

RED AHEAD
Moving Ahead to a Better Red



**Red Line
Extension**

Welcome to the **Red Line Extension Project** Public Hearing

The purpose of this public hearing:

- Share information on the Red Line Extension (RLE) Project
- Summarize results of the recently completed Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Obtain your input on the benefits, impacts, and proposed mitigation measures

If you have questions, feel free to ask the representatives stationed around the boards. There will be no formal presentation.

Comments can be made in two ways during this meeting:

- Provide written comments on comment cards
- Provide verbal comments to the court reporter

Written comments will be accepted through November 30, 2016:

By email: **RedExtension@transitchicago.com**

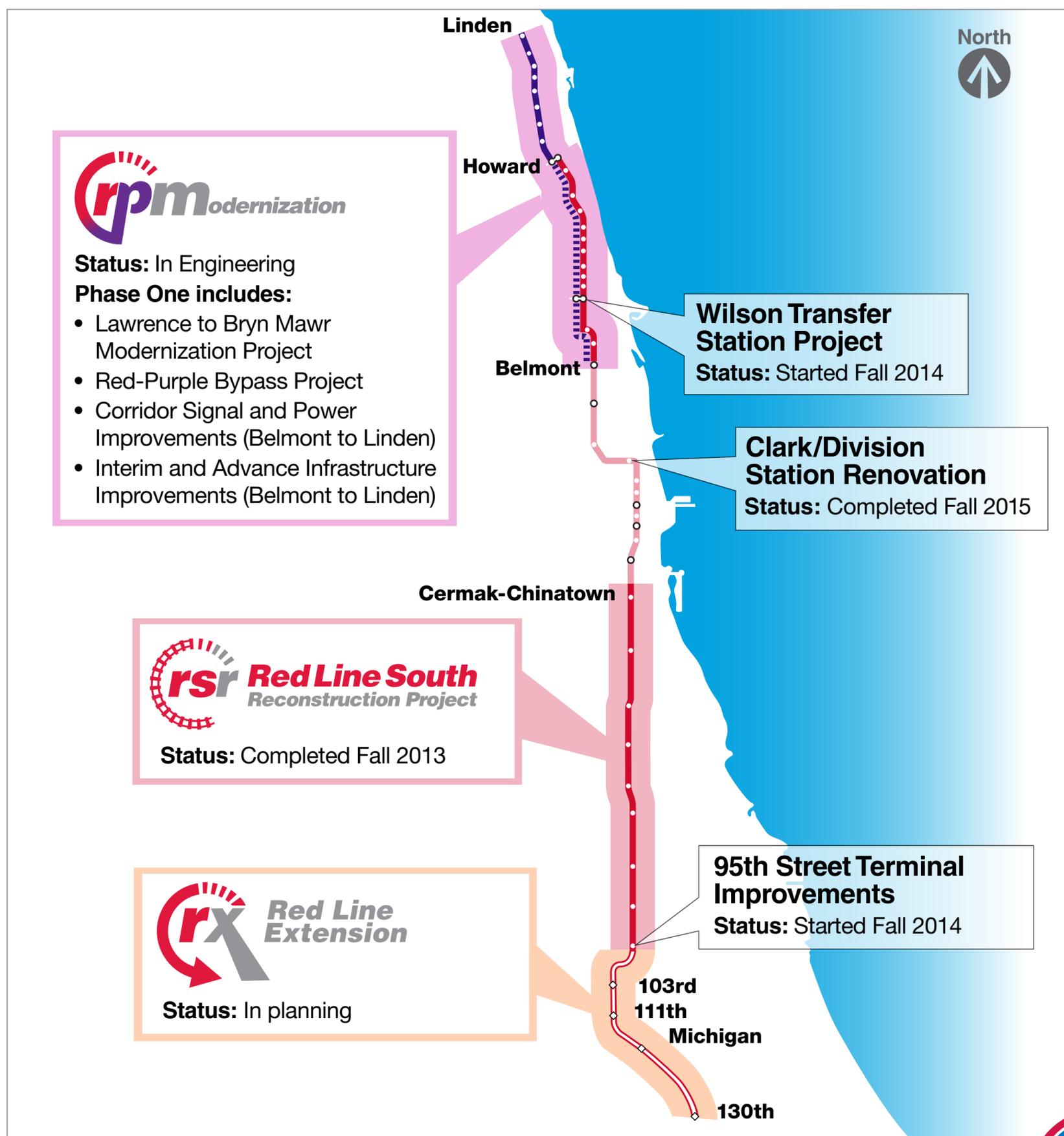
By mail: **Chicago Transit Authority
Strategic Planning, 10th Floor
Attn: Red Line Extension Project
567 W. Lake Street,
Chicago, IL 60661**





The Red Ahead Program

Red Ahead is a comprehensive initiative for maintaining, modernizing, and expanding Chicago's most traveled rail line.



Why is the RLE Project Important?

The RLE Project would accomplish the following:

- Improve service and transit accessibility for Far South Side neighborhoods where transit-dependent residents currently lack direct access to rail service.
- Save the average commuter in the communities affected by this project 87 hours per year.
- Provide better transit access to affordable housing, jobs, services, and educational opportunities.
- Increase accessible jobs within an hour commute of the proposed 111th Street station by 56%, according to Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.





