



I-290
Corridor Advisory Group and Task Force (CAG/TF)
Meeting #20 Summary
August 27, 2015

The 20th combined CAG/TF meeting for the I-290 Phase I Study was held on August 27, 2015 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 August 27, 2015 meeting, an E-invitation was created. A Save the Date invitation was sent out to all CAG and TF members on July 30th, 2015 and a formal invitation was sent on August 10th, 2015. The meeting was attended by 32 people. The following CAG/TF members were in attendance:

1. Ron Burke – Active Transportation Alliance
2. Chris Byars – Federal Highway Administration
3. JoEllen Charlton – Village of Forest Park
4. Claire Bozic – CMAP
5. Jennifer Killen – Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
6. Rick Kuner – Citizens for Appropriate Transportation
7. Erik Llewellyn – Pace
8. John Loper – DuPage County
9. David Myers – Village of Maywood
10. Henry Guerriero – Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
11. Peter Fahrenwald – Regional Transportation Authority
12. Tim Gillian – Village of Forest Park
13. Michael Grandy – Park District of Oak Park
14. Cara Pavlicek – Village of Oak Park
15. Edwenna Perkins – Village of Maywood
16. Mark Pitstick – Regional Transportation Authority
17. Teresa Powell – Village of Oak Park
18. Michael Sturino – Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association
19. Tammy Wierciak – West Central Municipal Conference
20. Felicia Hurley – IDOT
21. Ken Runkle – IDOT
22. Karen Gruszka – Park District of Oak Park
23. Colette Lueck – Village of Oak Park
24. Carole Morey – Chicago Transit Authority
25. Elizabeth Poole – US EPA – Region 5 – NEPA
26. Lorraine Snorden – Pace
27. Brenda McGruder – Chicago Department of Transportation



28. Russ Wajda – Village of Hillside
29. Nick Bridge – Oak Park EEC
30. John Sherrill – IDOT- Springfield
31. Eileen Lynch – Senator Harmon’s Office
32. Anan Abu-Taleb – Village of Oak Park

The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation with the following agenda topics:

- CAG #19 Recap
- Community and agency coordination efforts since CAG #19
- Schedule
- CTA Blue Line Vision Study Update
- Crash Analysis Update
- Access Changes Overview
- Air Quality
- Noise Analysis Update
- Section 106/4(f) Overview
- Aesthetics Overview

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.

CAG #19 Recap: At the last CAG meeting, the Round 3 Evaluation results to date were presented. The results show that the HOT 3+ alternative provides the greatest person throughput and accessibility improvement, and HOV 2+ is the second best. There was also an overview of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and review of the existing drainage. The existing drainage topics covered were: Flooding; Trunk Sewer Hydraulic Grade Line; Existing Drainage Plan; and 1 on 1 Village Meetings.

There were no comments or questions on the CAG #19 Recap.

Community and agency coordination efforts since CAG #19: The I-290 Study Team has been participating in extensive coordination efforts over the last year including: Oak Park and Maywood Town Hall Meetings; Meetings with the Park District; 1 on 1 Meetings; Working Group Meetings; Meeting with Cook County; Meeting with CTA/CSX; Meeting with Metropolitan Water Reclamation District; and Meetings with CDOT. In addition, community and agency coordination efforts continued with the establishment of the Oak Park Working Group and Oak Park Study Sessions.

There were no comments or questions on the community and agency coordination efforts since CAG#19.



Schedule: The I-290 Phase I Study schedule chevron shows that the study is progressing to the end of Round 3. There are currently four combination transit/highway alternatives being studied in further detail. The CTA Blue Vision Study is also progressing in a similar fashion with completion in Summer 2016.

There were no comments or questions on the Schedule.

CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study – Review and Status Update: The CTA started their presentation with a summary of their existing conditions assessment. The existing conditions assessment shows that minimal upgrades have been completed as needed which have included: special track work, crossovers, switch upgrades; and recently upgraded signals. The remaining elements are beyond useful life and severely worn. The track has contaminated ballast, deteriorated ties, poor drainage, and worn rail. The stations are over 50 years old with narrow platforms and only 4 of 12 in the study area are ADA accessible. The structures and maintenance shop are approaching the end of their useful life. In addition, the maintenance shop has inadequate track configuration and capacity. In terms of traction power, the substation, cabling, and the third rail all require upgrading. The communications system warrants technical improvements.

