

| # | Source Comment | Response |
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| 1 | IDOT DEIS CTA confirmed that their \$1.7B cost estimate is in current dollars, 2017. | This is what was stated by CTA at the January 26, 2017 Public Hearing. |
| 2 | IDOT DEIS Will the stairs at the Lombard CTA entrance be replaced with a ramp? This would be a welcome improvement, as those stairs are very challenging if not impossible for many people to climb. When I was pregnant I had to sit halfway through. I've seen elderly people have much difficulty, not to mention it's impossible for anyone in wheel chair, yet that entrance is better to drop off anyone physically challenged vs the Austin entrance. | Yes, the recommendations proposed in the Blue Line Vision Study would include ADA-accessible entrances at both Austin and Lombard entrances of the Austin stations. These may be accessible ramps with landings or an elevator. Regardless, the recommendation is to remove the stairs and grade-level walkway at Lombard so that the ADA-accessible entrance connects directly with the platform. |
| 3 | IDOT Q&A I became involved with this project about 8 or 10 years ago when it first started. As near as I can figure, it should have been ready to start already. I think we are still waiting. A couple things that perplexed me are when we initially got this going, we had talked about or it seemed to be coming at us that the Blue Line extension was going to happen sometime. And now I'm hearing that it's being pointed at the CTA instead of the RTA. And that perplexes me. | IDOT: With respect to the Blue Line extension, it continues to be something with very high stakeholder interest. IDOT partnered with the CTA for this study, which found that over 50% of new ridership on a Blue Line extension would be coming from other existing transit services. Accordingly, the density of land use within the service area of a Blue Line extension does not currently support it as a standalone project. However, as part of the Preferred Alternative, IDOT proposes to provide a corridor and space for a future extension. Initially, an express bus service could operate in the HOT 3+ managed lane. CTA: CTA is committed to maintaining our existing infrastructure before making commitments for expansion. While CTA has not ruled out an extension in the future, the current focus is on maintaining the existing branch. Our recent Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study has outlined recommendations for addressing slow zones and improving stations on the branch. More details are available at at www.transitchicago.com/blueweststudy . It is not practicable for the CTA to look at an extension before taking care of the existing infrastructure that is already there. So the first focus is on the existing facilities and service. And when that is taken care of, then CTA could start to explore the possibility of an extension. |
| 4 | IDOT Q&A I would suggest we plan for the future. And we can do the same thing with the CTA if we put the Blue Line with a monorail above it, the monorail would be for the express to the suburbs and then the lower one would be for the Chicago traffic. And then you might have a lessening. But there is going to be so many people wanting to ride it that you would have increased ridership, so that would be a simple common current technology process also. As far as a real headache that drives me crazy, only because I have a modicum of common sense, is when I see the articulated bus | CTA needs to maintain the existing infrastructure before considering expansion. Over 20 percent of the existing Forest Park Branch has slow zones on it today. CTA needs to bring that current infrastructure up to current design speeds before considering what might be done for an extension in the future. Thank you for your CTA service planning comments regarding buses; those comments have been passed on to the appropriate planning staff. |

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| | <p>by CTA (the double length ones that are the most expensive to maintain and fuel) going at 11 o'clock at night with 3 riders on the entire route, I wonder if there is someone at CTA thinking. Because there would be a more cost effective way to utilize that bus and a more cost effective way to handle those three passengers. Also, please tell the CTA that when they use their GPSs and they have got a full bus and an empty one behind, the whole dispatching system for CTA is designed to let the empty bus go ahead instead of staying behind. That would be a nice thing for the customers.</p> | |
| <p>5 IDOT Q&A</p> | <p>I have a question on that. Why are nine of the Blue Line stops closed in the poorest section of the city where they most need jobs?</p> | <p>There are eight CTA entrances that have been closed along the Blue Line over the years. Over 45 years ago, three stations were closed: California, Kostner, and Central, with two station entrances each. And two additional station entrances were closed in the 1980s, at Keeler and Lavergne (Pulaski and Cicero stations, respectively). The CTA's current recommendations are to reopen the auxiliary entrances at Pulaski and Cicero (Keeler and Lavergne). The auxiliary entrance at Keeler would also help serve the market at Kostner, one block away. As far as the other locations go, the CTA has recently had some very successful infill stations. The Morgan station on the Green Line is one, and Cermak-McCormick Place as well. After those successes, the CTA has instituted an initiative to consider looking at infill stations across our entire system because there are many opportunities ("infill" meaning a station that is in between two existing stations, where there is no station now). And those locations on the Blue Line are being considered, as well as locations system-wide on all CTA branches, to find the best opportunities for infill stations going forward.</p> |
| <p>6 IDOT DEIS</p> | <p>I have extensive experience riding public transportation from having lived in downtown Chicago across from Grant Park, from having worked in West Chicago, near West Chicago, and from now living in the suburbs, and I would say that my first comment would be that after over 20 years having GPS, CTA should learn to use it. It's inexcusably incompetent to have a full bus with an empty bus behind it and not have enough sense to have the empty bus pass the full bus to alleviate some of the traffic. It's inexcusably incompetent to have up to three or four buses idling when it comes to where the buses stop and end. If those buses are all available idling, they should be redirected to a route that has people waiting. That's what GPS is designed to do with very simple dispatch systems that have been around for over 20 years. Not knowing how to use GPS tracking is incompetent and</p> | <p>This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department.</p> |

