



Burnham Avenue Grade Separation

Public Meeting #1

July 27, 2022



- Welcome to the first public meeting for the Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project.
- Thank you for joining us today to learn about this important project that will positively impact residents and commuters in the Village of Burnham, the Chicago neighborhood of Hegewisch, and other surrounding communities.





Agenda

- Project Team Introductions
- Project Overview
- Project Process
- Outreach
- Next Steps



- During today's presentation, we will:
 - Introduce the project team
 - Provide an overview of the Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project
 - Discuss the anticipated process
 - Review how you can get involved
 - And discuss the project's next steps
- At the end of the presentation, we encourage you to head over to the exhibits room to review more information about the project and talk to the project team

Project Team

- Village of Burnham
- Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
- Mott MacDonald
- Morreale Communications



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- The Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project will be led by the Village of Burnham, with assistance from the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways.
- They will help drive the decision-making process as we progress throughout the project.
- Our consultant team will be led by Mott MacDonald, who is responsible for the engineering and design of the project.
- And Morreale Communications will lead the public involvement and outreach efforts for the project

Project Overview



- Now we will dive into the background of the project and why it is crucial to improving the quality of life for the Village of Burnham and surrounding communities

Project Background

- Project focuses on improving safety and mobility at the at-grade crossing near the intersection of Burnham Avenue and Brainard Avenue, where Burnham Avenue intersects with five (5) railroad tracks
- This area experiences **14,200*** vehicles per day and an average of over **three (3) hours** of downed gate time per day
- The at-grade crossing results in safety, congestion, and mobility issues for the community and commuters
- Funded by Surface Transportation Program (STP) Shared Regional Fund administered by Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)



*provided by CMAP Northeastern Illinois Priority Grade Crossing report



- The Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project will focus on improving safety and mobility at the at-grade crossing near the intersection of Burnham Avenue and Brainard Avenue, where the roadway intersects with five (5) railroad tracks.
- Currently, the Village of Burnham experiences 14,200 vehicles per day at this location and an average of over 3 hours in downed gate time per day.
- The multiple tracks and rail traffic that frequents this at-grade crossing results in safety, congestion, and mobility issues for the community and commuters.

- During this project, the team will evaluate several alternatives that will resolve these issues and improve the quality of life for the community.
- This Phase I process has been fully funded by the Surface Transportation Program Shared Regional Fund administered by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, also known as CMAP
- We would also like to mention that this project is considered regionally significant.
- In 2019, CMAP identified this as a priority location as part of the Northeastern Illinois Priority Grade Crossings due to road and pedestrian safety concerns with potential rail operations.

Project Purpose & Need

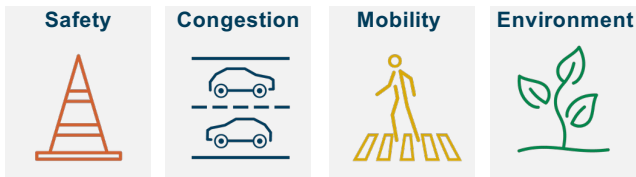
The Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project is needed to:

- Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and railroad users at the at-grade crossing near the intersection of Burnham Avenue and Brainard Avenue, where Burnham Avenue intersects with five (5) railroad tracks.
- Reduce congestion and improve mobility near this at-grade crossing located at the border of the Village of Burnham and City of Chicago.



- As previously mentioned, the at-grade crossing causes safety, congestion, and mobility issues for the community and commuters.
- Based on these issues, we have determined that this project is needed to:
 - Improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and railroad users at the at-grade crossing near the intersection of Burnham Avenue and Brainard Avenue, where Burnham Avenue intersects with five (5) railroad tracks.
 - And to reduce congestion and improve mobility near this at-grade crossing located at the border of the Village of Burnham and City of Chicago.

Project Benefits



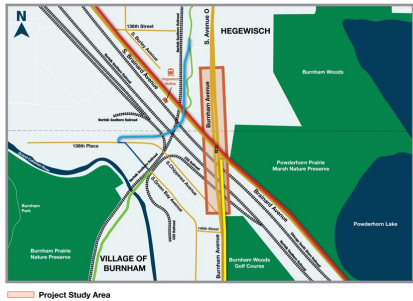
This project will enhance the community's overall quality of life by improving safety, mobility, and operational issues while reducing environmental impacts associated with the railroad crossings at Burnham Avenue south of Brainard Avenue.



