



IMPROVING ACCESS, INCREASING LIVABILITY:

The CTA Red Line South Extension

TECHNICAL REPORT
December 2012



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Forward

From the beginning of our work on the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Red Line South Extension a decade ago, the Developing Communities Project (DCP) understood that any assessment of the project's impact on livability meant that metropolitan Chicago needed to hear the voices of the far south side of the City. We took steps to capture those voices at numerous community meetings organized by DCP and we hear them in this report.

What we have heard and continue to hear from Greater Roseland residents is that the CTA Red Line South Extension will make their lives more livable. In the faith-based tradition of DCP and inspirational words of Elder Eugene Taylor, the late president of DCP's Red Line Oversight Committee (ROC), this report was produced "for such a time as this." As you read residents' descriptions of the extension impacts for their lives, remember Elder Taylor's cautionary words:

"Perhaps you are thinking that this whole thing does not affect you -- that you drive wherever you want to go, to work, to school, to the movies, to shop, to church You may use the CTA Red Line, but you get off before 95th Street. But your brothers and sisters, your nieces and nephews, your uncles and aunties, your cousins, your church member -- people who are crying out for better transportation and opportunities for the far Southside of Chicago, need your help."

As important as it is to hear these voices from Greater Roseland, it is also important to highlight certain structural issues -- for instance, that the area has one of the largest disability communities in Chicago but the least number of accessible train stations. So to really understand "livability," it is not enough to extend the Red Line. There needs to be collateral reforms of all public transit options.

DCP's CTA Red Line South Extension campaign is a multi-layered community organizing effort to promote greater access to jobs and services, improve workforce and community development, enhance educational opportunities, and reduce social isolation. The Extension will not only expand CTA fixed rail service to Chicago's far south city limits, it will help end over 40 years of transit inequity and disinvestment in Chicago's most job inaccessible area.

DCP still needs to hear from others impacted by the Red Line as we continue to strategically advocate within the community to insure grassroots engagement and decision-making around the extension, particularly around jobs and transit oriented development. Hopefully, something in the voices that you hear in this report will resonate and urge you to engage with us in this critical work that will knit our city and region closer together.

Red Line Oversight Committee
Developing Communities Project
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Introduction

In October 2010, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) was awarded a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist with the implementation of the GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan. With funding from this grant, CMAP launched its Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program, through which it provides planning and grant assistance to communities across the Chicago metropolitan region to undertake planning projects that advance the principles of GO TO 2040. Through the LTA program, the Developing Communities Project (DCP), the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), CMAP, and Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) have worked to better understand how the proposed CTA Red Line South Extension to 130th Street would impact the livability of the Greater Roseland area and the region as a whole.

The purpose of this report is to help promote the importance of the proposed extension to local, state, and federal partners by demonstrating the qualitative and quantitative livability impacts this major capital project would bring to the local community and northeastern Illinois. This report is intended to support the CTA's pursuit of federal New Starts funding and to serve as an educational resource for the Greater Roseland community as it continues the campaign in support of the CTA Red Line South Extension.

Locally, DCP has been advocating for the southern extension of the Red Line for over ten years. Regionally, CMAP's GO TO 2040 plan recommends the region invest strategically in transportation and increase commitment to public transit -- two goals supported by the proposed CTA Red Line South Extension. While the primary transportation emphasis of GO TO 2040 is to maintain and modernize the transportation system, the plan contains a handful of major capital projects -- including the CTA Red Line South Extension -- that will maximize regional benefits of mobility and economic development. These projects add capacity, come with large price tags, and promise to generate economic returns, reduce congestion, improve mobility, and transform large parts of the region.

GO TO 2040 recommends building the CTA Red Line South Extension because it offers three substantial benefits. The extension would:

1. Improve access to jobs and other amenities.
2. Streamline multiple CTA and Pace bus-to-rail connections for routes south of Street, substantially reducing travel times.
3. Generate a catalytic economic impact and increase livability in a highly distressed area of the south side of Chicago -- the Greater Roseland community.

The Greater Roseland area is located on the south side of Chicago, bounded by 95th Street to the north, 130th Street on the south, Stony Island Avenue on the east, and Ashland Avenue on the



west. In 2010, the Greater Roseland area had a population of approximately 115,000. According to the U.S. Census, between 2000-10 Greater Roseland lost about eight percent of its total population; a significant drop, but not uncommon to many community areas on Chicago's south side. Over the same period, the City of Chicago as a whole lost nearly seven percent of its population. While Greater Roseland was initially settled by the Dutch, today the area's residents are primarily African American.

The proposed CTA Red Line South Extension would extend the Red Line south 5.5 miles to 130th Street beyond where it currently ends at 95th Street. Currently the CTA's most heavily used line, the Red Line is 22 miles long, and access to it by bus is especially difficult south of 95th Street -- one of the CTA's most frequently used stations.

Building on the work of DCP, CTA, and the policies set forth in GO TO 2040, this report summarizes research and analysis that reinforce the CTA Red Line South Extension's potential as a catalyst for improving the far south side of Chicago. The project would improve the lives of many people and provide opportunities for many by increasing access to numerous regional resources, including higher education, employment, and medical facilities.

What is Livability?

Livability Principles

Through a partnership between HUD, U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the federal government has identified six livability principles to guide investment in community and economic development. The livability principles are the foundation for the research and analysis of this project.¹

1. **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
2. **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
3. **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.

¹See http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/Six_Livability_Principles.



4. **Support existing communities.** Target federal funding toward existing communities -- through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling-- to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
5. **Coordinate policies and leverage investment.** Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
6. **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods -- rural, urban, or suburban.

Measuring the Benefits of the CTA Red Line South Extension

For a community with limited mobility, few local job opportunities, and limited amenities, the extension of this transit line into Greater Roseland would have benefits that accomplish the goals of all six federal Livability Principles. Interviews with local residents and community leaders, a series of focus group workshops, and analysis of raw data, highlight the positive impact that reliable rail transit service would have on the lives of many families in this community.

Qualitative Data Collection

In partnership with DCP and CMAP, CURL conducted a total of 12 focus group workshops with 91 residents and stakeholders from the Greater Roseland community to gather data representing a diverse range of perspectives and experiences with public transportation and its impact on Greater Roseland's livability. Focus groups were targeted to individuals representing a variety of local resident and stakeholder interests. Focus groups featured the following representation:

- Block clubs
- Business owners
- Child care providers
- Church members
- Disabled individuals
- Educators/education advocates
- Environmental activists
- Homeowners
- Medical community
- Public housing residents
- Seniors
- Workforce development groups



Across all focus groups, over three-fourths of the participants were female and almost one-quarter were male. Focus group participants were all African-American, with the exception of one Latina/Hispanic participant.² Participants were diverse in age, ranging from early 20s to late 70s. Among residents, the majority of participants have lived in Greater Roseland for decades, while a small portion have moved to the area in the previous five years.

DCP utilized their partnerships with organizations and groups in the Greater Roseland community to identify and select a point person to facilitate recruitment for each focus group. CURL then worked with each point person to identify individual participants using flyers and letters for distribution among neighborhood groups. CURL convened focus groups consisting of six to eight participants. On a few occasions, focus groups contained greater or fewer than this targeted number.

In addition to the focus groups, six one-on-one interviews were conducted. Interview participants were selected to gain deeper understanding of key issues presented during focus groups, as well as gain perspective on issues not addressed by any of the 12 focus groups. Interview participants included a Chicago State University graduate student, a recent graduate of Fenger High School who is currently enrolled at South Suburban College, a member of DCP's leadership staff, a DCP board member who resides in Greater Roseland, leadership staff from the Chicago Jobs Council, and a Chicago-area researcher who has studied transit oriented development in the Greater Roseland area.

The focus groups and interviews covered a number of topics, including: current use of public transit and commute patterns; challenges with public transit; potential impacts of an extension of the CTA Red Line; and strengths and challenges of the Greater Roseland area.

Quantitative Analysis

For the supplemental quantitative analysis, CMAP measured the increased access to amenities and jobs within an hour's travel time for a transit rider leaving from the proposed 111th Street Station. Figure 1 shows the increased access area in orange -- a total of approximately 100 square miles -- while the current access area is shown in pale yellow.

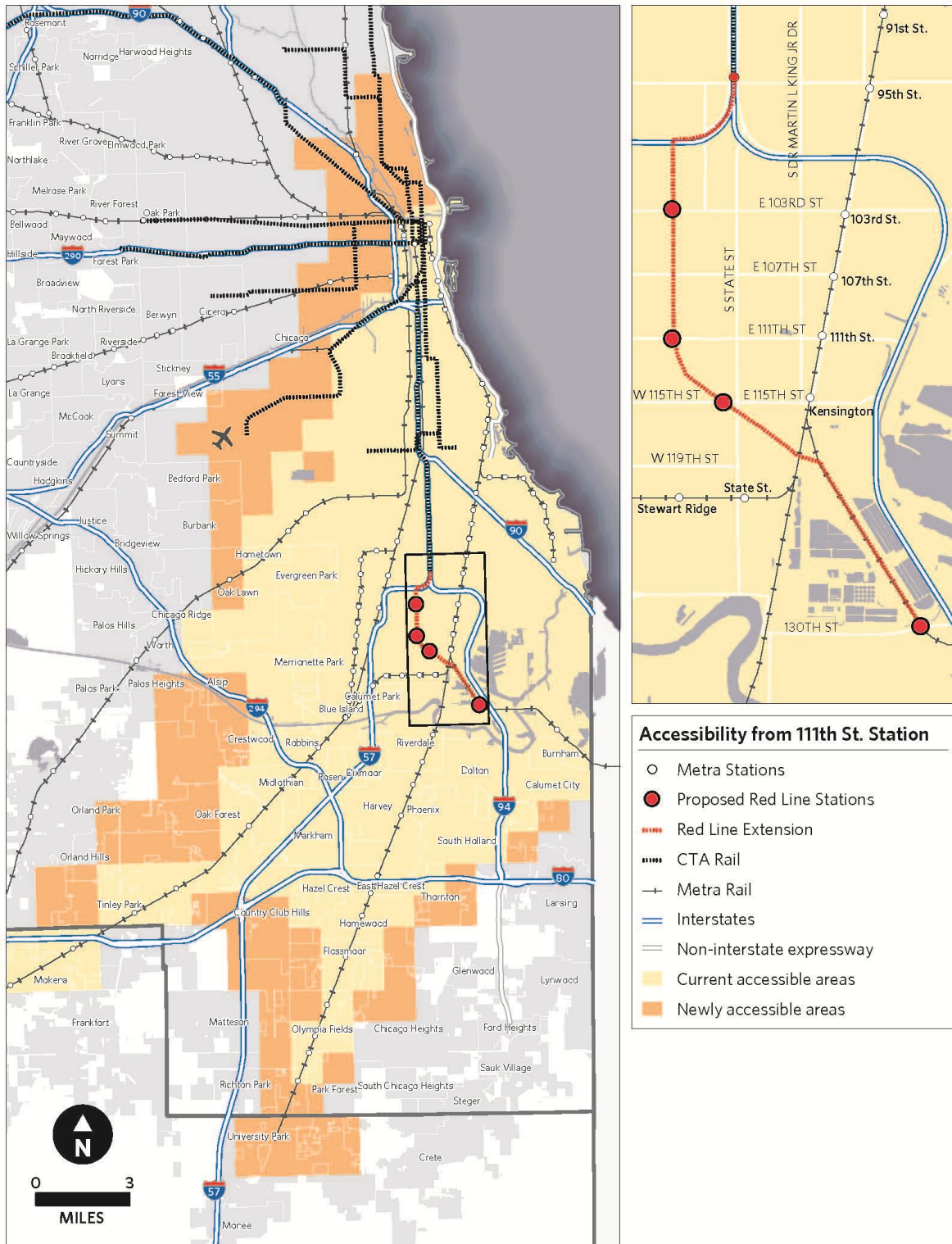
This analysis is based on the following assumptions:

