



# **CREATE Program**

***Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program***

***T.H.E. Conference***

***February 26, 2020***

# What is CREATE?

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A \$4.6 billion Public-Private Partnership (PPP) designed to improve transportation flow through Chicago focusing on:

- Increased capacity, speed and reliability for freight train traffic
- Separation of freight and commuter trains at 6 key junctions
- Elimination of 25 road/rail grade crossings (grade separations)

CREATE is a cooperative project involving:

- US Department of Transportation (FHWA & FRA)
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Cook County
- 6 major North American freight railroads and 2 switching railroads
- 2 passenger railroads (Amtrak and Metra)

# CREATE Partners



Illinois Department of Transportation



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS



BUILDING AMERICA®



# CREATE: Keeping Chicagoland at the Nexus of America's Freight Network

<https://youtu.be/le-YGWm7fcw>



# Why CREATE?

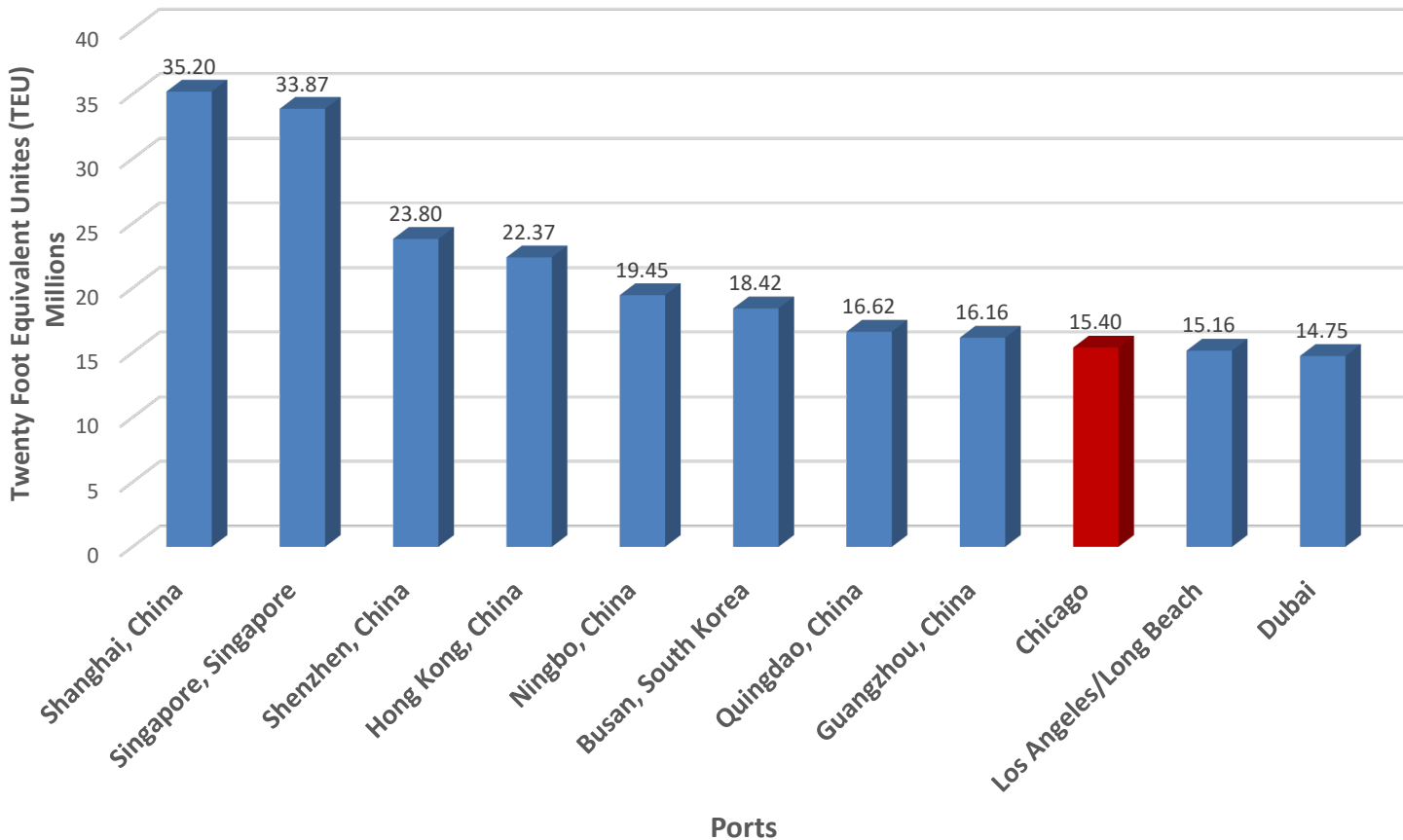
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- Freight rail trade (by value) within Chicago will more than double from 2012 to 2045\*
- Passenger, freight and motorist delays are experienced daily on the current system
- The region must improve freight movement and mitigate negative impacts
- Freight movements in Chicago are a **NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL** issue, not just a regional one

*"Global trade follows the path of least resistance. It will go where there are the fewest impediments." -UPS*

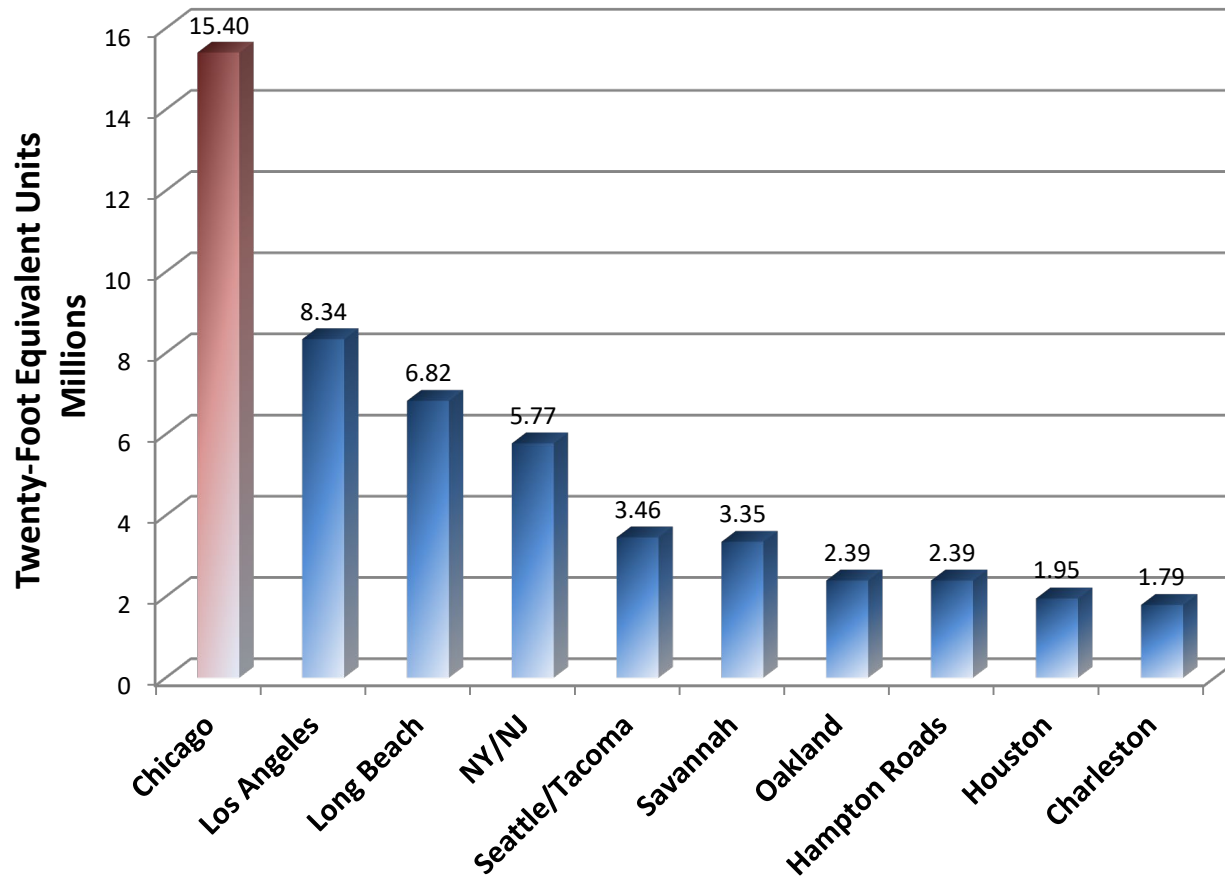
\*Source: US DOT Freight Analysis Framework 4.0

