



CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study Recommendations

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Presenting in coordination with IDOT
I-290 CAG Meeting July 30, 2014**



Purpose of the study

- **The 55-year old Forest Park Branch is beyond its useful life**
 - Evaluate existing conditions and infrastructure options
 - Evaluate markets and service options
 - Conduct outreach to project stakeholders
 - Identify policy and funding options
 - Coordinate planning with IDOT for I-290 corridor

Study Area



CTA Blue Line Vision Study Area



Legend

- Blue Line/Station Access
- Pink Line/Station Access
- IL Prairie Path Multi-Use Trail
- River
- Green Line/Station Access
- Metra Line/Station
- Study Area Boundary





Minimal upgrades have been completed as needed

- Special Trackwork: crossovers & switches recently upgraded (except Lathrop)
- Signals: recently upgraded

Remaining elements beyond useful life and severely worn

- Track: contaminated ballast, deteriorated ties, poor drainage, worn rail
- Stations: over 50 years old, only 4 of 12 are accessible, narrow platforms
- Structures: approaching end of useful life
- Traction Power: substation, cabling, third rail, etc require upgrading
- Communications System: warrants technical improvements
- Maintenance Shop: approaching end of useful life; inadequate track configuration and capacity



Complete reconstruction/modernization for the Forest Park branch

- Maintain existing entrance locations
- Improve customer experience
- Improve infrastructure
- Improve terminal site

