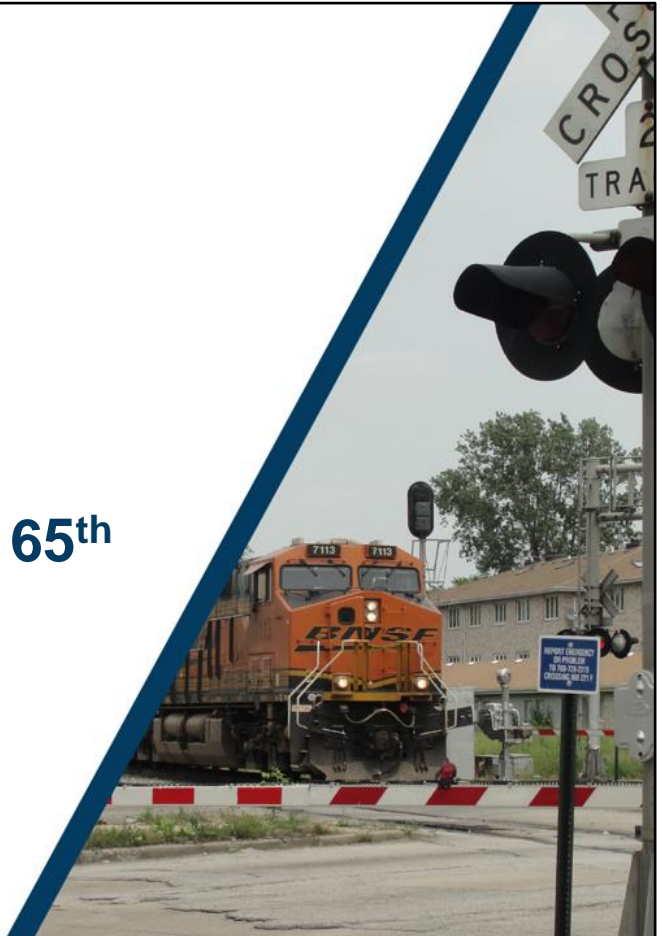




# Harlem Avenue between 63<sup>rd</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup>

Public Meeting #3 – VIRTUAL

June 17, 2020



Welcome to the third Public Meeting for the preliminary engineering and environmental studies of Illinois 43 (Harlem Ave) between 63rd and 65th Streets. Your participation in our virtual public meeting will help shape future improvements for Illinois 43. We appreciate your involvement and look forward to your continued participation throughout the study.

# What are the study goals?



**Identify**  
transportation  
issues in the area



**Identify and  
evaluate**  
impacts of the  
developed alternatives



**Develop**  
improvement  
alternatives



**Recommend**  
a preferred  
alternative



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The purpose of this study is to:

- Identify transportation issues in the area
- Develop improvement alternatives
- Identify and evaluate impacts of the developed alternatives
- Recommend a preferred alternative

# What are tonight's goals?



**PROVIDE** an overview of the project

**UPDATE** public on study's progress

**PRESENT** evaluated alternatives

**OBTAIN** public input on remaining alternatives



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The purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide an overview of the project and update the public on the study's progress. We'll also present alternatives that have been evaluated and obtain your feedback and input on the remaining alternatives.

# Project Overview

**NEPA**

**Schedule**

**Purpose and Need**



Now, let's go through the project overview.

# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969



**IL 43 study must consider the effects on the quality of the human environment per federal law.**



The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, often referred to as NEPA, is a federal law that outlines policies to protect the environment.

In enacting NEPA, Congress recognized that nearly all federal activities affect the environment in some way and mandated that before federal agencies make decisions, the IL 43 study must consider the effects on the quality of the human environment.

# Project Development Process



NOTE: This improvement is included in the Department's FY 2020-2025 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. Current engineering efforts are targeted to enable a contract letting in the later years of the multi-year program contingent upon plan readiness, land acquisition, and funding availability through future annual legislative appropriations.



IDOT projects are typically implemented in three distinct phases.

