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## **75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Community Advisory Group - Phases II and III Meeting #1 Meeting Summary February 13, 2019**

### **Summary:**

The first Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting for Phases II and III of the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) was held Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ, 1459 W. 74<sup>th</sup> St., Chicago, Illinois, 60636. The meeting was scheduled to run from 9 to 11 a.m. However, the meeting began at 9:15 a.m. and project team members remained with participants until 11:30 a.m. In total, there were 30 attendees. Fifteen were CAG members and fifteen were project team members. The names and affiliation of attendees are listed on page five. Nine photo release forms and one written comment form were received (see page eight for details).

Lilliane Webb, Metro Strategies, opened the meeting with a safety briefing and review of the project materials provided to meeting participants (provided on page eight). Next, Samuel Tuck III, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and Tom Livingston, CSX, delivered welcoming remarks and led introductions. Both project team members and CAG members stated their names and affiliations during introductions. Jakita Trotter, IDOT, started the PowerPoint presentation with a review of IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions process, anticipated 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP public involvement activities and the roles and responsibilities of the CAG. Alex Beata, Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (Cook County DOTH), introduced the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. Mr. Beata described the CREATE partnership and the four corridors and 70 projects that comprise the Program, noting the Program's benefits and its regional and national significance.

Next, Jeff Sriver, Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), elaborated on the project development process and projects that comprise the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. Mr. Sriver reviewed the public outreach from Phase I and explained that the CAG has been reassembled because the CREATE partners received a federal Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant award which funds the design of all projects in the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP and construction of two of the projects. Mr. Sriver summarized the existing conditions and the Purpose and Need for the proposed improvements. He presented the location, funding and timing of GS19 (71<sup>st</sup> St. Grade Separation), P3 (Forest Hill Flyover), P2 (Rock Island Connection) and EW2 (Belt Junction). GS19 and P3 are funded for final design and construction, whereas P2 and EW2 are currently funded only for final design. Additionally, Mr. Sriver introduced the viaduct improvements that became a project component following Phase I CAG feedback. Viaducts that have already been rehabilitated and locations under consideration for improvement were noted. Lastly, Mr. Sriver discussed the potential community mobility improvements (sidewalk, street, bus stop improvements) that will be constructed in conjunction with the project.

Mr. Livingston outlined the community benefits associated with the project, including support for education programming in local schools, on-the-job training through Dawson Technical Institute and IDOT's Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP), contracting opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and the Get On Board business-to-business networking event. Mr. Livingston concluded the presentation by discussing the timeline for the project and informing CAG members of how to stay involved and informed.

Following the PowerPoint presentation, project team members answered questions from CAG members for approximately 40 minutes. At 11 a.m., CAG members were given the opportunity to meet one-on-one with members from the project team and turn in comment sheets. Questions and discussion following the formal presentation centered on the Forest Hill Flyover and connecting community members and local businesses to employment and contracting opportunities. Residents expressed that the train tracks are already very close to their homes. They voiced concern regarding the noise and vibration impacts associated with the project. Additionally, CAG members stated the need for direct outreach to community businesses as it relates to contracting opportunities for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. Many companies from the community are not DBE certified. Moreover, CAG members expressed the need for smaller meetings to inform community members of the on-the-job training opportunities associated with the project

#### **Specific Discussion Topics and Associated Follow-Up:**

1. In response to Mr. Sriver's presentation of viaduct improvements, home owner Larry Richard stated that viaduct improvements are needed now. Mr. Richard stated that concrete falls from the viaduct at 74<sup>th</sup> and Normal. This viaduct was identified during the planning phase as warranting improvements. Under INFRA, funding has been secured to finalize improvements at the 74<sup>th</sup> and Normal viaduct, but construction funding is still needed. Additionally, Mr. Richard suspects the steel needs structural improvements. Mr. Sriver responded that the City of Chicago is responsible for addressing ground-level viaduct issues related to streets and sidewalks and the private railroads are responsible for the walls, columns, beams and structural elements. Mr. Sriver added that variations in temperature throughout the year can lead to concrete issues. Mr. Livingston responded that the viaducts are routinely inspected by railroad engineers. Often, structures that may look to be in poor condition are structurally sound.

