CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study Review and Status Update

August 27, 2015

Carole Morey, Chief Planning Officer
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
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
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
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

- **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
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 stations and track
  • Potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects
  • Provide transit alternative during highway construction

• **Continue to coordinate with municipal stakeholders**
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 and stakeholders 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