



**I-290**  
**Corridor Advisory Group and Task Force (CAG/TF)**  
**Meeting #10 Summary**  
**July 27, 2011**

The tenth combined CAG/TF meeting for the I-290 Phase I Study was held on July 27, 2011 at the Carleton Hotel of Oak Park, 1110 Pleasant St., Oak Park, IL 60302 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. The Meeting Agenda is included with this summary.

To announce the July 27, 2011 CAG/TF Meeting #10, an E-invitation was created. The invitation was sent out to all CAG and TF members on June 30, 2011. The meeting was attended by 27 people. The following CAG/TF members were in attendance:

1. Michael Bolton – PACE
2. Claire Bozic – CMAP
3. Fred Brandstrader – Cap the Ike
4. Lenny Cannata – West Central Municipal Conference
5. Rob Cole – Village of Oak Park
6. Peter Fahrenwald – RTA
7. Steve Glinke – Village of Forest Park
8. Henry Guerriero – ISTHA
9. John Kos – DuPage County DOT
10. Rick Kuner – Citizens for Appropriate Transportation
11. Tam Kutzmark – DuPage County Mayors and Managers
12. William Lenski – RTA
13. Phyllis Logan – 29<sup>th</sup> Ward, Community Advisor
14. John Loper – DuPage County
15. Gary Neubieser – Concordia Cemetery
16. Laura Perna – IDNR
17. Mark Pitstick – RTA
18. President David Pope – Village of Oak Park
19. Teresa Powell – Village of Oak Park
20. LaToya Price Childs – IRTBA
21. Ryan Richter – Metra
22. Lori Sommers – Village of Maywood
23. Robert Vance – CTA
24. Russ Wajda – Village of Hillside
25. Amy Welk – IDOT (DIPT)
26. Tammy Wierciak – West Central Municipal Conference
27. Brenda McGruder – CDOT



The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation (see attached) with the following agenda topics:

- Recap CAG/TF #9
- Public Meeting #2 Summary
- Single Mode Alternatives Evaluation Results
- Next Steps

During the presentation, CAG/TF members were invited to comment, ask questions, and provide input. Their comments are arranged in accordance with the presentation topics and are as follows below.

There were no questions or comments regarding Recap CAG/TF #9.

### **Public Meeting #2 Summary**

A summary of Public Meeting #2 was presented. The meeting was held on May 18, 2011 at the Proviso Math & Science Academy in Forest Park. At the meeting and during the 2 week formal comment period 150 comments were received. The most frequent comment categories were: improving highway access, providing multi-modal options, addressing residential and environmental impacts, extending the CTA Blue Line, addressing arterial highway congestion, improving pedestrian amenities, and modifying purpose and need. The primary comment received on the Purpose and Need was that the poor condition of the CTA Blue Line was not included as a need point. The existing deficiencies of the Blue Line were not included because these problems are the basic maintenance responsibility of the CTA, and the NEPA process does not replace the basic maintenance responsibilities of other agencies regarding the condition of their facilities.

### **Comment: Why is making the CTA stations modern and ADA compliant not included?**

Re: If we impact the CTA station as part of an alternative, we would need to put in a new modern facility in accordance with current standards.

### **Comment: I have concerns that the conditions of the CTA will not be addressed, and I can't see what is happening behind the scenes. It's like the study is taking place in a vacuum.**

Re: The study is not occurring in a vacuum. Representatives from the transit agencies are present at this meeting, and have been engaged in the process.

### **Comment: Does State of Good Repair refer to fixing the transit system to what it was 50 years ago when it was built or upgrading it to current standards?**

Re: CTA estimates to place its entire system in a state of good repair it would cost billions of dollars. It is unclear whether this number includes modernization of the system as it would depend on the current deficiencies. Accessibility and deterioration are both important needs, and often considered to be the same thing.



**Comment: If extending the Blue Line and station improvements are aspirations then they should be included in the Purpose and Need.**

Re: These suggestions are part of the alternatives phase. Station improvements will need to happen regardless of the I-290 Phase I Study. The no build situation is always an option, but the goal is to make both highway and transit perform better.

Post Meeting Note (from CTA): State of Good Repair refers to tackling the CTA's \$10 billion infrastructure backlog so that we can eliminate and minimize slow zones, ensure that our transit vehicles and equipment are not beyond their useful life, and generally bring our system into good operating order. Attaining a state of good repair will improve service for CTA customers and reduce operating costs.