# Top Global Container Ports, 2014



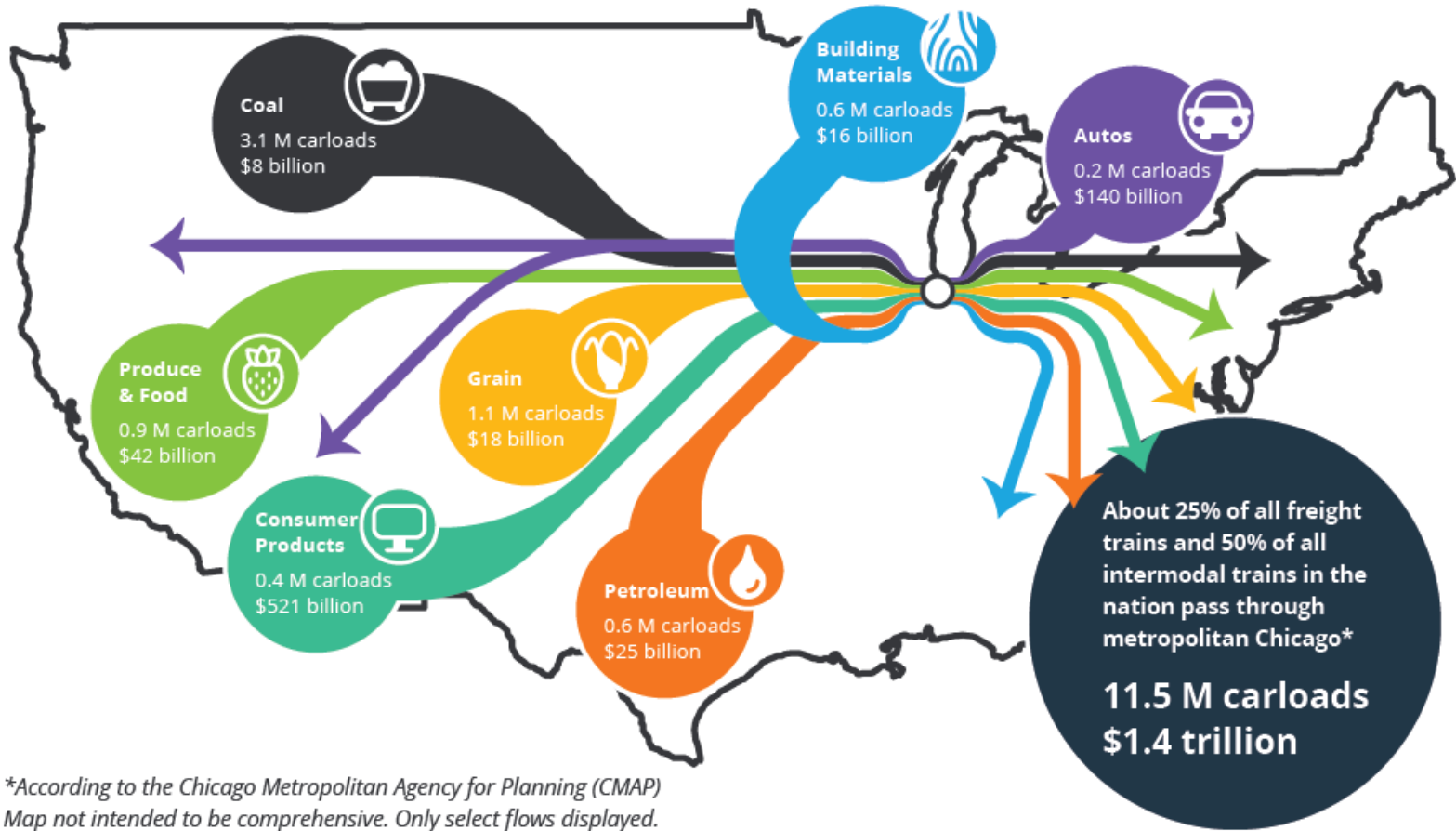
Source: Chicago – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Freight Snapshot; American Association of Port Authorities, 2014

# Top U.S. Container Ports, 2014



Source: Chicago – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Freight Snapshot; American Association of Port Authorities, 2014

# CREATE: Keeping the Nation's Economy Moving



*\*According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
Map not intended to be comprehensive. Only select flows displayed.*

# CREATE Economic Benefits

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- Passenger train delay reduced by over 1.3 million passenger hours annually
- 92,000 hours of truck delay and 230,000 hours of motorist and bus passenger delay will be saved
- 200 vehicle crashes with trains will be avoided
- 2,800 metric tons/year avoided emissions from idling vehicles
- Enable extra 50,000 freight trains to travel through the greater Chicago rail network annually
- 122 million tons of freight per year would travel by rail, avoiding 18,500 truck trips per day on highways