- First, an appropriate "accessible" transit travel time was chosen. For the purposes of this analysis, 60 minutes (of in-vehicle travel time) was used. This means that destinations requiring trips over 60 minutes in travel time were considered "inaccessible" and those that can be reached in less than 60 minutes were "accessible." This simplifying assumption was necessary to conduct the analysis. Below, references to "newly accessible areas" refer to places that cannot currently be reached within 60 minutes on transit, but could be after the proposed extension of the Red Line is completed.

² Participants were not asked to disclose information about demographic characteristics. The demographic data reported here are based on observations from the researchers.



Figure 1. Transit accessible areas (before and after CTA Red Line South Extension)



Source: CMAP Analysis, 2011.



- Second, it was necessary to pick a station from which to base these calculations. The proposed 111th Street station -- the approximate midpoint of the extension -- was chosen. Travel time benefits are greater at the proposed 115th and 130th Street Stations and are less from the proposed 103rd Street station. (Due to current limited transit options at the proposed 130th Street Station site, improvements from this station are particularly pronounced.)
- The analysis necessitated defining “regional assets.” The analysis conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Council report “Bus Rapid Transit: Chicago’s New Route to Opportunity” was used for this purpose.³ This analysis is one of few examples that measure a number of factors -- including connectivity to community services, educational institutions, entertainment, food stores, medical care, open space, retail, and jobs -- and explicitly ties these to the federal Livability Principles described in the “What is Livability?” section of this report. Because of their recent use for transit planning purposes in Chicago, as well as their direct connection to the Livability Principles, these factors were considered a good basis for this project.
- CMAP used a variety of data sources to measure the amenities, including data from Dun & Bradstreet, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, Cook County, the City of Chicago, and CMAP-collected data. The primary source for employment data is the ES-202 Unemployment Insurance file provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Other employment data sources include U.S. Census data, Dun and Bradstreet data files, and the Illinois Manufacturers Directory.

The newly accessible area has resources and amenities, such as jobs, educational institutions, and grocery stores, which are currently difficult or impossible for Greater Roseland residents to reach without the use of a car. From an analysis of transit access from the proposed 111th Street Station, CMAP found that the CTA Red Line South Extension would result in increased access to a number of regional and local amenities, including medical care, open spaces, and jobs, as seen in Figure 2.

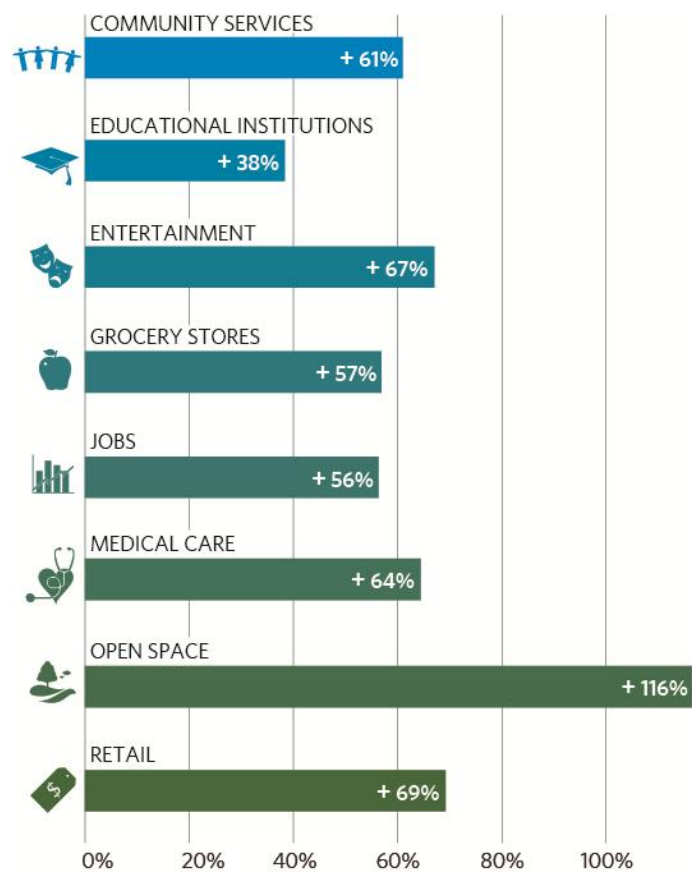
Livability Themes and Analysis

Extending the Red Line would significantly reduce the travel times for residents of the Greater Roseland area and increase access to jobs, community amenities, and important public services including educational institutions, medical care, and community services. It would also enable residents of Greater Roseland to access more jobs by creating new access to job-rich areas like the near north Side of Chicago, Midway Airport, and industrial parks in southwest suburbs. These benefits are all in-line with the federal Livability Principles, as described further below.

³ Metropolitan Planning Council, Bus Rapid Transit: Chicago’s New Route to Opportunity, 2011 Study Report, <http://www.metroplanning.org/multimedia/publication/524> (Accessed October 2012).



Figure 2. Increased access to amenities within an hour commute of the proposed 111th Street Station



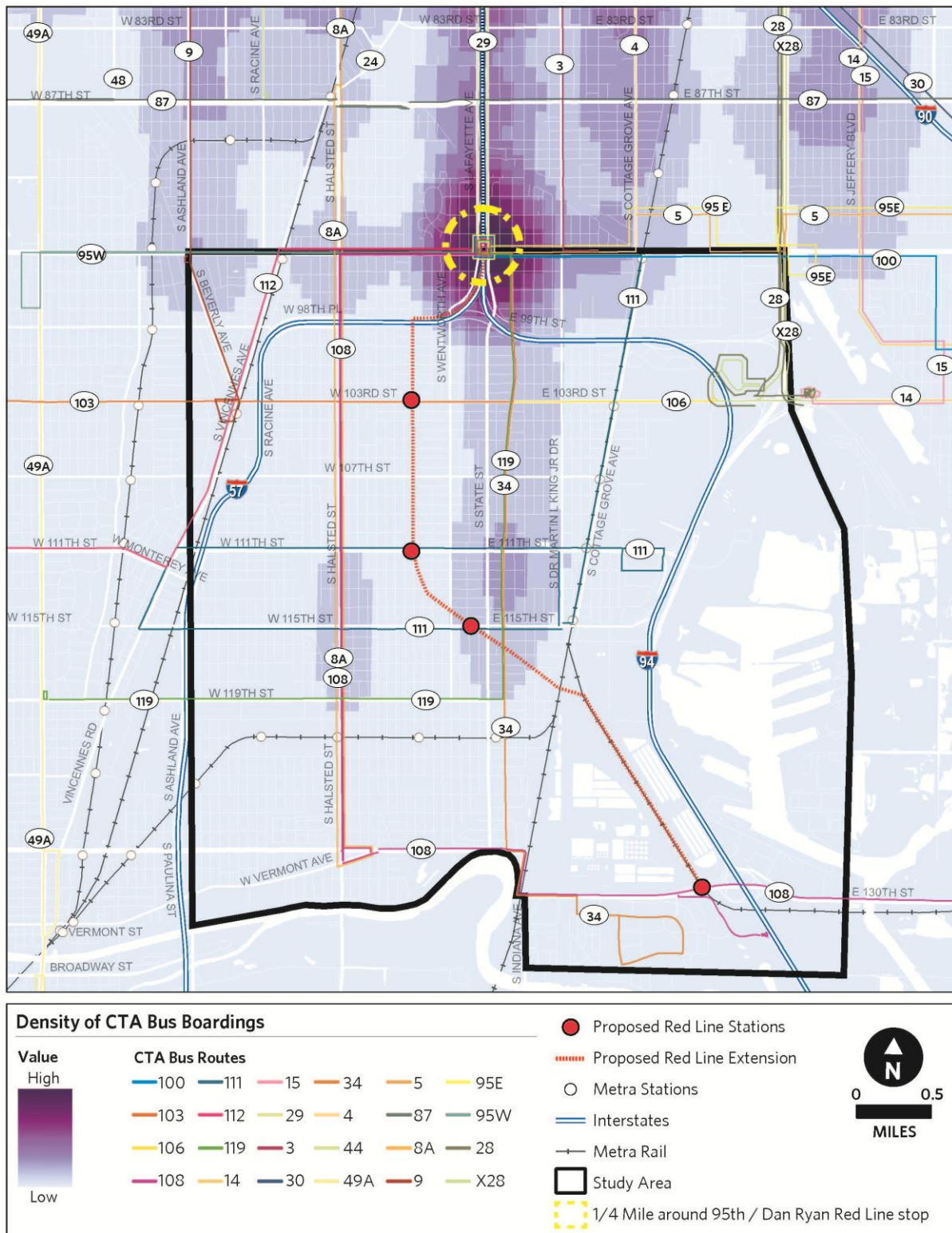
Source: CMAP Analysis, 2012.

