

Norfolk Southern Selects Track Design Firm for CREATE Project EW3-Segment B

October 5, 2022 - The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program partners announce that Norfolk Southern has selected Benesch to provide final track design services for the CREATE Project EW3-Segment B. The project, a public-private partnership to improve infrastructure located near the intersection of South Stony Island Avenue and East 95th Street in Chicago. Ultimately, these improvements are intended to increase train speeds and improve operational flexibility for railroads.

As a part of the CREATE public-private partnership, the project will improve infrastructure located near the intersection of South Stony Island Avenue and East 95th Street in Chicago. Ultimately, these improvements are intended to increase train speeds and improve operational flexibility for railroads.

“The CREATE Program’s East-West Corridor is a critical freight rail artery and impacts network fluidity hundreds of miles outside this project’s limits,” said Jeff Page, Engineer Planning for Norfolk Southern Design and Construction. “Dozens of daily freight trains traversing this location must slowly navigate existing Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) yard tracks – that will all change once this project is completed. The Benesch track design team will put pen to paper to get yet another CREATE project closer to shovel-ready.”

Benesch will begin engineering additional track infrastructure along a two-mile segment from the BRC’s Commercial Yard in the vicinity of 9500 South Commercial Avenue, through Pullman Junction, and near 9500 South Stony Island Avenue. As proposed, the additional mainline track and other track and signal changes will allow for an increase in train speeds and greater operational flexibility throughout this important rail corridor.

The CREATE partners’ commitment to creating economic opportunities in the project area neighborhoods is reflected in the 30% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation goal for this contracted work. The Benesch team includes five local DBE firms:

- American Surveying & Engineering – Topographical Surveying and Right of Way Research
- 2IM Group – Track/Civil Design
- GSG Consultants – Geotechnical
- Trinal – Public Involvement and Stakeholder Coordination
- Engineering Services Group – Construction Phasing & Constructability, Track Design

Four of the five DBE firms that are a part of the Benesch team participated in the voluntary, prime-DBE networking event, which occurred at the conclusion of the prime consultant pre-proposal presentation on November 9, 2021. Over 50 people attended the event at Kennedy-King College in Chicago’s Englewood neighborhood, including more than a dozen DBE firms.

There will be additional opportunities for right-of-way acquisition, engineering, construction, and suppliers within the CREATE Program. DBE firms are encouraged to register through the CREATE website for email invitations to respond to bid opportunities for contracted work. All CREATE Program partner procurements will be sent through the CREATE procurement notification email. Notifications are also made through newspapers.

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Visit createprogram.org to learn more.

Media Contact: Katie Dillon, RM Chin, 248-305-0057, kdillon@rmchin.com.