

CTA Seeks Community Input

After three years of working closely with local community groups, businesses and residents as well as municipal and agency stakeholders, CTA is completing the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study in preparation for the I-290/CTA public hearing in 2017.

As we work on station designs and access, we are looking for input from residents and commuters who access the Forest Park Branch between UIC-Halsted and Austin to present preliminary station design concepts.

We want to know:

> How do you access these stations?

> How can we improve your customer experience?

> Tell us which station improvement concept you prefer!

Visit the website and submit your comment www.transitchicago.com/blueweststudy

History of the Blue Line Vision Study

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) initiated the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study in 2013 to determine a long-term planning strategy for the Blue Line Forest Park Branch, in coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) through their adjacent I-290 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Study.

Through the project, CTA continues to assess transit enhancements, local access and mobility issues, policy options, and collaboration opportunities with IDOT. Improved station concepts include station access, redesign opportunities, and right-of-way (ROW) needs at specific stations along the corridor. The study has considered innovative solutions that enhance transit, while working with partner agencies to maximize mobility in this important regional corridor.

Goals

The Forest Park Branch of the Blue Line is 55 years old and beyond its useful life. CTA has evaluated the existing conditions and infrastructure options, along with policy and funding options. At this time, CTA is recommending complete modernization of the Forest Park Branch, which includes stations near you. CTA's goal is to:

- Improve the customer experience,
- Improve infrastructure, and
- Maintain existing entrance locations

Learn more about the Forest Park Branch Vision Study at www.transitchicago.com/blueweststudy

Study process

1: Data Collection and Existing Conditions Assessment

This stage of the project development process includes: assessing existing conditions and deficiencies within the study area corridor; reaching out to local stakeholders and other interested parties about the project; and hosting a public open house to identify study area issues/concerns.

2: Develop Conceptual Alternatives

This stage of the project consists of the development and analysis of project alternatives. The goal of this step is to identify a series of alternatives and potential solutions that are suitable to meet project and stakeholder goals that were identified in Step One.

3: Evaluate and Refine Alternatives

The process continues with the evaluation and refinement of corridor service alternatives.

A description of images on the fact sheet follow:

Image 1: Draft Conceptual Rendering of Racine station

A draft conceptual rendering of the entrance to Racine station is shown. There is a plaza in front of the station with a partial covering. There are green trees, a bike rack and many pedestrians in the image.

Image 2: Blue Line Vision Study Project Schedule

An image shows the project schedule, described by the following notes:

- Vision Study starting in 2013 with projected completion in 2017
- Since the beginning of the study in Spring 2013, the following tasks have been completed: Data Collection, Station Concept Development, and Corridor Service Evaluation
- Station concept evaluation began in late 2013 and is ongoing through the end of the project.
- Public and Agency Outreach Meetings are indicated with a green dot on the horizontal timeline, marking meetings in each year of the project: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017

Image 3: Blue Line Study Area

History of the CTA Blue Line / I-290 system

- Blue Line / I-290 infrastructure is 55 years old
- First integrated transit / highway facility in the U.S.

Project Study Area

- Existing CTA Blue Line: From Clinton Station to Forest Park Station
- IDOT Expansion Alternative: Forest Park Station to Mannheim Road

A map showing the study area: The Study area captures the complete Blue Line from Clinton to Forest Park, and also allows for the evaluation of alternatives that could continue to Mannheim Road in coordination with I-290 EIS study.

Specifically, a red box delineates the study area from 1 block east of Clinton station at Canal Street (east) to Mannheim Road (west), Madison Street (north) to Roosevelt Road (south).

A photo of the Blue Line / I-290 Corridor with traffic congestion in four westbound lanes and the Blue Line approaching a station.

Other Images

In the background of some of the text areas, there is an image of a moving CTA elevated train and also an image of a station sign indicating Forest Park as the terminal of the branch.