



Appendix J DEIS Public Comment Period and Public Hearing Summary

Introduction

Appendix J contains the key documents used to support and record the public involvement and agency coordination activities performed for the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (75th St. CIP) during the publication of the DEIS and the Public Comment Period. These activities are detailed in the text of Chapter 4 – Comments and Coordination of this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Documents in this appendix are presented in the order in which they are discussed in Chapter 4.

J1 Summary of DEIS Publication and Public Hearing

The 75th St. CIP Project Team published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on March 28, 2014. The DEIS was available for review at seven project area public libraries, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) office in Chicago, and online at www.75thcip.org, www.createprogram.org, and www.dot.il.gov. The Public Comment Period for the DEIS lasted from March 28 to May 22, 2014 for the purpose of receiving comments and input on the 75th St. CIP. The Project Team also held a Public Hearing on April 22, 2014 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ, 1459 W. 74th St. in Chicago, centrally located in the project area.

From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. the hearing format was an open house. Project Team members were on hand to present information and answer questions from those in attendance. Members of the Project Team participating in the Public Hearing included representatives from IDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Consultant Team of Jacobs and sub consultants, and the Association of American Railroads (AAR), including CSX, Norfolk Southern, and Metra.





At 6 p.m., elected officials and members of the public provided comments on the DEIS during the formal Public Hearing session. Those wishing to speak registered in advance and comments were limited to three minutes to allow all who wanted to speak the opportunity to do so. All comments received are documented and included in the FEIS.

This appendix summarizes the tools used to announce the Public Comment Period and the Public Hearing; the format of the Public Hearing and the information provided; and the comments received during the Public Comment Period, including those received at the Public Hearing.

There were a number of ways to submit comments during the Public Comment Period:

- A court reporter was available during the open house portion of the Public Hearing to record individual comments.
- Comment sheets were distributed to everyone who signed in at the Public Hearing. People were encouraged to complete the sheets and submit them at the Hearing, or mail them in before the May 22 deadline.
- Elected officials and members of the public provided comments during the formal Public Hearing session.
- Comments could be submitted through the project website at www.75thcip.org or emailed to info@75thcip.org.
- Written comments could be mailed to the Project Team.

J2 Notices and Invitation to Participate in the Public Comment Period and Public Hearing

A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the DEIS was published in the Federal Register on March 28, 2014, the first date of the Public Comment Period and can be found in Appendix J-1, On that date, the document was available for public review on the websites www.75thcip.org, www.createprogram.org, and www.dot.il.gov, and at the locations below:

- Chicago Public Library:
 - Wrightwood-Ashburn Branch, 8530 S Kedzie Ave.
 - Thurgood Marshall Branch, 7506 S. Racine Ave.
 - West Englewood Branch, 1745 W. 63rd St.
 - Sherman Park Branch, 5440 S. Racine Ave.
 - Brainerd Branch, 1350 W. 89th St.
 - Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State St.
- Hometown Ladwig Library, 4331 Southwest Highway #3, Hometown, Illinois
- Illinois Department of Transportation, 100 W. Randolph, Suite 6-600, Chicago, Illinois

The 75th St. CIP Consultant Team used several methods to announce the availability of the DEIS and to promote the Public Comment Period and the Public Hearing. The goal was to increase public participation. All documents used to announce the hearing may be found in Appendix J-1. Each piece provided locations where the public could view the 75th St. CIP Draft Environmental Impact Statement and gave specific information about the dates of the Public Comment Period, and the Public Hearing date, location, and time.

Advertising – The Project Team placed display ads announcing the Public Comment Period and Public Hearing in the following local and regional newspapers. See Appendix J-1.

