Slide 1: CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study

Village of Oak Park Board Meeting
Presented by Carole Morey, CTA Chief Planning Officer
October 26, 2015

Slide 2: Purpose and Study Process

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

Slide 3: Blue Line Study Area

- Clinton Station to Forest Park Terminal Station
- Madison Street to Roosevelt Road
- Review IDOT transit proposals to Mannheim Rd

A map showing the study area as described above: 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).

Slide 4: Blue Line Forest Park Branch - Background

Forest Park Branch Ridership, Annual Average 2014

Forest Park Blue Line Station	Average Weekday	Average Staturday	Average Sunday	Annual Entries	Market Share
Clinton	3,748	1,539	1,394	1,116,639	11%
UIC-Halsted	5,836	2,215	1,579	1,695,108	17%
Racine	2,474	1,346	979	757,731	8%
Illinois Medical District	3,703	1,230	856	1,057,932	11%

Western	1,737	1,176	912	556,858	6%
Kedzie-Homan	2,353	1,552	1,235	752,306	8%
Pulaski	1,946	1,509	1,259	647,672	7%
Cicero	1,492	1,042	796	480,685	5%
Austin	2,107	1,065	796	638,728	7%
Oak Park	1,882	809	591	556,353	6%
Harlem	1,179	693	528	367,351	4%
Forest Park	3,803	1,968	1,466	1,157,040	12%
Blue Line - Forest Park Total	**32,260**	**16,144**	**12,391**	**9,784,403**	**100%**

Slide 5: Demographics – Stations Areas by 3 Segments

CLINTON TO IMD

- More jobs than population – 3 to 1
- Most commuters come into area for work – 55,000
- Lowest residents who work outside of area – 6,000

WESTERN TO AUSTIN

- Kedzie-Homan highest population – 7,600
- Highest no access to car population – 4,000
- Most employment outside study area – 14,000
- Low amount of local jobs - 7,000

OAK PARK TO FOREST PARK

- Oak Park 2nd highest population – 7,400
- Lowest no access to car population & some jobs – 600 and 3,800
- Forest Park is a major transfer station for 9 Pace bus routes

Slide 6: Austin Station - Background

- Between Austin Avenue and Lombard Avenue, Village of Oak Park

- Station open in 1960
- Station not ADA accessible
- Primarily single-family homes within ½ mile
- 7,100 residents (2,700 households) w/in ½ mile
- 1,900 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: CTA Bus #91, Pace Bus #315
- Weekday ridership ~2,100 entries/day,
- >500 bus to rail transfers daily

Bicycle Facilities	Facility
Bicycle Parking within station	No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance	No
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block	Yes
Station entrance located along bike route	Yes
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block	No

Slide 7: Oak Park Station - Background

- Between Oak Park Avenue and East Avenue, Village of Oak Park
- Station built in 1961
- Station not ADA accessible
- Single-family homes and commercial uses within ½ mile
- 7,400 residents (2,800 households) w/in ½ mile
- 1,300 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: Pace Buses #311
- Weekday Boardings ~1,900 entries/day
- 200 bus to rail transfers daily

Bicycle Facilities	Facility
Bicycle Parking within station	No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance	Yes
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block	Yes
Station entrance located along bike lane or recommended bike route	Yes
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block of station	No

Slide 8: Harlem Station - Background

- Between Harlem Avenue and Circle Avenue, Village of Forest Park
- Station built in 1960
- Station not ADA accessible
- Primarily single-family homes, but mixed uses (commercial, industrial) w/in ½ mile

- 4,400 residents (1,900 households) w/in ½ mile
- >1,000 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: Pace Bus #307
- Weekday ridership ~1,200 entries/day
- 200 bus to rail transfers daily

Bicycle Facilities	Facility
Bicycle Parking within station	No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance	No
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block	Yes
Station entrance located along bike lane or recommended bike route	No
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block of station	No

Slide 9: Recommend Complete Reconstruction of FP Branch

- 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

Slide 10: 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

Slide 11: 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

Slide 12: Blue Line Stations – IMD/Odgen Concept

Two draft conceptual renderings of possible future work on the Illinois Medical District Station are provided. The first image is of the station or head house. A cantilevered roof extends over the glass front doors of the station. The word Ogden is written on the side of the head house.

The second image is a platform view. The platform canopy is shown with a few facing west, with an inbound (toward the loop) train approaching on the left-hand side of the image. There are no platform obstructions and the canopy has a redesigned top that is clean and sleek. There are several passengers waiting on the platform.

This slide is intended to share the differences in design that are seen along the Forest Park Branch and to indicate that the renderings shown in the presentation are conceptual. When final design is funded for the Forest Park Branch Reconstruction, efforts will be made to create consistency between all the stations on the Branch.

Slide 13: Blue Line Stations – UIC/Halsted (Peoria) Concept

One draft conceptual renderings of a renewed station house at the Peoria entrance of UIC-Halsted station is shown. The rendering shows the glass station house box with a canopy over the front door, and an elevator shaft coming up from the back end of the station house before stairs reach down to the platform. This rendering is a bird's-eye view from the southeast.

This station house has been under construction in coordination with the widening and changing elevation of the Peoria Street bridge as part of the Circle Interchange Reconstruction Project. In addition to the rendering, there are two photos of the renovated Peoria station house.

One photo shows the new station house from the bridge, standing to the northeast of the station house. The new structure and elevator shaft are visible. The second photo shows the front door of the station house, from the other side of the bridge. The new doors and canopies are visible. Some construction equipment is also visible to the sides of the entrance as these photos were taken before the entrance was reopened to customers.

Slide 14: Forest Park Terminal Station - Conceptual Rendering

An image is included of a draft rendering of Des Plaines Ave facing south looking toward a redesigned CTA station at Forest Park terminal. The rendering shows wider sidewalks with pedestrians and bike

lanes on Des Plaines, CTA entrances on the east and west sides of the street, and a redesigned station covering of aesthetically curved concrete.

Slide 15: CTA Proposal - Forest Park Terminal Station Improvement 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.

Slide 16: 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.]

Slide 17: Maintain Existing Service

- 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

        - Continue working with Forest Park and local officials up through construction
- 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

Slide 18: Intermodal Coordination

- 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

Slide 19: Summary of Recommendations

- Complete reconstruction/modernization for the Forest Park branch
        - Rehabilitate infrastructure
        - Maintain existing entrance locations
        - Improve customer experience
        - Improve terminal site
- Maintain existing service
- Continue working with IDOT, municipalities and stakeholders
- Continue seeking policy and funding solutions to advance project

Slide 20: Next Steps

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

[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.

Slide 21: More Information

Visit the project web site for more information and updates

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

The study team is interested in hearing your ideas and opinions!

- If you have questions or comments about the study or would like to sign up for the mailing list, please write to us at:

Chicago Transit Authority
Attention: Leslie Boucree
Government and Community Relations Officer
567 West Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60661

blueweststudy@transitchicago.com