

NORTH LAKE SHORE DRIVE PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITY

September/October 2020



PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITY: MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

REDEFINE THE DRIVE



N O R T H
L A K E S H O R E D R I V E

The Illinois Department of Transportation and the Chicago Department of Transportation invite you to provide feedback concerning the improvement of U.S. 41 (North Lake Shore Drive) from Grand Avenue to Hollywood Avenue in Chicago. Since the last public meeting, the project team has narrowed the range of alternatives to five finalists. We want to hear from you!

Due to ongoing health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Public Meeting (#4) will be conducted online through an interactive website. There are multiple opportunities to provide feedback.

Interactive Website

We have created a clearinghouse of materials, interactive exhibits, and an audio-visual presentation to provide a refresher on the project and help you review project updates. This website will be live on September 28th:

NLSDinput.org

Topics included in this brochure:

- Project Overview
- Level 2 Screening Results
- Alternatives Recommended to be Carried Forward
- Preliminary Level 3 Screening Criteria
- Transit Improvements
- Lakefront Trail and Park Access Improvements
- Next Steps

How can I provide feedback?

Provide feedback beginning September 28, 2020 through the avenues below. Comments received by November 9, 2020 will become part of the official public meeting record.



Input can be provided through the interactive website in multiple ways:

- Use the interactive map to comment and provide input on the proposed improvements
- Complete a survey to tell us how you use the Drive and lakefront and share your priorities
- Review and comment on the project exhibits
- Sign up for a small group discussion with the project team



Written comments can be mailed to:

NLSD Study
c/o Civiltech Engineering
30 N. LaSalle, Suite 3220
Chicago, IL 60602



Call the NLSD project phone line and leave a message with your comment: 312-561-3140 ext. 101

**We look forward to continuing to work with you to
Redefine the Drive!**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) are directing the North Lake Shore Drive (NLSD) Phase I Study. The study area boundaries are from Grand Avenue to Hollywood Avenue. This 7-mile length includes 12 highway junctions, 22 bridges and tunnels, and touches 11 Chicago neighborhoods. Lincoln Park, Lake Michigan, bicycle and pedestrian lakefront trails and historic landmarks surround the Boulevard.

The Phase I Study is following the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires a rigorous and objective evaluation of alternatives and considers both stakeholder input as well as quantitative, measurable factors.

Throughout the Phase I Study, the project team is charged with reviewing the current road configuration and redesigning the corridor and adjacent park trails into a more multi-modal system that accommodates people who walk, people who bike, transit users and auto users.

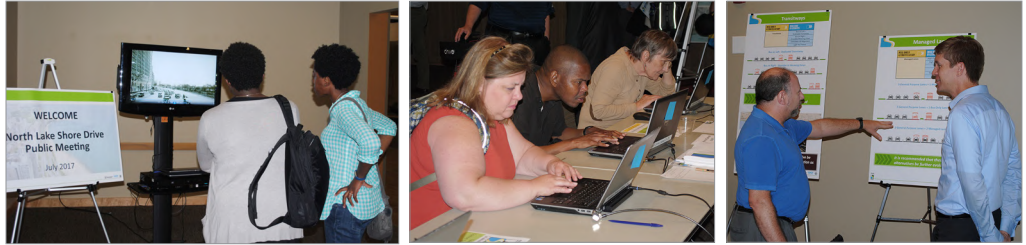
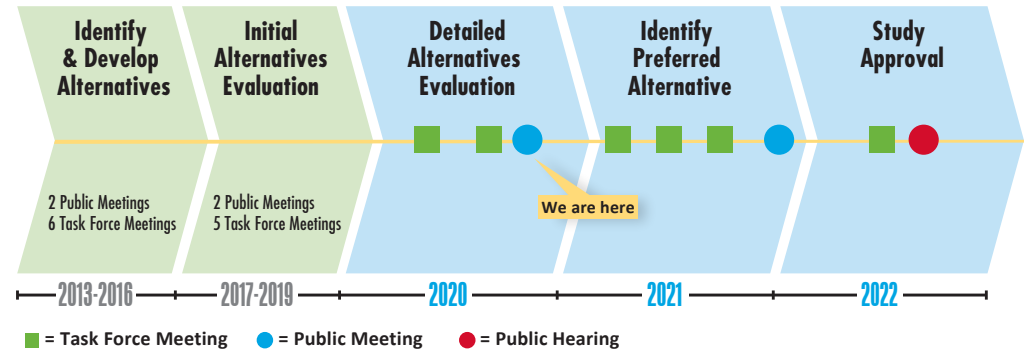
PURPOSE & NEED

The Project Purpose and Need Statement, which is the initial step in the NEPA process, identifies the transportation goals for the project and was developed based upon a combination of technical analysis and stakeholder input. The purpose of the project is to improve the NLSD multi-modal transportation facility.