RLE Project Purpose and Need

Project Purpose

The RLE Project would reduce commute times for residents, improve mobility and accessibility, and provide connection to other transportation modes. The RLE Project could also foster economic development, where new stations may serve as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization and help reverse decades of disinvestment in local business districts. The RLE Project would also provide a modern, efficient car storage yard and shop facility.

Needs to be Addressed

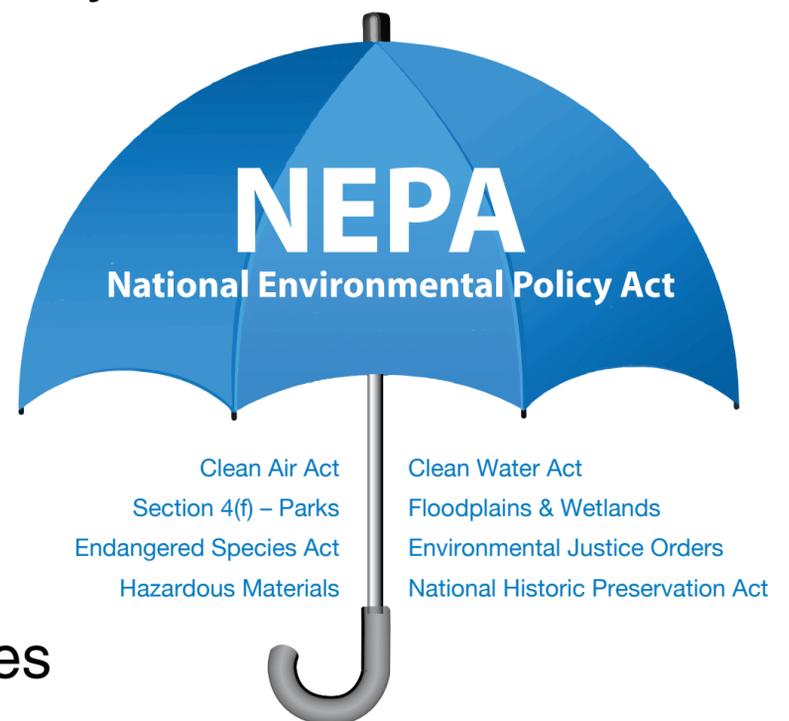
- Transit trips to jobs are longer for Far South Side residents than they are for passengers in the Chicago seven-county region as a whole.
- Transit-dependent populations in the project area have limited direct access to rapid transit rail service.
- The project area is geographically isolated from major activity centers and provides residents limited viable transportation options, which limits access between affordable housing and employment centers outside of the project area.
- Existing transit markets are underserved and transit connectivity is challenging in the project area.
- Disinvestment and limited economic development in the project area have negatively affected Far South Side communities.
- The existing 98th Street Yard does not have capacity to store rail cars for any substantial increase in Red Line capacity accompanying future Red Line expansion.



What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

To acquire future federal funding, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires an EIS for any project that may have significant impacts on the environment or where impacts have not yet been determined.

An EIS allows the public to fully understand the potential environmental impacts of a project and provide input before final decisions are made.



The EIS includes the following:

- A description and comparison of alternatives
- An explanation of the existing environmental setting
- An analysis of potential positive and negative environmental impacts of construction and operation of each alternative
- Proposed mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potential negative impacts

CTA published the Draft EIS on Thursday, October 6, and is taking public comments until Wednesday, November 30.

Comments and responses will be incorporated into the Final EIS.



Alternatives Development Process

Locally Preferred Alternative

In August 2009, the Chicago Transit Board designated the UPRR Rail Alternative as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

NEPA Preferred Alternative

In August 2014, based on the technical analysis and public input until then, CTA announced the NEPA Preferred Alternative—the UPRR Rail Alternative.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Evaluated Universe of Alternatives, including **11 modes of transportation** (including Bus Rapid Transit), **9 corridors** (including I-57, I-94, Halsted Street, Michigan Avenue, and State Street), and **4 profiles** (elevated, at-grade, trench, and underground)

SCOPING

UPRR Rail Alternative
Halsted Rail Alternative
Bus Rapid Transit Alternative
No Build Alternative

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

UPRR Rail Alternative
(Right-of-Way, East, & West Options)
Halsted Rail Alternative
Bus Rapid Transit Alternative
No Build Alternative