The CTA has incorporated public comments regarding maintaining existing entrance locations. The proposed design will retain all entry station entrances at Harlem, Oak Park, Austin, Illinois Medical District, Racine, and UIC-Halsted. In addition, dual head houses are possible for existing single entry stations with bus connections at Cicero, Pulaski, and Western.

Part of the CTA's results from the Blue Line Vision Study show that there is a need to improve and redesign the Forest Park Terminal, yard and shop. The initial design improves site circulation through improved bus circulation and transfers; additional bike and pedestrian access to the terminal; and better highway and traffic flow around the terminal. In addition, the initial design will meet increased rail yard and shop needs. There is currently inadequate fleet storage and shop size. The new proposed design will improve yard configuration.

The CTA has established both long and short term goals in order to maintain existing Blue Line service. The long term goals are: bring service speeds up to state-of-good repair; no 3rd track or express service; and remove stations closed in 1970s. The short term or immediate goals for the CTA are to continue to perform interim slow zone maintenance work on the Forest Park branch that began in spring of 2014. This work is happening 5 nights per week and occasionally on weekends from Clinton to Forest Park, but mainly focusing on west end of branch.

In terms of intermodal connections, CTA has committed to continue to work with IDOT on corridor improvements. This coordination includes: work on the overhead bridges to improve station entrances and access from street; segmenting the project into stations and track; potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects; and providing transit alternatives during the highway construction.



At this time, CTA provided a summary of the overall recommendations from the Blue Line Vision Study. The primary recommendation is for the complete reconstruction/modernization for the entire Forest Park branch. The reconstruction/modernization maintains existing entrance locations, improves customer service, improves infrastructure, and improves terminal sites. The CTA has also committed to maintain existing service and work with IDOT and stakeholders on corridor improvements. The schedule for the completion of the Blue Line Vision Study is similar to the IDOT I-290 Phase I Study, and the CTA will present results to the public in coordination with the IDOT I-290 Public Hearing. The CTA will continue to evaluate funding options and project phasing.

Comment: In previous presentations you have mentioned looking at platforms that are narrower than 24 feet, is this still an option?

Re: The 24 feet is not an ADA standard; it is established for clearance around obstructions. The CTA is working with IDOT on desired widths. The platform widths will be part of the future more detailed design process, and nothing has been finalized yet.

Comment: Will the Des Plaines terminal redesign account for future expansion of Blue Line service to the West?

Re: Yes, the west side of the Des Plaines terminal will be designed for possible extended Blue Line service in the future.

Comment: What types of construction savings are there for combining highway and transit projects?

Re: A lot of construction savings could be realized with regards to the Maintenance of Traffic and reduction in traffic disruptions. With the highway and transit projects combined, the CTA can take advantage of any highway closures to work on the tracks and vice versa. This will reduce closures and have less impact on drivers. A savings in overhead costs and a shorter construction schedule for contractors would also be beneficial. We anticipate the situation will be similar to the CTA Red Line South/Dan Ryan project coordination.

Crash Analysis Update: The original crash report was from the years 2006-2008, and as the study progresses more years of crash information have become available. The crash report was updated with crash information from 2011-2013. With the 2011-2013 crash study update, Eisenhower crash rate remains higher than comparable expressways. In addition, the west section has 22% higher crash rate than the east section. Similar types of crashes and time of day crash history are present from 2006-2008 to 2011-2013. 70% of crashes are rear end and 58% occur during congested periods. The most severe crashes occur overnight with higher operating speeds.

There were no comments or questions on the crash analysis update.

Access Changes Overview: At this time, IDOT presented the Access changes from 25th Avenue to 1st Avenue. The existing conditions in the section include 4 interchanges in 1.5 miles. The current IDOT policy and AASHTO requirements recommend 1 mile spacing. There are 8 to 9 ramps in each direction



in this roadway segment. The closely spaced ramps have inadequate acceleration/deceleration lengths, sharp/abrupt ramp entrance/exit angles, and inadequate weaving space, resulting elevated crash rates. This section from 25th Avenue to 1st Avenue has one of the highest crash rates throughout the corridor.