The specific needs to be addressed throughout the study include:

- **Improve safety for all users**
- **Improve mobility for all users**
- **Address infrastructure deficiencies**
- **Improve access and circulation**

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PHASE I STUDY PROCESS?

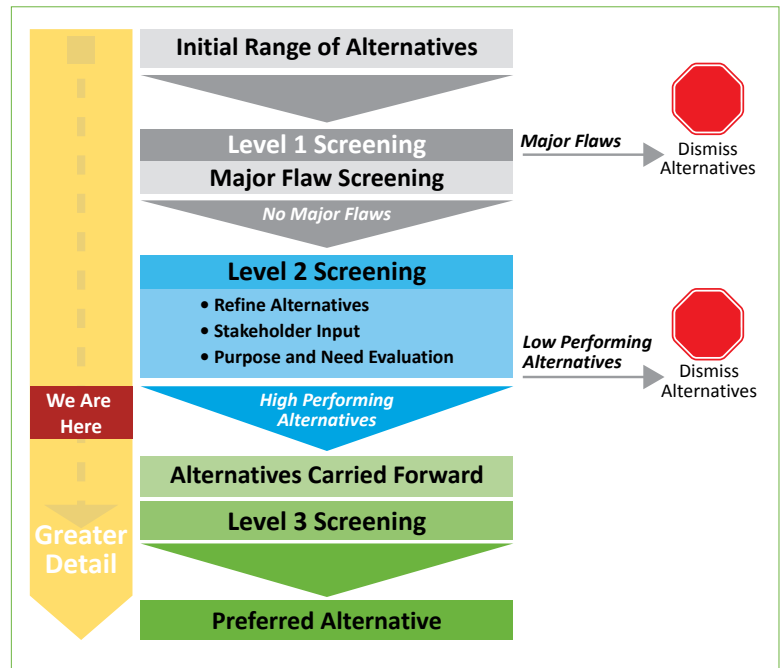


WHAT IS LEVEL 2 SCREENING AND WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

At the last Public Meeting, held in July 2017, we discussed Level 1 Screening. The Level 1 Screening was a review of the initial range of alternatives to determine if there were any major flaws (substantially higher costs or impacts). As a result of the Level 1 screening, alternatives that included building tunnels within Lincoln Park, or relocating NLSD onto a causeway in Lake Michigan were eliminated from further consideration.

The project team has recently completed Level 2 Screening, which included an evaluation of the remaining alternatives to determine how well they would address the Purpose and Need and their benefits and impacts. Based upon the technical analysis and stakeholder feedback, the project team is recommending five alternatives to

be carried forward for further evaluation. The alternatives include: Context Tailored Treatment with Transit Advantages, Dedicated Transitway-Left, 3+1 Managed Lane, 3+1 Bus Only Lane and 2+2 Managed Lane. These are detailed further on the next page.



WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO BE CARRIED FORWARD?

A total of 13 alternatives remained following the Level 1 Screening process. All of these alternatives were evaluated during the Level 2 Screening process, and the top performing alternatives are now being recommended for Level 3 Screening. The five Alternatives recommended to be Carried Forward are listed and described below.



Context Tailored Treatment with Transit Advantages

- Baseline improvements, such as a full junction at Chicago Avenue, straightened Oak Street Curve, shoreline protection, additional green space, added clear zones, Lakefront Trail improvements, and incorporation of the Northern Terminus Traffic Study (NTTS) design.
- Brings NLSD up to modern standards to improve safety and operations, with design tailored to unique locational considerations.
- This is both a standalone alternative and a base alternative onto which the other alternatives build.
- Spot transit improvements at junctions including queue jump lanes and bus priority signals
- Lanes are reduced north of Irving Park Road



Dedicated Transitway – Left

- Baseline Improvements (as noted in Context Tailored Treatment alternative)
- **Added** bus lane along center median
- Dedicated center entrance / exit ramps at key junctions to the bus lane



3+1 Managed Lane

- Baseline improvements (as noted in Context Tailored Treatment alternative)
- One existing center lane **converted** to a managed lane (shared lane for transit and some autos)
- Dedicated center entrance/exit ramps at key junctions to the managed lane



3+1 Bus Only Lane

- Baseline improvements (as noted in Context Tailored Treatment alternative)
- One existing center lane **converted** to a bus only lane
- Dedicated center entrance/exit ramps at key junctions to the bus lane



2+2 Managed Lane

- Baseline improvements (as noted in Context Tailored Treatment alternative)
- Two existing center lanes **converted** to managed lanes (shared lanes for transit and some autos)
- Dedicated center entrance/exit ramps at key junctions to the managed lanes

What is a Junction?

