



REDEFINE THE DRIVE

North DuSable Lake Shore Drive Phase I Study Belmont Avenue to Addison Street Community Meeting Frequently Asked Questions Guide

The North DuSable Lake Shore Drive project team hosted the Belmont Avenue to Addison Street Community Meeting on June 22, 2021, through the online meeting platform Zoom. A total of 255 people attended the meeting and the project team received over 800 comments throughout the comment period. Common questions received related to the Lakeview area between Belmont Avenue and Addison Street are summarized below. Please note that this is not a comprehensive review of all questions but rather a summary of the common questions and themes.

If you have further questions related to the Lakeview area, please review the presentation that was provided during the live meeting which can be [viewed here](#) or contact the project team at info@ndlsd.org. To visit specific topics in the presentation, please visit the following links:

- i. [Introduction](#)
- ii. [Existing Conditions](#)
- iii. [Feedback Summary: 2019-2020 Community Meetings and Aldermanic Coordination](#)
- iv. [Access Ramp Configurations](#)
- v. [Transit Operations near the Belmont "triangle"](#)
- vi. [Neighborhood Traffic Volumes and Cut-Through Traffic](#)
- vii. [Driveway Access along Addison Street](#)
- viii. [Reconfiguration of Belmont Harbor](#)
- ix. [Design Updates to the Inner Drive](#)
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Pedestrian and Bicycle

- 1. Why does the presentation appear to focus only on auto traffic in the area? What about pedestrians and bicyclists? How will the three alternate roadway configurations presented address pedestrian and bicyclist access to the lakefront?***

The Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021 was held with the specific intent of addressing the many comments received about the proposed roadway design in this area during Public Input Opportunity Meeting #4 held in the Fall of 2020. The comments received at that meeting were heavily focused on auto congestion, traffic volumes, and proposed ramp configurations between Belmont Avenue and Addison Street, and they guided the contents of the presentation.

Notwithstanding the specific focus of the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021, the NDLSO project intends to improve the NDLSO corridor for all people traveling within it, whether they are walking, bicycling, using transit, or using automobiles. All of the plans proposed in the Lakeview area are being designed with a 'pedestrian first' approach intended to create safer street crossings to and from the lakefront with the addition of new crosswalks, traffic signals, and pedestrian safety features such as median refuge islands. Similarly, bike access between the neighborhood and the lakefront is being planned consistent with the City's latest standards for safe and comfortable bicycling on and near city streets, and will be consistent with existing neighborhood routes such as along Aldine Avenue and Roscoe Street. For example, the proposed new traffic signal at Aldine Avenue will feature a protected phase for people walking and bicycling to safely and comfortably cross Inner Drive.

- 2. How will the proposed changes address safety for pedestrian and students, specifically those destined for the Nettelhorst School?***

All of the alternate plans presented at the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021 would reduce the amount of cut-through traffic experienced along Aldine Avenue. In existing conditions, there is too much demand for access to the Outer Drive at the Belmont Avenue junction. The proposed alternates create additional direct access opportunities to the Outer Drive in the area between Belmont and Addison, thereby reducing delays at the Belmont Avenue junction that currently cause motorists to seek out other routes using the adjacent neighborhood streets. These plans also restrict direct access to Outer Drive from Aldine so that Aldine would not be a shortcut to reach the Drive. Pedestrian friendly crossings and walking path improvements are also proposed along Inner Drive to create a safer and more comfortable environment for people walking in the area.

Transit

- 3. Is bus staging proposed by the parkland near the Sheridan triangle?***

All of the alternate plans presented at the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021 were refined to eliminate space where buses could stage on the east side of the triangle. The width of the pavement in this area was reduced to eliminate any space for staging. The only permitted bus activity at this location would be passing through or stopping to board and alight passengers, as buses do today.

Motor Vehicles

4. How will adding access at Addison Street ease congestion at the Belmont Avenue Junction?

Currently, most of the traffic traveling between neighborhoods along Belmont and Addison and points to the south along NDLSO uses the Belmont junction. This traffic demand often exceeds the capacity of Belmont junction, resulting in travel delays for people driving and people taking transit. These delays also encourage some motorists to use neighborhood side streets as shortcuts. Adding direct access to and from the south on NDLSO at Addison Street will serve a portion of the travel demand that currently must use Belmont, reducing congestion at the Belmont junction itself as well as along Inner Drive between Addison and Belmont.

