





CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT

Moving Forward Together

Welcome

WELCOME
and *Thank You*
for attending today's
public meeting

Welcome and thank you for spending time with us today to talk about the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

Today's Meeting

What We Want to Accomplish
Provide you with information about:

- The history of railroads in Chicago
- The CREATE Program
- The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project
- The purpose and needs of the project

Ask for your feedback on:

- The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project's purpose and needs

During this public meeting, we will explain the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project and how we got here. We will spend time talking about:

- the background of the project, including the history of the railroads in the region
- the CREATE program
- the reason for the 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project as listed in the purpose and need.

Most importantly, we are asking you to provide comments on the project's "purpose and need" presented tonight. Your input is vital to making sure the project team completely understands the project-related problems from your community's perspective as we move forward.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

History

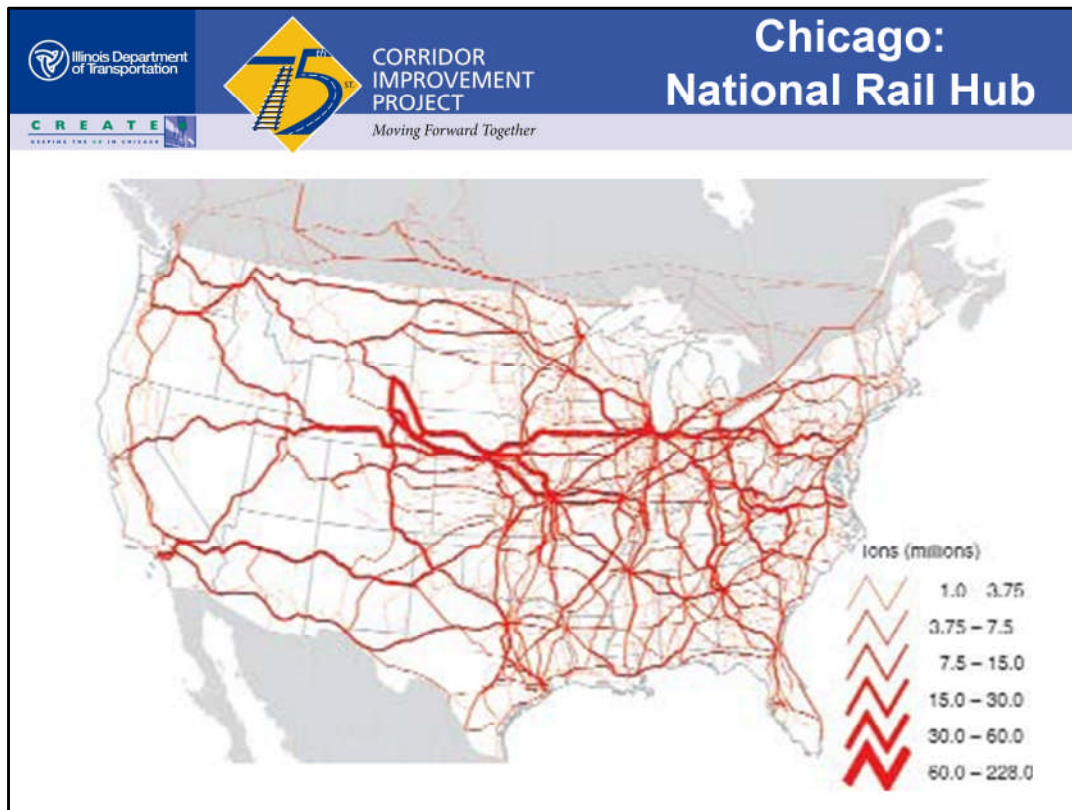
Chicago has been a rail hub for 150 years

- The only city that six of the seven major railroads operating in North America pass through
- Each day, nearly 1300 trains pass through the region – 500 freight and 760 passenger
- The city handles one-fourth of the nation's freight rail traffic

