



I-290

Corridor Advisory Group and Task Force (CAG/TF)

Meeting #9 Summary

March 22, 2011

The ninth combined CAG/TF meeting for the I-290 Phase I Study was held on March 22, 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 within this summary.

To announce the March 22, 2011 CAG/TF Meeting #9, an E-invitation was created. The invitation was sent out to all CAG and TF members on March 9, 2011. A previous, Save the Date email, was sent on February 18, 2011. The meeting was attended by 26 people. The following CAG/TF members were in attendance.

1. President David Pope – Village of Oak Park
2. Rich Hazlett – CDOT
3. Robert Vance – CTA
4. LaToya Price-Childs – IRTBA
5. Fred Brandstrader – Cap the Ike
6. Rob Cole – Village of Oak Park
7. Chris DiPalma – FHWA
8. Bill Lenski – RTA
9. Gary Neubieser – Concordia Cemetery
10. Ryan Richter – Metra
11. Sandy Lentz – Oak Park Conservatory
12. Lori Sommers – Village of Maywood
13. Claire Bozic – CMAP
14. Henry Guerriero – ISTHA
15. Rick Kuner – Citizens for Appropriate Transportation
16. John Loper – DuPage County
17. Laura Perna – IDNR
18. Neil Adams – Oak Park Park District
19. Tam Kutzmark – DuPage Mayors and Managers
20. David Moehring – Oak Park resident
21. Teresa Powell – Village of Oak Park
22. Phyllis Logan – 29th Ward, Community Advisor
23. Stephen Vaughn – Cook County Highway Department
24. Amy Welk – IDOT
25. Janine Farzin – RTA



26. Phil Lares – Oak Brook

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

- Recap CAG/TF #8
- Study Process Review
- Purpose and Need
- Existing Transportation System Performance Update
- 2040 Travel Model Update
- Public Meeting #2 Overview
- Footprint/Alternative Concept Workshop
- 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 during the **Recap from CAG/TF Meeting #8.**

Study Process Review

A review of the Phase I Study Process was presented showing that the project team is completing the Purpose and Need, and into the initial alternatives identification and evaluation. The alternatives identification and evaluation process flow chart the fatal flaw screening and single mode travel benefits determination as a next step. Based on the single mode testing, we will develop combination alternatives to carry into the next round of screening.

There were no questions or comments concerning the Study Process Review presentation.

Purpose and Need

A full draft Purpose and Need is being prepared based on the previously presented outline and stakeholder comments. The revisions in the full draft of the purpose & need include making a separate need point for improve access to jobs, incorporation of 2040 No Build travel model results, and some minor edits.

There were no questions or comments concerning the Purpose and Need presentation.

Existing Transportation System Performance Update

An update of the Existing Transportation System Performance Report was presented. One of the updates was a Crash Report Addendum which included a more detailed evaluation of I-290 high crash locations, transit crashes, and pedestrian and bicycles crashes. Also, an additional report was prepared to access the existing I-290 crossings with accordance to the Americans with Disability Act.



Comment: Does the ADA Report also include CTA Stations?

Re: The original Existing Transportation System Performance Report includes the CTA Stations. Forest Park is the only station in ADA compliance.

Comment: Were the 170 transit vehicle crashes all in the study area or are there some that occurred outside of the study area?

Re: All of the transit vehicle crashes were in the study area. The study area is defined as west to east along I-290 from approximately 1 ½ miles west of US 12/20/45 (Mannheim Road) to approximately two miles east of IL Route 50 (Cicero Avenue), and north to south from North Avenue to the Metra Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) commuter rail line to the south.

Comment: Do you know the number of people that were injured in the transit crashes compared to the number of transit riders? Can you develop a crash rate for transit users and compare it to a crash rate for highway users?

Re: We will take the information that we have collected, and develop a crash rate for transit users to compare with the highway crash rate.

Comment: Since the model is predicting job growth in the study area, can you identify from the model any specific areas where the employment growth would occur or be concentrated?

Re: It appears that the employment growth is concentrated towards the east end of the study area. We will provide more details in future CAG/TF meetings.

Comment: Is it possible to pull the police reports for individual transit crashes to determine which are in the corridor?

Re: The transit crashes are widely dispersed throughout the study area and there is little correlation between crashes. In general, the transit crash data did not highlight any trends or issues that would change our conclusions from the overall I-290 crash analysis. Only three of the transit crashes were identified in the IDOT crash reports obtained for the major arterials.