A junction is a grade-separated intersection (one road passes over another) that allows crossing roadways to connect with NLSD without interrupting traffic on the Drive.

*Explore the baseline improvements in more detail on the interactive website: NLSDinput.org



TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS FOR A FUTURE-FORWARD NLSD

It has been 80 years since NLSD was originally built. Today, we have the opportunity

to make the NLSD Boulevard more effectively serve modern multi-modal transportation needs. Major transit improvements including bus priority signals, bus turnarounds, and staging areas will be provided along the corridor – regardless of the alternative. These improvements will serve North-South buses along NLSD as well as East-West buses to and from Lincoln Park. Additional transit improvements are

being designed for specific junctions along the Drive.

Additionally, all of the alternatives being carried forward will improve bus travel time and reliability. Reliability is the range between the minimum and maximum travel times. Reducing the range of potential travel times improves reliability and allows bus riders to better plan their trips. **All of the remaining alternatives will reduce overall bus travel times* by a minimum of approximately 14% and improve bus reliability* (reduce the range of potential travel times) by a minimum of approximately 58%*.**

The project team has also modeled bus capacity on the Drive. All of these alternatives would continue to function at optimum performance with double, and in some cases, triple the current number of buses on NLSD. All alternatives will significantly speed up buses, be more reliable for bus commuters, increase overall bus performance, and accommodate tremendous growth in bus ridership along NLSD.

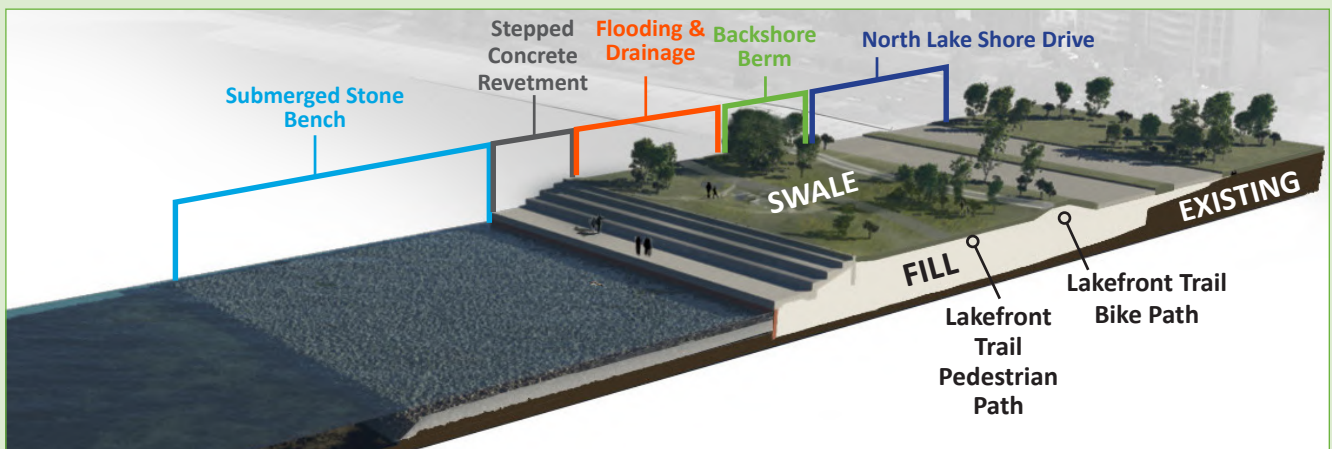
**These computer simulation modeling results are based on a combined average of all seven CTA Express Bus routes during the AM peak hours.*

SHORELINE PROTECTION

The City of Chicago and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have been working to implement shoreline protection, mostly recently with the Fullerton Revetment Project. As part of the NLSD project, shoreline protection is proposed between Grand Avenue and Fullerton Avenue. Shoreline protection is proposed to prevent overtopping waves from reaching the Outer Drive and at least one of the Lakefront Trail paths.

All alternatives contain shoreline protection. Shoreline protection techniques are used to safeguard shoreline facilities from the forces of wave action during large storm events. In the context of NLSD and Lincoln Park, these techniques would be used to shield NLSD and the Lakefront Trail from flooding associated with wave overtopping.

Example shoreline protection view between Oak Street Beach and North Avenue detailing elements to protect our shoreline from overtopping waves. These shoreline protection elements employ both hardscape and green infrastructure.



