

Ashland Avenue BRT Phase I Project
Chicago, Illinois
Small Starts Project Development
Information Prepared January 2014

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) proposes to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) along the 5.4-mile section of Ashland Avenue between Cortland Street (1900 North) and 31st Street (3100 South) in Chicago. The project includes 14 median stations, a dedicated center lane exclusive to buses in each direction, and the purchase of 50 specialized BRT vehicles (19 hybrid vehicles and 31 diesel vehicles) with doors on both sides. The project's current estimated capital cost is \$116.9 million. CTA expects to seek \$58.3 million from the Small Starts program.

The project is expected to significantly improve bus travel speeds and service reliability along CTA's most heavily traveled bus route, and to provide a needed crosstown rapid transit connection between heavy rail lines. The project corridor traverses some densely populated neighborhoods, where one in four residents is transit-dependent. In addition, the corridor includes the Illinois Medical District, the state's largest biotechnology and medical complex.

CTA selected a locally preferred alternative in April 2013. CTA released an Environmental Assessment for the project in November 2013. FTA approved the project into Project Development in January 2014. CTA did not provide updated anticipated dates for receiving a Finding of No Significant Impact or a Small Starts Grant Agreement.