Principle 1. Provide more transportation choices.

Transit service in the Greater Roseland area is limited, although CTA bus and Metra rail service is available. Nearby, the #9 Ashland bus has the highest ridership of any route in the area, with an average weekday ridership of over 29,000. However, the #9 bus is significantly west of the proposed CTA Red Line South Extension. In the immediate area, the #29 State Street bus has the second highest ridership with an average weekday ridership of over 14,000. The CTA buses serving the area have to contend with frequent traffic delays often caused by the numerous at-grade Metra and freight railroad crossings that are common in the area. Congestion is also caused by the convergence of many bus routes at the 95th Street Station, where 12 bus routes have 18 stops within a quarter-mile of the station, with 13,490 daily boardings in an average month. See Figure 3 for a map of the density of monthly CTA bus boardings by stop.



Figure 3. Bus transit ridership (2006)



Source: CMAP Analysis of RTAM5 Bus Ridership data, 2006.



A number of Metra stations, mostly on the Metra Electric line, provide some service to this area. Most have a low number of boardings due to limited schedules, although the Kensington station at 115th Street offers more trips per day than other stations and had about 1,600 boardings in 2006. The difference in fare structure between Metra and CTA may also be a barrier to increased use of Metra by Greater Roseland residents. CTA's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) report explores the possibility of serving demand in this area through improvements to existing service but concludes that this option is less effective than extending the Red Line.

Delays from the many at-grade freight railroad crossings in the Roseland and Pullman neighborhoods exacerbate traffic congestion on the streets. The Union Pacific Railroad operates about 27 trains that run through these neighborhoods per day. It has at-grade crossings at several east-west streets in the area. Similarly, Metra Electric District Blue Island Branch commuter trains operate at-grade level and cross several major streets in the area.

In addressing multiple issues, including long commute times, gaps in transit service, and transit access for seniors and people with disabilities, focus group and interview participants emphasized the need for additional transit options. The CTA Red Line South Extension would be able to tackle many of these issues.

Long Commute Times Involving Multiple Transfers

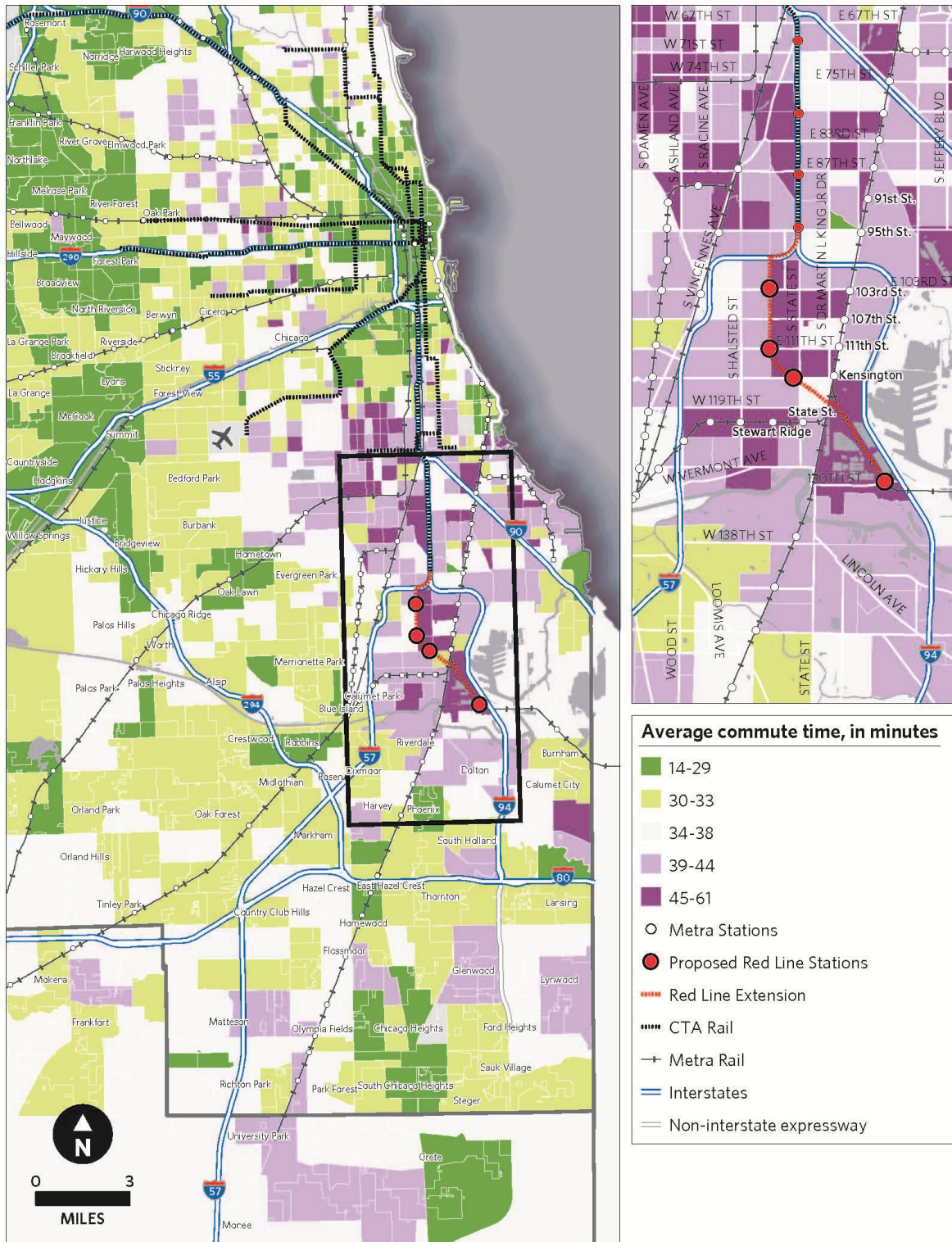
The most prevalent challenge, discussed in nearly every focus group and interview, was the length of commute times, which involve multiple transit transfers for work, school, medical appointments, shopping, and meetings. Participants explained that without direct access to the Red Line train, Greater Roseland residents must take the #34 South Michigan Avenue bus or other bus lines to then transfer to the train -- a time-consuming process. Given that many community members rely on the #34 bus line to access the 95th Street Red Line Station, a number of participants said that this bus can be extremely crowded.

Some residents described daily work commutes that exceeded two hours one-way. One individual who resides at Altgeld Gardens explained, *"...I work up north and it takes me like two and a half hours to get up there..."* He stated that he takes the #34 bus and transfers to the Red Line at 95th Street, *"...that's about a half hour right there just riding from there [Altgeld Gardens] to 95th."* Such long work commutes affect home environments as they limit the time parents are home with their children, some discussed. One church pastor commented on the challenges some parents face due to lack of jobs nearby, *"I have members that work at O'Hare Field, that work downtown, and they don't have automobiles; they are ladies and they have children and this is very problematic for them getting home. They're not getting home until 8 o'clock [p.m.] and we're watching the children at scout meetings until they can make it home and they have to catch two or three buses to make it home. So it's very stressful situations for them..."*

The travel times for residents of Greater Roseland are much longer than that of Chicago as a whole, as shown in Figure 4. Although the area is well served by expressways, the major



Figure 1: Average commute time



Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010, 5-year estimates.



arterial streets like Halsted continue to experience significant traffic congestion during the morning peak periods. Many young people have to contend with long commutes traveling to school and extra-curricular activities. A parent who lives at Altgeld Gardens recalled her two children's commute to high school at Simeon Career Academy, which took from 60 to 90 minutes and required two transfers -- #34 South Michigan bus to the Red Line to the #79 79th Street bus.

When asked about the impact extending the Red Line train to 130th Street would have in minimizing commute times and the number of bus transfers, participants said the change would be extremely beneficial to Greater Roseland residents. One church member described how her work commute to downtown would be shortened by the extension, *"Yeah, for instance, going from my house right now, I could take the bus right here on at 115th and Loomis, it would take me to the 95th Street Dan Ryan. But it would be much quicker if I got a train at 115th, 'cause this would take me right downtown from 115th Street...So, that would be easier."*

Table 1, taken from the CTA's LPA report, demonstrates the travel time benefits that the proposed CTA Red Line South Extension would create. A trip to the downtown Jackson Street station from 130th Street would be 20 minutes shorter, reduced from 61.75 to 41.25 minutes, with the extension's construction.

Table 1. Travel times from 130th Street to downtown with and without the CTA Red Line South Extension (from CTA's LPA report)

Travel Time Elements	No Build (current travel times - minutes)	Locally Preferred Alternative (minutes)
Wait time at 130 th Station	3.50	2.25
Run time 130 th to 95 th Stations	28.00	14.00
Walk time: curb to platform	3.00	0.0
Wait time at 95 th Station	2.25	0.0
Run time 95 th to Jackson Station	25.00	25.00
Total Travel Time	61.75	41.25

Source: CTA Locally Preferred Alternatives report, available at <http://tinyurl.com/brdvf7l>.

Gaps in Transit Service Limiting Access to Transit

While the Red Line operates 24 hours a day, only a limited number of buses provide 24-hour services and they run at sporadic intervals, leaving transit-reliant workers stranded at the end of the Red Line. Many participants discussed the various gaps in service that impacted access to transit.

Participants described difficult commutes to work and other destinations at night due to the limited hours on some bus lines. Further, participants mentioned inaccessibility because of a



lack of bus lines on the far south side. One educator explained, *“There’s nothing going east and west between 103rd and 111th, no east and west buses. We need one there on 107th. There is nothing between Michigan Ave. and Cottage Grove, except on King Drive, but that is a suburban bus. You’re talking a whole different fare.”*⁴ Another prevalent challenge noted was the lack of synchronization of bus schedules, which results in long wait times in between transfers.