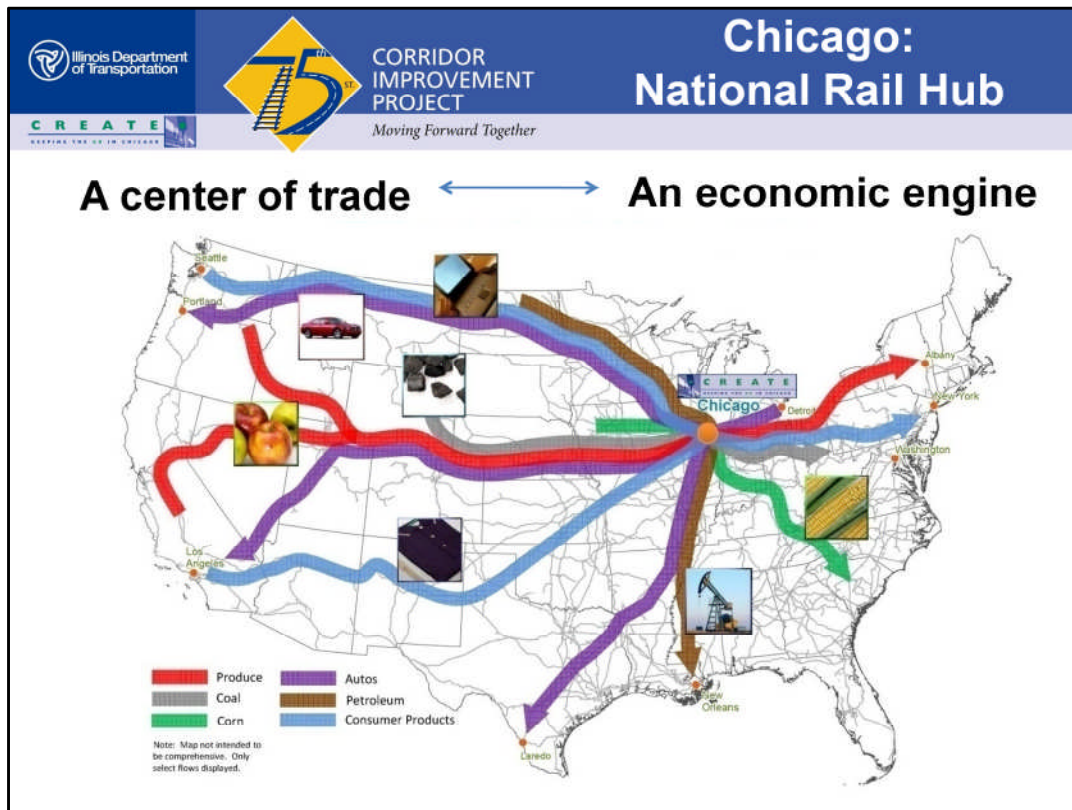


1904 Map of Chicago

Railroads helped make Chicago the city it is today. They are an important contributor to our economic growth, both in the past and in the future. Chicago is unique because six of the seven major railroads converge here. Thirteen hundred trains pass through our region daily – handling one-quarter of the nation's freight rail movements.



Chicago is a rail hub – if not THE rail hub – of the Nation.



Chicago is the center for the flow of goods through our country - from corn to coal to cars. The railroads help to keep the nation's economy moving.




**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

Rail Network

The Chicago rail system – by the numbers

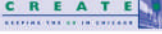
- 2,796 miles of track
- 16,000 acres of railroad right-of-way and yards – O’Hare Airport covers 7,000 acres
- 37,500 rail cars daily; by 2023 that number is expected to be 67,000

We all know that this means a lot of track. Our region holds almost 3,000 miles of track. Railroad right-of-way takes up over twice as many acres as O’Hare International Airport. Nearly 40,000 rail cars pass through our region daily, and that number is expected to reach 67,000 by 2023.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

Economic Benefits





Railroads employ more than:

- 18,000 people in Illinois
- 7,800 in Cook County
- 600 people living in the project area

The railroads generate \$22 billion in annual economic benefit to Illinois businesses

The railroads bring significant economic benefits to our state, region, and neighborhoods. They employ thousands throughout Illinois and the Chicagoland region. Also, more than 600 people living in the project area work for the freight railroads. Annually the railroads generate billions in economic benefit to Illinois businesses.




CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT

Moving Forward Together

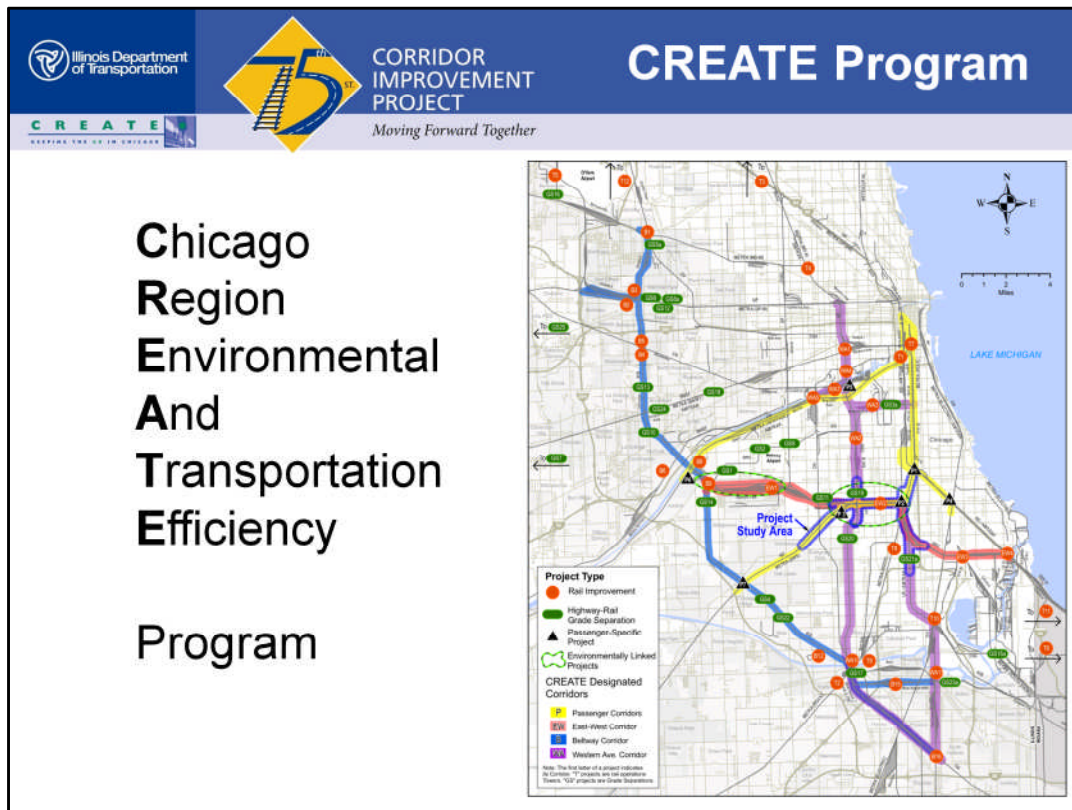
Congestion

CREATE





- Congestion in Chicago causes delays nationwide
- It takes a train approximately 48 hours to travel from Los Angeles to Chicago; that same train can spend over 30 hours traversing the Chicago region
- Average train speeds in the region range from 5 to 12 miles per hour
- Delay time makes up approximately 20 percent of all daily freight train operations time

Increased freight and passenger rail traffic presents challenges for the Chicago region and our nation. The demand for rail service has outgrown the existing rail infrastructure. Congestion in the Chicago rail network causes delays nationwide. A train that takes 48 hours to travel here from Los Angeles can take 30 hours just to pass through Chicago. This congestion threatens Chicago's position as a premiere rail hub, making other cities more attractive to freight business.



CREATE, the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency program, was developed to address this rail congestion and increase the efficiency of the region's rail infrastructure.


**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together


CREATE Program


A Partnership Between

- Federal Highway Administration
- Illinois Department of Transportation
- Chicago Department of Transportation
- Association of American Railroads



The Federal Highway Administration, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Chicago Department of Transportation and the Association of American Railroads came together to form CREATE. This unique public-private partnership is responsible for identifying and addressing the rail and roadway problems that result from our overburdened rail network.





**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together


CREATE Program

Goals



- Reduce rail and roadway congestion
- Improve passenger and freight rail service

Benefits

- Enhance public safety
- Provide national, regional and local economic benefits
- Reduce energy consumption
- Improve air regional quality



CREATE's goals are to reduce rail congestion and improve passenger and freight rail service. Meeting these goals will provide measurable benefits to the Chicago region. Eliminating conflicts between rail to rail operations and rail to roadway conflicts will enhance public safety. Demand for freight rail service in Chicago is expected to nearly double, and that means more jobs for Illinois workers and increased economic opportunity. To capitalize on these opportunities, Chicago must be able to handle more efficient rail movements. Reducing the number of idling trains will reduce energy consumption and improve air quality.

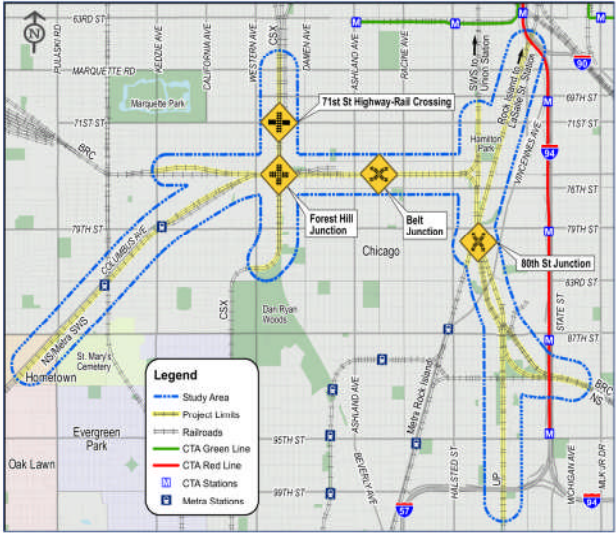
**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

