

- Welcome to the virtual public information meeting for the Burnham Multimodal Connector Phase I Study.

## Today's Agenda

**01** Introductions

**02** Project Overview and Study Process

**03** Design Challenges

**04** Proposed Improvement Plan

**05** South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association Update

**06** Next Steps & Ways to Provide Input

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Today we will review the Burnham Multimodal Connector Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Phase I Study which is being conducted by the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways

Following project team introductions, we will:

- Provide an overview of the project and review the study process
- Review the design challenges within the study area
- Introduce the proposed improvement plan
- Have the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association provide an update regarding requests for input on future bike signage within the community
- Discuss the study's next steps and ways to provide input
- And hold a moderated question and answer session

## Project Team

- Tara Orbon, Cook County DOTH
- Jennifer Skrebo, Cook County DOTH
- Katie Bell, Cook County DOTH
- Anne Marie Jensen, HNTB
- Sokol Lluri, HNTB
- Lissa Sweeney, Metro Strategies



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The project team present today includes:

- Tara Orbon, Cook County DOTH
- Jennifer Skrebo, Cook County DOTH
- Katie Bell, Cook County DOTH
- Anne Marie Jensen, HNTB
- Sokol Lluri, HNTB
- Lissa Sweeney, Metro Strategies

For this project, Cook County is also coordinating with the City of Chicago, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Illinois Department of Transportation, public and private railroads, and the Village of Burnham.



# Project Overview

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- This project aims to develop a connection between the planned northern and southern Burnham Greenway Trail segments by providing a safe, grade-separated bridge crossing over the multiple railroad tracks within the study area.
- While these segments are not yet completed, this project hopes to eliminate barriers to completing these projects and improve community mobility and recreational options.

## Regional Trail Connectivity

- The Burnham Greenway Trail is a regional trail system located within Burnham, Calumet City, Chicago, and Lansing
- When completed, the Burnham Greenway Trail will be nearly 10 miles long
- Former railroad right-of-way and includes numerous on-street segments
- The Burnham Multimodal Connector and adjacent projects will close a nearly 2.5-mile gap between the existing segments of the Burnham Greenway Trail



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- Before we dive into the existing issues for trail connections within the Village of Burnham and City of Chicago, we would like to provide greater context to the Burnham Greenway Trail system.
- The Burnham Greenway Trail is a regional pedestrian and bicycle trail system that stretches from the Village of Burnham through Calumet City, Chicago, and Lansing, Illinois and connects to the Pennsy Greenway Trail and the planned Cal-Sag Trail extension.
- Upon completion of the Burnham Greenway Trail, this regional trail will be nearly 10 miles long.
- The trail is a former railroad right-of-way and includes numerous on-street segments at various portions of the trail.
- One of the major gaps of this trail system is located within the Village of Burnham and Chicago, where pedestrians and bicyclists must cross over multiple railroad tracks on Burnham Avenue to continue using the Burnham Greenway Trail.
- The Burnham Multimodal Connector and adjacent projects will close this critical gap which extends approximately two and a half (2.5) miles.
- This gap is shown on the map in blue and orange. Blue represents this project; the Burnham Multimodal Connector and orange represents the planned Burnham Greenway Trail.
- We will now move to discuss how this interruption in the trail system causes conflicts

for users within the Village of Burnham.

## Project Background

- Project area located in the Village of Burnham and City of Chicago
- Burnham Avenue intersects five sets of railroad tracks and has heavy vehicle traffic
- Proposed improvement will build a designated pedestrian and bicyclist route that eliminates major road and rail conflicts and provide safety
- This study will determine the most favorable route and design of a designated pedestrian and bicyclist route that avoids these conflicts



- The Burnham Multimodal Connector study area is located within the Village of Burnham and the City of Chicago.
- As constructed today, Burnham Avenue intersects five sets of railroad tracks and has heavy vehicular traffic, causing conflicts and safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists who must use Burnham Avenue to cross from one side to the other.
- The proposed improvements in the area would seek to mitigate existing conflicts and provide improved safety measures for pedestrians and bicyclists by providing a bridge that will close the gap in the planned Burnham Greenway Trail System as well as enhance connections to other various trail systems, such as the Cal-Sag trail and other trails within local parks.
- The proposed improvements will also provide more direct access to the Hegewisch train station
- Sections of the trail will be on a bridge, on-street and an off-street paved path also known as an at-grade trail.

## Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to:

- Improve public safety by creating a grade-separated pedestrian and bicyclist bridge above the railroads
- Enhance connections to transit
- Improve community mobility and recreational options



**Safety  
Improvements**



**Pedestrian and  
Bicyclists Access**



**Multimodal  
Connections**



**Community  
Benefits**

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- By providing these proposed improvements, the project will:
  - Improve public safety by grade separating pedestrians and bicyclists from trains and motor vehicles through a designated bridge
  - Enhance connections to transit
  - And improve mobility and recreational opportunities within the Village of Burnham and City of Chicago.
- These benefits will provide critical regional connectivity and safety for all users within the area.