Source: CREATE economic benefits study conducted by Cambridge Systematics, 2015

# CREATE Program – 70 Projects

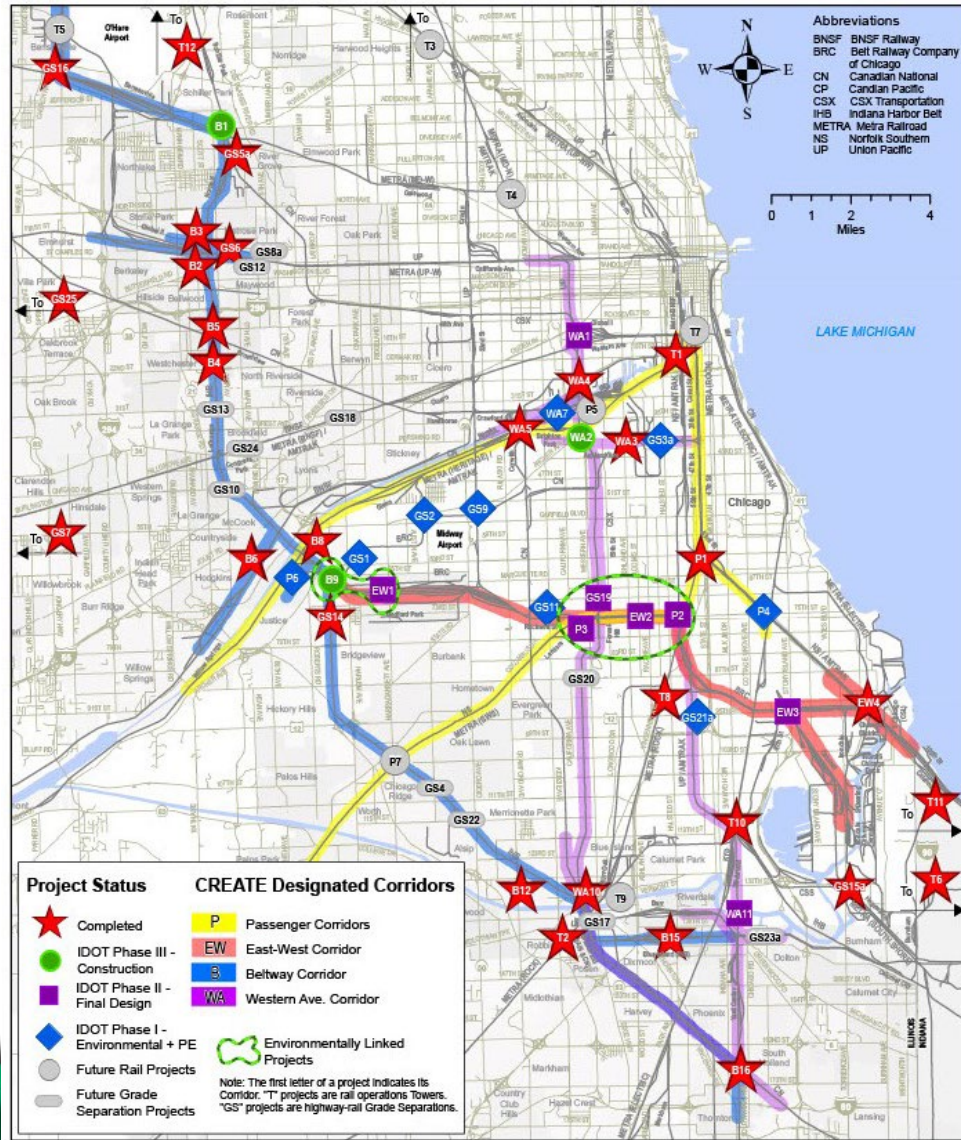
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- 25 road/rail grade separations
- 6 passenger/freight rail grade separations
- Railroad projects to improve rail infrastructure and upgrade technologies
- Viaduct improvement program
- Grade crossing safety enhancements
- Rail operations and visibility improvements





# CREATE Program Map



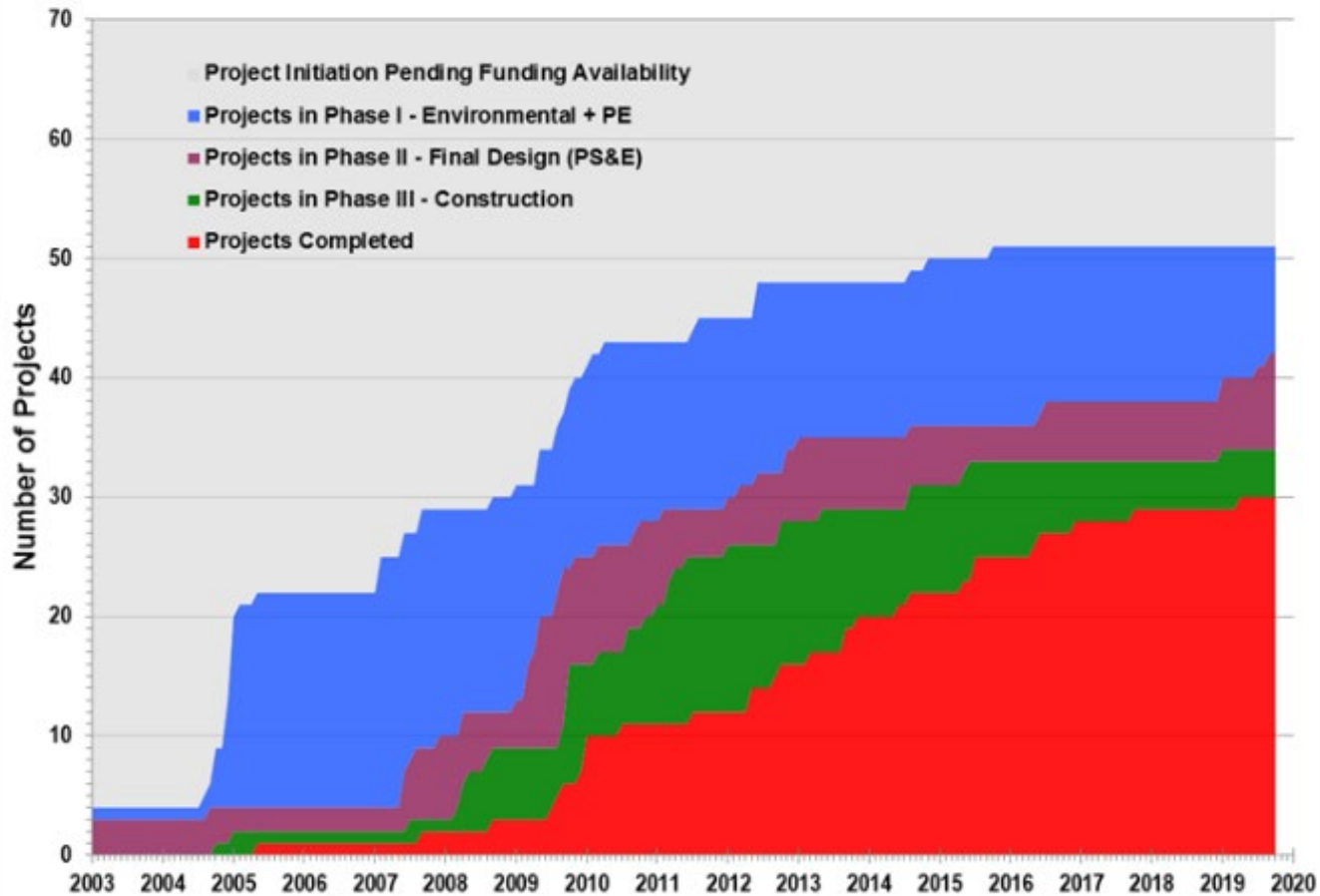
# Project Status



# Project Status Summary

## CREATE Program, Overall Project Status Summary

Revised 22-Aug-2019



# CREATE Public Benefits

- Passenger Rail Delay Reduction
  - 10 projects benefit Amtrak
  - 18 projects benefit Metra Commuter Rail
- Auto Delay Reduction
- Safety Improvements
- Air Quality Benefits
- Community Quality of Life



# CREATE Funding Commitments

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The CREATE Program has received funding commitments totaling \$1.6 billion so far, from a variety of public and private sources.

