Pedestrian Railroad Crossing Project
The Underpass at Uptown Station
Town Council Work Session - November 18, 2019
Partners

• USDOT – United States Department of Transportation
  • Secretary Elaine Chao
  • FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
  • FTA – Federal Transit Administration
  • FRA – Federal Railroad Administration
• IDOT – Illinois Department of Transportation
• ICC – Illinois Commerce Commission
• AMTRAK – National Passenger Rail Corporation
• UPRR – Union Pacific Railroad Company
Project History

• January 17, 2012 – Council Authorizes IDOT Agreement
  • Pedestrian Overpass
  • South Platform
  • Old Amtrak Station Improvements
• Summer 2012 - UPRR Removes At-Grade Crossing
• April 16, 2014 – ICC Authorizes $1.25 M for Bridge
• August 18, 2014 – Council Authorizes Uptown Plan Update
Project History

Uptown Master Plan Update

Uptown South (Uptown 2.0) Concept Plan
Project History

Uptown Master Plan Update

- November 16, 2015 – Council Adopts Uptown Normal Master Plan Update
- Underpass Most Favored Alternative Crossing
- Staff Begins Discussions with IDOT and UPRR Resulting in MOU
- April 18, 2016 – Council Authorizes Construction of South Boarding Platform and Old Amtrak Station Improvements – Without Bridge
- May 2, 2016 – IDOT Signs Modified Agreement
Project History

• September 18, 2016 – ICC Extends Deadline to December 2021
• October 3, 2016 – Contract with WSP for Phase I Engineering
• December 6, 2016 – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Executed
  • IDOT
  • UPRR
  • TOWN
• February 6, 2017 – Council Approves:
  • Study Alternatives
  • Project Goals
  • Criteria for Analysis
  • Purpose and Need Statement
Alternatives Analysis

Problem Statement

- Number of trains has increased dramatically
- Average freight train takes 3.5 minutes to clear Linden and Broadway
- Pedestrian and bicycle traffic has increased significantly
- Amtrak passengers need to take non-direct routes
- Tracks are perceived barrier through Uptown
- Need better access to Uptown South including mobility-challenged passengers and pedestrians
Safety – Pedestrian Trespass
Alternatives Analysis Process

**Level 1 alternatives screening**
- Fatal flaw analysis
- Generally meets project goals and selection criteria

**Level 2 alternatives screening**
- Improve safety
- Improve access
- Support economic development

Alternative(s) to be evaluated in NEPA document
(No Build Alternative must be evaluated)

**Project Build Alternatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alt.</th>
<th>Build Alternative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>At-grade Crossing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enclosed Passenger Overpass</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Public Overpass with Bridge Addition</td>
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<td>3b</td>
<td>Public Overpass with Overlook/Plaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Public Underpass</td>
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<td>4b</td>
<td>Public Underpass with Enhanced Access</td>
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<td>4c</td>
<td>Public Underpass with Park</td>
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Project Goals

- Improve Safety
- Improve Access
- Support Economic Development

Screening Criteria

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<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Adverse travel for pedestrians</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Construction cost</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Operation &amp; maintenance costs</td>
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Screening Scale

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Alternative 1: At-grade Crossing

• Alternative 1 is fatally flawed
• Alternative removed from consideration

Alternative 1 Conflicts with Railroad Standards, Guidelines and Agreements

• BNSF-UP Passenger Platform Guideline, Common Standard, April, 2012
• Amtrak Station Guidelines May, 2013
• MOU between IDOT, UPRR and Normal, December, 2016
Alternative 2: Enclosed Passenger Overpass

- Narrow, enclosed structure exclusively for Amtrak passengers
- Overpass would be open during station hours only
- Access provided through stairs and elevators in Uptown Station
Alternative 3a: Public Overpass with Bridge

- Wide overpass open to passengers and other pedestrians and bicyclists
- Access provided through stairs and elevators on either side
Alternative 3b: Public Overpass with Overlook

- Wide open-air bridge for passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Access provided through stairs and elevators on either side
- Structure includes an overlook with views to the street and track below

Draft conceptual renderings
Alternative 4a: Public Underpass

- Narrow underpass for passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Access provided through stairs and ramps or elevators on either side

Berkeley underpass representative photos
Alternative 4b: Enhanced Access Public Underpass

- Wide underpass for passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Access provided through stairs and ramps or elevators on either side
Alternative 4c: Public Underpass with Park/Plaza

- Wide underpass for passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists
- Access provided through stairs and ramps or elevators on either side
- Features an adjacent open public space
## Screening Results and Recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening Criteria</th>
<th>No-Build</th>
<th>Enclosed Passenger Overpass Alt #2</th>
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<th>Public Overpass with Overlook/Plaza Alt #3b</th>
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**OVERALL RATING:** Poor/Fair  Fair  Fair  Fair/Good  Fair/Good  Good  Good

- Recommended alternative
Public Comment Summary

• April 27, 2017 – Public Open House Meeting
• 30-Day Comment Period
• 41 Total Comments
  • 29 Comments Supported Alternative 4c
  • 5 Comments Opposed
  • 3 Comments Supported an Overpass
  • 4 General Comments or Questions
Project History

• June 19, 2017 – Town Council Approves Underpass Option 4c as the Preferred Alternative

• Phase I Project Team – Scope of Work Includes:
  • Railroad Coordination
  • Development of Concept Plans
  • Utility Survey
  • ICC Coordination
  • NEPA Study
  • Grant Applications - TIGER (x1), CRISI (x2), BUILD (x2)

• November 12, 2019 – USDOT Secretary Chao Announces $13M BUILD Grant
Letters of Support

• Joint letter signed by Senators Durbin and Duckworth and Congressmen Davis and LaHood
• Union Pacific
• Amtrak
• IDOT
• Amvets District 4, American Legion Post 56, VFW Post 454
• Illinois State University
• Illinois Wesleyan University
• Heartland Community College
• McLean County Board
• McLean County Regional Planning Commission
• Children’s Discovery Museum Foundation
• McLean County Chamber of Commerce
• Livingston & McLean Counties Building & Construction Trades Council
• Advocate BroMenn
• Connect Transit
• Bloomington Normal Economic Development Council
• United Way
• State Farm
• Central IL Regional Airport
• MarcFirst
• Normal Public Library
• AFL-CIO Bloomington and Normal Trades and Labor Assembly
Funding

• Original Project Budget $24.6 M
• Revised Estimate $22.6M
• BUILD Grant $13M
• Town of Normal Capital
• ICC Grade Crossing Protection Funds (GCPF)
• State Capital Bill
• Other Federal Funding
• Other Grants
• Private Funding
• Build America Loan Program