

Chicago Mobility Collaborative
September 14, 2023
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Riis Park Field House & Virtual
Meeting Summary

Event Date & Time: Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Number of Attendees: 66 total attendees (including participants joining via Zoom and in-person at Riis Park Field House)

CDOT Staff Attendees: Romina Castillo, Dave Smith, Kurt Facknitz; Mary Nicol; Erica Schroeder

Guest speaker: Margarita Reina, Chicago Department of Public Health

Leadership Group Attendees: Rochelle Jackson, Ruth Rosas, Jeremy Cuebas, Garth Katner, Ismael Cuevas, Greg Polman.

Summary of Meeting: This meeting was held both in-person at the Riis Park Field House and virtually via Zoom. CMC representative, Ismael Cuevas welcomed everyone to the meeting reminding attendees about the meeting format, the general goals of the CMC, and the community agreements of engagement. Attendees were also welcomed by Chris Koutoufari, a Belmont Cragin resident, by Alderwoman Cruz from the 30th Ward, and representatives from the 31st and 36th Wards respectively. After this, Complete Streets Director David Smith shared CDOT updates and upcoming projects and initiatives, see below for a complete list of updates. Margarita Reina from CDPH presented on the intersection between public health and transportation data analysis that provides a more comprehensive overview on how the city can measure equitable outcomes or challenges in communities. Romina Castillo introduced the Community Tables facilitated by representatives of CDOT, CTA, CDPH, civic organizations, and members of the public. These conversations are summarized below. In addition, we were pleased to have been joined by staff from the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee at this meeting.

CDOT Updates:

- Chicago Cycling Strategy released in 2023
 - This document provides an overview on the bicycle network's expansion across the city, focusing on the neighborhood scale:
 - Belmont Cragin is a great example of how we've piloted the neighborhood bike network effort. It started with a youth council of high school students requesting safer streets. We did 15 miles of bike projects in one summer. This speaks to the power of what we can do together.
 - Neighborhood Bike Network
 - Started in Belmont Cragin in 2021

- Moved to Austin, North Lawndale, and South Lawndale
 - Continuing into Brighton Park, Gage Park, McKinley Park
 - Have installed 50 miles of bike lanes on the west side adding infrastructure where there was none.
 - Thinking of biking in terms of a network, breaking down ward boundaries, breaking down other barriers, is the secret to moving this forward.
 - Working with 48-50th wards on the North Side to develop a comprehensive network that crosses ward boundaries. That was inspired by the work in Belmont Cragin.
 - Lake Calumet region to identify a network of streets for increase bicyclist infrastructure.
 - 85% of the next 150 bike lanes will be protected bike lanes and neighborhood bike routes.
- Projects Across the City
 - Recently installed Kedzie & Augusta protected bike lanes in place of painted bike lanes.
 - Kedzie- Instantly have seen a 90% reduction in people driving over 30 miles an hour.
 - Augusta – 35% reduction in people driving over 30 miles an hour.
 - These projects are about making the streets safer and more accessible for everyone.
 - Central Park Ave (in the Garfield Park community) protected bike lane project from Franklin Blvd. down to Madison. Goes through the conservatory and into Garfield Park. There's raised crosswalks, pedestrian bump-outs, protected bike lanes. Will be completed in the next month or so.
 - Dearborn-- North of Kinzie expanding a protected bike line from Kinzie up to Chicago Ave. Includes Dearborn & Chicago Ave improvements with bike signals and reworking the street. Construction started last week.
 - Clark Street in Edgewater is under construction. Transit boarding islands, pedestrian crossing, refuge island, curb protected bike lanes. That will be done by the end of October.
 - Blue Island between Roosevelt and 18th street. Protected bike lane connecting Roosevelt down to Pilsen.
 - Many other projects underway. It is a huge focus of ours moving forward.
 - Neighborhood Bike Route improvements:
 - Levitt between Milwaukee and Lyndale.
 - Lathrop Homes at Diversey all the way up to Berwyn which all of those combined in 4 miles– the longest neighborhood bike route in the city.
 - 5 miles of neighborhood greenways in Little Village to create a connected network. We will be extending that across the canal and under the Stevenson next year.
- High Impact Projects

