



DIRECTIONS!

Spring 2015 Newsletter Issue III



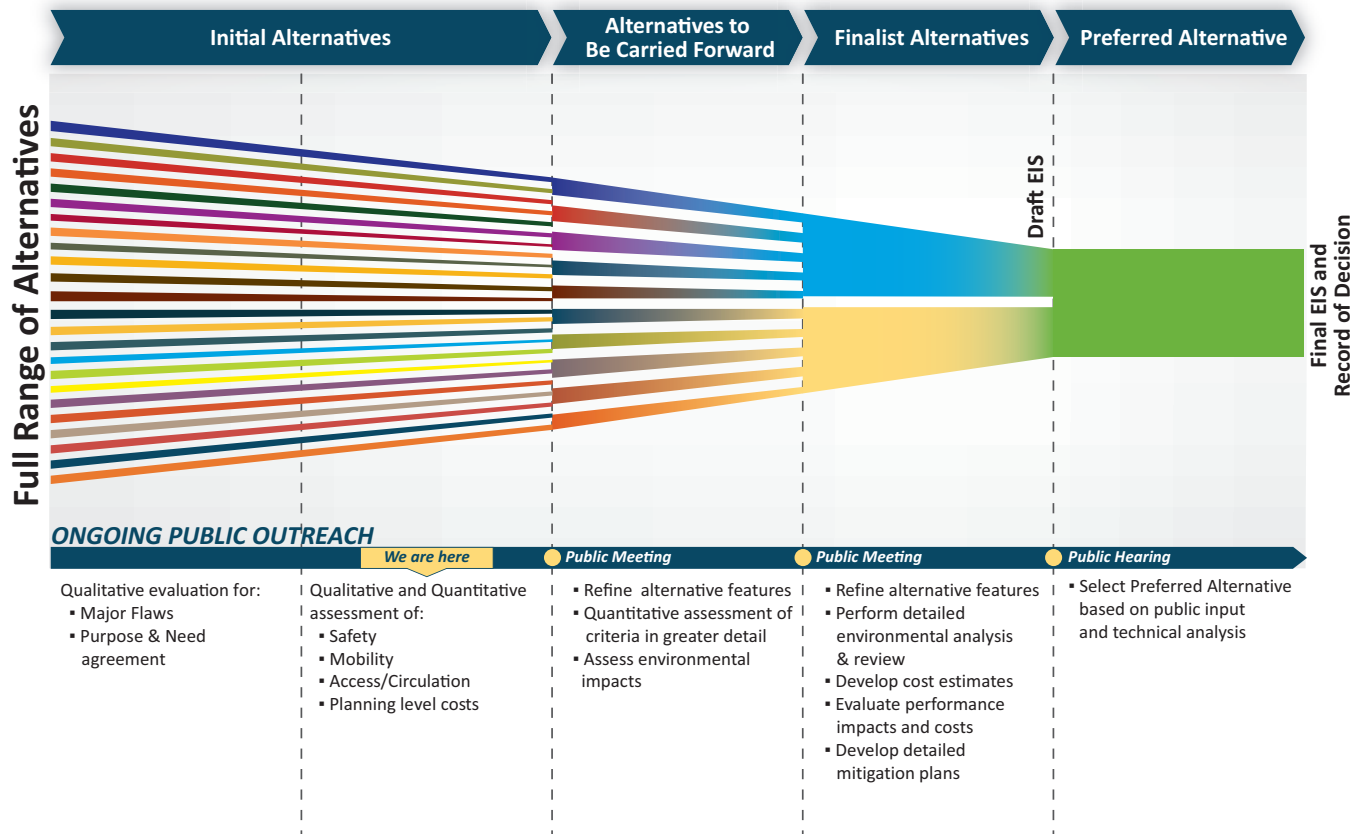
WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

Since the NLSD Phase I Study kickoff in 2013, numerous meetings have been held with the public, the existing conditions and transportation needs have been identified, and the Purpose and Need Statement has been drafted and approved. The Project Study Group, consisting of Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Chicago Park District, and the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), is now in the process of identifying, developing and evaluating alternatives.

WHAT'S NEXT?

