

Circle Interchange Project

Project Working Group Meeting #2 Summary

October 26, 2012

PWG #2 Participants:

- Derek Boeldt- CTA
- Frank Caputo- Special Service Area #16
- Chris DiPalma- FHWA
- Peter Fahrenwald- RTA
- Donna Firman- West Central Association
- Larry Gage- Fulton River District Association
- Toulou Georgakopolos- Hellenic Museum
- David Given- Sangamon Lofts Condo Association
- Jacky Grimshaw- Central for Neighborhood Technology
- Tanesheha Harris- Emergency Management & Communications-Traffic Management Authority
- Jerry Lockwood- UIC
- Dennis McClendon- South Loop Neighbors
- Mike McLaughlin- CTA
- Tom Murtha- CMAP
- Chrissy Nichols- Metropolitan Planning Council
- Bob O'Neill-Grant Park Conservancy
- Dennis O'Neill- connecting 4 communities
- Fay Peters- HSL Condo Association
- Jeffery Sriver- CDOT
- Darin Taylor- Emergency Management & Communications- Traffic Management Authority
- Jesus Yopez- CDOT
- Kevin Donahue- Illinois Tollway
- Craig Chambers- Chastain & Associates
- Representative- 2nd Ward Chicago
- Steven Simons- UIC
- Roger Deschner- UIC
- Albert Schorsch- UIC

The second Project Working Group (PWG) Meeting for the Circle Interchange Project was held on October 26, 2012 at the Marriott Chicago-Medical District/UIC, 625 Southbound Ashland Avenue Chicago, IL 60607, from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM. To announce PWG Meeting #2, a Save the Date email was sent out on September 16, 2012 followed by a formal email invitation sent on October 15, 2012. The meeting was attended by 22 PWG members and 7 observers.

The meeting included the introduction of participants followed by a live PowerPoint presentation. The presentation provided an overview of PWG #1 as well as the Public Meeting, and outlined data collection efforts. In addition, the presentation described the alternatives development process, evaluation and screening process, an overview of the 7 alternatives under consideration that were advanced into Round #4. The presentation portion of the meeting finished with an overview of the next steps and described Round #4 evaluation process, which consists of additional analysis, refinement, and further evaluation of the alternatives. The meeting concluded with a question and answer session followed by an opportunity for PWG participants to view and discuss all of the alternatives considered with study team members.

Each PWG member received a binder which included the PowerPoint presentation from PWG #1, a Public Meeting Summary, the Problem Statement, results to date of the survey from the website, and the PowerPoint presentation from PWG #2. Each participant also received a booklet with the 7 alternatives under consideration that have advanced into Round #4 for additional analysis and evaluation. Items provided to PWG participants have been posted to the project's website.

Questions and Comments

During the meeting, PWG members, which includes representatives from local condo associations, neighborhood organizations, and agencies, provided comments and/or questions regarding data collection efforts, and the development of the Circle Interchange alternatives evaluation and screening process. Among the topics covered were the following:



- Traffic counts, duration and under what conditions were they taken.
- Connectivity between UIC and surrounding neighborhoods.
- The Draft Purpose & Need.

During the next phase of the meeting, features of the 7 alternatives that have advanced into Round #4 for additional engineering analysis and evaluation were presented. The 7 alternatives were broken out into three series; A-1's, A-7's and A-15's. Within each series there are slight variations of each alternative.

A-1.1 - Key components include:

- Northbound to Westbound ramp - widened to 2 lanes
- Eastbound to Northbound ramp - widened to 2 lanes
- Southbound to Westbound ramp - widened to 2 lanes
- Northbound to Eastbound ramp - exit from mainline

A-1.2 - Key components include:

- Northbound to Westbound ramp - realigned and widen ramp to 2 lanes
- Eastbound to Northbound ramp - widen ramp to 2 lanes
- Southbound to Westbound ramp - realigned
- Northbound to Eastbound ramp - exit from mainline
- Southbound to Eastbound ramp - ramp removed

Discussion and comments on the A-1 alternatives included the following:

- Morgan Street ramp
 - Is Morgan Street in or out for these alternatives?
 - A Morgan Street exit remains with all alternatives but depending on the alternative some movements from the Circle Interchange will not have access to this exit ramp.
- Emergency responders, trucks and cars respectively access the loop and Southbound loop area.
 - How would vehicles circulate if the southbound to eastbound ramp was closed?
 - It was explained that emergency responders could use Taylor/Roosevelt; truck access could be achieved by using Roosevelt or Harrison if the southbound to eastbound ramp was removed, and vehicles could use Jackson.

