

The poster features a blue header with the Illinois Department of Transportation logo, the '75th' logo, and the text 'CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT' and 'Moving Forward Together'. Below the header, the title 'Draft Environmental Impact Statement Public Hearing' is centered in large, bold, black font. The date and time 'April 22, 2014 4:00-7:30 p.m.' and the location 'Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ' are also centered. The bottom section contains logos for the Illinois Department of Transportation, CDOT (Chicago Department of Transportation), the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, the Association of American Railroads, and Jacobs. A small speaker icon is in the bottom right corner.

Illinois Department of Transportation

75th

CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

CREATING THE CC IN CHICAGO

Moving Forward Together

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Public Hearing

**April 22, 2014
4:00-7:30 p.m.**

Freedom Temple Church of God in Christ

Illinois Department of Transportation

CDOT
CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS

JACOBS

Thank you for attending today's Public Hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project.



Welcome from the Project Study Group, made up of:

- The Illinois Department of Transportation, the project's lead public agency
- The Chicago Department of Transportation
- The Federal Highway Administration
- The Association of American Railroads, and
- Jacobs, the project consultant, leading a team of subconsultants.


We look forward to your comments.



This project is part of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program, or CREATE. The program was developed to increase the efficiency of the region's rail infrastructure.



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**Previous
Public Meetings**

June 2011 Public Meetings:

- Introduced the project
- Reviewed 75th St. CIP draft Purpose and Need
- Obtained public input on 75th St. CIP and the draft Purpose and Need

October 2011 Public Meeting:



- Reviewed the project
- Presented a Range of Alternatives developed to meet the Purpose and Need
- Obtained public input on the Alternatives



Two public meetings were held in June 2011 and one was held in October 2011 to present project information and obtain public feedback.

The Project Team has also met with a Community Advisory Group six times to gain more input on the project.

All of these public outreach activities have helped us develop the Preferred Alternative we are presenting today.

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Review of Preferred Alternative

Project Purpose

- To improve mobility for rail passengers, freight, and motorists

Project Needs

- Reduce rail-rail crossing conflicts
- Reduce road-rail crossing conflicts
- Improve passenger rail reliability
- Reduce local mobility problems

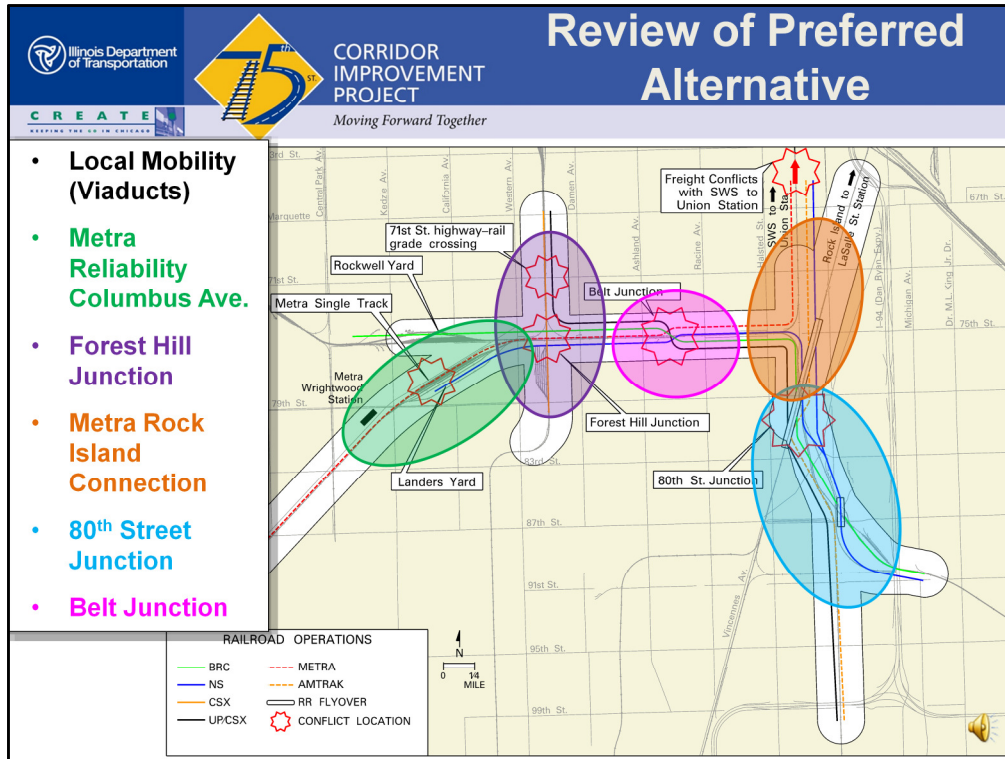


The purpose and need statement states that:

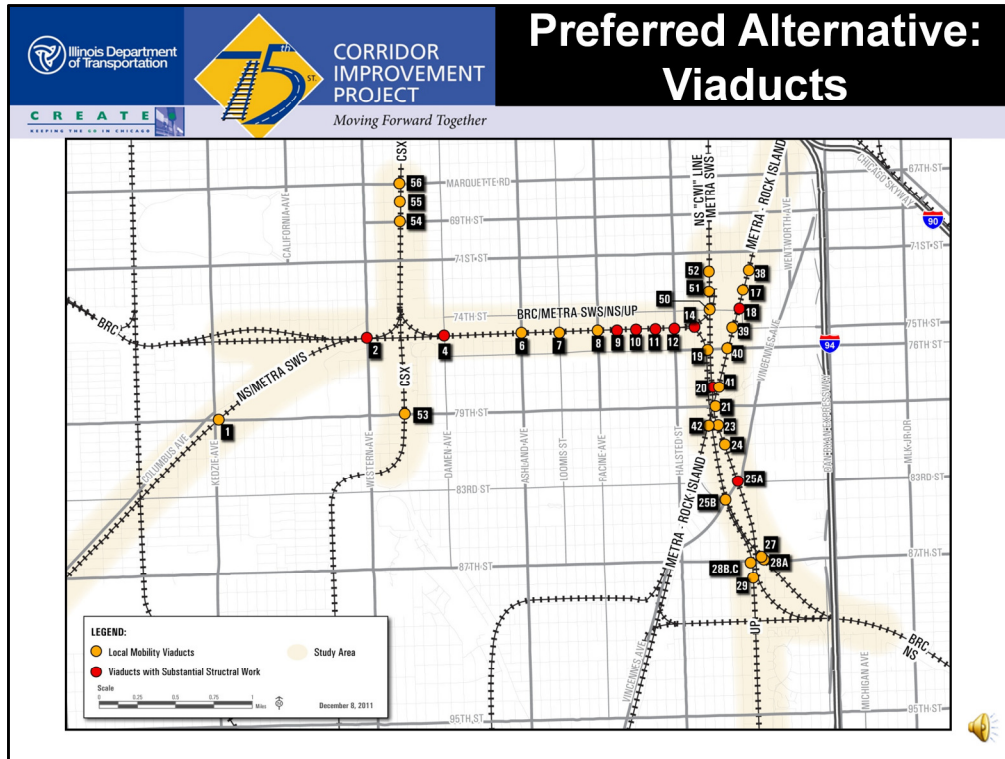
The project’s purpose is to improve mobility for rail passengers, freight, and motorists.