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| | embarrassing and inconvenient. | |
| 7 | IDOT DEIS When it comes to the corridor of the Blue Line, it is unconscionably unpleasant and inexcusable to have nine closed stations along the Eisenhower and even along the Green Line only in the areas of the city that have the most poverty and the least access to private vehicle ownership. To have those people imprisoned because CTA has decided to close what was previously open access to the Blue Line, I think is criminal. These are people who we would like to have getting jobs who can't walk four or five blocks through gang-infested territories, going through two or three different gang territories in order to get to a stop during icy weather, snowy weather and extra hot weather and expect them to get jobs at UIC, O'Hare and other places that could be hiring them. I think CTA is complicit in creating a low-security prison for these impoverished territories. And if they would simply take their plans for the Eisenhower corridor and use current technology that already anticipates the future and put another line above the current line, make it a uni-rail line which is more cost effective and is considered the current cost-effective technology and make that uni-rail line an express line to the suburbs, that will make better ridership for all the suburban people that would enjoy that kind of service and utilize it and it would also make improved ridership with the city transportation because it wouldn't be as crowded with all the suburbanites. | Thank you for your comment. This customer service based portion of this comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department. Regarding previously closed stations on the Blue Line Forest Park Branch, there are eight CTA entrances that have been closed along the Blue Line over the years. Over 45 years ago, three stations were closed: California, Kostner, and Central, with two station entrances each. And two additional station entrances were closed in the 1980s, at Keeler and Lavergne (Pulaski and Cicero stations, respectively). The CTA's current recommendations are to reopen the auxiliary entrances at Pulaski and Cicero (Keeler and Lavergne). The auxiliary entrance at Keeler would also help serve the market at Kostner, one block away. As far as the other locations go, the CTA has recently had some very successful infill stations. The Morgan station on the Green Line is one, and Cermak-McCormick Place as well. After those successes, the CTA has instituted an initiative to consider looking at infill stations across our entire system because there are many opportunities ("infill" meaning a station that is in between two existing stations, where there is no station now). And those locations on the Blue Line are being considered, as well as locations system-wide on all CTA branches, to find the best opportunities for infill stations going forward. |
| 8 | IDOT DEIS The most expensive and costly buses that we have and operate and maintain are the ventriculated buses. Those buses are being utilized at midnight with three or four passengers on the entire route. That is unconscionable. A shuttle bus would be sufficient than use the most expensive bus. Has to have been an idea made by an idiot. Shoot yourself. | This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department. |
| 9 | IDOT DEIS My other concern is the Pulaski, Keeler, Cicero, Lavergne ramps seems that they are too long. The safety of the riders is being jeopardized for those areas with that long space and there's not 24-hour security in place. The money seems it could be better utilized if you just have the smaller ramps and allow people to have access to those stations via some level of transportation, a | Thank you for your comment. Earlier in the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study, we heard from communities that they prefer to have long ramp access at disparate arterials to maintain more community access rather than having closed secondary entrances and more access at a compact location over the major street entrance. Even while accommodating these stakeholder |