DRAFT EIS

UPRR Alternative
(East & West Options)
No Build Alternative



Project Alternatives Evaluated

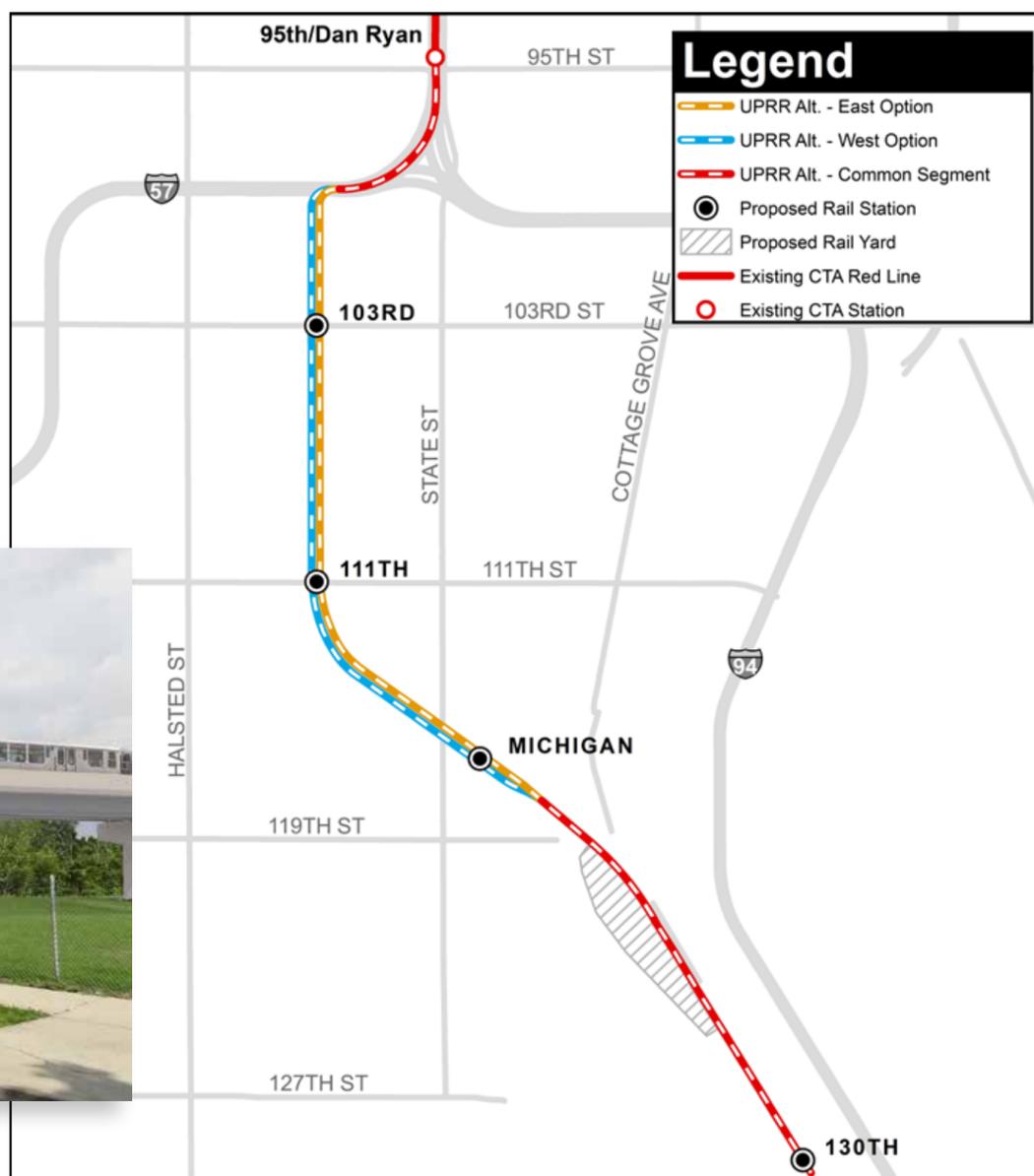
UPRR Alternative

The extension would run along elevated tracks south from the 95th Street Terminal, and follow I-57 until reaching the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor near Eggleston Avenue. The alignment would then turn south and follow the UPRR corridor to Prairie Avenue, where it would cross over the freight rail tracks near 119th Street. South of this point, the alignment would follow the existing freight rail tracks and end with a station at 130th Street.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluates two options for this alternative:

East Option 
(east of UPRR tracks)

West Option 
(west of UPRR tracks)



No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative represents future conditions if the UPRR Alternative were not implemented. The No Build Alternative is a required alternative as part of the NEPA environmental analysis and is used for comparison purposes to assess the relative benefits and impacts of implementing the UPRR Alternative. No new infrastructure would be built as part of the RLE Project under the No Build Alternative.

Note that appearance of project elements (such as parking structures, beams, columns, etc.) in visualizations is intended to show scale of project elements. Actual construction appearance may differ based on design decisions for colors, textures, finishes, and choice of specific design features.

Visualizations

West Option



103rd Street Station (facing south)

East Option



103rd Street Station (facing northwest)



Michigan Avenue Station (facing northwest)



111th Street (facing west)

Note that appearance of project elements (such as parking structures, beams, columns, etc.) in visualizations is intended to show scale of project elements. Actual construction appearance may differ based on design decisions for colors, textures, finishes, and choice of specific design features.

Section 4(f) - Impacts to Parks

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 is a federal law that establishes special considerations and requirements when publicly owned parks or recreational areas are proposed to be used by a transportation project. Parks would be affected whether the East or West Option is selected.