# Study Process

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- Now we will discuss what has taken place during the Phase I Study.

## Project Timeline



- The timeline for the study has 3 defined phases.
- We are currently in Phase I of the project which consists of a preliminary engineering and environmental study and includes developing the project scope, preliminary design, and related work for advancing the project to the next phase and ultimately to construction. Phase I of the study typically takes up to 18 months to complete.
- Phase II begins after the preliminary design from Phase I is approved and includes contract plan preparation and land acquisition needed for constructing the project. This phase would be anticipated to last between 18-24 months.
- Phase III is the project construction which would also be anticipated to last 18-24 months.
- We would like to highlight that the project has secured funding for Phase II engineering and Phase III construction. The County believes that phase II would begin between 2022 and 2023 and the earliest construction could begin is 2024, pending plan readiness and land acquisition.

## Evaluation Criteria

### Identified Needs

- Safety
- Mobility and Access
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Accommodations
- Americans with Disabilities Accommodations



### Potential Environmental Impacts

- Trees
- Parks
- Wetlands
- Cultural/Historic
- Recreation



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- Listed on this slide is a portion of the evaluation criteria that was considered for refining the design and finalizing a recommended alternative.
- During the Phase I process, the project team considered:
  - The identified needs for the community including safety, mobility, access, pedestrian/bicycle accommodations and ADA accommodations
  - Along with the identified needs, the team also reviewed several potential environmental impacts

## Evaluation Criteria (continued)

### Community Input

- Key Stakeholders
- General Public



### Potential Property Impacts

- Residential
- Commercial



### Cost

- Construction
- Maintenance



### Accessibility

- Pedestrians
- Bicycles



### Other Impacts

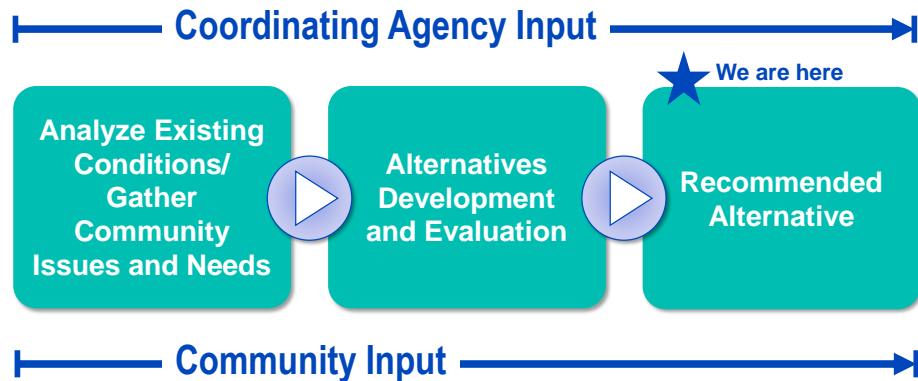
- Utilities
- Railroads



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- Along with the identified needs and potential environmental impacts, the project team also included other evaluation criteria when analyzing the recommended alternative including:
  - Community input
  - Potential property impacts
  - Accessibility
  - Cost
  - And other impacts to utility suppliers and railroads within the study area. In a few slides, we will dive into the specific organizations and companies that the project team coordinated with.

