

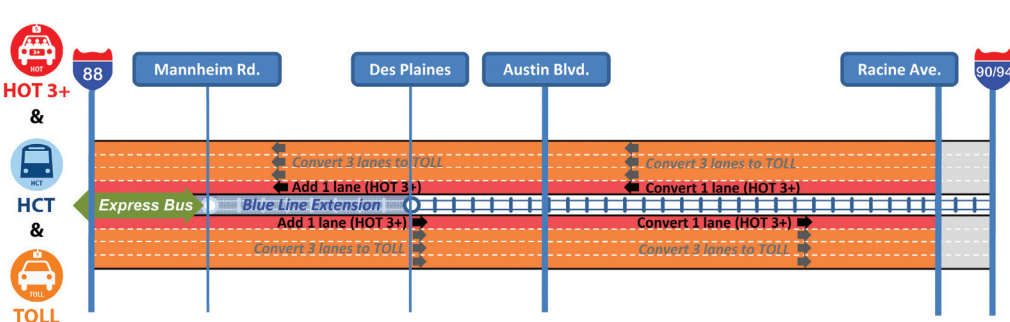
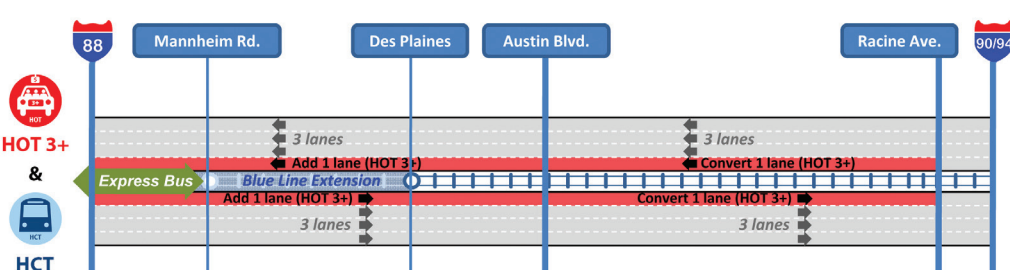
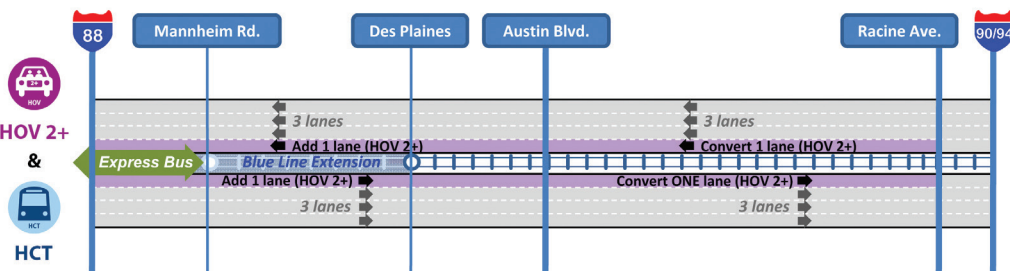
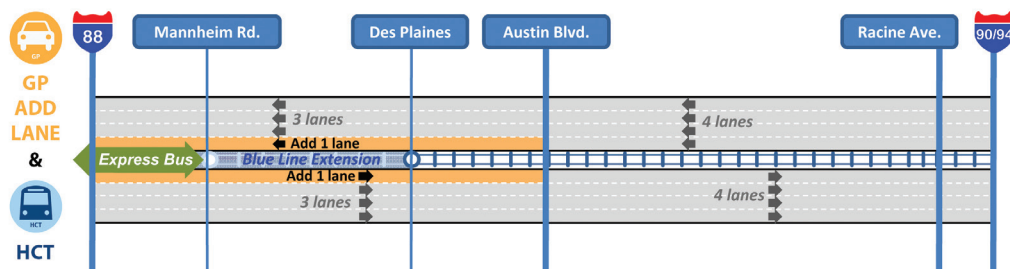
# Connections

(continued from page 1)

**The key features of these four alternatives also include:**

- Extending the CTA Blue Line as either rail or bus rapid transit to Mannheim Road, with supporting bus feeder routes along the Blue Line to improve ridership
- Express bus service west of Mannheim Road
- Improving I-290 without widening the "trench" to provide an additional lane in each direction between Mannheim and Austin
- 3 of the 4 alternatives include converting the existing inside lanes between Austin and Racine to provide a managed lane, which could include tolls or vehicle occupancy requirements.
- The No Build alternative will also be carried forward.

