



Building New Red and Purple Line Tracks: North Belmont Red-Purple Reconstruction 2022-2025

CTA held a virtual town hall meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022 to discuss the upcoming reconstruction. Below is a recap of the questions we received with responses.

Q. Will the meeting be recorded for re-viewing?

A. Yes, and the meeting will be posted online at [transitchicago.com/RPM](https://www.transitchicago.com/RPM).

Q. When will the land be temporarily cleared for construction purposes (Belmont station reconstruction, and on north) and turned over to developers and rebuilt?

A. CTA worked with the local community, 44th Ward Ald. Tom Tunney and real estate development specialists to create a Transit-Oriented Development plan for parcels that will be available for redevelopment after the project is completed in 2025. The goal of the plan is to promote redevelopment in both neighborhoods that is successful, thoughtfully designed, contributes positively to the community and promotes a transit-rich lifestyle. That study can be found on our web site: https://www.transitchicago.com/assets/1/6/RPB-TOD_Plan_Sum_Report.pdf.

Q. Do we have an RPM Phase 2 in the works? Is CTA going to consider replacing the Sheridan 'S' curve?

A. The Red and Purple Modernization (RPM) program is a multi-phase plan to rebuild the Red and Purple lines and stations between Belmont and Linden. Currently, we are building Phase One of the project.

The Sheridan station and adjacent elevated track structure will be rebuilt in a future phase. Future phases have not yet been finalized nor has funding been identified. CTA is working with an outside consultant to study potential phasing scenarios and funding sources. It is too soon to know or predict what changes will occur to the alignment of the rail line at the existing "S" curve.

Q. What will be the under track use after construction?

A. CTA will work with the Alderman's office and the community on how the land under the L will be used.

Q. The Brown Line is significantly louder after the flyover, what assurances do we have that the red line won't be louder as well? How will the noise from trains change and why?



A. Noise from trains haven't increased since completion of the bypass, based on our measurements, nor is noise expected to increase on the Red Line once the project is complete. A noise analysis was completed before the project that modeled noise projections and provided guidance on mitigations. A similar analysis will be performed following the project's completion and if there are increases in noise levels, CTA will explore possible mitigations.

Q. How loud is a decibel?

A. A single decibel is extremely difficult to hear outside of an extremely controlled environment. To give some context on how loud different decibel levels are: A whisper is around 15db, normal conversation is around 60db, and a car horn is about 110db. It is important to know that decibels are expressed on a logarithmic scale, therefore 10db is 10x louder than 0db, but 20db is 100x loud than 0db.

Q. When will track reconstruction north of Belmont begin? When will the temporary southbound brown line track come into service?

A. Track reconstruction work is scheduled to begin in the end of January/early February 2022. This work will start approximately from Roscoe to Newport/Cornelia and then move south.

The temporary southbound Brown line track is expected to be put into service in February 2022.

Q. What is the sequence of construction of tracks, in terms of closing and being rebuilt?

A. The two tracks on the west side will be reconstructed first and train service will continue on the two easternmost tracks. Once the work on the westernmost tracks is complete, CTA trains will run on these new tracks while the east tracks are rebuilt.

Q. Is the Brown Line track structure next to the flyover also being replaced/updated?

A. The Brown Line tracks are being rehabilitated, including replacing some foundations, updating and fortifying columns and steel, removing lead paint and repainting the structure.

Q. What are the completion dates and will there be alley closures?

A. Generally, there will be alley closures under and next to our tracks between Belmont and Cornelia to perform the work. The alley from W Newport to W Cornelia will experience some intermittent daily closures beginning this winter for micropile foundation work. We will provide notice to the community once dates are finalized.

Q. Will this cause long-term closures?



A. There will be extended, overnight closures of the alley between Newport and Cornelia to build the new structure. This work is scheduled to begin at the end of February/early March 2022. This closure is expected to last two weeks.

Q. How loud and close will construction be in the alley behind Cornelia near the red line?

A. Because of the close proximity to residences and businesses, CTA has imposed noise limits on the work on this project. These noise limits are 90 decibels during the day and 80 decibels overnight. This is generally the same level of noise associated with existing CTA service.