To accomplish that purpose, it was determined that the project must:



- Reduce conflicts at locations where rail lines cross
- Reduce conflicts where roads cross railroads
- Improve passenger rail reliability, and
- Reduce the problems at railroad viaducts that restrict local mobility.



In the following slides we will describe the Preferred Alternative developed to meet this purpose and need.



Elected officials, Community Advisory Group members, and residents said that poor conditions at viaducts cause safety issues for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians, and make it more difficult to get around.




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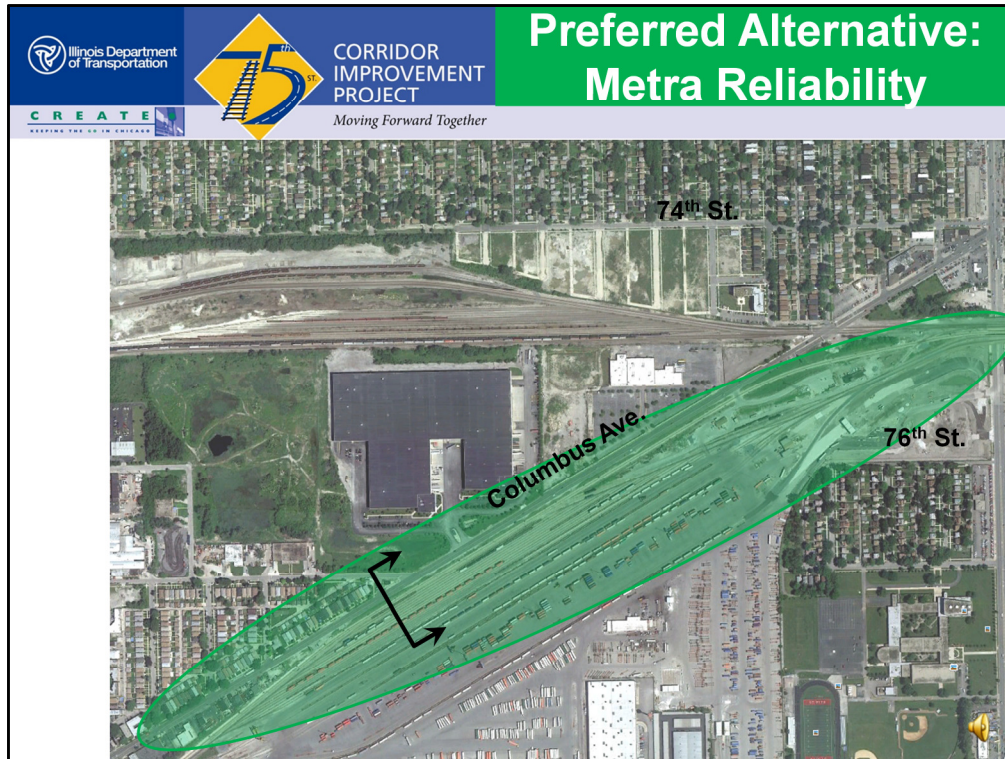
**Preferred Alternative:
Viaducts**

**ALL Viaduct Replacement
and Reconstruction
included:**

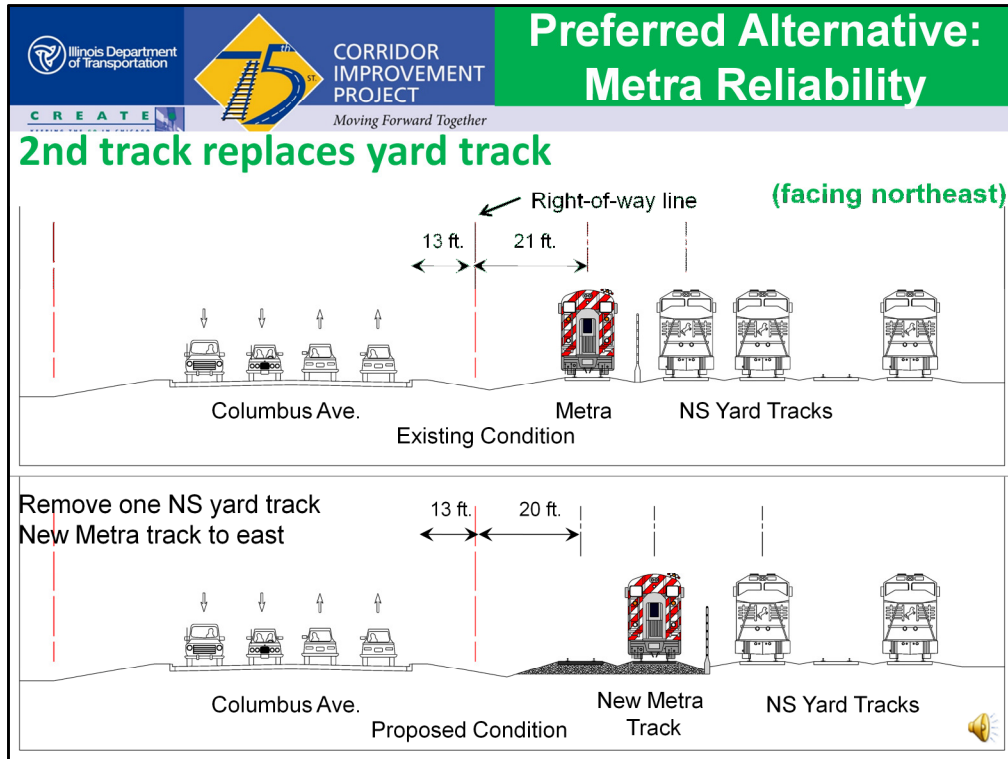
- Reconstruction of streets and sidewalks
- Bridge work
- Waterproofing of bridge decks (at the 10 viaducts requiring track work)
- Replace all lighting





The Project Team added Local Mobility to the Purpose and Need for the 75th St. CIP, and inspected 37 viaducts in the project area. One of these viaducts will be closed. At the other 36 viaducts, ALL viaduct replacement and reconstruction work we identified is included in the Preferred Alternative.



Metra's SouthWest Service line only has one track from just north of the Ashburn Metra Station to Western Avenue.



The Preferred Alternative adds a second track east of the existing track along Columbus Avenue. This would increase the reliability and flexibility of Metra service.

