

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 30, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact Alderman Joe Moore
(773) 338-5796

**STATEMENT
BY ALDERMAN JOE MOORE (49)
CALLING ON THE CTA TO DELAY
“THREE TRACK OPERATION” CONSTRUCTION
UNTIL PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS ARE ADDRESSED AND
ADEQUATE ALTERNATE SERVICE IS IN PLACE.**

Where is the Public in this Public Transit System?

I am joined by _____, _____ and other community leaders to call on President Frank Kruesi and the Chicago Transit Authority Board to delay the planned construction project at the Fullerton and Belmont stations. If this project commences without a serious plan for public safety and alternative methods of transportation, it will have a devastating effect on the lives and livelihoods of my constituents in the 49th Ward.

This “Three Track Operation” is off on the wrong track.

In the last nine months, residents in my community and communities across the city have experienced a precipitous decline in the quality, safety and reliability of both train and bus service on the CTA. Derailments and mechanical breakdowns are becoming the norm for most CTA riders. And the impending track closures to accommodate the widening of the Belmont and Fullerton “L” platforms will only exacerbate this already intolerable situation. I have said it before and I’ll say it again, Rapid transit, it ain’t—and it isn’t safe transit, either, I fear.

Make no mistake, we want reconstruction. We agree that the CTA needs to move forward with this project, but not until the public is satisfied that they will still have an adequate means of transportation and that our commuters will be safe.

The CTA’s advice thus far has simply been that commuters “*Leave Early. Leave Late. Alternate.*”

Frankly, this is insulting to the many working women and men who do not have options in their schedule, particularly when no viable alternatives have been put in place. A couple extra buses are not going to cut it.

My constituents are already leaving an hour early to ensure they arrive at work on time because of the many service disruptions. Now we are asking them to leave earlier and face greater safety risks? This is an unacceptable.

Residents in my transit-reliant ward are calling my office on nearly a daily basis complaining about the decline in service and with fears about what is to come. My constituents in Rogers Park, West Ridge and Edgewater also fear that public safety is at risk .

- Trains and platforms are expected to be overcrowded and no plan is in place to prevent this or to deal with emergencies that might arise as a result.
- Commute times and wait times are expected to double or triple, with no plan for keeping people safe in extreme temperatures.
- Vehicle traffic from the north shore suburbs through our residential communities is expected to significantly increase, at times when school children are crossing our already busy streets.

We want assurance that all platforms have been recently inspected, that they can handle the extra loads and that someone will be there to enforce maximum loads on the platforms as well as on the trains and buses as determined by the Chicago Building Department and the Chicago Fire Department.

The Chicago Building Department has asked property owners across this city to have their porches inspected, and often rebuilt to an extremely high standard out of fear of collapse. It should ask no less of the CTA at a time when we may be experiencing record crowding on our neighborhood platforms that don't normally experience that capacity.

We want to know what added resources will be in place during extreme heat and cold to assist people who may be affected by the weather.

We want traffic studies conducted and additional streetlights, crossing guards and other security precautions in place to protect our children.

In January, I called for Public Hearings on the CTA's declining service. We are still waiting for these hearings to occur. Until they do and until a comprehensive plan for getting my constituents to work safely and on time is in place, the CTA must delay this decision to commence construction.

-###-