The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) initiated the North Lake Shore Drive (NLSD) Phase I Study in 2013 to improve NLSD from Grand Avenue to Hollywood Avenue. The study is anticipated to continue through 2021 with many opportunities for input throughout the project process. Please visit the project website, northlakeshoredrive.org, to provide comments and view previous meeting materials.

As part of the study, the project team is working with stakeholders to develop a plan that improves safety and mobility for all users. The following is an overview of current issues and the proposed improvement concept for the Chicago Avenue junction.

There are three categories of alternatives being examined as part of the NLSD Phase I Study: Context Tailored Treatments; Transitways; and Managed Lanes. The top performing alternatives from these categories can be layered on top of one another in combination, or serve as standalone NLSD corridor designs. The following information addresses only the design features associated with the Context Tailored Treatments category.

**North Lake Shore Drive Corridor**
Chicago Avenue currently intersects NLSD at an at-grade signalized intersection, which is the only traffic signal on the Outer Drive within the project area. Signal operation during the evening peak period and on weekends causes major congestion that affects operations elsewhere in the corridor.

- The signal allows vehicles on Chicago Avenue to enter NLSD and allows northbound vehicles to exit NLSD at Chicago. Southbound right turns from NLSD are prohibited at Chicago, occurring instead at Chestnut Street.

- Access to and from NLSD at Chicago Avenue is prohibited from 5 to 10 a.m. to accommodate the predominant southbound traffic flow during the morning peak period. The signal is fully functional for the rest of the day in order to service traffic from the Streeterville area. Numerous hospitals and universities are located in the vicinity of the Chicago Avenue junction.

- The predominant northbound traffic flow from Chicago Avenue during the evening peak period requires use of the signal to cross the southbound lanes of NLSD. However, this regularly causes traffic to back up from the signal to Michigan Avenue to the north and Monroe Street to the south.

- NLSD is protected by concrete barriers along the lake shore and there is no green space east of the roadway in this area. During severe storms, waves from the lake sometimes overtop the sea wall and reach the Outer Drive, restricting use and creating a safety hazard.

- Three CTA bus routes pass through the Chicago Avenue junction, including #134 Stockton/LaSalle Express, #135 Clarendon/LaSalle Express, and #136 Sheridan/LaSalle Express.

- Pedestrian access to the park is provided by an underpass just north of Chicago Avenue. This underpass can only be accessed via stairs and is not in compliance with ADA requirements.
The Chicago Avenue traffic signal would be removed from the main roadway, which would eliminate a major source of congestion on NLSD during the evening peak period. This would result in improved operations at Chicago Avenue and along NLSD to the north and south.

- **NLSD would be lowered below grade** from Erie Street to just north of Chestnut Street. A pumping station would be required to keep the depressed roadway free of rain water. The station would most likely be located between the Inner and Outer Drives near Ontario Avenue and Erie Street.
- **At-grade, east-west roadway bridges** would be added at Chicago Avenue and at Pearson Street. Both bridges would feature pedestrian and bicycle crossing facilities.
- **Ramps would be added at Chicago Avenue**, allowing full-time access for vehicles to enter/exit northbound or southbound NLSD.
- **Vehicular access to northbound exit and entrance ramps at Pearson Street would act as a “relief valve” for Chicago Avenue traffic** by accommodating some vehicles that would otherwise only be able to use Chicago.

- **New park land would be created east of the Drive** to protect the Lakefront Trail from wave overtopping during storms and to assure that the proposed Chicago Avenue underpass is not subject to overtopping waves. The new land would also provide an opportunity for additional park amenities, including a proposed lakefront promenade and a terraced seating area in the Chicago Avenue-Pearson Street area.

- **The Chicago Avenue and Pearson Street bridges, in combination with Inner Drive and the northbound NLSD exit/entrance ramp connector, would create a street configuration suitable for CTA buses to turn around and lay over at the end of their routes.** This could eliminate the need for some buses to turn around and lay over on nearby residential streets as they do today.
- **A bus staging and boarding lane would be provided on the Pearson Street bridge.** This curbside lane would be able to accommodate two articulated buses. The configuration would improve bus operations and provide a new location for passenger boarding and alighting near the lakefront.
- **The bicycle and pedestrian paths would be grade-separated in this area.** The Lakefront Trail would run beneath both the Chicago and Pearson bridges east of the Drive.
COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: Why is NLSD below grade in this area?
A: By lowering the Outer Drive and keeping Chicago Avenue at grade, the existing signalized intersection at Chicago Avenue may be eliminated. This allows for free-flowing traffic on NLSD, unregulated by signalization. The depressed roadway also provides the opportunity to add ADA-compliant pedestrian access at both Chicago Avenue and Pearson Street.

Q: Why was a pedestrian bridge over both the Inner and Outer Drives not proposed for Pearson Street?
A: Stakeholders expressed concern regarding the potential visual impacts of a pedestrian bridge at Pearson Street. The design currently proposed offers at-grade access for people walking and biking in the area without the need to ascend and descend a bridge structure above both the Inner and Outer Drives.

Q: How was the pumping station location selected?
A: Stakeholders shared concerns with the project team that the proposed pumping station would create undesirable visual impacts. The proposed location between the Inner and Outer Drives near Ontario Avenue and Erie Street minimizes visual impacts from nearby residences.

Q: With Transitways and Managed Lanes alternatives still under consideration, what potential modifications associated with Transitways and Managed Lanes features are being considered?

Transitways: One of the alternatives still under consideration includes the addition of dedicated bus lanes in the NLSD corridor. The northbound lane would run in the center of NLSD in this area, while the southbound lane would cross under the southbound lanes and run parallel to a proposed exit ramp to Grand Avenue.

Managed Lanes: The evaluation of Managed Lane alternatives is ongoing. Northbound and southbound managed lanes would begin/end just north of Grand Avenue.

How can I comment on this proposal?
We welcome comments on the project and the Foster Avenue concept. Please visit our online comment form on the project website (northlakeshoredrive.org), email info@northlakeshoredrive.org, or mail feedback to NLSD Study c/o Civiltech Engineering, 30 N. LaSalle St., Suite 2624, Chicago, IL 60602.

For more information about the overall study, or to join our mailing list, please visit the project website northlakeshoredrive.org

We look forward to continuing to work with you to Redefine the Drive.