- Protected bike lane installed through a resurfacing project on Jackson in the West Loop. Jackson is under IDOT, so we partnered with them to implement safer streets.
- Milwaukee Ave between North and Armitage—over 200 people participated at a community meeting over the summer. Parking consolidation to one side of the street with protected bike lanes. Pedestrian improvements and street resurfacing will start in the next couple of weeks.
- Belmont Corridor—particularly western to Kimball. Connection to the 312 River Run. Transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements are all underway. The Kedzie and Belmont intersection is a protected intersection where two protected bike lanes meet.
- Grand Ave project. Had community meetings for the reconstruction from Damen Ave to Chicago. Implementing protected bike lanes, raised crosswalks, pedestrian improvements. It will set the stage for expanding that northwest into Humbolt Park and Belmont Cragin.
- Protected bike lane along Hanscom Park will be getting concrete curbs in the next couple of weeks.
- Grand Ave can be a cycling corridor from Belmont Cragin all the way to downtown. We are chipping away at it and making it happen.
- Concrete curbs going in along over 20 miles of protected bike lanes– the most aggressive, fastest program of any city in the country.
- Pedestrian Improvements
 - Belmont Cragin along Hanscom Park. Raised crosswalks that will start in the next couple of weeks. Pedestrian curb extensions that are underway. Pedestrian refuge islands and lowered speed limits to increase safety for students getting to the surrounding schools.
 - Portage Park Elementary School is targeted for pedestrian improvements.
- Transit Improvements
 - CTA has received money to target a handful of corridors to target for robust transit improvements.

Community Tables Summaries – What we heard from participants.

Table 1 + Virtual Table – Better Streets for Transit: implementing better streets for buses projects

Facilitators – Audrey Wennink (Leadership Group, MPC), Jennifer Henry (CTA), Jason Meter (CTA), Kurt Facknitz (CDOT)

- Action Items
 - This group is interested in co-developing a strategy and process to better design and implement BRT corridors.
- High-level participant feedback and conversation overview.

- This table discussed how the Invest in Cook award will provide funds to advance the implementation of three corridors proposed in the Better Street for Buses plan.
 - These corridors have not been selected yet. CDOT and CTA are collaborating to find corridors that successfully intersect function, impact, local support, and feasibility (geometry).
- Participant shared about the destinations they try to reach on a bus.

Table 2 - Beyond the Bike Lane: the transformative power of community bike rides
Facilitators – Jeremy Cuevas, Northwest Center / Angel Montalvo, SAFE Ambassadors

- Action Items
 - No action items were identified
- High-level participant feedback and conversation overview
 - The conversation at this table centered around the organized bike rides in Belmont Cragin and how CDOT’s SAFE Ambassadors support community rides across the city.
 - There were questions about providing a broader access to adaptive bikes for events such as community bike rides so that more people can participate, especially in neighborhoods that experience higher rates of health and transportation hardships.

Table 3 – Accessible and Safe Mobility for All: initiatives at the intersection of Public Health and Transportation (SPANISH TABLE)

Facilitators – Romina Castillo, CDOT / Margarita Reina, CDPH

- Action Items
 - CDOT through the SAFE Ambassadors will connect with a group of Parents Mentors to organize a large community bike ride event where all schools can participate.
 - SAFE Ambassadors to connect with more school in the Belmont Cragin community
- High-level participants feedback and conversation overview
 - This table discussed opportunities to better connect with schools in Belmont Cragin.
 - Participants were interested in identifying resources to bring a bike shop to the Belmont Cragin community and to expand a bike mechanic program for youth in the neighborhood.