Federal: \$647 million

State: \$461 million\*

Railroads: \$375 million

Local Governments: \$150 million

An estimated \$3 billion remains needed to complete the full Program of projects.

\* These figures do not reflect the \$400M allocated to the CREATE Program and \$118M for the 63rd Street and Harlem Avenue Grade Separation (GS1) in the 2019 Rebuild Illinois Capital Program



# Recent Grant Awards

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- **75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (P3, GS19, EW2, P2)**  
**Federal Highway Administration INFRA Grant (\$132 M)**  
**June 2018**
- **Dolton Junction Interlocking (WA11)**  
**Invest in Cook Grant (\$600,000)**  
**July 2018**
- **Dolton Junction Interlocking (WA11)**  
**Federal Railroad Administration CRISI Grant (\$19 M)**  
**June 2019**
- **95<sup>th</sup> Street and Union Pacific Grade Separation (GS21a)**  
**Invest in Cook Grant (\$500,000)**  
**July 2019**



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# 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project

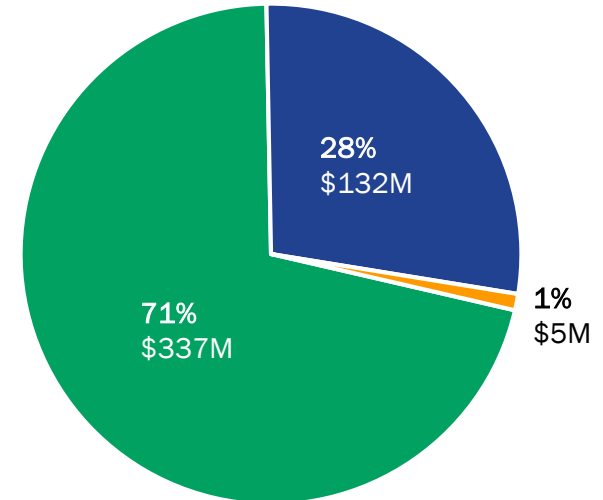
# 2018 INFRA Grant Award – 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP

The **\$132 million** federal INFRA Grant closed a funding gap to push the next phase of this project toward the finish line

A total of **\$474 million** in funding will design the entire 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP (P3, GS19, P2, EW2), construct two 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP projects (P3, GS19) and construct the Argo Connections Project (B9)