25th Avenue and 17th Avenue Ramp Conflicts: The proposed 25th Avenue interchange conflicts with the existing 17th Avenue west ramps due to the improved ramp length. The 17th Avenue ramps to and from the west will be removed, but the 17th Avenue ramps to and from the east will remain and be improved and lengthened. The proposed 25th Avenue Ramp design is 1,650' in length which is required for departure taper, deceleration, and storage. Also, the EB on-ramp will be 2,900' long which is required for turn-lane merging, acceleration and mainline merge taper.

1st Avenue and 9th Avenue Ramp Conflicts: The proposed 1st Avenue interchange conflicts with the existing 9th Avenue ramps. The existing 9th Avenue ramps to and from the east will be removed because there is insufficient room to accommodate improved 9th Avenue ramps and 1st Avenue ramps. The 1st Avenue ramp design has a 1,900' WB on-ramp which is required for turn-lane merging, acceleration and mainline merge taper. The EB on-ramp is 1,500' long which is required for departure taper, acceleration and storage.

In response to the access changes in this section, a GIS analysis was completed to compare the travel distances between the No-Build alternative (all existing ramps open) and Build alternatives (closure of 9th Avenue ramps and western 17th Avenue ramps). The change in travel distance for 7400 parcels to/from I-290 in the ramps open/closed scenarios were compared. The conclusion of this analysis was that the average distance change for all directions was less than 1/10th of a mile.

Comment: Has any thought been given to the impacts the closed ramps will have on the local businesses?

Re: There has been ongoing coordination with Broadview and the other affected communities. As presented there are not large changes in travel distance due to the ramp closures. The most important part is the access to and from the east and west at 25th and 1st Avenues. The new, improved interchanges will alleviate congestion at those locations allowing them to better serve the communities. This should reduce the impact of the loss of access at 17th and 9th Avenues.

Comment: Citizens will be concerned and upset about losing access. Is there any way to provide additional access from 1st Ave to 25th Ave?

Re: We are working with the communities and trying to address a number of existing deficiencies in this section. There will be additional coordination opportunities to discuss these changes.

Comment: If the frontage road on Harrison is going to be two way and people will no longer be able to get through to 1st Ave, will you have signage to direct people out of the Checkers?

Re: Yes, we will work with the communities on the appropriate signage at this location.



Air Quality: This part of the presentation included a brief overview of the air quality analysis. In general, air quality has been improving in the United States. The USEPA has National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for 6 pollutants (carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, and lead). Significant progress has been made in reducing mobile source emissions through the utilization of cleaner vehicles, cleaner fuels, vehicle inspection, and maintenance. On a smaller scale, Cook County is a non-attainment area for ozone and a maintenance area for small particulate matter. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Long Range Plan and Program has a region-wide transportation air quality conformity analysis. The region is in conformance and under allowable air pollutant budgets which includes the I-290 expressway improvements.

A regional air quality sensitivity analysis was completed for the No Build alternative and all 4 remaining Round 3 alternatives. This analysis showed that there is no substantial change between Round 3 Build alternatives and the No Build because of the small change in vehicle miles travelled (VMT). In addition, a Carbon Monoxide (CO) Screen for Intersection Modeling (COSIM) was completed for the interchanges on this project. CO concentration is measured in parts per million (ppm), and for transportation projects there is a pass/fail standard. These standards are initiated to protect vulnerable populations. The 1 hour CO average standard is 35 ppm and the 8 hour CO average is 9 ppm. The COSIM analysis shows that all of the intersections are well below the CO standards.

Comment: 4.4 ppm; is that the highest recorded volume or the average?

Re: It is the average. Also, we selected a background CO level of 3 ppm which is a higher background level than is measured in the corridor which is only 2 ppm. This gives us a worse case level that still shows the project is well below the air quality threshold.

Comment: Did you look at localized particulate matter?

Re: That sort of analysis is only done for projects of air quality concern, which has not been established for this project yet. Our projected traffic volumes, and especially truck volumes, do not indicate that the project should be of air quality concern, as the expected increase in truck volumes are well below the typical triggers for performing a detailed particulate matter analysis.

Comment: Particulate matter is worse near the road, and is of more important concern when there are people in the area with respiratory disease and other health effects. Why didn't you look at this?

