



***CTA Blue Line Forest Park Branch  
Feasibility/Vision Study***

***Village of Oak Park Board Meeting***

**Carole Morey, Chief Planning Officer**

**Monday, October 26, 2015**



## Purpose of the study

- **The 55-year old Forest Park Branch is beyond its useful life**
  - Evaluate existing conditions and infrastructure options
  - Evaluate markets and service options
  - Conduct outreach to project stakeholders
  - Identify policy and funding options
  - Coordinate planning with IDOT for I-290 corridor



# Study Area



## CTA Blue Line Vision Study Area



### Legend

- Blue Line/Station Access
- Pink Line/Station Access
- IL Prairie Path Multi-Use Trail
- River
- Green Line/Station Access
- Metra Line/Station
- Study Area Boundary



# Blue Line Forest Park Branch - Background



## Forest Park Branch Ridership, Annual Average 2014

Forest Park Blue Line Station	Average Weekday	Average Saturday	Average Sunday	Annual Entries	Market Share
Clinton	3,748	1,539	1,394	1,116,639	11%
UIC-Halsted	5,836	2,215	1,579	1,695,108	17%
Racine	2,474	1,346	979	757,731	8%
Illinois Medical District	3,703	1,230	856	1,057,932	11%
Western	1,737	1,176	912	556,858	6%
Kedzie-Homan	2,353	1,552	1,235	752,306	8%
Pulaski	1,946	1,509	1,259	647,672	7%
Cicero	1,492	1,042	796	480,685	5%
Austin	2,107	1,065	796	638,728	7%
Oak Park	1,882	809	591	556,353	6%
Harlem	1,179	693	528	367,351	4%
Forest Park	3,803	1,968	1,466	1,157,040	12%
<b>Blue Line - Forest Park Total</b>	<b>32,260</b>	<b>16,144</b>	<b>12,391</b>	<b>9,784,403</b>	<b>100%</b>





# Demographics: Station Areas by 3 Segments

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## ■ CLINTON TO IMD

- More jobs than population – 3 to 1
- Most commuters come into area for work – 55,000
- Lowest residents who work outside of area – 6,000

## ■ WESTERN TO AUSTIN

- Kedzie-Homan highest population – 7,600
- Highest no access to car population – 4,000
- Most employment outside study area – 14,000
- Low amount of local jobs - 7,000

## ■ OAK PARK TO FOREST PARK

- Oak Park 2nd highest population – 7,400
- Lowest no access to car population & some jobs – 600 and 3,800
- Forest Park is a major transfer station for 9 Pace bus routes

# Austin Station - Background



- Between Austin Avenue and Lombard Avenue, Village of Oak Park
- Station open in 1960
- Station not ADA accessible
- Primarily single-family homes within ½ mile
- 7,100 residents (2,700 households) w/in ½ mile
- 1,900 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: CTA Bus #91, Pace Bus #315
- Weekday ridership ~2,100 entries/day,
- >500 bus to rail transfers daily



Bicycle Facilities	Facility
Bicycle Parking within station	No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance	No
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block	Yes
Station entrance located along bike route	Yes
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block	No





# Oak Park Station - Background



- Between Oak Park Avenue and East Avenue, Village of Oak Park
- Station built in 1961
- Station not ADA accessible
- Single-family homes and commercial uses within ½ mile
- 7,400 residents (2,800 households) w/in ½ mile
- 1,300 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: Pace Buses #311
- Weekday Boardings ~1,900 entries/day
- 200 bus to rail transfers daily



<i>Bicycle Facilities</i>	<i>Facility</i>
Bicycle Parking within station	No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance	Yes
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block	Yes
Station entrance located along bike lane or recommended bike route	Yes
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block of station	No, proposed in 2016



# Harlem Station - Background



- Between Harlem Avenue and Circle Avenue, Village of Forest Park
- Station built in 1960
- Station not ADA accessible
- Primarily single-family homes, but mixed uses (commercial, industrial) w/in ½ mile
- 4,400 residents (1,900 households) w/in ½ mile
- >1,000 of these households with 0 or 1 car only
- Connections: Pace Bus #307
- Weekday ridership ~1,200 entries/day
- 200 bus to rail transfers daily