East Option



Wendell Smith Park

Block Park

Portions of Wendell Smith Park and Block Park would be permanently affected. Both parks would continue to provide park space after implementation of the RLE Project, but park space would be reduced. Both parks would remain active during construction with the exception of the overlapped portion of the parks.

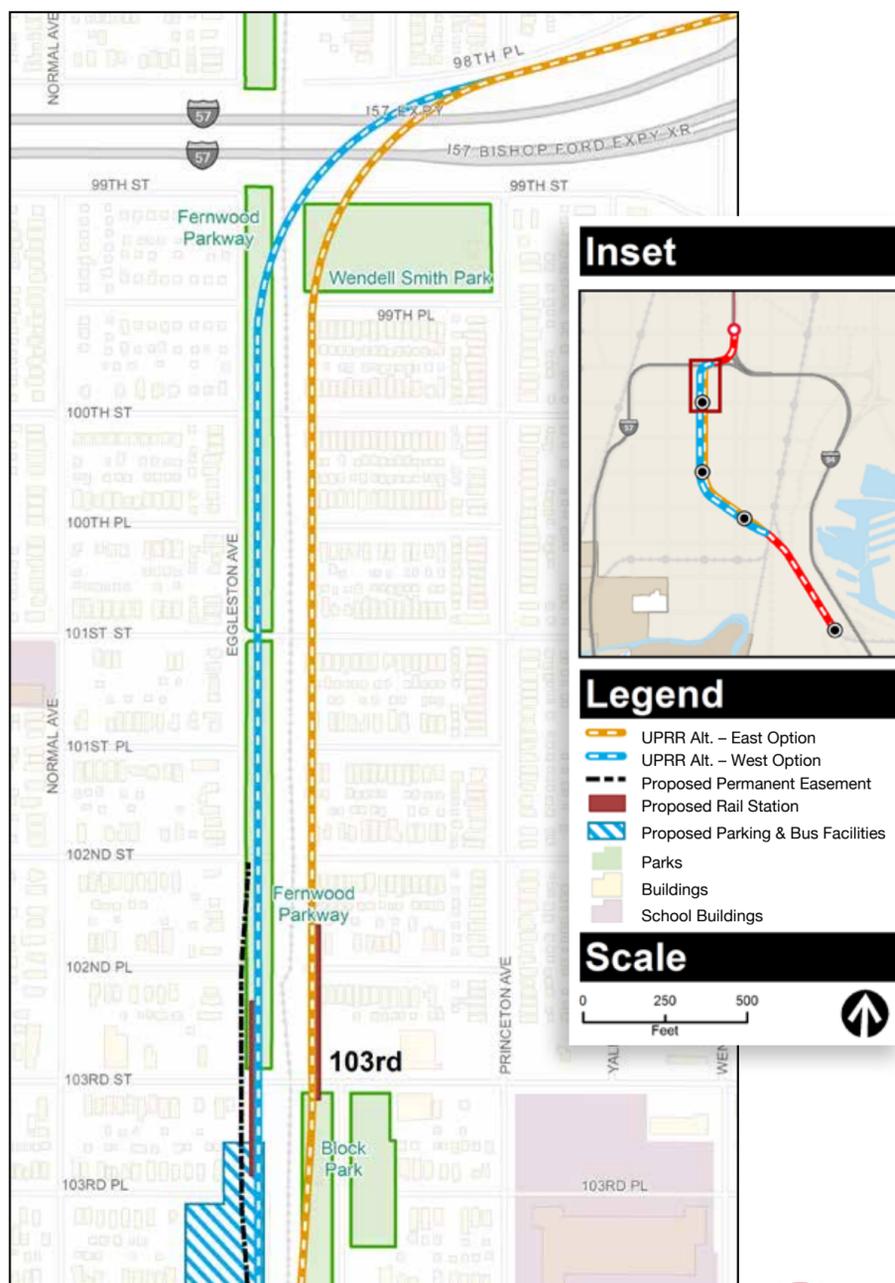
West Option



Fernwood Parkway

A portion of Fernwood Parkway would be affected. Temporary closure of the overlapped section of Fernwood Parkway would be necessary during construction. There would also be a short-term closure of Wendell Smith Park during construction, but no permanent impacts.

Park	West Option	East Option
Wendell Smith Park	—	0.7 acre
Fernwood Parkway	1.9 acres	—
Block Park	—	0.9 acre
Total	1.9 acres	1.6 acres



Section 4(f) – Mitigation for Impacts to Parks

Addressing Impacts to Parks

Mitigation Measures for both the East and West Options

- Provide new replacement parks in or near affected community areas
- Restore or landscape any disturbed areas on impacted parkland
- Incorporate context-sensitive design features at impacted parks

Additional Mitigation Measures for the East Option at Wendell Smith Park

- Provide one larger baseball field in Wendell Smith Park
- Relocate junior-sized baseball field in replacement park
- Relocate walking path and replace benches and other amenities in Wendell Smith Park