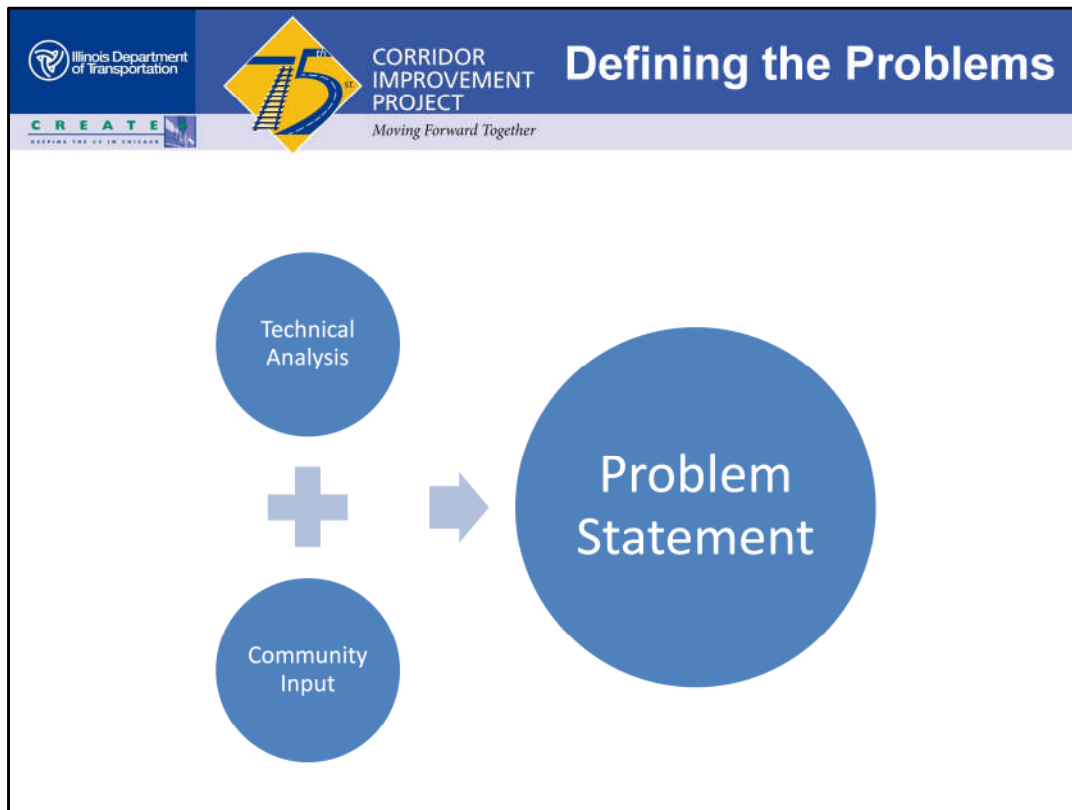
75th St. CIP

75th Street Corridor Improvement Project

- CREATE is focused on rail traffic on four rail corridors in the region
- Three of the four CREATE rail corridors go through the 75th St. CIP
- This project is one of the largest and most complex within the CREATE program





There are four major rail corridors that the CREATE program is focused on. Three of these four key rail corridors intersect at the 75th Street CIP. This makes it one of the largest and most complex projects of the 70 projects that make up the CREATE program.

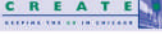


The first step in a project is defining the project goals and identifying the problems that should be addressed.

The project problems are identified through both technical analysis and community input. The combined list of problems is called a Problem Statement.






**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together



Defining the Problems



Technical Analysis



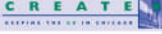
- Review train and vehicle traffic data
- Field surveys
 - Noise
 - Vibration
 - Bridge conditions
- Traffic projections

Our team of professionals analyze the rail and roadway problems in a variety of ways. We need to understand what is out there right now and what technical problems exist. First, we look at traffic counts, physical conditions of viaducts, rail and roadway at-grade intersections and overpasses. We also identify what existing community resources are in the study area that may be impacted. We then send people out to survey conditions such as noise and vibration.

Finally we look at trends to make projections on future traffic.




**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together



Defining the Problems

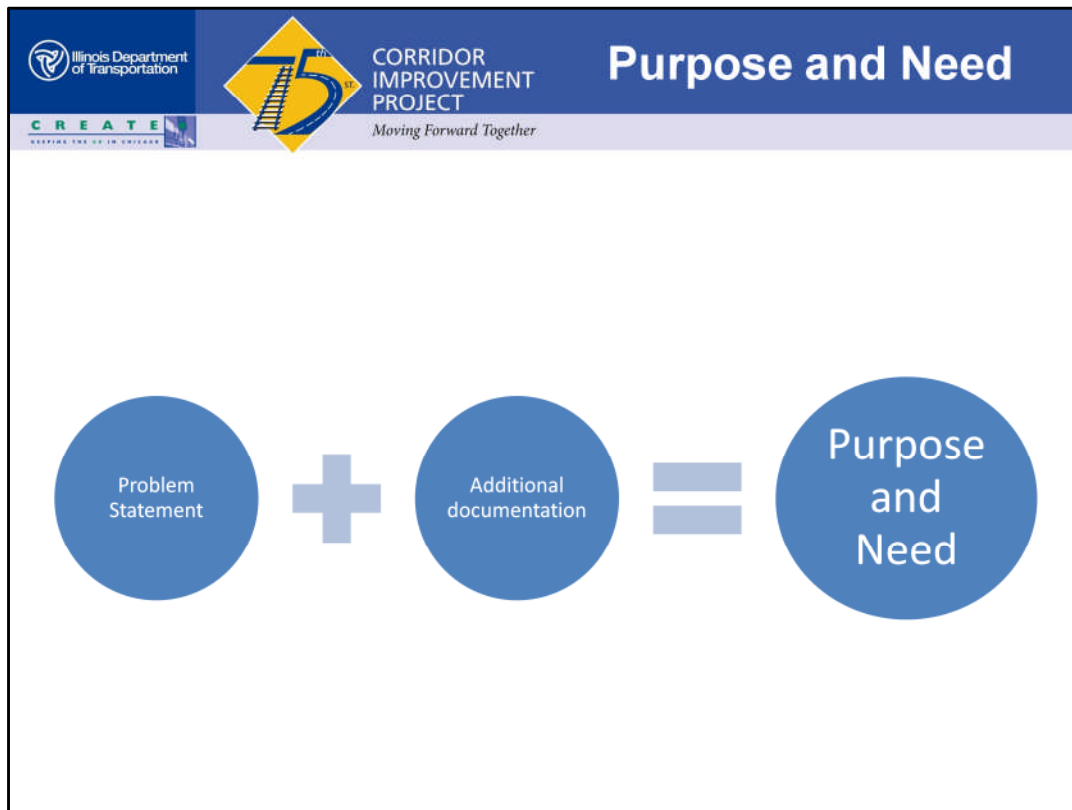
Public Input



- Community Advisory Group Meetings
- Meetings with Key Stakeholders
- Public Meetings
- Comments received via website and at public meetings


