

Central Avenue at BRC Railroad Grade Separation Study CAG Meeting #1 Summary

Summary

The first Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting for the Central Avenue at BRC Railroad Grade Separation Study was held on August 27, 2013, at the Garfield Ridge Public Library at 6348 W. Archer Avenue, Chicago IL 60638 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. The meeting included the following:

- PowerPoint presentation including a Review of the Planning Process, Overview of the CAG role and responsibilities, Study Overview and Public Meeting #1 Review.
- Binder of organizational materials passed out to each CAG member
- Workshop for identifying issues and concerns to assist in the development of a Problem Statement.

To announce the August 27, 2013 CAG meeting, an E-invitation and printed invitation were created (note: printed invitations were sent to those that requested them in their CAG membership forms). The invitations were sent out on August 7, 2013 to 23 CAG members. The meeting was attended by 17 CAG members and 10 Project Study Group members (see attached Sign-In Sheet).

PowerPoint Presentation

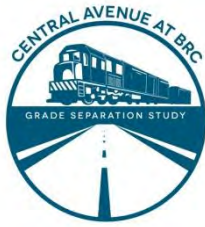
The major topics of the PowerPoint presentation were:

- Review of the Planning Process and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)
- Overview of the CAG including Ground Rules and Responsibilities
- Study Overview
- Public Meeting #1 Review
- Breakout Session Objectives

Questions, issues and concerns were brought up during the presentation and are summarized in Summary of Comments section of this document.

Breakout Session

The final portion of the CAG meeting included a workshop to engage the CAG members in assisting the Project Study Group (PSG) with the development of a Problem Statement. During the breakout session, CAG members were asked to identify problematic transportation issues within the project study area. Each member was given a notecard and five minutes to brainstorm a list of issues and concerns. The members were then asked to read aloud their most important issue to the rest of the group. Each issue was then summarized on a flip chart



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and posted for everyone to see. A list of the CAG members' issues and concerns is summarized in the Summary of Comments section. Scans of the flip chart recordings are attached.

Next Steps

The PSG will consider input from the CAG members along with comments from the first Public Meeting and results from the Community Context Survey, and draft a Problem Statement that addresses the overall issues and concerns. This draft Problem Statement will be presented at the next CAG meeting, tentatively scheduled for October 8, 2013. An additional CAG meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 19, 2013.

Summary of Comments

The following questions were brought up during the PowerPoint presentation:

1. Have representatives from the Belt Railroad been involved with the project?

Response: The Belt Railroad has been contacted and the project team will continue to correspond with them as the project moves forward.

2. I own a business at 5720 South Central providing parking shuttle service to the airport, how will business access be affected?

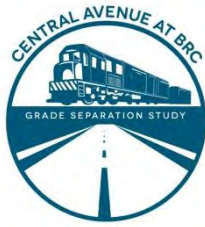
Response: We have not developed alternatives at this point in the study. Access to businesses and residences will be determined during the Alternatives Analysis.

3. I also need to have access from Central Avenue and 55th Street.

Response: Determination of access is part of the Phase I study and will be determined during the Alternatives Analysis.

4. Where is the funding coming from?

Response: The Department's FY 2014-2019 Proposed Multimodal Transportation Improvement Program includes \$2,000,000 to complete the Phase I Engineering as well as partial funding in the amount of \$15,000,000 for Construction. The Department's FY 2014-2019 Proposed Multimodal Transportation Improvement Program does not include funding for Phase II Engineering, Land Acquisition, or Construction Engineering.



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5. When will construction begin?

Response: The 18 month Phase I study will be complete in October 2014. Construction can begin no sooner than late 2016 and is based on fund availability and project readiness.

6. If the construction of this project is not approved, will funding for this project disappear like it did for the Crosstown Expressway project?

Response: The Crosstown funding that was earmarked went to other local projects within the area. Each year transportation needs are re-evaluated, costs are updated, and priorities reassessed. There are no assurances that funding will remain for any project given competing needs, particularly maintenance of the existing system.