*Forest Hill Junction (P3)*



■ CREATE Partners ■ INFRA ■ Other Federal

# 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvement Project

**GS19**



**P3**



**P2**

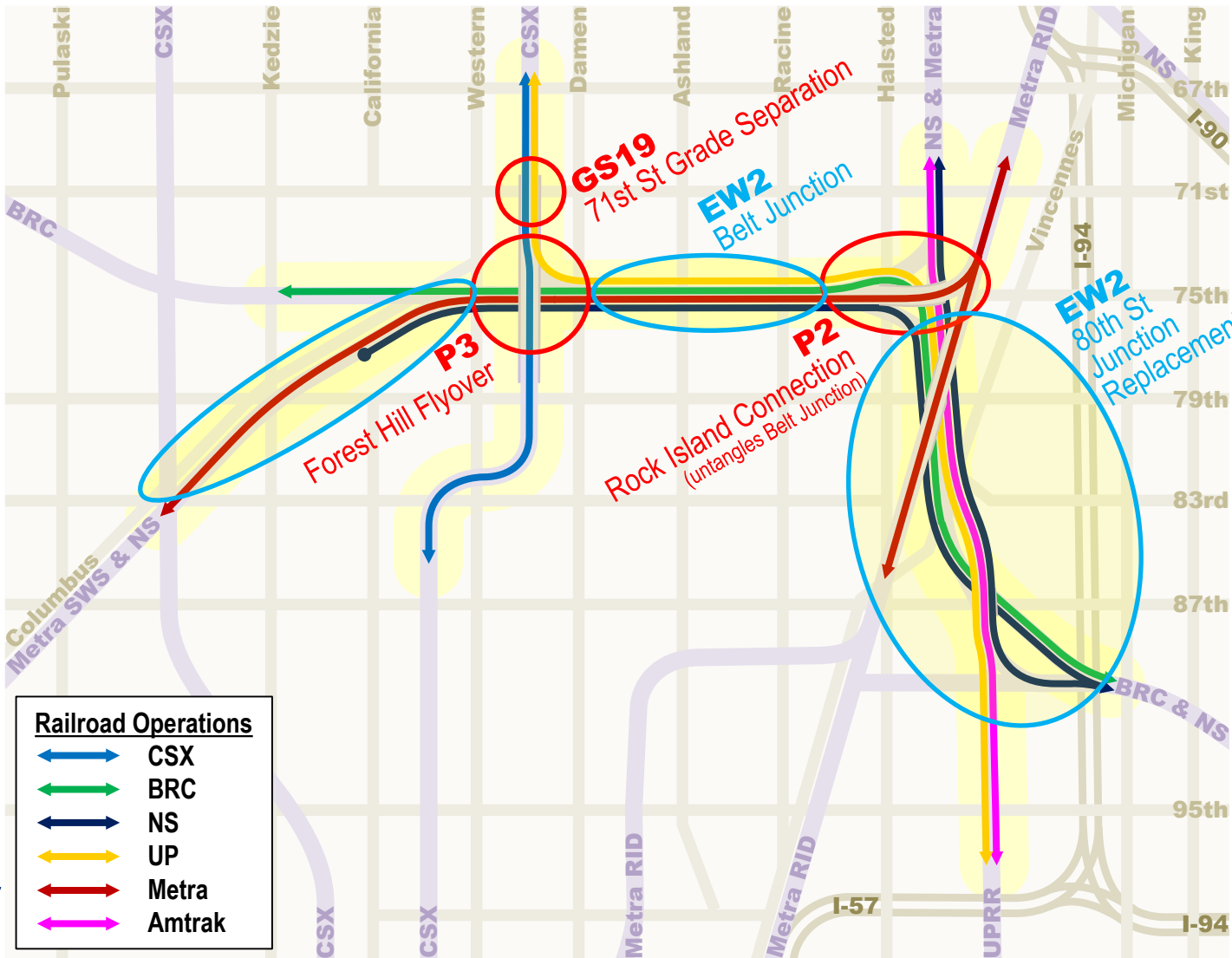


**EW2**



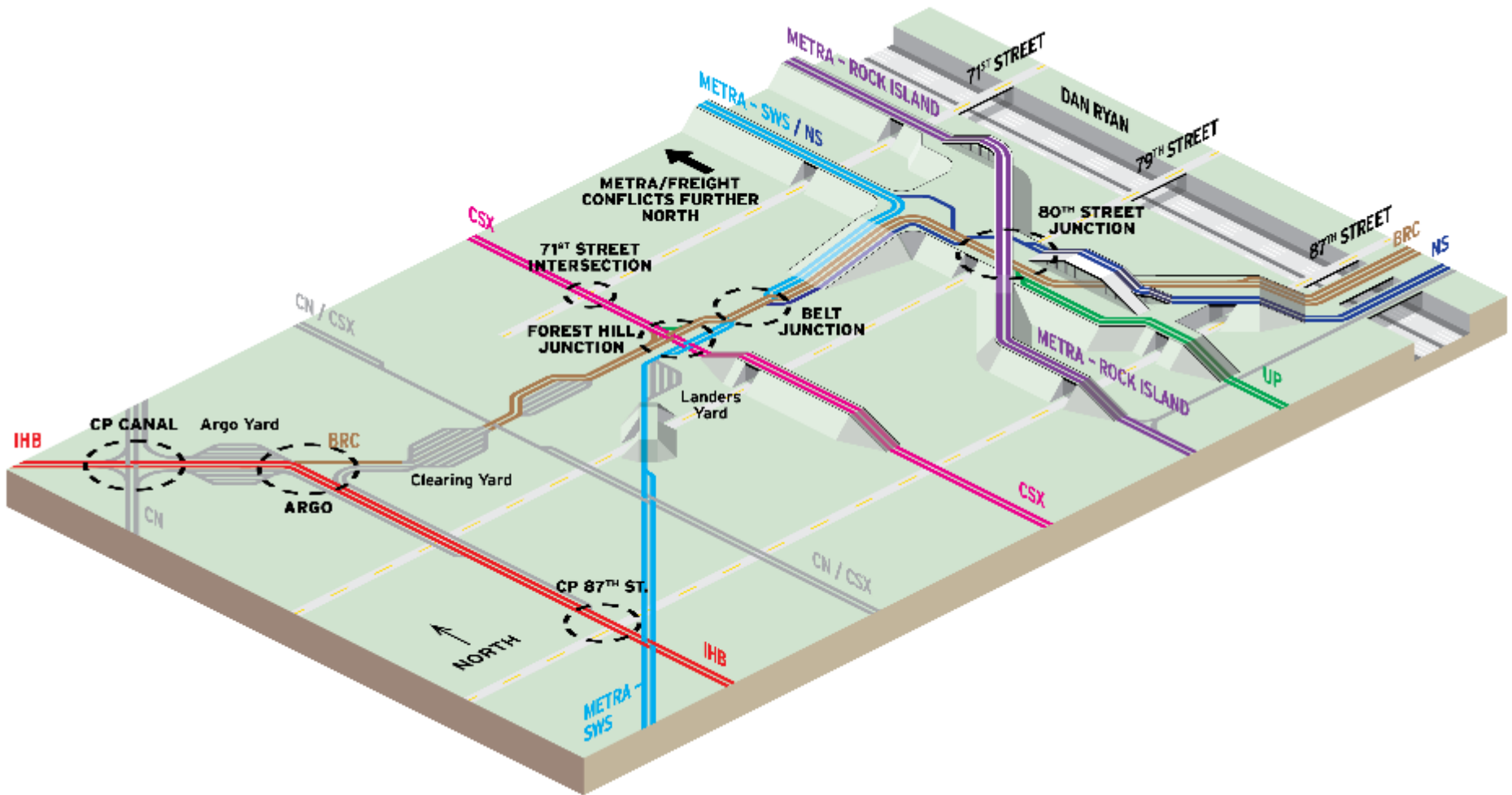
Design

Construction



*The CREATE partners will seek future funding to finish construction of P2 and EW2.*

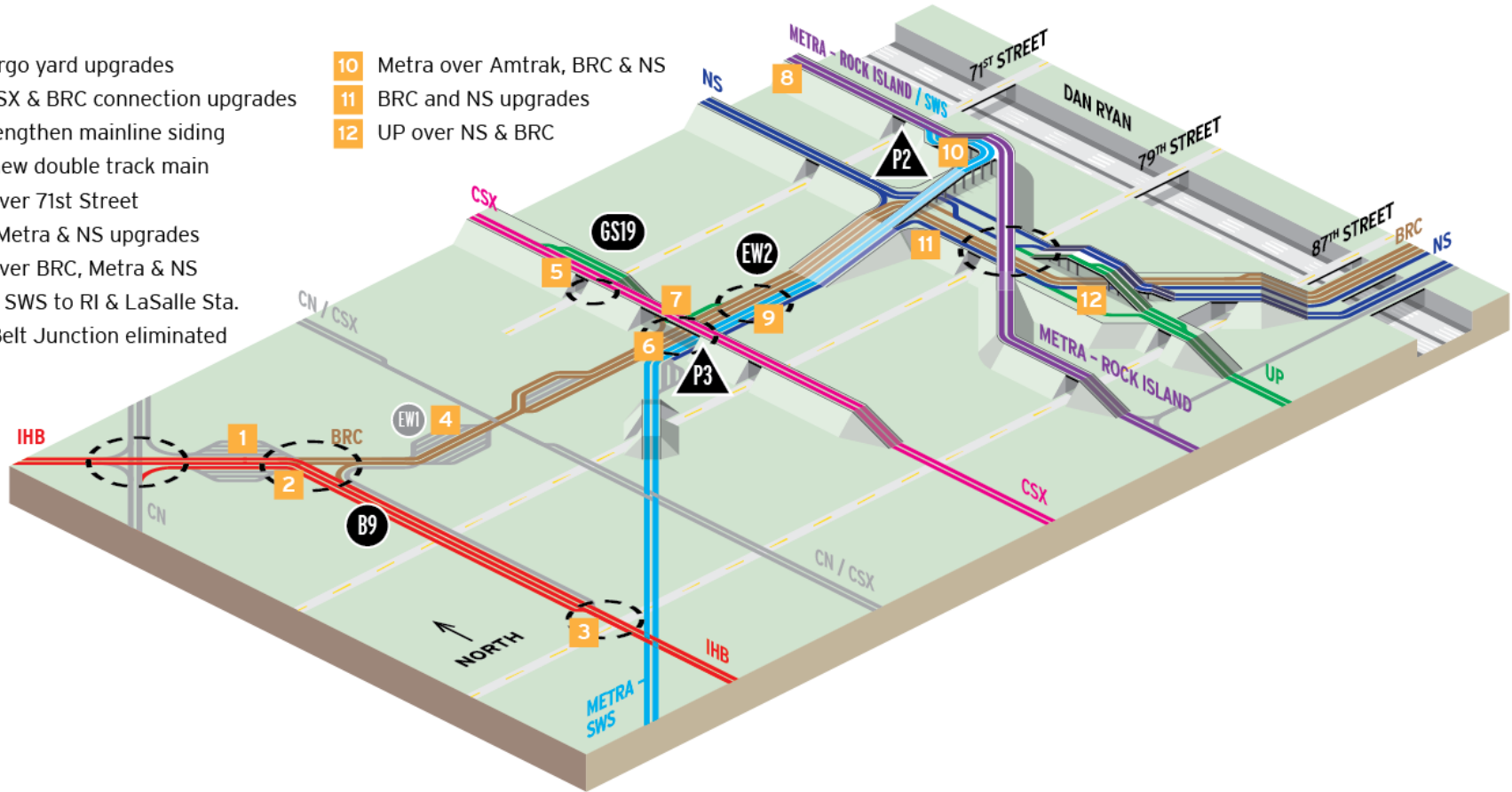
# 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor - Existing