5. Why is a southbound entrance ramp needed both at Aldine Avenue and Belmont Avenue?

Currently, the southbound entrance ramp at Belmont serves motorists approaching NDLSO from the west on Belmont, from the south on Sheridan, and from the north on Inner Drive. As noted in the previous answer, travel demand from the north on Inner Drive is currently in part coming from the west on Addison and will be removed from Inner Drive by way of the proposed new southbound entrance ramp at Addison. However, there will still remain a significant demand for southbound access to NDLSO just from the neighborhoods along Inner Drive between Addison and Belmont. As detailed in the presentation delivered at the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021, Alternatives A and B contemplated no direct access to southbound NDLSO from Inner Drive in the area near Aldine. However, this resulted in poor overall operations at the Belmont Avenue junction and for neighborhood traffic traveling along Inner Drive. The southbound entrance ramp at Aldine Avenue provided in Alternate C removes local traffic destined for southbound NDLSO from the southbound left turn movement at either Melrose Street or Belmont Avenue, reducing the volumes conflicting with vehicular and pedestrian traffic on Belmont Avenue and further improving operations for people walking, bicycling, taking transit, or driving at the Belmont Avenue junction.

6. How will access to the Belmont Harbor parking lot be provided?

Access to the Belmont Harbor parking lot will remain as it is today at the Belmont Avenue junction.

7. How will the added traffic signal at Aldine Avenue affect travel on Inner Drive?

Currently, the Aldine Avenue/Inner Drive intersection is controlled by an all-way stop sign. A traffic signal at this location will efficiently accommodate vehicular traffic along Inner Drive while also providing a safe and comfortable protected signal phase for people walking and bicycling across Inner Drive at Aldine. Additionally, proposed direct southbound access to NDLSO at Addison Street will reduce overall traffic on Inner Drive at Aldine Avenue, further improving travel conditions in this section of the corridor.

8. Can you explain the changes proposed at Melrose Street from previous plans?

Previous concepts (as shown in the Fall 2020 Public Input Opportunity) had restricted northbound left turn access to Melrose Street, limiting access to right in/right out only. After discussions with residents, the study team heard the importance of allowing full access at Melrose Street and have since modified the proposed design to maintain full access, as is the condition at this intersection today.

9. How will parking be affected by the alternates?

It is anticipated that minimal impacts to parking will occur with any of the three alternate plans presented at the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021; there are no differences in parking impacts across the three alternates. An overall goal of the NDLSO project is to minimize impacts to parking and replace impacted parking in kind whenever possible. As part of Level 3 screening, the preferred Alternate C for Lakeview will be included in all five of the corridor wide alternatives to be carried forward, and each of those will be further screened and compared for parking impacts.

10. What traffic studies have been done in the Lakeview area in order to develop and assess the proposed designs?

Traffic counts in the Lakeview area were collected in February/early March 2020, just prior to the beginning of the pandemic. The project team continues to monitor traffic volumes subsequent to the pandemic, however, it is important to recognize that many of the proposed changes are targeted toward improving safety and enhancing access to/from the lakefront, which are objectives that are independent of traffic volumes.

Environment

11. How will the proposed plans address speeding and pollution in Lakeview?

The study team acknowledges that speeding is an existing issue on NDLSO in the Lakeview area, and the proposed design will include pull-off areas for police enforcement of speeding. There is currently a state law that prevents the use of electronic or photo enforcement along NDLSO. The NDLSO study team will continue to assess and incorporate design features intended to reduce speeding and ensure forward compatibility with electronic or photo enforcement if State law is revised.

Level 3 screening will consider the air quality implications of each remaining alternative. The project team is currently working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to assess the effects of the alternatives' expected greenhouse gas emissions. Ultimately, the project will be evaluated to ensure the proposed plan is in conformity with the air quality goals of the region's approved Transportation Improvement Plan (or TIP).

12. How many trees will be impacted by the proposed plans in the Lakeview area?

As part of Level 3 screening of the 5 remaining overall alternatives, the study team will compare the impacts to trees for each alternative. The Level 3 screening results are anticipated to be presented in early 2022. While tree impacts will be avoided to the extent possible, any affected trees will be replaced.

Next Steps

13. When will updated plans in the Lakeview area be presented?

The preferred Lakeview concept alternate (Alternate C) will be incorporated into all of the remaining corridor-wide alternatives. The project team is preparing for Task Force Meeting #13 to occur in early 2022 to provide updates on Level 3 screening results, which will reflect the updated concepts in the Lakeview area and further incorporate comments received at the Lakeview Community Meeting in June 2021.

14. When will construction for the project begin?

Currently the NDLSO Phase I Study is working toward identifying a preferred alternative for the overall project sometime in 2022. The Phase I Study is expected to be complete in 2023, and will include possible strategies for staged construction. This will be followed by Phase II development of final engineering plans and detailed construction staging plans. The first and then subsequent stages of construction would only begin after both design phases are complete and funding has been secured. Neither Phase II design nor Phase III construction are currently included in [IDOT's FY 2022-2027 Proposed Highway Improvement Program](#).