Comment: It would be helpful to understand the level of risk involved with taking public transportation versus traveling by automobile.

Re: The crash risk for public transportation riders is very low. However, developing comparison information would likely not serve to facilitate improvements for either mode. The opportunities for improving safety performance will be primarily a function of design improvements, as well as potential mode shifts that can reduce congestion related crashes in the I-290 corridor.

Comment: Recent census data indicates that 200,000 people left the city to suburbs. This fact needs to be incorporated into the process and factored in a very real way. This may indicate a need for increased public transportation.

Re: The change in population forecast is captured in the model and will allow the study results to factor in recent changes in population.

Comment: There appears to be a disconnect on how the land use issue is being addressed. IDOT has been saying that they will account for land use in the study process by using the CMAP model. What I am looking for is a way to get to the livable community aspect. The way you are going to get there is this measurable? You are looking from an input value but are we getting what we need to get as far as livable communities?

Re: Land use is being considered as part of the I-290 Study. We will have distinct “build” and “no-build” population/employment forecasts. We will begin with land use under the no-build condition to account for it in very broad terms (not at a parcel scale). For the build alternatives, we will work with CMAP and study area communities regarding land use and add detail as appropriate.

Comment: Integrate PACE development guidelines for transit favorable land use and check other sources such as the City of Chicago too. When can we get to the 15,000’ view so we can start seeing these developments?

Re: We are familiar with the guidelines, and will work with the CAG/TF members as the land use conditions are developed.

Comment: We can all agree that the highway needs to be rebuilt in some fashion. The question is how do we rebuild the Blue Line so that it can operate in a fashion where it is more highly utilized?

Comment: We need to get away from grey solutions, and insure that we are building in green type of improvements. There are also many drainage concerns along the corridor.

Re: Agree. We will work together to get solutions that better the study area.

Comment: This is not meant to be a highway versus blue line discussion. It is very important that we discuss all of the modes and identify the full potential of transit connections under this study. That is what Cook-DuPage corridor did and we need to continue to explore those possibilities.

Re: We have included the Cook-Dupage Corridor Study alternatives into our list of single mode alternatives for this study.

Comment: Has anyone looked at personal safety relative to transit trips in the corridor? These types of issues could also be incorporated into the study.

Re: We will determine how these issues could be incorporated into the context of this study.

Comment: Does the issue of personal safety deter people from using the blue line?

Re: We could raise awareness, and work with the communities. However, we cannot have one of our (IDOT’s) solutions be to hire more police.

Comment: All you would have to do is install a camera system to give them a feeling of safety. This should include transit car and platform cameras. It should be noted that the CTA is purchasing new



rail cars with cameras. The Chicago Police Department has a transit police unit that just patrols the CTA stations. This is a source of potential information for the study.

2040 Travel Model Update

The process of how the project study team will update the I-290 Phase I Study based upon the new CMAP GoTo 2040 Plan was presented. For our I-290 Phase I Study, we developed a 2040 socio-economic forecast for the 2040 No Build or Baseline condition. The No Build condition deletes the I-290 capacity improvement from the network, with a new population/employment and travel forecast. It also assumes implementation of financially constrained GoTo2040 major transportation project recommendations outside of the study area. The 2040 travel forecast will replace the 2030 forecast. The next steps for travel modeling include: update 2040 travel model inputs, run model for 2040 No Build (Baseline) Alternative, test initial single mode alternatives, and a presentation of results after May public meeting.

There were no questions or comments concerning the 2040 Travel Model Update presentation.

Public Meeting #2 Overview

Public Open House Meeting #2 will be May 18, 2011 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm at the Proviso Math and Science Academy in Forest Park. The agenda for this meeting is a narrated slide show summarizing study status, and an open house with exhibits showing existing transportation system conditions, draft Purpose and Need, and a single mode alternatives summary.

Comment: Are you asking for comments at the Public Meeting?

Re: Yes, we will be providing the public with opportunities to provide input on all of the study findings to date including the range of alternatives.

Comment: How will this public meeting be formatted?

Re: The meeting will be conducted in an open house format similar to the initial public meeting. There will be a slide show, and exhibits/ maps in a larger room with IDOT representatives to help answer any questions. We will record any additional ideas for alternatives. The initial public meeting in November 2009 generated 342 comments mostly on alternatives.

