

Rosemont/Blue Line Improved Transit Access Study

BACKGROUND

The Rosemont/Blue Line station is a major regional multi-modal transfer station, with 6,000 weekday boardings of the Blue Line. The facility (Figure 1) also provides a surface park-and-ride lot with 800 spaces, has significant taxi pick-up/drop-off and kiss-and-ride activity, and private shuttle services to Rivers Casino and offices. The Village of Rosemont, in cooperation with Pace, recently began a lunch-time circulator service. Rosemont is one of the few CTA rail station bus terminals not served by CTA routes, due to its location within Pace suburban territory.

The facility opened as part of the O'Hare (Blue Line) Extension constructed by the City of Chicago in 1983 and the land is owned by the State of Illinois, Cook County and the Toll Authority. The site was previously occupied by clover-leaf entry and an exit ramp for I-90. The approximately 11-acre site is located between I-90 (Jane Adams Memorial Tollway) and I-90 (Kennedy Expressway) on the east side of DesPlaines River Road (N. River Road).

Rosemont/Blue Line is one of the region's top intermodal transfer points for reverse commute. It is the connecting point between the dense population centers along the Blue Line O'Hare branch and the job-rich O'Hare Airport and I-90 corridor. Pace currently serves approximately 2,000 reverse-trips and is set to significantly improve service in this corridor in partnership with the Illinois Tollway's Jane Addams Memorial Tollway Rebuilding and Widening Project (Figure 2).

Rosemont /Blue Line also is an access point to Rosemont office, hotel, convention and entertainment centers to the north and south of the station. The area to the south, in particular, has been developed in a pattern more conducive to pedestrian access than in many suburban settings (Figure 3). The Village of Rosemont has expressed interest in improving the pedestrian connectivity of the River Road corridor, and IDOT's reconstruction of I-90 will provide a revised ramp configuration with improved pedestrian crossings.

A final element of the Tollway's planning for the Jane Addams Reconsruction Project included a conceptual study for improved access for Pace express buses between the I-90 mainline and the Rosemont/Blue Line station. For eastbound buses, exiting I-90 and entering the Blue Line bus terminal, the existing bus-only direct exit after the tollplaza can be improved to enable the elimination of the manually-operated gate. For westbound service (egress to the Tollway from the bus terminal) short-term improvements have been identified, including TSP treatment, along the 1.2-mile path from the bus terminal via River Road and Higgins to the Higgins on-ramp. Two longer-term, capital-intensive alternatives have also been identified for westbound access: an exclusive bus-only I-90 entrance ramp on the north side of I-90 accessed from River Road; and a fly-over bus ramp direct from the east side of the bus terminal/parking lot to westbound I-90. Both alternatives are compatable with the Tollway's new lane, bridge and embankment design plans (Figure 4).

Further investigation of these direct access ramps as part of a larger review of multi-modal improvements to the terminal and the potential for re-development as a means to achieve these improvements is the scope of the proposed study.