We know that rail and roadway issues exist for those living and working near the study area. Public input helps us to understand these issues.

To collect public input into the problem we have formed two advisory groups, representing different parts of the project area. We also met with key stakeholders such as the Ministerial Alliance to learn about their issues. These groups provided much of the information we are presenting tonight.




The problem statement, plus additional documentation of the technical analysis, make up the project's "Purpose and Need", which is the formal statement of the reasons for and goals of the project.

We are here tonight to present the findings that make up the "Purpose and Need" for this project, and to allow you to provide additional input and comments.



Illinois Department of Transportation




CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

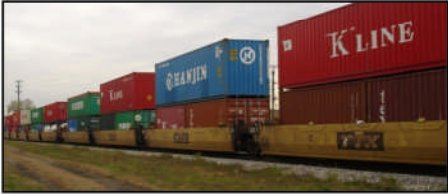
Moving Forward Together

Project Purpose

Improve mobility for:

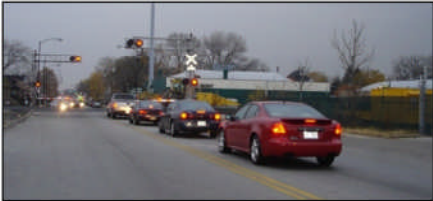
Rail passengers





Freight traffic

Motorists



A project's overall goals are summed up in its Purpose.

The purpose of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project is to improve mobility for rail passengers, freight traffic, and motorists.



CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT

Moving Forward Together

Project Needs

CREATE

KEEPING THE GO IN CHARGE


- Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts
- Reduce Highway-Rail Crossing Problems
- Improve Rail Transit Passenger Service Reliability
- Reduce Local Mobility Problems


The “Needs” are the more detailed objectives of the project – the problems and their causes that must be addressed to achieve the project’s purpose.

For the 75th Street CIP, the project “Needs” are to:

- Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts
- Reduce Highway-Rail Crossing Problems
- Improve Rail Transit Passenger Service Reliability, and
- Improve Local Mobility

Let’s look at these “needs” in detail.





**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together


Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts

Train Delays

- Multiple rail junctions (intersections)
- Crossing trains must stop
- Metra conflicts

Results

- Delays in the system
- Idling trains





The map shows a section of the Chicago rail corridor. Key features include:

- CSX Lines:** Running vertically on the left side.
- Metra Lines:** Represented by blue dashed lines, running horizontally and vertically.
- Junctions:** Three yellow diamond-shaped icons with black crosses indicate rail junctions. These are labeled:
 - Forest Hill Junction:** Located near the intersection of Western Ave and Damen Ave.
 - Belt Junction:** Located near the intersection of Ashland Ave and Racine Ave.
 - 80th St Junction:** Located near the intersection of 80th St and Vincennes Ave.
- Geographic Labels:** Western Ave, Damen Ave, Ashland Ave, Racine Ave, Hamilton Park, SWS to Union Station, Rock Island to LaSalle St. Station, Vincennes Ave, 94, 80th St, Dan Ryan Woods, and Chicago.

Our technical analysis showed that trains are delayed because of junctions in this corridor. Junctions are like railroad intersections, where trains have to stop and wait for crossing trains.

These conflicts cause delays in the system, and trains idle as they wait for their turn. Rail junctions in the project area were not designed to deal with this amount of train traffic.





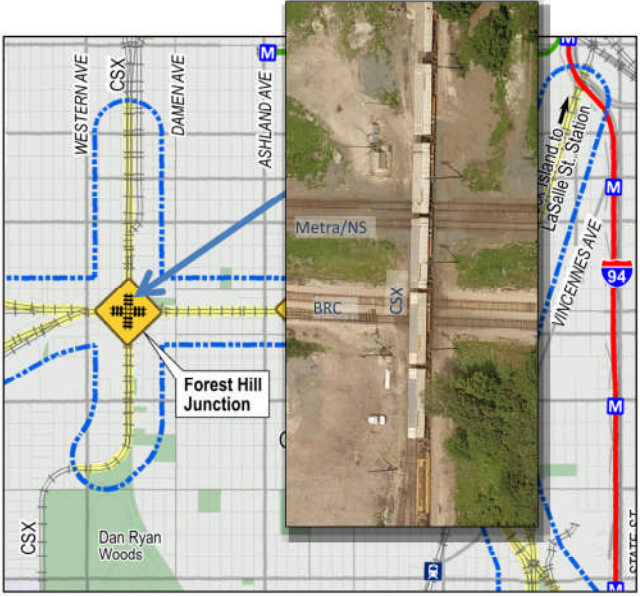
**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts


Forest Hill Junction

- North-South tracks cross the East-West tracks
- Trains have to wait to cross
- Loud noise from the rails at the junction



Three junctions in the project area lead to delays. The first conflict point is Forest Hill Junction, near 75th Street and Western Avenue. Here, north/south tracks cross east/west tracks. Trains sit idling as they wait their turn to pass through.

