

- UPRR expressed strong opposition to Option C and established unworkable constraints to constructing the option while maintaining the existing operation of the tracks.
- The Villages of Franklin Park and Bensenville expressed concern with socioeconomic impacts related to Option B, which would displace several major large industrial employers in the area.
- The general public had somewhat mixed opinions regarding Options A, B, C, and D. Some individuals expressed strong opposition to Option A because of direct impacts in Bensenville, including impacts to adjacent residential areas. Others expressed concern with displacement of major area industrial employers (under Options B, C, and D).

Based on the analysis findings and stakeholder input, Options B and C were dismissed from more detailed analysis. For Options A and D, neither the analysis nor community input provided a strong rationale to eliminate either option, so both were retained for more detailed consideration as part of Alternatives 203 and 402.

**Summary of North and South Bypass Connection Options.** In summary, the following north and south bypass connections options were retained for evaluation in this EIS:

- North Bypass Connection to I-90: Option D
- South Bypass Connection to I-294: Options A and D

The following connections were eliminated from further consideration:

- North Bypass Connection to I-90: Options A, B, C and E
- South Bypass Connection to I-294: Options B, C, E, F, and G

### 3.3 Multimodal Alternatives Development, Evaluation, and Screening

The development and evaluation of transit improvements used a three-step process to arrive at a set of improvements to be carried forward in the Draft EIS.

#### 3.3.1 Level One: Development of Transit Corridors and Screening

The transit alternatives development and evaluation process began with the March 2008 Stakeholder's Workshop, where project stakeholders identified potential transit improvements in the study area. Input was sought from transit agencies through Transit Agency Coordination Meetings. The project team then assembled the collective ideas into a workable system of 20 transit-related corridors (see Exhibit 3-7).

The first level of screening of the 20 transit corridors was a joint project team and transit agency exercise. Initial evaluation measures were developed and validated with the transit agencies. In addition to the analysis of compatibility with transportation plans or the ability to build a transit improvement by 2030 (projects that could not be implemented by 2030 were categorized as beyond the planning period, and not considered relevant), an analysis of population and employment factors was conducted. Population and employment data were mapped proximate to each transit corridor, and analyses were performed to determine the density of households, employment, and workers residing in the study area, as well as the origins and destinations of airport travelers. Table 3-8 summarizes the Level One Screening criteria.

TABLE 3-8  
Level One Screening Criteria

| Criteria                   | Measures of Effectiveness                    | Factor  |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Travel Performance</b>  |  |   |
| Improve travel/service     | Connect concentrations of population to work | Households and employment per route mile<br>Study area workers by residence TAZ |
|                            | Serve major employment concentrations        | Sites with 75 or more employees   |
|                            | Connect to O'Hare's air traveler markets     | Trips (daily origins and destinations) per route mile                           |
| Improve O'Hare West access | Connect to O'Hare's west entrance            | Yes or no   |
| <b>Other Criteria</b>      |  |   |
| Compatibility              | With adopted transportation plans            | Yes or no   |
| Implementation horizon     | Can be implemented by 2030                   | Yes or no   |

Of the 20 corridors evaluated, five had at least one “fatal flaw” and thus were eliminated from further consideration. For example, the Inner Circumferential corridor was eliminated because of conflicts with freight rail operations and because the likely implementation horizon for this corridor falls beyond the 2030 horizon of this study. Also, the Metra Rail Connector was eliminated because of freight conflicts, a high cost point to low travel benefit, and because it does not appear in the RTP. Five of the remaining 15 corridors were modified based on the findings of the corridor-level market analysis (see Table 3-9).

TABLE 3-9  
Alternatives Subject to Fatal Flaw and Level One Screening

| Alignment or Facility  | Result   |
|--|--|
| <b>Rail or BRT Alternatives</b>                                  |  |
| STAR Line connection to West Terminal                            | Retained.  |
| CTA Blue Line Extension to West Terminal                         | Retained.  |
| CTA Blue Line Express Track from Chicago Loop                    | Retained.  |
| J-Line: West O'Hare to IKEA and STAR Line                        | Retained.  |
| J-Line: IL-83 to Aurora and Naperville                           | Retained.  |
| Inner Circumferential  | Eliminated: cannot implement by 2030 and freight conflicts.              |
| Rail Connector: Metra UP-NW Line to UP-W Line                    | Eliminated: not in 2030 RTP; freight conflicts; high cost-low benefit.   |
| Mid-City Connector   | Modified: retained for screening as express bus or BRT; rail eliminated. |
| CTA Yellow Line Extension to Old Orchard Shopping Center, Skokie | Eliminated: too far from study area.                                     |

TABLE 3-9  
 Alternatives Subject to Fatal Flaw and Level One Screening

| Alignment or Facility   | Result   |
|---|--|
| <b>Arterial Rapid Transit or Express Bus</b>                                      |  |
| Golf Road: Evanston to Woodfield  | Retained.  |
| Dempster Street: East O'Hare to Yellow Line, Skokie                               | Retained.  |
| I-94 Yellow Line Transfer: Jefferson Park to Yellow Line Dempster Street terminal | Retained.  |
| I-294 North to Lake County: East O'Hare to Gurnee                                 | Modified: route shortened to terminate at Lake-Cook Road because of low densities farther north.                                     |
| I-294 South to Homewood: East O'Hare to Homewood                                  | Modified: route shortened to terminate at Ogden Avenue because of low densities farther south.                                       |
| Mannheim Road: East O'Hare to Orland Park   | Modified: route shortened to terminate at I-55 because of low densities farther south.   |
| I-355: Thorndale Avenue to Shorewood  | Modified: route shortened to terminate at I-55 because of low densities farther south, and at Higgins Road to conform to Pace plans. |
| <b>Local Limited Stop Bus Service</b>   |  |
| East Airport to West Airport via Irving Park Road                                 | Retained.  |
| West Airport Metra Connector via York Road, UP-NW to UP-W                         | Retained.  |
| <b>Other Facilities</b>   |  |
| Metra Transfer Station: NCS to UP-NW at Des Plaines                               | Eliminated: physically infeasible.   |
| Metra Transfer Station: STAR Line and proposed North-South rail connector         | Eliminated: North-South rail connector is eliminated.  |

### 3.3.2 Level Two: Refinement of Transit Corridors and Screening

For this step, the remaining 15 transit improvement corridors were validated and further defined. Greater definition was established for each corridor to include potential mode (rail, heavy or commuter rail, bus rapid transit, arterial rapid transit, express bus, local bus, or local circulator) and operational aspects, and transit station locations. Other considerations included station spacing, intermodal transfer opportunities and physical feasibility of transfer connections.

During this refinement and screening step, the study area was expanded (as noted in the introduction to Section 3 and shown in Exhibit 3-2). As a result, additional transit elements were developed for the expanded study area, including (1) an extension of the Thorndale Avenue transit corridor from the O'Hare West Terminal to the Schaumburg Metra Station; (2) local circulator routes; (3) a Roselle Road bus route; (4) a service upgrade to Pace Route 554; and (5) employer shuttles designed to provide frequent, convenient and direct "last mile" connection service between rail and transfer stations and employment or activity centers.

At this stage of evaluation, further analysis was conducted for transportation performance, and environmental and socioeconomic measures. As a result of the screening, three corridors were eliminated from further consideration (see Table 3-10).

TABLE 3-10  
 Alternatives Subject to Level Two Screening

| Alignment or Facility   | Result   |
|---|--|
| <b>Rail or BRT Alternatives</b>   |  |
| STAR Line connection to West Terminal   | Retained.  |
| CTA Blue Line Extension to West Terminal  | Retained.  |
| CTA Blue Line Express Track from Chicago Loop                                     | Retained as a “regional supporting project.”                                       |
| J-Line: West O’Hare to IKEA and STAR Line   | Retained.  |
| J-Line: IL-83 to Aurora and Naperville  | Retained.  |
| J-Line: West O’Hare to Schaumburg Metra MDW station                               | Retained for screening. Alignment added to address markets in expanded study area. |
| Mid-City Connector  | Retained as a “regional supporting project.”                                       |
| <b>Arterial Rapid Transit or Express Bus</b>                                      |  |
| Golf Road: Evanston to Woodfield  | Retained.  |
| Dempster Street: East O’Hare to Yellow Line, Skokie                               | Retained. Corridor to be extended to Evanston, consistent with Pace plans.         |
| I-94 Yellow Line Transfer: Jefferson Park to Yellow Line Dempster Street terminal | Eliminated: low market potential for express service.                              |
| I-294 North to Lake County: East O’Hare to Gurnee                                 | Eliminated: low market potential.  |
| I-294 South to Homewood: East O’Hare to Homewood                                  | Eliminated: low market potential   |
| Mannheim Road: East O’Hare to I-55  | Retained.  |
| I-355: Higgins Road to I-55   | Retained.  |
| <b>Local Limited Stop Bus Service</b>   |  |
| Irving Park Road, East Airport to West Airport                                    | Retained.  |
| York Road Shuttle, UP-NW to UP-W  | Retained.  |
| <b>Local Services</b>   |  |
| Golf Road West (Pace Route 554), Northwest Transportation Center to Elgin         | Retained.  |
| Roselle Road, Palatine to Glen Ellyn  | Retained.  |
| Circulators   | Not evaluated at this stage; to be assessed in later analysis.                     |
| Employer Shuttles   | Not evaluated at this stage; to be assessed in later analysis.                     |

### 3.3.3 Level Three: Refinement of Transit Corridors and Screening

At this step, the remaining transit corridors and elements were refined. For example, to reinforce the IL 83 section of the J-Line as a BRT line, its southern terminus was relocated from the future STAR line station at Naperville Road/95th Street to the I-88/Naperville Road interchange. This section of the route was replaced with a connecting shuttle service to link to the BRT service and coordinate with the BRT schedule. Another J-line refinement occurred in the section linking West O'Hare Airport to the STAR Line's Schaumburg/IKEA station. This section originally was to operate in the I-290 corridor, but it was moved to the Rowling Road/Martingale Road/IL 53 alignment to facilitate station development and access to neighboring employment and activity centers. Other refinements include modifications of station locations to accommodate parking requirements or further input from communities or transit agencies.

Other socioeconomic evaluation factors were introduced to assess the number of transit-dependent populations near proposed facilities. These factors included determining how many zero- or one-car households represent potential transit users near transit facilities; how many people are more than 65 years old; and how many households had incomes of \$50,000 or less.

Level Three screening supported the conclusions of Level Two, confirmed ridership demand and benefit based on population and employment, and confirmed the presence of a potential transit-dependent population within the area. This final analysis confirmed that all 15 remaining transit elements should be retained and combined with other multimodal elements and roadway improvements to form complete transportation system alternatives for the Tier One Draft EIS evaluation.

## 3.4 Alternatives Carried Forward to the Draft EIS

### 3.4.1 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative consists of transportation improvements to existing roadway and transit facilities in the study area that are expected to be constructed by 2030. It represents an investment aligned to current program funding levels, and thus, does not include the major transportation improvements considered in this study. Development of the No-Action Alternative required extensive coordination with the region's transportation service providers to gather information on funded or anticipated transportation improvements in the study areas. The roadway improvements identified in the 2030 RTP and in the 2007–2012 Proposed Highway Improvement Program were the foundations for developing the No-Action Alternative. Through coordination with area transportation providers, including IDOT, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA), Cook County, DuPage County, Chicago Department of Transportation, transit service providers, and CMAP (the MPO), it was agreed that improvements identified in the 2030 RTP for parts of the region outside the study area would be included in the No-Action Alternative modeling. Also, the federally approved OMP, including a western terminal complex, would be completed within the planning period. Recognizing that other projects likely would be implemented as part of multiple short-range programs beyond 2012, additional improvement projects were identified through the end of the planning period (2030) in coordination with transportation providers. The additional projects were added to the No-Action Alternative.