Chicago Sun-Times
March 23 and April 15, 2014

Chicago Citizen
March 26 and April 16, 2014

Chicago Defender
March 26 and April 16, 2014

Southwest News-Herald, city edition
March 28 and April 18, 2014

Postcard Mailing – On March 24, 2014 the Project Team mailed postcards to 1,400 property owners and about 700 individuals and organizations on the project mailing list, including members of the two Community Advisory Groups and other key stakeholders including local, state and federal elected officials, community organizations, area churches property owners near the study area. (see postcard in Appendix J-1).

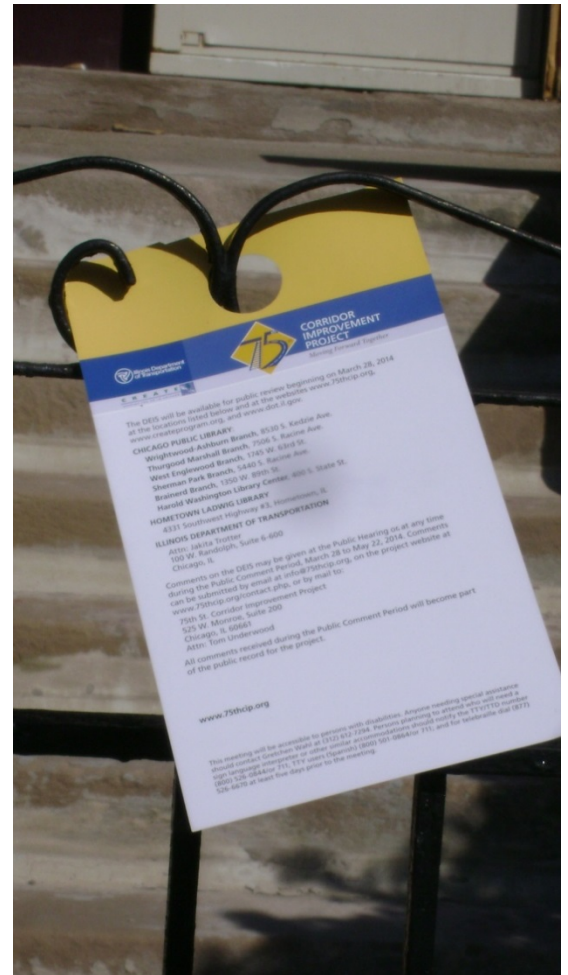
The Project Team hand-delivered packets of 50 postcards to 29 community resource locations for their distribution:

- Alderman Latasha Thomas
- Alderman Lona Lane
- State Senator Jackie Collins
- State Representative Mary Flowers
- 1st Corinthian Church
- Amanda Norman
- Ashburn Community Elementary School
- BJ's Market
- CPD, 6th District
- Employment Resource Center



- Esquire Barber Shop
- Woodson Library
- Grace & Mercy Barber & Beauty Shop
- Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corp.
- I Care Christian Center Ministries
- Kraft Foods
- Monument of Faith Evangelical Church
- Neighborhood Housing Service
- Orland Park Metra Station
- Palos Park Metra Station
- Pleasant Green MB Church
- St. Denis Church & School
- St. Leo Residence for Veterans
- St. Rita High School
- St. Sabina
- St. Simeon High School
- Stag Elementary School
- Wrightwood Ashburn Library
- Wrightwood Improvement Association

Door hangers – In addition to more conventional outreach methods, a local delivery firm - Diversity City - from the project area was hired to hang notices of the Public Comment Period and Public Hearing on doorknobs in areas where there is the most potential for project impacts. Those areas include properties south of Hamilton Park, properties near the Union Avenue viaduct at 75th Street, and properties along the CSX railroad tracks from 71st Street to 79th Street. On April 4 and April 7, 2014, door hangers were distributed at 1,700 residences and businesses in those areas. (see Appendix J-1).