Re: Our pollutant burden air quality sensitivity analysis showed that 3 of the 4 build alternatives are below the projected 2040 No Build particulate matter 2.5 emissions. We are doing an MSAT analysis which helps analyze the air toxics from vehicles, and initial pollutant burden analysis shows that the alternatives show improvement regionally. Also see above response.

Comment: This project is not designed to induce traffic. It takes traffic off the arterials and moves them more efficiently throughout the corridor.

Re: This project will redistribute traffic. We are paying particular attention to the 2040 traffic on the parallel arterials. In addition, we are taking into account social and economic factors.



Comment: Could an analysis be done on this project similar to what was done on the Dan Ryan for air quality?

Re: This is a different project in the sense that there is not a large increase in trucks. The managed lane will not allow trucks, and there will be improvements in overall travel speeds. We do not expect an increase in PM 2.5.

Comment: I would like to go on record saying that I have concerns with how the modeling is capturing induced demand and robbing the system of capacity.

Re: Comment noted.

Comment: Is there a way to do an analysis on a neighborhood level, and see the adverse effects from additional traffic on each neighborhood specifically?

Re: The nature of this analysis is at a more regional level. Pollutants tend to drop off substantially as you move away from the highway.

Comment: Was the COSIM analysis done for the overall area or at specific locations for the 24 hour period?

Re: The analysis was done at specific locations at each of the interchanges. In addition, the 1 hour concentration is the worst case scenario, and the 8 hour concentration is the worst case average over an 8 hour time period. A document was prepared which shows the specific results of each interchange, the location of the receptors, and background information on COSIM. It can be found on the website at the following link: http://www.eisenhowerexpressway.com/info_center/reports.aspx

Comment: Why not do a particulate matter analysis at all of these receptor locations as well?

Re: As noted earlier, the analysis to date does not show an impact it shows positive trends for the mainline alternatives, and does not have the trigger for additional analysis.

Traffic Noise Analysis: An overview of the traffic noise analysis completed thus far was presented. Traffic noise is predicted by the FHWA Traffic Noise Model. The model is calibrated based upon field measurements taken at sensitive noise receptors; areas of outside human use (congregation areas such as benches or tables). Noise receptors are separated into different categories depending upon the land uses, and each category has a specific criteria. In general, IDOT and FHWA stipulate that outdoor areas of frequent human use be given primary consideration, and interior noise for private residences is not studied. The analysis focuses on noise levels interfering with outdoor conversations.

There are several things that can affect noise levels including: amount of traffic; distance from roadway; topography and elevation; vehicle speed and traffic control; land cover between roadway and receptor; and traffic composition. At this time, the noise analysis has compared the existing versus no build noise levels throughout the 8 communities. Each community has a different number of studied noise receptors and varying results. The traffic noise impacts from the build alternatives will be presented at



the next CAG meeting. In addition, reasonable and feasible wall locations and the viewpoints solicitation (voting) will be presented.

Once the noise wall locations have been determined a viewpoints solicitation will be sent out to each of the benefitted receptors (benefitted receptors are those properties that receive a 5 decibel noise reduction due to the proposed noise wall). The viewpoints solicitation is basically a vote taken from potential benefitted receptors on whether or not they would like the proposed wall. The response goal is to have 1/3 of all benefitted receptors per wall provide a vote. If 50% of votes are in favor, of the wall then the proposed noise wall will likely be implemented. The first row receptor get two votes (if adjacent to IDOT right-of-way), and for rental properties one vote goes to the tenant and one vote goes to the owner. In order to help the public better understand the noise wall solicitation process, IDOT will be holding noise wall informational meetings. There will be 3 locations of these meetings over a course of 3 nights in October. At these meetings, IDOT and consultant staff will go over renderings and be available to answer any questions. Only benefitted receptors will be invited to the meeting, but the general public is welcome.

Comment: Why are there such differences between the communities in noise levels and number of representative receptors?

Re: There is variation in land use along the expressway which determines the number and location of representative receptors (worst case receptors within a common noise environment). If land use changes frequently, then there will be a larger number of representative receptors.

There are a number of factors to consider in determining noise levels. Traffic volumes are the primary factor in noise levels, however, traffic volumes are not substantially increasing with the Build Alternatives due to the fact that this is an existing roadway corridor with mature land uses. Noise levels can also vary throughout the corridor due to topographic differences, distance from expressway and whether existing noise barriers are present.

