

Lawrence to Bryn Mawr Modernization: Virtual Public Meeting July 14, 2020

We thank everyone who participated in this virtual public meeting about the Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) Phase One Project. Below are all of the questions we received with our responses. If you have further questions, please contact us at RPM@transitchicago.com.

Aesthetics

- Will the new track structure be coated with anything to protect from wear, erosion, graffiti, etc.?
 - The new structure and associated columns use high performance concrete and receive an anti-graffiti coating to make them easier to clean.

Aesthetics/Design

- Will the community have an opportunity to comment on station design and/or aesthetics before they are finalized?
 - The community will have opportunities to engage on community identity and aesthetic elements of the new stations and infrastructure. Follow the [RPM website](#) and [sign up for project alerts](#) for information on these opportunities in the future.
- How will the Bryn Mawr Hollywood exit be designed so it doesn't become another "pigeon poop alley"?
 - The new Bryn Mawr station's planned Hollywood auxiliary entrance is being designed to minimize horizontal surfaces where birds may roost. Where horizontal surfaces cannot be avoided, anti-bird measures will be installed to prevent birds from gathering. The entrance will also be an enclosed structure.

Businesses

- How can I learn more about the Open for Business Program?
 - There is a section on the CTA RPM website that discusses the Open for Business campaign and further information will be provided soon once additional elements of the campaign are launched:
<https://www.transitchicago.com/rpm/openforbusiness/>
- How will local businesses be supported throughout the project?
 - CTA believes it is important to, at every step, support local businesses as we perform the work to modernize our rail structure. We will provide notification of all work beforehand and make arrangements for business deliveries as needed. We have also hired an outside consultant to develop an Open for Business program to promote local businesses during construction through signage, advertising, online and social media, etc. We also already encourage all of our contractors to patronize local businesses.

Closures

- Will the Bryn Mawr station be closed?
 - The Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn, and Bryn Mawr stations will temporarily close for reconstruction in late 2020/early 2021. However, temporary rail stations will open at Bryn Mawr and Argyle to provide Red Line access to customers.

- Will there be any alley closures between the Lawrence station and the Aragon (east side) between Lawrence and Argyle?
 - There will be daily and extended closures in the alley east of the CTA tracks to allow for construction of the new northbound track structure and permanent stations. CTA will notify adjacent properties, including the Aragon, ahead of closures.
- Why can't the stations stay open like Wilson did during construction?
 - The existing Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr stations cannot stay open like Wilson did during construction because there isn't enough space to both keep stations open while reconstructing them. The Lawrence to Bryn Mawr station and track modernization work takes place in some of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Chicago. By contrast, the Wilson station's specific location enabled CTA to take advantage of an area where more property was available for construction. Temporary rail stations will be provided where feasible near Bryn Mawr and Argyle to maintain access to the Red Line.
- How will the Lawrence closure impact US Bike Route 37 (Lawrence Avenue) and other important cross-town bike routes?
 - Daily lane closures and weekend full street closures are anticipated on Lawrence Avenue to allow for construction of the new CTA track structure. At times when bike lanes on Lawrence Avenue are impacted by these closures, signage to alert cyclists will be put in place for the duration of these impacts.
- Which alleys will be impacted?
 - Alleys on both sides of the CTA tracks from Thorndale to Leland will have intermittent closures throughout the entirety of the project. Longer duration closures are anticipated during construction on the east side of the CTA tracks. Nearby alleys may also have occasional, less frequent closures or limited access. We will provide advance notification to residents and businesses ahead of closures. If an alley is closed overnight or for an extended period CTA's contractor will accommodate garbage pickup and provide alternative parking for those who are unable to access their garage/parking space.
- When will there be work in the Montrose/Kenmore area? What would that look like?
 - As of posting, the entrance to the alley west of Kenmore Avenue is blocked at Montrose Avenue. Local access remains at Buena Avenue. This closure is scheduled to remain until mid-August 2020 to install micropile foundations and will likely resume in the fall for multiple weeks to replace the existing foundations. Repainting the track structure and some track systems modifications are also scheduled for the fall, and those activities will require some temporary alley closures.
- Will Lawrence and Bryn Mawr reopen after the project?
 - Yes, when the project is completed, CTA customers will use new, larger stations at Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr that will be fully accessible to all customers with elevator access. The new stations are expected to open in 2024 and the project will be fully completed in 2025.