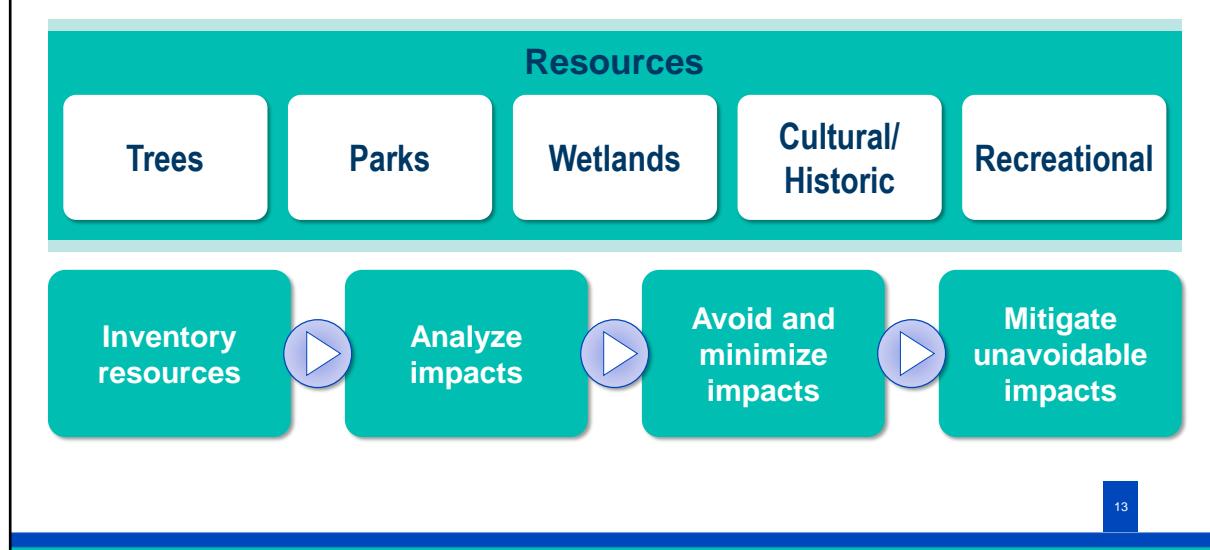
## Phase I Process



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- During the Phase I process, the project team accomplished many engineering tasks to reach the recommended alternative
- During the alternatives review and development process, the project team:
  - Reviewed conceptual alternatives that were previously designed
  - Analyzed existing conditions and gathered input from the community regarding issues and needs
  - Developed revised alternatives
  - Based on the revised alternatives, we developed a preliminary design for the recommended alternative and performed an analysis of the preliminary recommended alternative
  - This ultimately led to the selection of a recommended alternative
- Other engineering tasks were also completed including a topographic survey, reviewing existing drainage infrastructure, geotechnical soil boring, a bridge type study, and a retaining wall type study

## Environmental Studies



- During the Phase I process, the project team performed an environmental review of the possible impacts from the proposed improvements. In order to complete the environmental review, the study first collected an inventory of environmental resources that may be impacted including:
  - Trees
  - Parks
  - Wetlands
  - Cultural and historic areas
  - And recreational spaces
- After the inventory of resources were collected, their impacts were analyzed.
- The team then identified design options that avoid or minimize environmental impacts
- The process concluded with developing mitigation measures for unavoidable impacts and determining right-of-way needs during construction.

## Project Coordination

### Agencies/Organizations

- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC)
- Openlands
- Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
- South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
- Village of Burnham

### Companies/Utilities

- Commonwealth Edison (ComEd)
- CRRC Sifang America
- Various gas companies

### Railroads

- Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad (CSS)
- CSX Railroad
- Metra
- Norfolk Southern Railroad
- Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD)

### Elected Officials

- Alderwoman Susan Sadowski Garza (Ward 10)
- Mayor Polk with the Village of Burnham

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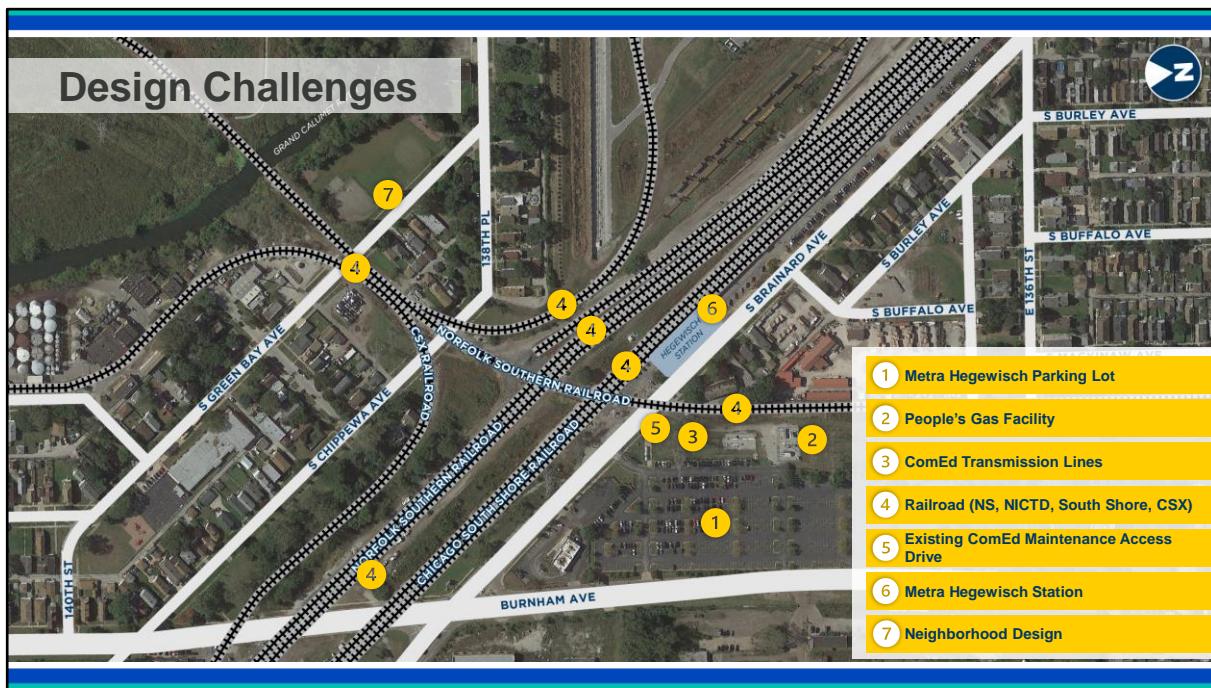
- In order to develop the recommended alternative, the project team carried out a comprehensive coordination approach with several government agencies and organizations, companies, utility providers, railroads, and locally elected officials.
- Through this collaborative effort, we were able to advance the design to provide the critical connection for the Burnham Greenway Trail
- We also value coordination and input from the public which is what we are seeking during today's meeting