Section 106/4(f) Overview: The Section 106 process is intended to protect properties of significant historical designation. The 1st step in this process is to identify historic properties through data collection and coordination with agencies and consulting parties. The 2nd step is to identify and address potential adverse effects to these properties. There could be direct or indirect impacts. If it is determined that there is a direct adverse effect, then the project would need to be modified, and any unresolved issues would require additional consultation. An area of potential effect is defined as an area within which a project may affect historic properties; study area. Historic properties are defined as those listed in or eligible for listing in National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for historic and/or architectural significance and retaining integrity. Coordination is done with FHWA, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), IDOT, and consulting parties to identify historic properties.

The Section 4(f) process is intended to protect areas of park and recreation. These properties are publically owned, open to the public, and the significant use is for recreation. Park and recreation areas



adjacent to I-290 are located in Forest Park (Veterans Park, Dog Park, Community Garden), Oak Park (Rehm Park, Barrie Park, Wenonah Tot Lot) and Chicago (Columbus Park, Park No. 422, Horan Park). In consideration of Section 4(f), the FHWA may not approve the use of a publically owned park, recreation area, or wildlife/waterfowl refuge, or a publicly or privately owned historic site, unless: there is no feasible and prudent alternative to such use, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm. Otherwise, the use is determined to have only a de minimis impact on the Section 4(f) resource. The Section 4(f) applicability criteria for significant historic properties are: historic properties on or eligible for the National Register; Archaeological sites that are National Register eligible and important for preservation in place rather than data recovery; historic districts; and a local historic property as determined significant by FHWA.

A Section 4(f) impact is: when land is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility; a temporary occupancy that is adverse in terms of the 4(f) purpose; or a constructive use that is just proximity impact and no actual incorporation of land. At this point in the project, we have determined that no permanent ROW acquisition is necessary from a Section 106 of 4(f) property. There may be a temporary easement at Columbus Park for the multiuse path extension. Another sensitive area that the study team is also looking into is Environmental Justice to make sure to identify the needs of all affected income groups.

Comment: On slide 57 where Barrie Park is discussed, it should also be noted that there is a Center there along with the Park, and the Oak Park Conservatory is opening a discovery garden that should be included in the analysis.

Re: This comment has been noted and the slides will be revised accordingly.

Comment: The Oak Park Conservatory is both historic and there is a potential for a noise wall. How will the voting happen here? What if someone votes yes and someone else votes no?

Re: The Oak Park Conservatory will receive a vote and so will the surrounding neighbors. There are other benefitted receptors in the area.

Comment: Would the barriers be continuous between cross streets?

Re: Yes, in general the noise wall would be continuous between cross streets. In order to eliminate noise wrapping around the end of the wall, the length of the barrier needs to be 4 times the distance between the barrier and the receptor.

Comment: Are you looking at both the north and the south side of the highway for noise walls?

Re: Yes.

Aesthetics: The presentation briefly described the potential aesthetic features for both the mainline and crossroads. The intent of this items is for the I-290 mainline to have a continuous consistent aesthetic treatment throughout the corridor. The design features utilized to achieve this will be: bridge piers; bridge parapets, side slope landscaping; median and shoulder barrier; bridge abutments; retaining walls;



and noise walls. The crossroad aesthetic features will need additional coordination with the local communities. It will be important for these aesthetic features to include both the expressway traveler and the local community. A crossroad aesthetic features booklet was dropped off at each community for their consideration.

Comment: Have you considered any joint funding opportunities for all of the overpass bridges? An idea would be to have IDOT be the leading agency and apply for a grant that includes all of the communities. The money could help cover the cost of bike racks, bus, shelters, etc.

Re: This is an excellent suggestion, and we will look into this further.

Next Steps: The next steps of the project include: additional community and agency meetings; CAG #21 in October; Noise wall forums in October; DEIS in February; and a tentative Public Hearing in March 2016.

Comment: Are you still considering a connection of the Prairie Path to Columbus Park?

Re: Yes, this is considered in all 4 of the Build alternatives.

Comment: Are you still considering expanding the cross street bridges to incorporate additional park space?

Re: There has not been a decision made on this. It will require additional coordination with the Villages.

Comment: Just wanted to thank IDOT and the Study Team for addressing our concerns and all of the coordination that has been done with the Village of Oak Park.