	<i>Bicycle Facilities</i>	<i>Facility</i>
Bicycle Parking within station		No
Outdoor Bicycle parking adjacent to station entrance		No
Outdoor bicycle parking within ½ block		Yes
Station entrance located along bike lane or recommended bike route		No
Divvy Bike Share location within ½ block of station		No





# Recommend Complete Reconstruction of FP Branch

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## Minimal upgrades have been completed as needed

- Special Trackwork and Signals recently upgraded (except Lathrop)
- Ongoing maintenance efforts keep tracks in operable condition: 27.3% of Forest Park Blue Line branch in slow zones (Sep 2015); permanent fix not possible w/out full reconstruction

## Remaining elements beyond useful life and severely worn

- Track: contaminated ballast, deteriorated ties, poor drainage, worn rail
- Stations: over 50 years old, only 4 of 12 are accessible, narrow platforms
- Structures: approaching end of useful life
- Traction Power: substation, cabling, third rail, etc require upgrading
- Communications System: warrants technical improvements
- Maintenance Shop and Yard: approaching end of useful life; inadequate track configuration and capacity



# Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

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Draft Conceptual Rendering

- ADA accessible
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian crossings/refuges
- Station entrance design and locations
- Reduced noise via station design
- Bike racks
- Lighting
- CTA maintenance & construction





# Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY



Draft Conceptual Rendering



- Wider Platforms

- Shelter/weather protection

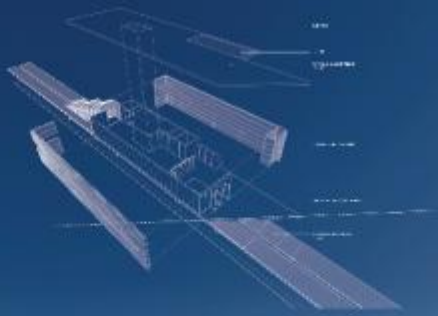


# Blue Line Stations – Ogden/IMD Concept

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY



5 ogden stationhouse



exp Blue Line | Forest Park Branch | Illinois Medical Center Rehabilitation



platform

The existing canopy structure will be retained and reinforced. The new roof will consist of alternating translucent and clear cellular polycarbonate panels to provide ventilation of light through out the length. Future structural columns will be incorporated at the access points, while the canopy fascia profile will be modified to incorporate linear LED lighting to create a specific line of layered light at the edge.



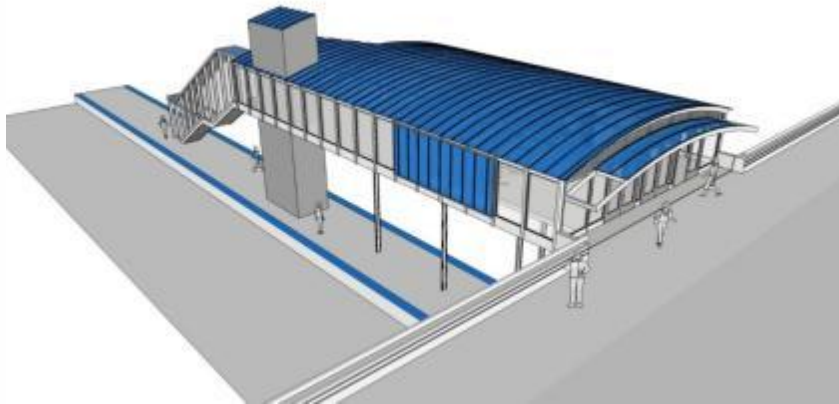
exp Blue Line | Forest Park Branch | Illinois Medical Center Rehabilitation

