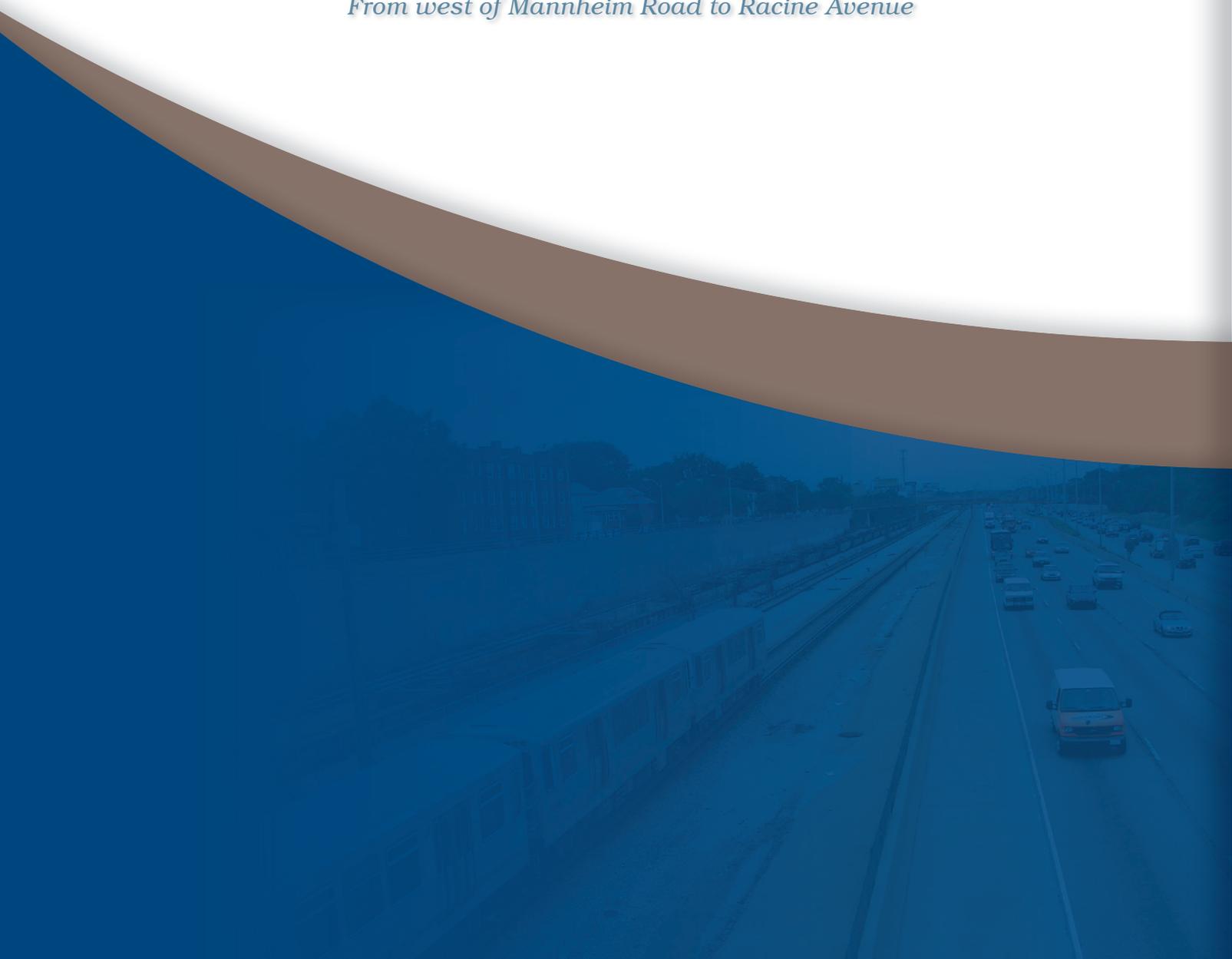


# I-290 | Eisenhower Expressway

*From west of Mannheim Road to Racine Avenue*



Public Comments and  
Agency Coordination

December 2016

## 4.0 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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Agency coordination and stakeholder involvement are critical to developing transportation improvement recommendations that address the needs of the Study Area. This section summarizes the agency and public involvement regulatory requirements, approach and methodology, agency coordination and stakeholder coordination conducted for the I-290 Study. Documentation of the project outreach and coordination with the public, local, state and federal agencies can be found on the project website and in the project record.

A Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) approach was developed to be responsive to the unique conditions and character of the Project Corridor. The approach was developed to facilitate the collection of substantive agency and stakeholder input, ensure that public concerns are duly considered, consider alternative modes of transportation, satisfy federal and state requirements, and to work towards a consensus solution.

### 4.1 Outreach Requirements

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#### 4.1.1 Federal and State Requirements

The preparation of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is in compliance with federal and state public involvement requirements. These include the following:

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- 23 USC 139: Title 23 of United States Code (USC) - pertains to regulations governing highway projects. Section 139 of Title 23 describes the process governing *Efficient Environmental reviews for Project Decisionmaking*.
- 23 CFR 771: Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 771 - describes the policies and procedures that Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) adheres to regarding implementation of NEPA for the processing of highway and public transportation projects.

Context Sensitive Solutions

- 605 ILCS 5/4-219: Chapter 605 (Roads and Bridges) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) governing Section 5 the Illinois Highway Code, Article 4-219 states that context sensitive design and CSS be employed on Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) projects in an effort to ensure that projects meet the State's transportation needs, while existing in harmony with their surroundings and add lasting value to the communities they serve.