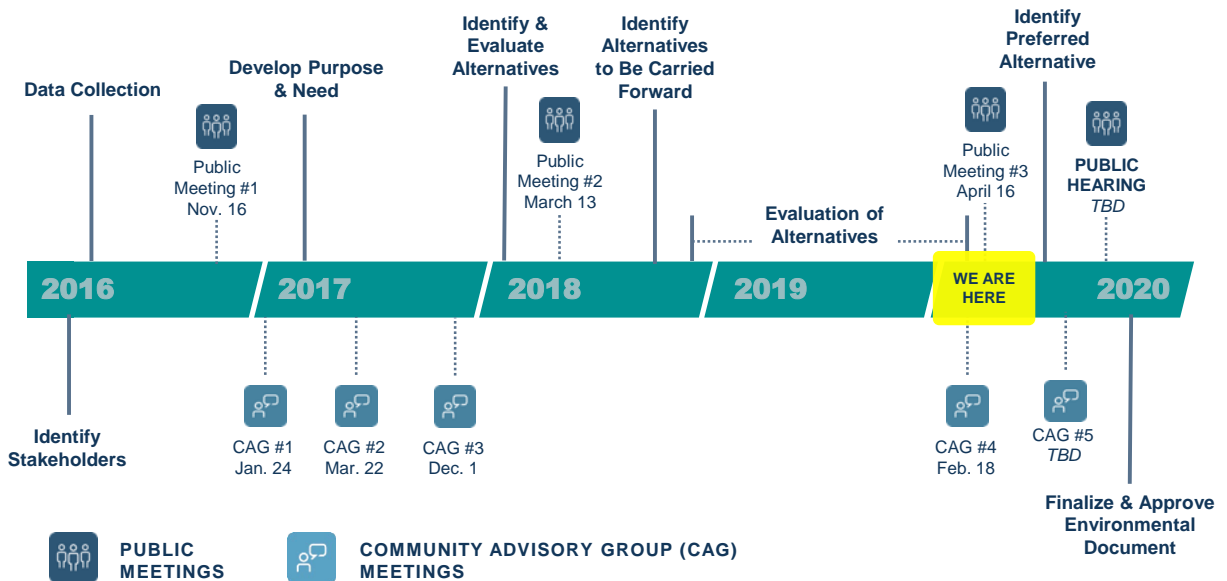
Phase I is often referred to as the preliminary engineering and environmental studies. It involves analyzing existing and future conditions, defining the Purpose and Need for an improvement, and developing and evaluating improvement alternatives. Phase I concludes with the selection of the preferred alternative, which is anticipated to complete 2020.

Phase II is the contract plan preparation and land acquisition stage. During this phase, plans are developed and any necessary right of way is acquired.

When all Phase II activities are complete and funding for construction is secured, we begin Phase III – project construction! This is the phase which is most visible to the public.

Funding for Phase II and Phase III have been identified which means it is included in the Department's FY 2020-2025 Proposed Highway Improvement Program. Current engineering efforts are targeted to enable a contract letting in the later years of the multi-year program contingent upon plan readiness, land acquisition, and funding availability through future annual legislative appropriations.

# Phase I Process



Milestones subject to change

Over the course of the project, the study team has held two public meetings and four Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meetings.

During those meetings, the study team and CAG identified the issues and concerns, developed a problem statement, analyzed data to determine the Purpose and Need, and evaluated alternatives to carry forward for further study.

# Purpose and Need Statement



## PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to enhance safety, mobility, and improve multi-modal connectivity.

## NEED

The needs to be addressed by this project include:

### Enhance Safety

Vehicular & Pedestrian Crashes  
Emergency Services

### Increase Mobility

Rail/Highway Conflict  
Traffic Analysis  
Rail and Roadway Operations

### Improve Multimodal Connectivity

Intermodal Transportation  
Public Transportation  
Non-Motorized Modes



The purpose of the project is to enhance safety, increase mobility, and improve multi-modal connectivity.