**Comment: If we want to improve both the highway and the transit systems shouldn't they both be in the Purpose and Need?**

Re: They both are included in the "Improve Modal Connections and Opportunities" need point. In addition, "Improve Local and Regional Travel" and "Improve Access to Jobs" are need points that could be addressed by transit and highway modes.

**Comment: If both are included in the Purpose and Need then it is not necessary to specifically single out the Highway deficiencies.**

Re: In the NEPA and Transportation Decision making Environmental Review Toolkit, which describes the elements of Purpose and Need, Item #9 states roadway deficiencies should be included in a Purpose and Need. The text reads, "Roadway Deficiencies - Explain if and how the proposed action is necessary to correct existing roadway deficiencies (e.g. substandard geometrics, load limits on structures, inadequate cross-section, high maintenance costs, etc.) In addition, explain how the proposed action will correct these deficiencies." As previously stated, the CTA is responsible for their regular maintenance activities including addressing their facility conditions.

**Comment: It seems that the single mode alternatives should be removed from the table because we are assuming that the preferred alternative will be multimodal.**

Re: We are assuming that the preferred alternative will be multimodal. To simplify the initial analysis, we are first evaluating single mode alternatives to determine their stand-alone travel performance and benefits. Then, single mode alternatives will be combined to form various 'combination mode' alternatives to be evaluated. This approach is consistent with the alternatives development process that has been presented since the fall of 2010.

**Comment: Is the intent of the process to look at the Capital improvement programs of the agencies? If so, is there some alignment that can happen to work together between the projects (road and transit)?**

Re: The Phase I study process aligns this. We are working together with the transportation agencies. If the CTA were to obtain money to improve the Blue Line, they would use the I-290 study as a resource.



**Comment (to CTA): Does your current program include the extension of the Blue Line? How does the CTA feel about more rail line?**

Re: FTA guidance says that the CTA can't provide for new or expanded service until the current system is maintained. The CTA Blue Line is a long term project, and there is no alternative suggested at this point. Currently, the Red Line is the only CTA line being looked at for an extension, but first the current Red Line system needs to be maintained before they can extend it.

**Comment: At some point in the process you will need to come up with a locally approved preferred alternative. If the Blue Line is not included from the beginning it will never be included, nor approved by the locals. The Purpose and Need should recognize all facilities.**

Re: All facilities are included in the need point to "Improve Modal Connections and Opportunities." It is not our goal to fix one mode, and then allow another to deteriorate. If all of the pieces don't fit together then we don't have a good plan. All of the agencies are present; we are working together, and we will add more detail as we go along.

**Comment: What happens if an alternative is not identified as a transit project by the agencies?**

Re: This forum is an opportunity for us to come together and formulate a plan.

**Comment: The cost of improving multiple modes will be greater if we do not allow the improvements to be carried out simultaneously.**

Re: Clearly this is a cooperative effort. We have all of the agencies at the table and can coordinate and collaborate on alternatives that span multiple modes.

**Comment: What criteria are being used for State of Good Repair and the basic maintenance function?**

Re: The CTA has established the maintenance and improvement schedule for their facilities. The NEPA process is not required to move this type of improvement forward. The NEPA process isn't intended to address repair scenarios; rather it is to advance an analysis of transformative improvements.

**Comment: We are concerned that if the Blue Line is left out of the Purpose and Need then it will not be fairly addressed. We need to have a comfort level that transit alternatives will be measured evenly.**

Re: Transit is already included in our alternatives for testing and we have already gone on record stating that improvements will be multimodal.

**Comment: I appreciate that the stakeholders have the opportunity to view the alternatives before the agencies address it in their program. This forum helps to develop the vision.**



**Comment: Does IDOT need to show that they are performing maintenance like the CTA does?**

Re: The majority of IDOT's program focuses upon maintenance, according to the IDOT FY 2012 - 2017 State Program, 66% of the state program is allocated to maintaining Illinois roads and bridges. 25% is for congestion mitigation and 9% is for system expansion projects.

**Comment: In reference to the comment categories from the Public Meeting, was environmental justice one of the categories?**

Re: Not specifically, but it is included within the NEPA process. We will need a more developed alternative before we can start defining environmental justice areas of concern.

**Comment: When will the next iteration of the Purpose and Need be available?**

Re: At the next CAG/TF meeting we plan on wrapping up the Purpose and Need. A version of this will be distributed for your review before the next meeting. If new information becomes available, we will revisit the document.