## Design Challenges

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- We will now review the design challenges within the study area



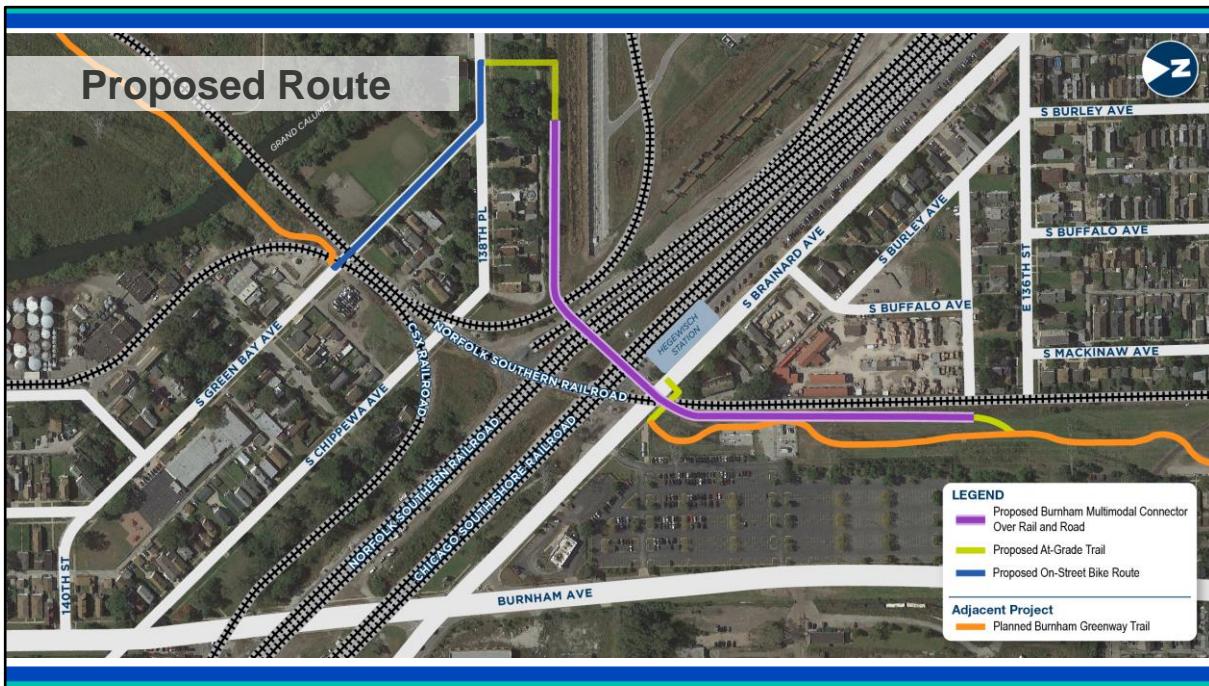
- The design challenge for this project was providing a safe route for pedestrians and bicyclists while considering the infrastructure, transportation facilities and the environmental resources in the study area.
- On the slide, you will see:
  - The Metra Hegewisch Station and Parking lot
  - People's Gas Facility
  - ComEd's transmission lines and existing maintenance access drive
  - A multitude of railroad tracks managed by various operators
  - And the existing neighborhood design.
- Throughout the Phase I process, these factors narrowed the development and evaluation of potential design improvements.