## Round 3 Alternatives Advancing



- = General Purpose Lane
- = High Capacity Transit
- = High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
- = High Occupancy Toll Lanes
- = Toll Lanes



Eisenhower Expressway Project  
Illinois Department of Transportation  
Division of Highways - District One  
201 W. Center Court  
Schaumburg, Illinois 60196

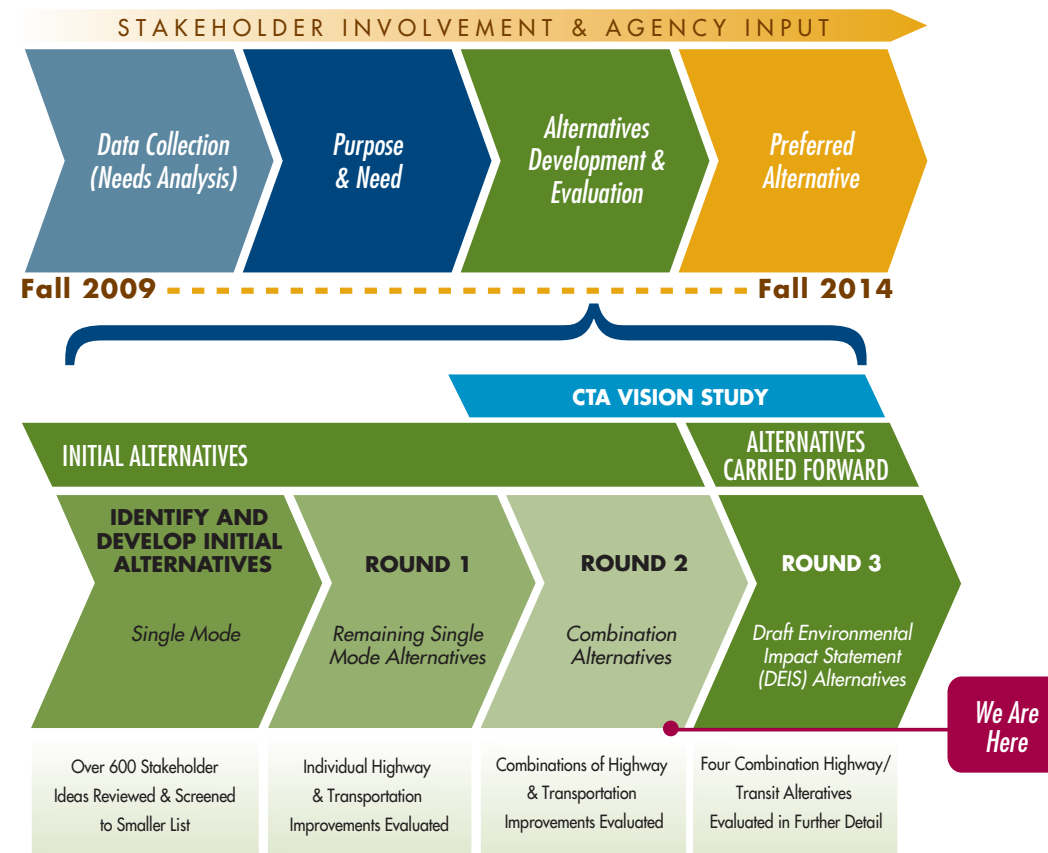


## NEXT STEPS

Public Meeting  
Coming in Early October

Thus far, the study process has focused on the transportation needs and how various modes could address those needs. In this next round of alternatives development and evaluation, we add factors such as cost, environmental effects and secondary and cumulative impacts. In addition, we will be blending aesthetics, urban design and conceptual alternatives, with the ultimate objective of developing a preferred plan that best addresses the transportation needs, improves all modes, and creates an asset for the adjacent communities.

We will be present and discuss our findings with stakeholders in the coming months, including CAG meetings, as well as a public meeting in early fall, with the objective of circulating a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and hosting a Public Hearing in late spring/early summer 2014.



Issue 3 • Summer 2013

### In this Issue

This publication provides a format to keep you informed about new project developments.

- Four Alternatives Advancing.....1, 5
- IDOT and CTA partnering .....1
- Study area extended .....2
- Stakeholders review Round #2 results .....3-4
- Next Steps .....6

## Four Alternatives Advancing

After presenting the results of our round 2 alternatives evaluation in the Spring of 2012, the project team added two additional alternatives based upon stakeholder comments, and restarted the analysis. These alternatives were tested based upon their ability to address the transportation needs identified in the I-290 Corridor, which include:



- » Improve local and regional travel
- » Improve modal connections and opportunities
- » Improve safety for all users
- » Improve access to employment

The top four alternatives from this evaluation are multimodal, and stay within the existing walled section ("trench") in the Oak Park area.