# 75<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Improvements - Proposed

- 1 IHB Argo yard upgrades
- 2 CN, CSX & BRC connection upgrades
- 3 CSX lengthen mainline siding
- 4 BRC new double track main
- 5 CSX over 71st Street
- 6 BRC, Metra & NS upgrades
- 7 CSX over BRC, Metra & NS
- 8 Metra SWS to RI & LaSalle Sta.
- 9 BRC Belt Junction eliminated

- 10 Metra over Amtrak, BRC & NS
- 11 BRC and NS upgrades
- 12 UP over NS & BRC





# P3 - Forest Hill Flyover



- Constructs bridge to carry north-south CSX tracks over east-west tracks at 75<sup>th</sup> Street and over roadway at 71<sup>st</sup> Street
- Bridge extends from 68<sup>th</sup> Street to 79<sup>th</sup> Street

*Existing Condition, facing northeast*

*Concept Rendering, facing northeast*





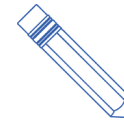
## P3 - Forest Hill Flyover

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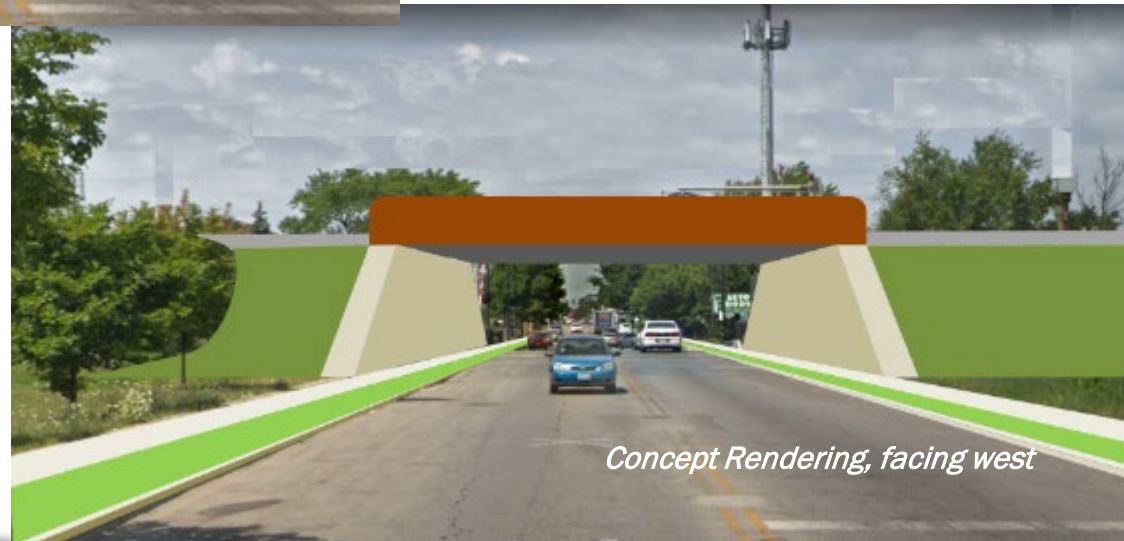
Video of Forest Hill Junction:

<https://youtu.be/e9uLFDJK30Y>

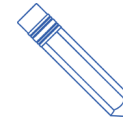
# GS19 - 71<sup>st</sup> Street Grade Separation



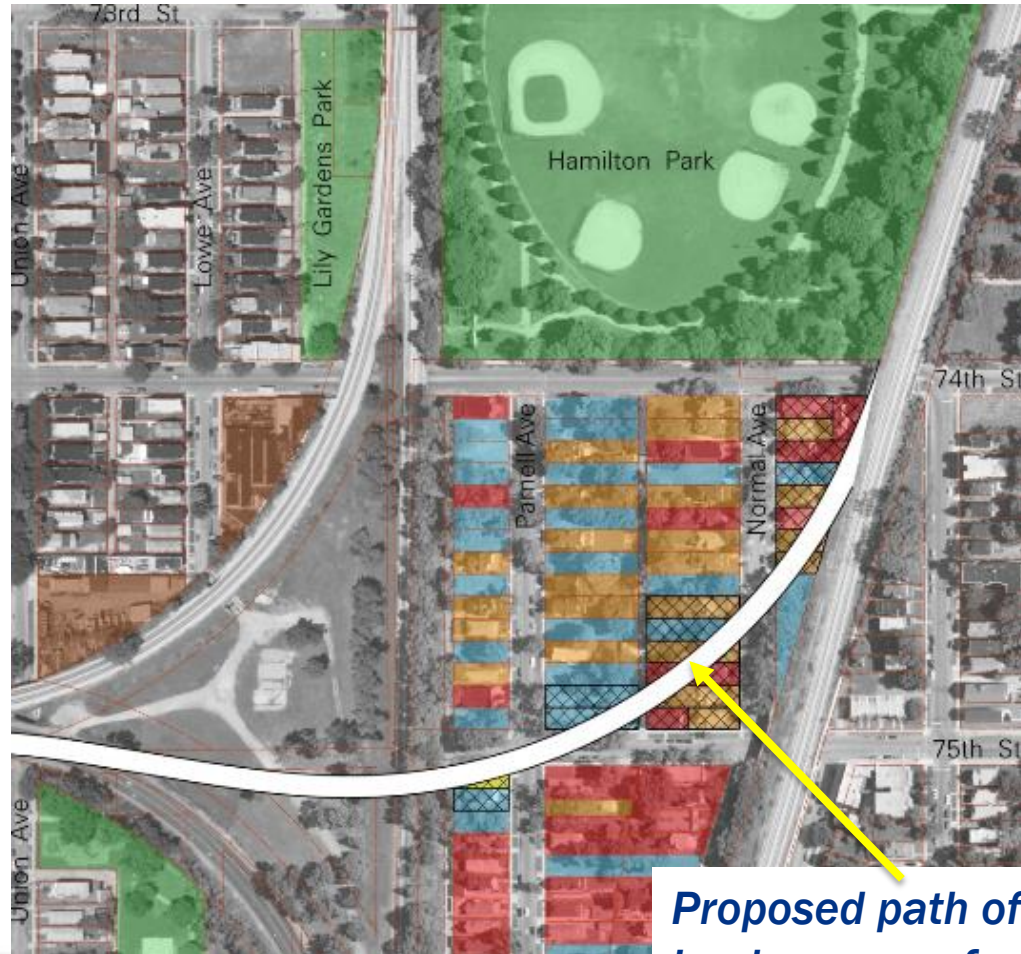
- Separates 71<sup>st</sup> Street and the north-south CSX tracks
- Between Hamilton Avenue and Bell Avenue, north of Forest Hill Junction