Draft Conceptual Rendering



# Blue Line Stations – UIC/Halsted (Peoria) Concept

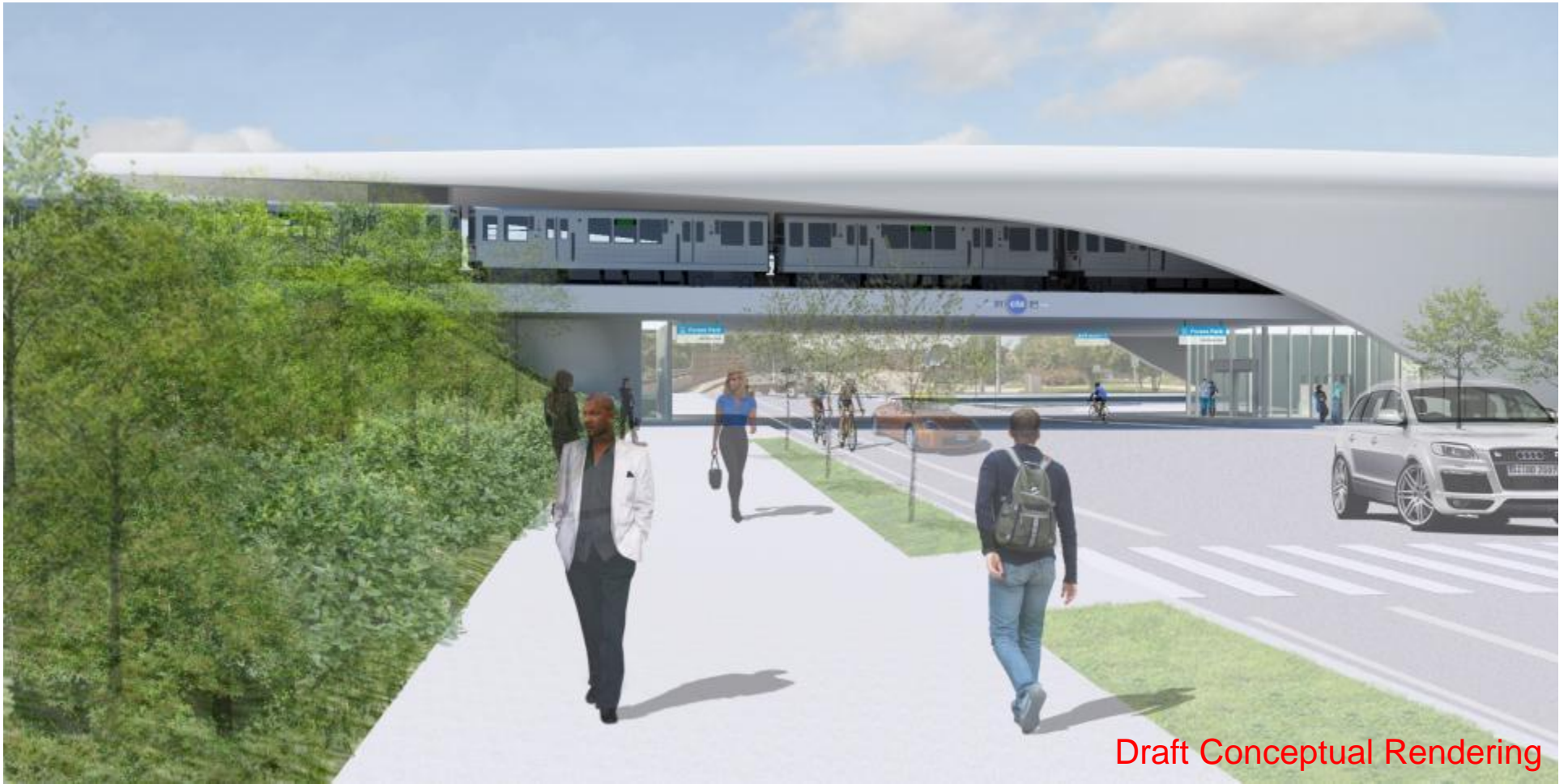
CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY





# Improve Customer Experience: Conceptual Rendering

CTA BLUE LINE VISION STUDY



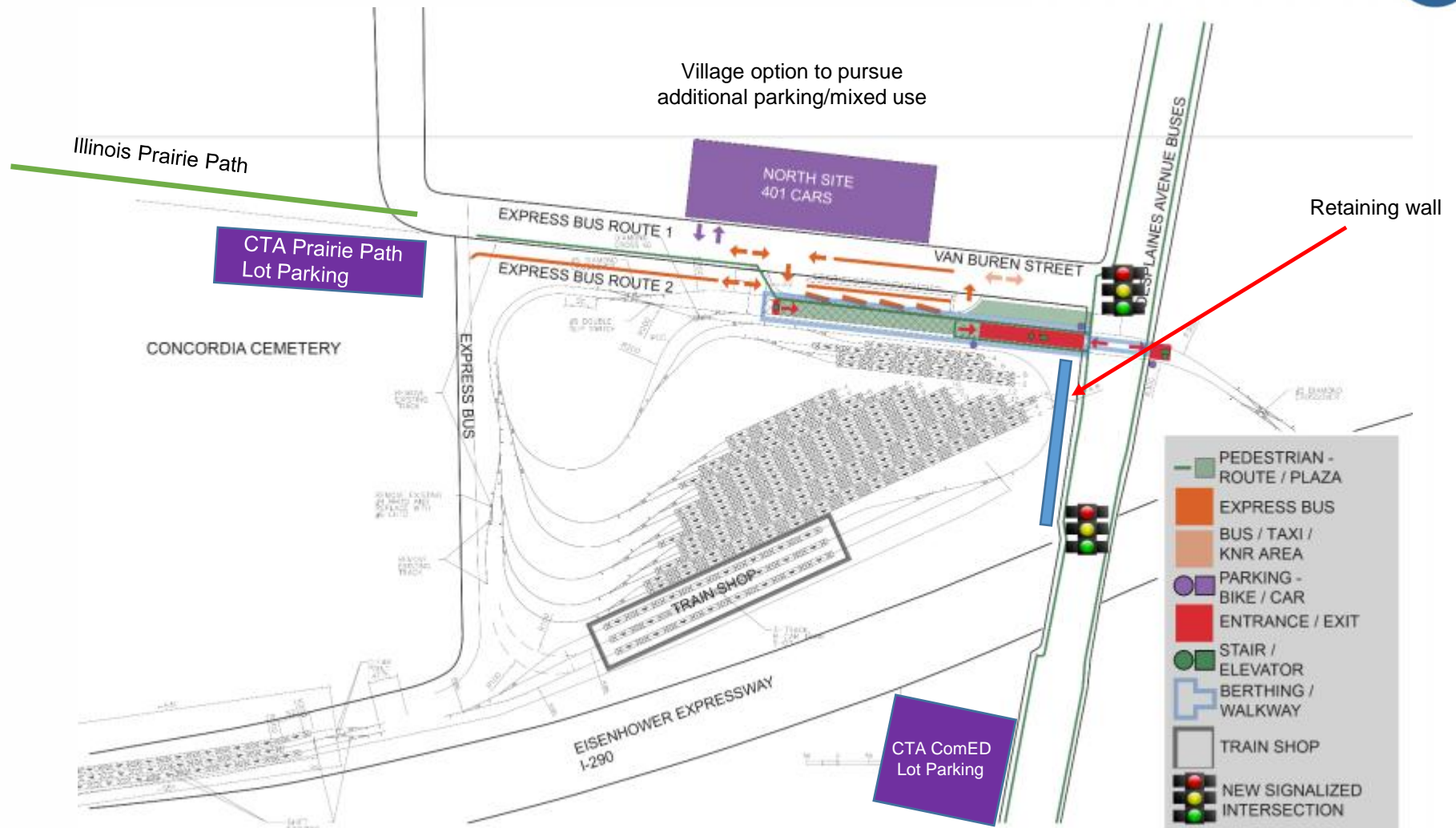
Draft Conceptual Rendering





# CTA Proposal – Forest Park Terminal Station Improvement Plan

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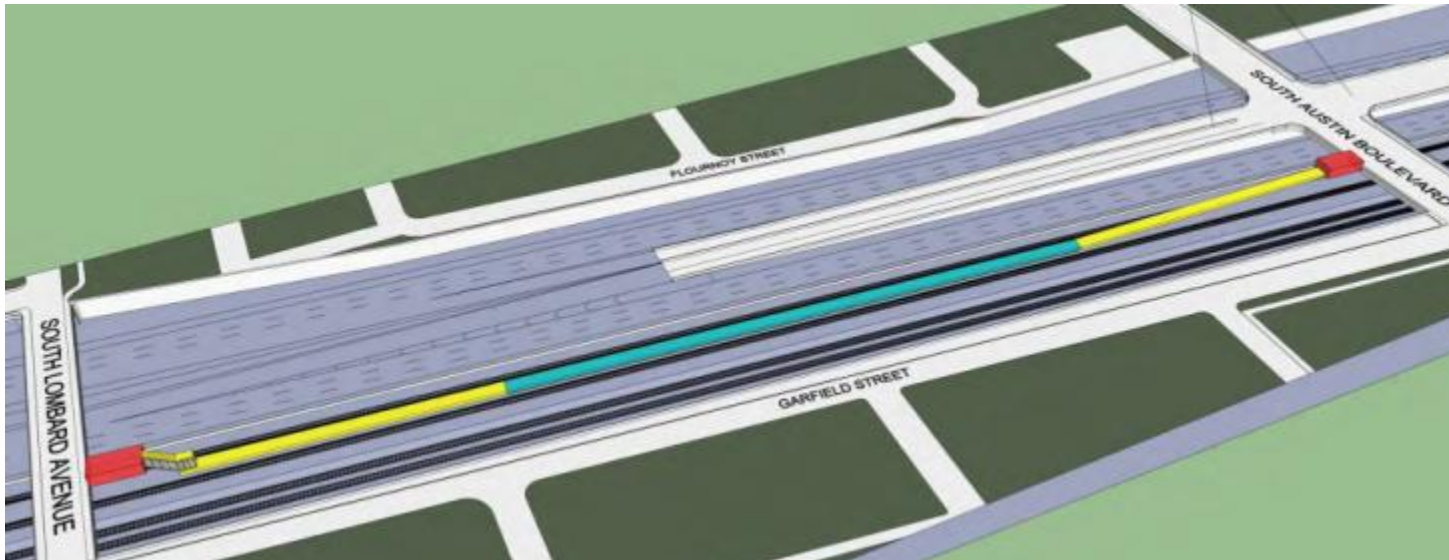
Draft Concept



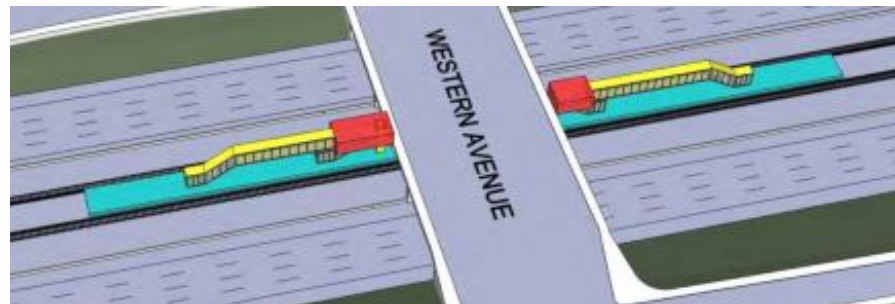
# Maintain Existing Entrance Locations



- Retain double and triple entry station entrances  
Harlem, Oak Park, Austin, Illinois Medical District, Racine, UIC-Halsted



- Dual head houses possible for single entry stations with bus connections  
Cicero, Pulaski, Western



# Maintain Existing Service



- **Long-term**

- Bring service speeds up to state-of-good-repair / posted speeds
- No 3rd track or express service
  - Already serves as west side express due to current station spacing
- Remove stations closed in 1970s

- **Short-term (immediate)**

- CTA continues to perform interim slow zone maintenance work on branch, which began in spring 2014
  - 5 nights/week, occasional weekends
  - From Clinton to Forest Park, but focusing on west end of branch







- **Continue to work with IDOT on corridor improvements**
  - Coordinate on overhead bridges to improve stations and access from street
  - Project may be segmented into track and stations
  - Potential for coordinating long term cost savings for both projects
  - Provide transit alternative during highway construction