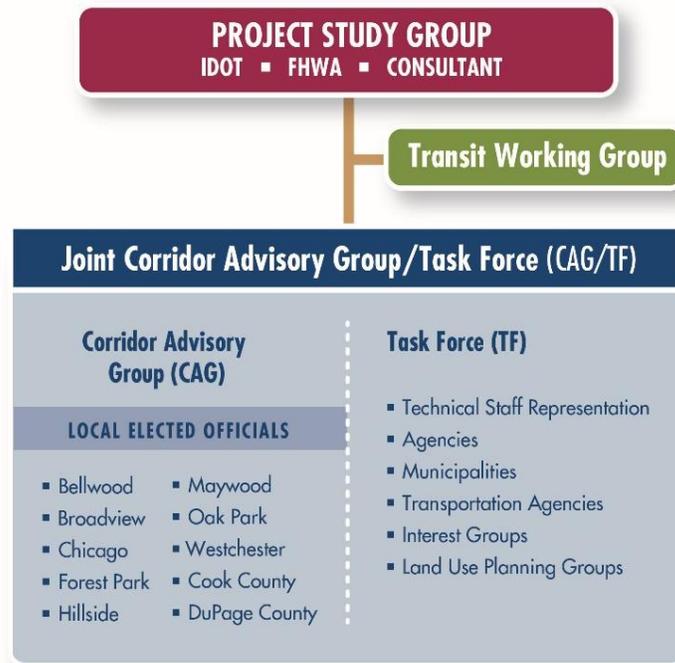
### 4.1.2 Stakeholder Involvement Plan

A Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) was developed to provide a framework for communicating the decision-making process between the general public, public agencies, and governmental officials with respect to this study. The SIP was made available to all stakeholders and was revised and updated periodically throughout the duration of the study. It can be found in the Project Reports section of the Information Center at [www.eisenhowerexpressway.com](http://www.eisenhowerexpressway.com).

### 4.1.3 Project Study Group

A Project Study Group (PSG) was established to lead the study. The PSG is comprised of multidisciplinary representatives from IDOT, FHWA, and the project consulting team. The PSG is tasked with determining the ultimate project recommendations and decisions (Figure 4-1). The PSG has a primary responsibility for following and implementing the project development process, including agency coordination and stakeholder involvement. This group collaborates throughout the EIS process to provide oversight and expertise in key areas including study process, agency procedures, design standards, and technical evaluations. The PSG also has a primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with the SIP, promoting partnerships with stakeholders to address identified project needs, and developing consensus among stakeholders.

Figure 4-1. Project Working Group Structure



## 4.2 Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force (CAG/TF) Meetings

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The PSG used a wide range of outreach methods for agency coordination and public involvement throughout the I-290 Study. However, the backbone of the I-290 Study public coordination process has been the Corridor Advisory Group (CAG). The CAG consists of representatives from each corridor community, transportation agencies, interests groups, and has been open to the general public. Twenty-one meetings have been held with this group at, and in-between, NEPA and various study milestones, and are summarized in Table 4-1. As agency, municipal, and interest group representatives, the CAG participants played a key role in the identification, development, and refinement of build alternatives, including recommendation of a preferred alternative.

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings

Project Phase Key: P = Purpose and Need; AD = Alternatives Development; AE = Alternatives Evaluation
October 14, 2009 – CAG/TF Meeting #1 (P) An overview of the proposed project was provided followed by two breakout working sessions. The first session sought CAG input on concerns, issues, and deficiencies along the Project Corridor. The second breakout session asked CAG members to work in groups to identify goals and objectives for the project. Feedback received served as a basis for the development of the project problem statement and ultimately the project Purpose and Need.
January 19, 2010 – CAG/TF Meeting #2 (P) A review of the Phase I Study Process and recap of the CAG/TF Meeting #1 and Public Meeting #1 comments was provided. The study approach and methodology for the technical analyses were presented including: travel demand model; travel demand forecasting; definition of the Study Area; and the approach to analyze existing conditions of the major transportation elements including roadways, transit, freight railroads, non-motorized travel, socioeconomic, and land use. A draft problem statement was presented.
February 17, 2010 - CAG/TF Meeting #3 (P) An overview of the Phase I Study Process including Data Collection, Purpose and Need, Alternatives Development and Evaluation, and selection of a Preferred Alternative was presented. The draft Problem Statement was revised based on input from the CAG/TF members. The findings of the Cook-DuPage Corridor Study (2003-2009, by others) were reviewed. This study encompassed a broader, regional study area, and included a Travel Market Analysis and Options Feasibility Study with a goal of establishing a framework to help guide future transportation planning. Part 1 of the I-290 Existing Transportation Systems Analysis findings were presented including public transit, summary of the Cook-DuPage Corridor Study (2003-2009) findings, geometric deficiencies, drainage, and non-motorized transportation.