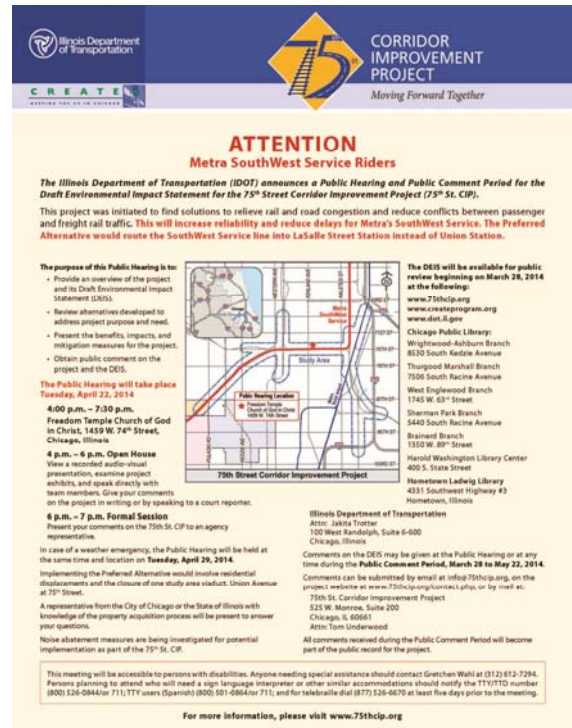
Project Website Posting – The Project Team posted announcements about the Public Comment Period and Public Hearing on the project website at www.75thcip.org on the home page and the “Overview” and “Get Involved” pages. The Public Hearing notice was also posted on the CREATE Program website and on the Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation website portal.

Posters in Metra’s SouthWest Service Line (SWS)

Stations – To reach out to Metra’s SWS riders, the Project Team placed 24 posters in the 12 stations along the SWS Line route on March 26, 27, and 28 (Metra does not own Union Station, so the team was unable to hang posters at that location) (see Appendix J-1).

On the Bi-Level – Metra’s newsletter for commuters

“On the Bi-Level” also ran a mention of the Public Hearing in its March/April 2014 issue, which Metra distributed on all Metra trains and posted Public Hearing details on Metra’s website. See Appendix J-1.



J3 Public Hearing

When attendees arrived at the Public Hearing location, signs directed them to parking and to the registration table. Approximately 140 people signed-in for the meeting as they entered the hearing reception area and each provide hearing materials.

- A 12-page brochure that explained the Preferred Alternative; outlined the benefits, impacts, and mitigation measures associated with the Preferred Alternative; and explained how stakeholders could comment on the DEIS (see Appendix J-1)
- A comment sheet (see Appendix J-1)

Also available at the sign-in table and in the exhibits area were:

- CREATE Program Employment Opportunities Fact Sheet
- A flyer about Chicago Urban League job training and educational programs funded by IDOT.
- Information about IDOT’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program
- IDOT Highway and Railroad Improvements & Property Rights brochure
- CREATE Program Railroad and City of Chicago Contact Information Fact Sheet

Open House

Upon entering the Public Hearing, participants were invited to watch an automated PowerPoint presentation with a voiceover (see Appendix J-1) that ran approximately every 20 minutes. The presentation provided an overview of the 75th St. CIP and the DEIS; explained the Preferred



Alternative for the 75th St. CIP; presented the benefits, impacts, and mitigation measures; and requested public comment.

After the presentation, attendees were invited into the area where the “open house” part of the Public Hearing took place and where the exhibits (see Appendix J-1) were displayed. Project Team members were on hand to answer questions.

Participants were encouraged to complete the comment sheet that was provided to them when they registered to make a verbal comment during the formal session. The comment sheet provided space for people to give their comments on the 75th St. CIP and the DEIS, and invited people to rank additional mitigation measures and offsetting benefits in order of importance. FHWA has presented the additional mitigation measures in an effort to further offset community impacts associated with the project. Public Hearing participants were asked to rank the additional mitigation measures based on their personal preference on the comment sheet.