In 2015, we anticipate hosting the fourth Task Force Meeting and third Public Meeting. These meetings will be a chance for Task Force members and the general public to review the initial range of alternatives developed by the Project Study Group. The alternatives will address improvements needed along NLSD as documented in the Purpose and Need Statement. After these meetings are held, the Project Study Group will review the public input and select alternatives to be carried forward for more detailed study. Additional public meetings will be held during these steps as well.

Alternatives Development & Evaluation



Illinois Department of Transportation



TOP 20 IDEAS TO REDEFINE THE DRIVE

Since the second North Lake Shore Drive public meeting in July 2014, the project team has been reviewing over 1,500 comments that describe how NLSD should be redefined. You had a lot to say and we have been listening! As we consider your ideas for potential solutions for NLSD, we wanted to pass along the Top 20 Ideas we received. The comments

below are compiled from the July 2014 public meeting, where almost 400 ideas were submitted and the third Task Force meeting in April 2014, where over 1,200 ideas were submitted. The photos are used for illustrative purposes or provide a look at existing conditions.



1. Separate bike/pedestrian users on Lakefront Trail (263 Comments)



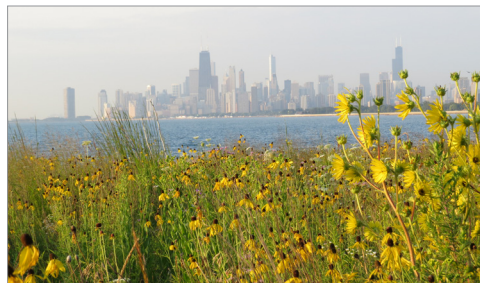
2. Improve Transit Service (185)



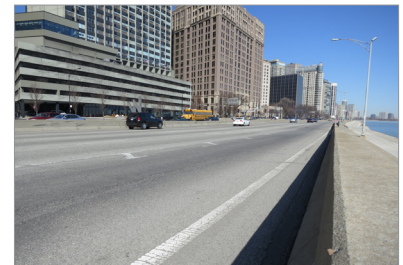
3. Improve east-west pedestrian/bike connections and facilities (134)



4. Grade separate Lakefront Trail at junctions and pedestrian tunnels (104)

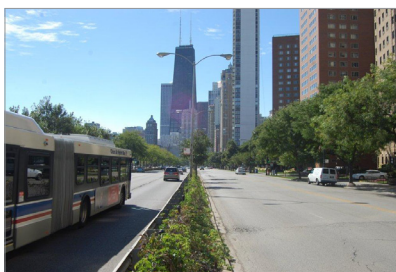


5. Add trees and natural landscaping areas (101)



6. Add green space east of NLSD (Grand to LaSalle) (81)

8. Add green space between Inner and Outer Drives (61)



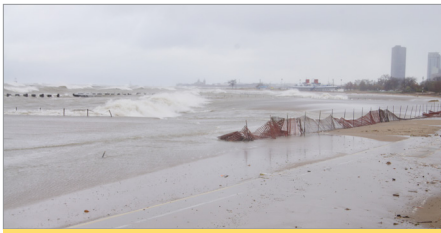
7. Separate Inner and Outer Drives (64)



9. Realign the Oak Street curve (61)



10. Reduce/enforce speed limit on NLSD (56)



11. Expand lake fill to improve shoreline flood protection (55)



12. Relocate and/or expand Oak Street Beach (51)

EXTREME WEATHER ON NLS

On October 31st, 2014, high winds caused waves from Lake Michigan to crash onto North Lake Shore Drive and close lanes. The National Weather Service reported winds up to 50 mph and 23-foot waves. Large slabs of asphalt pavement were broken along the trail, which resulted in around \$200,000 worth of damage. Chicago Park District has since repaired the trail and cleared the debris. Residents have expressed their concerns about flood related issues, throughout the Phase 1 process. In fact, it was currently ranked #11 in the Top 20 Ideas.



