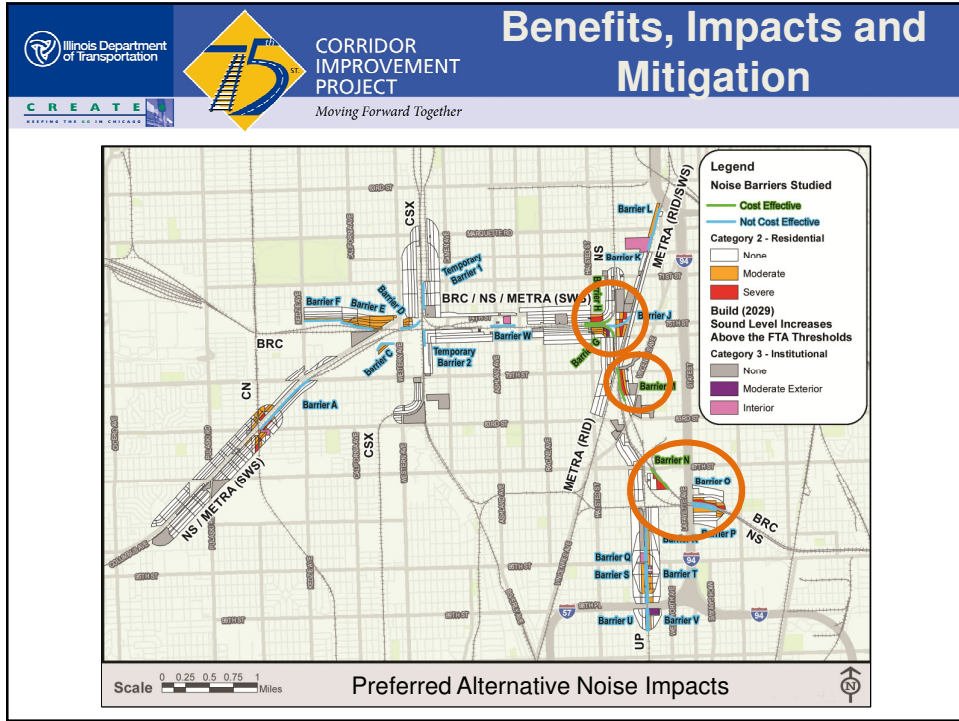
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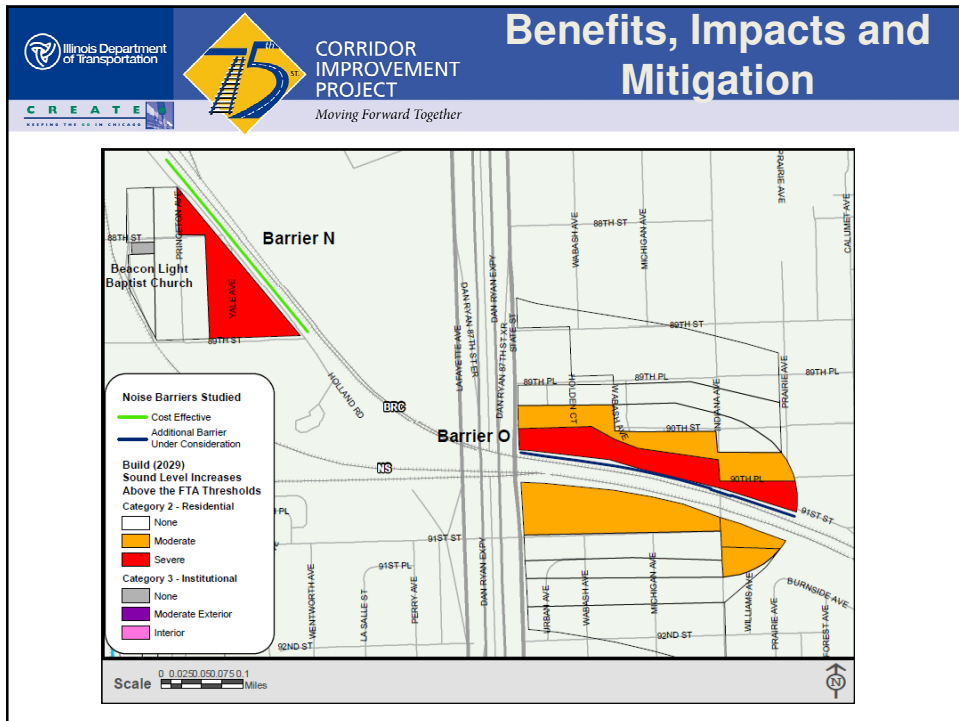
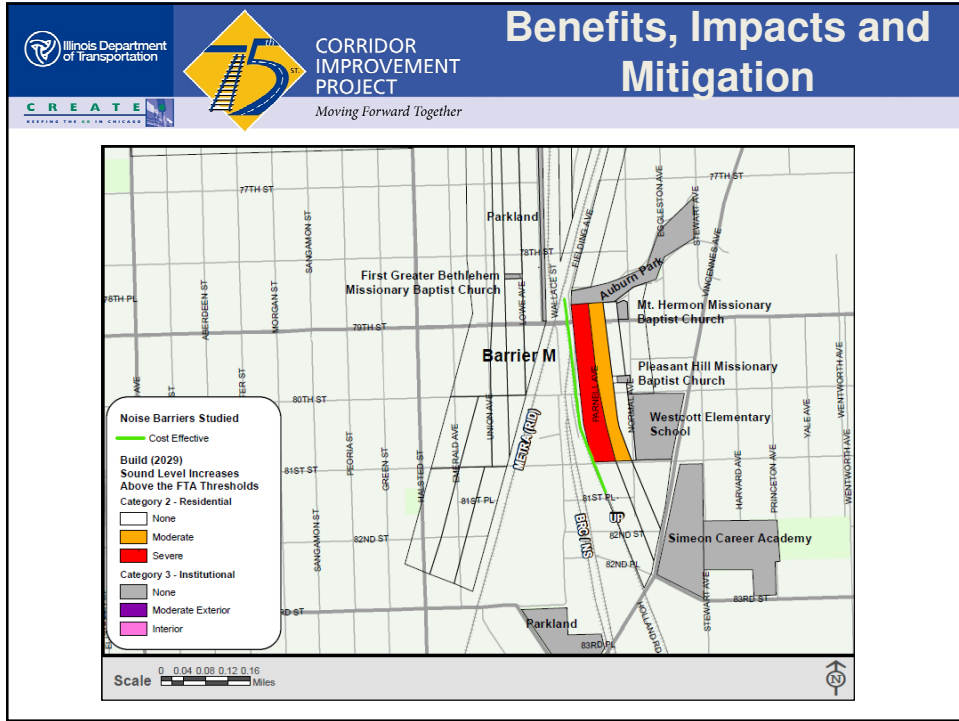
# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation





Example Photo of Noise Barrier









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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

### Comparisons to Existing Vibration Levels

	Preferred Alternative	No Build Alternative	Difference
Properties with ground-borne vibration levels above the FTA threshold	755	28	727
Properties with ground-borne noise levels above the FTA threshold	77	58	19

### Vibration Commitments and Mitigation

- Normal maintenance, including
  - Rail grinding
  - Wheel truing
  - Wheel-flat detectors
  - Vehicle reconditioning
- However, they will not completely eliminate the predicted vibration impacts




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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

### Energy

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less locomotive idling will result in a 20% reduction in fuel usage compared to the No Build alternative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in fuel use is a benefit – no mitigation needed</li> </ul>






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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

## Air Quality

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less locomotive idling will result in fewer emissions due to reduction in fuel consumption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in air emissions is a benefit – no mitigation needed</li> </ul>





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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

## Natural Resources and Water Resources

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>43 trees removed</li> <li>No impact to water resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees would be replaced on a one-for-one basis per IDOT policy</li> </ul>






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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

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### Special Waste

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 high-risk sites potentially affected</li> <li>33 medium-risk sites potentially affected</li> <li>48 low-risk sites potentially affected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental investigation performed before soil is disturbed at any high- or medium-risk sites</li> <li>Soil management and/or remediation completed by responsible agency</li> </ul>

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### Visual Resources

Impacts	Commitments and Mitigation
<p>Two flyovers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metra Rock Island flyover south of Hamilton Park</li> <li>CSX flyover at 71<sup>st</sup> Street/Forest Hill Junction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscaping</li> <li>Tree planting</li> <li>Public art</li> </ul>

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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation



Partial Rendering of Metra Flyover

This slide features a header with the Illinois Department of Transportation logo, the '75' anniversary logo, and the 'CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT' branding. The main title is 'Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation'. The central image is a partial rendering of a Metra flyover structure crossing over a residential street. The scene includes trees, a brick building, and a clear sky with some clouds.

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# Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation



Partial Rendering of CSX Flyover

This slide features the same header as the first slide. The main title is 'Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation'. The central image is a partial rendering of a CSX flyover structure crossing over a residential street. The scene shows a brick house, a sidewalk, and trees under a cloudy sky.