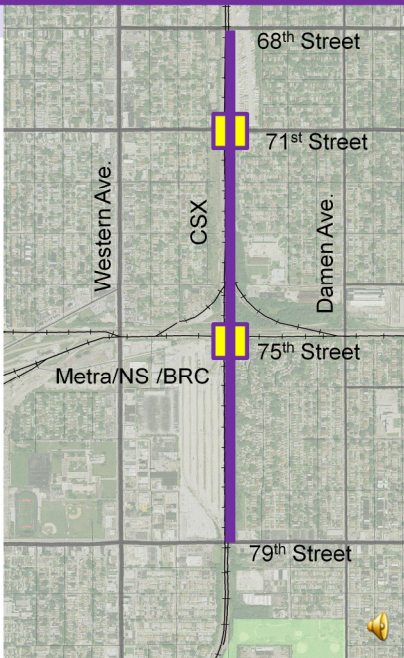



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Preferred Alternative: Forest Hill Junction

- Elevate north-south CSX tracks over east-west tracks and 71st Street
- Bridge extends from 68th Street to 79th Street
- 1 vacant property to be acquired in this area

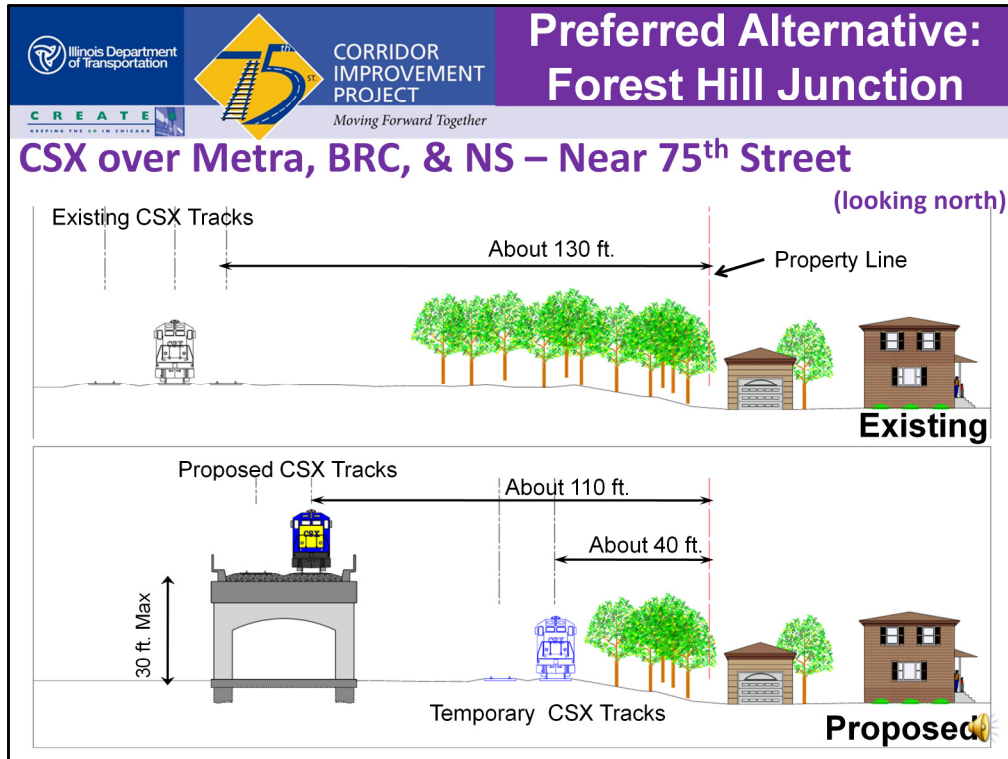


At Forest Hill Junction, the Preferred Alternative provides for a new elevated structure to carry north-south train traffic over east-west train traffic and to separate road and rail traffic at 71st Street.

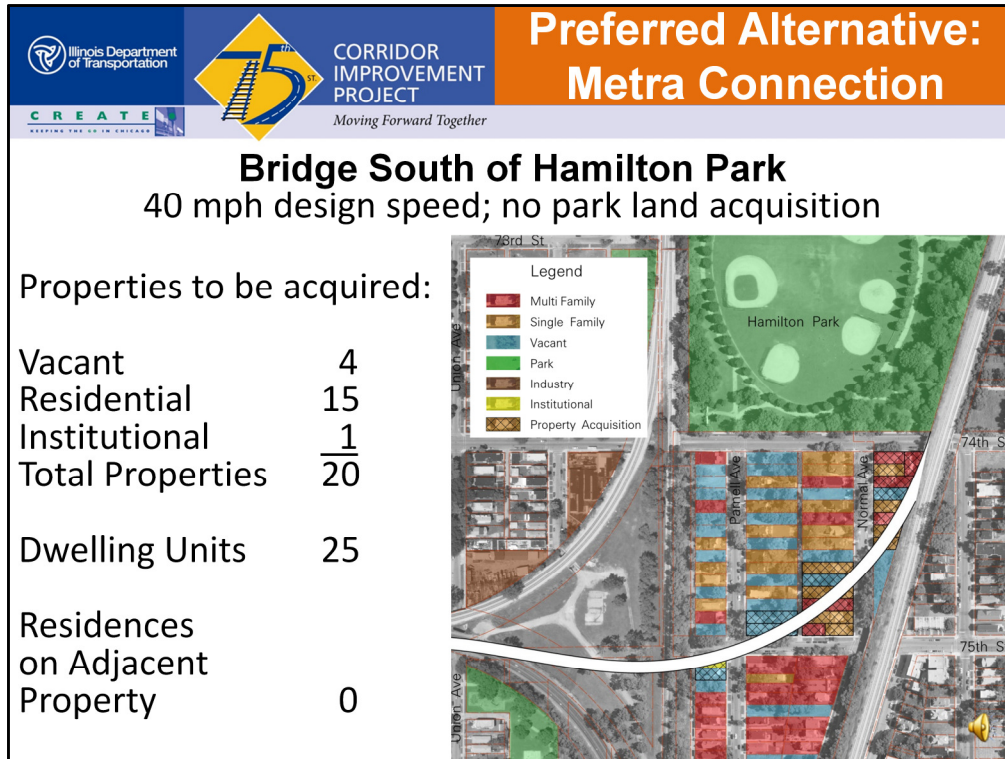
This eliminates all rail-rail conflicts and delays at Forest Hill Junction and the road-rail conflicts at 71st Street.

The noise and air pollution from idling trains waiting to cross Forest Hill Junction and the pounding noise from trains crossing Forest Hill Junction would be eliminated.

In addition, motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians would no longer have to wait for trains at 71st Street.