- Are there any diagrams or maps for visual learners about which areas will be closed and where alternative parking is located?
 - There are several maps and diagrams that provide information on the project on the [RPM website](#). A project overview map that include potential alternate parking locations can be found here: <https://www.transitchicago.com/assets/1/6/BigMap-Backdrop-FINAL.pdf>
- Which alleys near Thorndale and Winthrop will be closed to homeowners?
 - The alley west of Winthrop between Ardmore and Thorndale is being intermittently closed during current pre-stage construction activities in 2020 as of this posting. Future closures of the alley are still being determined as construction plans for the new stations and track structures are finalized, ahead of that work beginning in 2021. We will notify residents before construction activities in the future.

Construction

- Will the track upgrades be like what is being done near the Belmont station?
 - The tracks in the Lawrence to Bryn Mawr project area are being completely rebuilt and supported on new structures independent of the existing embankment. When complete these new tracks will provide a smoother, faster ride. At cross streets all existing columns will be removed creating better sightlines for drivers and pedestrians.
- What is the schedule for the overnight work?
 - As of this posting, the current Thorndale interlocking work that commenced July 17, 2020 requires 24/7 work hours. Future construction phases will require overnight work and we will notify the public beforehand.
- What time of day does the construction start and end?
 - Some work activities require crews to work 24/7 in order to complete work faster. Other work activities are done during daytime hours, typically between 7AM-7PM.
- When does demolition work begin?
 - As of posting, demolition of the tenant space adjacent to the Argyle station has commenced and is scheduled to be completed by August 2020. Demolition of the Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr stations will commence in 2021.
- Why was money spent to renovate some of these stations in 2012 just to be completely rebuilt not ten years later?
 - The interim improvements made in 2012 were necessary because we could no longer postpone repairs that needed our immediate attention. We wanted to be good stewards of the existing infrastructure, as we continue to plan for the implementation of the RPM project, in phases.
- How will the new track structure be built?
 - We will rebuild our tracks and stations in two stages, rebuilding the northbound Red and Purple Line tracks in stage A (2021-2022) and the southbound tracks in stage B (2022-2024). Most of the new track structure in the Lawrence to Bryn Mawr project area will be built with pre-cast concrete segments that are produced off-site, trucked in, and then installed with a gantry crane system.

- Are there plans to remove the debris left in Challenger Park and replace the guardrails, reseed/resod the destroyed landscape?
 - Debris left by the contractor near Challenger Park is in the process of being cleaned up. As of this posting, there are still miscellaneous debris that will be removed. The contractor is responsible for replacing any damaged guardrails and landscaping.
- What exactly is being done to the Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr stations?
 - We will completely rebuild the four century-old stations, creating larger, modern and fully accessible Red Line stations for our customers. This is different from recent station rehab projects, which involved replacing platforms and canopies, new paint, new lighting, etc. but otherwise reused the existing station and track structures. Once completed, the new stations will include modern amenities for customers and be fully ADA accessible.
- Will the Thorndale rail interlocking be permanent after the project is done? How does it benefit riders?
 - Yes, CTA will continue to benefit from the Thorndale interlocking after the project is done. This infrastructure benefits riders because it enables trains to bypass stalled trains and makes it easier for CTA to conduct future construction with fewer service impacts to riders.
- Will residents' private garages and parking spots be used for construction purposes?
 - No. There is no current plan to utilize residents' private garages or parking spots" If the Contractor would like to access this space, prior approval by the owner would be obtained.
- Will the platforms and stations be reflective of the communities? i.e. the historic districts and the Argyle pagoda
 - Even though the stations will be completely reconstructed, the architecture will recognize that several of the stations are in historic districts. At Argyle and Bryn Mawr stations in particular, the portion of the station house facing the street will be in keeping with the districts. The pagoda at Argyle will be preserved.
- Will the remodeled stations have elevators?
 - Yes, all four stations will receive elevators and other amenities.
- How much will the track be raised? Will this height be consistent along all of the new track structure?
 - The height varies throughout the corridor. In general, the new tracks will be about 5-10 feet higher than the current height, depending upon location.
- Will the tracks be elevated to provide additional overhead clearance at Thorndale?
 - The tracks will not be elevated at Thorndale to provide additional overhead clearance during Phase One of RPM, but it is possible that this may take place in a future phase.
- When will the station renderings be revealed?
 - We expect to share the designs for the new permanent stations by Fall 2020.
- Will rails that sit on the outer retaining walls sit on ballasts decks or direct fixation structures?

- The RPM project will install new direct fixation track from Leland Avenue to Ardmore Avenue. North of Ardmore, it will transition back to ballasted track.
- Will the platforms be wider?
 - Yes, the platforms will be widened from 12 feet to 22 feet in order to accommodate elevators and increased passenger capacity.