# P2 - Rock Island Connection



## New Metra flyover structure south of Hamilton Park

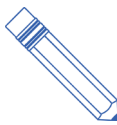


### Legend

- Multi Family
- Single Family
- Vacant
- Park
- Industry
- Institutional
- Property Acquisition

*Proposed path of structure and land use map from 2014 Environmental Impact Statement report*





# EW2 – Belt Junction & 80<sup>th</sup> St. Junction Replacements

Track realignment and reconstruction of existing railroad structures



# EW2 -80<sup>th</sup> St. Junction Replacements

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Video of 80<sup>th</sup> Street Junction:

<https://youtu.be/RLLeLuVmxB8>

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# Community Benefits of the 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP



# Community Mobility Improvement Program

- Community-prioritized mobility improvements
  - Sidewalk & curbs, repaving, tree planting, pedestrian safety



*Community Advisory Group identifying most important projects*

# Contracting and DBE Engagement

- Promote Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contracting opportunities
- Host business-to-business networking sessions providing small businesses the opportunity to network and learn about opportunities
  - **Get On Board: January 24, 2019**  
112 people (56 DBE firms) attended
  - **Norfolk Southern EW2: May 14, 2019**  
100 people (46 DBEs) attended
  - **Metra P2: September 4, 2019**  
300 people (180 DBEs) attended

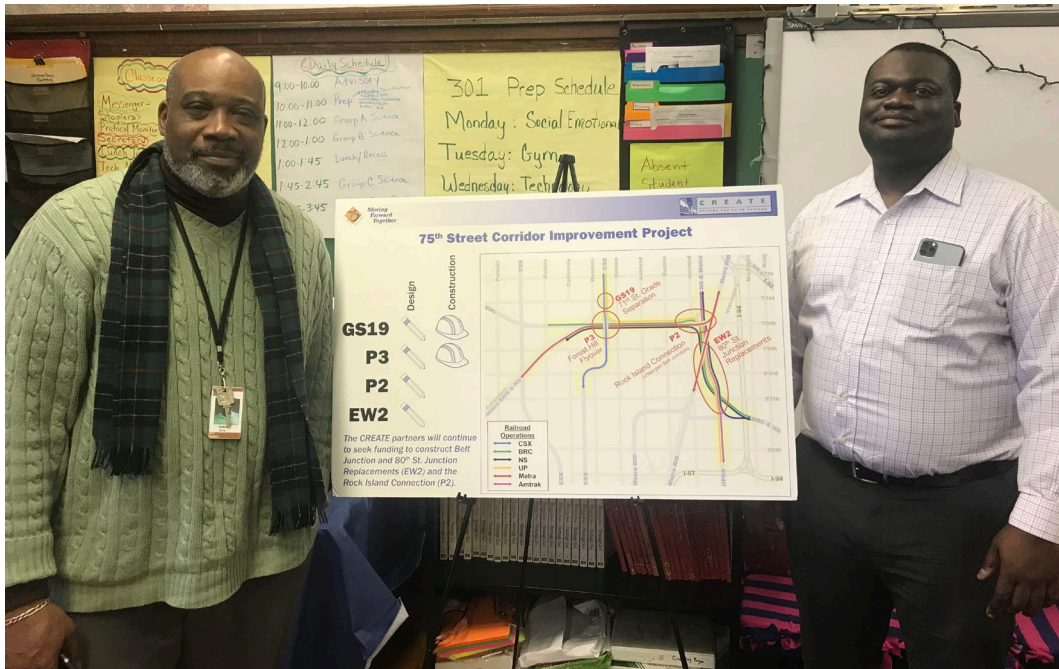




# Education Program

- CREATE in the Classroom
- Demo Days
- Internships

*Randolph Elementary Demo Day*



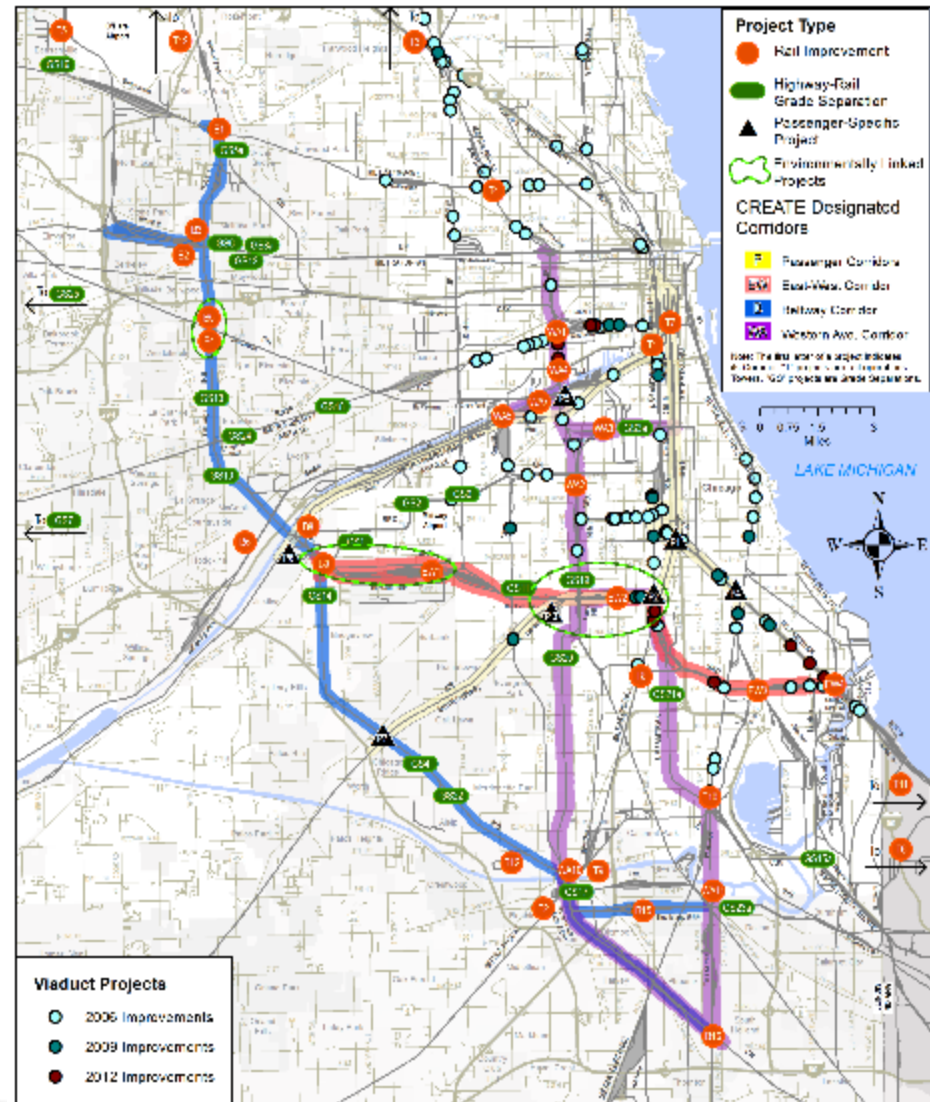
*CREATE in the Classroom  
Barton Elementary*