7. Is this project being done solely to benefit Midway Airport?

Response: Although representatives from Midway Airport are considered stakeholders in this project, this study is being conducted independent of Midway Airport.

8. Does this project include any other railroad crossings?

Response: This project focuses only on the Central Avenue and Belt Railroad crossing, but other crossings have been identified for improvement by the CREATE program.

9. Was traffic data collected during the recent I-55 construction? If so, will this affect the accuracy of the data?

Response: Traffic data was collected from a number of sources including the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), IDOT and traffic counts conducted by the project team in spring 2013. All of this data is used to calibrate a traffic model that will be used during the Alternatives Analysis.

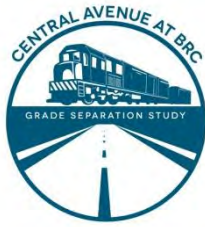
10. How many lanes are anticipated on Central Avenue based on future traffic projections?

Response: Although the Alternatives Analysis has not begun, it is anticipated that two lanes in each direction on Central Avenue will be retained.

11. How do crashes on Central Avenue compare to other intersections?

Response: The crash rates at the Central Avenue are lower than state-wide data.

12. How many trains go by at night?



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Response: The project team has not determined the number of trains that pass the crossing at night, but this data can be acquired.

13. Is there a limit to how long trains can block traffic?

Postscript: Based on the attached January 25, 2008 Village of Mundelein v. Wisconsin Central Railroad ruling, the federal government has authority over rail movements, and since they do not have restrictions on blockages there can be none imposed by other authorities.

14. Would like to see more data on train traffic (times, length of trains etc.)

Response: The project team will contact the Belt Railroad for more data on train traffic.

15. Is the Belt Railroad committed to using both sets of tracks that enter the rail yard or can one set be abandoned?

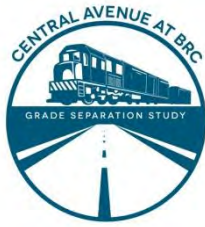
Response: The Belt Railroad currently uses both sets of tracks to handle the train traffic that comes through the rail yard. There are no plans to abandon either set of tracks.

16. Why do trains go so slow through this area?

Response: The reverse curves along the rail line as well as the proximity to the rail yard prevent the trains from traveling at higher speeds.

The following is a list of problematic transportation issues and concerns discussed during the Breakout Session:

- Excessive delays and congestion
- Delays in every direction
- Neither Cicero or Harlem can handle additional traffic
- Interruptions to business access
- Lack of mobility has impeded businesses growth
- Faulty gates
- Heavy vibrations from trains; damaged buildings
- Weekend delays to recreation/shopping
- Lack of signal timing adjustments during train events
- Through traffic goes too fast for residential context



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- Need to obtain accurate data for analysis to be fiscally responsive with taxpayers money
- Noise – train horn
- Pavement quality is bad within tracks
- Train schedules are inconsistent creating uncertainty
- No fixed route for PACE on Central extending south of I-55
- No direct transit route to the other side of the BRC Yard
- “Complete Streets” needs to be considered
- Delay to / from schools in am/pm
- Safety of school children crossing Central north of Archer
- This project is needed and has been promised for a long time
- Additional information is needed to justify the expenditure of public funds to build a grade separation

CAG #1 SIGN-IN SHEET

Central Avenue at BRC Railroad Grade Separation Study
Meeting Date: August 27, 2013