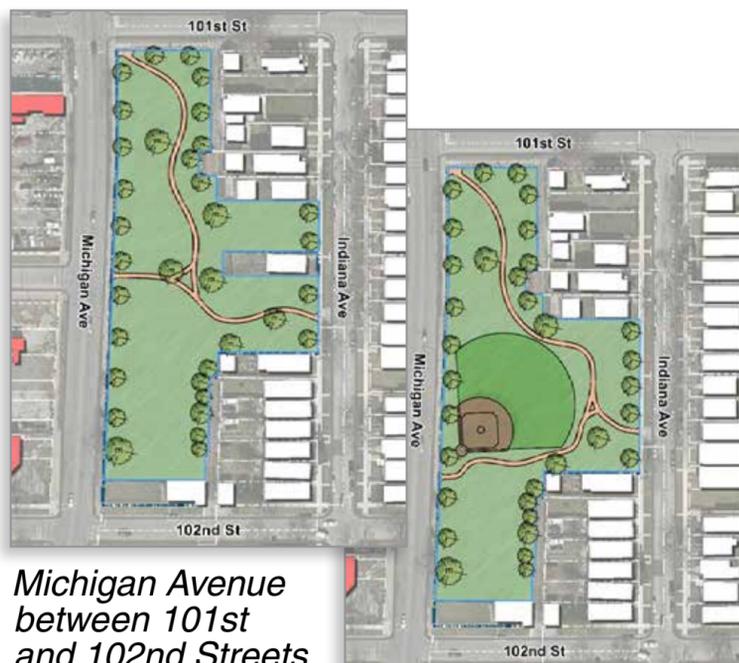
Wendell Smith Park – Proposed Park Concept

Additional Improvements for the West Option at Fernwood Parkway

- Potential to install a new bike path beneath the elevated structure

Potential Replacement Park Concepts

CTA worked with the Chicago Park District to develop replacement park options in the surrounding community.



Michigan Avenue between 101st and 102nd Streets (East or West Option)



111th Street near the UPRR tracks and Eggleston Street (East Option only)



Michigan Avenue near the UPRR tracks and Kensington Avenue (East or West Option; concept shown is for the East Option)

Park Concept Visualizations

Wendell Smith Park (East Option)



Visualization of Wendell Smith Park as part of the East Option.

Includes newer, larger ballfield and rerouted walking path to restore affected features of the park.

There would be no permanent impact on Wendell Smith Park as a result of the West Option.

Replacement Park Concept - 101st and Michigan Avenue (East or West Option)



Aerial overview (left) and street view (top) visualization of replacement park concept at Michigan Avenue between 101st and 102nd Streets.

Replacement park sites would be contingent on voluntary acquisition of vacant and/or active parcels from willing sellers.

Note that appearance of project elements (such as parking structures, beams, columns, etc.) in visualizations is intended to show scale of project elements. Actual construction appearance may differ based on design decisions for colors, textures, finishes, and choice of specific design features.

Park Concept Visualizations

Replacement Park Concept - 111th Street and Eggleston Avenue (East Option)



Visualization of replacement park concept, showing a new ballfield and integrated park & ride at the proposed 111th Street station.

Replacement Park Concept - Michigan Avenue near Kensington Avenue (East or West Option – concept shown for East Option)



Aerial overview (left) and street view (top) visualization of replacement park concept at Michigan Avenue near the UPRR tracks and Kensington Avenue.

Replacement park sites would be contingent on voluntary acquisition of vacant and/or active parcels from willing sellers.

Note that appearance of project elements (such as parking structures, beams, columns, etc.) in visualizations is intended to show scale of project elements. Actual construction appearance may differ based on design decisions for colors, textures, finishes, and choice of specific design features.



Property Displacements

Construction of the project would require the acquisition of private property.

Parcels	West Option	East Option
Affected Parcels without Building Displacements	159	154
Affected Parcels with Building Displacements <i>(Residential Building Displacements)</i>	46 (26)	106 (90)
Total Affected Parcels	205	260

- Impacts are based on conceptual engineering and represent the maximum impacts on all alternatives.
- Impacts are for the purposes of comparing alternatives and will be confirmed in the Final EIS following more detailed conceptual design
- Availability of vacant parcels and buildings near the affected properties will likely allow for affected businesses and residents to relocate within the project area.
- The total number of properties identified for both the East and West Options is 381, because some properties have been identified as possibly needed for both options. Of the 381 properties, 248 properties are privately owned and 133 properties are publicly or railroad-owned.



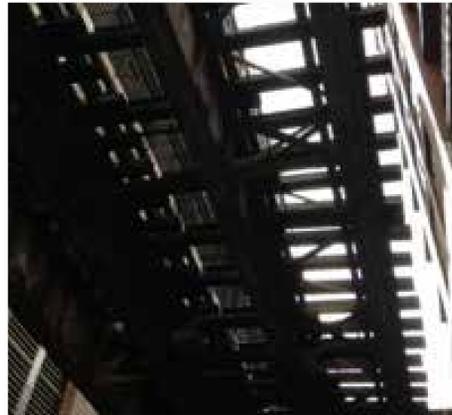
Noise and Vibration Impacts

What would CTA do to reduce, or mitigate, noise from the elevated track structure?

