

## ***Board 1: 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.

## ***Board 2: Blue Study Area Timeline***

[Image of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision/Feasibility Study Schedule including several tasks and their respective work dates, as follows:

- Data Collection: Spring 2013 through Fall 2013
- Station Concepts Development: Summer 2013 through Fall 2013
- Corridor Service Evaluation: Fall 2013 through Winter 2013/14
- Station Concepts Evaluation: Fall 2013 through Winter 2013/14

Public and Agency Outreach Meetings are indicated with a red mark in Fall 2013, and 2016, which will coincide with the Study Completion. CTA participation in IDOT I-290 Corridor Advisory Group Meetings is indicated with green dots in Spring/Summer 2013, 2014, and 2015. An arrow along the bottom of the image reads "Continuous Stakeholder Outreach" and coincides with the entire study period.

Process

- Evaluate existing infrastructure and market conditions
- Conduct early outreach to project stakeholders
- Identify policy and funding options

Purpose

- Determine long-term vision
- Coordination planning with IDOT for I-290 corridor

Outreach

- Participated in IDOT I-290 Corridor Advisory Group Meetings: 2/13, 7/13, 7/14, 8/15
- Participated in IDOT Public Meetings 10/2013 and IDOT Public Hearing in 2016
- Continuous stakeholder coordination and outreach during project

***Board 3: Summary of Existing Conditions Assessment***

- Minimal upgrades have been completed as needed
  - Special Trackwork and Signals recently upgraded (except Lathrop)
  - Ongoing maintenance efforts keep tracks in operable condition: 27.3% of Forest Park Blue Line branch in slow zones (Sep 2015); permanent fix not possible w/out full reconstruction
- 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 and Yard: approaching end of useful life; inadequate track configuration and capacity
- Recommendation
  - Rehabilitate infrastructure
  - Maintain existing entrance locations
  - Improve customer experience
  - Improve terminal site
  - Maintain existing service
  - Work with IDOT on corridor improvements

***Board 4: Maintain Existing Entrance Locations***

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

[Image of Austin station, with two head houses at Austin and Lombard, and ramps to center platform]

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

[Image of Western Ave revised station concept design with dual headhouses on both the east and west sides of Western Ave, both leading down to opposite ends of a CTA platform.]

***Board 5: Improve Customer Experience Conceptual Rendering***

A draft rendering of the platform level at Austin station is shown. The platform is wider than existing without any barriers, allowing a long open view of many transit users. There is a partial concrete station covering. The features of the rendering are listed at the bottom of the slide as follows:

- WIDER PLATFORMS
- SHELTER/WEATHER PROTECTION

***Board 6: Improve Customer Experience Conceptual Rendering***

A draft rendering of the entrance to Harlem 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. The features of the rendering are listed at the bottom of the slide as follows:

- ADA ACCESSIBLE
- LANDSCAPING
- PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS/REFUGES
- STATION ENTRANCE DESIGN AND LOCATIONS
- REDUCED NOISE VIA STATION DESIGN
- BIKE RACKS
- LIGHTING
- CTA MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION

***Board 7: Forest Park Improve Terminal Site***

Redesign Forest Park terminal, yard, and shop

- Improve site circulation
  - Bus circulation and transfers
  - Bike and pedestrian access to the terminal
  - Highway and traffic flow around the terminal
- Meet increased rail yard and shop needs
  - Inadequate fleet storage
  - Inadequate shop size
  - Improve yard configuration

An aerial image of the CTA terminal, yard and shop site is located on the right-side of the board.

***Board 8: Forest Park Proposed Site Plan***

A diagram of the CTA yard, shop and terminal site is displayed, and description of proposed improvements follows:

The proposed station accommodates entrance/egress from roughly the same area as currently is the case at the north bus terminal, and an additional entry/exit point on the east side of Des Plaines Avenue. Both are envisioned to include stairs and an elevator, and an escalator would be a likely addition for the main station entry west of Des Plaines Avenue. The future bus terminal is planned to be at grade level, so entry to the station would be as is presently, in terms of elevation. The platform would not extend across Des Plaines Avenue due to the track curve east of the station, but a covered pedestrian walkway is proposed to connect from east side of Des Plaines Avenue to the east end of the terminal.

- New signalized intersection at Van Buren/Des Plaines to facilitate lefts, including buses.
- New signalized intersection for highway access from Des Plaines.
- Park-n-Ride on the south side of the platform would be eliminated (all vehicular traffic on the south side of the station would be eliminated in this proposal).
- One 10-car capacity storage track was added in the West Yard, in addition to rail storage over the current location of the south-side Park-n-Ride lot.
- IDOT confirms that a center I-290 Fly over connection for future transit extensions (via bus or rail) is reserved in plans and is shown here.
- Proposed maintenance shop would house 8-car trains (currently limited to 6-cars).
- Truck access to the yard and shop would be from Van Buren Street under the yard structure.

### ***Board 9: CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch***

#### Conclusions:

- Based on existing conditions, full modernization is recommended.
  - Rehabilitate infrastructure
  - Maintain existing entrance locations
  - Improve customer experience
  - Improve terminal site
- Maintain existing service: Long-term
  - Bring service speeds up to state-of-good-repair
  - No 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 track and stations
  - Potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects
  - Provide transit alternative during highway construction

Visit the project web site for more information and updates:

<http://www.transitchicago.com/blueweststudy/>