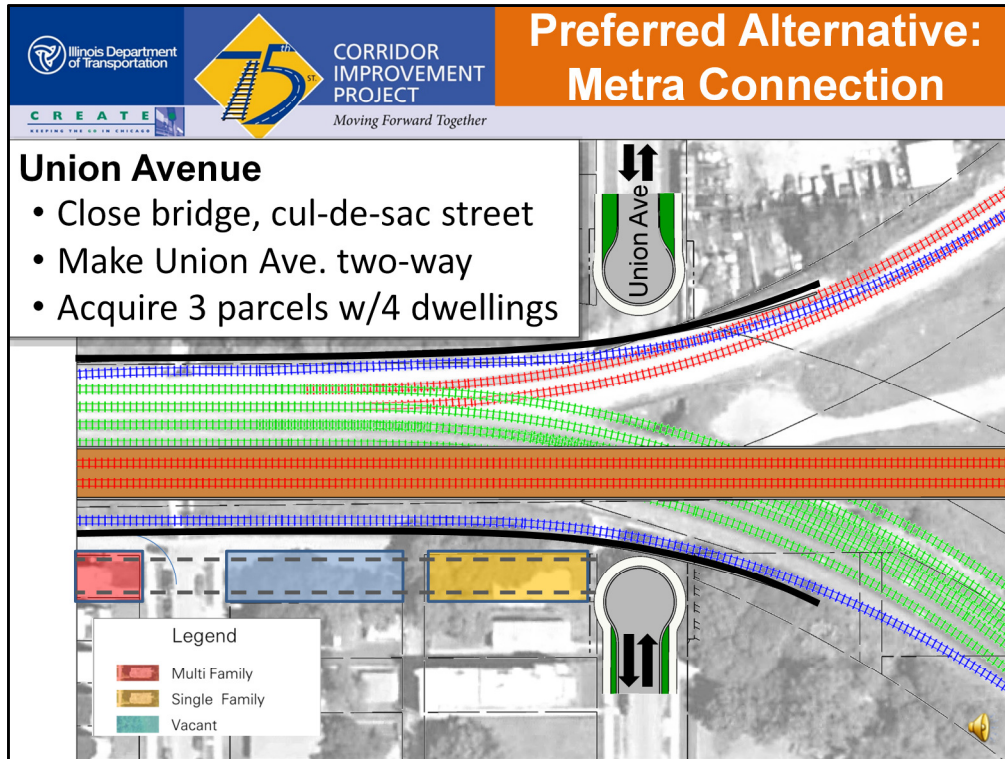
The new elevated tracks would be constructed close to the existing tracks. Temporary tracks built east of the existing tracks would be used for about one year during construction.



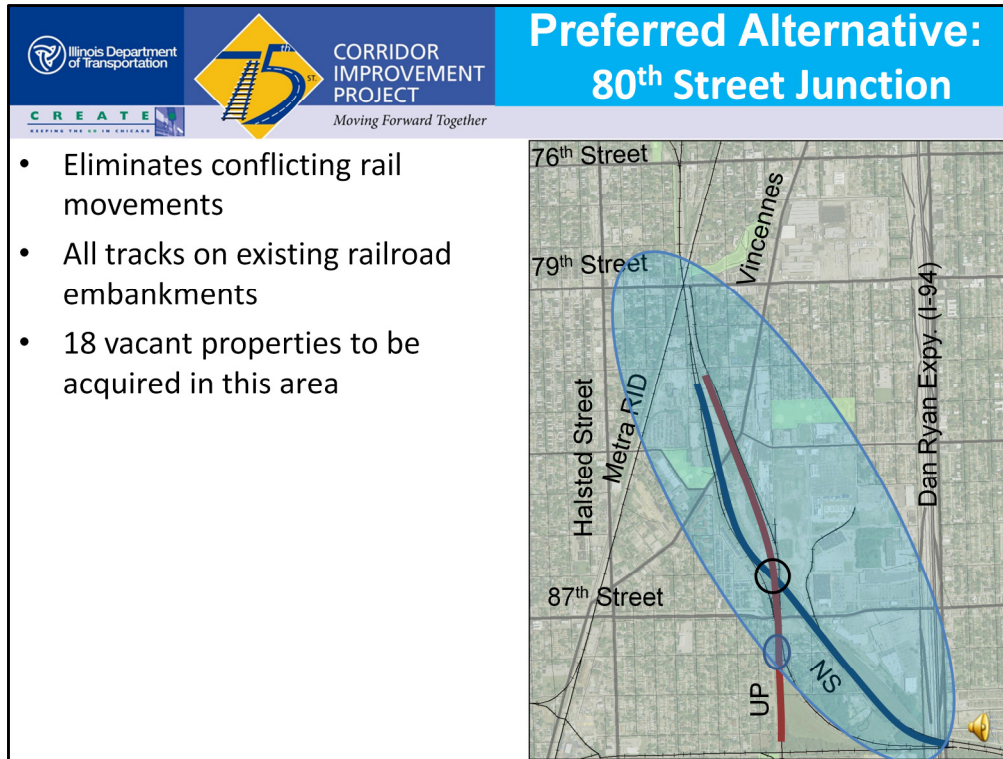
Metra's SouthWest Service line shares its tracks with freight traffic along the 75th Street corridor and north to Union Station.

To separate this service from freight traffic, the Preferred Alternative would connect the SouthWest Service line tracks to Metra's Rock Island District line tracks. This will require a new flyover structure through the residential neighborhood south of Hamilton Park. Metra's SouthWest Service line would arrive in downtown Chicago at LaSalle Street Station instead of Union Station.

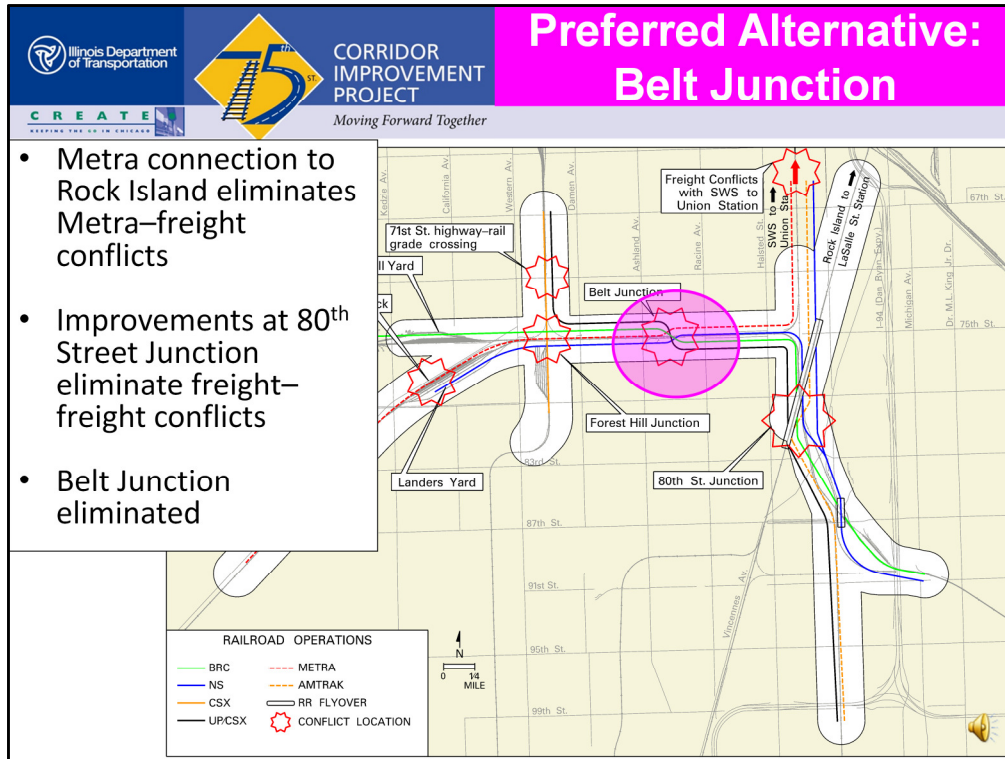
This map shows the new structure and the properties which would be acquired.