Footprint/Alternatives Concepts Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to review single mode "footprints" by representing how single mode alternatives could 'fit' in the study area, and identify physical constraints and opportunities for various modes. The footprints selected for this workshop: 'physical' corridor concepts that have right of way requirements, represent single mode alternatives, and reflect stakeholder suggested alternatives. The Transit alternative shows blue line extensions from Forest Park, and the Highway alternative shows an HOV add lane with buffer separation. The workshop identified four sections of the study area: East – DesPlaines Avenue to Cicero Avenue, Center – I-294 to DesPlaines Avenue, Prairie Path – Butterfield



Road to CTA Forest Park, and West/Far West – Yorktown Mall to I-294. Comments were recorded for each section. Attached to this meeting summary is the transcribed workshop feedback.

Comment: What is difference between the table showing East 1 and East 2?

Re: They are identical to allow for more ease in viewing.

Comment: What is the expected outcome of the 30 minute workshop?

Re: The question that we are trying to answer is how well do these alternatives fit – or do they fit within the context of the surrounding development and within general footprint of the existing facility?

Comment: The east end of the study area is a blank canvas but the others are more defined? Can we still comment on the alternatives which are already laid out?

Re: The entire study area is a blank canvas, and we will still take comments on all alternatives. The other more defined alternatives were easier to lay out, and can still be changed.

Comment: The two acetates are transit related but will you also record our suggestions for additional alternatives?

Re: Yes, we are building on what has already been included in the range of alternatives suggested.

Comment: The Blue Line is in the Cook DuPage Corridor Study but not necessarily on the Prairie Path. Can we also provide input on the Prairie Path to make it more desirable for all users?

Re: Yes, please provide input on other alternatives.

Comment: Is the “up to” dimension a minimum standard for the transit typical section?

Re: We need to start with the standards. This exercise is trying to get input on the alternatives development, and in the future we may be able to reduce the sections.

Comment: Have you been in contact with the CSX?

Re: Yes, we have been in contact with the CSX but there is no one here today. The CSX is drafting a document to guide discussions concerning their facility alongside I-290.

Comment: Are we getting back together after this workshop?

Re: We will not come back to this room but we will summarize the results of the discussions and comments and submit for review by the CAG/TF members.

Comment: Will the results of the workshop be included in the Public Meeting?

Re: The results of this workshop will be presented at the next CAG/TF meeting in July 2011. At the public meeting we will be presenting a study update to the public since our previous public meeting in 2009. This will include an explanation of the study process, identified needs and deficiencies, Draft Purpose and Need Statement and range of alternatives identified.



Next Steps

The next steps of the study process are to compile the single mode evaluation results, identify combination alternatives, and evaluate combination alternatives. The Public Meeting #2 is May 18, 2011, and the Next CAG/TF Meeting will be in July 2011.



Corridor Advisory Group/ Task Force Meeting # 9

March 22, 2011

Workshop: Footprint/Alt. Concept Workshop

(Transcribed Workshop Feedback)

East 1- DesPlaines Avenue to Cicero Avenue

Comments

- Consider 3rd and 4th CTA express track
- Combine alternatives, i.e. add-lane, transit enhancements
- Use CSX- Metra extension, add-lane and or CTA expansion
- Consider ramp/platform width trade off with express
- Consider side platform
- Consistency of ramp locations, potential ramp elimination
- Stakeholder concerned with Harrison and Garfield
- Harrison/ Garfield substandard from Wesley to Home
- Preserve station access from East and Oak Park, but shifting platform is a possibility (same with Lombard, Austin, Harlem and circle)
- Option to combine Central and Austin interchange ramps

Constraints

- Impacts to adjoining neighborhoods, local roads
- Dealing with Railroads
- Potential property impacts
- Commercial access (fire station at East Avenue)
- Commercial access
- Pace Bus Route on Oak Park

Opportunities

- Joint meeting with CTA, freight and communities to define goals and discuss trade offs
- Express enhances prospect of success for Blue Line extension to Oak Brook
- Underutilized currently; maximize use of existing trench-decrease I-290 congestion
- Less accidents, reduce congestion, appropriate spacing
- Create width at Oak Park Avenue, pinch point

- Connect Harrison to Garfield Park, ride facilities
- ADA compliance more room at pinch point