# Proposed Improvement Plan

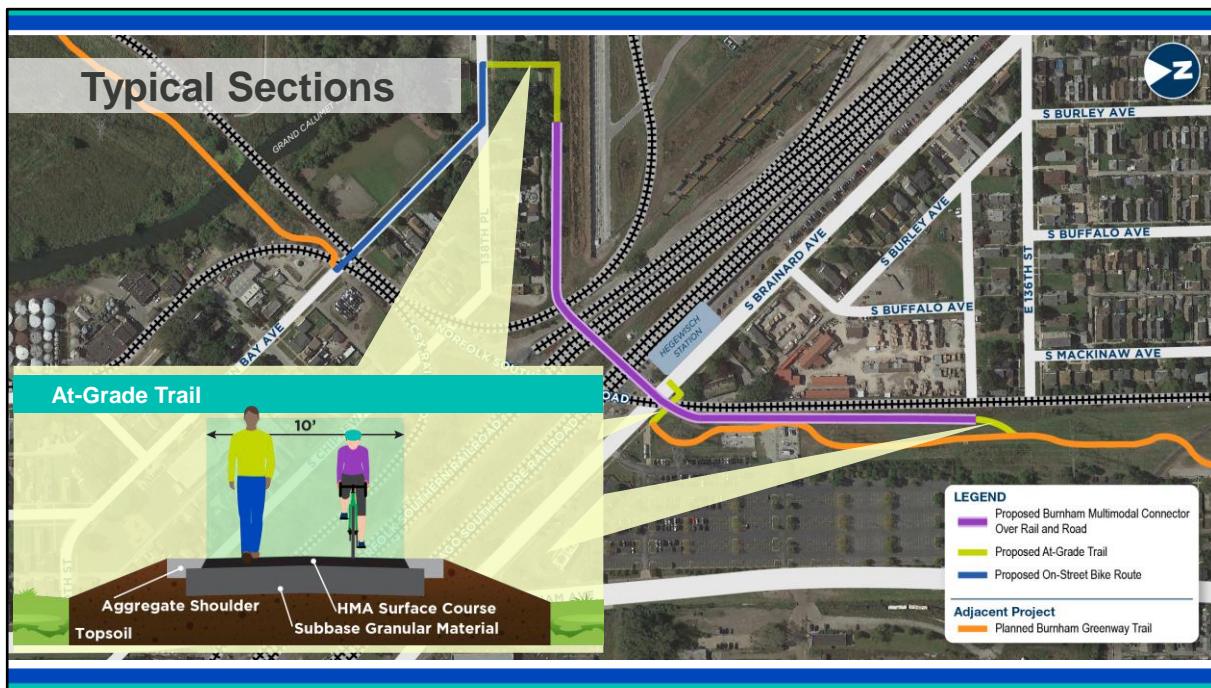
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- As we look to gather public input for this project, we will present an overview of the proposed improvement plan and considerations necessary for the Phase I study.