The study team evaluated the following existing conditions and other data to determine the need for improvement:

- Vehicular & Pedestrian Crashes
- Emergency Services
- Rail Highway Conflict
- Traffic Analysis
- Intermodal Transportation
- Public Transportation
- Non-Motorized Modes



# Safety Summary



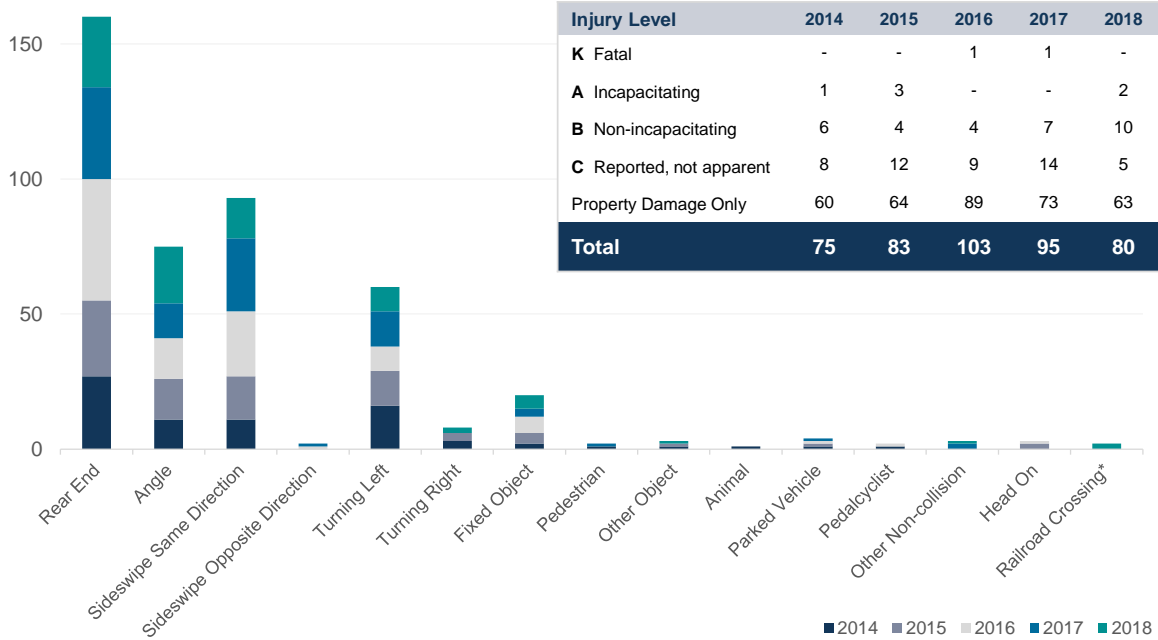
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Let's learn about the safety issues in the study area.

# Crash Study Results 2014-2018



\*One crash involved a vehicle and train and resulted in 2 injuries, and the other involved a pedestrian and train and resulted in 1 injury.

Crash data collected by IDOT from 2014 to 2018 shows that 436 crashes occurred within the Project Study Area.

Of the 436, 87 crashes resulted in injury and 2 crashes were fatal. The first fatal crash occurred in 2016 on Harlem Ave between 63<sup>rd</sup> St and 65<sup>th</sup> St and the second fatal crash occurred in 2017 at the intersection of 63<sup>rd</sup> St. and Harlem Ave. Both fatal crashes involved an alcohol-impaired driver.

There were also 2 reported crashes at the 65th St railroad crossing, both occurring in 2018. One crash involved a vehicle and train and resulted in 2 injuries, and the other involved a pedestrian and train and resulted in 1 injury.

# Evaluating Mobility and Multimodal Connectivity



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Next, we'll explain how mobility and multimodal connectivity are evaluated.

# Mobility



## Rail Highway Conflict and Traffic Analysis

The proximity of the BRC railroad to IL 43 (Harlem Ave.) results in additional traffic delays due to train traffic at the crossings.

When a train is present, 63<sup>rd</sup> St and 65<sup>th</sup> St back up for several blocks, negatively impacting the traffic on blocked side streets.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Street at BRC crossing is a 911 critical crossing



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The proximity of the BRC railroad to IL 43 (Harlem Ave.) results in additional traffic delays due to train traffic at the crossings.

When no train is present, upstream intersections are not affected. However, when a train is present, queues on both 63<sup>rd</sup> St and 65<sup>th</sup> St back up for several blocks, negatively impacting the traffic on blocked side streets.

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Street at BRC crossing is designated as a “911 Critical” crossing, meaning it is critical for providing access to emergency services. When trains are stopped or obstructing the crossing for more than five minutes, the Chicago Transportation Coordination Office must immediately notify the 911 emergency telephone system, and alert them when the crossing is clear.