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings (continued)

<p>April 29, 2010 - CAG/TF Meeting #4 (P)</p> <p>Additional revisions to the Problem Statement, based on stakeholder input were reviewed, and the statement was finalized. The second part of the Existing Transportation Systems Analysis findings was presented including preliminary operations and crash analysis results. A summary of the methodology and development of the travel demand model and forecasts for the build and no-build scenarios was presented. Formal development of the project Purpose and Need was initiated based on the CAG-developed Problem Statement and the findings of the existing transportation systems analysis report.</p>
<p>July 22, 2010 - CAG/TF Meeting #5 (P)</p> <p>Additional existing conditions operations and safety analysis findings were presented including an in-depth look at the crash types and causes at specific locations within the project limits. A discussion of the Initial Needs of the corridor and five identified transportation project purpose and need points were reviewed. Copies of project Purpose and Need slides were distributed via email for comment.</p>
<p>September 23, 2010 - CAG/TF Meeting #6 (P, AD)</p> <p>A draft outline of the project Purpose and Need was reviewed followed by a presentation of the proposed alternatives development and evaluation process that included several rounds of development and analysis for single mode and combination mode alternatives. Proposed transportation benefit and environmental evaluation measures were presented. An environmental inventory map was provided with known environmental features and constraints; stakeholders were asked to review the map and provide any additional information.</p>
<p>December 2, 2010 - CAG/TF Meeting #7 (P, AD)</p> <p>The Phase I Study process was recapped followed by a summary of the stakeholder comments received on the project Purpose and Need outline that was distributed to the CAG members on November 24, 2010. An updated Purpose and Need outline, with revisions based on CAG input, was reviewed. The initial alternatives development and evaluation process was presented and initiated via a facilitated Alternatives Identification Workshop. CAG/TF members were provided with large scale maps, and various tools to assist sketching and describing various transportation alternatives and solutions to address the project Purpose and Need.</p>
<p>January 27, 2011 - CAG/TF Meeting #8 (P, AD)</p> <p>The draft Purpose and Need document was discussed, with a full draft to be prepared by the next CAG/TF meeting. A summary of the alternatives submitted by stakeholders at the Public Meeting, CAG/TF Meeting #7, and from the Cook-DuPage Corridor Study was presented, summarized by mode. A list of initial single mode alternatives to be evaluated with the travel demand model was reviewed. Typical section requirements for various transportation modes were presented and discussed.</p>
<p>March 22, 2011 - CAG/TF Meeting #9 (P, AD)</p> <p>The Phase I Study process was recapped followed by an update to the Existing Transportation System Performance report. Updates included additional crash analysis at high crash locations and review of an additional report on the existing Americans with Disability Act deficiencies in the Study Area. The Travel Model update from year 2030 to year 2040 was reviewed followed by an overview of the upcoming Public Meeting #2 agenda. A facilitated alternatives alignment and footprint workshop was conducted to review single mode alternative alignments and footprints, and to identify physical/environmental constraints and opportunities.</p>

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings (continued)

<p>July 27, 2011 - CAG/TF Meeting #10 (AD, AE)</p> <p>A review of Public Meeting #2 was presented including a summary of comments received. The process for evaluating Round 1 Single Mode Alternatives was presented along with the initial list of Single Mode Alternatives selected for evaluation. These included seven transit, seven expressway, and one arterial alternative. Concept-level footprints and a fatal flaw analysis of the alternatives were reviewed as well as safety and travel performance measures from the travel demand model. A summary of the in-progress results were provided, with evaluations still on-going.</p>
<p>September 29, 2011 – CAG/TF Meeting #11 (AE)</p> <p>A recap of the CAG/TF meeting format and document review process was presented. The Round 1 Single Mode Alternatives Evaluation results presentation was continued from the previous CAG/TF meeting, starting with a recap of the alternatives screening process. A summary matrix of the Round 1 performance evaluation results was presented, categorized by each of the five purpose and need points. A results summary was distributed highlighting the top four performing single mode transit and highway alternatives.</p>
<p>December 1, 2011 - CAG/TF Meeting #12 (AE)</p> <p>The Phase I Study process and progress was summarized along with an update on the Purpose and Need document. A summary of the Round 1 analysis findings and overall conclusions were presented. Round 2 Combination Mode Alternatives evaluation was initiated with the identification of ten initial combination mode alternatives to be evaluated with the travel demand model. The ten alternatives combined highway, express bus, and high capacity transit modes.</p>
<p>March 15, 2012 - CAG/TF Meeting #13 (AE)</p> <p>The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped. Results of the ten initial combination alternatives Round 2 evaluation was presented in additional detail. The alternatives scoring system was explained with overall scores calculated based on each Purpose and Need point, which carry equal weight. The top Round 2 combination mode alternatives were summarized and recommended for further refinement and evaluation. The interchange and access evaluation approach was presented.</p>
<p>June 11, 2012 - CAG/TF Meeting #14 (AE)</p> <p>The Phase I Study process and progress was summarized followed by a review of the Round 1 and initial Round 2 findings. The CAG requested that two additional combination alternatives be evaluated as part of the Round 2 evaluation. Round 3 evaluation approach was presented which would further refine and evaluate the top Round 2 performing alternatives, adding in additional design detail. The goal of Round 3 is to determine the alternatives to be carried forward for detailed analysis in the DEIS. The extension of eastern limit of the Study Area to the Jane Byrne (formerly Circle) Interchange project limit was also discussed. A facilitated interchange and access workshop was held to review initial interchange configurations and access concepts, identify any issues or concerns, and identify any other potential interchange designs or access configurations.</p>

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings (continued)

February 22, 2013 - CAG/TF Meeting #15 (AE)

The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped. An update of the Round 2 combination mode alternatives was presented that included the analysis of two additional alternatives requested by the CAG. From the 12 Round 2 Alternatives, the four top performing combination mode alternatives were selected for further evaluation in Round 3. An overview of the interchange and access design and local coordination was provided. The Study Area was formally extended to Racine Avenue and summary of existing conditions for the expanded study area section was provided. Round 3 screening analysis approach was revisited followed by a discussion of environmental factors to be included as part of Round 3 evaluation.

Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) introduced the Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study (Blue Line Vision Study) and the steps that would be taken to study the existing and future market potential and condition needs of the Forest Park Branch; the results are intended to inform the I-290 Study.

July 17, 2013 - CAG/TF Meeting #16 (AE)

A summary of Round 2 comments was provided and along with responses to several stakeholder questions including right of way impacts, left-side ramps, livability in the project Purpose and Need, congestion relief, congestion pricing, urban design, Blue Line extension, land use and travel markets, and environmental justice. Renderings of the Austin Boulevard and Harlem Avenue interchange concepts were displayed. An alternate Round 2 scoring methodology, (ratio scoring) was presented and resulted in the same four top performing alternatives as the original scoring method (ordinal). The final Round 3 alternatives to be evaluated in the DEIS were presented along with a recap of the evaluation activities proposed as part of Round 3. CTA provided an update in the CTA Blue Line Vision Study. A facilitated Bike and Pedestrian workshop was held after the CAG meeting to further detail existing conditions and identify stakeholder issues and needs related to improved bike and pedestrian facilities.

September 4, 2013 - CAG/TF Meeting #17 (AE)

A summary of the bike and pedestrian workshop results was presented followed by a presentation from CTA on the status of Blue Line Vision Study. After the CTA presentation, IDOT stepped through a detailed presentation on geometrics associated with the proposed interchange and access concepts, as well as the mainline reconstruction and restriping sections. This included an overview of design standards and design exceptions. Geometrics was followed by a presentation on the proposed air quality analysis approach, an introduction to aesthetics, and a review of the Highway Safety Manual (HSM) and applicable crash reduction factors. The agenda for the upcoming third public meeting(s) was reviewed (October 7, 2013 and October 8, 2013). Large scale exhibits of the overall proposed expressway, interchange, and crossroad concept were available for CAG review, and PSG representatives were available to answer questions.

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings (continued)

July 30, 2014 - CAG/TF Meeting #18 (AE)

The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped, followed by a summary of Public Meeting #3. The four DEIS build alternatives were reviewed highlighting the identified key project benefits. Transit, safety, managed lanes, funding and construction with respect to a build alternative were discussed. CTA provided an update on the Blue Line Vision Study that included a summary of overall recommendations for the Blue Line modernization. IDOT then presented detailed Round 3 alternatives evaluation findings including expressway and arterial ADT, expressway travel times, safety performance, transit ridership, construction cost estimates, vehicle hours of travel, and productivity savings. An evaluation of the west end operational analysis and a proposed west end mainline lane configuration concept was presented. A summary of delay and queue improvements for the proposed interchange concepts was reviewed, followed by an overview of existing drainage issues and proposed drainage concepts, mainline profile adjustments at Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard, and a shared use trail connection concept at Columbus Park. Traffic Noise Analysis process was explained and included an overview of how noise is measured and perception of sound levels. Traffic noise regulations and the noise analysis steps were summarized. The findings of a noise sensitivity analysis for left vs. right hand ramps was provided. The meeting concluded with a discussion of upcoming local cross-road aesthetic coordination and a distribution of plan and profile geometric packages (plans, profiles, cross-sections) for the CAG review and comment.

September 24, 2014 - CAG/TF Meeting #19 (AE)

The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped followed by an update on the ongoing Round 3 alternatives evaluation. An overview of the content of an EIS was provided. The remainder of the CAG/TF meeting presentation focused on the existing and proposed drainage. This included a description of the current expressway drainage system design, deficiencies and flooding issues, and an assessment of municipal areas that drain to the expressway system during larger storm events. Sets of existing drainage plans were provided to each municipality, and to others as requested, for review and comment regarding documentation of known drainage issues and location of drainage features.

August 27, 2015 – CAG/TF Meeting #20 (AE)

The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped followed by an update on the CTA Blue Line Vision Study final findings presented by CTA. IDOT provided a crash analysis update that included 2013 crash data. Crash analysis was followed by a detailed summary of the proposed frontage road and ramp access configuration between 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and resulting average local travel distance changes. Air quality analysis results were presented including the results of a regional project air quality sensitivity analysis for each DEIS build alternative, and a carbon monoxide intersection sensitivity analysis. A noise analysis update was provided that included a summary of the existing vs. no build condition noise levels and a discussion of upcoming build conditions analysis and noise wall viewpoint solicitations. An overview of Section 106, Section 4(f) and Environmental Justice considerations was provided, including project applicability and considerations. The presentation concluded with an overview of the aesthetic approach for the mainline expressway and cross roads.