- Install noise barriers, which absorb and reduce noise from the tracks by 10 decibels.
- Use a closed-deck structure, which limit transmission of noise beneath the tracks.
- Use continuous welded rail, which has fewer joints and means a smoother and quieter ride.



Noise Barriers



Open versus Closed Deck



What about construction noise?

- CTA would limit nighttime construction as much as possible.
- CTA would keep the community informed about construction schedules.
- CTA would use construction best management practices to reduce noise.

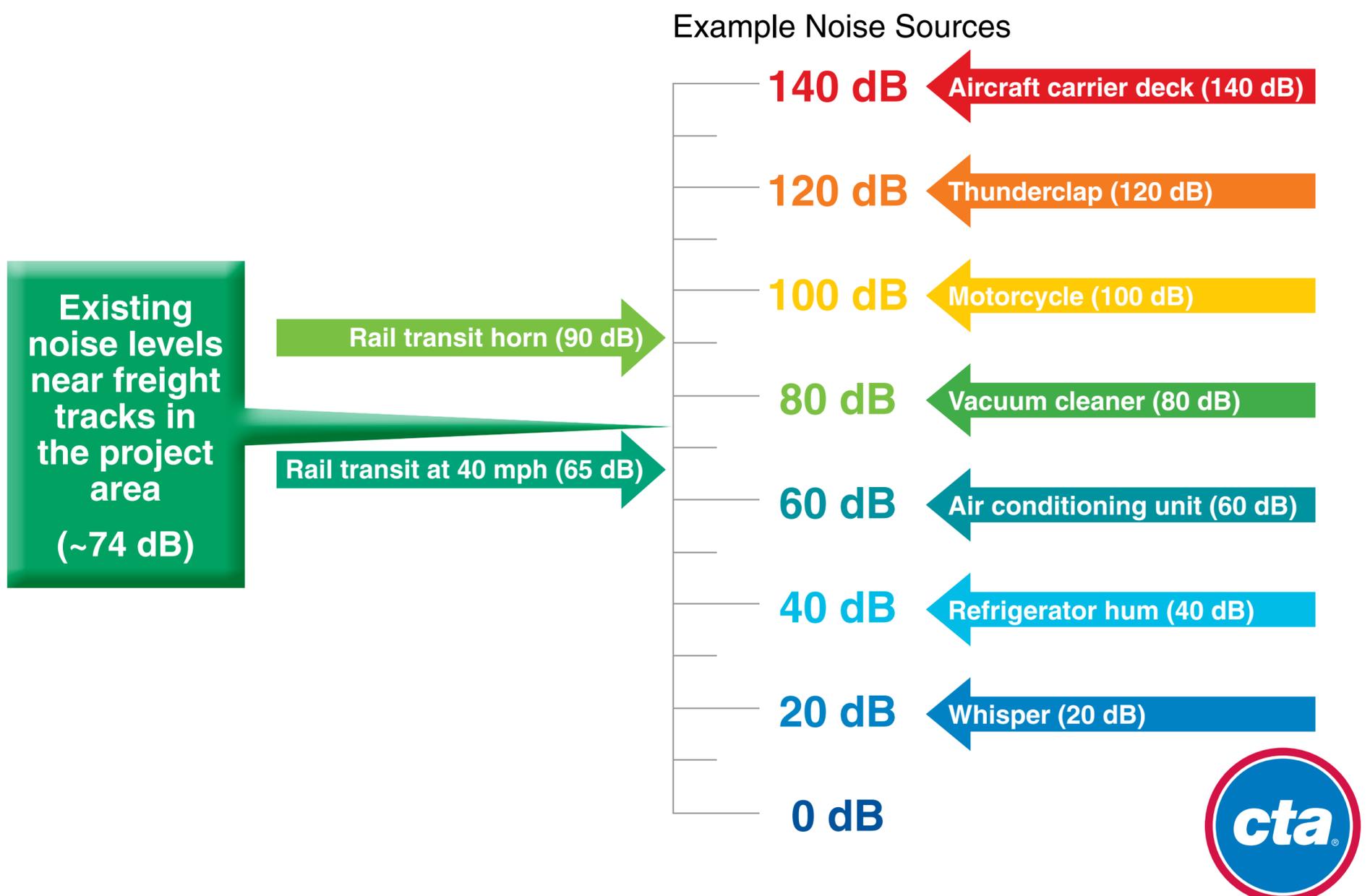
What about vibration?

Because the CTA train cars are lighter and carry less weight (freight) than the freight trains that pass through the project area, vibration levels would not exceed FTA thresholds and no mitigation measures would be required. Elevated track structures also transmit less vibration through the ground than at-grade tracks.

Noise and Vibration Impacts

CTA performed general noise and vibration assessments to identify and estimate the severity of noise and vibration impacts that could occur on noise-sensitive receivers (such as residences) with implementation of the project.

- Because existing noise levels are already high in the project corridor from freight trains, the allowable noise increase (using FTA noise impact criteria) is very small (about 2 dB).
- To minimize noise impacts, CTA will implement specific mitigation strategies (see next board), which would make the Red Line tracks in this area quieter than other parts of the CTA system.
- Because of the mitigation strategies, **the RLE Project would not worsen noise conditions.**



Visual Impacts

The analysis of visual impacts evaluates whether the project would affect scenic vistas, scenic resources, and visual character, or create new adverse sources of light emissions or glare. The RLE Project would have adverse visual impacts at some locations, despite mitigation.