Noise

- How high will the noise levels be during construction?
 - During construction, noise from construction machinery can be expected. The contractor must follow specifications requiring “best practices” to limit construction noise and cannot exceed certain noise thresholds in the day and overnight hours. In addition, the contractor is required to monitor noise and mitigate noise if the noise thresholds are exceeded. Mitigation methods could include work stoppage, temporary enclosures for loud equipment and the use of noise blankets.

Other

- If the escalator at the Bryn Mawr station is not working, where is the closest station with ADA accessibility?
 - Once the project is completed, there will be an escalator and elevator at the Bryn Mawr Avenue entrance of the station and also an elevator at a new Hollywood Avenue entrance. The closest station with ADA accessibility to the Bryn Mawr station will be the Berwyn station, which also will have an elevator.
- What is an interlocking?
 - A rail interlocking is a track configuration that allows trains to safely switch between tracks.
- Who is the architect on this project?
 - The prime design contractors for the project are Stantec and EXP.

Other stations

- When will Sheridan, Morse, Granville, and Jarvis stations be rebuilt?
 - Those stations, as well as all other Red Line stations between Belmont and Linden, would be rebuilt as part of the Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) program, which will be completed in multiple phases. Currently, we are building RPM Phase One, which allows us to make the greatest number of improvements while also minimizing impacts on riders and the surrounding community. Future phases of RPM will be developed through a series of studies and public outreach processes and are not yet funded.

Outreach

- Is the community outreach office open yet?
 - We hope to open a community outreach office by fall 2020, but will follow public health guidelines in deciding when it is safe to open. However, we are currently exploring holding virtual office hours to stay engaged with local residents and businesses about this project.
- Amid COVID-19, is there a virtual channel being created to allow residents to interface with the project?

- We are committed to engaging frequently and safely with the community about this project. That is why we held the virtual town hall meeting where these questions were asked. We are in the process of creating other opportunities for the community to engage with the project virtually.
- How frequent will there be town hall/public meeting updates like this throughout the project?
 - CTA is committed to host public meetings multiple times a year throughout the project. The most recent meetings for both the Lawrence-to-Bryn Mawr and Red-Purple Bypass project areas were held in July 2020. Smaller meetings with specific residents being impacted by work will continue to be coordinated with neighborhood groups and alderman offices.

Parking

- Where will alternative parking be located?
 - Walsh-Fluor will be responsible for providing alternative parking when parking access is restricted. A project overview map that include potential alternate parking locations can be found here: <https://www.transitchicago.com/assets/1/6/BigMap-Backdrop-FINAL.pdf>. We understand residents are concerned about parking access. We will reach out to affected residents in advance of work that will restrict parking access and provide information on alternative parking locations and related information.
- How far in advance will property owners be informed regarding alternative parking?
 - We will make every effort possible to inform residents who will require alternative parking at least two weeks beforehand, and provide parking location information, and a parking pass.
- Can Winthrop be made a permit parking zone during this time?
 - CTA does not have the authority to change parking permit zones. Please contact the 48th Ward office for questions on permit parking.

Property impact

- What is being done to reduce our taxes while properties are being impacted with closures and quality of life (noise, lights, debris, etc.)?
 - We understand that residents living in the project's footprint will occasionally be affected by construction activities, including temporary street and alley closures, noise, and more. During construction, we will coordinate closely with the project's design-build contractor to mitigate impacts of construction on local residents and their daily lives, including parking, garbage pickup, etc. We continue to meet regularly with resident groups, from condo buildings to residents on city blocks, to explain the project and listen to their concerns, which will help us develop plans to support residents during construction. The project funds CTA is utilizing to construct the RPM Phase One Project are not permitted to be used to provide tax relief to private individuals or businesses. At this time, CTA is not aware of any outside funding sources for tax relief during construction.

Red-Purple Bypass

- How will the Vautravers building be moved?
 - CTA's contractor, Walsh-Fluor, is responsible for relocation the building. The relocation is subject to permit review by the City of Chicago Commission on Landmarks and the Department of Buildings. The contractor's plan is generally to excavate around the current and future building location, construct a new foundation for the permanent location of the building, brace the building, use jacks to lift the structure, and then use jacks and rollers to move the building into the proper location. The contractor will then complete the basement walls, place the building onto the new permanent basement walls and restoration of the building will commence.
- What is the column for on the far south side of the site by Belmont?
 - The southernmost column was casted as a test column as is common in infrastructure projects in order to test procedures and improve the product for the columns that will remain.