Table 4-1. Corridor Advisory Group/Task Force Meetings (continued)

October 15, 2015 - CAG/TF Meeting #21 (AE)

The Phase I Study process and progress was recapped followed by the conclusions of the Round 3 analysis of the DEIS alternatives. Air quality results for Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT), and quantitative PM<sub>2.5</sub> analysis of the alternatives were summarized. Noise analysis results for the four DEIS alternatives were provided. An overview of the environmental justice policies and principles, and a summary of the effects and benefits of the build alternatives was presented. A preliminary preferred alternative was identified based on the completion of the Round 3 evaluation and a comparison of results. This included a summary of how the preliminary preferred alternative meets the stakeholder goal and objectives identified at the beginning of the CAG process. Noise abatement analysis process and results for the preliminary preferred alternative were presented to the advisory group, indicating where noise walls were found to be reasonable and feasible. Noise wall viewpoint solicitations are the next step in the process. Three public Noise Wall Forum meetings were scheduled to provide information and answer stakeholder questions on the noise wall process. The final presentation topic was an overview of ITS concepts that are being considered in the Project Corridor and potential off-system arterial improvements that could be implemented in conjunction with the expressway improvements.

December 14, 2016 - CAG/TF Meeting #22 (AE)

An overview of the DEIS and a summary and status of the CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch Vision Study were presented. The DEIS overview reviewed the purpose and need, alternatives evaluation process, a description of the No Build and four DEIS alternatives, and the identification of the HOT 3+ alternative as the Preferred Alternative. A summary of how the HOT 3+ alternative addressed stakeholder goals and the problem statement was provided. Summary findings from the DEIS for environmental justice, air quality, traffic noise, special lands, indirect and cumulative, Section 106, and comments and coordination were presented. An overview of the construction approach, including advance work, a conceptual construction schedule, and construction effects mitigation was presented. CTA and CSX design coordination and the use of FHWA's INVEST sustainability tool were summarized. Next steps and schedule were provided, including the DEIS release, public hearing dates, locations, and format, the end of the DEIS comment period, and release of the combined FEIS/Record of Decision. It was also noted that Phase II design and Phase III construction are not funded. The CTA Blue Line Vision Study summary included community outreach, recommendation summaries for single entry stations, infrastructure, and station design, construction approach, and next steps.

## 4.3 Stakeholder, Community, and Agency Coordination

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This section summarizes other stakeholder, community, and agency coordination and outreach that occurred as part of the I-290 Study.

### 4.3.1 Stakeholder Outreach

In addition to the CAG meetings, a range of other outreach and coordination approaches were used that provided additional layers and coverage of stakeholder participation in the study process. These included one-on-one meetings with individual project stakeholders, village boards, village staff working groups, agency meetings, interest groups, town hall meetings, and more. A summary of the outreach methods is provided in Table 4-2, with more detailed documentation provided on the project website in the Public Involvement Record.

Table 4-2. Summary of Outreach Methods  
(as of December 2016)

Outreach Method	Quantity
Stakeholder Mailing List Members	3,000
Project Website - Visits	63,300
Newsletters and Fact Sheets	6
Media Releases and E-Mail News	3 and 69
Community Stakeholder Meetings	128
Agency Stakeholder Meetings	52
NEPA/404 Merger Meetings	6
Transit Working Group Meetings	10
Public Meetings	3
Speaking Engagements	11
Public Comments Received & Considered	1,450

**Public Meetings.** Public meetings were held at three different times during the study (Table 4-3). The meetings were held in more than one location within the Study Area to provide additional opportunity and flexibility for public input. Facilities were ADA compliant, easily accessible by public transportation, and located within the Project Corridor.

Table 4-3. Public Meetings

<p>November 18, 2009 – Public Meeting #1: As part of the scoping process, the project team sought stakeholder input on the transportation issues and concerns as it relates to the I-290 Study. The feedback received coupled with data collection allowed IDOT and stakeholders to identify transportation deficiencies and begin to process for developing solution to address these needs.</p>
<p>May 18, 2011 – Public Meeting #2: Highlights of Public Meeting #2 include an explanation of the EIS process, project phases, public involvement opportunities, CSS process, data collection, needs analysis, initial alternatives identification and development, environmental constraints, single mode alternatives analysis, transit suggestions, and suggested arterial improvements.</p>
<p>October 7 and 8, 2013 – Public Meeting #3: Highlights of Public Meeting #3 include expansion of the Study Area, public involvement activities, Purpose and Need recap, Round 2 alternatives development and evaluation process, identification of four finalist alternatives, Round 3 evaluation criteria, proposed Harlem/Austin interchange designs, air quality and noise analysis process, and the CTA Blue Line Vision Study.</p>

Environmental Justice. The PSG worked to ensure full and fair participation opportunity by all potentially affected communities and stakeholders in the study process. Special effort was also made to advertise the public meetings within environmental justice (EJ) communities. In addition to regular meeting notices in newspapers, libraries, and public agency offices, advertisements were also posted in places of worship, laundromats, and local convenience stores. Public meeting notices and website content were also provided in Spanish, and Spanish translation services were available at the public meetings.

Other means of communicating and coordinating with the public, including EJ populations, have been utilized. These additional outreach efforts include:

- Use of a project website ([www.eisenhowerexpressway.com](http://www.eisenhowerexpressway.com)) to disseminate information to the public and receive input and comments. This website provides a central source of project study information and documents, and is available to anyone at any time with access to the internet. Key project information is also translated in Spanish on the website;
- Distribution of four project newsletter/fact sheets at key project milestones to all contacts on the project mailing list, including federal, state, and local officials; special interest groups; resource agencies; business and community leaders; and members of the public (Fall 2009, Spring 2011, Spring 2013, and Fall 2014);
- Use of media outlet press releases, media briefings, publication pieces, media correspondence, and briefings with agency-designated spokespersons to inform the general public about the proposed project and its progress. To specifically reach minority populations regionally, press releases were sent to targeted radio, print and television outlets;

- Advertising the public meetings on digital billboards along I-290; and
- Focused outreach in the Village of Maywood to address access issues brought about by the interchanges proposed between 25<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenues. Section 4.3.2, Community Coordination provides a description of the process used to address the stated concerns.