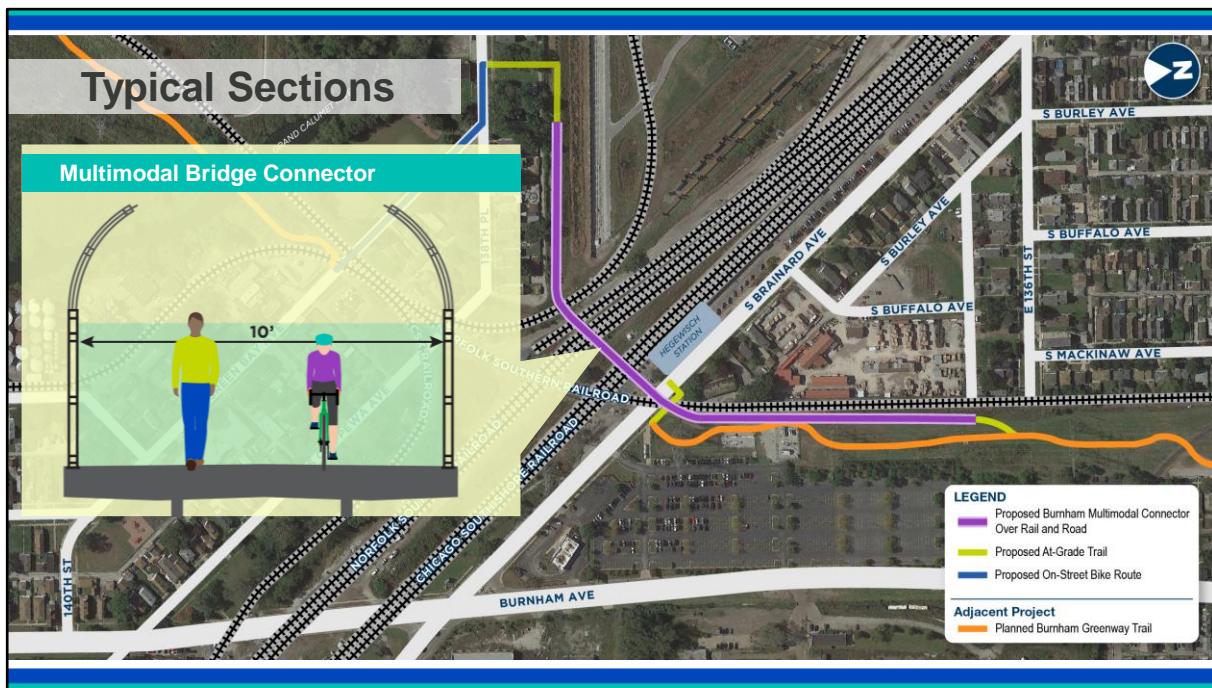


- As discussed earlier, this Phase I Study aims to develop a design for a safer connection through the study area and propose a way to overcome the design challenges.
- With the proposed design, the planned Burnham Greenway Trail, highlighted in orange, on the northern end of the study, is an at-grade trail and connects to the Burnham Multimodal Connector trail, and Brainard Avenue.
- The Burnham Multimodal Connector at-grade trail will then transition into the proposed bridge, crossing seven tracks, and ultimately become at-grade south of the tracks. The Burnham Multimodal Connector at-grade trail and bridge is highlighted respectively in yellow and purple.
- An on-street bike route on Green Bay Avenue and 138<sup>th</sup> Place will connect the Burnham Multimodal Connector at-grade trail to the Burnham Greenway Trail in the Village of Burnham. This route is highlighted in blue.
- Through the proposed improvement plan, the design will:
  - Provide solutions to the numerous safety hazards and potential impacts to the railroads and utilities
  - Add regional connectivity to the Burnham Greenway Trail
  - And meet ADA compliance requirements to improve accessibility for all users.
- We would like to note that with the proposed designs, permanent and temporary easements will be needed. To learn more about these requirements, please review the Permanent and Temporary Easement exhibit located on the project webpage. These

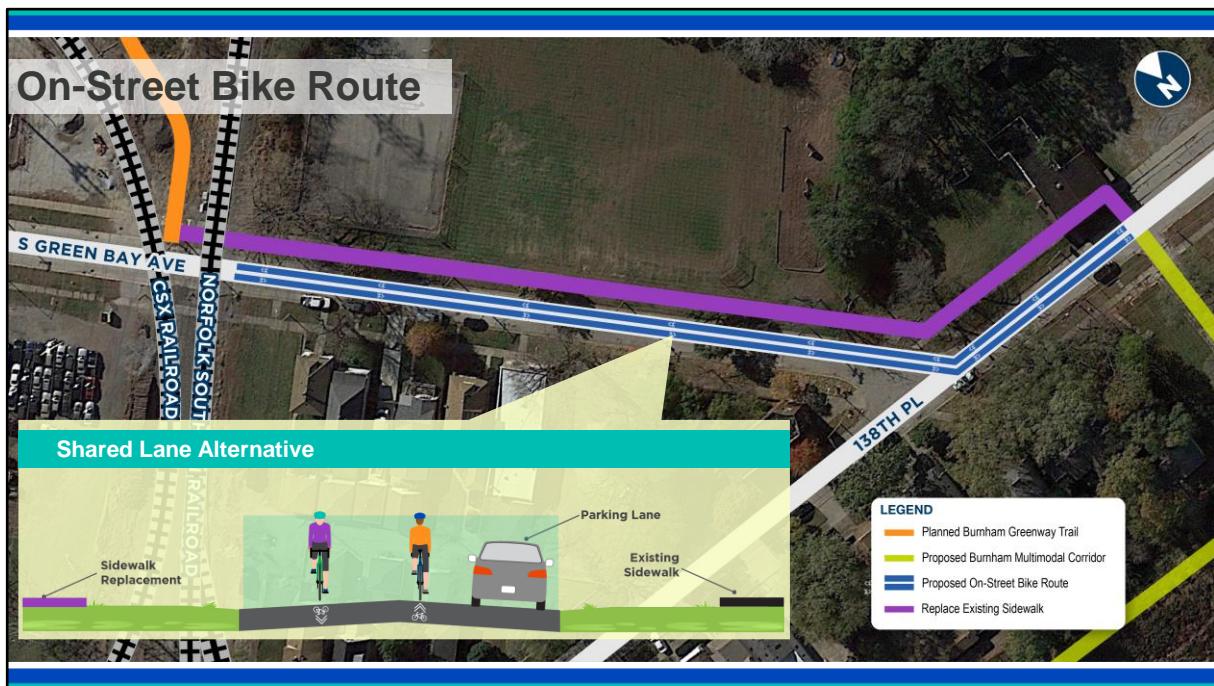
exhibits will be made available tomorrow on the project webpage, along with the other meeting materials.