Maintain existing service

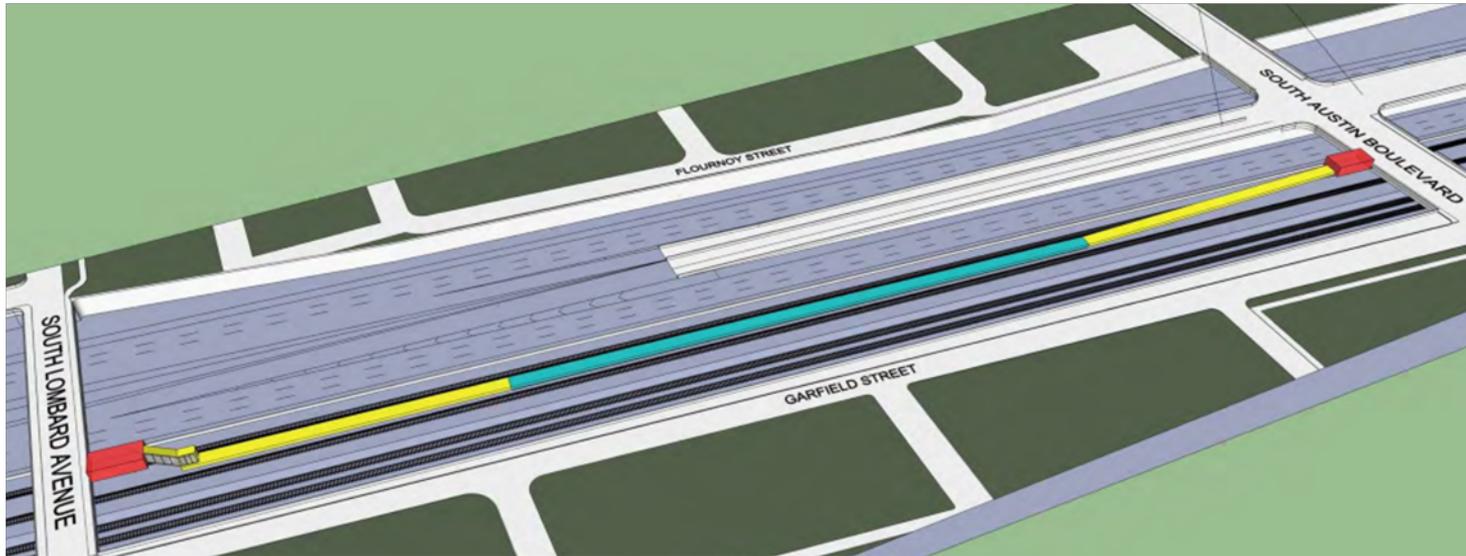
Work with IDOT on corridor improvements



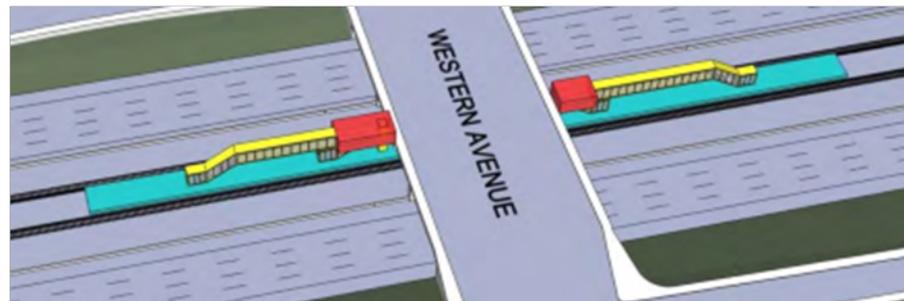
Maintain Existing Entrance Locations



- **Retain double and triple entry station entrances**
Harlem, Oak Park, Austin, Illinois Medical District, Racine, UIC-Halsted



- **Dual headhouses possible for single entry stations with bus connections**
Cicero, Pulaski, Western



Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY



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- ADA accessible
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian crossings/refuges
- Station entrance design and locations
- Reduced noise via station design
- Bike racks

Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY



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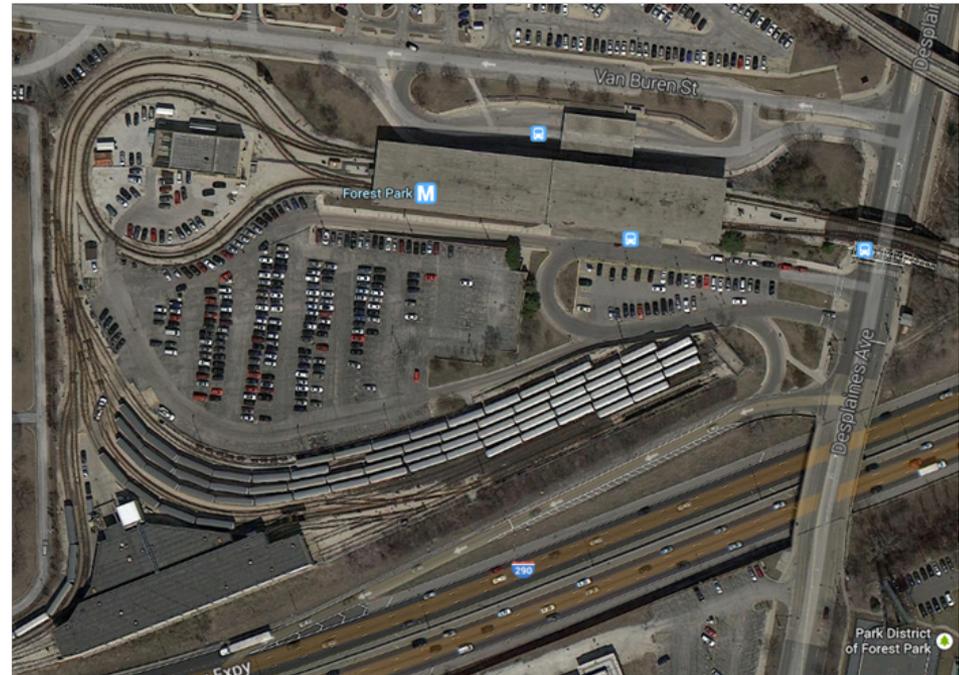
- **Wider Platforms**