- By grade separating Burnham Avenue from these five (5) rail lines, the community's overall quality of life will be greatly improved. Benefits will include:
 - Enhancing safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and buses that intersect with freight, passenger, and commuter trains.
 - Reducing congestion that currently exists from vehicles waiting at downed gates.
 - Providing improved mobility in the Village of Burnham and Chicago neighborhood of Hegewisch.
 - And improving the environment by decreasing carbon emissions emitted from idling vehicles

Existing Projects in the Area

- Burnham Resurfacing Project** (Brainard Avenue to 159th Street)
 - Led by Illinois Department of Transportation
- Brainard Avenue Improvement Project** (Muskegon Avenue to State Line Road)
 - Led by Illinois Department of Transportation
- Burnham Multimodal Connector**
 - Led by Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
- Proposed on Street Bike Route**
 - Proposed improvement part of the Burnham Multimodal Connector
- Planned Burnham Greenway Trail**
 - Led by the Village of Burnham and Illinois Department of Natural Resources



- As many of you know, there are several other projects taking place in close proximity to the Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project.
- We wanted to outline the other projects to reduce confusion.
- The yellow line on the map represents the Burnham Resurfacing Project which is occurring from Brainard Avenue south to 159th Street. Construction has already begun for this project which is being led by the Illinois Department of Transportation.
- The red line on the map represents the Brainard Avenue Improvement project which extends from Muskegon Avenue to State Line Road. This project is also being led by the Illinois Department of Transportation with construction anticipated to begin later this year.
- The light blue line on the map represents the Burnham Multimodal Connector which is a proposed grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle bridge that crosses over multiple railroad tracks and Brainard Avenue. This project is being led by the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways.
 - The dark blue line shows a proposed on-street bike route that is a part of the Burnham Multimodal Connector
- And lastly, the green line represents the planned Burnham Greenway Trail which is being led by the Village of Burnham and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

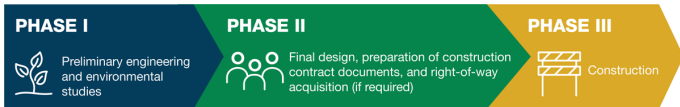
Project Process



- We will now review the process of the Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project.

Project Development Process

The Burnham Avenue Grade Separation project will follow IDOT's project development process from planning to construction.



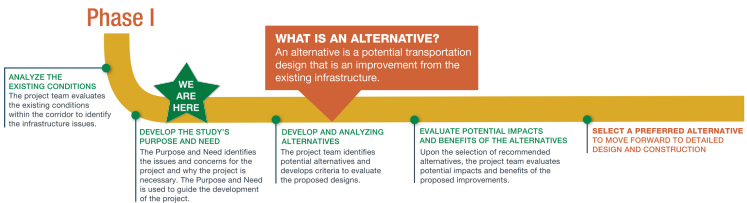
- The development of this project will follow the Illinois Department of Transportation's project development process which consists of three phases.
- We are currently in Phase I of the project which includes the preliminary engineering and environmental studies of the project. This phase will conclude when a preferred alternative has been selected and approved.
- After Phase I has been completed, the project will move into Phase II during which the final design, preparation of a construction contract, and any right-



of-way acquisition that is needed takes place.

- After the conclusion of Phase II, the project will move into Phase III construction.

Phase I Study Process



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- As mentioned, we are currently in Phase I.
- We started this phase by analyzing the corridor's existing conditions. This stage takes place to understand what infrastructure issues are present.
- Based on the analysis of the existing conditions, the project team can develop the study's Purpose and Need which defines why the project is necessary.
- The project team will then move to identifying potential design alternatives and develop criteria to evaluate these alternatives.
 - We would like to take a moment to define what an alternative is, which is a potential transportation design that is an improvement from the existing infrastructure.
- The project team will then evaluate a range of alternatives and identify their potential benefits and impacts.
- Based on the evaluation of the alternatives, the project team will select a preferred alternative to move forward into detailed design and construction.

Phase I Project Timeline



- The Phase I process started in September 2021, when we began establishing the project’s goals and purpose and need. We also began identifying stakeholders, developing the project’s Public Involvement Plan, and collecting data. This portion of the Phase I process will conclude August of this year.
- Then, we will begin developing and analyzing alternatives which we anticipate will take place from August 2022 to August 2023. During this step, we will host our second Community Advisory Group meeting and second public meeting.
- The preferred alternative selection and refinement

will then take place from September 2023 to March 2024. This will coincide with our third and final Community Advisory Group meeting and public meeting.

- Phase I is then anticipated to conclude in September 2024

Project Evaluation Criteria

A variety of factors will be considered when looking at different alternatives. Factors considered will include but are not limited to:

Safety 	Environmental Impacts 
Traffic Operations 	Community Impacts 
Bicycle/Pedestrian Access 	Land Acquisition Needs 
Drainage & Utility Impacts 	Construction Needs 
Railroad Operations 	Cost 



- The project team has established a comprehensive and robust set of factors to be considered when evaluating the alternatives.
- The criteria that will be considered throughout the Phase I process will include:
 - Safety
 - Traffic Operations
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Access
 - Drainage & Utility Impacts
 - Railroad Operations
 - Environmental Impacts
 - Community Impacts
 - Land Acquisition Needs
 - Construction Staging Needs
- And Cost

Data Collection

Data collection will include methods shown here

Surveys

Traffic Counts

Subsurface Utility Locating

Geotechnical Field Work

Environmental Field Studies



- In order to evaluate the alternatives using the determined criteria, the project team collected data in the project area.
- This consisted of performing surveys, traffic counts, subsurface utility locating, geotechnical field work, and environmental field studies.
- We would like to note that stakeholders with utilities and infrastructure in the project area will be notified to obtain information that may be needed to comprehensively evaluate the alternatives.