LAKEFRONT TRAIL AND PARK ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

Alternatives include improvements to the Lakefront Trail and access to the park. As part of the alternative development process, the project team established key design goals and guidelines for the Lakefront Trail and park access. The design goals include reducing congestion on the trail, minimizing conflict points, decreasing flooding, improving visibility and aesthetics at access points, and ensuring Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.



Design Guidelines:

- Separate users
- Create wide, welcoming access points
- ¼ mile spacing of pedestrian/bicycle access points

These improvements can be viewed in greater detail on the interactive website in the mapping tool.

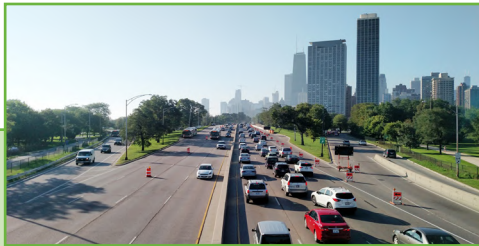
PRELIMINARY EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR LEVEL 3 SCREENING

In this next phase of the screening process, the project team will review the remaining alternatives against an expanded set of evaluation criteria, including Social, Economic and Environmental effects, as well as updated Purpose and Need factors. Input will also be sought from stakeholders during multiple points in the Level 3 Screening evaluation process. Some of the preliminary evaluation criterion are as follows:



Social Factors

- Population and employment effects
- Displacements
- Equity



Economic Factors

- Construction cost
- Revenue potential
- Productivity



Purpose and Need Factors

- Transit mobility and reliability
- Vehicular mobility and reliability
- Network volume change
- Person throughput
- Safety

Environmental Factors

- Climate change
- Natural resources
- Threatened & Endangered Species
- Historic Structures/Section 106
- Park facilities/Section 4(f)
- Change in paved surface and green space
- Environmental Justice
- Surface water quality
- Waters of the U.S.
- Visual effects
- Traffic noise
- Air quality
- Indirect and cumulative effects



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Since the Public Meeting in 2017, the NLSD project team has hosted five Task Force meetings and been involved in many other public engagement activities throughout the corridor to spread awareness of the project and receive input. These activities included community meetings, library outreach, and attending public events.

Task Force Meetings

The project team has continued to meet with Task Force members. Task Force meetings #7 through #11 took place between October 2017 and June 2020. During these meetings, the project team reviewed alternatives development, analysis and evaluation, and received input from the Task Force. **A few Task Force groups have openings and the project team is accepting applications through November 9, 2020. Learn more through the interactive website: NLSDinput.org.**

Community Meetings

The project team has met regularly with local aldermen and various community members to discuss the Context Tailored Treatment alternatives in specific areas. This includes community meetings focused on the Diversey Parkway to Irving Park Road Corridor, the Montrose-Wilson-Lawrence Avenue Corridor, and the Northern Terminus Traffic Study (NTTS) area. Over 500 community members were in attendance throughout these meetings.

Library Outreach

The project team held outreach events in five Chicago Public Library branches near the NLSD project corridor. Approximately 80 individuals were informed of the project which resulted in dozens of new e-newsletter recipients.



Stakeholder Meetings

The project team meets with stakeholders on an ongoing basis, such as first responders, organizations focused on the Lakefront Trail and parks, transportation advocates and location-specific business and community organizations. Since the last Public Meeting, we have held over 20 stakeholder meetings.



PLANNING FOR FLEXIBILITY

In the last six months, most of our lives have changed dramatically. Offices have told employees to work from home, schools have transitioned to e-learning and much of the world implemented a measures that confined people to their homes aside from necessities. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed the way we live our lives, including, but not limited to, how we access our jobs, how we use transportation, and how we socialize. As engineers and urban planners, these changes impact how we plan for communities. The project team is closely monitoring the pandemic and the social ripple effect to ensure that our work reflects these challenges as appropriate. We pledge to keep you informed as we take into consideration, and continue to prioritize, the forward compatibility and flexibility of the proposed improvements throughout the life of the project.



NEXT STEPS

The project team will take into consideration all feedback received during this Public Input Opportunity. Over the next several months, the project team will begin analyzing the alternatives through the Level 3 Screening process. We plan to hold our fifth Public Meeting in late 2021 and expect to review the Preferred Alternative at that time.

COMMENTS

The public is encouraged to provide their input on the alternatives presented. Your feedback can be provided through the Interactive Website, NLSDinput.org. Feedback will also be collected through the engagement activities in the interactive website. Comments will be accepted throughout the entire project development process; however, comments must be received by November 9, 2020, to become part of the public record for this Public Input Opportunity.

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 Like us at www.facebook.com/NorthLakeShoreDrive and follow us on twitter: [@n_Lakeshoredr](https://twitter.com/n_Lakeshoredr)
 for additional meeting information.