Mr. Richard stated that the majority of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project funds are from public agencies, but he believes that the private railroads have the most to benefit from this project. Mr. Livingston responded that the funding put forth by the private railroads in the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP is unique to the CREATE partnership. Moreover, while public funding is going towards these rail improvements, the private railroads are responsible for their maintenance in perpetuity. He noted that trucks contribute major wear and tear on roads, yet the trucking industry does not subsidize road development or maintenance.

Mr. Sriver stated that the funding contributions of the public and private partners were negotiated amongst the partners prior to the INFRA grant application. He noted that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP will provide many public benefits, which is why IDOT, Cook County and CDOT are

contributing to the project's implementation. Although the breakdown of contributions could have been different, and some may prefer a different breakdown, the CREATE partners were pleased to reach an agreement that funds the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP and are excited to move forward. IDOT, Cook County and CDOT will make sure the project provides community benefits.

After the meeting, Mr. Srivier, Joe Alonzo, CDOT, and Jason Biernat, CDOT, visually inspected the viaduct with Mr. Richard. The viaduct is part of Metra's SouthWest Service line. At the Public Involvement Working Group (PIWG) meeting on February 14, Tanya Cohn, Metra, reported that a bridge inspector from Metra is scheduled to evaluate the structure. There will be follow-up with Mr. Richard from the project team.

**2.** Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ's Associate Pastor Elliott Powell asked about the project's commitment to minority contracting, minority hiring and wealth distribution. Mr. Tuck responded that the partners are committed to minority contacting and hiring. He described CREATE's Get On Board business-to-business networking event which was held on January 24, 2019 at Kennedy-King College. This event's purpose was connecting local DBE firms with the railroads, public agencies and prime consultants associated with the design and construction of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. The event was extensively promoted to DBEs. Mr. Tuck continued that the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team has learned a lot from other CREATE projects, including the Englewood Flyer project at 63<sup>rd</sup> and State streets. Building off these lessons, the work packages for the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP are smaller in cost and scope than those for the Englewood Flyover so that smaller firms can more easily bid on them. Additionally, the proportion of work in the packages that must be carried out by DBEs has increased; however, this is ultimately linked to the type of work DBE's are eligible and qualified to bid. Federal reimbursement for job training has also been secured for the project. Mr. Tuck continued that the project partners need CAG members to share information on the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP contracting and hiring opportunities with their networks. If the project team does not meet the DBE benchmarks for the project, they must return the federal money.

**3.** Resident Daisy Ryan expressed concerns about the truck congestion at 79<sup>th</sup> and Kedzie, just south of the overpass by Nabisco Bakery. Mr. Srivier shared that a business that services shipping containers has recently relocated to this location drawing heavy truck traffic to the area. CDOT is aware of this issue and is pursuing solutions. This situation is outside of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project area.

Ms. Ryan continued that the east-west Norfolk Southern, Belt Railway of Chicago and Metra tracks associated with the Forest Hill Flyover are already very close to the homes in the south-east quadrant of the junction. She asked if anyone reconsidered the effects of moving the tracks even closer to the homes, even on a temporary basis. Mr. Livingston added that after completing the environmental analysis, forty feet was determined the appropriate distance for the temporary CSX tracks, which operate north-south by the homes in the south-east quadrant of the junction.

Additionally, Ms. Ryan submitted a comment form requesting that members of the project team attend a Hamilton Block Club meeting to present on the project. *[After the CAG meeting on February 20, Chrissy Breit, Metro Strategies, spoke with Ms. Ryan on the phone. During this call, Ms. Ryan asked about the status of her meeting request and she sought*

*additional information related to the Dawson Technical Institute training program for jobs on 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. On March 1, Ms. Breit sent a follow-up email to Ms. Ryan. The communication is included in the Appendix on page 11.]*

4. Homeowner Joseph Ryan asked if the Columbus Avenue and Belt Railway of Chicago Grade Separation (GS11) is part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP funded projects. This grade separation is located at the intersection of South Maplewood Avenue and West Columbus Avenue. Mr. Sriver noted that it is a CREATE-funded project which could be constructed in the same time period, but it is not part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. Project GS11 is fully funded for final design and construction.