Adverse Visual Impacts	
West Options	East Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North of I-57 • Between 99th and 103rd Streets • Near the 103rd Street station • Michigan Avenue station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North of I-57 • 117th Street and Prairie Avenue



I-57 Right-of-Way from 98th Place and Princeton Avenue (facing east)



103rd Street Station (facing south)



117th Street and Prairie Avenue (facing west)



Michigan Avenue Station (facing northwest)

Temporary Construction Impacts and Minimal Impact Areas

What would CTA do to minimize construction impacts?

- Post notices of noise-generating activities
- Announce road closures
- Conduct special advertising for affected businesses
- Limit idling of construction vehicles
- Provide for alternative parking



Based on CTA's analysis, the following impact areas would have minimal or no impacts after mitigation:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • Transportation | • Noise & Vibration | • Hazardous Materials |
| • Land Use & Economic Development | • Safety & Security | • Environmental Justice |
| | • Historic Resources | |

Impacts to Wetlands

Up to 15.34 acres of wetlands at the proposed rail yard and 130th Street station site could be affected by the RLE Project.

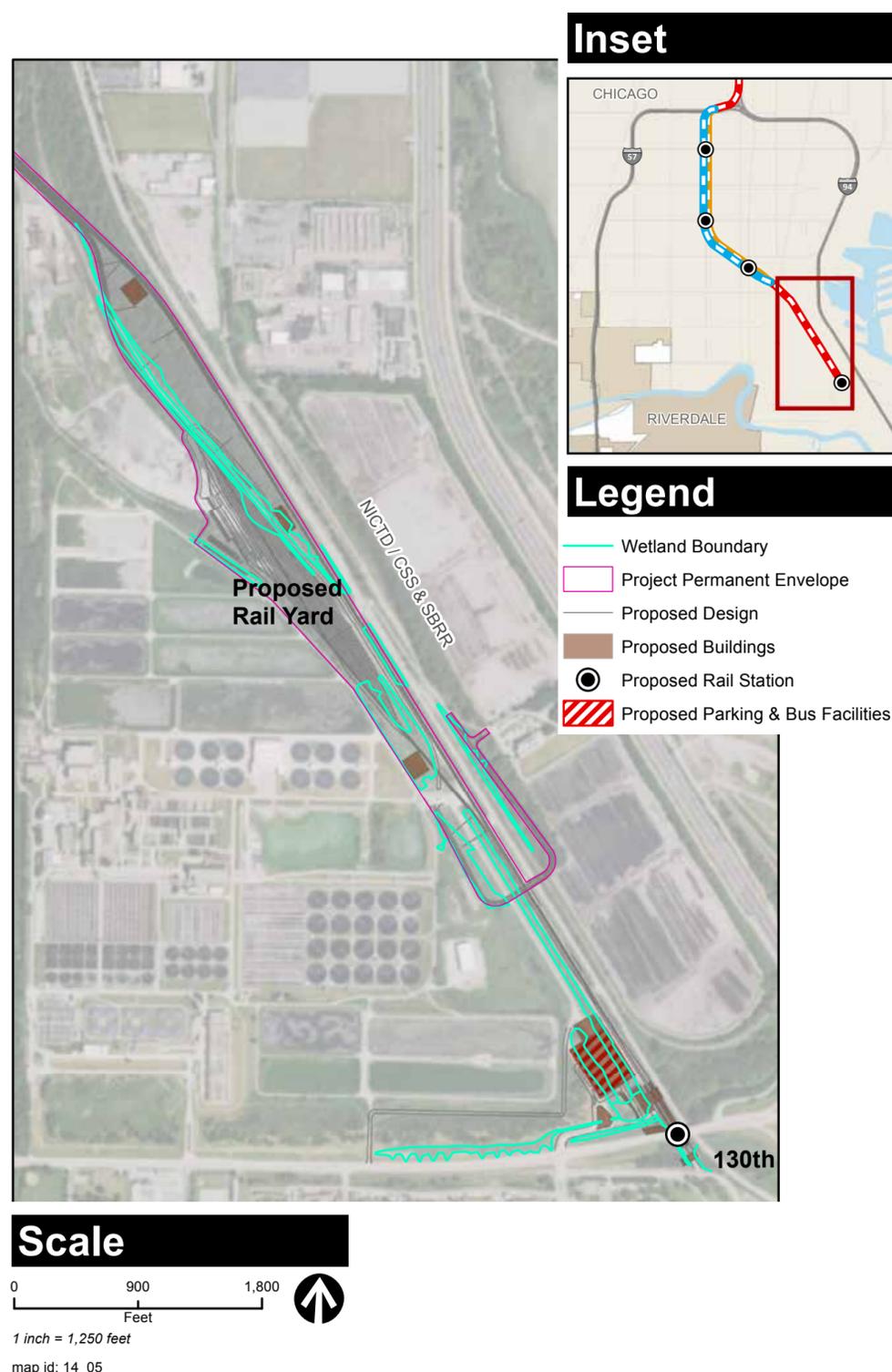
Compensatory Mitigation is required under the Clean Water Act:

- Replaces lost wetlands with the goal of “no net loss” of wetlands
- Takes place adjacent to or generally within the same watershed

CTA is coordinating with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding impacts to wetlands

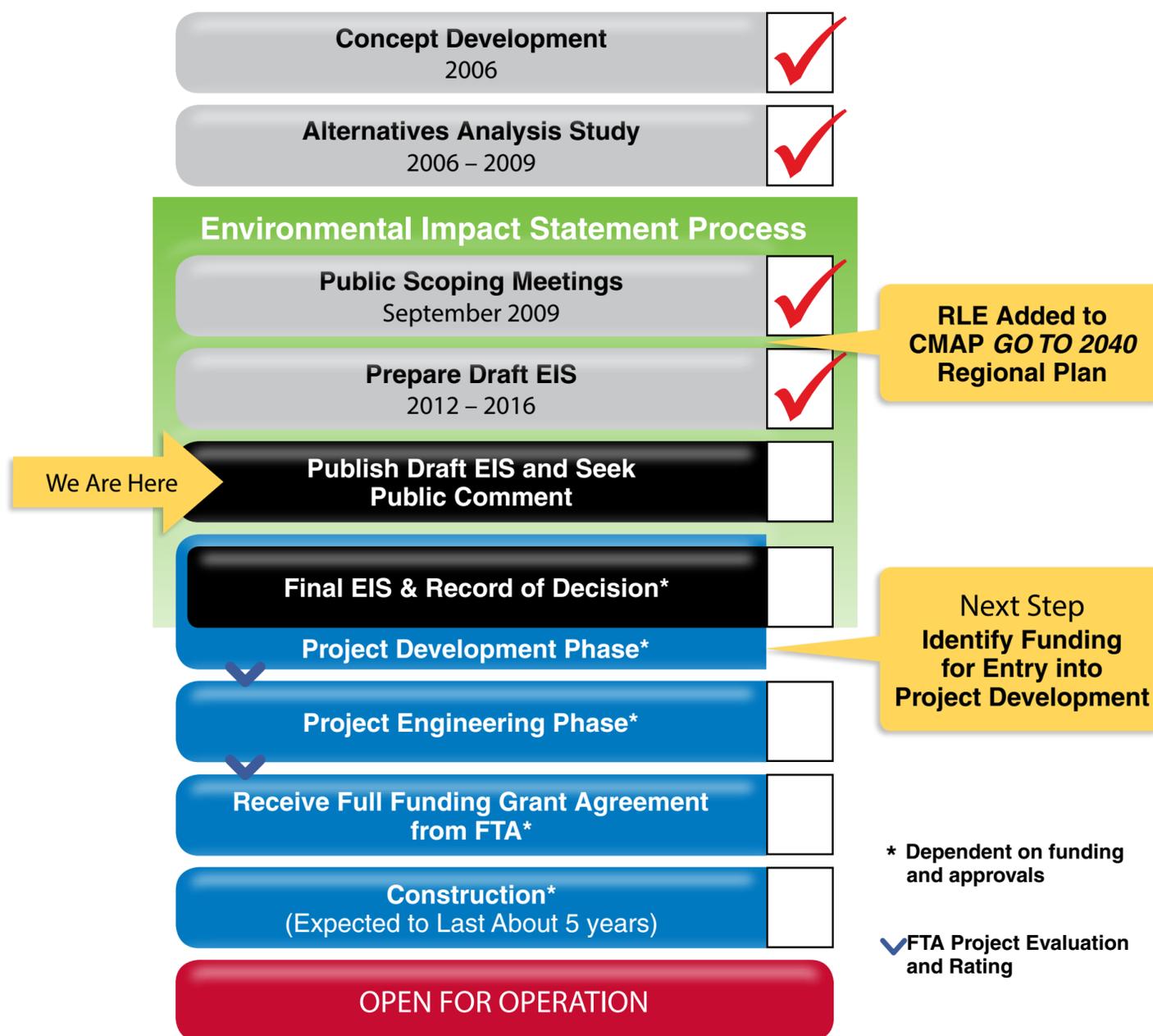


Existing wetlands in the RLE Project Area





Project Development Process



Project Funding

- FTA's New Starts Program would likely fund up to 49% of the project cost
 - The New Starts Program is competitive – the Red Line Extension Project would compete with projects across the country for these funds
- The remaining costs for construction would need to be funded through local and non-federal funds

Project Costs

- The East Option is estimated to cost \$2.26 billion
- The West Option is estimated to cost \$2.30 billion



Thank You for Participating!

Stay Involved



Next Steps

- CTA and FTA will respond to public comments on the Draft EIS as part of the Final EIS.
- CTA and FTA will complete any additional analyses required and prepare the Final EIS.
- The Final EIS will confirm whether the East or West Option is selected.
- FTA intends to issue a single document that consists of the Final EIS and Record of Decision in 2018.