Primary concerns from EJ communities include access to I-290, improving their local economy, and the ability to directly benefit from the reconstruction of the Eisenhower Expressway in the form of jobs and job training. To address these concerns, representatives from IDOT's community college career training program attended the I-290 public meetings. IDOT has also spoken about the I-290 Study at four town hall meetings and a civic group meeting since 2009. The Maywood Advisory Group was formed to address I-290 access concerns as previously stated.

Other EJ concerns expressed at meetings include economic and business impacts (existing I-290 access will be maintained, and improved 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue interchange operations), community connectivity (1<sup>st</sup> Avenue interchange and 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> avenue I-290 cross-road bridges would have wider sidewalks and improved bicycle, ADA and pedestrian facilities), Village of Maywood residential drainage/flooding issues due to undersized combined storm and sanitary sewer system (proposed I-290 drainage improvements have potential for reducing flooding in 141 acres in Maywood), access to transit (wider sidewalks and improved ADA and pedestrian facilities to improve CTA station access), and financial impacts on the residents (accessibility and shorter access to jobs with I-290 improvements).

Noise Wall Forums. Three Noise Wall Forums were held to publicly share and explain findings of the noise impact and abatement analysis prior to viewpoint solicitation. The meetings were conducted in an open-house format followed by a live presentation and facilitated question-and-answer session. Large scale maps of proposed improvements, noise wall locations, and location of the benefitted properties were available. Also available were boards showing the Phase I Study process and noise wall solicitation process, and a video of before and after noise wall visualizations. The visualizations included relative sound differences playing on a speaker. PSG representatives were available to answer questions. The noise wall forums were held in Chicago, Oak Park, and Hillside in October 2015, with a follow-up event in Maywood in August 2016.

Legislator Town Hall Meetings. There were four public "town hall" meetings requested by state legislators and held within their districts, with presentations by the PSG and question-and-answer periods. These meetings occurred in December 2009 (Representative La Shawn Ford), October 2013 (Senator Don Harmon) and Senator Kimberly Lightford (April 2014 and January 2015). There were various purposes of the meetings, including introducing and providing an overview of the I-290 Study; initiating a dialogue with residents who live near the Eisenhower Expressway, community leaders and advocacy groups; providing additional presentations by the CTA and Citizens for Appropriate Transportation; and discussing proposed improvements that directly impact Maywood. These meetings served to connect state legislators, their constituents, and the PSG in sharing project information and addressing questions.

### 4.3.2 Community Coordination

Both small group one-on-one meetings and broader audience meetings were held with the City of Chicago and the seven other Project Corridor communities. The individual meetings were initiated in 2009 and held throughout the study process at NEPA milestones and other project decision points to solicit comments, brief local officials on the study progress, answer questions, identify local issues and needs, and develop and refine project elements. The following summarizes the outreach efforts with respect to community coordination.

Hillside. Hillside's primary project concerns were existing local street flooding issues in the vicinity of I-290 and the extension of the CTA Blue Line. The project team worked with village staff to identify the cause of drainage issues and develop a plan to address the issues. The accommodation of a future High Capacity Transit extension along I-290 to Mannheim Road was coordinated with Hillside planners.

Bellwood. Bellwood's primary project concerns were associated with expressway access at 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and potential redevelopment of the vacant Wilson School property in the northeast quadrant of the 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange. The project team worked closely with village officials to configure the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange to accommodate future development plans.

Westchester. Westchester's primary project concerns were related to flooding along Addison Creek and the condition of Mannheim Road. The project team coordinated the expressway and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange design with village staff. I-290 does not currently drain to Addison Creek and is not proposed to drain to Addison Creek under the proposed drainage design. IDOT will continue to coordinate with the village on patching work for Mannheim Road in advance of I-290 reconstruction.

Broadview. Broadview's project concerns include the design of 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange, maintaining expressway ramp access to and from the east at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue (for access to their retail development at Cermak Road), flooding conditions along the Des Plaines River/Salt creek/Addison Creek, and pavement flooding at Indian Joe Drive west of the 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange. The project team coordinated 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue interchange designs to incorporate and improve the desired access at these locations as well as addressing parking and circulation concerns along the Bataan Drive which included adding a northbound right turn lane at 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue onto Bataan Drive. The project team addressed village concerns regarding project effects on Des Plaines River flooding and coordinated the proposed drainage plan to help address flooding issues along Indian Joe Drive.

Maywood. Coordination with Village of Maywood staff occurred throughout the study process and included a Town Hall meeting in January 2015. In December 2015, a second town hall meeting was held where concerns were raised by stakeholders regarding the proposed I-290 ramp access concept. To address these concerns the Maywood Advisory Working Group (AWG) was formed consisting of PSG representatives, Village of Maywood staff, village trustees, state representatives, and local citizens. The project

team worked closely with the village staff and AWG to develop and evaluate access alternatives and assess benefits. The AWG process resulted in a revised alternative recommendation that retains the existing I-290 ramp connections at 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> avenues, while providing overall mobility improvements to the community. Detailed traffic models and traffic video simulations were developed to evaluate and demonstrate the effects of the improvements.