In addition to extending the Red Line, many participants asserted that modifications to the bus system are also necessary in order to improve the efficiency of transit riders’ commutes. Several participants mentioned that it will be essential to ensure *“buses are synchronized with the Red Line tracks.”* One resident and church congregation member asserted, *“So it’s not enough just to extend the train. We have to change the bus routes, some of the bus routes as well...”* In addition, a resident of Altgeld Gardens described the importance of increasing bus service on some lines explaining, *“And I know in some communities they cut the hours of certain buses...so I would love to see it 24 hours out here because of the people that do work at night.”*

Transit Access for Seniors and People with Disabilities

Participants described particular challenges for seniors and people with disabilities. Those who use walkers, wheelchairs, or other devices experience inconsistent service related to the use of lifts and availability of priority seating on buses.

One senior mentioned the compounded problem of limited train and Park & Ride options in the community: *“I don’t want to walk three and a half blocks on my cane to get on the Michigan bus to go down to 95th Street to get on. It would just be great if I could just drive down to 130th, park my car, and get downtown... I just don’t even know what’s downtown anymore because it’s so inconvenient to go to 95th Street to go downtown.”* Another senior resident described how the extension would make travel via CTA much more convenient for physically disabled individuals:

There are some handicapped people that are riding the bus all the time so I think it would be more convenient for them if they could take a straight shot out... if they could catch the Red Line at 119th or you know, maybe 115th and go straight to... Mercy Hospital, or whatever hospital they need to go that’s north of where they live, it would be much more convenient... if there’s a point where they could get on on the south side and they wouldn’t have to worry about moving or anything like that.

Principle 2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.

Greater Roseland has more homeowners than renters; about 58 percent of homes are owner-occupied. The high homeownership levels are an indication of the investment and strong ties to the community that many people have. At the same time, there is a slightly higher rate of vacant housing than the City of Chicago at just over 13 percent. Home values in Greater

⁴ Beginning summer 2013, a new fare card will allow transit riders to use one debit card for CTA and Pace fares and products. The Regional Transportation Authority system faces a 2015 deadline to implement an integrated fare system.



Roseland area are relatively low, estimated at an average of \$85,000, compared to \$170,000 for the City of Chicago.⁵

Residents and stakeholders of the Greater Roseland communities discussed relationships between access to transportation and affordable housing resources. Numerous participants were hopeful that with the CTA Red Line South Extension, Roseland's affordable housing stock would become an additional incentive for new residents to move into the area, as well as an incentive for current residents to remain in the community.

Affordable Housing and Transit Mismatch

In addition to the challenges to public transportation indicated above, participants discussed barriers to transit in relation to housing. In particular, a resident of Altgeld Gardens mentioned that a main reason he moved there was because *"the rent was cheap,"* however, the area is lacking many resources, stating they *"...don't have enough business; they don't have enough transportation."* Another Altgeld Gardens resident explained that she was hesitant to move to that area due to inconvenient train access. Prior to learning of the #34 bus she thought, *"There's no way to 95th."* This single parent of an infant son shared the isolation she feels living there: *"I even tried to invite people out here."* Her friends tell her, *"There's only one bus that comes out there; we're not coming all the way out there!"* Both participants demonstrated a tradeoff between access to affordable housing and adequate transportation.

Participants further described a housing and transportation mismatch and how limited access to transit is a factor preventing more people from residing in Greater Roseland. One homeowner commented that her niece moved away from Greater Roseland *"because transportation would take too long"* to get to school at the University of Illinois at Chicago on the near west side. Others suggested that workers avoid living on the far south side due to difficult commutes from the area. A DCP board member and resident explained that although Greater Roseland has viable housing options, lack of public transit access is a barrier: *"A lot of good people that want to [live in Greater Roseland] understand that there are homes out there and they could live out there, but it's just so far to go to work and everything. So that [the extension] would bring a different quality of people to the neighborhood too, people that care."*

Vacant Housing

A concern of residents and stakeholders is the abundance of vacant housing in Greater Roseland. One homeowner commented, *"We got a lot of housing that we need to put some bodies in. We have a lot of empty houses in Roseland."* Multiple participants explained that an asset of the Greater Roseland area is its affordable housing stock, however much of that stock is underutilized.

⁵ See http://www.trulia.com/home_prices/Illinois/Chicago-heat_map/.



Extension to Attract New Residents

Several residents were optimistic about the benefits of the extension of the Red Line, believing that it will attract new residents to Greater Roseland. In particular, participants hope that the extension would encourage working families to relocate to the area if they see they can more easily commute to the Loop and other areas of Chicago via the Red Line. One homeowner asserted, *“Hopefully it [the extension] will bring in more working-class people... they [will] have accessibility of getting back to the Loop. A lot of the working or the 30-40 [age] group they don’t want to come this far, it’s too much of a hassle to drive and figure out how to get back to work.”*

Minimize Vacant Housing Stock

Participants envision that new residents to Greater Roseland would help to decrease the existing vacant housing stock. One Roseland homeowner articulated: *“... the extension, that would bring more people into the Roseland, Pullman, all those areas, Riverdale, where there are vacant houses just sitting. Because they will see the access to public transportation...”* One community leader explained that the extension is an essential component to attract new residents and improve the community overall, stating, *“... people come where transportation is available. They look for two things: good schools and good transportation. [We] have a lot of work to do in terms of schools, and have a lot of work to do in terms of transportation. But as you get folk in the community to advocate for better transportation, better schools; it all goes hand-in-hand. So this has to be a better community as a result of it.”*

Principle 3. Enhance economic competitiveness.

While housing is less expensive in the Greater Roseland area than the city, county, or region, most households are overburdened by transportation costs, as shown in Table 2. On average, housing in the Greater Roseland area costs about 21 percent of regional median income, compared to about 25 percent and 27 percent for city of Chicago and Cook County respectively. However, households spend about the same amount, almost 21 percent, of their total incomes on transportation, which is about four percent higher than the average for the City of Chicago (17 percent). These figures are based on regional median incomes, and Greater Roseland has a lower median income than the regional average. This means that many residents of Greater Roseland actually face a housing and transportation cost burden that is greater than these figures would imply.

According to the most recent American Community Survey, there are more than 34,000 workers in the Greater Roseland area. Of those, about 33,000 commute to work every day. Table 3 shows that the percentage of commuters from Greater Roseland who drive alone to work is about eight percent higher than the City’s average (61 percent and 53 percent respectively). This difference is also reflected in the higher amount of vehicle miles traveled per household in the Greater Roseland area than in Chicago, as shown in Table 4.



Table 2. Housing and Transportation (H+T) Costs as a percentage of income per household

	Greater Roseland	City of Chicago	Cook County	Chicago Region (Metropolitan Statistical Area)
Housing Costs as percent of income	20.8%	25.2%	26.8%	28.2%
Transportation Costs as percent of income	20.6%	17%	19.6%	21.8%
"H+T" Costs as percent of income	41.4%	42.2%	46.3%	50%

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), "H+T Affordability Index." See <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>.

Table 3. Mode share, as a percentage of commuting workers

	Greater Roseland Area	City of Chicago	CMAP Region
Total Workers (age 16+)	34,243	1,168,318	3,844,599
<i>Worked at Home</i>	764	54,588	181,715
Total Commuting Population	33,479	1,113,730	3,662,884
Drive Alone	61.0%	52.6%	72.8%
Carpool	9.9%	9.9%	9.1%
Transit	26.4%	27.7%	12.8%
Walk	2.1%	6.9%	3.4%
Other	0.6%	2.9%	1.8%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (for county and region figures); 2006 - 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (for municipal and census tract figures). U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 4. Total annual vehicle miles traveled per household

Greater Roseland	City of Chicago	Cook County	Chicago Region (Metropolitan Statistical Area)
16,754	13,650	15,780	18,272

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, "H+T Affordability Index." See <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>.



Research participants discussed in great detail the current economic conditions of the Greater Roseland communities and challenges related to access to resources among residents. Likewise, they hope the extension of the Red Line will prompt improved economic conditions in the area, including access to greater employment and educational opportunities, as well as new retail and economic development projects.

Employment Opportunities

Participants explained that access to employment opportunities is a challenge for residents of Greater Roseland. There is a shortage of job opportunities located *within* Greater Roseland, participants asserted, and this problem is compounded by a lack of access to jobs in neighboring communities. As discussed earlier, one-way work commutes via public transportation typically exceed one to two hours and involve multiple CTA transfers. Participants often described access to transit as a major barrier to employment. An Altgeld Gardens resident who is a single parent recounted, *"To be honest with you, I have rejected a few jobs because it's just so much getting there -- the commute, the commute."*

Participants are optimistic that the extension will increase access to jobs outside of the community. One participant recalled, *"Look at when they extended the El into O'Hare Field, the biggest thing there was there were jobs there. So now when they extend it into this area and other areas, then we can access those jobs..."*

The vast majority of jobs held by residents of the Greater Roseland area are in Cook County, with 61.8 percent of all jobs located in the City of Chicago. Most workers in the study area are employed at jobs in Chicago located north and northwest of their homes. However, some residents commute longer distances, with 15 percent commuting over 25 miles away. Figure 5 shows the places where majority of people in the Greater Roseland area work.

An extension of the Red Line could help improve the current commute for many residents in Greater Roseland, and it could also provide access to jobs that they would not otherwise be able to reach. With the CTA Red Line South Extension, newly accessible jobs within a hour commute of the proposed 111th Street Station would increase by 56 percent, as shown in Figure 6.

Additionally, focus groups and interview participants expressed expectations that a portion of the construction jobs available through the extension would be set aside for members of the Greater Roseland communities. DCP is currently spearheading a collaborative of workforce development professionals that will advocate for training programs to be offered to residents before the project begins so that there will be a qualified workforce available from the community.