5. Ruthette Campbell, project area resident, asked if it was possible to set up smaller meetings between small construction companies and the project team to better enable businesses from the community to get involved in the work packages. She said this approach would be preferable to asking CAG members to individually inform construction companies about contracting opportunities. Mr. Sriver replied that the CREATE partners reached out to small, minority-owned construction companies through Get On Board; however, the project team could attend small meetings upon request. Mr. Sriver continued that the best way for local firms to stay notified of contracting opportunities is to sign up for the CREATE procurement listserv on the CREATE webpage ([www.createprogram.org/business.htm](http://www.createprogram.org/business.htm)).

Additionally, Ms. Campbell referenced concerns with the vegetation overgrowth at viaducts, especially near the viaduct at 75<sup>th</sup> and Normal near her home. Mr. Sriver responded that vegetation overgrowth is an issue that the railroads address. Ms. Campbell was referred to the *Railroad and City of Chicago Contact Information* flyer that was included in the folder of materials provided to meeting participants.

6. One participant expressed concern with Forest Hill Flyover and the proximity of the temporary tracks to the houses. Noting that there will not be noise barriers for temporary construction, she worries the homes cannot withstand increased vibration. She then asked about the Rock Island Connection flyover near Hamilton Park. It was shared that the tracks will be the same width as the current tracks and only Metra will use this track. Lastly, she mentioned that she and her neighbors' television and radio signals are sometimes interrupted at their homes. She thinks it could be due to the railroad technology installed in the area. Mr. Sriver shared that this was first time hearing about the issue and the City will investigate further. Following the meeting, the resident spoke with Herbert Smith, Norfolk Southern, Mr. Beata and Mr. Biernat about the telephone and radio interference issue. Mr. Beata and Mr. Biernat shared that the resident did not make any specific requests for follow-up.

7. Amanda Norman requested printed materials regarding land acquisition plans in the area south of Hamilton Park. *[On February 19, Ms. Norman left a voicemail for Mr. Sriver with her mailing address so he could send her the plans. On February 21, the City of Chicago mailed these documents to her (refer to pages 12 and 13 in the Appendix for correspondence).]*

**CAG Member in Attendance:**

Residents (7)

- Daisy Ryan – 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, 78<sup>th</sup> Block Club
- Joseph Ryan – 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, 78<sup>th</sup> Block Club
- Jeanette Purnell – Triple Street Block Club
- Rosemary Richard-Sydnor – 73<sup>rd</sup> Lowe Block Club
- Amanda Norman
- Ruthette Campbell
- Larry Richard

Churches (3)

- Pastor Elliott Powell – Freedom Temple Church of God In Christ
- Pastor Lethaniel Smith – I Care Christian Ministries
- Bishop Willard Payton - New Birth Church of God in Christ

Community Development Groups (4)

- Tonya Walls – Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC)
- Linda Johnson – Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC)
- Demetri Alexakos – Greater Southwest Development Corporation
- LaDarius Beal – Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP)

Schools (1)

- Jerilynn Johnson – Stagg School of Excellence

**CREATE Program Partners in Attendance:**

- Joe Alonzo, Chicago Department of Transportation
- Jason Biernat, Chicago Department of Transportation
- Jeffrey Sriver, Chicago Department of Transportation
- Alex Beata, Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
- Tom Livingston, CSX
- Michael Kowalczyk, Federal Highway Administration
- Michael Hurley, HNTB
- Jakita Trotter, Illinois Department of Transportation
- Samuel Tuck III, Illinois Department of Transportation
- Tanya Cohn, Metra
- Chrissy Breit, Metro Strategies
- Lilliane Webb, Metro Strategies
- Laura Wilkison, Metro Strategies
- Herbert Smith, Norfolk Southern
- Erik Varela, Union Pacific



