

## 2019/2020 Local Technical Assistance and Community Planning Programs

**Application Number:** 14

**Project Title:** CTA Transit Improvement Plan

**Applicant:** City of Chicago - Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)



### Project Description:

The 2017 North Branch Framework Plan was adopted to help guide the review of future development proposals and land use transitions for the North Branch area (see map). One primary goal of the plan is to provide better transportation access, especially in the context of significant projected increases in travel demand.

In coordination with CTA, CDOT is already studying the potential to create a transitway and trail connecting the North Branch area to downtown (see map). However, the future travel demands of this will not be solved solely with a single new transit option. There is important potential for existing bus routes that run through or near the area, in many cases connecting to rail connections, to help provide additional capacity, but this will require making these bus routes faster, more convenient, and more reliable. CTA and CDOT believe that it will be vital to create an enhanced bus service network that will help encourage and accommodate increased transit mode share to the North Branch area.

To accomplish this, CTA is seeking funding for consultants to create a North Branch Area Bus Network Enhancements Plan, which would develop a framework for bus enhancements that identifies key routes for improvements and concepts to make bus service a more attractive travel option. This would be developed in coordination with the other transportation analyses in the corridor, including a study of the new transitway. The combined analyses will provide guidance for the City and developers and facilitate implementation for a program of transportation improvements that can accommodate the expected growth in the area.

The scope of work would include:

- Assessment of existing conditions in the study area, including current mode-share by type and corridor;
- Identification of critical existing bus routes based on expected implementation scenarios for real estate development and the alignment of the transitway;
- Identification of potential locations and configurations for improvements for those critical bus routes, such as but not limited to dedicated bus lanes, bypass lanes, queue jumps, Transit Signal Priority (TSP), and enhanced boarding areas;
- Estimation of potential ridership growth and mode share that could result from improvements;
- Development of cost estimates for improvements;
- Identification of improvements that could be implemented by developers or incorporated into developer plans.

The scope would not provide detailed analysis of roadway configuration or engineering, nor would it include public outreach; but it would provide concepts that could be advanced to these next steps.

This project is a necessary next step in implementing the City's North Branch Framework Plan and realizing the vision of a corridor with modernized transportation assets sufficient to support the expected development. It aligns with the goals of ON TO 2050 and Invest in Transit, as it would help build out a modern multimodal system that adapts to changing travel demand, could lead to transformative investment, and builds on the strengths of our region's existing transit investments. It would also constitute an important step towards implementing the ON TO 2050 fiscally unconstrained project, "City of Chicago BRT group."

**Project Location:** The project location includes the North Branch Industrial Corridor (NBIC), which includes 760 acres along the Chicago River from Kinzie Avenue in the South, Fullerton Avenue in the North, I-90 to the west and Kingsbury and Clybourn to the east. The study area also includes the following bus routes and related corridors which serve the NBIC and areas beyond are as follows: #74 Fullerton, #73 Armitage, #72 North, #70 Division, #66 Chicago, #9 Ashland, and #8 Halsted.