In addition to the noise and vibration from idling trains, the location where the rails cross produces a loud pounding noise when trains pass over. This could be eliminated by taking one set of tracks over the other.



75th


CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Moving Forward Together


Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts


Belt Junction

- Five tracks converge onto two tracks
- Most trains have to cross over to another track – only one at a time can pass



The second conflict point is Belt Junction, located near 75th Street and Loomis Avenue. Here, five tracks narrow to two, and most trains need to cross from one track to the other. The result is a bottleneck.





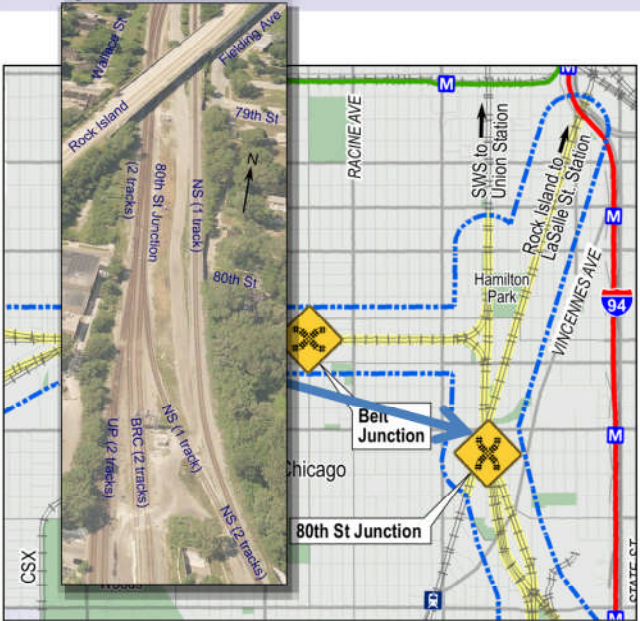
**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts


80th Street Junction


- Six tracks converge onto two tracks
- Train traffic is more than these tracks can handle



80th Street Junction, near Wallace Avenue, causes a similar bottleneck. Here, six tracks converge to two tracks.

Reorganizing these junctions will allow more efficient passage of trains and reduce delays.





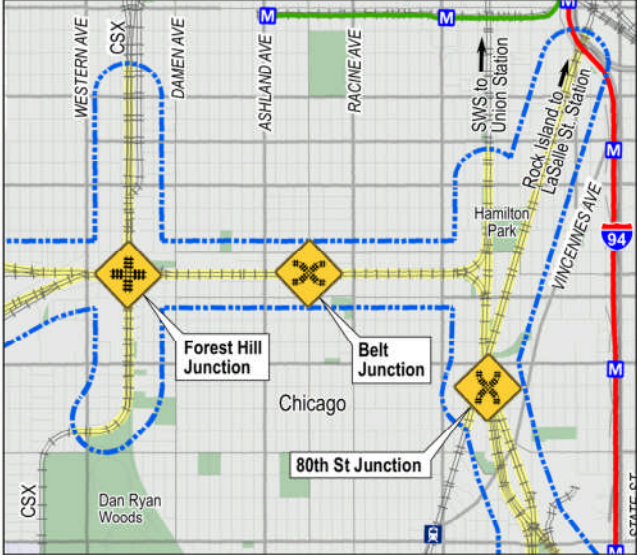
**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts



Junctions Too Close Together

- Trains stopped at one junction often block adjacent junctions
- This results in delays in the system and idling trains



In addition, these junctions are too close together. Modern trains are now one or even two miles long. When the longer trains stop at some junctions, they block the last junction. They have to wait until both junctions are clear before they go through.

Eliminating Forest Hill and Belt Junctions would leave longer spaces between the remaining junctions, and trains could pass through more easily.


**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

Reduce Rail Line At-Grade Conflicts



Metra Conflicts with Freight Trains

- Metra SouthWest Service shares corridor with freight rail, has priority in peak times
- This results in:
 - Restrictions to freight traffic
 - Less reliable transit service



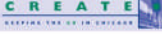
Metra's SouthWest Service shares its corridor with freight trains, both in the project area and on the rest of its route to the Loop. Metra has priority to operate during peak hours in this section of the corridor, restricting freight traffic.

Separating the Metra tracks from the freight tracks, with a possible connection to the Rock Island line, will reduce the delays to both commuter and freight traffic.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

**Reduce Rail Line
At-Grade Conflicts**





Train delays lead to idling trains, which:

- Emit fumes into the air
- Create noise and vibration
- Blow their horns when restarting
- Block crossings, causing delays to drivers and pedestrians
- Present temptation for theft

In addition to the transportation problems from the delayed trains, members of the community expressed concerns about noise and air pollution from trains idling at crossings.