Figure 2. Employment locations for Greater Roseland workers

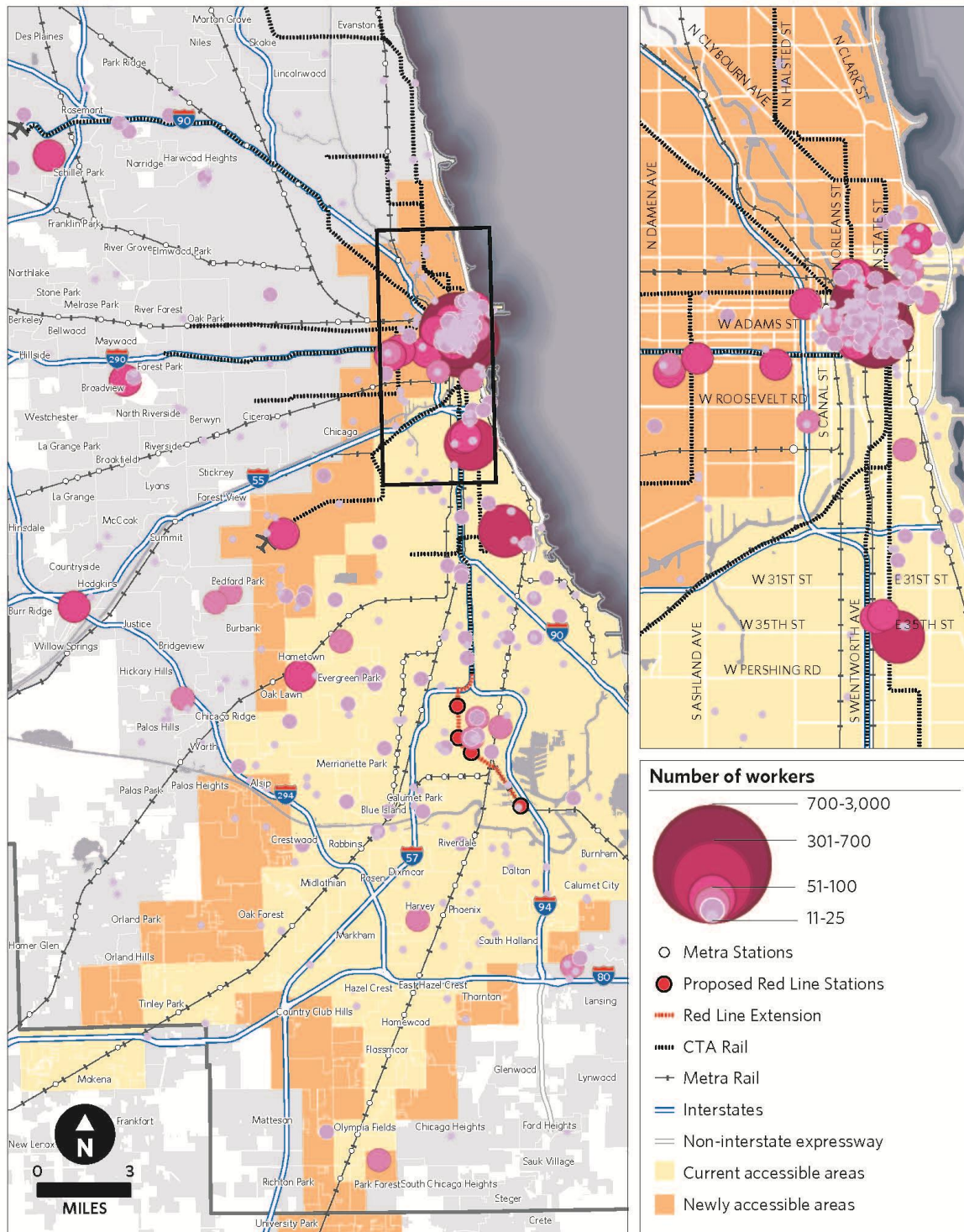
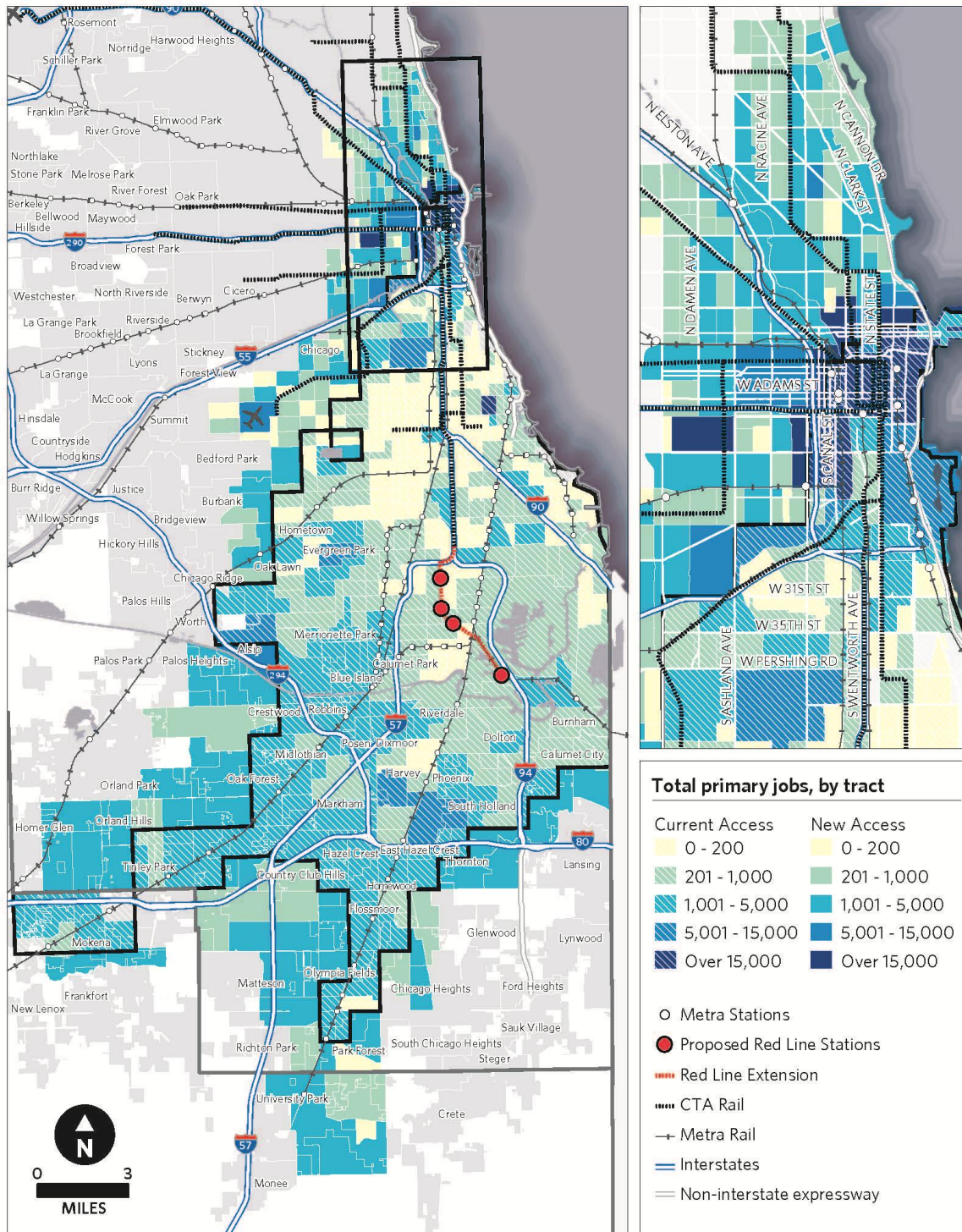


Figure 3. Access to jobs



Educational Opportunities

In addition to inadequate job options, Greater Roseland residents also experience limited access to educational institutions. These barriers are experienced at all educational levels. A childcare provider described how access to transit poses a barrier to education for children and adults, asserting, *“And that’s why some of these children do not get preschool education because it is too difficult to come from there out in Altgeld to here. If the trains would run out there, they would have transportation at least. Then the young mothers and fathers could go to the city colleges to get their GED or their associate degree or get a trade...”* To further support that, some parents have difficulties accessing their child’s school or daycare center via public transit. An educator discussed, *“They [parents] get here the best way they can. And if they don’t have a car that means bus service... that means that you’re going to get off probably on Michigan Avenue and you’re not going to stand there and wait on that 103 Street bus to turn down that street when you could walk over here, but walking from Michigan to Wentworth, even in the daytime is dangerous.”*

As stated previously, many high school students experience long commutes involving multiple transit transfers. In addition, a college student related how her difficult commute from Altgeld Gardens limited her school options: *“...That’s why I started to go to school on-line. Because of the distance. I have to get on the #34 [bus], then I’ve got to get on the train, and then I got to walk two blocks to get to school. And I was just so frustrated because everything seemed so far away from Altgeld.”*