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# Sign In

75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project  
Community Advisory Group Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 2019, Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ

|    | Name               | Organization                     | Phone | Email     |
|----|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| 1  | ELLIOTT POWELL     | FREEDOM TEMPLE                   |       |           |
| 2  | Lethand Smith      | I C 92                           | 70    | com       |
| 3  | Jerilynn Johnson   | Stagg School of Excellence       |       |           |
| 4  | WILLARD PAYTON     | New Birth Ch / Chicago           |       |           |
| 5  | Demetri Alexakos   | Greater Southwest Dev. Corp      |       | west.org  |
| 6  | DAISY RYAN         | 76, 77, & 78 Block Club          |       |           |
| 7  | Joseph Ryan        |                                  |       |           |
| 8  | Jeanette Ruffell   | Temple Street Block Club         | 7     | leo.com   |
| 9  | ROSEMARY R. SYDNOR | 73 <sup>rd</sup> Lowe Block Club | (7)   | ill.com   |
| 10 | Tonya Walls        | GAGDC                            | 7     | gagdc.org |
| 11 | Linda Johnson      | GAGDC                            |       |           |



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# Sign In

75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project  
Community Advisory Group Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 2019, Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ

|    | Name              | Organization | Phone | Email |
|----|-------------------|--------------|-------|-------|
| 12 | AMANDA NORMAN     | RESIDENT     |       |       |
| 13 | BUTHELLE CAMPBELL | HOME OWNER   | 7     | leo   |
| 14 | LARRY RICHARDS    | HOME OWNER   | 7     |       |
| 15 | LADARIUS BEAL     | SWOP         | 7     | 2     |
|    |                   |              |       |       |
|    |                   |              |       |       |
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|    |                   |              |       |       |
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# Project Team Sign In

**75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project  
Community Advisory Group Meeting**

Wednesday, February 13, 2019, Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ

| Initial | Name              | Agency             |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|
|         | Bill Thompson     | AAR                |
| JA      | Joe Alonzo        | CDOT               |
| JB      | Jason Biernat     | CDOT               |
| JS      | Jeffrey Sriver    | CDOT               |
| AB      | Alex Beata        | Cook Co. DOTH      |
|         | Sis Killen        | Cook Co. DOTH      |
|         | María Choca Urban | Cook Co. DOTH      |
|         | Gail Lobin        | CSX                |
| TL      | Tom Livingston    | CSX                |
| MK      | Michael Kowalczyk | FHWA               |
| MH      | Michael Hurley    | HNTB -             |
|         | Lillian Yan       | HNTB               |
| JT      | Jakita Trotter    | IDOT               |
| ST      | Samuel Tuck III   | IDOT               |
| T.C.    | Tanya Cohn        | Metra -            |
|         | Janice Thomas     | Metra              |
| CB      | Chrissy Breit     | Metro Strategies   |
| LW      | Lilliane Webb     | Metro Strategies - |
| LW      | Laura Wilkison    | Metro Strategies - |
| HS      | Herbert Smith     | Norfolk Southern   |
|         | Liisa Stark       | Union Pacific      |
| EV      | Erik Varela       | Union Pacific -    |



**Materials in Project Folders:**

- [Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Presentation slides with section for note-taking](#)
- [CREATE Project Status Map](#)
- [CREATE Program Brochure](#)
- [75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Brochure](#)
- [75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP Community Benefits Fact Sheet](#)
- [Railroad and City of Chicago Contact Information Flyer](#)
- [CREATE Program Employment Information](#)
- [IDOT Highway Construction Careers Training Program Flyer](#)
- [Comment Form](#)
- [Photo Release](#)

**Exhibit Boards:**

Three exhibit boards were on display throughout the meeting for CAG members to view. These boards included a map of all CREATE projects, an isometric map detailing the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP and a rendering of the Forest Hill Flyover.

**Comment Forms and Photo Releases:**

One comment form (see scanned document) was submitted by Ms. Daisy Ryan. Everyone who attended the meeting received a photo release form. Photo releases were received from Amanda Norman, Demetri Alexakos, Daisy Ryan, Jerilynn Johnson, Jeanette Purnell, Joseph Ryan, Linda Johnson, Tonya Walls and Willard Payton.





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## COMMENT FORM

Please write your question(s) or comment(s) in the area below (please print). If you would like to receive a response to your question(s) or comment(s), please include your name, mailing address and email.

I would like to have a Community Meeting  
with Hamilton Blocks and 75<sup>th</sup> Corridor  
Improvement  
DARYL RYAN

Please return this form to a project team member, email form to [cbreit@metrostrategiesinc.com](mailto:cbreit@metrostrategiesinc.com)  
or return by mail to the address below.