A-7.1 - Key components include:

- Northbound to Westbound flyover ramp - inside to outside
- Eastbound to Southbound ramp - outside to center
- Westbound to Southbound ramp - flyover to outside
- Eastbound to Northbound ramp - center to outside
- Taylor Street bypass

A-7.2 - Key Components include:

- Northbound to Westbound flyover ramp - inside to outside
- Eastbound to Southbound - outside to center



Westbound to Southbound ramp flyover to outside
Eastbound to Northbound ramp – center, underpasses I-90/94
Taylor Street bypass
Northbound C-D road bypass to Kennedy ramps

A-7.3 - Key Components include:

Eastbound to Northbound ramp - outside to outside
Northbound C-D road bypass to Kennedy ramps
Northbound to Westbound ramp - inside to outside
Taylor Street bypass ramp

Discussion and comments on the A-7 alternatives under consideration included the following:

- Clarification of the northbound to westbound movement in Alternative 7.1.
 - Would the flyover go under Peoria Street?
 - The flyover ramps would cross over Halsted Street but would cross under Peoria Street. More study is needed to determine if Peoria needs to be raised. The design team will look at all touchdown points while conducting detailed analysis.
- Halsted flyover
 - What will the flyover look like and how tall will it be?
 - 15' clearance, 5' to 6' steel beams and then the cars. The parapet wall would be 3 ½' - 4' in height.
 - Concerns were expressed that the flyover will look dark and dangerous much like the conditions at Des Plaines under the Congress Parkway. One PWG member stated modern urban planning is getting away from flyovers.
 - It was explained that several aesthetic components will be taken into consideration when determining the look and feel of a flyover.
 - Some PWG members stated that UIC and the West Loop have taken 2 decades to bring their communities together and the flyover will take the "community" away after decades of building.
 - One member of the PWG mentioned that the flyover is a 2 lane structure and not as intrusive as Clinton or Des Plaines under the Congress Parkway and if it works for traffic purposes then we can make it work aesthetically.
 - Will Halsted remain open to vehicular and pedestrian traffic during construction? Concern is that Greektown and UIC will be cut off from each other.
 - It is anticipated that Halsted Street Bridge would be the first to undergo construction. Staging of construction will be closely looked at and connectivity will be taken into consideration because it is vital to the community.
 - Greektown expressed that thousands use Halsted Street Bridge and it is imperative that access be maintained at all times between the communities during reconstruction through either Halsted Street or Peoria Street.
- Coordination with the I-290 project to the west.



- PWG member asked how the Circle Interchange and I-290 project to the west are being coordinated.
 - They are two separate studies but the results are being coordinated. For example, managed lanes are being investigated at both locations.

A-15.1- Key Components include:

Northbound to Westbound flyover ramp – over Harrison Street only
Westbound to Southbound flyover ramp - inside to outside
I-290 Eastbound and Westbound flared out
Eastbound to Southbound ramp - outside to center
Taylor Street slip ramp maintained

A-15.2- Key Components include:

Northbound to Westbound flyover ramp - over Harrison only
Westbound to Southbound flyover ramp - inside to outside
Southbound to Eastbound ramp - removed
I-290 Eastbound and Westbound flared out
Eastbound to Northbound ramp - inside to outside
Taylor Street slip ramp maintained

Discussion and comments on the A-15 alternatives under consideration included the following:

- Community Access
 - Concern about pedestrian access during construction.
 - It was mentioned that an understanding of the community, such as pedestrian and cyclists, need to be kept in mind when it comes to closing bridges and the foot traffic patterns around the UIC Campus. It's imperative to maintain pedestrian access during construction.
- Two Flyover Ramps Over Harrison
 - Harrison is more of an industrial street, so a flyover over Harrison isn't as big of an issue as a flyover over Halsted. However, UIC representatives were concerned that two flyovers along Harrison impact them visually.
 - One flyover over Harrison (for northbound to westbound) would probably be ok, but would need to see a rendering for other flyovers.
 - PWG would like IDOT to collect bike/pedestrian data around CTA/Peoria and Halsted Street.
- For the most part, the PWG #2 members liked the series of A-15 alternatives under consideration due in part to where the flyover would take off and land.

In closing, discussions regarding next steps took place. It was mentioned that there are very successful aesthetic plans implemented throughout the City of Chicago and the previous Aesthetics Master Plan study will be used as a starting point for implementation. The plan will consider community, pedestrians, cyclists, UIC students, business owners, residents and agencies. The PWG #3 is scheduled to include an aesthetics workshop. Discussions and hands on activities will take place regarding the overall look and feel, thematic features of the Circle Interchange. In addition, IDOT will be meeting with UIC, CDOT and CTA to ensure that appropriate treatments such as median



storage areas, access, lighting, design, etc. is being met. The next PWG will be held in mid-December and all documents presented today will be posted on the website.

Meeting concluded with the PWG participants having the opportunity to view and discuss any or all of the alternatives with study team members.