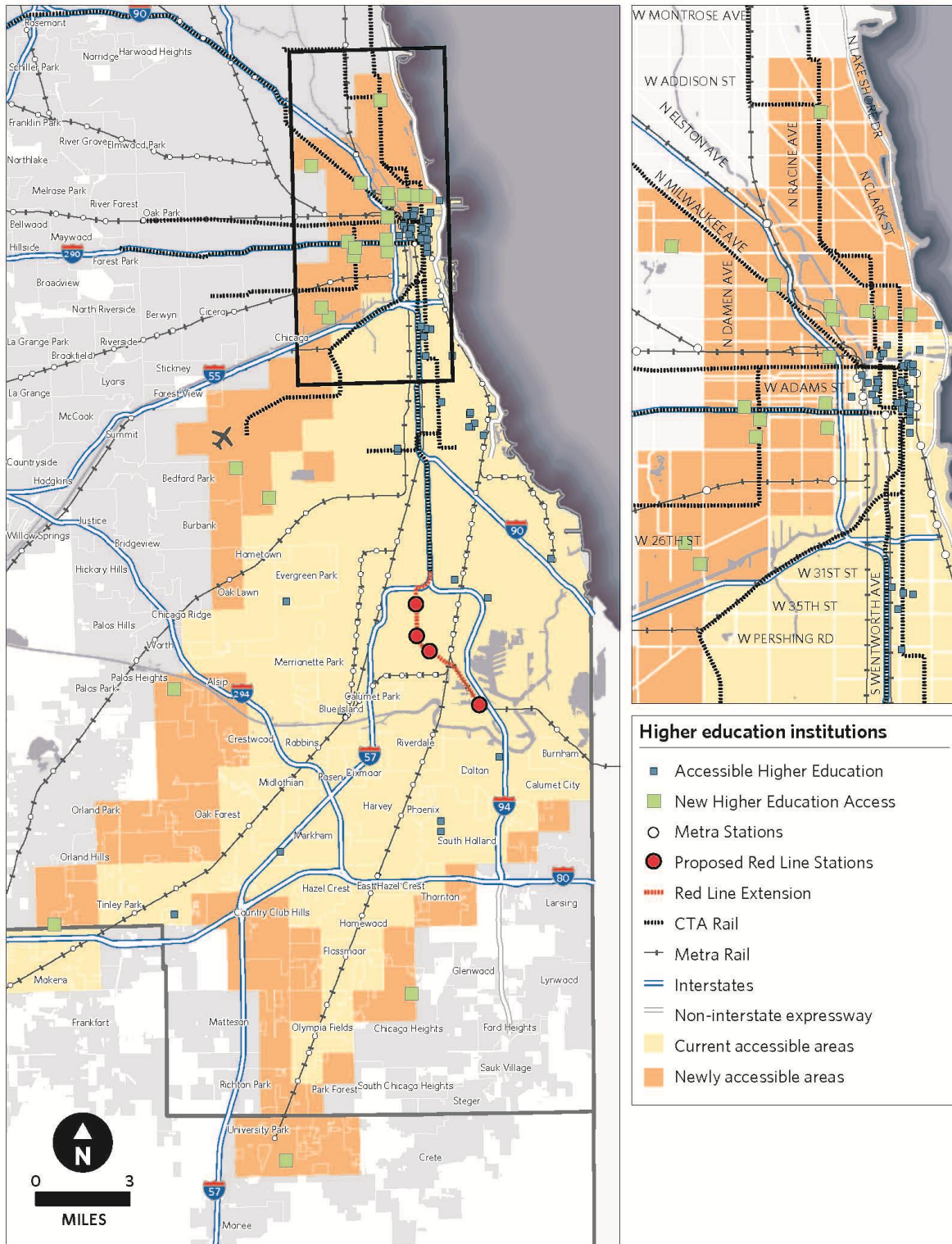
Participants expressed the hope that the extension would make access to education, at all levels, more feasible. Not only would students have shorter commutes with fewer transfers, but access for parents would be improved. A community leader said, it would improve *“the ability to get to the school...to be there to support your child and your child’s school and to be kept abreast of what’s going on in the school.”* A Roseland pastor asserted that the extension could have broad impacts on youth as well as adults:

Exposure -- our youth being able to get to various areas where they can be exposed to the culture and the enrichment that is offered, and also to jobs, and that’s on all levels. Our youth and our young people, as well as our adults, being able to access... get the transportation to the jobs.
Education -- being able to move across, so we’re not discriminated on this end but they can access Loyola, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois -- all of those to bring us closer together educationally.

For many people, a good education can be a stepping-stone to a better life. Many colleges and universities offer night classes and job training programs. Access to these amenities via transit would improve by nearly 40 percent with the Red Line South Extension. The map in Figure 7 shows the new higher education facilities that would become accessible with the extension.



Figure 4. Access to higher education facilities



Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2009.



Access to Shopping and other Economic Development

Participants also spoke about the lack of quality food available in the community. The term “food desert” was used often to describe the lack of access to healthy food options. A lack of access to other retail establishments is also a challenge. Many typically leave Greater Roseland to shop, creating a “leakage problem” within the communities. Community members asserted, *“Right now we have a lot of leakage, a lot of money from 130th at Altgeld Garden to the far suburbs. To think of what that money could do for schools and for parks. But the leakage is going to the suburbs because there is nothing [here].”* Many participants shared how challenging grocery shopping can be when they must transport their bags, often making multiple transit transfers; the task is even more challenging when traveling with children.

Participants hope that the extension would spur economic development in the far south side. An Altgeld Gardens resident remarked, *“I believe that if they do extend the Red Line that it also would bring more business in this community. Because where the public transportation, people do like to build around it. You have easy access to public transportation it means you can establish a business here to get customers...”* Participants hope that the extension will create jobs for community residents. Local economic development will also alleviate the leakage problem, participants asserted. A participant involved in business development in the area insisted, *“What we’re looking for is a quality grocery that would bring other quality stores because they feed off each other. And... the leakage problem will slow because now people won’t need to get into their car...”*

Dun & Bradstreet data indicate that there are currently over 6,500 retail locations accessible within an hour’s commute on transit. The CTA Red Line South Extension would increase access to an additional 4,590 locations, an increase of 69 percent, as seen in Figure 8.

Principle 4. Support existing communities.

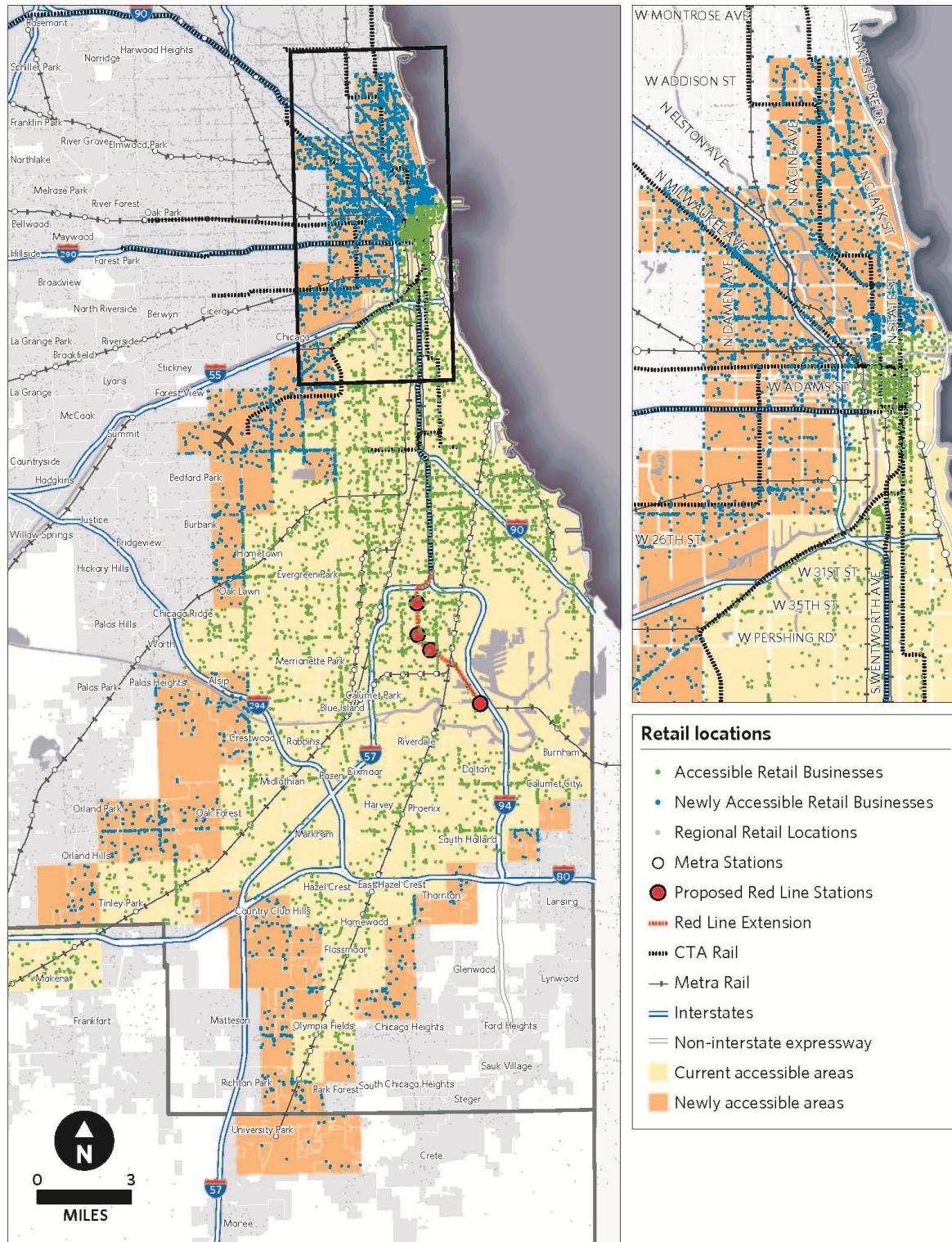
Although participants were overwhelmingly in support of the extension, they did emphasize the importance of supporting and protecting existing community resources. If planned for carefully, the extension of the Red Line south has the opportunity to support existing residents and business owners of Greater Roseland.

Support Existing Businesses

Local business owners envision numerous positive effects of the extension on the Greater Roseland community, yet shared the greatest number of concerns among all participant groups. Of particular concern was the potential for displacement. Business owners worried that businesses close to the extension may be displaced to make room for parking or other development associated with the new transit. Participants advocated for a plan to retain existing businesses and provide assistance for businesses forced to relocate. In addition, business owners also expressed great desire to be involved in the planning process for the extension, saying they bring knowledge and insight about the community. Business owners look forward to increased economic development stimulated by the extension. As one business



Figure 5. Access to retail locations



owner said, *"We have been waiting, anticipating redevelopment, anticipating being a part of it."* The extension would increase the customer base for the existing and new businesses in the community, business leaders expect. They envision such changes leading to increased economic revenue for Greater Roseland.

