CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study

Village of Oak Park Board Meeting

Carole Morey, Chief Planning Officer

Monday, October 26, 2015
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
Study Area
Forest Park Branch Ridership, Annual Average 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forest Park Blue Line Station</th>
<th>Average Weekday</th>
<th>Average Saturday</th>
<th>Average Sunday</th>
<th>Annual Entries</th>
<th>Market Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>3,748</td>
<td>1,539</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>1,116,639</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIC-Halsted</td>
<td>5,836</td>
<td>2,215</td>
<td>1,579</td>
<td>1,695,108</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racine</td>
<td>2,474</td>
<td>1,346</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>757,731</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Medical District</td>
<td>3,703</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>1,057,932</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>1,737</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>556,858</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedzie-Homan</td>
<td>2,353</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>1,235</td>
<td>752,306</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulaski</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>1,509</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>647,672</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cicero</td>
<td>1,492</td>
<td>1,042</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>480,685</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>2,107</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>638,728</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Park</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>556,353</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>367,351</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Park</td>
<td>3,803</td>
<td>1,968</td>
<td>1,466</td>
<td>1,157,040</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue Line - Forest Park Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,260</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,144</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,391</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,784,403</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographics: Station 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
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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bicycle Facilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bicycle Parking within station</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor bicycle parking within ¼ block</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station entrance located along bike route</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divvy Bike Share location within ¼ block</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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<td>Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Station entrance located along bike lane or</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recommended bike route</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block of station</td>
<td>No, proposed in 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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
Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

- ADA accessible
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian crossings/refuges
- Station entrance design and locations
- Reduced noise via station design
- Bike racks
- Lighting
- CTA maintenance & construction
Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

- Wider Platforms
- Shelter/weather protection
Blue Line Stations – Ogden/IMD Concept

Draft Conceptual Rendering
Blue Line Stations – UIC/Halsted (Peoria) Concept

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY
Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering
Draft Concept

Village option to pursue additional parking/mixed use

CTA Proposal – Forest Park Terminal Station Improvement Plan

CTA Prairie Path Lot Parking

Retaining wall

CTA ComED Lot Parking
Maintain Existing Entrance Locations

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

- Dual head houses possible for single entry stations with bus connections
  Cicero, Pulaski, Western
Maintain Existing Service

• **Long-term**
  • Bring service speeds up to state-of-good-repair / posted speeds
  • 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 track and stations
  - Potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects
  - Provide transit alternative during highway construction
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
Next Steps

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