Safety

- How will you ensure safety of individuals and vehicles during construction?
 - Safety of residents and our construction crew is our first priority. Temporary street closures will be required as part of the construction process in order for construction crews to be effective and efficient, while also providing a safe working environment for both the crews and local residents and their property.
- Is there a point person available for emergencies 24/7? Who would that be or how can I contact someone regarding emergencies?
 - We will launch a project call line later in 2020 for project questions and concerns. However, for emergencies, individuals should always call 911.

Service

- How will the Lawrence and Foster buses be rerouted when the Lawrence and Berwyn stations close?
 - We will reroute some bus routes so that customers who access Lawrence station using the #81 Lawrence bus or Berwyn station using the #92 Foster bus will be able to transfer to an open station, while the Lawrence and Berwyn stations are closed.
- How will bus and rail service be impacted overall?
 - We will continue to provide train and bus service during the pre-stage work in 2020 as well as new station and track reconstruction through 2024, but there will be impacts to service. Service alert information are available here: <https://www.transitchicago.com/alerts/>. You can sign up to receive customized service alerts here <https://www.transitchicago.com/updates/>
- Will there be shuttles during the three years that Lawrence and Berwyn are closed?
 - Once the two stations close for reconstruction, customers who normally board at Lawrence can use Wilson or Argyle stations, which are each a quarter mile

away and connected via the #36 Broadway bus, and Berwyn customers can use the Bryn Mawr or Argyle stations. We will reroute some bus routes so that customers who access Lawrence station using the #81 Lawrence bus or Berwyn station using the #92 Foster bus will be able to transfer to an open station, while the Lawrence and Berwyn stations are closed.

- Will the Purple Line be making Red Line stops during any of this work?
 - No, the Purple Line will not be making Red Line stops during pre-stage work. And currently there are no plans to make stops during Stage A and Stage B work.
- Why are there ride backs instead of shuttles when one-way service is eliminated?
 - Bus shuttles are used when three or more stations in a row closes temporarily to provide substitute service, since there is no direct train service to the affected stations. However, when trains bypass this same number of stations in one direction only, some direct service still exists to these stations and the alternate access is easier. Due to the close proximity of the affected stations, the back-ride is a short distance, and thus takes only a modest amount of additional time, typical less time than transferring to a shuttle bus. Parallel main line bus service (#36, #147, #151) are also available as alternatives.
- Will bus routes run more frequently when the stations close? Will there be supplemental service when there are impacts?
 - CTA will analyze ridership levels and patterns at the affected stations closer to the time they are closed, and determine, whether rider journey patterns, ridership levels, or service and vehicle capacities suggest the need to add service to existing routes or supplement with additional services to meet customer and community needs.

Temporary stations

- Where will the temporary stations be located?
 - Temporary stations are being constructed at Argyle and Bryn Mawr will open to provide access to rail service. Please see this map that include temporary station locations: <https://www.transitchicago.com/assets/1/6/BigMap-Backdrop-FINAL.pdf>
- Will the temporary stations have disability access?
 - Like the existing Argyle and Bryn Mawr stations, the temporary stations will not accommodate elevators and so will not provide full disability access. The permanent stations will be fully accessible.

Timeline

- Why is this project going to last through 2025?
 - This project takes a long time to complete because we will continue to provide active Red and Purple Line service throughout the duration of construction. This means we have to build the new track structure in two halves, Stage A (2021-22), which includes rebuilding the northbound Red and Purple Line tracks, and Stage B (late 2022-2024), which includes rebuilding the southbound Red and Purple Line tracks.

- How has the timeline changed due to COVID?
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the project schedule, but CTA and the contractor are working to mitigate impacts on the schedule.
- When are the stations anticipated to close and when will the temporary stations open? For how long will they be closed?
 - As part of the Lawrence to Bryn Mawr Modernization, CTA will fully reconstruct the Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr stations. We will need to close the existing stations for about four years to accomplish this; however, we will open temporary rail stations at Bryn Mawr and Argyle to provide Red Line access to our customers. As we rebuild the stations and tracks, we will continue to provide Red and Purple Line service. We expect the new stations to open by the end of 2024.

Workforce

- Is there a community or targeted hire program?
 - Yes. We are committed to maximizing participation in the RPM project by creating increased access to training and apprenticeships for disadvantaged individuals that can lead to construction careers, including work on RPM or other Chicago capital projects. To learn more, please visit <https://www.transitchicago.com/rpm/workforce-opportunities/>
- Will photography services be welcome or needed for the next stations of RPM? Perhaps photographers with knowledge of rail and infrastructure safety and ongoing studies of historic roads and rails?
 - The RPM project already has contracts in place for photography services through CTA's competitive bid process. For more information about CTA contract opportunities and procurement information, visit <https://www.transitchicago.com/procurement/>.

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