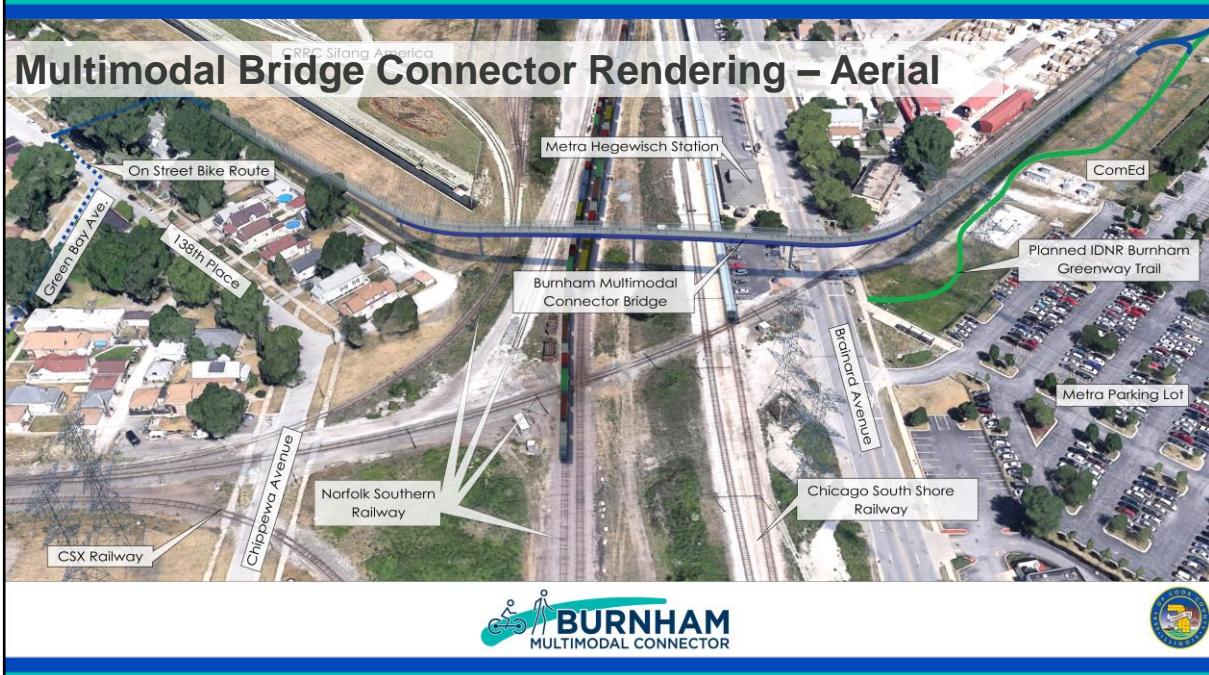
- Here you will see an example of the trail sections proposed as a paved path or at-grade trail
- The proposed at-grade trail will be 10 feet wide to allow for two-way travel.



- Similar to the at-grade sections of the trail, the trail on the bridge is proposed to be 10 feet wide.
- We considered providing a wider trail but design challenges required a bridge with a smaller footprint



- As previously mentioned, an on-street bike route is proposed at Green Bay Avenue and 138<sup>th</sup> Place for safely connecting to the Burnham Greenway Trail in the Village of Burnham.
- From the Burnham Multimodal Connector bridge, an at-grade trail will extend and connect to the on-street bike route.
- The on-street bike route will include bicyclists sharing the road with vehicles.
- Proposed pavement markings on the road and signage will indicate the bike route and provide awareness to drivers.
- The proposed improvements also include replacing the existing sidewalk with new sidewalk along Green Bay Avenue and 138<sup>th</sup> Place.
- The new sidewalk will also include a ramp leading up to the existing railroad tracks, providing ADA improvements to connect to the planned Burnham Greenway Trail.



- The image shown is a bird's eye view of the bridge spanning several railroads and Brainard Avenue and connecting to the proposed at-grade trail north of 138th Place and Brainard Avenue.
- As you can see, the Burnham Multimodal Connector Project provides connectivity to the regional trail system and safety for trail users by eliminating train and vehicle conflicts.

## Multimodal Bridge Connector Rendering – Brainard Avenue



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- This slide shows the bridge crossing the railroads and four lanes of traffic at Brainard Avenue. The bridge is proposed southeast of the Metra's Hegewisch Station. The view is looking northwest on Brainard Avenue.
- The bridge provides a safe and direct access to Metra's station and Burnham Greenway Trail.

## Multimodal Bridge Connector Rendering – 138<sup>th</sup> Place



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- This slide shows the bridge south of the railroads and Brainard Avenue. The view is looking north from the sidewalk on 138th Place.



## Next Steps and Ways to Provide Input

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- Now we will take a look at the project team's next steps and ways to provide input.