#### **Round 1 Screening: Single Mode Alternatives Process**

The process for screening the single mode alternatives was presented. A single mode alternative is defined as an alternative that consists of changes to, or additions of, one type (mode) of travel. For the initial selection process, the suggested alternatives were identified by primary mode, and grouped by similarity within each mode. The initial selection was based on: corridor level alternatives suitable for modeling, serve primary travel markets, and stakeholder and agency support. 15 alternatives were initially identified for Round 1 Evaluation. These include 7 Transit alternatives, 7 Expressway, and 1 Arterial. The initial alternatives were evaluated for: travel performance based on the CMAP Regional model, and a fatal flaw/footprint impact.

**Comment: What is a fatal flaw? Does this include environmental and cemeteries?**

Re: This includes disproportionate impacts buildings or other environmental features. The Arterial alternative fell more clearly into this category due to potential impacts of widening study area arterials.

#### **Round 1 Screening: Evaluated Alternatives**

All of the alternatives that were modeled were presented at this time.

1. HRT 1– CTA Blue Line Extension from Forest Park CTA Terminal to Oak Brook via Illinois Prairie Path and Butterfield Road.
2. HRT 2 – CTA Blue Line Extension from Forest Park CTA Terminal to Oak Brook via I-290 median and adjacent to I-88.

**Comment: Why is the Blue Line elevated?**

Re: There are some difficulties with impacts along some of the routes. Elevating the line requires less right-of-way, eliminates at-grade road crossings, and reduces the overall footprint of the improvement.



**Comment: Are there still opportunities to combine the HRT alternatives to incorporate both the I-290 median and the prairie path?**

Re: Yes, there are to incorporate any combination of alternatives. This is just the beginning and we will continue to work with the agencies.

3. BRT 1 – Bus Rapid Transit from Forest Park CTA Terminal to Oak Brook via Butterfield Road and the Illinois Prairie Path.

4. BRT 2 – Bus Rapid Transit from Forest Park CTA Terminal to Oak Brook adjacent to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and I-88 and in the I-290 median.

**Comment: Do these alternatives terminate at Forest Park CTA terminal?**

Re: Yes, these alternatives assume a transfer between the CTA line and BRT there.

**Comment: The Village of Hillside strongly objects to the alternatives along the Prairie Path. We believe this is fatally flawed. We do not want transit running through our residential neighborhoods.**

Re: This alternative follows the existing Prairie Path ROW. We acknowledge the Village's comment and will consider this information as the process moves forward.

**Comment: Anything along the Prairie Path ROW would not work politically. It seems to be a dead issue.**

Re: This was among many stakeholder suggestions; we will consider this comment as the alternatives evaluation moves forward.

**Comment: Why is Lombard not part of the transit alternatives evaluation as an appropriate end point?**

Re: Our initial modeling assumed that a feeder service will be provided from Lombard. However, we will adjust our limits to include Lombard.

**Comment: It is essential to consider the Cook DuPage alternatives in this study.**

Re: They are all being modeled; at this point we are trying to understand the different modes, and use comparative methods to evaluate them.

**Comment: There are multiple terminus points that could be used for the alternatives.**

Re: We are starting with the initial alternatives on an equal footing to understand how they compare, and will refine the alternatives as we go through each step of the process.

**Comment: I appreciate the process, but I think you need to start with the whole picture for DuPage County, and then cut back as necessary.**

Re: We will run the model with Lombard as an endpoint.



**Comment: There is a long standing plan to build a J-Line. We will need to work with the J-Line plan in order to not overlap the major capital expenditure.**

Re: We are aware of the plan, but need to start with the CMAP 2040 fiscally constrained plans in the model.

**Comment: Did you look at the Inner Circumferential Rail Line?**

Re: No, we did not. It has been previously studied by Metra.

**Comment: Do the BRT and the HRT alternatives have the same station locations?**

Re: Yes, there are either 6 or 7 stations depending on the location of the alternative. There is more detail on the larger handout map.

5. BRT 3 – Bus Rapid Transit from Oak Brook to Cicero Avenue with an overlap of the current CTA system.

**Comment: Why wouldn't an overlap with existing CTA service be fatally flawed out?**

Re: This was a request from the transit agency to model, and according to the agencies an overlap would not pose a fatal flaw.

6. BRT 4 – Bus Rapid Transit from Oak Brook to Ashland Ave with the existing Blue Line converted to BRT.

**Comment: Who submitted the Blue Line conversion alternative?**

Re: The RTA submitted this idea, and the CTA agrees with testing it. Both agencies believe that is a radical idea that needs to be considered in the process. The existing Blue Line is an underused service. It seems more economical and appropriate for the service in this corridor to be buses rather than a train. This may be a more effective way to serve the population.

