

Red Line Extension (RLE Project): Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Red Line Extension Project and why is it needed?

The Red Line Extension (RLE) project is the expansion of the Red Line from the 95th Street Terminal to 130th Street, adding four new stations, and creating new parking and bus connections. This extension aims to improve transit experience and accessibility for more communities. The Red Line Extension is designed to create a better system for all by connecting neighborhoods and investing in local communities. It will offer better transportation options and improve the overall transit experience.

What is advance utility relocation and what does it involve?

Advanced utility relocation (AUR) is an important step in preparing to break ground for the new stations and tracks. It involves digging new underground trenches, relocating power and communication lines, installing shorter utility poles, and relocating power transformers from poles to underground. This work is necessary to make way for the new tracks and stations.

What does demolition work include?

Demolition work for the Red Line Extension project will focus on dismantling and removing existing buildings, structures, and other physical obstructions that CTA has acquired to build the Red Line Extension. The work will include underground storage tank removal and associated contaminate soil remediation and removal. Crews will collect, sort and transport debris to proper disposal or recycling facilities. The area will then be cleared and prepared for new construction, which could involve grading and leveling the site.

How is this work different from construction of the Red Line Extension?

Advance utility relocation and property demolition needs to occur to make way for building the new stations and tracks. This work is different in that it must occur prior to any new construction for the Red Line Extension. We expect to begin station and track construction in late 2025.

How many properties have you acquired for demolition and what happened to the people who lived or worked in those buildings?

CTA has purchased about 50 commercial, industrial, and residential properties that are scheduled to be demolished in 2024 and 2025. Those properties span the entire project area from south of 95th Street to north of 119th street. Many of these properties were already vacant and in poor condition. In planning for the Extension, CTA sought to minimize the number of properties required to build this project. CTA was required under federal law to pay current market value to the property owners, as well as all relocation expenses for the property owners and rental residents.

Is CTA still acquiring properties?

No. CTA has identified what properties it needs to build the project and has already notified all affected property owners.

How will the advance utility relocation (AUR) and demolition work affect the community?

AUR and demolition work may cause temporary impacts, including noise from construction equipment, increased truck traffic, and temporary street, alley, and sidewalk closures. CTA and its contractors are committed to providing advance notice of work and taking steps to minimize impacts as much as possible.

Will my utilities be disrupted by the advance utility relocation work?

You may experience minor impacts on your utilities that could vary from an hour to a day, depending on the type of work. If you were to be affected, you would receive advance notification of the work and impact.

How long will this work and impacts last?

We expect advance utility relocation work to begin this summer and be completed in 2025. Property demolition work is anticipated to begin in the fall and occur through 2025. The impact of advance utility work and demolition work will vary based on the type of work that needs to be performed. Specific timelines for different phases of work requires coordination of multiple utilities (electric, gas, telecommunications, etc.) are still being finalized and will be communicated in advance to keep the community informed.

What measures will be taken to minimize the impact of demolition work on the community?

CTA and its contractors are committed to minimizing impacts of demolition work on the community. Our contractors will use water and other dust control measures like screened fencing to minimize the spread of dust during demolition. Water helps to dampen the debris, preventing dust particles from becoming airborne, which improves air quality for nearby residents. Additionally, to minimize disruptions, multiple adjacent properties will be demolished together to reduce the frequency of street and alley closures.

What about the impact of having construction machinery in the community and pollution? What's being done about that?

CTA requires that its contractors use practices that reduce environmental impacts to the community. Contractors are required to keep all construction equipment exhaust emissions in a state of good repair, limit idling of vehicles as much as possible and other measures.

How will I be informed about the construction activity and timelines?

The CTA is committed to providing residents and local businesses with advance information about the construction work, including what to expect and when to expect it. The community will be notified of upcoming construction activities through Construction Activity Notices (CANs) distributed throughout the community, and online at transitchicago.com/rle.

Where can I find more information or ask questions about the project?

For more information or to ask questions, you can visit the project website at transitchicago.com/rle, email RedExtension@transitchicago.com, or leave a message at (312) 772-2272. You can follow the project updates @CTARedExt on Facebook and Instagram. You can also make an appointment to visit us at the RLE Community Office, 401 W. 111th St. by using the contact information above. Sign up for construction alerts at transitchicago.com/rle.