



CREATE

KEEPING THE GO IN CHICAGO

2022 NEWSLETTER

CHICAGO REGION ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

The CREATE Program is a first-of-its-kind multimodal public-private partnership to improve the Chicago region's freight, passenger, and commuter railroad infrastructure. Through the completion of 70 interrelated projects, CREATE's benefits extend throughout the Midwest and across the country. The CREATE Program is a unique partnership among USDOT, the State of Illinois, Cook County, City of Chicago and the Association of American Railroads representing ten of the freight, passenger and commuter railroads serving the Chicago region. These railroads include freight carriers BNSF Railway, CN, Canadian Pacific, CSX, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, the Belt Railway of Chicago, and the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad, as well as Amtrak and the commuter railroad Metra. The Program is stepping up to modernize our rail network to better handle our region's freight and passenger needs, both today and in the future.

IN THIS ISSUE

Project Movement	1-2
75 TH Street Corridor Improvement Project	3-4
CREATE Around the Country	5
Looking Forward	6

PROJECT MOVEMENT

B1 Ribbon Cutting

In November 2021, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Franklin Park Mayor Barrett Pedersen and the CREATE Program partners, including Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski, Metra Board Chair Romaine C. Brown and Canadian Pacific Chief of Administration & Corporate Events and Assistant to the



President Chad Becker participated in a ribbon-cutting at the Metra/Canadian Pacific Crossover Upgrades (B1) Project. The project has minimized Metra and freight train delays by installing five crossovers and associated signaling on the Metra tracks servicing the Milwaukee District West (MD-W) line and Canadian Pacific. In addition, this project reduces delays to motorists, pedestrians and cyclists at nearby at-grade crossings due to increased train speeds and reduced gate downtimes.

Project Status

The CREATE Program continues to move full steam ahead on projects throughout the Chicago region in 2022!

Completed projects

31

Projects under construction (Phase III)

4

Projects in final design (Phase II)

9

Projects in environmental review (Phase I)

7

Remaining projects

19

PROGRAM APPLIES FOR CRISI GRANT

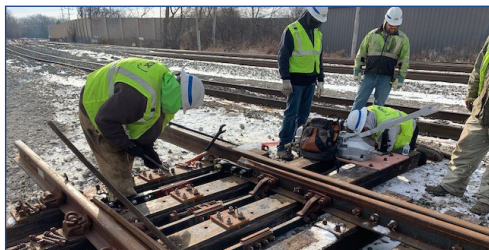
APPLICATION TO FUND OGDEN JUNCTION (WA1)

In November 2021, the CREATE Program partners submitted an application for federal grant funding from the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program to support the construction of WA1. This project will upgrade a 1.9 mile-long segment of the Union Pacific rail line along the Western Avenue Corridor. This corridor provides critical connectivity for regional and national freight traffic, hosting approximately 20 to 30 freight trains a day in support of a network that serves more than 180,000 freight and 300,000 passenger trains annually.



This project will install new Centralized Traffic Control, and control points and upgrade existing hand-thrown switches to power switches to improve operational capacity, rail speed and fluidity and prepare Chicago for future freight rail demand. It will also reduce idling trains resulting in less emissions and greenhouse gases.

There are 18 existing viaduct structures in this corridor. WA1 will replace 14, rehabilitate two, and remove two to upgrade the corridor to modern standards. Other improvements include new lighting, sidewalks and roadway paving. This will enhance accessibility and safety for all roadway users and support community efforts to bring development, jobs and housing into surrounding neighborhoods.



Argo Connections (B9) Construction Advances

CREATE project B9 is well under construction and anticipated to be completed Summer 2022. This project is constructing a new double-track connection and crossovers between the Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) and Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad/CSX line near Archer Avenue and 63rd Street and providing additional crossovers to the control point at 71st Street in Summit, Illinois. These upgrades will allow trains to increase their speeds from 10 mph to 25 mph, improving efficiency and reducing congestion. This project will also upgrade Argo Yards to create yard capacity that is lost from the installation of new main line crossovers.

Archer Avenue & Belt Railway of Chicago Grade Separation (GS9) Phase I Complete, Phase II to Start in 2022

In July 2021, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded the CREATE Program \$19.1 million through the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant Program to support construction of the GS9 project in the Chicago communities of Archer Heights and Garfield Ridge. This grade separation will eliminate delay to more than 2,700 vehicles daily, alleviating nearly 59,600 annual motorist hours of delay. It will improve air quality by reducing idling and roadway congestion while also improving safety for all road users by eliminating collisions. This location is designated as a “911 Critical Crossing”, for emergency services to access communities that have a high frequency of train movements or delays.



75TH STREET CIP MOVING FORWARD

The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (75th St. CIP) is the largest and most complex effort within the overall CREATE Program. It includes four projects that are advancing together due to their operational and environmental linkages. This rail and roadway improvement project is located on the south side of Chicago in the neighborhoods of Ashburn, Auburn Gresham, Englewood, and West Chatham along two passenger and four freight rail lines. The project area is roughly bound by Pulaski Road, 63rd Street, Interstate 94 (Dan Ryan Expressway), and 103rd Street.



