

# BUSINESS PROPOSAL

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# Table of Contents

## Abstract

### Part I: Introduction

- A. Statement of the Problem
- B. Objective
- C. Details of the Problem
- D. Needs
- E. Scope of Proposal

### Part II: Proposed Plan

- A. General Overview
  - I. Phases of the Plan
    - a. Phase One
    - b. Phase Two
    - c. Phase Three
  - II. Cost and Materials
- B. Facilities
- C. Feasibility
- D. Benefits

### Part III: Conclusion

- A. Summary of Key Points
- B. Call For Action

## Works Cited

## Abstract

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) receives hundreds of complaints a year concerning the lack of accessibility for disabled persons on public transportation. With approximately 600,000 disabled people living in Chicago, it doesn't seem fair that they are unable to use public transportation in the way that the non-disabled people of Chicago can. Not to mention, Chicago brings in thousands of tourists a year, many of whom may be handicapped and rely on public transportation. The CTA is undoubtedly the most convenient and cost efficient way to get around the city, and someone's handicap should not prevent them from that privilege many of us able-bodied people take for granted. With 46 CTA stations still without elevators, transportation for the disabled is not impossible but it is limited, creating obstacles for those in need.

In my research I have found that there are in fact efforts to improve the CTA to meet with the compliances of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), however there is still some hesitation in regards to commitment to budgets designated for CTA renovation. Some previous accomplishments that the city of Chicago has made towards making transportation easier for the disabled include the reconstruction of the Red Line coming in at \$425 million, and \$75 million on the engineering and planning of a Red Line extension program which is expected to cost a total of \$2.3 billion by the time of completion. These are all rather costly improvements but the payoff far outweighs the current costs. With the use of new tax increments assigned for the improvement of the CTA, there is money to continue making the city of Chicago more accessible for all. Some of the 46 CTA stations without elevators are over a century old and will require extremely extensive renovations, costs estimating in the billions. However, with the improvements, there will be an increase in consumer usage, meaning more money spent on the CTA eventually breaking even, then turning a profit.

Efforts have been made, but it is time to really push these efforts and turn them into tangible goals that will make Chicago a better, more tolerant place for everyone. As one of the greatest cities in the nation, we need to step up and show that we care for our neighbors with disabilities and welcome disabled tourists with open arms because this city is for everyone and our public facilities need to mirror that notion.

**To:** Chicago City Government  
**From:** Alex Herrera  
**Date:** February, 20 2017  
**Subject:** Wheelchair accessibility on the CTA

## **Part I: Introduction**

### *A. Statement of Problem*

1. The Chicago Transit Authority is still not entirely handicap accessible. The city of Chicago needs to speed up the long ongoing process of making public transportation available to all.

### *B. Objective*

1. Placing elevators in remaining train stations currently without will allow for handicapped citizens to use public transportation, increasing CTA revenue for the city.

### *C. Details of the Problem*

1. Approximately 46 CTA "L" stops are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act including popular train stations such as the Clinton Blue Line stop.

### *D. Needs*

1. There have been plans loosely outlined by the city of Chicago to resolve these issues but they are not being put into effect. This process needs to be taken seriously and put into action as soon as possible.
2. A clear budget must be sorted to begin construction.

### *E. Scope of Proposal*

1. This proposal will outline the options, costs, and benefits of making public transportation in the city of Chicago accessible for our disables residents and tourists, as well as the time it will take to complete these renovations if the proposal is accepted.

## **Part II: Proposed Plan**

### *F. Overview*

1. The following plan will explain how the Chicago Transit Authority can improve the city's public transportation in a cost

efficient manner to successfully improve the equipment for CTA consumers.

#### *G. Phases of the Plan*

1. Phase One: The first steps in speeding up the process of making commuting easier for those who are disabled include the Chicago Transit Authority reviewing their options. Once it is clear which stations have the highest demand for accessibility renovations, we can move forward with renovation plans.
2. Phase Two: With the stations in need selected, the heads of the Chicago Transit Authority should meet with the City of Chicago's mayor to discuss the budget and the renovation timeline.
3. Phase Three: After the construction timeline and budget have been sorted the next step is ensuring the proper installation of the new elevators at the selected stops.

#### *H. Costs and Materials*

1. The cost to renovate the L station stops to be handicap accessible ranges at about \$5 Million per stop. Former President Barack Obama recently signed off on a federal grant worth \$1.1 Million towards improving the Red Line, which will greatly help these far overdue improvements.
2. Due to some stations' old age, certain renovations will cost more because of the level of difficulty it is to install new machinery. The Damen and California Blue Line stops call for a \$33 Million renovation.

#### *I. Facilities*

1. The plans to renovate the Chicago transit Authority "L" stations will affect the Red and Blue lines the most as they are the most popular, specifically the Clinton, Damen, California, Addison, and Grand Blue Line stops and the Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn, and Bryn Mawr, and Sheridan Red Line Stations.

#### *J. Personnel*

1. Professional public transportation construction companies and workers will be needed to safely instal the renovations. The construction will be overseen by the City of Chicago to see the proposal is being carried out according to plan. If said plan is accepted, all residents and users of the CTA will need to be

notified of the specific stations under construction and how they can carry on with their commute during this time.

#### *K. Feasibility*

1. This plan will aid in making public transportation in Chicago available to all walks of life. Making these improvements will resolve the longstanding fight towards making commuting easier for all residents and tourists. It is in the City of Chicago's best interest to make these improvements to better the relationship and reputation of the city by showing that our community cares about our handicapped neighbors and friends.

#### *L. Benefits*

1. These outlined renovations will bring more money to the city. The costs for improvements are high but they will increase the traffic on the "L" which will increase the revenue brought in by CTA users and the improvements will pay for themselves over time. This is an investment that will benefit all.

### **Part III: Conclusion**

#### *M. Summary of Key Points*

1. This proposal highlights ways in which we can speed up this long fight towards making public transportation in Chicago accessible to the handicapped. The number of popular "L" stations that still do not cater to those who find it hard to maneuver steep staircases is astonishing and the renovations that have been made thus far are barely sufficient. This proposal will help in making that final push to improve the city's overall image and accessibility.

#### *N. Call for Action*

1. By reviewing this proposal, I wish for The City of Chicago to realize that the benefits of getting these improvements done as soon as possible will help the city out immensely by making our community more inclusive and welcoming while bringing profit to the city that will show immediately once the newly renovated stations are ready for use. Please, take the time to review the plans that will benefit our city and the people in it.

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