

Clark Street Streetscape, Devon Avenue to Arthur Avenue
Virtual Public Meeting #1
July 14, 2020
Questions and Answers

The questions below were submitted via the Zoom public meeting registration page, to the project website, and during the public meeting via the Zoom Q&A function. All comments have been recorded as part of the meeting record. Similar questions have been grouped together or summarized into one question for ease of response and readability. The public meeting presentation materials are posted on the project website at: <https://chicagocompletestreets.org/portfolio/clark-street-devon-avenue-to-arthur-avenue/>

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General Questions

Q1. Where will this recording be accessible/live? Will presentation be available for download?

A1. The recording is available on CDOT's project website:
<http://chicagocompletestreets.org/portfolio/clark-street-devon-avenue-to-arthur-aveune>

Q2. What is being done to improve safety, not just for cyclists but also for motorists subject to senseless shootings?

A2. The project aims to stimulate economic development and increase foot traffic in the area to create more eyes on the street to discourage crime. New street lighting will also be installed.

Q3. Are there plans to make improvements to Clark Street south of Devon Ave? Wasn't this part of the Vision Clark plan? The same need is there for pedestrians and bike improvements, plus there is much more space to work with.

A3. The Vision Clark Street Corridor Master Plan did not include recommendations south of Devon. Currently there are no plans in progress for Clark Street south of Devon; however, the location is being considered for future plans.

Q4. How does approval by IDOT happen?

A4. As part of the permit approval process for IDOT jurisdiction roadways, IDOT will review the proposed plans at various stages of the project. IDOT will provide review comments and CDOT will address the comments accordingly. Once the plans are approved, IDOT will issue a permit for construction.

Q5. Why is this project taking so long (3 years)? I thought from original documentation it was to start and finish in 2021.

A5. The project design started December of 2019. A completion date of 2021 was never proposed by CDOT. The existing conditions analysis, concept development, public outreach, agency/stakeholder coordination and review, construction document development, and procurement of public improvement projects such as this take time.

Q6. Why not consider a couple hundred feet of median improvement on Clark St south of Devon? Its rather abrupt to cross this intersection, and then get hit with a landscaped median north of Devon. If you have a median, could you also create an area midpoint crossing on Clark?

A6. There is no room for a landscaped median on Clark south of Devon. Intersections are designed and timed for pedestrians to cross the street in one phase; however, a ped refuge island will be explored as part of the design process.

Q7. Will the large billboard at the Clark/Ashland split remain?

A7. The billboard will be removed.

Q8. Are precautions being taken to ensure current local businesses aren't pushed out?

A8. CDOT is working with the local Aldermen and the Rogers Park Business Alliance to ensure current businesses are represented and informed. Several local business owners are on the project task force to ensure their input and concerns are heard.

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Q9. What is the Rogers Park Business Alliance?

A9. Rogers Park Business Alliance (RPBA) is a 501c3 non-profit organization established in 1993. RPBA works in the areas of business, community, and economic development. Visit their website for more information, <https://rpba.org/>

Q10. Are there plans for art installation?

A10. At this time no public art is proposed for this project. Community identifiers both on the light poles and sidewalk will be installed.

Q11. It seems that construction is already underway. Crews have been working in the area recently. Will this work need to be redone?

A11. A few ADA ramps were brought to compliance by others. Need for rework will be evaluating during detailed design engineering.

Q12. Will ADA detectable warnings tiles be a type that won't be damaged?

A12. Yes. CDOT's standard for ADA detectable warning tiles is cast iron. Concrete tiles are no longer used.

Q13. What is the total funding required (ballpark)?

A13. The project budget is \$3,800,000.

Q14. For Clark Devon Hardware store, does that business still have access for trucks to access its loading dock on the paid parking lot side?

A14. Yes. Access for Clark Devon Hardware's loading dock in the paid parking lot will remain. We are coordinating with local business owners to manage the impacts to their businesses.

Q15. If the small section of Arthur is closed, will the city plow the new sidewalk in Winter?

A15. A maintenance partner will be required to clear the sidewalk within this space.

Q16. Were any final decisions made as to the design of the project? When O'Connor was still alderman, he stated that the money was secured for the 40th ward section of the project, and a mural was planned for Clark and Devon. Is that still part of the plan?

A16. The design is currently in progress. The proposed mural is not part of the streetscape project scope.

Q17. Has there been any consideration given to removing the city-owned parking lot in the project space? It is rarely used, as Clark Devon hardware has its own adjacent free parking lot, and it makes traffic in the area less predictable and more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. It contributes to the bleakness of that corner.

A17. The city owned metered parking lot will remain. The parking lot entrance on Clark will be moved north, away from the intersection to improve safety for all users. This public ROW is also important to the operations of Clark Devon Hardware and allows access to their property and loading dock.

Q18. What about that unused restaurant next to Touché that seems to be city storage?

A18. This property is privately owned and not used by the city. The streetscape project is only impacting public right of way and City owned property.

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Q19. How does the plan going to boost up the business at that corner (Clark & Devon)?

A19. The streetscape project will provide new public infrastructure creating a welcoming business corridor. The project aims to improve pedestrian safety, walkability, and accessibility, increase green space, and enhance the public realm all in an effort to support economic development. Businesses should work with their local Aldermen, chambers, and business organizations to further support this effort.