(continued on page 5)

## IDOT and CTA team up to enhance transit planning in the I-290 Corridor



IDOT and CTA have combined resources to enhance the I-290 transit planning process. In February of this year, the CTA initiated a "Vision Study" to determine a long-term planning strategy for the Blue Line Forest Park Branch from Clinton station to Forest Park station. The study focuses on the Blue Line Forest Park Branch from Clinton station to Forest Park station. The CTA will continue to work with IDOT regarding potential expansion alternatives that would continue west to Mannheim Road. The Blue Line Vision study area boundaries extend from Canal Street on the east to Forest Park on the north to Roosevelt Road on the south. The CTA's

The study is expected to be completed by early 2014.



## Study area extended

When the I-290 study began in the fall of 2009, the study area focused on the section of I-290 from Mannheim Road to Cicero Avenue. As the alternatives evaluation process advanced into round 2, there was a need to extend the study 4 miles eastward to Racine Avenue. This new study boundary matches the improvement limits of the round 2 alternatives, and matches the study limits of the ongoing Circle Interchange study. Data regarding existing safety, mobility and facility condition was collected and analyzed. In general, the transportation needs are relatively less severe in this 4 mile eastern section, compared to western 9 miles.



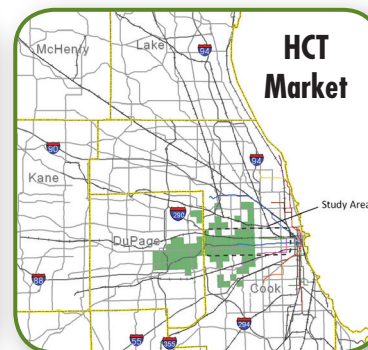
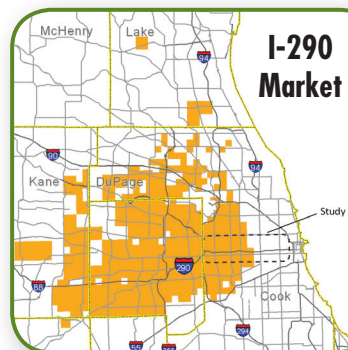
**PROJECT WEBSITE**  
new look!

Visit our updated website for project information and opportunities to provide feedback!

[www.eisenhowerexpressway.com](http://www.eisenhowerexpressway.com)

## Stakeholders Review ROUND 2 RESULTS.

After considering public comments regarding the initial round 2 evaluation, and revisiting the analysis this spring, stakeholders were asked to provide additional comments. Approximately 80 comments were provided. The following is a summary of the major themes from those comments, as well as our responses.



