Kinzie–Fulton Market
New Metra Station

Community Meeting

DRAFT October 12, 2021 | 6:00 pm
Community Agreements

1. This is a Zoom webinar format and this meeting is being recorded.

2. The recording will be available on DPD’s webpage: http://www.chicago.gov/westloop

3. Please use the Zoom Q&A function for any questions during the webinar.

4. All questions and ideas are valid.

5. Questions may be responded to from the project team either in writing or verbally during this meeting.
Agenda

• Improvements at A-2 Interlocking (Metra)
• New Station Feasibility Assessment (CDOT)
• Timeline and Next Steps (CDOT & Metra)
• Questions (CDOT & Metra)
Metra A-2 corridor overview

The A-2 interlocking, at Kinzie and Western, is where four Metra lines (UP-W, MD-N, MD-W, NCS) intersect adjacent to two major Metra yards.

Trains from three additional lines (UP-NW, UP-N, HC) traverse A-2 to access daytime maintenance and storage.
A-2 is at the heart of Metra's System

• Metra is currently evaluating solutions to maintain and improve the A-2 interlocking

• A-2 is the busiest interlocking in the region’s commuter rail network
  • Critical bottleneck and cause of train conflicts that can increase passenger delays

• A-2 improvements will give Metra the ability to add more frequent train service and improve reliability

The A-2 interlocking is a system chokepoint that limits the number of Metra trains that can serve Chicago

Trains passing through the A-2 interlocking serve 7 of 11 Metra lines

Over half of Metra riders rely on trains that pass through the A-2 interlocking

The reliability and efficiency of the A-2 interlocking impacts Metra’s ability to add and improve service

Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study
A-2 project overview

- Over 200 trains daily on seven train lines cross at grade at the A-2 interlocking.
- Delays and a bottleneck in service to downtown result from the at-grade crossing.
- A-2 flyover will prevent bottleneck, enable added capacity and allow for expanded service to the West Side and O’Hare.
- Adding a new Metra station would serve the growing Fulton Market and Kinzie Industrial Corridor areas. It would provide a more convenient transit option for traveling between work and home.
- However, a new station cannot be added unless the A-2 flyover is implemented to create capacity to stop trains in the area.
A-2 flyover alternatives

Following concept design, alternatives 2 & 3 are still under consideration. Metra has begun value engineering to determine the most cost-effective solutions along with operations modeling before the project can move into full design and environmental analysis.
Metra’s Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations

Per Metra’s Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations,* the site screening process for the Kinzie-Fulton Market New Metra Station:

- Is data-driven and quantifiable where feasible
- Weighs benefits to new riders against impacts to existing riders
- Conforms to all Metra standards (design, safety, accessibility)

New Metra Station positioned to serve various existing / future markets & service plans

Traditional commute
New Metra Station improves Chicago’s and the region’s transportation connections to growing employment markets west of the Loop

- Will reduce the need for traditional inbound commuters to “backtrack” from the Loop to access opportunities to the west

Reverse commute
Metra lines served by the new station connect to growing regional employment centers such as O'Hare and the Lake-Cook area

Source: CMAP, Metra
A-2 improvements & New Metra Station will:

- Enhance City & regional access
- Increase transit system connectivity
- Benefit Chicago neighborhoods

Metra is the only rail transit provider serving much of Chicago's Northwest Side

Source: City of Chicago data portal; Metra
Travel Market Assessment

- **Travel market considerations** include findings related to mobility, accessibility, and transit operations within the study area and beyond.

- Metra’s A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study identified five potential station platform locations for further station site screening: Damen, Ashland (east and west), Ogden, & Racine.

- This analysis conforms with Metra’s Draft Station Evaluation Process for New/Infill Stations.

- This analysis informs a **site screening evaluation** that will identify a preferred new station site.
Improved access to City employment centers

Increased connectivity to job centers beyond the Loop: New Metra station can provide improved access to IMD, Kinzie Industrial Corridor, Fulton Market, United Center, and various educational institutions.

Some of Chicago’s most disadvantaged populations work in employment hubs outside the Loop, especially in the IMD/UIC-area [1]

Key connection to high-capacity CTA Bus Routes 9 & X9 along Ashland Ave

Source: City of Chicago Kinzie Framework Plan (2017 job data); IMD Master Plan 2019; North Branch: Census LEHD analysis 2017; City of Chicago data portal; DPD FMID Plan; [1] RTA 2017 RTA Regional Transit Market Assessment, CMAP “Travel patterns in Economically Disconnected Area Clusters” Report, 2018
Jobs near potential station sites

Employment growth is shifting west towards Ashland Ave.

Eastern station sites provide better access to employment within walking distance.

A new station would provide access to several new corporate headquarter offices.

