



Citizens for Appropriate Transportation

728 South Euclid Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60304

www.CitizensForAppropriateTransportation.org

ACTION ALERT – FEBRUARY 3, 2017

We need your help on two fronts: the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the Village Board.

IDOT'S Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

IDOT's Public Comment Period for the DEIS ends Monday February 13, 2017. Submit written comments to Pete Harmet (Pete.Harmet@illinois.gov) and Mark Peterson (Mark.Peterson@illinois.gov) at IDOT. Please consider the following comments and add your personal perspective.

1. **Congestion** - The Eisenhower Expressway will still be congested after the improvement project (albeit less congested than now). The Forest Park Branch of the CTA Blue Line has excess capacity because the CTA schedules trains based on the O'Hare Branch ridership, which is substantially higher than the Forest Park Branch. If the CTA attracts more riders, they generate more revenue and there will be less congestion on the expressway.
2. **Blue Line Extension** - Not extending the CTA Line west from the Forest Park Terminal to at least 1st Avenue is a missed opportunity.
3. **Interchanges** - The Austin and Harlem Interchanges, which are higher in elevation than adjacent neighborhoods bring air and noise closer to where people live.
4. **Lane Widths** - IDOT is proposing four 11-foot and four 12-foot lanes. The Interstate standard is 12-foot lanes.
5. **High Occupancy Toll Lanes (HOT 3+)** – HOT lanes are hard to manage.
6. **Shoulder Widths** - Expressway shoulder widths are too narrow, creating hazardous conditions for emergency personnel and vehicles as well as stranded motorists.
7. **Context Sensitive Design** - IDOT committed to a Context Sensitive Solutions process, but has never had an architect or urban designer present concepts or designs, especially for the corridor edges.
8. **Year 2040 Projections** - Projections to the Year 2040 are difficult to prepare because of the uncertainty about future conditions. Many differences among the Build Alternatives are so small that projections to the Year 2040 are not helpful. IDOT should do Scenario Planning and Sensitivity Analyses to determine what actions to take if the 2040 projections are wrong.

9. **Citizen Review Time** - Forty-five calendar days (December 30, 2016 to February 13, 2017) is not sufficient time for people to read the 2,200 plus Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Meaningful citizen participation should be a dialogue where participants learn from each other.

VILLAGE BOARD ELECTIONS

Voters in the April election will select three Village Trustees. Mayor Abu-Taleb must appoint someone to complete Trustee Adam Salzman's term. You can contact all seven current Village Board members at board@oak-park.us or 708/358-5784.

1. **IDOT's Goal** - IDOT's goal ("*Create an asset for adjoining communities*") cannot be done by IDOT alone. The Corridor Communities and the CTA must take actions on their own. IDOT's Study is more advanced than the CTA's Vision / Feasibility Study, so coordination between the two will be difficult.
2. **Intergovernmental Agreement** - The IDOT – Village of Oak Park Letter of Intent (LOI) says, "*Funding for the reconstruction of the CTA Blue Line and I-290 should be sought for both improvements as if they were one project.*" IDOT's work is much closer to a construction start than the CTA's work. Treating them as one project is problematic. The LOI will lead to an Intergovernmental Agreement later in the process.
3. **Development Opportunities** – There are development opportunities along the Corridor. The Envision Oak Park Comprehensive Plan lists some sites that could become available.
4. **Noise Walls** - Whether to build noise walls has not been decided.
5. **Ground Vibration** – The CAT Working Group suggested video / photograph documentation prior to construction, insurance, dispute resolution by binding arbitration, and use construction contract retainage to settle damage claims.
6. **Cost Participation** - IDOT is willing to build some extras, such as better landscaping and hardscaping, but only if the Village pays for them. Corridor edge design is one area where we need improvements.
7. **CSX Right Of Way** – The IDOT – Village Letter of Intent has a contingency clause that says IDOT will consider design changes if the CSX will give up some of their space.
8. **Air Quality (Fine Particulates)** – The DEIS says Fine Particulates (PM_{2.5}) are "unclassifiable" for the state of Illinois because the sample filters were outside specifications. The filter problem was corrected in mid-2016, but the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency needs three years of data, so they cannot make a determination until at least mid-2019.
9. **Property Values** – Given IDOT's estimated eight-year construction period, property values near the Corridor may be depressed. This problem also occurred during the Barrie Park remediation process.

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