Support Existing Homes and Neighborhoods

Participants expressed concern over the potential displacement of homes and disruption of existing neighborhoods. An Altgeld Gardens resident stated, *"Everybody seems to think that this is prime land. We think so too... If we've been here that long and people been living here just that long why can't we live here when they build it up? We really need that [train] stop and we really want to stay."* This sentiment was echoed by several participants, all of whom conveyed the pride they had in their communities and the reasons they remained living in their community. A related concern was the potential for gentrification and "up-scaling" due to rising property values. While rising property values are often desirable for homeowners, the associated increases in property tax can force a family out of their home when income is not increasing along with their taxes. With continued access to Cook County property tax cost control programs and increased access to new job opportunities, it is hoped that residents will avoid displacement due to rising property values.

Principle 5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.

This livability report is the result of a collaborative effort led by DCP between CMAP (via a federal Sustainable Communities Initiative grant), CTA, and local community organizations, to understand the needs of the residents and better coordinate policies to serve them. One community, or even a single level of government, cannot solve the region's most pressing problems alone. GO TO 2040 connects policy areas that have long existed in separate "silos." By making collaboration across federal and state programs routine, agencies can help regions to implement comprehensive solutions to their problems.

Principle 6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

Participants described significant challenges related to the health, safety, and walkability of the Greater Roseland communities. Still, residents demonstrated overwhelming pride and anticipated improvements as a result of the extension.

Security and Safety

Many residents expressed concerns about violent crime in Greater Roseland. Concerns about safety for transit riders were also expressed. One participant stated, *"...with the increasing violence that's going on in the neighborhood, it's unsafe for you to be walking and waiting for public transportation for long periods of time."* Participants mentioned a variety of security concerns, such as a lack of police presence to deter crime and poor lighting at bus stops and on the roads leading to transit stops.



A particular concern was the 95th Street Station. It was described as *“a real headache for most transit travelers”* due to the congestion of cars and buses, including, CTA, Greyhound, and PACE buses, and the number of transit riders at the station. Participants also stated that they did not feel safe waiting at 95th Street late at night because the area *“is sometimes dangerous with fights.”*

Participants made a number of recommendations to improve transit safety for riders and the community in general. Increased police presence was considered especially important both at the stations and on the streets where people wait for buses. One local school supporter argued, *“...if the El goes four or five more stops, we can have police and security to go four or five more stops. You know, we can improve as we improve... That’s my biggest problem... Is there going to be a secure El station?”* Participants also hoped that, by having closer train stops, they would feel safer simply because they wouldn’t have to walk as far. An Altgeld Gardens resident contended, *“I think that actually it’d be even better security... if you get off [the Red Line] at 130th it’s faster, closer to home, you got a better opportunity to get home safely.”* Likewise, a resident described how the extension would help to lessen some safety concerns for young people traveling through gang-related territory in Greater Roseland. She stated: *“If they’re traveling by themselves, I think that’s a lot less worrisome than having them ride the bus and having to transfer in different neighborhoods.”* In addition, participants recommended CTA facilities that are “well-lit” with working, monitored cameras.

Community Health

Participants discussed many health challenges associated with the lack of transit access in the Greater Roseland communities. With the lack of quality food options available, residents tend to eat fast food and *“a lot of junk.”* Participants also expressed concern over the perceived levels of pollution in the Greater Roseland communities resulting from the congestion at the 95th Street Station and the nearby highway and the smell of the contents from the landfills found near Altgeld Gardens. Many participants conveyed the hope that with the extension would come quality grocery stores. Several participants mentioned the lack of access to medical facilities via public transit and expressed the hope that the extension would not only provide this access but also, spurred by economic development, lead to new services such as a trauma center.

One participant believed the deterioration of the neighborhoods has also had a negative effect on the physical and social development of children. She stated, *“Our parks are in dire shape, and our kids needs to go out in to the parks and exercise. They need that energy outlet that parks provide and everything. Not only that but the interpersonal skills, communicating with friends, being able to get out and talk and play with their friends...”* Others hope that the extension will prompt further development of a bicycle trail as well as increased opportunities for walking. A Roseland resident discussed the positive health consequences of the extension commenting, *“And for me too, it will be healthier, because I can’t walk that far, but at 130th I can walk a couple of blocks to get home.”* Further, describing the development she envisioned would occur along with the extension and the resulting benefit for seniors, she explained, *“So even for the seniors, the quality of life would be a lot better. They would be able to build around there and everything, so they can walk.”*



That's healthy, breathing in [fresh air]. Instead of hoping that one of their kids will come and take them to the store, they go walk and get the fresh fruit and vegetables and things that they need."

Access to community recreational areas and public open space can improve a person's quality of life and improve their levels of physical fitness. One study found that access to parks can increase the number of people who are physically active five times a week by up to 25 percent.⁶ Parks and open space can help bridge gaps between public health and social equity by providing exercise facilities to low-income residents who may find gym fees prohibitive.⁷

Additionally, studies have found that public open space and parks provide psychological benefits across varying demographic groups.⁸ In a study of Chicago public housing residents living in architecturally identical buildings, researchers found that residents living near green space "were significantly more effective in managing their major life issues than were their counterparts living in barren environments."⁹

The Greater Roseland community was found to be "park poor" in CMAP's Parks and Open Lands strategy paper.¹⁰ While the extension of the Red Line will not create new parks in Roseland, the new access areas have over 10,000 acres of protected open space -- a 116percent increase from the currently accessible open space. The public open space included in this calculation is only those parks over 25 acres in size -- parks significant enough to warrant traveling long distances.

Figure 9 illustrates newly accessible parks. The dark green areas represent parks greater than 25 acres in size.

In addition to healthier lifestyles due to increased open space, residents traveling from 111th Street can currently reach 17 hospitals within an hour on transit. An extension of the Red Line would nearly double that to 32 hospitals. For many, this can mean finally being able to choose between various medical facility for their loved ones. It may prevent others from missing work to drive family members to the hospital. In addition to hospitals, the Red Line extension would provide access to health centers and other medical facilities, as shown in Figure 10.

⁶ Active Living Research. "The Role of Parks and Recreation in Promoting Physical Activity" infographic. See <http://www.activelivingresearch.org/blog/2012/10/node/12795>.

⁷ Gies, Erica (2006). The Trust for Public Land. [*The Health Benefits of Parks: How Parks Help Keep Americans and Their Communities Fit and Healthy*](#).

⁸ Bedimo-Rung, Ariane L., Mowen, Andrew J., Cohen, Deborah A. (2005). [*The Significance of Parks to Physical Activity and Public Health: A Conceptual Model*](#). American Journal of Preventive Medicine 2005; 28(2S2):159 –168.

⁹ Kuo, Frances E, "Coping with Poverty: Impacts of Environment and Attention in the Inner City" *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 33 No. 1, January 2001 (pp. 5-34).

¹⁰ See <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/strategy-papers/parks-and-open-lands>.



