I-290
Corridor Advisory Group and Task Force (CAG/TF)
Meeting #15 Summary
February 22, 2013

The fifteenth combined CAG/TF meeting for the I-290 Phase I Study was held on February 21, 2013 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 February 22, 2013 CAG/TF Meeting #15, an E-invitation was created. The invitation was sent out to all CAG and TF members on February 8, 2013. A previous, Save the Date email, was sent on January 30, 2013. The meeting was attended by 48 people. The following CAG/TF members were in attendance:

1. Matthew Ames – Village of Broadview
2. Michael Bolton – PACE
3. Claire Bozic – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
4. Lenny Cannata – West Central Municipal Conference
5. JoEllen Charlton – Village of Forest Park
6. Rob Cole – Village of Oak Park
7. Christopher DiPalma – Federal Highway Administration
8. Peter Fahrenwald – Regional Transit Authority
9. Ted Gibbs – Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
10. Tim Gillian – Village of Forest Park
11. Andrea Green – Friends of Oak Park Conservatory
12. Henry Guerriero – Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
13. Melissa Headley – Village of Westchester
14. John Hedges – Village of Oak Park
15. John Kos – DuPage County DOT
16. Rick Kuner – Citizens for Appropriate Transportation
17. Phyllis Logan – 29th Ward, Community Advisor
18. John Loper – DuPage County
19. David Moehring – Resident, Oak Park
20. Gary Neubieser – Concordia Cemetery
21. Kevin O'Malley – Chicago Transit Authority
22. Laura Perna – Illinois Department of Natural Resources
23. Mark Pitstick – Regional Transit Authority
24. President David Pope – Village of Oak Park
25. Teresa Powell – Village of Oak Park
26. Ryan Richter – Metra

27. Lori Sommers – Village of Maywood
28. David Upshaw – Village of Broadview
29. Russ Wajda – Village of Hillside
30. Amy Welk – IDOT
31. Mike Albin – DuPage Mayors and Managers
32. Kevin McGrier – Village of Broadview
33. Dale Fitschen – Resident, Oak Park
34. Marilyn Fitschen – Resident, Oak Park
35. Viktor Schrader – Oak Park Development Corporation
36. Marc Rogers – Nevin Hudlund Architects
37. Bill Kuehl – Resident, Oak Park
38. Elizabeth Rexford – Resident, Oak Park
39. Lynne Whitaker – Resident, Oak Park
40. Al Whitaker – Resident, Oak Park
41. Annice Kelly – Resident, Oak Park
42. Kevin Beese – Oak Leaves
43. Barbara Vanek – Resident, Oak Park
44. Michelle Manchir – Trib Local reporter
45. Nick Binotti – Resident, Oak Park
46. John Fleming – Resident, Oak Park
47. Anan Abu-Taleb – Resident, Oak Park
48. Anna Lothson – Wednesday Journal

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

- Where Are We In the Process?
- Recap CAG #14
- Round 2 Update
- Extended Study Area
- Purpose and Need Update
- Question and Answer
- Round 3 Preview
- Next Steps
- CTA Vision Study

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.

Where Are We In the Process?: We are currently finishing up Round 2 of the Alternatives Evaluation Process which consisted of the initial evaluation of Combination Alternatives, and have begun Round 3 of the Alternatives Evaluation Process which consists of evaluation of the remaining alternatives in greater detail.

There were no comments on where we are in the process.

Recap CAG/TF Meeting #14: At the last CAG/TF Meeting, the following topics were discussed: NEPA process review, Round 2 results, Introduction to Round 3, and Interchange Access Workshop.

There were no comments on the recap of CAG/TF Meeting #14.

Round 2 Update: The original Round 2 evaluation of combination alternatives consisted of the testing of 5 pairs of alternatives, for a total of 10 alternatives. Each pair consisted of an I-290 Mainline capacity improvement and express bus service, tested with and without a Blue Line Extension to Mannheim Road. A total of 79 public comments were received on the Round 2 Alternatives Evaluation Report. The main topics of these comments were: unfamiliarity with managed lanes, support for bike/pedestrian accommodations, left hand ramps, noise/air, and additional alternative suggestions. Two additional alternatives were added based on feedback from the initial round 2 evaluation: Value Price all lanes with no add lane, and HOT 3+ with no add lane. These two additional alternatives were modeled, and the overall set of 12 alternatives were re-scored. With these new alternatives added, the top 4 performers to be advanced to Round 3 are: GP Lane & EXP & HCT; HOV 2+ & EXP & HCT; HOT 3+ & EXP & HCT; HOT 3+ & TOLL & EXP & HCT. Also as part of Round 2, the Project Study Team met individually with the municipalities to review interchange concepts. The Round 2 Alternatives Report Update will be available on the project website for review in March 2013.