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| | <p>different mode of transportation from one point to another. Say for instance from one end to another on bus routes, along bus routes. The entrances to the EI stations if they were along areas where there are bus routes it would be better for the residents.</p> | <p>preferences, CTA is recommending improvements to customer amenities including safety features such as improved lighting and additional cameras in the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study.</p> |
| <p>10 IDOT DEIS</p> | <p>First thing I was looking at was the ramps at Cicero and at Pulaski and one of the things that I noticed is that they were going to make that dual entry and the ramps appear to be long and my questions and comment had to do with the disabled. Everything is supposed to be accessible for the disabled but when you look at say the entrance at Keeler and Lavergne, you have about 500 feet to go down to the platform. And I'm thinking about a person who is disabled walking with a cane or with a wheelchair, that's a long ramp. And I understand that these were ramps that were closed years ago and my question is: Why were these ramps closed years ago? And why all of a sudden are these ramps, the idea to reopen them, what has changed in the area now that it's being considered to reopen these ramps? What kind of improvements are going to be made? I understand that the areas are going to be covered so that people won't be walking on the outside but then what kind of safety considerations are being considered? That's a long distance. Then there's no bus route on the Keeler and Lavergne Avenue exit. There's no bus running parallel to the EI that can get you down to Pulaski and I just wondered if this is the most viable means of accessing those particular exits. I understand that there have been some outreach to the people in the community. I don't live in the community. So if this is something that people who live near there are interested in but just observing it, being an outside observer, these are some of the things that I saw and wanted to bring them to your attention. Again, safety, mobility and all of those things.</p> | <p>One of the CTA Blue Line Vision Study's recommendations is to provide ADA-compliant facilities at all stations along the Forest Park Branch. ADA accessibility between street level and platform level can be accomplished either by the use of sloped ramps or walkways, or by elevator. It is not always practical to place every ADA access immediately adjacent to a bus stop. The reason that station ramps are sometimes 400 feet in length is that they must adhere to a maximum grade to meet ADA requirements, and the greater the vertical drop between street and platform, the longer the ramp must be.</p> |
| <p>11 IDOT Q&A</p> | <p>And then the last question was what is the budget for the CTA work.</p> | <p>For the Vision Study, we have a cost estimate of \$1.7 billion in current year dollars. This includes three main elements: 1) improved track infrastructure to eliminate slow zones, 2) accessible and modern stations along the branch, and 3) updated rail maintenance and storage facilities at the Forest Park terminal.</p> |

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| <p>12 IDOT Q&A</p> | <p>I'm a homeowner in Oak Park near Austin Boulevard. I don't have a driver's license. To get around, I use my senior citizen \$50 pass and use the Blue Line all the time. I just have several comments that I would like to just put on the record, and I will fill out the forms as well. But I did have a couple ideas that I liked a lot of what I saw. I'm delighted with the redesign of the Austin station, which I use personally every day more than once. My first kind of question/comment is the one thing that disappoints me the most is there is no rail extension of the Blue Line past the Forest Park station stop. And my comment is that I see the CTA is doing some wonderful things downtown with the new bus stops. In fact, they are designing bus stops that almost look like stations. So rather than just reserve a corridor or some grass for a future, future Blue Line extension, why not build a real bus route where people would get off the Blue Line at the Forest Park station stop, and transfer to an express bus that would simulate what a train could be in the future. And this shouldn't just stop where the current right-of-way is indicated, but there is no reason why it couldn't curve up to O'Hare or curve down to the south side as well so it could create kind of a beltway or a loop around Chicago. The thing that fascinated me most, I heard the comment that the original Eisenhower was multimodal and was the first of a kind, a real innovation. So we should try to innovate, too. So this idea of a rail, of a bus, an express bus extension, simulating, would be a real innovation.</p> | <p>IDOT: The preferred alternative includes accommodations for an express bus coming from the Forest Park station going west and the bus would ride in the managed lane. The managed lane is structured so that there would be a 45 mph minimum operating speed. It would act like an express, and extend beyond the Study Area.</p> <p>CTA: The question of a CTA rail line extension has come up several times during this project. The CTA had limited funds in the Vision Study. The most important aspect for the CTA is to maintain the existing infrastructure. It would be irresponsible to seek federal funds for an extension without maintaining the existing facilities first. This is similar to having a house with a leaking roof and wanting to add some new rooms instead of fixing the roof. The focus of this study first was to look at the existing infrastructure. And once CTA can get that maintained and operating at design speeds, we will continue to look at opportunities system-wide where there may be opportunities for extension.</p> |
| <p>13 IDOT DEIS</p> | <p>2) UNNECESSARY DELAYS- Blue Line trains are often delayed because they must wait for signal clearance or an available track in Forest Park station. The Green line has the same problem as an end point on that line - trains sit and can't discharge passengers at Harlem. The delays can be VERY lengthy - just they are at O'Hare sometimes. Because of these delays Blue Line rider miss bus connections at Forest Park.</p> | <p>This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department.</p> |
| <p>14 IDOT DEIS</p> | <p>9) LEVERAGE VALUE OF TODAY'S BLUE LINE Effective immediately the Austin 91 bus should be extended to Cermak - it makes no sense to terminate service at Roosevelt - a slightly longer route will act as a feeder from the south for increased ridership to Blue Line . We need to maximize the existing Blue Line infrastructure.</p> | <p>This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department.</p> |
| <p>15 IDOT DEIS</p> | <p>12) EFFECTIVELY IMMEDIATELY Seamlessly integrate PACE and CTA bus networks - avoid dead ends and overlap of services. Having two networks is EXTREMELY wasteful - and bus service can be revolutionized for very little capital expenditure</p> | <p>This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department.</p> |