In addition, the Union Avenue viaduct would be closed. Union Avenue would become a two-way street both north and south of the train tracks. Three residential properties would need to be acquired along the south side of the tracks. The decision to close Union Avenue was made with the concurrence of elected officials, emergency responders, and the community.



At 80th Street Junction, six tracks used by five different railroads narrow to three tracks. The Preferred Alternative would realign existing tracks and provide additional new tracks to eliminate this bottleneck.



Construction of the Preferred Alternative in other areas would eliminate the conflicts at Belt Junction.

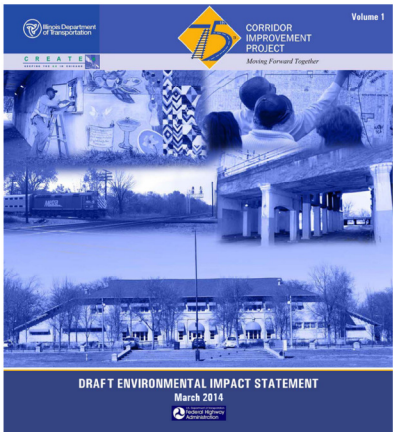
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Moving Forward Together

Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)



- Describes alternatives, including the “No-Build” alternative
- Describes benefits and impacts
- Describes mitigation measures
- Will be finalized after Public Hearing and Comment Period





As the Project Team developed the Preferred Alternative, it also prepared the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS. This important document describes:

- The project alternatives, including the “No-Build” alternative, or taking no action
- The benefits and impacts of the Preferred Alternative, and
- The mitigation measures that will be included in the project as well as some additional ones that are under investigation. Mitigation means avoiding or reducing the negative consequences associated with the project if it is built.



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Mitigation

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Overview

1. Benefits of the Preferred Alternative
2. Impacts of the Preferred Alternative and Mitigation Measures
3. Temporary Construction Impacts and Mitigation Measures
4. Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Investigation. **Your Input is Needed!**



We will now discuss the benefits and impacts of the Preferred Alternative; mitigation measures developed to address impacts; and temporary construction impacts and mitigation measures to reduce those impacts.

We will also explain additional mitigation measures and benefits still under investigation. Please provide input on these items on the comment sheet that you were provided.





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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Benefits of Meeting Purpose and Need for the 75th St. CIP



| | |
|---|---|
| Reduces rail-rail crossing conflicts | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decreased train idling 2. Decreased air emissions from locomotives 3. Improved safety and security |
| Reduces road-rail crossing conflicts | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elimination of the at-grade crossing at 71st Street and CSX tracks 2. Eliminates 3 ½ hours of daily road closure 3. Improved safety |
| Improves Rail Passenger Service Reliability | Faster and more reliable Metra and Amtrak service |
| Reduces Local Mobility Problems | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major improvements at 36 viaducts in the project area 2. Improved mobility, safety, and security for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists 3. Improved appearance of viaducts |



The construction of the Preferred Alternative would meet the Purpose and Need for the 75th St. CIP, resulting in real benefits to those who live in and travel through the project area.

The benefits include:

- Decreased train idling
- Decreased air emissions
- Improved safety and security
- Elimination of the at-grade crossing at 71st Street
- Faster and more reliable Metra and Amtrak service, and
- Replacement and reconstruction of 36 viaducts.

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Physical Characteristics and Socioeconomics

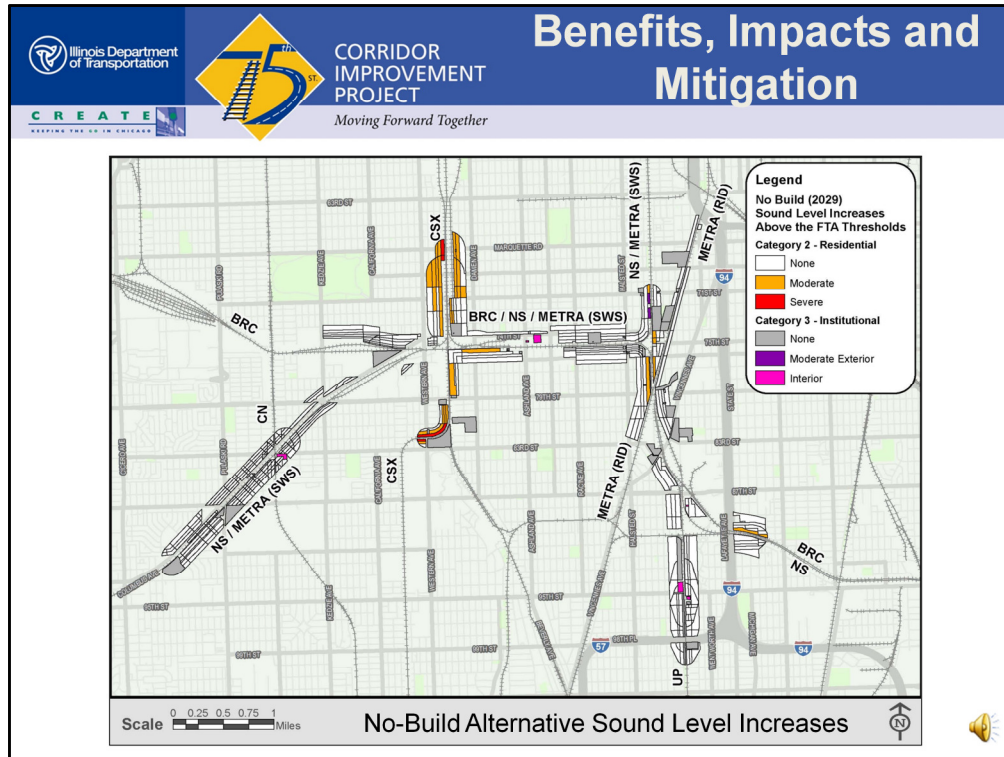
| Impacts | Commitments and Mitigation |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42 parcels of land to be acquired 15.4 acres of private property 1.3 acres of public property No businesses or commercial establishments would need to move | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal and Illinois property acquisition and relocation policies followed Fair market value Relocation assistance <div> <h3>Mitigation Under Investigation</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some affected residential property owners who owe more on their property than its fair market value (negative equity) could receive assistance in settling their mortgage balance. Opportunities would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis when appropriately justified. </div> |

The 75th St. CIP Project Team worked hard to minimize the need to acquire property.