# Multimodal Connectivity



## Intermodal Transportation

The IL 43 corridor and east-west movements are critical to manufacturing and freight along I-55.



## Public Transportation

CTA and PACE operate bus routes that are impacted when trains occupy the crossings.



## Non-Motorized Modes

It is difficult to bike or walk along Harlem Ave. due to lack of bike separation and narrow sidewalks.\*



\*According to a survey conducted by the Village of Summit and the Active Transportation Alliance

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The study team also evaluated the different types of multimodal connectivity in the area to determine the need for improvement.

- The IL 43 corridor and east-west movements are critical to manufacturing and freight along I-55.
- CTA and PACE operate bus routes that are impacted when trains occupy the crossings.
- According to a survey conducted by the Village of Summit and the Active Transportation Alliance, it is difficult to bike or walk along Harlem Ave. due to lack of bike separation and narrow sidewalks.

# Screening Process



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CREATE  
KEEPING THE GO IN CHICAGO

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Now, let's discuss the process for evaluating the alternatives.

# Alternatives Considered



No-Build (Baseline)

Group 1 : **Minor Build**

Group 2 : **Belt Railway Co. Railroad Elevated/Depressed**

Group 3 : **63<sup>rd</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass)**

Group 4 : **63<sup>rd</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)**

Group 5 : **65<sup>th</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass)**

Group 6 : **65<sup>th</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)**

Group 7 : **Combinations**



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The study team developed various alternatives, which are categorized into 7 different groups.

Using the No Build as the baseline for comparison, the alternatives developed show:

- Minor roadway improvements such as adding turning lanes and improving traffic signals
- The Belt Railway Company of Chicago railroad Elevated/Depressed means rebuilding the rail over or under existing 63<sup>rd</sup> or 65<sup>th</sup> streets
- Groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 involve essentially leaving the railroad in place and rebuilding 63<sup>rd</sup> or 65<sup>th</sup> over the railroad or under the railroad

# Alternatives Considered



No-Build (Baseline)

Group 1 : Minor Build

Group 2 : Belt Railway Co. Railroad Elevated/Depressed

Group 3 : 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass)

Group 4 : 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)

**Group 5 : 65<sup>th</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass)**

**Group 6 : 65<sup>th</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)**

Group 7 : Combinations



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Out of the alternatives considered, the study team will focus on Group 5: 65<sup>th</sup> St. Elevated which requires 65<sup>th</sup> Street to go over the railroad and Group 6: 65<sup>th</sup> St. Depressed, which requires 65<sup>th</sup> Street to go under the railroad.

We'll now explain how the study team came to this decision and why the other alternatives were dismissed.



# Screening Process



# 1

## Determine

if alternatives meet the Purpose and Need

# 2

## Conduct

stakeholder outreach and analyze BRC impacts

# 3

## Evaluate

alternatives against specific criteria



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To evaluate the alternatives, the study team conducted three different levels of screening.

- Level 1 screening was to determine if alternatives meet the Purpose and Need.
- Level 2 screening was to conduct stakeholder outreach and analyze railroad impacts.
- And finally, Level 3 screening was to evaluate the alternatives against specific criteria

# Level 1 Screening

## Group 1: Minor Build

### *Eliminated*

- Improvements are limited to adding storage capacity
- Existing roadway/rail conflicts remain
- Improving the intersection will not address safety or capacity needs

### EXAMPLE



Harlem Ave. and 63<sup>rd</sup> St.

During Level 1 screening the study team determined that Group 1, the Minor Build, is eliminated from further study. The improvements do not meet the overall needs identified for the study due to the existing rail crossings remaining at-grade and associated traffic, safety issues and multimodal connectivity would not be improved.

# Level 2 Screening

## Group 2: Belt Railway Co. Railroad Elevated/Depressed

### *Eliminated*

- Impacts railroad operations
- Impact to TIF Redevelopment District
- Depressed alternatives pose major drainage/utility challenges
- Would require temporary tracks and increase overall impacts
- Much higher costs

### EXAMPLE



IL-19 (Irving Park Rd.)  
under East UP Rail Bridge

During Level 2 screening the study team determined Group 2, Belt Railway Company Railroad Elevated/Depressed alternatives, are eliminated from further study.