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations

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Temporary Construction Impacts	Mitigation
Traffic	Traffic Management Plans
Construction noise and vibration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. City of Chicago ordinances for noise and vibration</li> <li>2. Coordination with local schools</li> </ol>

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations

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Temporary Construction Impacts	Mitigation
Nuisance species (rodents, etc.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. City of Chicago ordinances</li> <li>2. Contractors control nuisance species during the land-clearing and through construction to protect residential areas</li> </ol>




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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations

Temporary Construction Impacts (cont.)	Mitigation
Retaining walls near Hamilton Park and Leland Giants Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Permits from Chicago Park District</li> <li>2. Landscaping plan for restoration</li> </ol>




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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations

Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration	
Mitigation or Benefit	Description
Employment and Job Training Programs	Current IDOT and CREATE strategies to encourage small and disadvantaged businesses and employment and job training activities. In addition: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contracting strategies</li> <li>2. Job training</li> <li>3. Educational programs</li> </ol>






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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations




Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration	
Mitigation or Benefit	Description
Bus Stop Improvements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upgrade 20 busiest bus stops near project limits</li> <li>2. Install electronic bus-arrival signs at all 20 stops</li> <li>3. Install bus shelters at the 10 stops that don't have them</li> </ol>
Sidewalk Improvements	Provide funding to the City to improve sidewalks, in addition to sidewalk improvements at viaducts

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations



Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration	
Mitigation or Benefit	Description
Bicycle Improvements	<p>Two bike routes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A 6.2-mile bikeway on 76<sup>th</sup> Street from Damen Avenue to Rainbow Beach Park</li> <li>2. A 750-foot long off-street path through Dawes Park connecting to Major Taylor Trail</li> </ol>









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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations


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Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration

Mitigation or Benefit	Description
Streetscape Improvements	Add trees, benches, signs, decorative pavement at crosswalks, bike racks, and other amenities










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## Benefits, Impacts and Mitigations

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Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Consideration

Mitigation or Benefit	Description
Maintenance of Railroad Property and Infrastructure	1. Viaduct improvements will partly address 2. Encourage residents to call 311 for maintenance needs and 911 to report emergencies



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### Viaduct Safety

For viaduct maintenance call **311**

To report an emergency call **911**

[www.75thdcp.org](http://www.75thdcp.org)






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# Discussion



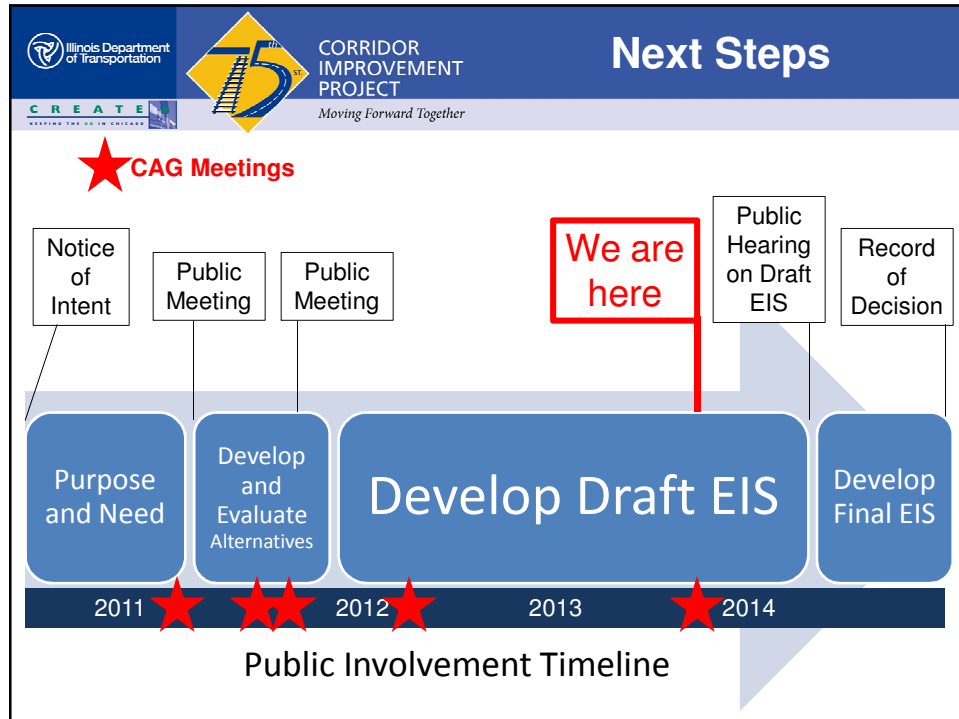


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## Next Steps

### What Happens Next?

- Consider your input
- Finalize the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Hold Public Hearing in early 2014
- Consider input from public and other agencies
- Complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement



**Opportunities for Public Involvement**

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- Request speakers for local group meetings
- Information available at [www.75thCIP.org](http://www.75thCIP.org)
- Attend upcoming Public Hearing
- Send us comments through:
  - Online comment form at website
  - Project team email – [info@75thCIP.org](mailto:info@75thCIP.org)
  - Mail – 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP  
525 W. Monroe, Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60661

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# Thank you!

FRESH VINE  
Hamilton Park  
Established 1904  
CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT