



CREATE

KEEPING THE GO IN CHICAGO

WA2

Signalization - Ogden Junction to 75th Street

Location

Ogden and Western Ave to 75th Street, west of Damen Ave.

Chicago Community Areas: Brighton Park, Chicago Lawn, East Garfield Park, Gage Park, Lower West Side, McKinley Park, New West Side, New City, North Lawndale, South Lawndale, and West Englewood.

Chicago, IL

Daily Trains Affected

35 freight trains

6 Metra trains (Heritage Corridor)

10 Amtrak trains (Lincoln and Texas Eagle Service)

Scope of Work

This project will install a new bi-directional computerized Traffic Control System (TCS) on a seven-mile segment of the CSX rail line along the CREATE Western Avenue Corridor. Approximately 15 hand-thrown switches will be upgraded to power switches. At the CSX 59th Street Yard signals and switches will be upgraded to improve flexibility in mainline operations. One of the CSX mainlines will be upgraded between 51st Street and 71st Street from the existing 10 mph maximum speed to allow 25 mph operations.

The project will install a new eastward connection to the Belt Railway from a CSX main line. All of this work will be within existing railroad right-of-way. Bridges at 35th Street and 36th Street will be reconstructed to accommodate the proposed increase in speed. All of this work will be within existing railroad right-of-way.

Benefits

New computerized signaling will alleviate a number of issues in the WA2 corridor. The corridor currently has limited operational flexibility due to an inefficient signal and switching system and high volumes of trains making many different types of movements. These conditions result in low operating speeds, limited operational flexibility, congestion, and delay. Currently, most trains

spend at least 2 hours to traverse the limits of this project. With the completion of this project trains are expected to pass through this segment in as little as 20 minutes.

The WA2 corridor also is currently controlled by a single-direction Automated Block Signal (ABS) system. ABS is a series of signals that govern blocks of track between the signals, which are automatically activated by the presence of a train. ABS also detects the status of the following signal, so trains must proceed at slower speeds as they approach the signal. Operational speeds and flexibility are limited due to the use of ABS and single-direction travel. The current permitted speed on the main tracks through the area ranges from 10 to 40 miles per hour, but actual speeds are sometimes much lower due to congestion on the tracks. Trains needing access to one of the four yards in the area travel at slower speeds as they approach or leave the yard.

Operations are significantly hindered by multiple hand-thrown switches, which require trains to stop to allow the conductors to exit the train, manually align the switch, and walk back to the train to resume movement. Dispatchers tend to dispatch trains through the corridor based on switch alignment, which reduces the speed, capacity and fluidity of the corridor. Trains experience 15 to 30 minutes of delay for every switch the conductor is required to hand operate. Trains experience delays not only due to operating their own switches but also waiting for other trains to navigate the project limits with manual switches.

The signal system upgrades mitigate these issues by providing greater visibility to the train dispatcher, enabling knowledge of exact train locations. This enhances the dispatcher's ability to route more trains through the territory, expanding overall capacity. Operations into and out of the four intermodal yards, each of which handles five or more intermodal trains per day, will be improved.

Together with CREATE Project WA1, this signalization project at the connection between CSX and UP will enable quicker interchanges of trains between CSX and UP. Metra Heritage Corridor riders experience significant delay due to freight train interference, which would be partially mitigated by this project.

Communities Benefited:

- Communities along the Metra Heritage Corridor Line
- Communities along the Amtrak Lincoln Service serving Joliet, Bloomington-Normal, Springfield, IL; and St. Louis, MO. Communities along the Amtrak Texas Eagle service between Chicago and San Antonio, TX.
- Cook County and Will County

Project Status

Phase I – NEPA – Preliminary Design (30% Design)	Phase II – Final PS&E*	Phase III - Construction
Complete	Complete	Underway

Project Location Map

