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

CTA Blue Line Vision Study Area

Legend

- Blue Line/Station Access
- Pink Line/Station Access
- Green Line/Station Access
- Metra Line/Station
- IL Prairie Path Multi-Use Trail
- River
- Study Area Boundary

North
Summary of Existing Conditions Assessment

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
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 on corridor improvements**
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
Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

- ADA accessible
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian crossings/refuges
- Station entrance design and locations
- Reduced noise via station design
- Bike racks

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Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

- Wider Platforms
- Shelter/weather protection
Improve Terminal Site

- Redesign Forest Park terminal, yard, and shop within current parcel
  
  - Improve site circulation
    - Bike and pedestrian access to the terminal
    - Highway and traffic flow around the terminal
  
  - Meet increased 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
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 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