There were no comments on the Round 2 Update.

Extended Study Area: The I-290 study area has been formally extended 4 miles to the east. This will now encompass the entire extent of the Round 3 alternatives, and matches up with the Circle Interchange Study at Racine Avenue. The overall study length is now 13 miles from I-88 to the Circle. The configuration of the existing I-290 roadway in the extended study area is 8 lanes throughout, a varied ROW width of 203 ft to 273 ft, CTA ROW in the median with a varied width of 52 ft to 124 ft, and frontage roads. An existing conditions evaluation of the extended study area is being developed similar to the original study area, as well as an ETSP Addendum for roadway geometry, safety and operations.

Comment: What were the time periods identified for peak traffic times?
Re: The time periods used for peak traffic were from 7 am to 9 am in the morning and from 4 pm to 6 pm in the evening.

Comment: Do we have it for other times?
Re: There are a total of 8 time periods in the model. In addition to the two peak periods, there are the peak shoulders (6 to 7 am, 9 to 10 am, 2 to 4 pm, 6 to 8 pm), a mid-day(10 am to 2 pm), and an off peak (8 pm to 6 am). Typically, the peak periods are used for design purposes.

Purpose and Need Update: The Purpose and Need will be revised based on the expanded study limits and the updated "Need" Information will be included in the document as appropriate.

There were no comments on the Purpose and Need Update.

Question and Answer

Comment: When will you come back with the interchange concepts that you presented last year?
Re: The interchange concepts were prepared to assist in the identification of local needs related to vehicular traffic, bicycles/pedestrians and transit. These concepts were presented to municipalities and transportation agencies for their input. Refined concepts are expected to be presented for additional stakeholder input during alternatives evaluation round #3. The CTA Feasibility/Vision Study will provide an avenue for coordinating Blue Line station needs and interchange concepts.

Comment: What are the implications of two adjacent study areas (I-290 and Circle Interchange)? Can you look at it as if is one study area?
Re: The Circle Interchange study will not be adding an additional lane to I-290 or extending improvements into the I-290 study area. As a result, the two study areas match quite well at Racine Avenue. In addition, the two studies are being conducted simultaneously, so they can easily be coordinated.

Comment: For the alternatives that include tolling, how are tolls collected if you do not own a transponder?
Re: New technologies are available to collect tolls by other means - license plate recognition, online toll payment and camera enforcement are just a few of these technologies that do not require toll accounts to be maintained for the users.

Comment: Does this mean that visitors from other states would be excluded from using Ike?
Re: No, the toll users will be able to pay the toll at a later time. As a reminder, not all of the alternatives include tolling of all lanes. General purpose (free) lanes would not require users to pay a toll. Under other alternatives, transit vehicles and vehicles with multiple occupants would be exempt from paying tolls.

Comment: What about low income groups? Tolling would affect those without accounts or transponders.
Re: Alternatives with HOV lanes would not require users to pay tolls if they meet certain occupancy requirements such as carrying two or three or more riders.

Comment: I would like to know the efficiency rate for HOT and how many minutes are being saved?

Re: There is a 44% travel time savings which is the equivalent to over 10 minutes. One of the benefits of HOT lanes is the reliability of trip travel times. The lanes would be managed through variable pricing to maintain a 45 mph travel speed and consistent travel time.

Comment: What has been the adoption rate for HOV and HOT? Are a portion of the users diverted?
Re: We are still working through the specifics of the alternatives, but national experience shows that the most person throughput is with HOV 2+ and HOV 3+ (for example, in California and the Washington, D.C. area).

Comment: On the combination alternatives results spreadsheet in row 1.3 - I-290 Average Travel Time Changes (Peak Periods), what does 17.2 minutes represent?
Re: The 2040 No Build travel time is 17.2 minutes through the study area. The results of each alternative are based on percent increase and decrease from the No-Build travel time.

Comment: In row 1.6 - Vehicle Miles of Travel (Daily VMT) means what?
Re: This measure is the number of vehicle miles traveled throughout the entire region, and in row 1.18 this measures the number of vehicle miles traveled on the arterials only in the study area.