Other concerns addressed by the AWG were related to improving traffic conditions at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, providing a safe crossing of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue at the Illinois Prairie Path, ensuring that access to business corridors in the community were maintained or improved, providing for local flooding relief, and noise walls. Drainage improvements that could benefit both IDOT and the Village were also identified with the support of the Village and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Great Chicago. Overall, this eight month extended outreach period with Maywood included five AWG meetings, eight village staff meetings, and two additional town hall meetings.

Forest Park. Forest Park's primary project concerns were related to CTA Blue Line Terminal access, operational improvements along DesPlaines Avenue, bike and pedestrian improvements along DesPlaines Avenue and Circle Avenue, and operational improvements at Harlem Avenue. The project team worked closely with the Village planners and the CTA to coordinate DesPlaines Avenue improvements with the existing and future CTA terminal development. Improved bike and pedestrian accommodations desired by the Village are incorporated at DesPlaines Avenue, Circle Avenue, and Harlem Avenue. In particular, proposed bike and pedestrian features along these arterials will help achieve village goals of improving connectivity over the expressway and to the Park District of Forest Park facility adjacent to and south of the expressway.

Oak Park. The Village of Oak Park has been actively involved throughout the study process. In response to December 2014 correspondence that provided village comments on the concept plan and profile geometry, the Oak Park Working Group (OPWG) was formed. The OPWG consisted of PSG representatives, CTA staff, village staff, elected officials and trustee members. Village concerns addressed include Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard interchange operations and ramp design, expressway elevation and cross-road profiles, air quality impacts, noise walls, drainage, utilities, bicycle and pedestrian features, aesthetics, expressway decking, CTA station accommodations, and construction impacts.

The OPWG met 21 times from February 2015 to August 2016 to systematically work through the issues and concerns raised by the Village of Oak Park, and to develop a consensus plan. Presentations were also made by IDOT and Village staff at 10 Village Board Study Session meetings from January 2015 to July 2016 to publicly communicate the OPWG progress and to address any other issues raised by the Board. Visualizations including traffic simulations, 3-D fly-through animations, and scale 3-D printed models were prepared by the PSG to respond to concerns raised by the village. At the August 1, 2016 Village Board meeting, the Village approved the preferred mainline alternative along with other project elements proposed within the Village limits.

City of Chicago. The PSG met individually with the aldermen of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> wards that border the expressway; CTA and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) were also invited. Concerns of the Wards included the noise impact and abatement process (including viewpoints solicitation voting), potential effects of the project on arterial traffic, improvements and connectivity of the CTA Blue Line and other transit services in conjunction with the project, and the managed-lane component of the build alternatives.

### **4.3.3 Agency Coordination**

Coordination with other transportation providers, local and regional transportation agencies and regulatory agencies has been undertaken to ensure that the proposed improvements to I-290 are operationally consistent with other transportation facilities and services potentially affected by the project. A summary of this coordination follows.

Transit Working Group (TWG). Due to the multimodal nature of the Project Corridor, a TWG was established to provide coordination with relevant service providers throughout the study process. The TWG included the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), CTA, Metra, Pace, the Illinois Tollway, and CMAP, who are also all members of the CAG/TF. The PSG coordinated with the TWG regarding all phases of the study process, ranging from Purpose and Need to alternatives identification and evaluation. The TWG met 10 times during the course of the study.

Chicago Transit Authority. Extensive and continuous coordination occurred between IDOT and the CTA regarding a potential extension of the Blue Line, configuration of transit in alternatives development and refinement, and coordinating the modernization goals of the existing Blue Line Forest Park Branch with the proposed I-290 improvements. IDOT supported and coordinated closely with CTA's Blue Line Vision Study to ensure that the goals of the Blue Line Vision Study were accommodated and supported by the proposed project. CTA's primary project concerns with respect to expressway improvements were Blue Line head station access/interface improvements, coordinating improvements to, or redevelopment of, the Forest Park Terminal/yard/shop facility, bus accommodations and transfers, and the availability of vacant CTA right-of-way for I-290 improvements.

CTA is a member of the CAG/TF and presented at several meetings, was a member of the TWG and attended many of the I-290 one-on-one municipal coordination meetings, town hall meetings, and working group meetings. CTA worked with the project team early in the alternatives development process to determine Blue Line extension opportunities and feasibility, Blue Line Terminal concepts, bus transfer locations and configuration, station/platform design, ADA improvements, bus stop locations, expanded bus layover/waiting areas, shelters, crosswalks, and use of vacant CTA right-of-way for expressway improvements.

Regional Transportation Authority. The RTA has been a regular member of the CAG/TF and TWG. The PSG met with the RTA individually during the initial phases of the study. Project coordination was related to the Purpose and Need statement and alternative identification.

Pace. Pace has been a regular member of the CAG/TF and TWG. The PSG met with Pace individually during the study process. Project coordination included provision of express bus service along I-290 either on a shoulder or in a managed lane, bus pull outs/waiting areas at the Cicero Avenue U-turn, and provisions of improved bus transfers on bridges. Pace worked with the project team to configure the express bus and feeder bus transit components in the build alternatives, as well as bus transfers at specific locations.

