



**Moving
Forward
Together**



CREATE's 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project 6th & 17th Ward Community Meeting Feb. 25, 2021

Attendance:

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| 1. Alderman David Moore | 10. Jennifer Drake, Jacobs |
| 2. Alderman Roderick Sawyer | 11. Joe Alonzo, CDOT |
| 3. Jeffrey Sriver, CDOT | 12. Sam Tuck, IDOT |
| 4. Bill Thompson, AAR | 13. Tanya Cohn, Metra |
| 5. Cecilia Diaz, CCDOTH | 14. Tom Livingston, CSX |
| 6. Ernie Wong, Site Design Group | 15. Michael Hurley, HNTB |
| 7. Jakita Trotter, IDOT | 16. Keith Spencer, Metro Strategies |
| 8. Jason Biernat, CDOT | 17. Lilliane Webb, Metro Strategies |
| 9. Tanya Adams, WSP | 18. Arlinda Bajrami, Metro Strategies |

There were 70 unique participants who joined the call, including Aldermen Roderick Sawyer (6th Ward) and David Moore (17th Ward).

Meeting Summary

Jakita Trotter, IDOT, re-introduced the CREATE Program, the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (75th St. CIP), and its timeline. Samuel Tuck, IDOT, stated the CREATE Program is engaged in many community benefits as part of the 75th St. CIP. Some of these benefits include reaching out to local schools, providing workforce training opportunities, and conducting outreach to local businesses to foster participation among Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms.

Mr. Tuck provided an education update by explaining that project stakeholders have spent 85 hours discussing engineering and planning careers with more than 300 local students. The program has invested \$240,000 in science and engineering programs for local students while also planning summer field trips and internships that were not conducted as planned due to the ongoing pandemic. This link (<https://75thcip.org/benefits/>) contains more information about the project's community benefits.

Jason Biernat, CDOT, discussed how the project's community mobility improvements involve work related to street improvements, sidewalk improvements, new street trees, and bus stop improvements. The programs anticipate starting construction on these elements in 2022.

Tom Livingston, CSX, noted that the project team met with students of Dawson Technical Institute earlier that day with CSX's human relations staff to discuss what railroads are looking for in applicants and how those students can be involved in the CREATE Program.

The railroads are working on selecting engineering firms to complete the next stages of projects. In May 2020, Union Pacific advertised for design services on EW2 and another CREATE project, WA11, and had more than 100 interested people, including minority-owned businesses, in attendance at the online informational and networking event. CSX also held a virtual event for a construction manager opportunity in June 2020 and held another networking event in September 2020. Nine Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms are expected to be a part of CSX's construction manager and temporary construction work. The teams were selected this fall. So far, there are 27 different DBE firms working on 75th St. CIP project teams.

Anyone can sign up to be alerted of upcoming CREATE bid advertisements/requests for proposals at <https://www.createprogram.org/get-involved/bids-rfps/>.

The CREATE Program will host Get On Board, a business-to-business networking event, to share information with interested vendors about upcoming contracting opportunities.. Due to the pandemic, the event will be entirely conducted online. More information and a sign-up opportunity are available at tinyurl.com/CREATEGetOnBoard2021.

Mr. Tuck explained that IDOT is hosting free virtual workshops through April as part of its Building Blocks of Success series for firms interested in participating in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, strengthening their skills and bidding on state projects. The workshops are open to all, but some are tailored to specific districts/regions of the state. Find out more information at tinyurl.com/IDOTBuildingBlocks.

Mr. Livingston explained construction for P3/GS19 will be broken out into two stages – the first involving mobilization, site preparation and temporary track construction. The second stage will include the permanent construction of the Forest Hill Flyover and the 71st Street Grade Separation. The project will involve temporary track pest abatements near the project area. Mr. Livingston presented an aerial view of the P3 junction and the temporary north-south track alignment. Alderman Moore asked about the 71st St. grade separation and Mr. Livingston confirmed that that portion of the project will separate the rail and the road levels.

Keith Spencer, Metro Strategies, explained the visual treatments on the bridge – or how the bridge will look when complete. There are three options for the visual treatments. Mr. Spencer conducted three polls. The first asked participants which ward they live in. The second asked them how they heard about this meeting. The third poll asked call participants what their preference is for visual treatments. Anyone not able to vote on the call can vote online until March 15 or call the project team to express their opinion on the visual treatments. Mr. Spencer noted out that some textured visual treatments have been found to be less susceptible to graffiti than flat surfaces. Metro Strategies will provide a flyer to local aldermen to distribute this survey to others who may be interested in participating in the survey but are not on this call.

Jennifer Drake, Jacobs, then discussed the P2 Rock Island Connector and talked about how Metra has just started the design phase and is undertaking community outreach early on in the process. Ernie Wong, Site Design Group, introduced his firm and expressed an interest in hearing from community members on the visual treatments throughout this P2 component.

