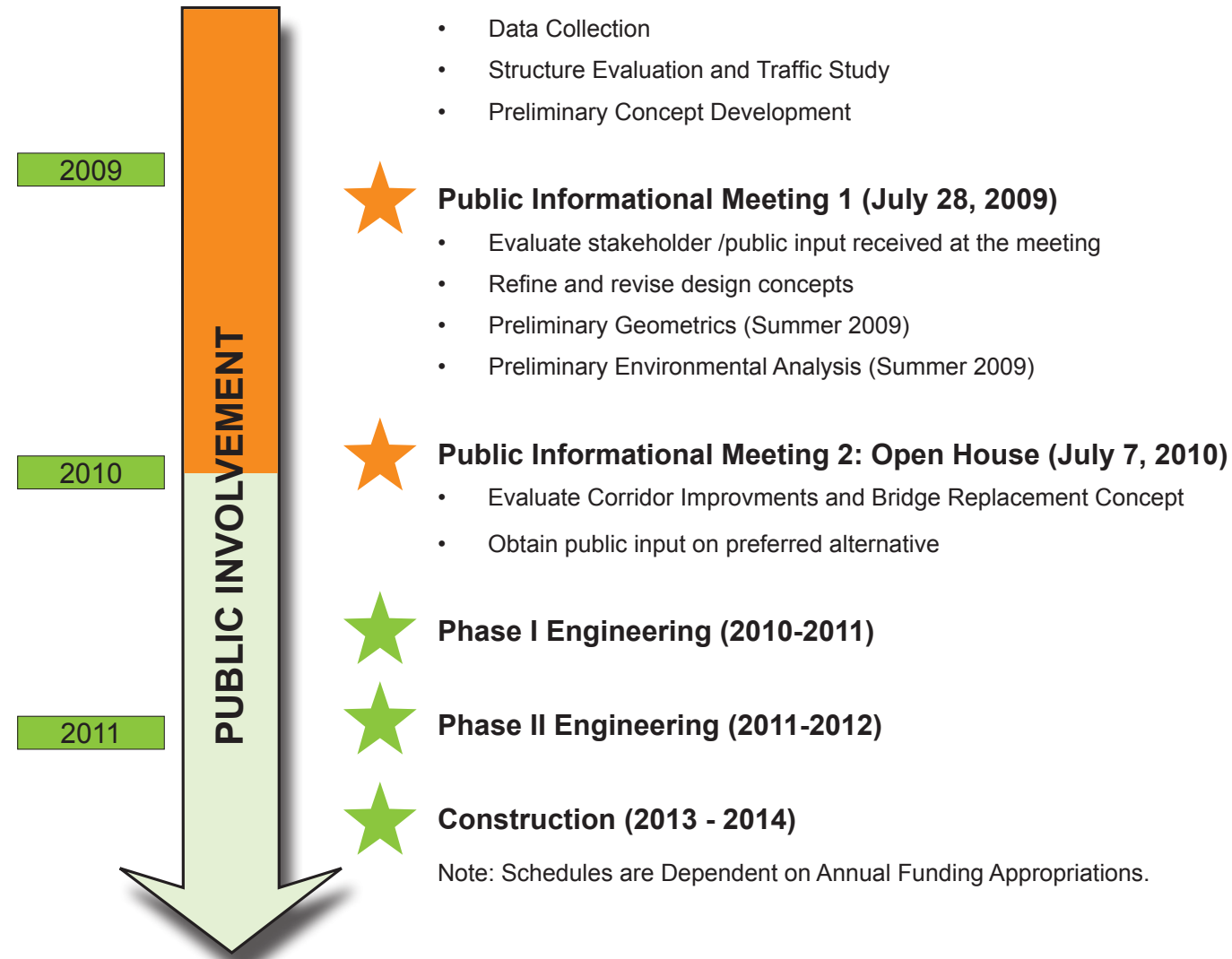


Project Schedule and Next Steps



Questions, Comments and Information

For more information about the project please visit the website below:

Email: cdotnews@cityofchicago.org

www.cityofchicago.org/transportation

Western Avenue Improvement Project

Purpose of Brochure

The Chicago Department of Transportation is providing an overview for public information on the proposed improvements along Western Avenue.

Project Purpose

The 49-year-old Western Avenue Viaduct over Belmont and Clybourn is deteriorating and reaching the end of its useful life. While it is still safe, it is time to develop a long-term solution that addresses the structural deficiencies of the existing viaduct.

Project Objectives

Address Structure Condition

Due to the type of box beam construction originally used, repair or rehabilitation of the existing structure is not a feasible long-term solution. Regardless of the alternate selected, the existing viaduct will need to be demolished.

Transportation Objectives

- Improve traffic flow
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian safety
- Improve the pedestrian experience
- Discourage use of local streets by through traffic

Economic Development Objectives

- Enhance physical environment
- Improve accessibility
- Increase pedestrian traffic and on-street parking
- Minimize construction impacts on existing businesses

Financial Objectives

- Provide broadest range of benefits for least amount of cost

Property Impact Objectives

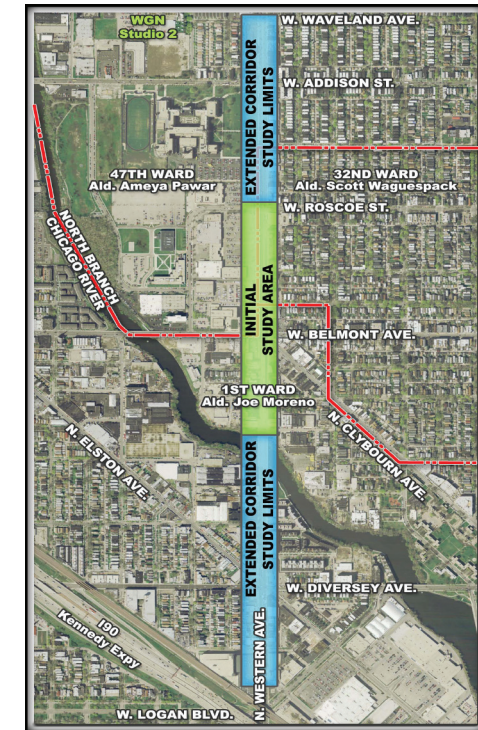
- Minimize displacement of residents and active businesses

Public Input to Date

The Chicago Department of Transportation along with then 1st Ward Alderman Manuel Flores, 32nd Ward Alderman Scott Waguespack and 47th Ward Alderman Gene Schulter hosted the 1st Public Informational meeting on July 28, 2009 at DeVry University Chicago Campus.

The focus of the meeting was to introduce the project and obtain input on the two basic approaches:

- New bridge, or
- At-grade intersection



Primary Issues

From the questions and comments received from the meeting, the primary issues derived from the public's responses involved:

- Safety
- Traffic congestion
- Neighborhood Impacts (traffic on local neighborhood street network)
- Land Acquisition Impacts
- Cost

Through public involvement received at this meeting, the project team reviewed input from stakeholders, studied and evaluated alternatives, and expanded the study through the development of a corridor improvement concept to fully address the various concerns.

Second Public Meeting

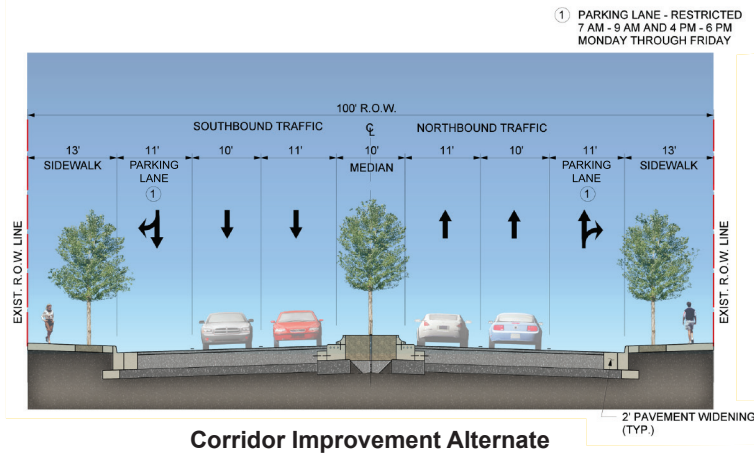
The Chicago Department of Transportation in conjunction with Alderman Joe Moreno (1st Ward), Alderman Scott Waguespack (32nd Ward) and Alderman Gene Schulter (47th Ward) hosted the 2nd Public Informational Meeting on July 7, 2010 at WGN Studios.

The goal of the meeting was to continue the public involvement process by providing greater details of the alternatives considered, address the issues and concerns raised at the previous public meeting, and obtain additional public input on the preferred solution.

Alternatives Considered

Corridor Improvement Alternate: Involves the removal of the existing viaduct and construction of a five-leg at-grade intersection at Belmont/Western/Clybourn. The project limits extend along Western Avenue from Schubert to Waveland and include the installation of a landscaped median and the widening of the outside parking lane with rush hour parking restrictions to provide a third lane of traffic during the peak hour travel times.