Environmental Studies

- All work performed during this project will be in accordance with State, Local, and Federal requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- A primary goal is to ensure the project fits its surroundings and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while addressing safety and mobility.



- We also wanted to take time to recognize that all work performed during this project will be in accordance to State, Local, and Federal requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- A primary goal will be to ensure the project fits its surroundings and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources while addressing safety and mobility.

Project Coordination

Community Advisory Group (CAG):

- Businesses
- Community Groups
- Transportation Agencies
- Railroad Representatives
- Other Stakeholders

Anyone who is interested in joining the CAG is welcome! Talk to a project team member after the presentation.

Project Study Group (PSG):

- Government Agencies
 - Federal Highway Administration
 - Illinois Commerce Commission
 - Illinois Department of Transportation
- Railroad Representatives
 - Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad
 - CSX Transportation
 - Metra
 - Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District
 - Norfolk Southern Railway
- Engineering and Public Involvement Consultants



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- To help guide the Phase I process, we have established two groups – a Community Advisory Group and a Project Study Group.
- The CAG consists of businesses, community groups, transportation agencies, railroad representatives, and any other organizations that will represent the community and may be impacted by this project.
- This group's purpose is to be a body that is representative of the community that facilitates the discussion of issues and opportunities on behalf of the constituents.
- The CAG will meet three times throughout this

project.

- The CAG is open to anyone who is interested, so please talk to a project team member after the presentation to learn more about joining.
- The project team has also established a Project Study Group (PSG).
- This group assists with providing technical oversight and expertise in key areas as we move throughout the project.
- This group consists of government agencies, railroad representatives, and a group of engineering and public involvement consultants.

Outreach



- We will now discuss the public outreach strategies that the project will follow.

Stakeholder Identification and Inclusivity

- Project will follow IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions Policy which provides all stakeholders an opportunity to share feedback about the study's goals and alternatives
- Stakeholders identified:
 - Residents
 - Business Owners
 - Community Representatives
 - Schools
 - Neighborhood Groups
 - Hospitals and Emergency Services
 - Special Interest Groups
- The project will partner with community leaders to ensure all residents are informed about the project
- All materials will be provided in English and Spanish



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- This project will follow the principles of the Illinois Department of Transportation's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Policy.
- This policy is a collaborative approach that provides everyone the opportunity to participate and share comments or concerns about the study's objectives and the alternatives.
- Stakeholders that have been identified and will be engaged throughout the project include:
 - Residents
 - Business owners
 - Community representatives

- Schools
 - Neighborhood groups
 - Hospitals
 - Emergency services
 - And Special interest groups
- We also recognize and understand the makeup of the Burnham and Hegewisch communities, which is key to engaging residents and maximizing participation.
 - We will ensure that we are partnering with community leaders to guarantee that stakeholders that are hard-to-reach are informed about the project.
 - We also want to guarantee that project information and materials will be accessible to all audiences so we will be providing all materials in English and Spanish to keep residents informed and up to date.

Receive Information and Provide Input

Ways to receive information:

- Project website
 - www.BurnhamGradeSeparation.com
- Register to receive project updates and newsletters
- Attend future public meetings



Public Meetings



Project Email

Ways to provide input:

- Submit comments through:
 - www.BurnhamGradeSeparation.com/contact
 - info@BurnhamGradeSeparation.com
- Call us at: (708) 232-8803



Project Website



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- During this project, we are committed to providing various avenues for you to receive information and provide your feedback.
- We have developed an accessible project website that will house all the most up-to-date project information: www.burnhamgradeseparation.com.
- Please note that there is a Spanish language option at the top of the home page to translate the website.
- We will host approximately three public meetings throughout the Phase I process and we will be sending out newsletters throughout the project to keep all community members and stakeholders up to

date.

- The ways that the community can provide input will be at our public meetings, through our project email, through our project website or by calling our project phone number.

Next Steps



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- And now, we will take a look at the project's next steps



Next Steps: We Want To Hear From You!

- Advancing to the developing and analyzing alternatives phase
- Gathering feedback
 - Contact us at: info@BurnhamGradeSeparation.com
 - Call us at: (708) 232-8803
 - Visit the project website: www.BurnhamGradeSeparation.com/



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- After this meeting, we encourage you all to provide initial comments and questions to the project team. To be part of the official Public Meeting #1 record, we request you provide your feedback by Wednesday, August 17th.
- We have comment cards available for you to fill out today, but you may also reach us at the project email, our project website's contact us page or by calling the project phone number.
- After our meeting tonight, all materials will be made available on the project website in English and Spanish

- At the conclusion of this first round of outreach, the project team will advance to developing and analyzing alternatives.
- As mentioned before, please do not hesitate to contact us with questions and comments.



Thank You!

We appreciate
you taking the
time to join us!



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- Thank you for attending today's public meeting, and we encourage you to visit the exhibit room next door to review further project information and to talk with a project team member.