Property acquisition would occur near 80th Street Junction, Union Avenue, Forest Hill Junction, and in the neighborhood south of Hamilton Park.

No businesses or commercial establishments would need to move.

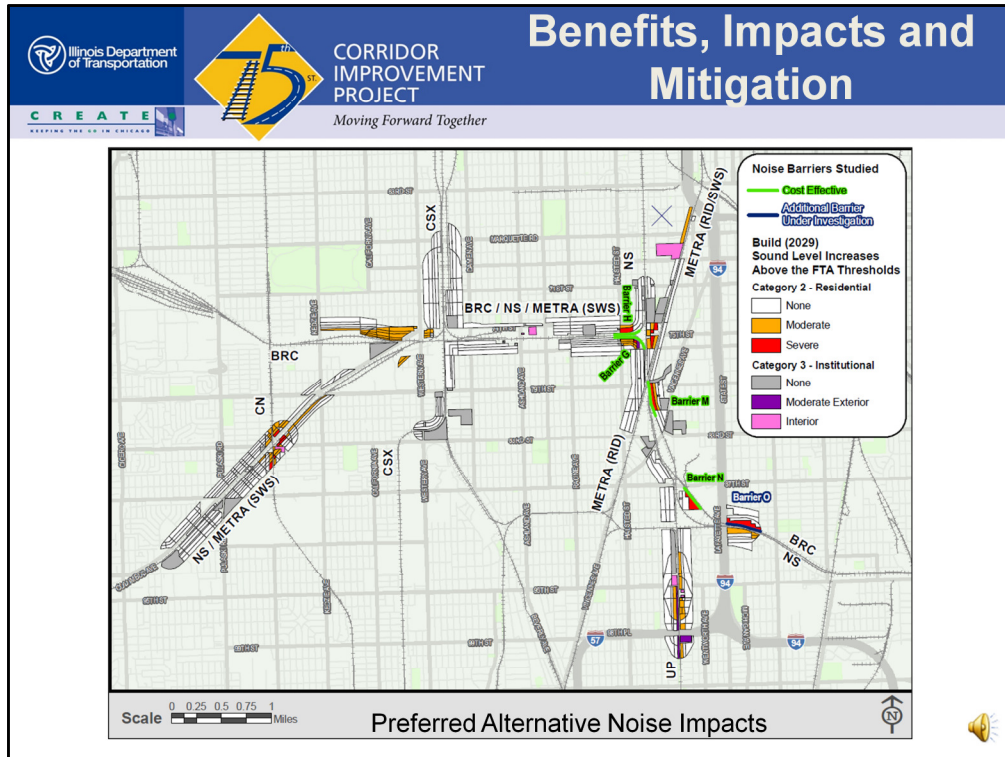
All property acquisition will follow Federal and Illinois property acquisition and relocation policies. Owners will receive fair market value and relocation assistance would be available for both owners and renters. The project may assist some residential property owners settle their mortgage balance if they owe more money than the fair market value. This would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.





Noise is a major concern of people who live in the project area. Railroad tracks in the project area, some as much as 150 years old, carry freight and passenger trains every day.

Train traffic in the region will grow, whether the project is constructed or not. The Project Team compared existing noise levels to the noise levels that are predicted to exist if the project is built and if it is not built.

This map identifies locations where noise is predicted to increase if the project is not built.




This map identifies locations where noise levels are predicted to increase if the project is built.





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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation




| | Preferred Alternative | No-Build Alternative | Difference |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Residences above the FTA moderate impact threshold | 1,092 | 1,009 | 83 |
| Residences above the FTA severe impact threshold | 267 | 90 | 177 |
| Institutional facilities above FTA moderate impact threshold | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Institutional facilities above FTA interior impact threshold | 7 | 7 | 0 |



If the project is built, a larger number of residences and institutional facilities will experience noise impacts above the Federal Transportation Administration, or FTA, impact thresholds.

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Noise Commitments and Mitigation

Four recommended noise barriers would provide benefits to:


- 66 residences with moderate impacts
- 123 residences with severe impacts
- 1 park with moderate impacts

Mitigation Under Investigation

One additional noise barrier would provide benefits to:

- 57 severe impacts

Quiet Zones at three crossings in the area (95th Street, 97th Street, and 101st Street) would reduce horn noise at those locations



The Project Team evaluated 23 potential noise barriers to see if they would be a practical way to mitigate noise impacts. The team found that four noise barriers were feasible to construct and meet the criteria for cost-effectiveness and are recommended for the project. These barriers would benefit 189 residences and one park.

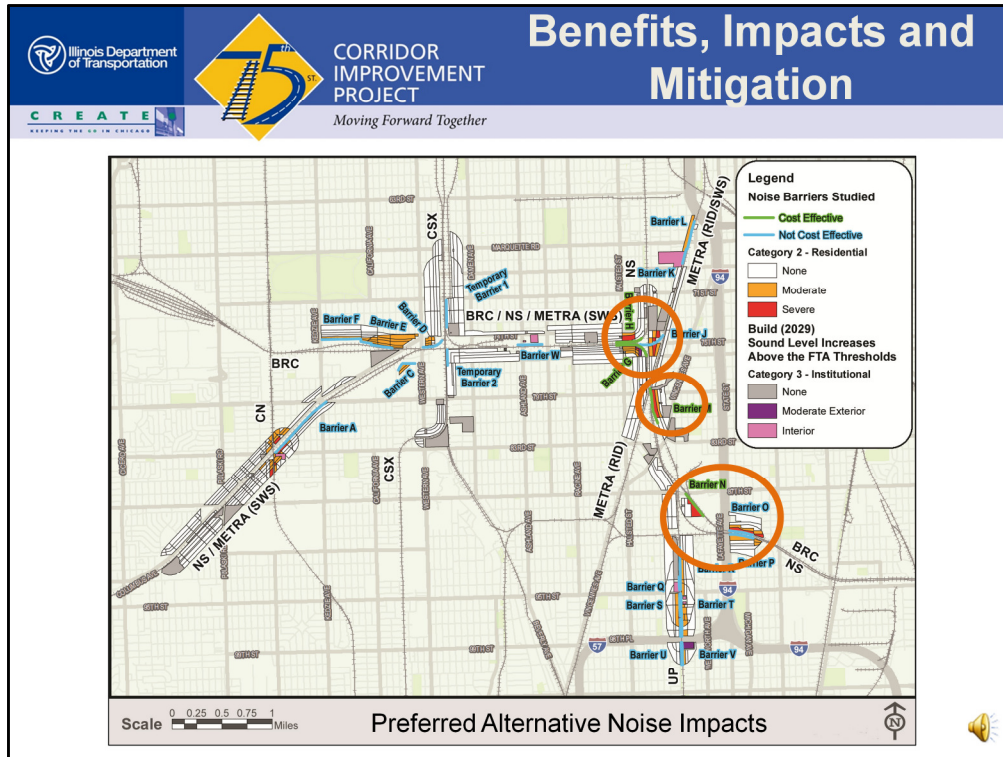
Another noise barrier is close to meeting the cost-effectiveness criteria, and the Project Team recommends that this noise barrier also be built. That barrier would benefit 57 residences.