East 2- DesPlaines Avenue to Cicero Avenue

Comments

- Stakeholder concerned with Austin and Central interchanges
- Stakeholder concerned with CSX and Railroads
- Test entire existing Blue Line and extension as BRT- due to 50 % of capacity
- Transit: must look at quality of cars, system first when looking to add Blue Line past Forest Park
- Remove Frontage Road (Harrison) between East and Home Ave, opportunities to expand Oak Park Avenue bridge

Constraints

- Examine travel time
- Examine emergency access and CTA station access

Opportunities

- Examine the potential of combining the two interchanges and connecting via frontage roads
- Look at putting CTA underground where it crosses into the median
- Look at using line track for CTA instead of freight. CSX only needs one track?
- Convert fourth lane to BRT East of Austin- add fourth lane from Austin to Lombard

Center I-294 to DesPlaines Avenue

Comments

- HRT alternative- in median
- Concordia Cemetery- there is two parts of the cemetery. Needs N/S access (12 Ft.) bridge if Route B is selected
- Concerned with land acquisition if Route A is selected
- Stakeholder was concerned with flooding along river
- HRT alternative- concerned with Billboards on 290. If selected billboards would need to move
- Add Maywood station near courthouse

- Add Hillside station if extended
- Need BRT option labeled as an alternative
- HRT alternative in median- Route B may be less desirable for Com-Ed and or a developer
- Stakeholder was concerned with 1st avenue station
- Concerned with pollution near Route B
- HRT alternatives- would like access to medical center
- Stakeholder was concerned with 1st Avenue stop
- Prefer HRT alternative in North side of 290
- Tight Row with HOV lane alternative
- Express rail option and local rail option
- Stakeholder suggests to add station
- Stakeholder suggests to add park and ride
- Replace Blue Line from Down Town with BRT

Constraints

- Any possible graves near Route A
- If Route B is selected Maywood Courthouse needs an additional access road
- Building for sale north of courthouse

Opportunities

- Access to medical center and V.A
- Shuttle service to Medical Center and V.A
- Many people get off at Forest Park and have to take a bus to medical center
- Large ridership potential in this area
- Will not disrupt traffic during construction
- HSR opportunity for future
- Existing Pace station could relocate closer to potential new station

Prairie Path- Butterfield Road to CTA Forest Park

Comments

- Prairie Path should not be used for rail
- Leave Prairie Path alone, don't go through residential areas
- Stakeholder suggests an extension of the Green Line
- Make Forest park stop, and extend maintenance yard out further west
- Extend Green Line to 5th Ave, major demand at Loyola Medical center
- Stakeholder suggests an express Bus down 5th Ave to Loyola

- Train line on Prairie Path will lead to higher crime
- Make elevated train an express train to reach a further west destination faster, not local Blue Line traditional stops (like yellow line)

Constraints

- Hard-won open space would be comprised especially in densely populated areas
- Elevated rail would create shaded areas, weeds, trash and opportunities for crime

Opportunities

- Extension of Green Line
- Green Line is cheaper and already exists

West/Far West- Yorktown Mall to I-294

Comments

- How are station locations determined?
- Why is this alternative assuming HRT?
- If public meeting presents the sole option of HRT stakeholders will be disappointed
- Dedicate one route for higher speed
- BRT fits in existing right of way
- BRT more flexibility, less fixed locations more stops
- 22nd street provides better access to pedestrians- best option for potential blue line extension
- Stakeholder is concerned with the Pace 322 drop off
- Stakeholder suggests a Transit Market analysis
- Elevated as an enhancement as long as they can extend further west as oppose to driving on the I-290
- Stakeholder suggests elevation on North side of expressway

Constraints

- Termination at Lombard will be underutilized
- Air Space
- Underutilized
- No parking opportunities in Yorktown
- Cost
- Terminations difficult to get to
- Not a pedestrian friendly environment
- Station access
- Blue line extension will not serve same people
- No off ramp to get to station from route B
- Existing interchange configurations not conducive to access station locations

Opportunities

- York Town, Lombard briefings
- Outline station locations
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Higher Speed option to continue past Lombard termination Route
- Route A, more of a local option
- Multi-modal facility at interchange confluence I-294-I-88
- Underground, elevated, tunnel closure, or provide noise walls
- Park and ride
- Cross-over terminal loop at terminations