EXHIBITS DISPLAYED AT PUBLIC HEARING

Program Exhibits

1. CREATE Map
2. CREATE Program
3. Purpose and Need
4. Environmental Impact Statement
5. How to Comment
6. Community Involvement
7. Timeline

Preferred Alternative Board Exhibits

8. Large (8' x 8') Project Area Map
9. Improve Metra Reliability: Columbus Ave. Aerial
10. Improve Metra Reliability: Cross Sections – Existing, Recommended
11. Forest Hill & 71st St.: Aerial
12. Forest Hill & 71st St.: Cross-sections – Near 72nd , S. of 75th, Near 77th
13. Forest Hill & 71st St.: Cross Section – 75th St facing east
14. Forest Hill & 71st St.: Rendering
15. Forest Hill & 71st St.: Plans and Comparison
16. Metra Rock Island Connection: Aerial
17. Metra Rock Island Connection: Rendering
18. Metra Rock Island Connection: Halsted Cross-section
19. Metra Rock Island Connection: alignment and property acquisition locations
20. 80th Street Junction: Aerial
21. 80th Street Junction: Cross Sections – 79th , 87th & Eggleston, 88th & S. Holland
22. 80th Street Junction: Plans and Comparison
23. Viaduct Inspections
24. Viaduct Preferred Alternative
25. Viaduct Map
26. Other Area Viaduct Work

Benefits, Impacts, and Mitigation Exhibits

27. Benefits to meeting the Purpose and Need
28. Noise under No Build Alternative
29. Noise under Preferred Alternative
30. Noise Information
31. Noise Barrier info
32. Barrier Walls map 1
33. Barrier Walls map 2
34. Barrier Walls map 3
35. Vibration under No-Build Alternative
36. Vibration under Preferred Alternative
37. Vibration Information
38. Property Acquisition 1 (Uniform Act)
39. Property Acquisition 2 (Methods)
40. Temporary Construction Impacts Board
41. Additional Mitigation Under Investigation
42. Employment and Small Business

A court reporter was available to record comments during the open house. The transcript of these comments is presented in Appendix J-2.

All of the information provided at the hearing, including the PowerPoint presentation, handout, and exhibits, was placed on the project website at www.75thcip.org on April 23, 2014.

Formal Public Hearing Session

At 6:00 p.m., attendees were invited to join Project Team members in the formal Public Hearing session. Samuel Tuck III, IDOT Bureau Chief of CREATE and Freight Rail, served as the official Hearing Officer. During this session, elected officials and members of the public gave their formal comments. To make sure that all who signed up to speak had time to do so, comments were limited to three minutes. People with additional comments were invited to submit them in writing or provide them to the court reporter following the formal session.



A court reporter recorded the formal session. The entire transcript of the formal session can be found in Appendix J-2.

J4 Public Comments Received

The 75th St. CIP received a total of 89 comments during the Public Comment Period (March 28 – May 22, 2014). A total of 74 people or organizations commented – some commented multiple times, or in multiple formats.

University Hill Community Council submitted a petition concerning the railroad problems of disturbances that have increasingly impacted the community. Specifically, the petition requested a sound wall. Sixty-six residents from 87th, 88th Princeton Avenue, Yale Avenue, Holland Road, West 89th Street and Harvard Avenue signed the petition.

Another community based group, Senior Suites of Marquette Village, a retirement complex submitted 13 comments forms, most asking for the elimination of idling trains and horns blowing.

All of the comments received during the Public Comment Period from the public can be reviewed in Appendix J-2 and from the agencies can be reviewed in Appendix J-3.

Comments were received in the following formats:

- Comment Forms - 31
- Open House Comments Recorded by Court Reporter - 13
- Formal Session Comments Recorded by Court Reporter - 20
- Letters - 9
- Emails - 11



- Telephone calls - 5

J5 Next Steps

Where addresses were provided, the 75th St. CIP team will respond to each comment submitted with a letter. The comments gathered during the Public Comment Period and presented in this document have been included in the FEIS, along with the responses.