**Comment: Why does the Blue Line not perform well?**

Re: The model looks at the travel times and cost for mode options serving where a trip wants to go and the Blue Line tends to have a more narrow travel market compared to some other modes.

**Comment: What happens when energy costs go up?**

Re: While we can easily see the price of gasoline increasing, it is not that easy to predict the future cost of travel. As gasoline becomes more expensive, manufacturers produce more fuel efficient vehicles and the development of alternative fuel vehicles is encouraged. Within the timeframe of 30 years, we assume that technology changes and household budget changes will shift in ways that ensure that people can still fulfill their travel needs at a cost similar to today, as measured by share of the household budget.



**Comment: Now is the time to take out emotional interest in specific alternatives, and not be constrained by old technology. It is important for us to look at what alternative performs the best. It is not important who suggested the alternative.**

Re: Comment noted.

**Comment: We should not be building transit systems that are based on the way neighborhoods are now. We need to look ahead at land use and economics. BRT could be a huge disinvestment to some of the communities in the corridor.**

Re: BRT should not be considered a disinvestment to any communities.

**Comment: Maywood supports the BRT alternative.**

**Comment: The medical center would be a logical terminus for the BRT. A single seat ride would be beneficial.**

Re: As we move forward with the alternatives we will adjust and refine the termini.

**Comment: Understand that BRT is good for stops and accessibility, but from a community standpoint there is concern that some stops that were previously there may be removed or replaceable. There are certain ridership concerns.**

Re: This is all part of the discussion. This is a significant capital investment with right-of-way, vehicles and stations owned by agencies.

**Comment: The model for BRT is the same as for light rail and is being used in economic models and strategies on other projects. Good examples of this are in downtown Markham Canada and the Cleveland Medical District. They both represent an economic strategy.**

7. EXP - Express Bus in various Locations throughout the study area.

8. GP LANE – General Purpose add lane from I-88/I-290 Split to Central Avenue.

9. /10. HOV 2L & HOV 3L – High Occupancy Vehicle lanes with 2+ and 3+ occupants from I-88/290 Split to Racine Avenue

11. /12. HOV 2W & HOV 3W – High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes with 2+ and 3+ Occupants from Oak Brook to Central Avenue

13. HOT 1 – High Occupancy Toll Lanes with 3+ occupants for free from Oak Brook to Central Avenue

14. HOT 2 – High Occupancy Toll Lanes with 3+ occupants for free from Oak Brook to Racine Avenue

**Comment: Are HOV lanes successful? Based on personal experience they do not seem to be.**

Re: HOV lanes have shown success on the east and west coast, and HOT lanes also have been successful.

**Comment: Have you modeled a conversion of the entire road to a tollway?**

Re: No, not yet. We will. We are also investigating FHWA guidance towards the conversion of existing free roadways to toll facilities.



**Comment: If the road was converted to a toll could we use the revenue from the tolls for transit?**

Re: Toll agencies need to first apply toll revenues towards maintenance of the toll road, and then if there is leftover money it can be invested somewhere else.

Post Meeting Note: The total federal gas tax is 18.4c per gallon for gasoline and gasohol, and 24.4c per gallon for diesel fuel. Of that total amount, 2.86c per gallon goes into the Federal transit account which funds public transit programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration. Percentage-wise, this works out to 16% of federal gasoline taxes and 12% of federal diesel taxes. These rates have been in effect since October 1997.

**Comment: Does the toll model have a transponder system or a physical toll to pay?**

Re: The model assumes a transponder system similar to the I-PASS.

**Comment: Why are none of the alternatives fatally flawed?**

Re: The arterial improvements, including the widening Madison and Roosevelt throughout the entire corridor are fatally flawed because of right-of-way impacts. Others may have flaws that become apparent as details are developed, and the alternatives process moves forward.

**Comment: What is the toll rate that the model uses?**

Re: \$0.06/mile was quoted at the meeting but is being refined

**Comment: How many of the High Occupancy Toll alternative model trips are free because they have 3+ occupants?**

Re: We will provide more detail on the HOT lane performance in the next CAG meeting.

**Comment: Where are the improvements that incorporate a bike facility through the study area into the city?**

Re: We won't be able to define non motorized transportation inputs until the alternatives are more defined. These types of improvements cannot be modeled.

**Comment: Are ramp configurations included in the single mode alternatives?**

Re: No, this is too much detail for the regional model.