Walkshed employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Damen</th>
<th>Ashland</th>
<th>Ogden</th>
<th>Racine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>19,700</td>
<td>23,700</td>
<td>24,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) data, 2017

Screening criteria: access to jobs, station access

Source: ESRI Network Analyst
Map source: ESRI Network Analyst; HQ employment source: Chicago Tribune, January 2020
Ashland location provides best connectivity to existing CTA bus and rail service, based on the walkshed analysis summarized above.

Ashland (CTA Routes 9/X9) is busiest north-south bus route in the City (22,000 daily trips).

Ashland new station site is a 5-minute walk from existing CTA Green and Pink Line station; Damen new station site is a 5-minute walk from future CTA Green Line station.

Source: CTA, ESRI Network Analyst
# Gate down time analysis

## AM peak: 7-9 AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Racine Avenue</th>
<th>May Street</th>
<th>Aberdeen Street</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total gate downtime</td>
<td>25% of peak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racine Station</td>
<td>69 min</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total gate downtime</td>
<td>57% of peak</td>
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## PM peak: 4-6 PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Racine Avenue</th>
<th>May Street</th>
<th>Aberdeen Street</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>26 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total gate downtime</td>
<td>22% of peak</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Racine Station</td>
<td>45 min</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of total gate downtime</td>
<td>37% of peak</td>
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Racine location would significantly increase grade crossing delays

Racine is the only at-grade potential station location.

Slower travel speeds before and after stopping will result in longer gate down times at grade crossings.

Because three crossings are within 1,000 feet of the potential Racine station site, gates would remain down at all three crossings during station dwell for eastbound trains.

Note: Build scenario assumes Racine, May, and Aberdeen crossings remain open and at grade, and assumes same train volumes as Baseline. Traffic counts unavailable at Aberdeen Street. Source: Analysis of Metra trip data 2019, Metra train length, and Metra rolling stock inventory data; Google Earth; IDOT traffic counts; Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study.
Screening methodology

Screening addresses advantages / disadvantages of each potential station site from the following perspectives:

1. Travel market
2. Multimodal network
3. Rail operations
4. Land use / development
5. Implementation

Screening is informed by the conditions and analysis just presented
### Station site screening evaluation matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential station site</th>
<th>Travel market</th>
<th>Multi-modal network</th>
<th>Rail operations</th>
<th>Land use / Development</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Damen</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashland [west]</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashland [east]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogden</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Racine</td>
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**Favorability**
- **high**
- **med-high**
- **medium**
- **low**
- **fatal flaw**

**Summary**

- **Highest favorability at both Ashland sites;**
  - Ashland [east] site is recommended, with pedestrian links to Ogden and Ashland [west]
- **Ogden stand-alone site lacks transit connections, but has good walk access to Fulton Market area**
- **Station spacing and operational issues affect the Damen site**
- **Racine site eliminated from future consideration due to safety issues, pedestrian and traffic delays at grade crossings, and inability to serve Metra lines from OTC**

*Note: “Fatal flaw” designation removes station site from future consideration.*

Source: Metra A-2 Interlocking Relocation Study
Screening recommendation

Ashland to Ogden

- Future design concept will focus on platform(s) at the Ashland [east] station location, with pedestrian connections to/from Ogden and Ashland [west]
- Concept will leverage platform length to combine the benefits of the three most highly evaluated potential station sites

Ashland access critical for CTA transfer to support ridership and broader connectivity

Easy and safe pedestrian access to platforms from Ogden is also important

Ability to access platforms from both sides of Ashland is a priority

Bus and curbside transfer facilities are possible along Ashland, Ogden, and Arbour Place

There are opportunities for supportive private development on and near this site
Coordinated signals along Ashland

Assess potential pickup/dropoff options on north side of station

Curbside pickup/dropoff lane on Arbour Place
- westbound only
- evaluate potential for ROW extension

Focus primary vehicular access on south side of station

Curb management strategy needed for transit, TNCs, private vehicles, deliveries

Assess USPS truck congestion along Carroll Ave and develop traffic management strategies as needed

Ashland-Ogden Station Site
Roadway Circulation

Kinzie–Fulton Market New Metra Station
Composite potential timeline – A-2 & New Station

Note: Timeline assumes that Metra pursues FTA CIG program funding, a decision subject to findings of the CIG Strategy Assessment shown.
A-2 & New Station preliminary draft cost estimate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-2 Flyover</th>
<th>New Station &amp; Site Prep</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.0-1.2 billion</td>
<td>$400-500 million</td>
<td>$1.4 - 1.7 billion</td>
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Note that these cost estimates are very preliminary and subject to change as further planning and design progresses.
A-2 & New Station next steps

A-2 current tasks

• Value engineering study (will inform New Station refinements)
• Assessment of federal discretionary funding compatibility

A-2 next milestone

• Initiation of Environmental Analysis (NEPA) - 2022-23
• Initiation of federal discretionary funding process – 2022-23

New Station next milestones

• Initiate protective land acquisitions
• Identify funding for additional analysis and preliminary engineering
Q & A

Additional questions can be sent to:

[CDOT email needed]

DPD@CityofChicago.org