75th Street Corridor Improvement Project Advertisements and Opportunities Continue

To stay up to date with bid advertisements and opportunities, register for our email notifications [here](#).

Continuing Education Commitment

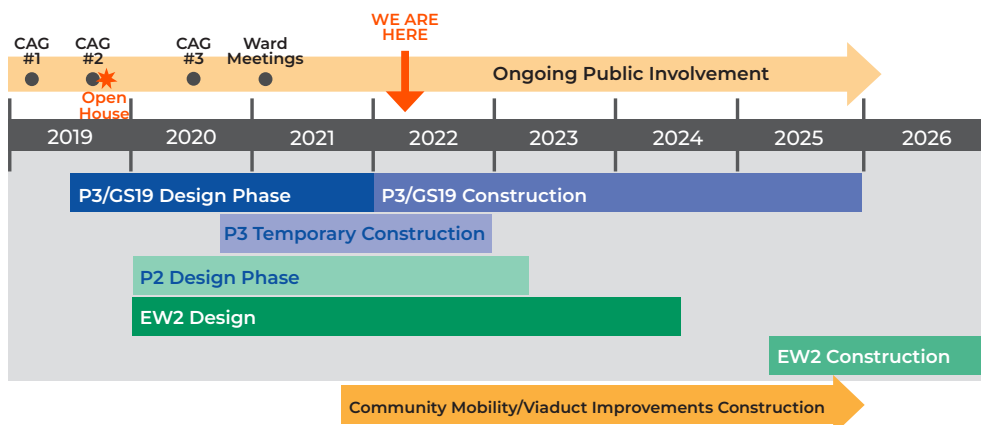
Since 2019, the CREATE partners have been dedicated to promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) educational programs for elementary and high school students located within the 75th Street CIP project area. Events throughout this initiative have included in-classroom activities, hosting field trips to rail-related sites, junior mentor protégé internships and more.

For the 2021-2022 school year, the Program partners donated \$230,000 across eight recipients. Recipients were the Chicago Public Schools (Randolph Elementary School, Barton Elementary School, Englewood STEM High School, Joplin Elementary School and Simeon Career Academy High School), Leo High School, the Museum of Science and Industry and the Chicago Public Library Foundation. Grants have been used for science labs, after-school clubs, new equipment, at-home science kits, and online programs.

Please click the video above to hear how the education grants are having a positive impact on STEM education!

75th Street CIP Status Updates:

- In December 2021, the CREATE Program solicited bids for four Engineering Service Provider (ESP) design packages for Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements (EW2). Awards are anticipated to be announced in Q2 2022.
- In December 2021, the CREATE Program solicited bids for the Rock Island Bridge Raise (EW2). Awards are anticipated to be announced in Q2 2022.
- In the first quarter of 2022, Metra plans to release a Notice to Advertise (NTA) or a Letting Opportunity (LTO) for Right-of-Way (ROW) Consultant Services for the Rock Island Connection (P2).
- In the first quarter of 2022, Union Pacific plans to release a Notice to Proceed (NTP) for design and scope for Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements (EW2).
- On March 15, 2022, CSX held its Forest Hill Rail Flyover (P3) Stage II pre-bid meeting at Kennedy-King College. Prime contractor selection announcement anticipated in the second quarter of 2022; Stage I shoo fly track construction continues.



Project Timeline

LEGEND		P3 - Freight Rail Flyover (75 th Street, Chicago)
		GS19 - Road/Rail Grade Separation (71 st Street, Chicago)
		P2 - Freight Rail Flyover (74 th Street, Chicago)
		EW2 - Add a Commuter Track & Realign Freight Tracks (80 th Street, Chicago)
		Community Mobility/Viaduct Improvements Construction
		CAG (Community Advisory Group) and Ward meetings

ENGAGING CHICAGO'S WORKFORCE VIRTUALLY

Over the past year, the CREATE partners continued their effort to provide procurement opportunities and updates to encourage Program participation by certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), small businesses and rail-industry prime contractors specializing in engineering, design, land acquisition and construction. We will continue to host events as an ongoing project information resource to keep individuals and organizations informed of Program opportunities.

Get on Board

In March 2021, the CREATE Program held Get on Board, a virtual business-to-business event that fosters networking between certified DBEs, small businesses and rail-industry prime contractors. A variety of panels were held over several days and included topics such as Working with the Railroads and Securing Work with Public Agencies. We thank U.S. Representatives Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, Bobby Rush, and Marie Newman for their participation in the event and their continued support for CREATE. Materials from the sessions are available on the CREATE Program’s [website](#).



Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Certification



A DBE is defined as a for-profit small business that is:

- At least 51% owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged. In the case of a corporation, 51 percent of the stock must be owned by one or more such individuals; and
- Whose management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more of the socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who own the business.
- CREATE procurements require [Illinois Unified Certification Program \(IL UCP\)](#) certification.