- **Shelter/weather protection**

Improve Terminal Site

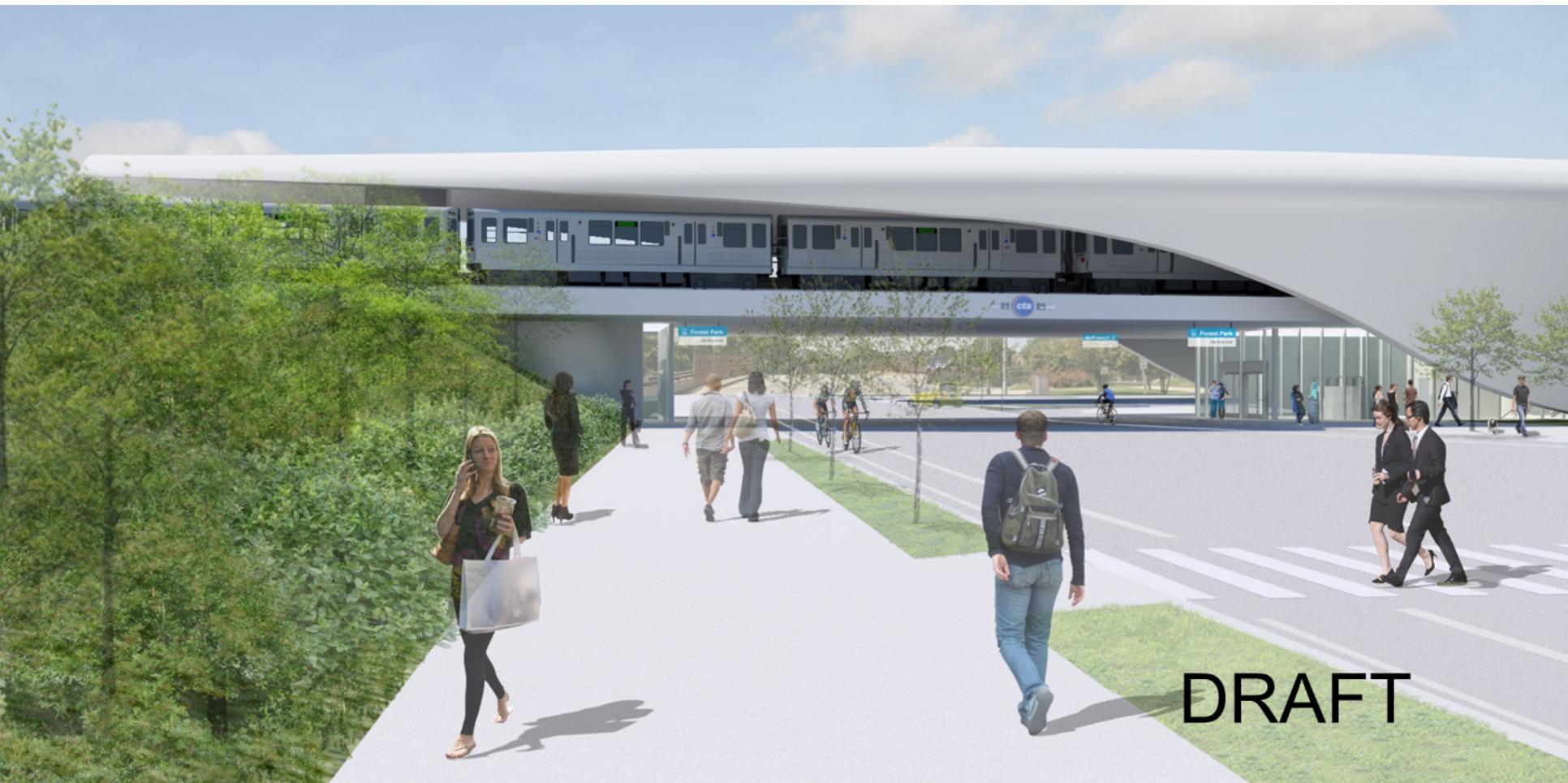


- **Redesign Forest Park terminal, yard, and shop within current parcel**
- **Improve site circulation**
 - **Bike and pedestrian access to the terminal**
 - **Highway and traffic flow around the terminal**
- **Meet increased yard and shop needs**
 - **Inadequate fleet storage**
 - **Inadequate shop size**
 - **Improve yard configuration**



Forest Park Terminal Station – Conceptual Rendering

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY





• Long-term

- Bring service speeds up to state-of-good-repair
- No 3rd track or express service
 - Already serves as west side express due to current station spacing
- Remove stations closed in 1970s

• Short-term (immediate)

- CTA continues to perform interim slow zone maintenance work on branch, which began in spring 2014
 - 5 nights/week, occasional weekends
 - From Clinton to Forest Park, but focusing on west end of branch



- **Continue to work with IDOT on corridor improvements**
 - **Coordinate on overhead bridges to improve stations and access from street**
 - **Project may be segmented into stations and track**
 - **Potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects**
 - **Provide transit alternative during highway construction**

Summary of Overall Recommendations



- **Complete reconstruction/modernization for the Forest Park branch**
 - **Maintain existing entrance locations**
 - **Improve customer experience**
 - **Improve infrastructure**
 - **Improve terminal site**
- **Maintain existing service**
- **Work with IDOT on corridor improvements**

Next Steps



- Present results to public in coordination with IDOT I-290 Public Hearing
- Continue to evaluate funding options and project phasing