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# Additional CREATE Project Highlights

# Viaduct Improvement Program Chicago

- Locations in the City of Chicago
- Improved roadways, sidewalks and drainage under railroad viaducts
- Enhanced safety and security for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists
- 37 locations completed in 2006
- 14 locations completed in 2012 (USDOT TIGER funding, \$5 million)
- 11 completed between 2015 and 2016 (State of Illinois funding)





# Viaduct Improvement Program Chicago

*Example: 1530 S Racine Avenue*



*Example: 1530 S Loomis Street*



# BNSF Horseshoe (WA4) Chicago

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## Improvements benefit BNSF CN and CSX railroads

- Eliminated safety and delay issues associated with a long reverse move
- Added new tracks, creating a direct connection between BNSF's Corwith and Cicero Yards. Provides new connections from the CN Freeport Subdivision to the CREATE Western Avenue Corridor
- Rehabilitated six bridges over city streets and the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
- Installed crossover switches and centralized traffic control signalization
- Completed April 2019

# Canadian Pacific Crossover Upgrades (B1) Franklin Park

## Improvements benefit Canadian Pacific and Metra

- Installing five crossovers and associated signaling on the Metra tracks serving the Metra Milwaukee District West Line and Canadian Pacific
- Reduces the number of freight trains within Bensenville Yard, diminishing delays at nearby at-grade crossings and Metra trains
- Under construction 2019



*Photo taken during B1 construction*



# Union Pacific Third Mainline (B2) Melrose Park

60 freight trains & 59 Union Pacific Metra trains affected

- Constructed 3.5-mile third main track on UP
- Constructed railroad bridge over Addison Creek
- Constructed flyover connection from the Indiana Harbor Belt to the UP
- Control points reconfigured
- Upgraded track between UP and IHB
- Metra's Berkeley and Bellwood passenger stations improved; pedestrian underpasses constructed
- Completed 2013



*Before*



*After*

# 130<sup>th</sup> Street & Torrence Avenue (GS15a) Chicago

- Eliminated the at-grade crossings of the two Norfolk Southern main tracks at 130<sup>th</sup> Street and Torrence Avenue
- Eliminated conflict between railroad and access to Ford Plant
- Road underpass constructed
- Completed 2015

**Eliminated road/rail conflicts**





# 130<sup>th</sup> Street & Torrence Avenue (GS15a) Chicago

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**Before 2011**

**After 2015**



*Source: BNSF and NS*

<https://youtu.be/ear4UsOpJ9M>

# Argo Connections (B9) Summit

Improvements benefit Amtrak, BRC, CN, CSX, IHB, Metra railroads

- Constructing a new double track connection and crossovers between the BRC and IHB/CSX line at Archer Ave. and 63<sup>rd</sup> St. in Summit, IL.
- Upgrading mainline crossovers to accommodate higher speeds, from 10 mph to 25 mph
- Improving Argo Yard
- Groundbreaking April 2019



*B9 Groundbreaking – April 26, 2019*

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# Upcoming CREATE Opportunities



# Dolton Junction Interlocking (WA11)

## Dolton and Riverdale

Current conditions - facing northwest



# Dolton Junction Interlocking (WA11)

## Dolton and Riverdale

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### Proposed Improvements & Benefits

- Upgrade and reconfigure CSX/IHB/UP connections at Dolton Interlocking
- Construct a third main line with direct access from CSX and Barr Yard to the UP mainline
- Build crossovers between two mainline IHB tracks
- Increase freight train speeds for multiple routes from 15 mph to 30 mph
- Reduce delay for Amtrak, motorists and pedestrians
- Promote better air quality



# Dolton Junction Interlocking (WA11)

## Dolton and Riverdale

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### Project Status

- July 2018 – Received Invest in Cook grant to fund Right-Of-Way acquisition
- June 2019: Awarded CRISI grant from Federal Railroad Administration that will fund Phase III Construction
  
- Currently in Phase II Final Design
- Construction Begins: Spring 2021\*
- Project Completion: Spring 2022\*

*\*Anticipated timelines, subject to change*

# Cottage Grove Grade Separation (GS23A)

## Dolton

- Grade separating Cottage Grove Avenue and the IHB and CSX rail tracks from 138<sup>th</sup> Street to 142<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Eliminate delay to approximately 1,300 vehicles daily, resulting in alleviation of over 26,000 annual motorist hours of delay
- Reduce roadway congestion, improve safety, eliminate the potential for collisions between vehicles and trains



# Cottage Grove Grade Separation (GS23A) Dolton

- Received 2019 CMAP STP Grant for Phase I study - \$2 M
  - Village of Dolton - lead applicant
  - Cook County Department of Transportation & Highways - partner
- Cook County currently conducting grade separation study to assist in planning for Phase I
- Phase I Preliminary Engineering study will begin in FFY 2023

Current  
Conditions –  
facing south



# Other Upcoming CREATE Program Opportunities

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- Columbus Avenue Grade Separation (GS11) - **Construction**
  - CDOT-led project; includes Columbus/Western/74<sup>th</sup> St. intersection reconfiguration
  - Phase II Design ongoing; Phase III Construction is funded, expected
- NS Pullman Junction (EW3) – **Construction**
  - In Phase II; Phase III Construction timing depends upon funding
- IDOT DBE Events and Workshops
- Pre-Bid Networking Sessions



# Northeastern Illinois Grade Crossing Prioritization



- Joint evaluation between local and state agencies of the region's busiest railroad crossings
  - ICC, IDOT, CDOT, CMAP, Cook County
- Identified priorities for grade separations or crossing improvements
  - 47 priority crossings locations selected
    - 9 groupings of multiple crossings
    - 6 crossings are also part of the CREATE Program



# CREATE Next Steps

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- Continue to leverage all funding opportunities
- Execute 75<sup>th</sup> St. CIP grant and other grant funded projects



- Complete:
  - Remaining rail corridor projects
  - Remaining passenger-freight rail flyover projects
  - Remaining grade separation projects

# Stay in Touch!

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