There will be construction noise during demolition, drilling and steel rehabilitation. This work will take place during the day.

Q. Will there be service disruptions? At any time will there be track closures? Will busses be required to cover the gap and for how long?

A. We are committed to maintaining CTA rail service during construction. On the Red and Purple lines, this work will be done in stages and trains will be rerouted from one set of tracks to the other to continue to provide rail service during construction.

On the Brown Line, there may be some temporary suspensions of service on weekends in which case shuttle buses will be run from Belmont to Southport.

Q. Can you describe boarding changes at Belmont station during this coming phase and what future boarding changes will occur?

A. Red and Purple Line service will continue throughout reconstruction 2022-2025. During the work, there will be a new boarding location for Purple Line trains at Belmont. Purple Line trains will board on the inside track (same side as the Red Line) instead of the outside track. Any future boarding changes will be communicated via alerts at the station, online, via our social media channels and via service alerts sent to service subscribers. You can sign up for the alerts at transitchicago.com/updates.

Q. Will this structure be solid concrete rail beds?

A. The structure will be solid concrete rail beds, or closed deck, from Belmont to just north of Newport.

Q. Will you use the overhead construction gantry that is being used to rebuild Red and Purple Line tracks between Lawrence and Bryn Mawr to rebuild the Red and Purple tracks here?

A. No.



Q. Will all the tracks between Belmont and Addison be less than 100 years old when completed, or will there still be some century old track remaining?

A. During Phase One, we will rebuild Red and Purple Line elevated track structures between Belmont and to a location between W Newport and W Cornelia, which is a short distance south of Addison.

Q. Aside from the lead paint mitigation, what other work will be done on the Brown Line portion?

A. In addition to lead paint mitigation, the Brown Line structure is being rehabilitated to strengthen it and extend its life. Some of the columns and other steel parts have been replaced. New foundations and columns have been built as part of the flyover and some new foundations and columns will be built on the remaining existing structure. New platform, new signal equipment, new track and new special trackwork is also being installed on the Brown Line. Improvements will be made to the areas below the tracks as well.

Q. With the closed deck configuration, what consideration has been given for water run off and snow accumulation?

A. CTA's primary way of removing snow is with existing service, with snow plows attached to the front of trains. This is generally our best tool for removing snow. On some tracks, we use a special piece of heavy equipment overnight -- basically a large train-operated snow blower. There are smaller tools called brooms that we use in the course of track maintenance.

The Bypass has a drainage system in which water drain into a retainage system under the tracks before it drains into another drainage system. The drainage system is an important component of the project that was worked on extensively to maximize the service life of the track and to make sure we weren't impacting any of the streets or buildings in the area.

Q. How many truckloads of concrete will be used for the North Belmont Red-Purple Reconstruction?

A. The caissons for the new Red and Purple Line foundations will be approximately 4 to 5 feet in diameter, requiring approximately 6 truckloads of concrete or 60 yards of concrete each.

Q. What else is being done to make the spaces under the tracks safe, clean and usable?

A. The new structure will feature lighting at overpasses to increase visibility. We will continue to work closely with the community and the elected officials to find out what the best use is for spaces under the tracks. As we get closer to the end of the project and those spaces become available, we will be reaching out to the elected officials and the community to get some ideas about what they would like to see there.

Q. How will the old materials be disposed of and where will they go?

A. Railroad ties and steel are disposed of in accordance with regulations at designated disposal locations.

Q. How much of the berm that the tracks rest on now will be removed?

A. There are no berms associated with this work. The tracks are elevated.

Q. Will the metal shanty immediately east of Racine be removed soon?

A. The metal shanty is in use by the CTA and it is outside the bounds of any work being done with the project.

Q. Will there be places to sit at the Belmont platforms?

A. The Belmont station is not part of the RPM Phase One Project. However, there is limited seating on that station's platform, near the heating lamps.



Seating at Belmont station.

*--Duplicate questions have been combined and edited for space.
Information provided here is current as of Jan. 7, 2022*