Comment: Why does VMT increase with the addition of HCT?
Re: Travel time and accessibility changes with each alternatives based on the type of improvement. Some people then adjust their travel patterns because they can make a more efficient trip because of the transportation improvement. Trip origins and destinations can also change as a result of the improvement. With the addition of HCT, some auto trips are diverted to transit. However, these trips are replaced with slightly longer auto trips

Comment: What you are not saying is that more lanes means more cars.
Re: This roadway needs to be reconstructed based on safety, age, and facility conditions. There is an increase in traffic volumes even in the No-Build scenario.

Comment: Is the Dan Ryan the least safe of the area highways?
Re: The Dan Ryan is much safer than the six lane section of I-290. In 2008, the year after the Dan Ryan reconstruction was completed, the Dan Ryan experienced a crash rate of 1.15 crashes per million vehicle miles travelled, compared to the 6 lane section of I-290 which is experiencing 2.21 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled.

Based on a comparison of the preconstruction and post construction crash rate for the Dan Ryan, the total number of crashes dropped from 1,297 crashes/year (average) prior to construction down to 635 crashes reported in 2008 (year following construction). On January 1, 2009, a new crash reporting system went into effect that raised the dollar amount for property damage crash reporting from $500 to $1,500 potentially lowering the overall number of crashes reported, but did not change the reporting of injury and fatality crashes. Historical data prior to construction reflected an injury and fatality crash rate that dropped by 17% after construction.

Comment: The bar chart showing the top performers on Round 2 Alternatives Evaluation Results Summary does not match the slideshow.
Re: The bar chart is correct. We will update the slide.

Comment: In my opinion, the results shown here do not accurately represent the real value of what we are trying to accomplish. The table is exaggerated because the scores are not weighted properly.
Re: This scoring system treats all Purpose and Need points equally. No one need point is more important than another and weighting would introduce subjectivity into the evaluation scoring. As the alternatives evaluation advances, the remaining alternatives will be refined to maximize performance in each need point category.

Comment: On the spreadsheet, why is the VMT more with Tolling options rather than less? What happens on the other end – sprawl?
Re: Reconstructing I-290 does not induce sprawl. The many variables associated with urban growth patterns are well documented, and reconstructing an urban expressway would be among the least influencing factors. VMT increases with tolling options because some auto trips (typically longer auto trips) travel further to use the toll facility due to its faster speed.

Comment: What is the VMT that occurs within the study area only? Can we get that?
Re: Yes. The information is attached to the meeting summary.

Comment: Regarding the Blue line extension, can we put it in a tunnel?
Re: The cost of this would be in the order of billions. It is too expensive, and has been previously ruled out. In addition, the Blue Line can be accommodated with the trench width without widening into adjacent communities.

Comment: The average person doesn't think of a crash in terms of the type of injury or fatalities. The definition of a crash is not apparent.
Re: A detailed analysis of crashes was developed and presented during a number of previous CAG/TF meetings. The project team can follow up with anyone interested in a briefing.

This study is following the same criteria for safety as all the other projects across the State. There is currently a statewide safety program that is focused on the top 5% of crash locations and addressing the safety needs at those locations.

Comment: Will only the drivers on I-290 be tolled?
Re: We have a number of alternatives that include tolling for I-290, and this study is only addressing the I-290 corridor.

Comment: Some of the additional evaluation measures to be used in Round 3 may allow the top 6 alternatives to be measured along with the others more evenly. Should we move 6 alternatives forward instead of 4 alternatives?
Re: The alternatives methodology was developed and discussed for over a year, and we have come up with a balanced approach. Carrying 6 alternatives would not follow any objective rationale.

Comment: Doesn't this project just encourage sprawl? If I drivers are willing to put up with such a large degree of congestion now why wouldn't motorists just move further out when travel is improved by the addition of lanes?
Re: This study will not provide new destinations. We also need to consider safety and existing facility condition, along with many other things. There are a number of variables that people use when choosing a home and commute time is only one of those factors.

Comment: Will there be another comment period?
Re: Yes, there will be several additional comment periods similar to the previous two Public Meetings and Report evaluation comment periods.

Comment: Why are you only extending the Blue Line to Mannheim Road?
Re: As discussed in previous meetings, 70% of ridership occurs between Forest Park and Mannheim Road, at less than half the length (3.5 miles vs. 8 miles) of an extension to Oak Brook.