In addition, the 75th St. CIP may also commit funding for Quiet Zones at three crossings in the area to reduce train horn noise.

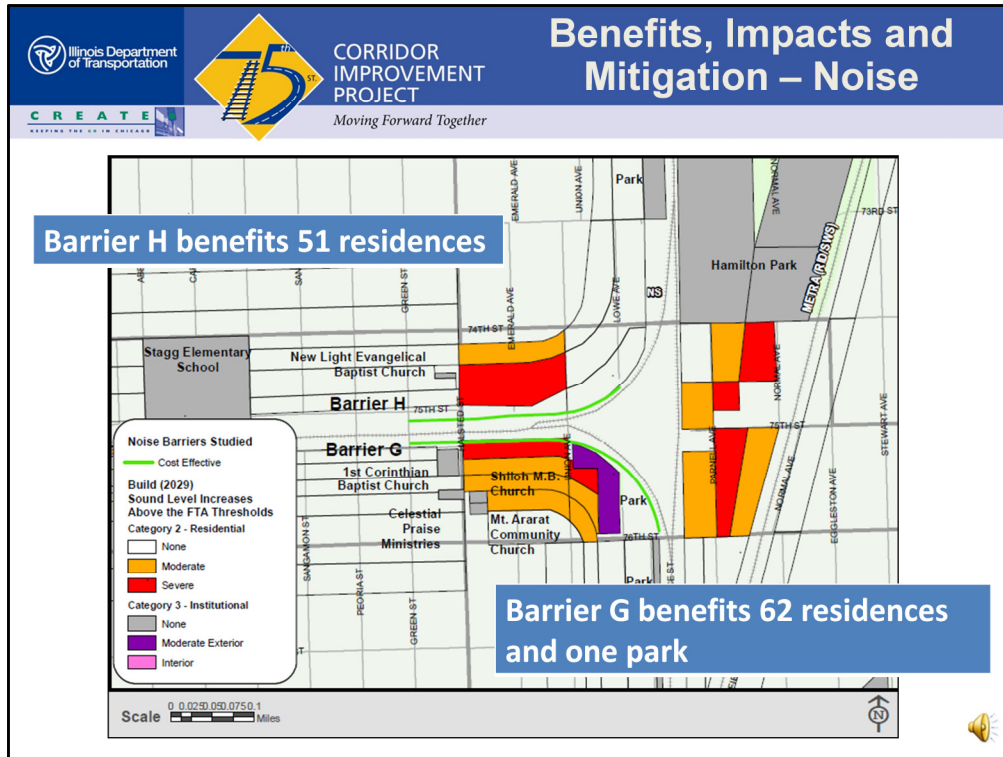


Here are some examples of what a noise barrier could look like.



Those people who would directly benefit from the noise barriers have been identified and asked to tell us if they support or oppose these barriers. Their input will be incorporated into the final decision of whether to build each barrier.



This map shows the locations of the five recommended noise barriers.



Barriers G and H, depicted in green, would run along the north and south sides of the tracks near 75th and Halsted, near the new Metra flyover.

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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Comparisons to Existing Vibration Levels

| | Preferred Alternative | No-Build Alternative | Difference |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Properties with ground-borne vibration levels above the FTA threshold | 755 | 28 | 727 |
| Properties with ground-borne noise levels above the FTA threshold | 77 | 58 | 19 |

Vibration Commitments and Mitigation

- Normal maintenance, including
 - Rail grinding
 - Wheel truing
 - Wheel-flat detectors
 - Vehicle reconditioning
- However, they would not completely eliminate the predicted vibration impacts



The community has expressed concerns about vibration from trains. If the Preferred Alternative were built, the number of properties experiencing vibration levels above FTA thresholds would be higher, as seen in the chart.

Maps showing these vibration levels are on display in the exhibit area.

While these levels of vibration are annoying, they are far below levels that would cause damage to structures.

Normal maintenance carried out by the railroads can mitigate some vibration. However, they would not completely eliminate the predicted vibration impacts.



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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

| Energy | |
|---|---|
| Impacts | Commitments and Mitigation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less locomotive idling would result in a 20% reduction in fuel usage compared to the No-Build alternative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in fuel use is a benefit – no mitigation needed |




Construction of the project would mean less locomotive idling, resulting in 20% less fuel usage compared to the No-Build alternative.




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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation

Air Quality

| Impacts | Commitments and Mitigation |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less locomotive idling would result in fewer emissions due to reduction in fuel consumption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in air emissions is a benefit – no mitigation needed |




Less locomotive idling would also result in fewer air emissions due to the reduction in fuel consumption. These are benefits to the project area.




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Benefits, Impacts and Mitigation



| Visual Resources | |
|--|--|
| Impacts | Commitments and Mitigation |
| Two flyovers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metra Rock Island flyover south of Hamilton Park CSX flyover at 71st Street/Forest Hill Junction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscaping Tree planting Public art |




The project would include the construction of two rail flyover structures, which would change the way these neighborhoods look. The project would commit to landscaping, tree planting, and public art, which would be developed in coordination with the community.

| <div>   <div> CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT </div> <div> Moving Forward Together </div> </div> <div> Temporary Construction Impacts </div> | |
|---|--|
| Temporary Construction Impacts | Mitigation |
| Traffic | City of Chicago Traffic Management Plans |
| Construction noise and vibration | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Chicago ordinances for noise and vibration 2. Ongoing coordination/information campaign during construction |
| Rodents | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Chicago ordinances 2. Contractors control rodents during the land-clearing and through construction to protect residential areas |
| Retaining walls near Hamilton Park and Leland Giants Park | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permits from Chicago Park District 2. Landscaping plan for restoration |



The public has expressed concerns about the temporary impacts of project construction.

Traffic Management Plans would be required during construction.


Construction activities would be coordinated with the community and adhere to noise and vibration requirements.

Rodents would be controlled during construction.

The project would obtain access permits from the Chicago Park District and re-landscape affected areas. No finished construction will remain on park land.