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| <p>16 CTA</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CTA or CMAP or PACE should study implementing a BRT line from the Forest Park L station west on the Prairie Path right-of-way to loop through streets in Lombard. 2. Serious consideration should be given to minimize the deleterious effects of the elimination of the main CTA parking lot at the Forest Park station. 3. The Forest Park station should have a waiting room that is heated in the winter and cooled in the summer. Like Metra stations. 4. CTA should study how skip stop (A-B) scheduling on the Blue Line could reduce most trip times. And the number of trains. 5. In refurbishing the Congress Blue Line, CTA should try to increase average trip speeds. Currently, average speeds for a trip between Forest Park and Jackson seem to be about 20 mph. Not good. 6. In refurbishing the line, try to reduce the astounding noise of the trains. Nowhere in the world have I ridden a metro or light-rail train that is as loud as the L. (But probably most of the noise comes from the out-of-round wheels <bang!-bang!-bang!> and all the loose metal parts that rattle and jangle as the trains jerk and sway.) 7. Consider a west entrance/exit to the Western Ave station. Currently those living west of Western have to walk east to Western and then back west down the ramp to the platform. 8. Consider a pedestrian bridge from the Ogden station straight south to a new walkway leading directly to Stroger Hospital. | <p>Thank you for your detailed questions. Please see responses to each question below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.As IDOT has noted in their DEIS, the preferred alternative includes accommodations for an express bus coming from the Forest Park station going west and the bus would ride in the managed lane. The managed lane is structured so that there would be a 45 mph minimum operating speed. It would act like an express, and extend beyond the Study Area. 2.The current recommendations for the Forest Park terminal, yard and shop would need to incorporate more planning to solidify details and ensure coordination between CTA, Village and community needs. CTA anticipates future work coordinating with the Village of Forest Park and soliciting community feedback on these recommendations at a future date when additional funding is available for this purpose. 3. See response to 2 above. 4. CTA evaluated skip-stop scheduling during the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study. The A/B service operation is an express option typically used when no passing tracks are available. This system of operation would allow for increased train speeds, service frequency proportional to riding demand, fine adjustment of headways between trains, and reduced number of cars and manpower. However, it's important to note that even when A/B train operation was a system wide practice when the CTA took over the "L" service on October 1, 1947, this operating approach was never used as the operational service plan for the Forest Park branch, which makes it more of a cost to implement station signage to mark the stations each a letter. Furthermore, adopting this operating plan on the branch would not reduce operating expenses or equipment requirements to any extent. The A/B service pattern may cause confusion for newer riders because of the varying train schedules. If executed without adding any trains to the daily schedule, this would result in a 24-minute headway between trains at the lower-trafficked stations, which is a distinct deterrent to transit usage (based on the northbound AM peak headway in effect for the Spring 2013 rail schedules). For these reasons, it was not recommended as an alternative to be pursued in the future. For more details, see the Conceptual Service Patterns Final Report located online at |
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http://www.transitchicago.com/assets/1/planning/FP_Conceptual_Service_Patterns_Draft_3-9-15_Final.pdf.

5. As of December 2016, 28% of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch was operating under slow zones. The first recommendation of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study is to bring the track speeds back up to their design speed, which would allow for 55mph speeds between each station.

6. This customer service based comment is outside the purview of the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study team and has been forwarded to the CTA Customer Service department.

7. The current recommendation in the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study is to include dual entrances at Western Avenue, including on the west (new) and east (existing) sides of the street.

8. The Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study did not consider additional walkways to access the Ogden entrance at the Illinois Medical District (IMD) station. Other agencies such as IMD itself or entities within it, along with the Chicago Department of Transportation would need to plan this type of sidewalk and work with CTA to coordinate a connection to the existing station.