Round 3 Evaluation Criteria: Round 3 will have expanded evaluation criteria, and will include travel performance, cost, stakeholder input, and environmental effects. Also, Round 3 will include additional engineering design. Round 3 social and economic factors to be included are: bicycle/pedestrian amenities; residential and commercial displacements; job creation; productivity savings; and low income access to employment. Round 3 natural environment factors are: floodplains; natural resources; and sensitive air/noise sites. Round 3 cultural/special lands environmental factors are: Section 106; Section 4(f); and cemeteries. The Round 3 screening approach will include stakeholder identified goals.

Comment: Could you clarify whether HCT includes rail or buses?
Re: High Capacity Transit (HCT) includes either rail transit, in this case the Blue Line, or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) which is an express bus operating in a dedicated lane/facility.

Comment: Just a follow up, are you going to include both roadway improvement and transit extension in the initial construction?
Re: Part of the study will involve development of a financial plan and a staged implementation strategy that will create the framework for construction of the improvements.

Comment: If we assume that the benefits are achieved with the project as a whole then they should all move together otherwise it would be problematic.

Re: I don't think we can take that strategy since funding may not allow the project to roll out in a single stage. Instead, we will continue to work together to determine the best method for delivering improvements in the corridor.

Next Steps: The near term next steps are: Round 2 comment responses; circulate updated ETSP, Alternatives Report, and Purpose and Need; and updated website launch. For the April CAG/TF Meeting #16: review stakeholder comments; present initial Round 3 findings; Blue Line visioning update; and Bike/Ped facilities workshop.

There were no comments on Next Steps.

CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study

What is the Blue Line Feasibility/Vision Study?: This will be an opportunity to assess current conditions. Modernization needs exist for rail infrastructure and customer amenities. Planning for modernization has near term goals for the next 10 years, and long term goals for 2040. There will be early outreach and comment opportunities for project stakeholders. The Recommendations from this study will inform IDOT's I-290 Phase I Study.

Project Study Area and Background: The Study area is the existing Blue Line from Clinton to Forest Park, and continuing to Mannheim Road for review of IDOT transit proposals. The 55 year old Blue Line/I-290 facility was completed in 1958 as the 1st integrated transit/highway facility.

Blue Line Feasibility/Vision Study Scope of Work: The Scope of work on this study includes: determination of existing conditions; development of potential conceptual service patterns; determination of station access needs and design modernized station prototypes; evaluation and refinement of conceptual service and station access alternatives; and consideration of funding options. This study includes Joint Partnership with IDOT's I-290 EIS Study and Village of Oak Park.

Project Schedule: There is an 8 month timeline for this Study. Deliverables include: Service Concepts and potential alternatives in the Spring 2013, final concepts and station prototypes in Summer 2013, and then the Vision Study will be complete in the Fall of 2013.

Connection with I-290 Phase I Study: There is a desire to coordinate major investments between IDOT and CTA so that a combined alternative can be advanced. The CTA Feasibility/Vision Study will supply near- and long-term transit information to support the design of the I-290 roadway improvements. The benefits of coordinated studies are: multimodal coordination improves mobility; coordinated implementation may allow potential cost savings and reduced customer inconvenience during maintenance and construction; broader funding opportunities than isolated projects.

Comment: I am not sure that Mannheim Road is the right terminus. There are a lot of DuPage County users.

Re: Our study will look at how to draw people back to our system, and change existing demographics. We need to achieve state of good repair of this system before we can look at extending it.

Comment: Is the express track ROW still available?

Re: Yes, this study will look at the possibility of utilizing that space.

Comment: Will a phased approach be used on this project?

Re: We will first need to look at the immediate needs to be addressed versus the long term vision.

Summary of Round 2 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) within the project study area:

Study Area	2040 Base	GP		HOV 2+		HOT 3+		Toll		HOT3+ & Toll		Base(3GP)& Value $	Base(2GP)& HOT 3+
		&EXP	&EXP&HCT	&EXP	&EXP&HCT	&EXP	&EXP&HCT	&EXP	&EXP&HCT	&EXP	&EXP&HCT	&EXP&HCT	&EXP&HCT
I-290 VMT	1,778,536	245,523	284,063	150,810	159,620	266,235	274,460	267,168	280,608	(51,418)	(41,402)	(346,331)	(15,766)
Arterial VMT	3,381,655	(67,378)	(77,451)	(36,511)	(43,604)	(40,146)	(43,110)	(22,289)	(25,257)	73,639	74,412	196,323	43,270