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Your Input Needed!

| Additional Mitigation Measures and Benefits Under Investigation | |
|---|--|
| Job Training and Educational Programs | Bicycle Improvements |
| Bus Stop Improvements | Remnant and Vacant Parcel Improvements |
| Sidewalk Improvements | Streetscape Improvements |

Help us decide! ➡
Use your comment form.

The Project Team developed additional mitigation measures based on feedback received from the community during the public involvement process to address impacts and provide additional benefits to the community. These additional mitigation measures are above and beyond current CREATE Program policies.

These include Job Training and Educational Programs, Bus Stop Improvements, Sidewalk Improvements, Bicycle Improvements, Remnant and Vacant Parcel Improvements, and Streetscape Improvements.

Please share your opinion on these measures when providing your comments. Your input will help us determine the mitigation measures that are included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.




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Job Training, Employment, and
Small Business Opportunities



The CREATE Program is committed to helping local residents find out about job opportunities and requirements through:

- IDOT's Highway Construction Careers Training Program
- Urban League's Transportation Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program
- IDOT's Bureau of Small Business Enterprises and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program

Railroads are hiring now. See the CREATE Employment Opportunities handout and visit the railroad websites.

HCCTP News

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION CAREERS TRAINING PROGRAM



CONSTRUCTION COURSES OFFERED IN VARIOUS SKILLS:

- OSHA 10-hour Safety
- First Aid/CPR/AED
- Aerial Lift
- Fork Lift
- Mobile Crane
- Crane Signaling
- Skid Steer






Chicago
Urban League

Ready to Launch Your Construction Career?
Join the Chicago Urban League Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program

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Railroads are hiring now. See the CREATE Employment Opportunities handout and visit the railroad websites.



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Next Steps

What Happens Next?

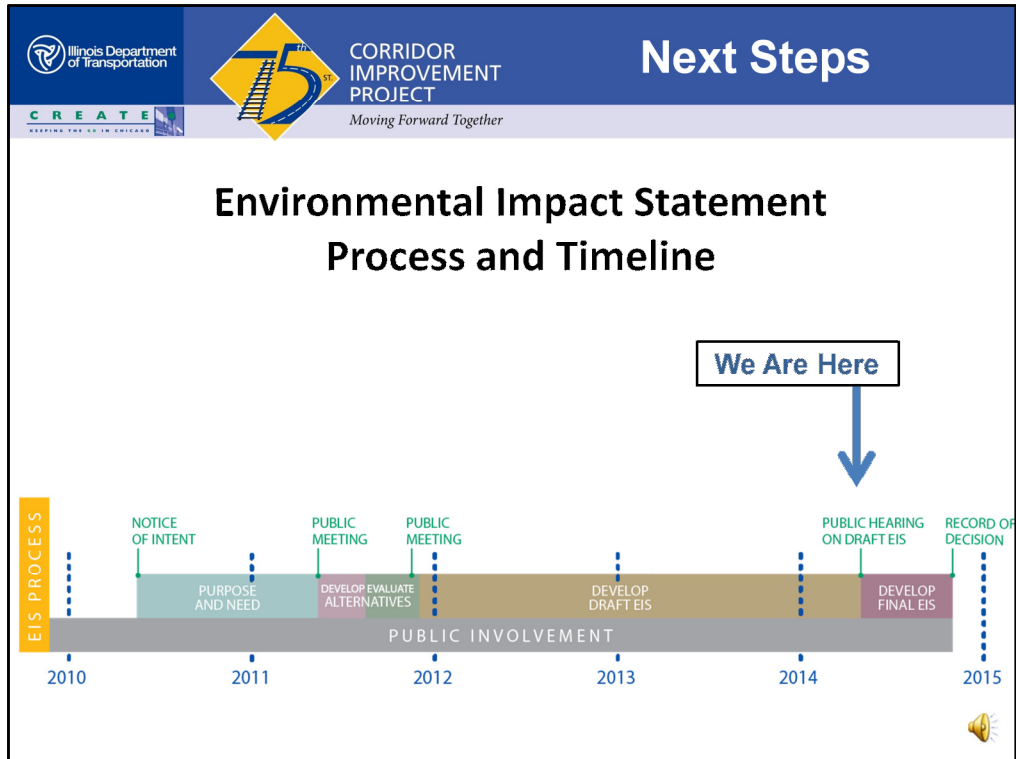
- Public Comment Period on Draft Environmental Impact Statement
 - March 28 – May 22, 2014
 - DEIS available at area libraries and www.75thcip.org
- Consider agency and public input
- Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the 75th St. CIP by October 2014
- 75th St. CIP ready for Phase II Design




What happens next?

The Public Comment Period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will last until May 22nd.


Public and agency comments will be considered as part of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the project. These documents will be completed in October 2014. The project will then be ready to move on to Phase II, project design.



On this timeline you can see that we are nearing the completion of the Environmental Impact Statement Process.



Illinois Department of Transportation




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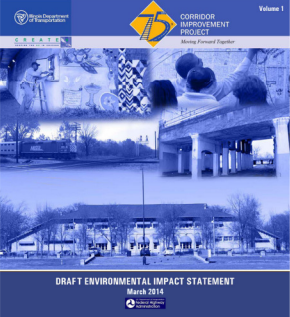
How to Comment Today




KEEPING THE GO IN CHICAGO

Comment Today on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Submit a written comment
- Give a comment to the court reporter
- Comment in the formal session (6-7 p.m.)
 - Sign in at registration table.
 - If people are waiting to speak, comments limited to 3 minutes in length. Longer statements may be made in writing.







Your comments are important to us, and there are many ways to give us your feedback.

You may submit a written comment and place it in the comment box in the exhibit area.


You may make a statement to the court reporter.

You may comment during the formal session today, which will be held from 6-7 p.m. Please sign in at the registration table if you would like to speak. Comments will be limited to 3 minutes in length.

You may give longer testimony in writing.



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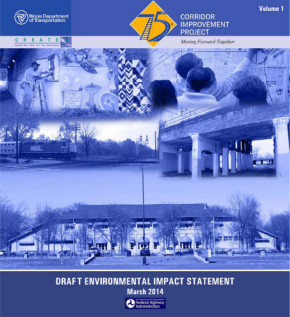


How to Comment Later


Comment Later on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Send an email to info@75thcip.org
- Comment online at www.75thcip.org
- Mail comments to:
75th St. CIP
525 W. Monroe, Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60661
Attn: Tom Underwood

The public comment period lasts from **March 28 to May 22, 2014.**



Read it online at:
www.75thcip.org
or at area
libraries.



You may send an email or comment online. You may also mail comments to the address listed in the brochure.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is available on EPA, IDOT, and CREATE websites and can be reviewed at local libraries and IDOT's Chicago office.

Comments must be provided by May 22, 2014.



Thank you for attending today's Public Hearing! We look forward to receiving your comments.