Q20. I am just learning about this, is it too late to get involved?

A20. It is not too late to get involved. CDOT has conducted only one of three public meetings. The next public meeting is expected in early to mid-2021. Please visit CDOT's project website or check with your local ward office for upcoming announcements and dates.

Q21. Are there any plans to create a dog park? There are hundreds of dogs in this neighborhood, maybe more now that folks have reinvested in puppies during the pandemic. A dog park that is dedicated would be a huge asset as walking dogs has become difficult during covid.

A21. No, CDOT does not operate and maintain dog parks. Please work with your local Alderman on this initiative.

Q22. Is this a city-led initiative or is there a local chamber of commerce involved as well for the branding aspects?

A22. The streetscape project is a city led project that builds off the community led Vision Clark Street Corridor Master Plan. The streetscape project is being designed in partnership with the 40th, 48th, and 49th wards, the Rogers Park Business Alliance, and the community.

Q23. The proposed greenspace on Arthur will be an uncomfortable place to spend time with a bus turnaround to the south and a car repair shop to the north. Has this been considered in the closure?

A23. The proposed greenspace on Arthur Avenue is part of the Vision Clark Street Corridor Master Plan completed by the Rogers Park Business Alliance (RPBA). The plan was developed with extensive community outreach and the proposed closure was supported by the community and continues to be supported. The space will provide a connection from Schreiber Park to Clark Street and address community concerns about the lack of greenspace and trees along the Clark Street corridor.

Site Furniture and Landscaping

Q24. Will there be garbage cans and greenery along Clark St.?

A24. Yes. Litter receptacles, trees, and landscaping will be included where space allows.

Q25. Are there any requirements for parking lots to include bushes or trees?

A25. Yes. Per the Chicago Landscape Ordinance construction of new parking lots are required to provide landscaping. Existing parking lots that are being improved and are not increasing the number of parking stalls are exempt from these requirements.

Traffic

Q26. Will there be bike lanes added on Clark St or Ashland as part of intersection improvements? Strongly suggest a clearly marked bicycle lane, protected if possible.

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A26. Currently there are no existing bike lanes on Clark Street to the north or south of the streetscape project limits. Without existing bike lanes to connect to, bike lanes will not be added within the project area at this time. The streetscape project will be designed to allow bike infrastructure to be added in the future if connections become available. The recommended route for cyclists currently is to use the greenway on Glenwood/Greenview.

Q27. How are pedestrians and bikes being prioritized?

A27. The streetscape project proposes to install curb extensions where feasible to shorten crossing distances, a midblock crossing near Arthur Ave, a new pedestrian connection between Clark Street and Shreiber Park, new street lighting, and bike racks.

Q28. Will there be a signal leaving the public parking northbound to take a left?

A28. No, a signal at this location is not warranted. There is not enough traffic at this driveway, and it is too close to the signal at the Clark and Ashland intersection.

Q29. Can left hand turn signals be added at the Clark and Devon intersection in both directions? Turning South on Clark from Devon is terribly difficult during the morning and evening rush hour

A29. The addition of a dedicated left turn arrow is dependent upon traffic volumes and intersection capacity. This would be subject to IDOT approval and at this time is not warranted with current traffic volumes.

Transit

Q30. How can we speed up the Clark bus?

A30. We are currently working with the CTA to determine if any improvements can be incorporated to speed up the Clark St bus.

Q31. Can the CTA to restore the bus stop at the gas station at the southwest corner for the 155 Devon bus going eastbound?

A31. CTA prefers that bus stops be located at the far side of signalized intersections in order to reduce delay and increase reliability for customers along the entire route. Additionally, being far side increases safety for all road users, especially pedestrians, as the opportunity is removed for vehicles to illegally turn right in front of a stopped bus. The location by the gas station also has driveways which partially impede boarding and alighting the bus. While transfer distance to SB #22 is greater, having the #155 stop at the far side of the intersection also allows for easier, no-walk transfers to southbound #36 and #151 buses, and shorter transfers to all other routes/directions at the intersection. Given this information, the current plans have the bus stop remain in its current far side location.

Q32. The buses going south bound on Clark and turning left to go East on Devon, create a bottle neck at the bus stop on Devon, SE corner, in front of the new Cozy Corner. Could this Devon SE bus stop should be shifted slightly more east so the articulating bus will clear and allow other traffic when the light turns green to get past the bus?

A32. CDOT and CTA will consider the possibility of shifting the bus stop further east. We want to remain as close to the intersection as practical so transfers to routes on other corners do not become cumbersome. Note that such a shift would result in the permanent loss of approximately two parking spaces.

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Q33. The pavement has warped at bus stops. Will concrete be poured at bus stops like many other corners in the city?

A33. Yes, concrete bus pads will be installed at bus stops.

Q34. Has there been coordination with CTA on these improvements?

A34. Yes, CDOT is working in close coordination with the CTA on the streetscape project design.

Q35. Will cars still have signal priority at all intersections, or will buses and pedestrians have leading intervals?

A35. This has not yet been determined. Signal timing will need to consider bus flow, existing traffic counts and pedestrian counts, and will need final approval by IDOT.