Learn about IDOT's DBE Certification and submit an application:

<https://idot.illinois.gov/doing-business/certifications/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-certification/index>



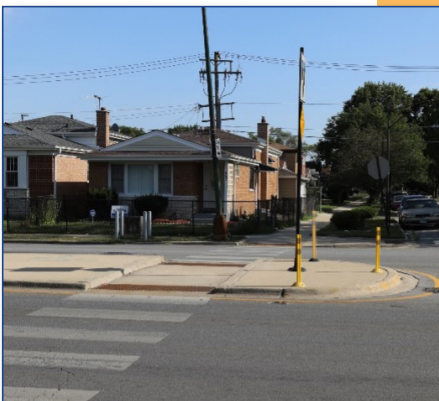
22

CREATE Opportunities Update Event

A virtual event was held in October 2021 to provide an update on upcoming CREATE Program and 75th Street CIP bid opportunities and information on the DBE certification process. Materials from this event can be found on the CREATE Program's 75th Street CIP [website](#).

Union Construction Career Pathways Workshops

The CREATE Program partners hosted Union Construction Career Pathways virtual workshops for those interested in careers in the rail and construction-related industries. During the workshops, Union representatives and organizations from various locals discussed educational and career opportunities. Materials from the workshops are available on the CREATE Program's 75th Street CIP [website](#).



75th Street Community Mobility Improvements Continue in 2022

The CREATE Program will continue implementing community mobility improvements within the 75th Street CIP project area. These improvements are being made by the Chicago Department of Transportation and will include neighborhood street repaving, curb and sidewalk repair, street tree planting, bus stop improvements, ADA ramp improvements, and upgrades under rail viaducts. These improvements will be completed during the 2022 construction season.

PROMOTING CREATE NEAR AND FAR

2021 brought many opportunities for the Program to discuss CREATE's accomplishments and future endeavors with federal, state, and local transportation officials and professionals. We are excited about the support for the Program and look forward to continuing to spread the word about CREATE!



U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg Visit

On July 16, 2021, the Program partners had the honor of hosting U.S. DOT Secretary Pete Buttigieg for a visit to Chicago to learn about CREATE and how the public-private partnership is positively impacting the North American supply chain. Secretary Buttigieg was joined by Governor J.B. Pritzker, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, and U.S. Representatives Marie Newman, Sean Casten, Bill Foster and Brad Schneider at CSX's Bedford Park Intermodal Facility. The railroad yards on the border between Chicago and Bedford Park are among the largest and busiest freight rail facilities in North America. This event was a tribute to the CREATE Program's long standing partnership with the federal government and an opportunity to keep officials apprised of the partnership's importance to the region and nation. The CREATE partners appreciate Secretary Buttigieg taking time to learn more about the Program and its mission.



MAASTO Tour

The CREATE Partners were pleased to participate in the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) annual meeting in Chicago in August 2021. The CREATE partners invited state transportation officials attending the conference to join a tour to visit various CREATE project sites, including Englewood Flyover (P1), 130th & Torrence & Norfolk Southern Grade Separation (GS15a) and the Forest Hill Flyover (P3). Discussions between the Program partners and attendees included the scope of various projects, their benefits, and Program outreach efforts including workforce development and DBE/MBE contracting. Participation included transportation departments from Kansas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Minnesota.

BENEFITS

BENEFITS OF CREATE

- Reduces passenger train delay by more than 1.3M passenger hours annually
- Saves 92K hours of truck delay and 230K hours of motorist and bus delay
- Avoids 200 vehicle crashes with trains
- Avoids 2.8K metric tons/year emissions from idling vehicles
- Enables 50K more freight trains to travel through greater Chicago rail network annually
- Avoids 18.5K truck trips a day on highways since 122M tons of freight per year would travel by rail



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The CREATE Program partners are excited about the opportunities that the recently passed \$1.2 trillion bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will bring to continue modernizing our rail infrastructure. Through the IIJA, significant funding will be available for freight and passenger railroad projects. This presents a unique opportunity to complete many of the remaining CREATE projects, including the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project, viaduct reconstruction near Western Avenue on Chicago's West side and separating railroad crossings along major roads at multiple locations throughout the city and suburbs.



Rep. Marie Newman Visits CREATE Project Sites

The CREATE partners started off 2022 strong, hosting Representative Marie Newman (3rd District) for a briefing and tour in February. It was a privilege to take the Congresswoman to discuss the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and visit project sites Rock Island Connection (P2), 65th & Harlem Avenue & Belt Railway of Chicago Grade Separation (GS1) and Argo Connections (B9). We appreciate Rep. Newman's continued support for the Program as we continue to untangle Chicago's rail infrastructure.



STAY ENGAGED

Follow CREATE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and sign-up for our mailing lists to ensure you know when the latest procurement notices, project updates and event information is available. As always, CREATE representatives are available to provide briefings, presentations and tours – reach us at info@createprogram.org if you are interested!

CREATE PARTNERS