## Project Schedule for Phase I Study



**ACM** Agency Coordination Meetings

**PM** Public Information Meeting

2022-2025

Phase II: Detailed Design  
(Approx. 18-24 months)

Phase III: Construction  
(Approx. 18-24 months)

- The project team anticipates receiving approval of the recommended alternative in early summer 2021, which will complete the Phase I preliminary engineering and environmental study for the project.
- Phase II and Phase III are anticipated to be completed between 2022 to 2025.

## Ways to Provide Input

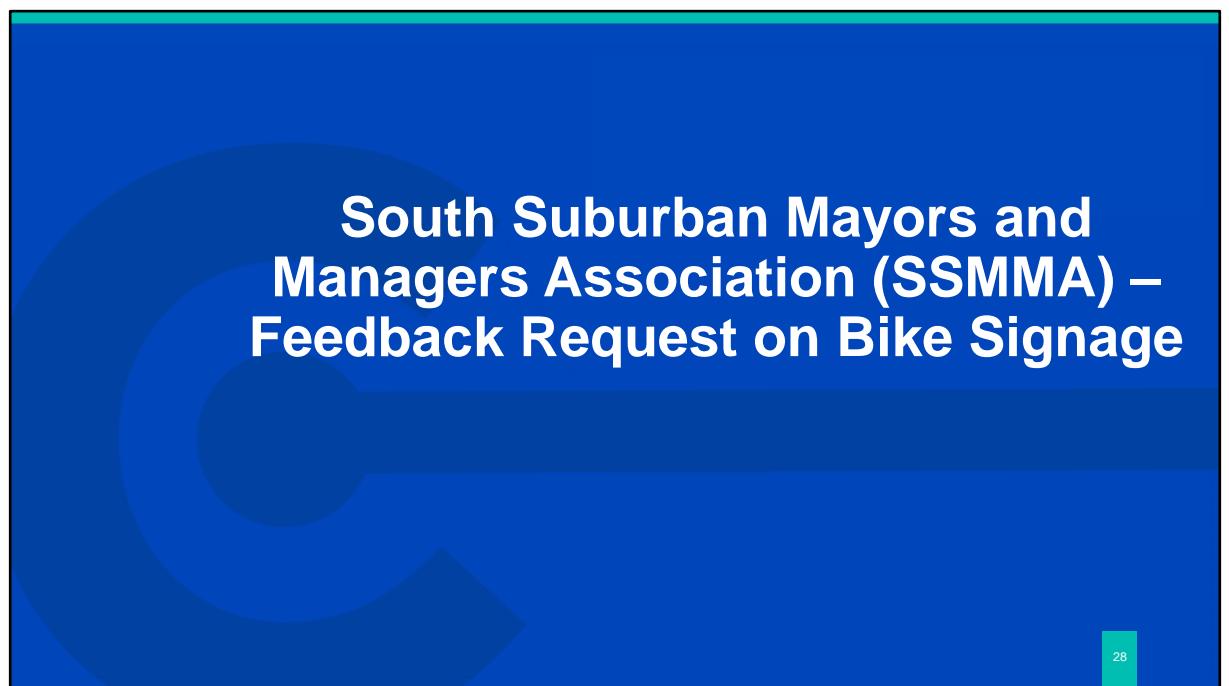
- Check out the project webpage:  
Burnham-IL.gov/BurnhamConnector
- Email the project team:  
[info@BurnhamConnector.com](mailto:info@BurnhamConnector.com)
- Leave a message on the project phone line:  
(708) 232-6591
- Mail in your comment form:  
Burnham Multimodal Connector  
c/o Metro Strategies, Inc.  
17 N. State Street, Suite 850  
Chicago, IL 60602
- View paper materials and fill out a comment form at:
  - Burnham Village Hall
  - Ward 10's Aldermanic Office



**Written comments received by June 3, 2021 will be included as part of the public meeting record.**

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- The project team is now seeking your input and feedback regarding the proposed improvement designs
- You may also provide your feedback to the project team by:
  - Emailing us at [info@burnhamconnector.com](mailto:info@burnhamconnector.com)
  - Calling and leaving a message on the project phoneline at 708-232-6591
  - Or by mailing your comment to the Burnham Multimodal Connector at 17 N. State Street, Suite 850, Chicago, IL
- If you prefer to view the materials in-person, hard copies of the presentation and exhibits are provided at the Burnham Village Hall or Ward 10's Aldermanic Office
- Please note that comments will be accepted through Thursday, June 3, 2021 to be included in the official public meeting record.



# **South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA) – Feedback Request on Bike Signage**

## Burnham Wayfinding Signage



[Burnham Multimodal Connector Public Outreach Web Map](#)

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- In order to leave feedback on local destinations you would like included on local bike signage in the area, please visit the mapping tool URL provided at Burnham-IL.gov/BurnhamConnector



- Thank you for joining us for the Burnham Multimodal Connector public information meeting!