NEPA/404 Merger Team. The Illinois NEPA/404 Merger Process was instituted in 1996 by FHWA and IDOT to provide for the concurrent review of federally funded transportation projects requiring an environmental assessment or EIS and an individual section 404 permit. It includes regularly scheduled meetings held with representatives of state and federal regulatory agencies including the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), US Coast Guard (USCG), US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). Projects are presented to the agencies for discussion and concurrence during various stages of development.

Early in the I-290 Study process, the NEPA/404 Merger Team concluded that the I-290 Study would not require formal concurrence by the Merger Team because an individual section 404 permit is not required. It was agreed that an EIS would be prepared to address public concerns, while the PSG would periodically update the NEPA/404 Merger Team at key study milestones, e.g. Purpose and Need, Alternatives to be Carried Forward to the DEIS, and the Preferred Alternative. Few environmental permits were anticipated given the limited presence of protected environmental resources in this developed, urban corridor. A summary of NEPA/404 Merger Team meetings is provided in Appendix K.

US Environmental Protection Agency. The USEPA has been a regular member of the CAG/TF. Coordination with the USEPA also occurred throughout the study process via presentations at NEPA/404 Merger Team Meetings and one-on-one meetings. The USEPA's primary interest was the consideration of EJ communities in alternatives development and evaluation, and that EJ is adequately addressed in the DEIS.

Illinois Tollway. Project interests were primarily related to the interface with their facilities and the configuration of managed lanes and tolling in alternatives development. Coordination with the Illinois Tollway included how I-290 improvements would affect connections with I-88 and I-294, and in particular where managed lanes would begin and end in the west end of the Study Area. The Illinois Tollway was a regular participant in the CAG/TF meeting process and the TWG. The PSG also met with the Illinois Tollway individually during the study.

Illinois State Police. The PSG coordinated with the Illinois State Police regarding the I-290 crash analysis, alternatives and access modifications, intelligent transportation system concepts, and potential enforcement areas.

Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways. Cook County's project interests were primarily related to how county-maintained frontage roads would be affected by the proposed improvements and the desire to transfer jurisdiction of remnants sections of county-maintained frontage roads to local agencies in conjunction with this project. The project team coordinated the scope of frontage road improvements with Cook County and local governments regarding potential jurisdictional transfers.

DuPage County Division of Transportation. DuPage County's project interests included transit connections, the Prairie Path, and the I-290/I-88/I-294/North Avenue connections. DuPage County has also been a regular participant at CAG/TF meetings.

Chicago Department of Transportation. CDOT has been an active participant in the CAG/TF meetings, and the PSG also met individually with the agency. Their primary project focus was with the design and operation of the Laramie/Cicero and Austin interchanges; ADA/pedestrian treatments at intersections; and arterial performance.

Chicago Park District. Coordination with the Chicago Park District was primarily focused on the proposed project elements adjacent to Columbus Park and the proposed shared-use path connection to the Columbus Park trail system. As described in Section 3.12, Special Lands, no impacts to Columbus Park are anticipated, however, the Chicago Park District has been interested in the alignment and profile of the Austin Boulevard and Central Avenue Ramps, and the connection of the proposed shared-use path to the west end of Columbus Park. Coordination with the Chicago Park District is ongoing to provide enhancements along the southern edge of the park in conjunction with the expressway reconstruction.

CSX and Other Railroads. Coordination with the CSX Railroad included discussion of the potential to reallocate or obtain portions of their existing operational envelope (right-of-way), discussion of railroad vertical clearance requirements beneath the crossroad bridges from Central Avenue and DesPlaines Avenue, and their I-290 bridge crossing. Through the study process, the PSG coordinated with the CSX to develop and refine a concept that would improve vertical clearances to a minimum of 21 feet-9 inches, improve drainage and decrease flooding exposure, and avoid CSX right-of-way impacts without the need to raise cross-road profiles, which would have impacted property in Oak Park and Forest Park.

IDOT also coordinated with the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Railroad, the Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC), and the Canadian National (CN) Railway regarding their operations and facilities, including I-290 bridge crossings.

Cook-DuPage Corridor Study. The West Central Municipal Conference in conjunction with the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference is conducting a long-range transportation planning study of a 300 square mile study area extending from Cicero

Avenue on the east to the Kane-DuPage County line on the west. The PSG coordinated with the Cook-DuPage Corridor Study regarding travel forecasting, alternatives identification and evaluation, and smart corridors.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

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CSS and Stakeholder outreach were essential components of the I-290 Study process and a primary driver of study progress. Since stakeholder involvement activities for the EIS first began in October 2009, with the initial CAG meeting, a substantial array of stakeholder input has been received, considered and used to reach a consensus on a preferred alternative and other improvements recommended along Eisenhower Expressway, from west of Mannheim Road to Racine Avenue. Nearly 200 individual community, agency, and other stakeholder meetings have been held to present information, listen to stakeholder concerns and needs, and to discuss and refine ideas. The individual meetings were complemented by a series of 22 CAG meetings to provide guidance on project development. As a result of this collective outreach and community involvement, more than 1,400 public comments were received and considered. The culmination of this robust stakeholder outreach program has resulted in a project that reflects, to the extent feasible, community and stakeholder values in this Project Corridor.

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