Figure 6. Access to parks and open space

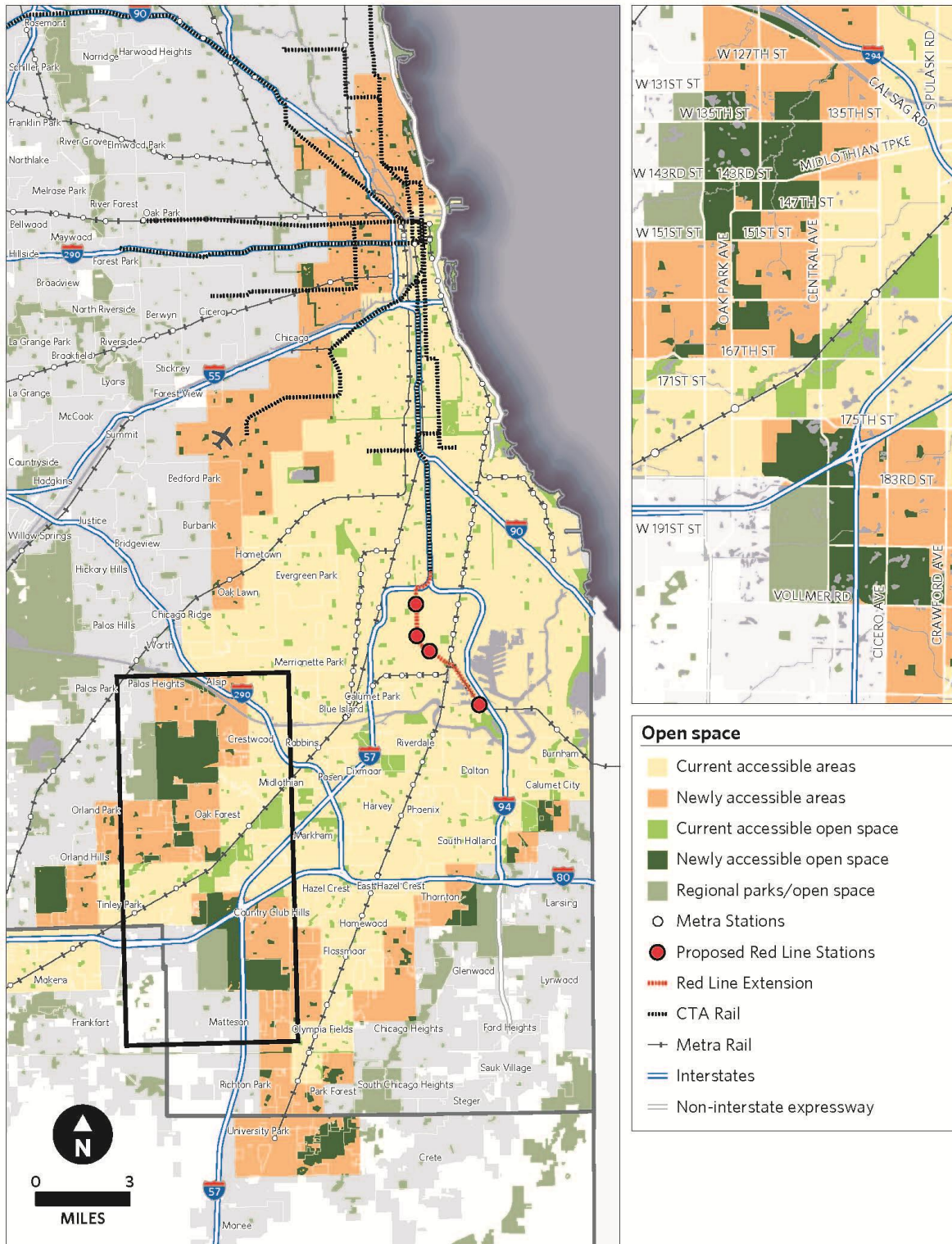
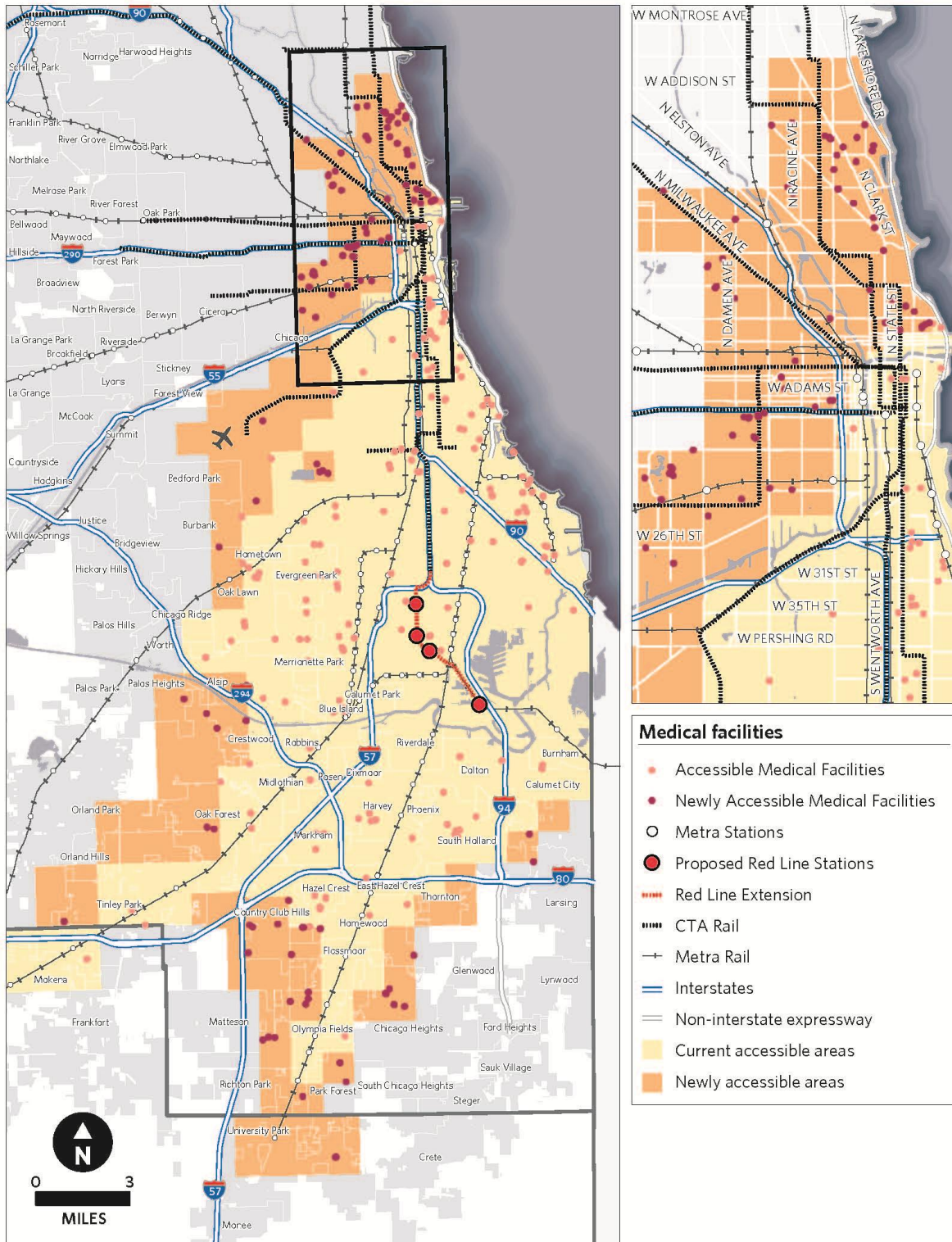


Figure 7. Access to medical facilities



Source: Cook County Hospitals, 2012; City of Chicago Health Centers, 2012; Illinois Department of Health Medical Facilities, 2006



Decrease Traffic and Congestion

Yet another perceived benefit of the extension would be a reduction of traffic and congestion in Greater Roseland. Participants believe that the extension would help to alleviate the major congestion at 95th Street. Ideally, traffic congestion would be alleviated in the broader region, a participant asserted. This was echoed by a resident and congregation member, *“...a lot of people come from Indiana specifically, so if they could have a place to park on 130th Street and take the train downtown, it would help relieve the congestion on Dan Ryan and probably even the other expressways.”* Similarly, residents stated that the extension could promote increased transit ridership among current South Suburban drivers: *“By having the Red Line extension ending at 130th Street, then you bring folks from the South Suburbs who would Park & Ride, rather than drive downtown.”* As such, participants suggested that it would be ideal to provide Park & Ride facilities with the hope that decreased congestion would result in improved air quality for the community.

Community Pride

Many residents of the Greater Roseland communities have a great deal of pride in the places they call home. Although many acknowledged the serious problems with crime and violence, one research participant stated, *“It’s always the shootings and all the crazy things that happen in this community... being highlighted and it’s unfair to the people that live in this community, ‘cause it’s good people in this community.”*

Many longtime and some new residents spoke of extensive community involvement aimed to improve the environment and reputation of their community. Many were members of block clubs, homeowners associations, local school councils, anti-violence groups and other groups. Participants often spoke of a strong sense of community, with one resident stating: *“We have always taken pride in where we live and we’ve tried to make sure that we’ve kept up our property... We have our problems just like everybody else but we have a very strong community base... So I am very proud to be a resident of Rosemoor Community Association and the Pullman Historical District. I am still very proud to be here. And I love my home.”*

High-Quality Transit Stations

Many residents and stakeholders explained that the far south side has been without convenient train access for decades and the extension is “overdue” and greatly needed. Still, participants want to ensure that the extension is carried out in a manner that benefits the far south side, seeking stations that are clean and well-maintained, with resources such as food options and other business development located inside or nearby. Several participants emphasized equity between stations on Chicago’s North and South Sides. One block club member contended, *“...It needs to be quality... I mean, there’s a difference in our station versus the stations on the North Side. I mean, it flows with the community and it’s aesthetically nice, it’s architecturally built well, and I would hate to see us... they just put us a Red Line, and then they just put up a shack up there. Just because we live in Roseland doesn’t mean we should have a shack.”*



Communication with and Input from the Community

Participants anticipate significant community improvement as a result of the extension and want to ensure that they have input in the planning and development. Many shared that they have often felt excluded from the planning for their own communities in the past and hope for transparency and input with the extension. A community member stated, *"We think that it's important for that community to feel it's valid. I think people who live in communities, it helps communities to realize the importance of their vote, it lets communities know they have power, and it makes communities know they are respected."* Participants hope to be involved in the process of planning and building the extension; including sharing in the construction contracts and jobs and deciding what type of economic development is important to the community.

Connecting Communities

A pastor from Roseland asserted that the extension would not only benefit the Greater Roseland communities, but would improve quality of life in the Chicago region as a whole, stating: *"Everybody's going to benefit from us being able to have access to services and to stores. The whole greater Chicago area benefits, not just we're benefiting, but everyone -- the quality of life in Chicago is benefiting because persons are going to be able to have resources, are going to be able to share those resources across the government, across the city... everybody's quality of life benefits when everybody comes together to pool our resources, we become a better, stronger city, a better community, because persons in the society will be able to participate and raise the quality of life on one level, which is going to raise it overall."*

Next Steps

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the evaluation of potential environmental impacts associated with federal projects and actions. The CTA is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).¹¹ The EIS will study the effects of the proposed project and its alternatives on the quality of the physical, human and natural environment. CMAP's Unified Work Program Committee,¹² which allocates federal metropolitan planning funds to projects that further the goals of GO TO 2040, awarded CTA over \$1 million for the development of the EIS in 2012. Once complete, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will review the EIS and ensure that all NEPA requirements have been met.

Two types of funding are needed for the proposed extension -- capital and operating. Capital funding for construction of the proposed extension, projected to be just over \$1 billion in 2009 dollars, will be sought from the FTA through its New Starts grant program. The New Starts program offers highly competitive grants to fund major public transit infrastructure projects. CTA is currently in the second phase of that process.

¹¹ CTA Red Line Extension website. See www.transitchicago.com/Redeis/envreview.aspx#eis.

¹² Unified Work Program Committee, see <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/unified-work-program>.



Upon successfully advancing through the FTA's process, the CTA Red Line South Extension project would be qualified to receive a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) from the federal government. The FFGA typically covers half of a project's capital cost. The remainder of capital funding would have to come from non-federal state, regional, and local sources, which still need to be identified. These non-federal funds must be identified for the project to progress through the New Starts program and receive an FFGA.

Conclusion

The metropolitan Chicago region relies on its transit system, which benefits all residents and businesses in metropolitan Chicago -- not just the 2 million riders who commute each day by train or bus. Public transportation keeps cars off the roads, reduces congestion for everyone who drives, and improves air quality for all. The mobility enabled by transit helps the economy and quality of life by giving people more choices for getting around and encouraging businesses to locate here.

Likewise, supporting and implementing the federal livability principles on projects such as the CTA Red Line South Extension make the region more economically competitive. To sustain the region's economy and quality of life, residents must be able to travel quickly and easily around the region so they can choose from a wide variety of jobs and communities in which to live. The CTA Red Line South Extension would help to accomplish regional priorities, by supporting greater livability, improving transportation and quality of life, and implementing GO TO 2040.



List of Acronyms

CMAP	Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
CTA	Chicago Transit Authority
CURL	Center for Urban Research and Learning
DCP	Developing Communities Project
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FFGA	Full Funding Grant Agreement
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
H+T	Housing and Transportation
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LPA	Locally Preferred Alternative
LTA	Local Technical Assistance
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ROC	Red Line Oversight Committee





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