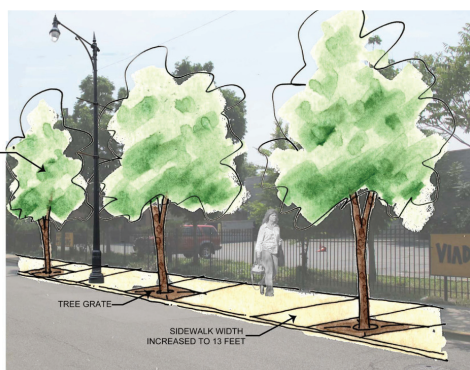
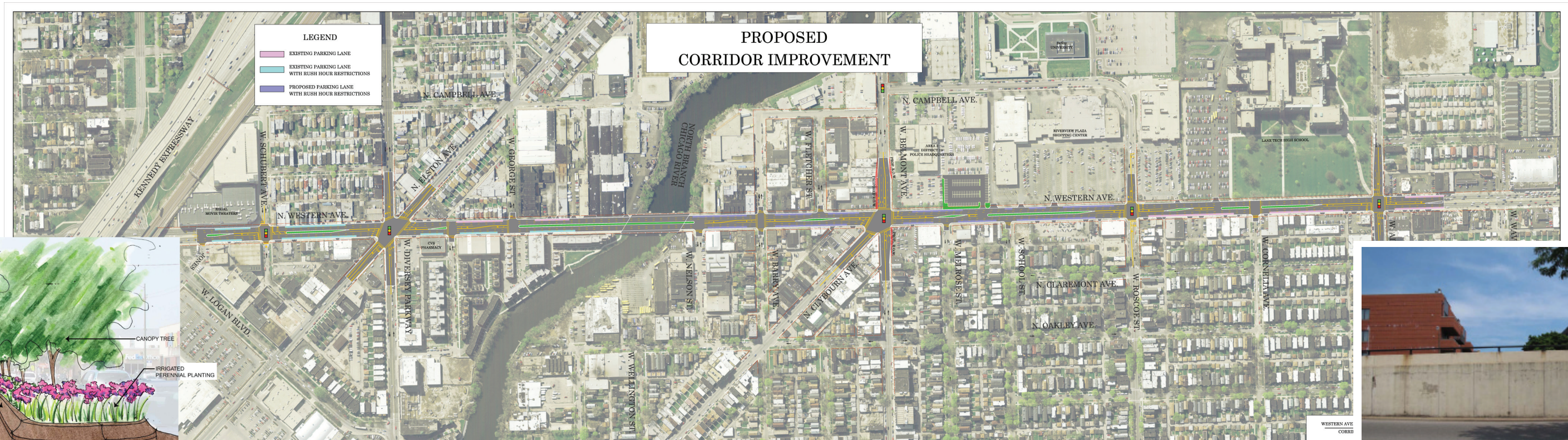
Bridge Replacement Alternate: Involves the removal of the existing structure and reconstruction of a new viaduct. The project limits extend along Western Avenue from the Chicago River to Roscoe. In order to meet current design requirements, a new structure must be wider than the existing structure. This widening requires the displacement of numerous businesses and residences along Western Avenue.



Alternatives Comparison

While the bridge replacement alternate addresses the deteriorating condition of the existing viaduct, it does not provide for improvements along the Western Avenue corridor and does not address the primary issues and objectives of the project. Most importantly, replacement will result in the displacement of residents and/or active businesses. Because of these impacts, and its low benefit to cost, replacement with a new bridge is not recommended.

The preferred solution is the Corridor Improvement Alternate. Through minor widening of the existing parking lane and the enforcement of rush hour parking restrictions, a third lane of traffic will be provided during the peak hour. The addition of the third traffic lane, intersection and signal improvements, and the installation of a traffic signal interconnect system will greatly improve traffic flow and travel times along the corridor. The Corridor Improvement Alternate satisfies each of the projects primary objectives by improving traffic flow, improving vehicular and pedestrian safety, and enhancing the overall environment along Western Avenue.



Corridor Improvement Scope

Project Limits extend along Western from Schubert to Waveland

- Remove viaduct and reconstruct the intersection with Belmont and Clybourn
- Rehabilitate the Western Avenue Bridge over the Chicago River
- Reconstruct roadway from Schubert to Waveland
 - Provide 13-foot sidewalks
 - Provide a third travel lane during peak hours (requires peak hour parking restrictions)
 - Provide approximately 100 new on-street parking spaces
- Interconnect traffic signals and optimize timings to improve traffic flow
- Install pedestrian countdown signals and ADA ramps at corners
- Construct new landscaped medians and plant trees along sidewalks

Key Benefits of Corridor Improvements

Safety

- Removing the viaduct eliminates numerous factors contributing to crashes
- Intersection improvements include pedestrian countdown timers, increased time for pedestrians to cross Western, marked crosswalks and accessible ramps
- Medians provide pedestrian refuge at unsignalized intersections

Traffic Congestion

- Travel time along Western is improved through 3rd travel lane during peak hours and signal interconnect system
- Intersection timing improvements reduce delay on side streets

Neighborhood Impacts

- Improved traffic flow along Western minimizes traffic diverting into neighborhood
- Landscaped medians restrict access to side streets and enhance physical environment
- Wide sidewalks and on-street parking enhance accessibility and pedestrian experience

Land Acquisition

- No homes or active businesses will be displaced

Cost

- More overall benefit for less cost than bridge replacement