Railroad design criteria results in extended project limits and costs that have increased displacements and impacts to businesses and residents.

Additionally...

- There would be impacts to railroad operations.
- Extensive impact to TIF Redevelopment District that ensures the Conservation Area is afforded direct and convenient rail access. Elevating or Depressing the BRC would eliminate the rail access.
- Depressed alternatives pose major drainage and utility challenges.
- Rail traffic must be accommodated during construction so temporary tracks will be required and would increase overall impacts
- Both elevated and depressed alternatives require extensive retaining walls, significant earthwork and are cost prohibitive.

# Level 3 Screening



## EVALUATION CRITERIA

**The study team developed the following criteria to measure alternatives from Group 3 through Group 6.**

### CONSIDERATIONS

Safety  
Mobility and Connectivity  
Construction Duration & Cost  
Long Term Maintenance

### POTENTIALLY AFFECTED PROPERTIES & ACCESS

Residential  
Businesses  
Parks & Community



**The study team developed the following preliminary criteria to measure each alternative and determine if it meets the Purpose and Need, goals of the study, and adheres to the NEPA process.**

Considerations when developing alternatives included:

- Safety
- Mobility and Connectivity
- Construction Cost

The study team also identified potential residential and business properties that could be affected and how access to parks and other areas of the community could be impacted.

# Level 3 Screening



## EVALUATION CRITERIA *continued*

Based on the criteria and data available,  
**the results showed an overall trend  
of greater environmental, social and property  
impact at 63<sup>rd</sup> Street than at 65<sup>th</sup> Street**  
due to the community make-up.



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Based on the criteria and data available, the results showed an overall trend of greater environmental, social and property impact at 63<sup>rd</sup> street than at 65<sup>th</sup> Street due to the community make-up.

# Level 3 Screening

## Group 3: 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass) & Group 4: 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)

### *Eliminated*

- Greater property impacts
- Direct impact to Nottingham Park
- Impacts community cohesion, creating a physical disruption through the neighborhood
- Not as conducive to multimodal transportation

*The combination alternatives (Group 7)  
will not be further evaluated.*

### EXAMPLE



Mannheim Rd. over CP Rail Yard



Canal, Cermak Depressed

During Level 3 screening the study team determined Group 3, 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass), and Group 4, 63<sup>rd</sup> St. Depressed (underpass) are eliminated from further study due to:

- Higher number of residential and commercial property impacts when compared to other groups
- Direct impact to Nottingham Park, a section 4(f) resource
- Impacts to community cohesion, creating a physical disruption
- Not as conducive to multimodal transportation

*Because Group 3 and Group 4 are eliminated from further study, the combination alternatives from Group 7 will not be evaluated.*

# Alternatives to be Further Studied

## Group 5: 65<sup>th</sup> St. Elevated (Overpass)

EXAMPLE



Harlem Ave. over CSX Rail Line and Toyota Park Frontage Rd.

## Group 6: 65<sup>th</sup> St. Depressed (Underpass)

EXAMPLE



Archer Rd. Under At-grade BO-RR

Based on the Level 3 screening results, alternatives from Group 5 & Group 6 will be further studied and evaluated.

Each alternative is on display and can be viewed in detail in the next room.

# Next Steps



**REVIEW** and consider all written, verbal, and online comments received.

**CONDUCT** a detailed analysis on remaining alternatives.

**RECEIVE** additional input to identify the preferred alternative.

**PREPARE** the preferred alternative for the public hearing.



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Following this meeting, the study team will:

- Review and consider all written, verbal, and online comments received.
- Conduct a detailed analysis on remaining alternatives.
- Receive additional input to identify the preferred alternative.
- Prepare the preferred alternative for the public hearing.



# Thank You!

**Please proceed to the next room to view the alternatives, talk to the study team, and provide your feedback on a comment sheet.**

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We want to thank you for participating in this Public Meeting.

Please proceed to the next room to view the alternatives, talk to the study team, and provide your feedback on a comment sheet.

For more information, please visit the project website, [il43study.org](http://il43study.org), which will be updated throughout the study as milestones are reached.