#	Name (First and Last)	Organization	Address (Street, City, ZIP)	Email	Phone	Preferred Method of Contact	Primary CAG Representative?
1	SOPHIA BARTON	GARFIELD Ridge Civic		SSVS 42@ATT.NET	773-735-3415	R TECHMAN	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
2	VINCENT BARTON	" "		"	"	"	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
3	MICHAEL DELAURENTIS	23 WARD OFF.			773 524 7463		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4	RICHARD J. TECHMAN	GARFIELD Ridge Civic League		GarfieldRidgeCivicLeague@yahoo.com	(708) 269-9094	PHONE (self)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
5	PAUL SIMA	Resident		Paul.Sima@ymail.com	773-767-6868		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
6	CELINA SIMA	"		celina.sima@gmail.com	"		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
7	MARIE ZILKA	CLEARING CIVIC LEAGUE		ZILK74@SBCGLOBAL.NET	773-586-4378	SELF	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
8	MARY ANN DYKALA	GARFIELD Ridge COFC		fa Realty sells@yahoo.com	773 582 9300		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
9	GUNITA M. CUMMINGS	United Bus. Assoc	Midway	UBAM@ubam.org	(773) 767-3336		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
10	ALICE MARTINEZ	RESIDENT		Alcmartinez@cps.edu	773-562-4426	PHONE/EMAIL	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
11	JOHN NOWICKI	GRCL 5520 S. MELVINA		johnnowicki16@yahoo.com	312-259-6893	EMAIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
12	DUANE MAHONEY	PACE 550 W. ALGONQUIN		duane.mahoney@pacebus.com	(847) 228-2369		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
13	JOE ALONZO	CDOT 30 W- LaSalle ST.		JOE.Alonzo@cityofchicago.org	(312) 744-1731		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
14	MARY ELLEN BROWN	Midway Storage 5600 W. 55th St		MEB6128@LIVE.COM	(773) 297 4975	EMAIL	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
15	EDDIE YOKHANA	EZ PARK 5720 W. 55th		eddieyokhana@gmail.com			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
16	YONATHAN YOKHANA	EZ PARK 5720 W. 55th		www.MidwayEZPark.com			<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
17	J. FIRE MARSHAL	→ BIRDFORD PARK		JPONIO@BIRDFORDPARKFD.ORG			<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
18							<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
19							<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
20							<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Completion of this sign-in sheet is voluntary and helps the study team keep an accurate record of meeting attendance. Under the Freedom of Information Act, any identifying information provided above will become part of the public record and, as such, must be released to any individual upon request.

This meeting is going to be photographed. I give HDR, Inc., its collaborators, assigns, successors in interest, and legal representatives permission to use my picture in all forms and in all media, without restrictions as to changes or alterations for advertising, trade, promotion, exhibition or any other purpose. I also waive any right to inspect or approve the photograph(s), including written copy that may be created and appear in connection with the image(s). I understand that HDR owns the copyright in these photographs and I waive any claims I may have based on any usage of the photographs, including but not limited to claims for either invasion of privacy or libel. I agree that this release is binding on me, my legal representatives, heirs, and assigns. I have read this release and am fully familiar with its terms and contents.

FOCUS QUESTION:

What transportation issues are problematic for the Central Ave. and BRC Railroad crossing?

- ①' EXCESSIVE DELAYS & CONGESTION
- ② DELAYS IN EVERY DIRECTION
- ③ INTERRUPTIONS TO BUSINESS ACCESS
- ④' FAULTY GATES
- ⑤' HEAVY VIBRATIONS FROM TRAINS
-DAMAGED BUILDINGS

⑥ WEEKEND DELAYS
TO RECREATION / SHOPPING

⑦ LACK OF TRAFFIC
SIGNAL TIMINGS

⑧ THROUGH TRAFFIC
GOES TOO FAST FOR
RESIDENTIAL CONTEXT

⑨ ACCURATE DATA &
NEED TO BE FISCALLY
RESPONSIBLE WITH
TAXPAYER \$\$\$

- ⑩ NOISE - HORN
- ⑪ PAVEMENT QUALITY IS BAD WITHIN TRACKS
- ⑫ SCHEDULE - INCONSISTENT
- ⑬ NO FIXED ROUTE FOR PACE ON CENTRAL-1-SS to 71ST due to congestion
- ⑭ COMPLETE STREETS
- ⑮ DELAY TO/FROM SCHOOLS