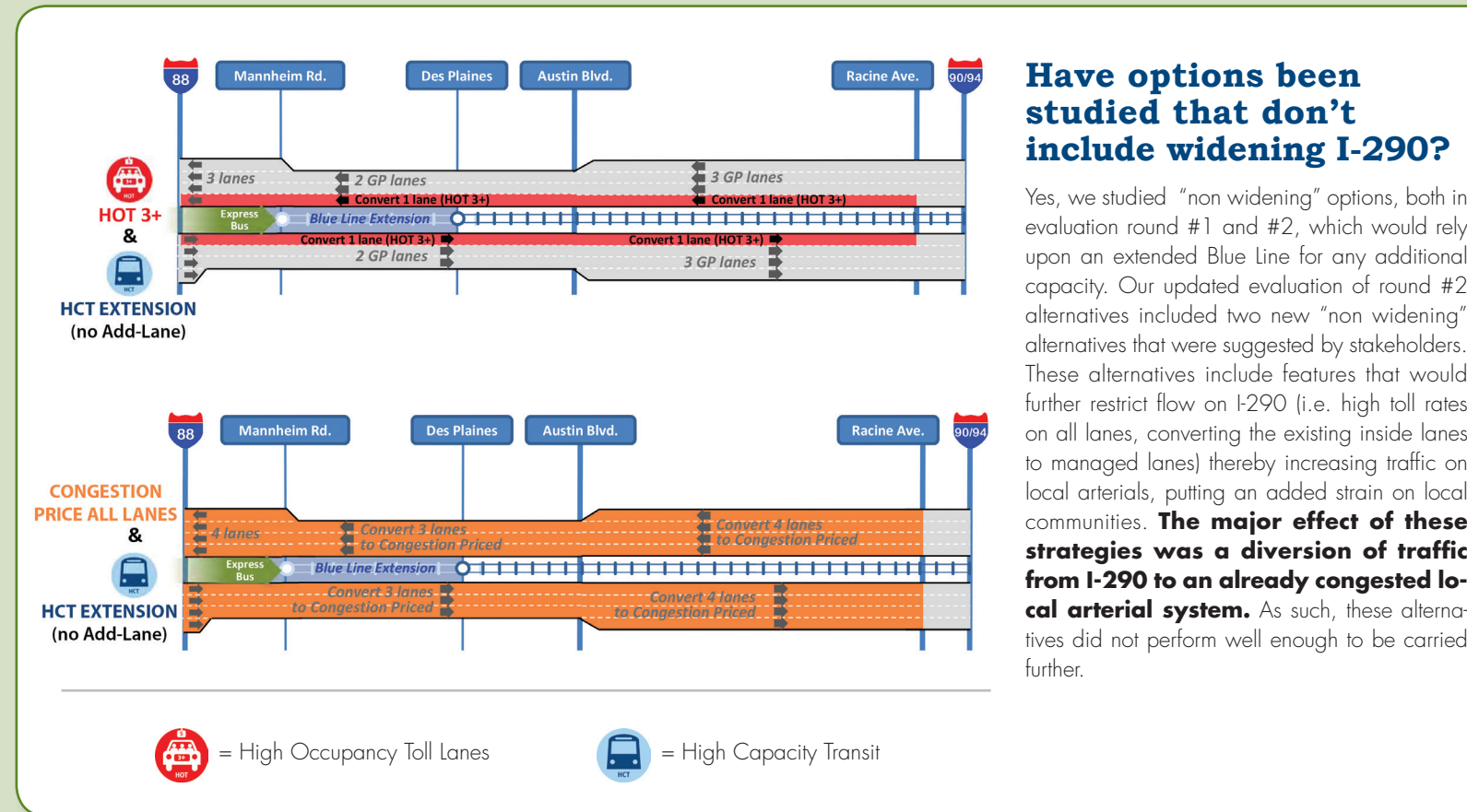
### Can transit improvements address the problems in the I-290 corridor?

Our extensive technical studies and stakeholder/agency coordination has resulted in a thorough understanding of existing conditions in the corridor, with the conclusion that improvements to all modes are needed. Overall, there is an abundance of existing transit options in the study area, with 21% of the work trips using transit compared to 12% regionally. However, the market served by I-290 is much broader than the market served by transit and, as such, the stand alone transit improvements that we have studied, including a Blue Line extension to Oak Brook, have not demonstrated significant increased transit ridership or would not address the mobility issues along I-290 in any meaningful way.

Further, as a result of the current variety and extent of transit options in the study area, our studies have shown that about 50% of the ridership on any new transit service is coming from other existing transit services. Our approach is to develop multimodal alternatives, rather than choose one mode over another, and configure each mode to maximize its performance.

### Why are the left side ramps a safety concern?

At the beginning of the I-290 planning process, we conducted a detailed review of crashes along the I-290 corridor. The two highest concentrations of crashes in the westbound direction occur in the sections of I-290 near Austin Boulevard and Harlem Avenue. The section of westbound I-290, from Laramie Avenue to Austin Boulevard, had the highest crash rate (537 crashes per mile) within the project limits, the next closest rate was near Ashland Avenue, at 390 per mile. 74% of the crashes that had an identified lane position in the police reports were in the inner two lanes at Austin, and 47% of the crashes that had an identified lane position in the police reports were in the inside lane at Harlem. This crash experience can be attributed to the inside lanes on an expressway typically serving higher speed, longer distance travel; the inside ramps introduce merging and speed changes. A national study sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in cooperation with the FHWA documents that left side entrances or exit ramps have up to 180% more crashes than right side entrance or exit ramps.



### Have options been studied that don't include widening I-290?

Yes, we studied "non widening" options, both in evaluation round #1 and #2, which would rely upon an extended Blue Line for any additional capacity. Our updated evaluation of round #2 alternatives included two new "non widening" alternatives that were suggested by stakeholders. These alternatives include features that would further restrict flow on I-290 (i.e. high toll rates on all lanes, converting the existing inside lanes to managed lanes) thereby increasing traffic on local arterials, putting an added strain on local communities. The major effect of these strategies was a diversion of traffic from I-290 to an already congested local arterial system. As such, these alternatives did not perform well enough to be carried further.

While the interchanges at Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard would have right side ramps for a portion of their length, they would transition to the center, allowing the lanes to remain within the current ramp locations.



### Proposed Austin Boulevard

This proposed rendering is based on community feedback and IDOT's obligation as a transportation agency to meet standards of reconstruction. It is not the final design.