# Summary of Recommendations



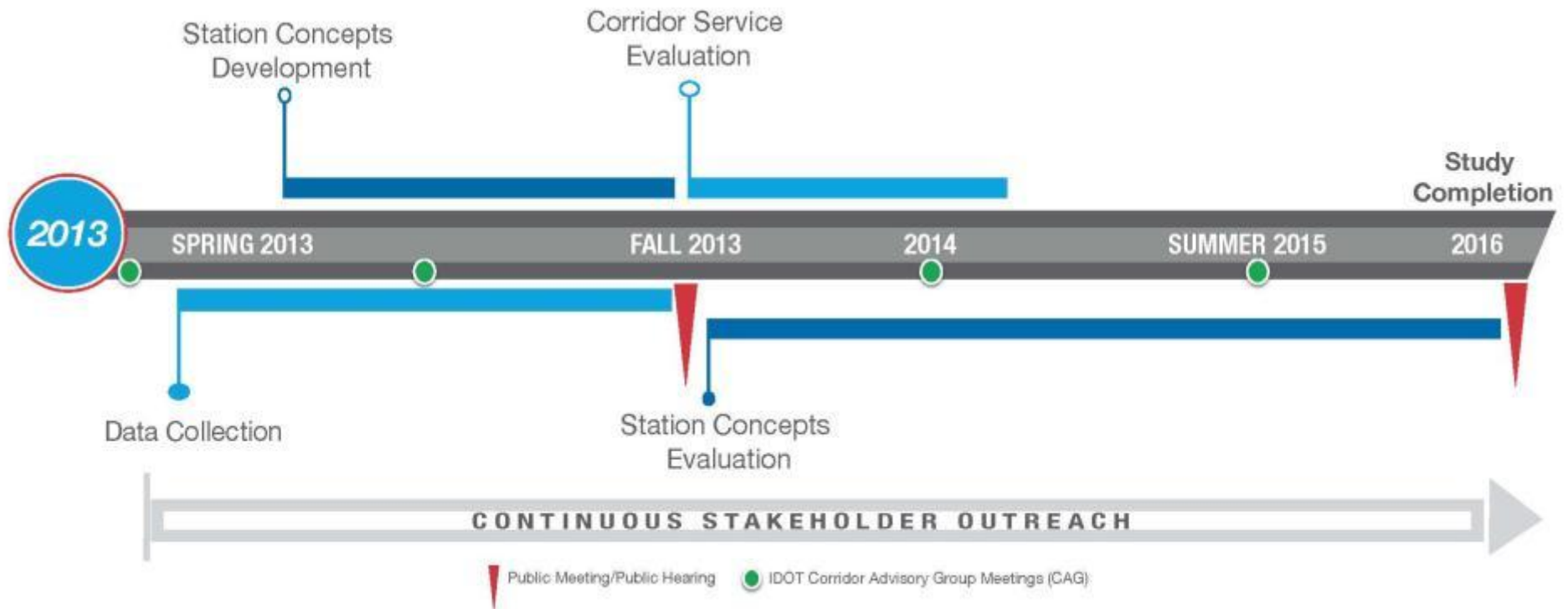
- **Complete reconstruction/modernization for the Forest Park branch**
  - Rehabilitate infrastructure
  - Maintain existing entrance locations
  - Improve customer experience
  - Improve terminal site
- **Maintain existing service**
- **Continue working with IDOT, municipalities and stakeholders**
- **Continue seeking policy and funding solutions to advance project**



# Next Steps



- Present results to public in coordination with IDOT I-290 Public Hearing
- Continue to evaluate funding options and project phasing





# More Information



- **Visit the project web site for more information and updates**

<http://www.transitchicago.com/bluweststudy/>

- **The study team is interested in hearing your ideas and opinions!**

If you have questions or comments about the study or would like to sign up for the mailing list, please write to us at:

Chicago Transit Authority  
Attention: Leslie Boucree  
Government and Community Relations Officer  
567 West Lake Street  
Chicago, IL 60661

[bluweststudy@transitchicago.com](mailto:bluweststudy@transitchicago.com)



## Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study

This page provides information and invites public input regarding the CTA's Blue Line Forest Park Branch Feasibility/Vision Study, process, and schedule. We invite you to explore the website and provide your comments and recommendations regarding the study through our Get Involved section.

### On this page

- [What's New](#)
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