As trains sit idling, they emit fumes or air pollution into the surrounding neighborhoods. Residents living close to the tracks feel the vibration. When a stopped train begins moving, it is required to blow its horn, regardless of what time of the day it is. Stopped trains can block road crossings, causing delays for drivers and pedestrians.

Some of you have also noted that stopped trains present an opportunity for theft from rail cars, leading to more crime in the community.






**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

Reduce Highway-Rail Crossing Problems

- Drivers and pedestrians must wait for trains to pass at 71st Street and other crossings
- Church members are often late for services
- Potential delays for emergency responders
- People crossing tracks or climbing trains presents safety concern

Where trains cross roadways at street level, like at 71st Street, vehicles and pedestrians must wait for the trains to pass. There are 7 other similar at-grade crossings in the study area. Given the number of these crossings and the number of trains in the 75th St. corridor, there are concerns about these delays for both drivers and pedestrians. From you we have heard reports of children crossing the tracks or climbing through the stopped trains to get across, emergency responders being delayed, and church members being held up on their way to services.

Putting the tracks on a bridge over 71st Street may eliminate the delays at that location.

Several other at grade crossings including Columbus at 75th Street, 95th Street at Eggleston, and 87th at Rockwell will be addressed in other CREATE projects.



CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Moving Forward Together

Improve Rail Passenger Service Reliability

- Metra's SouthWest Service has only one track from Wrightwood Station to Western Avenue
- Limits flexibility and reliability of service



From Wrightwood Station to Western Avenue, Metra operates on a single track, but Metra runs on double track east and west of there. Since the Metra trains run in both directions, one train is sometimes delayed while the other one clears the single-track segment. This can cause service delays and less reliable transit service. A second track in this area will allow Metra to run trains in both directions throughout the corridor.



75th

CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Moving Forward Together

Improve Local Mobility

Viaduct conditions restrict mobility

- Falling concrete/debris
- Poor lighting
- Water on sidewalks due to poor drainage
- Uninviting to walk or drive under
- Low clearances for trucks



Some of you have commented that the conditions of many viaducts under the railroads are unsafe. The design team has inspected the viaducts for conditions that would affect the street users as well as the railroads passing over them.

Many of the viaducts are in disrepair, and people hesitate to drive or walk under them. Some have poor lighting at night. Low clearances force trucks to find alternative routes when making deliveries to businesses like Aldi's. Structures are showing their age, with falling concrete and damage to sidewalks from poor drainage.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together



**Public Input to
Purpose and Need**

Key Elements of Public Engagement

- Develop a Stakeholder Involvement Plan
- Form two Community Advisory Groups
- Meet with community leaders and groups
- Maintain project website
- Hold public meetings



While our project team has a lot of experts in transportation and engineering, YOU are the experts on living in your neighborhoods. We need your input to identify transportation needs and help choose the best way to meet them. One of our first steps in involving you in the project was to develop a Stakeholder Involvement Plan to guide our outreach activities. We formed two Community Advisory Groups to reach out to individuals and organizations in the neighborhoods surrounding the study area. We have begun meeting with community leaders and groups, and look forward to meeting with more of you. We maintain a project website where you can give your input, and we also look for your input through public meetings, and in a variety of other outreach methods.




**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

**Public Input to
Purpose and Need**

Community Advisory Groups Formed

- Two Community Advisory Groups were organized
 - East half of project area
 - West half of project area
- Comprised of individuals that work daily to benefit your neighborhoods



```
graph TD; CAG((CAG)) --- Churches((Churches)); CAG --- Schools((Schools)); CAG --- EmergencyServices((Emergency Services)); CAG --- Businesses((Businesses)); CAG --- CommunityGroups((Community Groups));
```

The project team invited representatives from businesses, police and fire districts, not-for-profits, churches, schools and other stakeholders to join either the East Community Advisory Group or the West Community Advisory Group for the 75th St. CIP. Their role is to be a “sounding board” for the project team throughout the project, and help the team provide project information to the groups and organizations they represent. We introduced them to the 75th St. CIP project, asked them about their community, presented the problem statement, and asked for their input on transportation issues in your community.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

**Public Input to
Purpose and Need**

**Community Members Have Expressed
Other Vital Project-Related Concerns**

- Employment and economic development
- Appearance of railroad property
- Railroads need to be better neighbors



The focus of our recent community outreach activities, including this meeting today, has been to ask for input about transportation problems in your neighborhoods as they relate directly to infrastructure. However, community leaders, elected officials, and others in your neighborhoods have also expressed other vital project-related concerns. They told us that people in your neighborhoods need good jobs. We learned that you want improved maintenance of railroad right-of ways. Your community leaders called for beautification around the railroad properties and asked for solutions to problems including dumping, badly-maintained fencing, poor viaduct lighting and maintenance, overgrown vegetation and increased rodent populations. Many of your community leaders expressed a desire for railroads to be more responsive to your neighborhoods' concerns.