Waves crashing over North Lake Shore Drive (via Twitter)



Lakefront Trail pavement damage (via Twitter)



13. Add more pedestrian/bicycle access points to the lakefront (53)



14.* Improve signage and wayfinding including path mile markers (44)

**Photo credits*
14. gopixpic.com
18. vioxinc.com



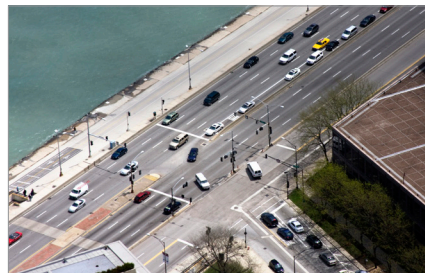
17. Expand park space at Oak Street & Michigan Avenue (32)

15. Reconfigure NLS (tunnel, boulevard) (41)

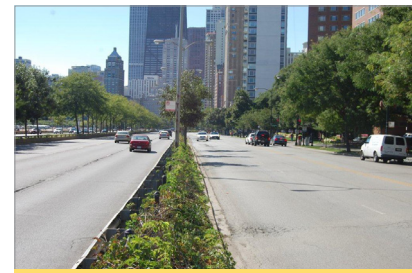
16. Add a west side bicycle highway (33)



18.* Improve storm water management/add bio-swales (31)



19. Construct a Chicago Avenue junction (30)

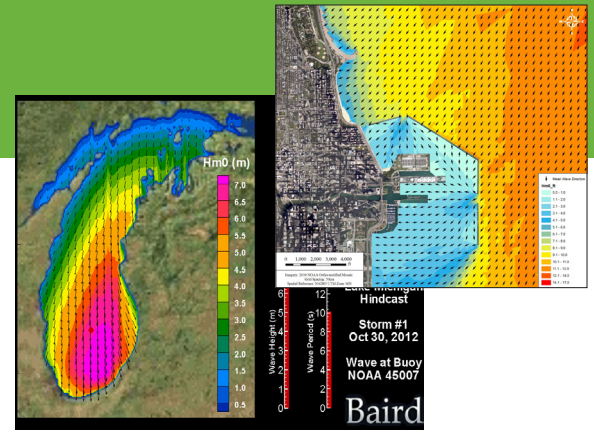


20. Narrow the Inner Drive (22)

DID YOU KNOW!

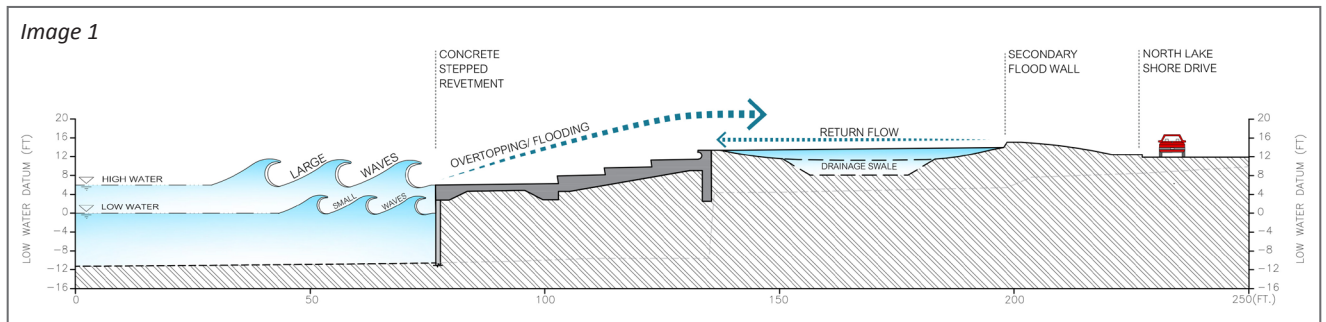
COASTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The project team has been investigating and analyzing the complex components of the NLSD project including how **WATER** affects the corridor. Flooding in the study area can occur due to stormwater runoff as well as due to Lake Michigan wave action.



Coastal considerations are an integral component of the NLSD Phase I Study. Baird & Associates, a member of the project team and foremost experts in the field of costal engineering, has undertaken an in-depth analysis to better understand these conditions and the impacts they may have on potential alternatives. This analysis included multiple surveys to document existing water depths and shoreline conditions as well as a thorough evaluation of wind, waves and water levels. These parameters have been utilized to generate computer models of the existing conditions. These models will serve as technical tools to assist the design team and the public with understanding the existing wave climate and currents in the project area, and will also be used to evaluate the impacts of these conditions on proposed alternatives.