Ms. Trotter highlighted the poll, Get On Board, and IDOT's upcoming DBE Building Blocks of Success program. Melinda Kelly, MelKel Group, discussed her firm's role in community outreach and how the Program is providing access to skills training in preparation for the work that will eventually be part of this project. Alderman Moore expressed support for these trainings to assure there will not be future staffing shortages in these type of construction jobs. Mishaune Sawyer, ERS Enterprises, explained that her firm will be assisting with the community engagement portion of P2 as a liaison between Metra and community members with specific emphasis on allowing community members a voice on the design of P2. Alicia Garcia-Abner, Trinal Group, explained how her firm's role is similar to MelKel Group's, with focus on working with job candidates in securing employment with railroads directly and through the CREATE Program.

Lilliane Webb, Metro Strategies, explained that meeting materials will be added to the 75thcip.org website along with materials from previous outreach meetings. If there are any additional questions beyond what get asked during this meeting, anyone may email info@75thcip.org. Next, the presenters switched to taking questions from the attendees. The meeting concluded after questions.

Polling Questions:

- Which ward do you currently live in?
17th Ward received 30 votes (79%)
18th Ward received 1 vote (3%)
6th Ward received 1 vote (3%)
'Other' received 6 votes (16%)
- Which design best fits the community near the Forest Hill Flyover and 71st Street Grade Separation?
Option C – Quarry Stone received 18 votes (46%)
Option A – No Form Liner received 12 votes (31%)
Option B – Fractured Finished received 9 votes (23%)
- How did you hear about the meeting?
My Alderman received 31 votes (79%)
Word of Mouth received 4 votes (10%)
Email from CREATE received 2 votes (5%)
'Other' received 2 votes (5%)

Question & Answer Session:

There were 76 participants on the call at this point.

Q: Will we have access to this recording?

A: Yes, the slide will be posted on the project website at www.75thcip.org.

Q: Are any changes being made along 75th between Ashland and Damen?

A: 75th Street between Ashland and Damen is currently under design. There is no definitive answer; however, the current plan is that if there are changes it would be on existing railroad property.

Q: What role does MelKel have and what jobs are available?

A: MelKel currently partners with the City Colleges to identify talent that would be needed for CREATE projects. MelKel is working with Dawson Technical Institute and Kennedy-King College to identify such talent. Additionally, MelKel recently worked on a program with ComEd and engaged residents within Alderman Moore's district to prepare people with skills needed for the program.

Q: How will the project target recruiting women? And workforce training efforts?

A: When those construction opportunities come up along with opportunities from the partners, then the community members will be informed. For example, the pest control company is hiring a pest control technician and the Aldermanic offices have been informed and posted that information on a number of media outlets. In addition, the Get On Board event is an opportunity for businesses to network and receive coaching. It is recommended that any business interested should register for the Get On Board event at tinyurl.com/CREATEGetOnBoard2021. There are opportunities to showcase one's business as well. More information about that will be released shortly.

Q: Will training and jobs be offered to ex-felons?

A: If you are interested in obtaining additional training, consider Dawson Technical Institute. This institution has training programs available where people are introduced to several different trades. This program typically runs for 16 weeks once a year. Furthermore, Dawson Technical Institute and IDOT have an incentive program where graduates from Dawson Technical Institute receive pay at an hourly rate based on certain amount. Graduates from Dawson Technical Institute are a mixture of people which includes ex-felons. However, given it is a federal contract, there may be some concerns related to exclusion.

Additionally, there is a job corp. program through the Paul Simon Chicago Job Corps Center that is no cost. This program teaches people the skills they need to become employable and independent and place them in meaningful jobs or further education.

Q: How or when can an electrical contractor be able to bid on the viaduct lighting?

A: The City of Chicago is currently in the process in replacing and upgrading to brighter LED type of lights and general city streets over the next few years.

Q: Can you provide CSX contacts who makes decisions instead of going into the database abyss?

A: Norfolk Southern will provide information. Please provide Alderman Moore with the job number so that he can contact the right person. CSX is more than willing to look at

someone's job application and ensure equity and fairness when hiring; however, there is no guarantee of a job.

Q: Is there an age limit for the programs that is happening?

A: There are different jobs based on skillset and age range. It is recommended to apply to jobs based on qualifications.

Q: Will this be 100% union? If so, how will you address getting community involvement on the project when the unions presently have low minority numbers?

A: A response is needed for this. Will provide further information to Alderman Moore. For the projects related to tracks, local workforce maintains the tracks.

Additional Comments:

Alderman Moore mentioned that most people hear about projects; however, people are not prepared for the jobs. It is important to prepare people for these jobs within the community through such outreach efforts that are currently underway.

Alderman Sawyer stated that part of CREATE P2 with Metra can be conduit to community members and give members an opportunity to be a part of the process. There needs to be more community input and engagement, specifically on the P2 project. Perhaps this looks like additional surveying in the community to make sure that community members have a voice.