**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moving Forward Together

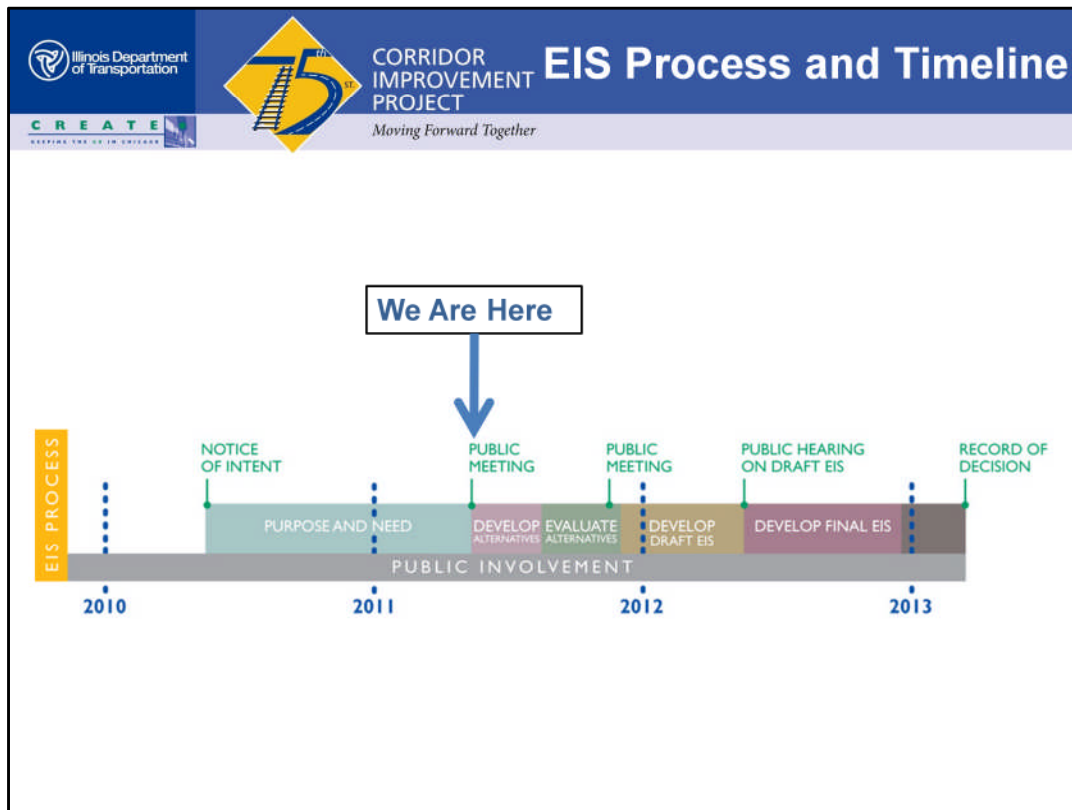
Opportunities for Public Involvement

CREATE
KEEPING THE GO IN CHARGE



- Submit comment sheets today
- Provide input through email at info@75thCIP.org
- Attend the next public meeting in Fall 2011 to discuss alternatives
- Request a speaker for local groups
- Sign up for newsletters or read them online at www.75thCIP.org
- Submit a comment form on the project website at www.75thCIP.org
- Learn more about the CREATE program at www.createprogram.org

Your input is important to us, today and throughout the life of the project. This project is in the planning stage, and it will be several years before construction can start. We are letting you know about the project now so that you can comment on the purpose and need of the 75th St. CIP. Later, we will ask you to help us evaluate possible solutions.

We want to hear from you! Today you can submit a comment sheet, or take one home to mail in later. You can also make your comments to the court reporter, or submit a question at the presentation tonight at 6 o'clock. Throughout the project you can provide your comments, questions and concerns through emails, attend public meetings, request a speaker to come visit your group, and learn more about the 75th St. CIP and CREATE program online.



This timeline shows the next steps in the process. This is the first public meeting to be held for the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project. With your help, we will learn more about the railroad and roadway problems that exist in the study area. That information will help us confirm the “Purpose and Need” for the project. The next step will be for us to develop transportation alternatives to address those problems. We will bring those alternatives back to you at another public meeting in the Fall and ask for input again. That meeting will be preceded by another round of Community Advisory Group meetings.



**CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**
Moving Forward Together

Next Steps

What Happens Between Now and the Next Public Meeting?

- Review and incorporate your input
- Develop transportation alternatives to address the problems
- Evaluate the alternatives based on several factors including benefits, impacts and cost
- Come back to you to present the alternatives for your feedback

We will review the input we receive from you tonight and in the next few weeks, and use it to improve the “Purpose and Need Statement”.

The next step in the environmental process is for the planners and engineers to develop alternatives that will address the transportation problems that have been identified. The alternatives will be evaluated based on how well they address the problems and how they affect the community. The team will then bring those alternatives back to you in another public meeting to seek your input and feedback.



Thank for attending this first public meeting of the 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project. We encourage you to stay and speak to members of the project study team, review project exhibits, and provide comments. A formal presentation will take place beginning at 6 p.m., when the team will present much of the information that is shown on our exhibits. Thank you for helping to keep the 75th St. CIP “moving forward together”.