75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project  
c/o Metro Strategies  
17 N. State Street, Suite 850  
Chicago, IL 60602

Photos from the Community Advisory Group Meeting



**Email Response to Daisy Ryan's Comment Form and Phone Call**

Dear Ms. Ryan,

Thank you for sharing your comments with the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team. The CREATE partners would be happy to meet with the residents of Hamilton Block. The partners have received your request and acknowledge that more robust information could be provided if the meeting were to occur later this spring. We want to ensure the meeting is as informative and beneficial to your neighbors as possible. When additional information is available, we will reach out to you about arranging the meeting and inviting your neighbors on Hamilton.

Regarding your request for information on Dawson Technical Institute, we are process of collecting the information and will provide that information to you as soon as it is available.

Please continue to be in contact with your questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

The 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team

## Materials Sent to Amanda Norman



February 21, 2019

Amanda Norman

Dear Ms. Norman,

Thank you for your attendance at the Community Advisory Group meeting for the CREATE Program's 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project (75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP) on February 13, 2019. At that meeting you inquired about details on the project's anticipated land acquisition needs in the area south of Hamilton Park. I have also received your voicemail message from February 19 in which you shared your mail address.

Per your request, I have enclosed two documents:

- A printout of a page from the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP's website that contains the table of contents for all documentation from the entire Environmental Impact Statement that was completed and approved in 2014. These documents contain more than 1,000 pages of materials so we are not able to send it by mail. However, they may be accessed via the internet by typing in the following address and clicking on the respective links: <http://www.75thcip.org/envstudies.html>. For information on property acquisition south of Hamilton Park please reference *Chapter 2.2.4.3 Metra SWS Connection to Rock Island District Line* (pg. 2-21) and *Chapter 3.2.6 Relocation and Right-of-Way Acquisition* (pg. 3-36).
- A printout of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP handout entitled "Preliminary Information on Property Acquisition South of Hamilton Park". This handout identifies the preliminary land acquisition needs in the area of interest. The project team will be finalizing the list of properties to be acquired over the next two years. Therefore, the properties identified on the attached map should be considered a preliminary estimate and are subject to change.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these materials, either by phone at 312-744-7080 or by email at [info@75thcip.org](mailto:info@75thcip.org).

We look forward to your continued participation and input in the Community Advisory Group for this project and thank you again for your involvement so far.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Sriver  
Director of Transportation Planning and Programming  
Chicago Department of Transportation  
(on behalf of the CREATE Partners)

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

ASSOCIATION OF  
AMERICAN RAILROADS

COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAYS



## Materials Sent to Amanda Norman



### Preliminary Information on Property Acquisition South of Hamilton Park

The map below identifies institutional, residential and vacant properties that may be acquired as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP. These properties, along with the location of the Metra Rock Island Connection (P2) south of Hamilton Park, were identified in the 2014 Environmental Impact Statement, or Phase I environmental report, after extensive analysis of several routing options (See *Chapter 2.2.4.3 Metra SWS Connection to Rock Island District Line<sup>1</sup>* of the Final EIS for detailed documentation of this analysis).

Now that 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP has funding for final design, also referred to as Phase II, the CREATE partners will identify the final location of the P2 flyover structure and the properties to be acquired. Until the final design is prepared it is possible that the properties identified in 2014 to be acquired could change. Therefore, the properties identified on the map below should be considered a preliminary estimate. Once finalized, the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP project team will contact impacted property owners and residents directly to initiate the property acquisition process.

The project team will follow the *Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970*, as amended. This act ensures that owners are fairly compensated for the value of their property, that renters and owners receive relocation assistance, including moving expenses, and that the cost of comparable replacement housing is covered.



Map: Preliminary Estimate of the Properties to be Acquired (2014)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.75thcip.org/resources/FEIS/5\\_75th%20St%20CIP%20FEIS\\_Chapter%202\\_Alternatives.pdf](http://www.75thcip.org/resources/FEIS/5_75th%20St%20CIP%20FEIS_Chapter%202_Alternatives.pdf)