Figure 1

Rosemont Blue Line – Existing Conditions



Figure 2
Existing I-90 Services from Rosemont



Expanded I-90 Service, 2013-16

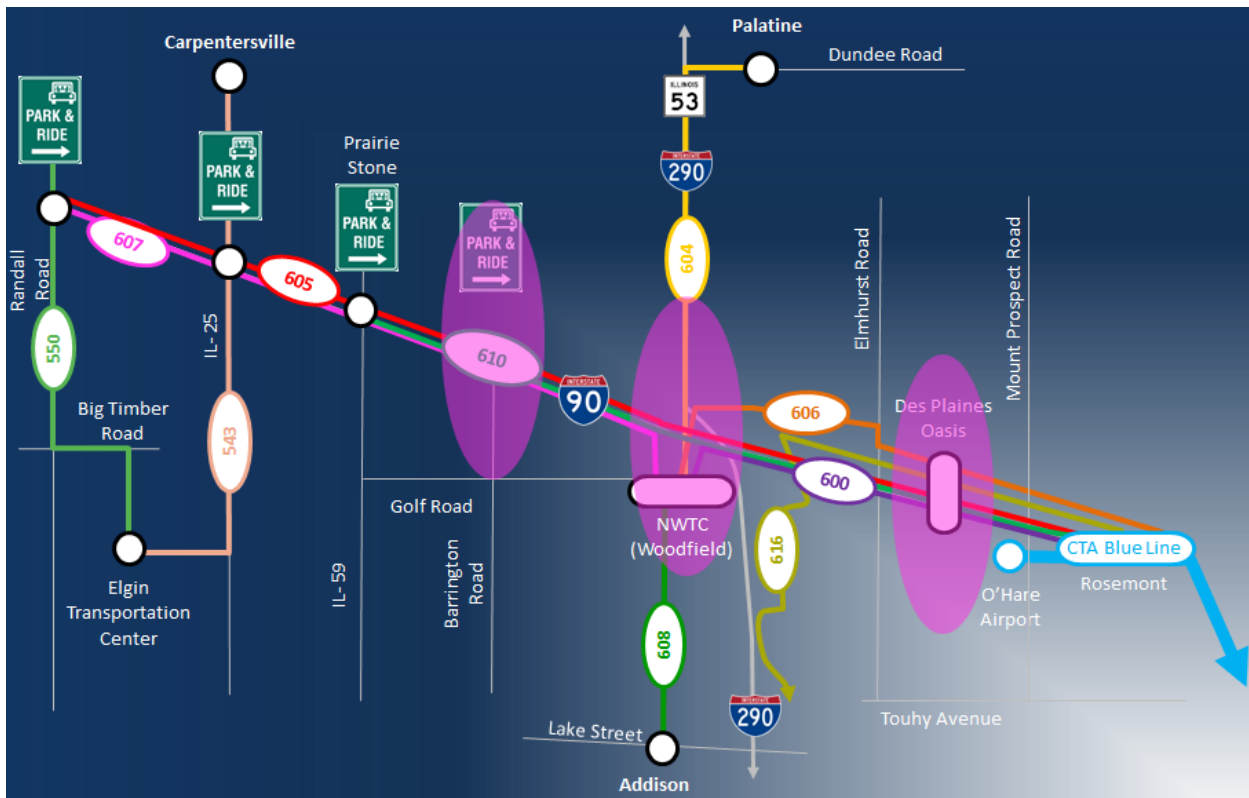


Figure 3
Local street conditions south of Blue Line (River Road at Bryn Mawr)

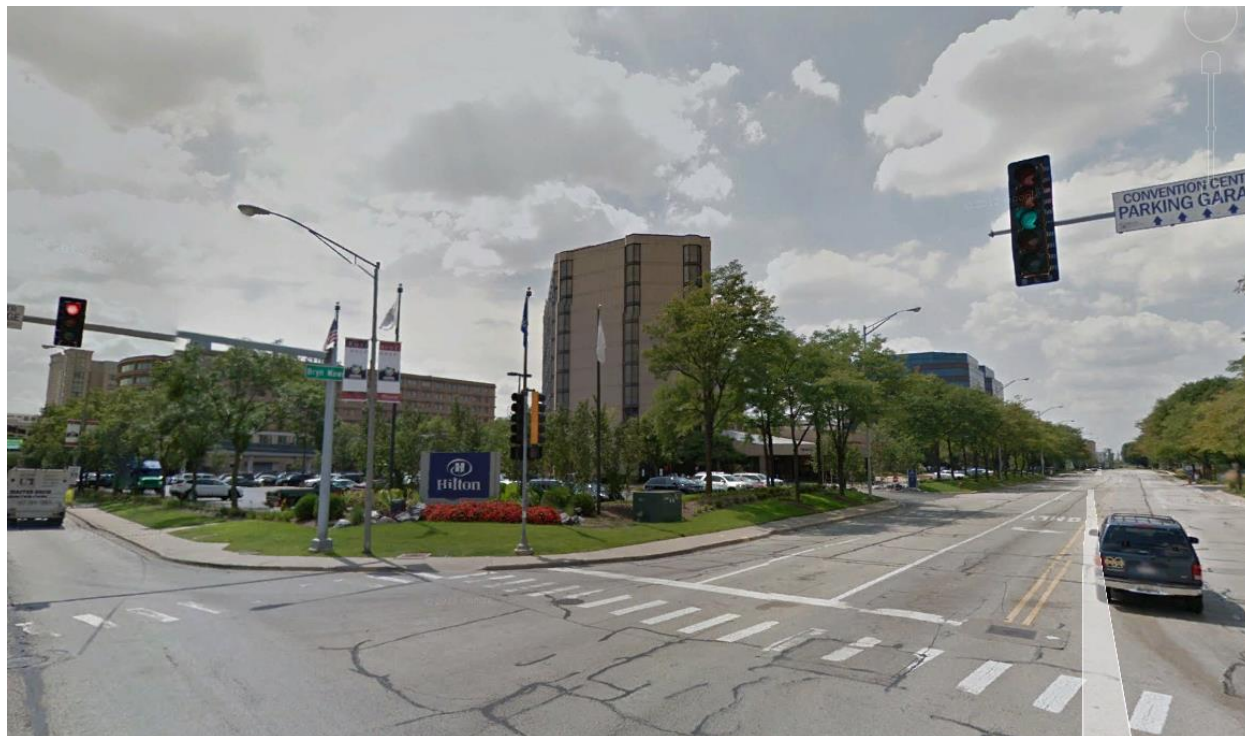


Figure 4
Concept for direct bus access – north side of I-90



Concept for direct bus access via fly-over



SCOPE OF STUDY

Major elements include:

1. Assess current use and potential future demand for sizing of multi-modal elements:
 - a. Pace bus terminal
 - b. Park and Ride
 - c. Taxi
 - d. Private bus (e.g. Casino, village circulator, employer shuttles)
 - e. Kiss and Ride
 - f. Bicycle parking
 - g. Pedestrian facilities
2. Confirm land ownership and facility O&M responsibilities/agreements
3. Multi-Modal Circulation and access
 - a. Assess current vehicle and circulation patterns for safety, operations and customer needs and develop access hierarchy.
 - b. Examine alternative configurations for improved circulation, with and without allowance for joint development.
 - c. Conduct additional concept planning and order of magnitude cost estimation for direct express bus access ramps, including long-term maintenance and operation.
4. Pedestrian access improvements within ½-mile
 - a. Inventory planned improvements
 - b. Identify pedestrian/bicycle access improvement recommendations
5. Inventory development plans for adjacent properties and review local zoning
6. Assess potential for private development on site
 - a. Commercial/office/retail potential
 - b. Parking needs and strategies (shared, surface vs. deck)
 - c. Height/FAA restrictions
 - d. Service vehicle requirements
 - e. CTA rail facilities maintenance and service access requirements
7. Funding/Revenue
 - a. Assess potential financial/funding structures for PPP and traditional funding sources
 - b. Estimate revenue streams for alternative levels of development
 - c. Land valuation estimates
8. Implementation Strategies
 - a. Identify responsibilities for key recommendations
 - b. Alternative phasing/build-out plans