One of the primary considerations of any improvements will be the exposure of the Drive, the Lakefront Trail and Lincoln Park to wave overtopping and flooding. The prevention of flooding due to wave overtopping would require a tall shoreline structure to protect against extreme wave events, which in turn, would impact views of the lake. In locations where the viewshed is important, it will be necessary to provide a setback that will accommodate flood waters as they recede back into the lake during extreme storm events as illustrated in Image 1.



Did you know that the height of a near shore wave above normal water level can reach as much as 65% of the water depth? Image 2 illustrates that if the water is 10 feet deep, then a wave can potentially reach a height of 6.5 feet above the normal water level.

Image 2

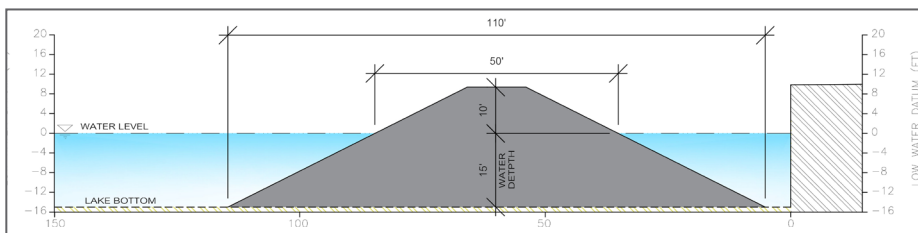
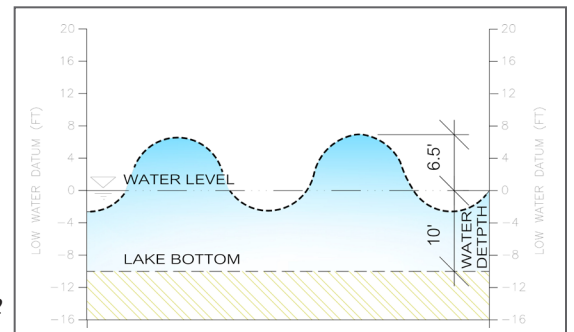


Image 3

What looks like a 10 foot high wall above water may look narrow at the surface but would be much wider at the lakebed. See Image 3.

2,498

comments received
thus far

37

internal Bi-weekly Meetings

3

rounds of Task Force Meetings

2

rounds of Public Meetings

PURPOSE & NEED STATEMENT APPROVED

In December 2014, the NLSD Purpose & Need Statement was approved by the necessary regulatory and resource agencies including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Purpose & Need Statement has changed significantly since it was posted in May of 2014. Project stakeholders provided extensive and valuable input that allowed the Project Study Group to enhance the draft Purpose & Need Statement and better focus it on the diverse

needs that exist in the project area. Since the draft Purpose & Need Statement was posted, the project team has reviewed your feedback, made revisions to the document and sought concurrence on the revised document from regulatory and resource agencies that are partners in the NEPA/404 Merger process. You can find a copy of the recently updated and approved Purpose & Need Statement posted on the project website:

www.northlakeshoredrive.org

PROJECT TEAM TOUR

In October 2014, though it was a cold and blustery day, the North Lake Shore Drive project team and some critical regulatory agencies participated in a day-long tour of the North Lake Shore Drive study area and Northerly Island. Participants walked, rode Divvy bikes and took buses to see first-hand some of the challenges and opportunities within the study area. Participants reviewed locations within the study area including the Chicago Avenue intersection, Oak Street curve, numerous underpasses, the Passerelle bridge, the Belmont Avenue bus stop, the Lakefront Trail, Montrose Harbor, and the northern terminus at Hollywood Avenue. The project team observed peak rush hour congestion to better understand all modes of transportation and their conflict areas.



Chicago Park District discusses the Northerly Island renovation.



Participants look towards the Oak Street Beach and observe the Oak Street curve.



The Chicago Park District discussed the Montrose Dunes Illinois Natural Area Inventory site and the bird sanctuary near Belmont Harbor.

WE'RE A SOCIAL BUNCH, SHARE WITH US

Use the Drive for your daily commute? Walk, run or ride along the trail? Send us your favorite NLSD pictures and we will feature them in an upcoming presentation or on Facebook & Twitter!



www.facebook.com/NorthLakeShoreDrive



[@n_Lakeshoredr](https://twitter.com/n_Lakeshoredr)



info@northlakeshoredrive.org



www.northlakeshoredrive.org