**Round 1 Screening: Alternatives not Evaluated:** Several alternatives suggested by stakeholders were not evaluated in Round 1 and presented at this time. These alternatives were not modeled because they were too small in scale for modeling, could be included as an enhancement or refinement, already included in the baseline, or required additional coordination with transit agencies. The alternatives included commuter rail, automated guide way transit, arterial improvements, and non-motorized improvements.



**Single Mode Evaluation Results:** At this point in the presentation, the Purpose and Need measures were defined as well as the results from the Single mode model. Each alternative was evaluated on how well it addresses the needs relative to the No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative is CMAP's GOTO 2040 fiscally constrained regional plan, with the I-290 project removed.

**Comment: What are we using to compare the alternatives with?**

Re: The 2040 Baseline condition.

**Comment: When scanning the numbers, why are the numbers for the vehicle miles traveled different for the Blue Line extension when the alternative is along the Prairie Path and along I-290?**

Re: It is a slight difference because each alternative is serving slightly different trips, as well as some slight variations in frequencies and feeder bus service.

**Comment: With BRT being relatively new, how are we accessing safety for this alternative?**

Re: For this stage in the process we assume no injuries for transit users. This needs to be looked into more detail and will involve the vehicle miles traveled on roadways and person miles traveled through the study area.

**Comment: Have you looked at air quality for the alternatives?**

Re: We will need a further defined alternative to assess the air quality. This will happen in later stages of the alternatives evaluation.

**Comment: There seems to be a fundamental error in the transit results because the transit extension does not have an impact on highway users.**

Re: This is because transit and highway have a different set of users with differing origins and destinations. The model determines what is the best option based on time and cost.

**Comment: The transit alternatives show no improvement on congestion.**

Re: This is because we can take one single mode alternative and compare it directly against the other. The point of the single mode evaluation is to see how each alternative performs and what combination of alternatives may best complement each other.

**Comment: How did you reach the conclusions from the model? Is there a study?**

Re: CMAP has been studying the area for many decades and has developed a model that takes into account where people work, where people live, and the origin and destination of the trips.

**Comment: Does the model take into account future fuel costs?**

Re: The model does the best that it can to forecast future gas and energy costs. The important thing to remember about future fuel costs and our transportation budgets will still use the same relative amounts of our income and not a much larger amount.



**Comment: Is HOT the best option for managing traffic?**

Re: The model may be telling us that we can over manage traffic with HOT lane, or potentially undermanage traffic with a General Purpose lane addition. The details of the alternatives will need to be adjusted as we progress into combination alternatives.

**Comment: Do all of the 1's and 0's in the chart mean that none of the alternatives do a very good job in that area or is it comparative?**

Re: The 1's represent how many categories there were to evaluate that need point. We have more work to do on the scoring. These are just initial results.

**Comment: Is 2 out of 3 weighted the same as 14 out of 21?**

Re: All of the need points are weighted the same. These numbers are to show how they perform relative to each other.

**Comment: Why do the BRT and HRT operate differently despite having the same limits?**

Re: These systems have different operating characteristics in the model that affect the results.

**Comment: Are these absolute numbers?**

Re: The numbers shown in the table for the no-build scenario are absolute numbers, and for the alternatives, the difference from the no-build scenario is shown.

**Comment: Does the model take into consideration the existing Pace bus routes?**

Re: Yes, Pace bus routes are included in the model.

**Comment: What is the source for the 17 hours of congestion? I just don't believe that it is that bad.**

Re: Mainline hourly volume traffic data from April 2009 was provided by the IDOT Traffic Systems Center (TSC) and evaluated using Highway Capacity Software (HCS 2000) to determine the Level of Service (LOS) for each hour of the day at two locations in the study area: Maywood and Oak Park. Levels of service for each hour were evaluated and reported as LOS A through F, with A representing free flow conditions, F representing a breakdown condition, and congested conditions as D or worse. 17 hours of congestion represents the total number of hours that were LOS D or worse.

**Comment: How do you figure out the number of cars per household?**

Re: The model takes the household size, household income, and the number of workers living per household to determine auto ownership.

**Comment: What happens to the local (non HOV/HOT) lanes under the HOV/HOT alternatives?**

Re: Please reference the large table handout. It shows that there is a ten percent improvement in travel time in those local lanes.



**Round 1: Alternatives Footprint evaluation:** At the end of the Power Point presentation, the Study team walked through the table showing the impacts for the portions of the alignment that lies west of the Des Plaines River.