APS Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 18, 2026
Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Location: 2 N LaSalle St, Chicago, IL 60602

Committee Attendees:

- **Michael Shaw** — Jensen Hughes, Independent Monitor — In-Person
- **Thomas Ciesielski** – MOPD – In-Person
- **Denise Avant** – National Federation of the Blind of Illinois— In-Person
- **Bryen Yunashko** — DeafBlind Advocate — In-Person
- **Jessica Maronto** — CDOT / MOPD — In-Person
- **Mandi Hetzel** — Second Sense / COMS — In-Person
- **Doreen Bogus** — MOPD — In-Person
- **Irma Gomez-Fierro** — CTA — In-Person
- **Anne Zhang** — CDOT — In-Person
- **Dave Miller** — CDOT / APS Implementation Point Person — In-Person
- **Daniel Shin** — CDOT — In-Person
- **Abraham Emanuel** – CDOT – In Person
- **Grant Davis** — CDOT / Funding Point Person — In-Person
- **Christina McGleam** — MOPD — In-Person
- **Craig Turner**— CDOT First Deputy Commissioner — Virtual
- **John Gleichman** — Committee Member — Virtual
- **David Gleason** — CDOT — Virtual
- **Jaemi Jackson** — CMAP — Virtual
- **Jaret Bozigian** — The Chicago Lighthouse — Virtual
- **Jae Jin Pak** – UIC – Virtual

ASL and tactile interpreters and other support staff were present at the meeting.

1. Introductions and Opening Remarks

Committee members, City staff, and other team members introduced themselves.

a. Program Status Update

CDOT reported that the APS Program exceeded its Year 1 installation goal by completing 78 APS-equipped intersections, surpassing the goal of 70 intersections. CDOT also reported that 19 installations have already been completed toward the Year 2 goal of 110 intersections.

Staff provided updates on ongoing outreach, training, reporting improvements, website enhancements, and educational efforts. Committee members congratulated CDOT on its progress and encouraged continued public engagement and information sharing.

2. Old Business

a. New APS Videos & Educational Materials

CDOT provided an update on APS educational videos currently in development. CDOT is reviewing the script for the next video with a publishing date target of mid-September.

Committee members discussed ways to improve public awareness and accessibility of educational resources, including:

- Creating a centralized location for all APS videos and related materials.
- Providing transcripts for all videos.
- Notifying committee members and partner organizations when new videos are released.
- Expanding outreach beyond social media platforms.

CDOT agreed to continue developing educational materials, provide transcripts for future videos, and notify committee members when new content becomes available.

b. Engaging Technology Partners and Other City Departments

CDOT reported on efforts to work with technology providers and navigation platforms regarding APS information.

i. Mapping and Navigation

CDOT shared that Google Maps does not currently support displaying APS locations but indicated they have raised the issue with Google who are taking it under consideration. Committee members encouraged exploration of additional platforms, including Apple

Maps and voice assistant technologies, to improve public awareness of APS locations. These apps would require additional coordination.

ii. APS Mobile Application

CDOT provided an update on a federally funded mobile application under development that would communicate directly with signal infrastructure and provide crossing information through haptic and audio notifications.

Committee members emphasized that:

- Any app should supplement APS infrastructure rather than replace physical APS installations.
- Preference is to not need to use a phone or point a phone camera to use an app.
- Haptic feedback is preferable to reliance on audio alone, particularly to be accessible for deafblind users.
- Ongoing user testing and stakeholder feedback should be incorporated throughout development.

CDOT confirmed that APS infrastructure remains the primary accessibility solution and that the app is intended only as a supplementary tool. CDOT said there are currently approximately 600 intersections that would be able to support the app, but more intersections are being updated to support it.

Committee members also discussed existing technologies such as the OKO app and smart glasses and how they differ from the app.

iii. DeafBlind Community Engagement

Committee members requested that CDOT seek feedback from organizations representing DeafBlind individuals in addition to organizations serving blind and low-vision users. Chicago Hearing Society (CHS) and PTIL organizations were recommended for future outreach and participation in testing efforts. CDOT agreed to broaden stakeholder engagement.

c. Tactile Crosswalks

CDOT provided an update on ongoing research related to tactile crosswalks and tactile guidance surfaces.

Discussion included:

- International examples of tactile crosswalk installations.
- Current research and practices in other cities.
- The absence of a federally adopted U.S. standard for tactile crosswalk guidance.

- Material durability challenges in Chicago's climate.
- Opportunities for future testing and pilot projects.

Committee members expressed support for continued research and exploration while emphasizing the importance of consistency, user testing, and alignment with emerging standards. CDOT will continue evaluating potential applications and report back with future findings.

3. Committee Feedback

a. General Design Feedback

i. APS Placement, Distance to curb or distance to crosswalk

Committee members discussed APS placement preferences and shared feedback gathered from APS users.

Key themes included:

- Preference for APS devices to be aligned with the crosswalk so that people can wait at the APS and be aligned and ready to cross.
- Importance of installation consistency across locations.
- Benefits of locating APS devices where users can remain aligned with the crosswalk after activating the pushbutton.

CDOT explained that site-specific conditions often influence final placement decisions but affirmed that consistency remains an important program objective.

ii. Particularly Dangerous Conditions and Interim Installations

The committee discussed situations where publicly requested APS installations at locations with particularly dangerous conditions such as T-intersections or mid-block crossings may need to be phased or implemented incrementally due to construction constraints.

Committee members said that a button in a poor location would not get used regularly anyway. In Chicago, having buttons that only cover some of the crosswalks at an intersection already happens regularly so would make more sense to wait for a better installation location.

The committee discussed non-APS audible devices such as rapid rectangular flashing beacons and how they differ from APS.

iii. Volume, Audio Messages, and User Experience

Committee members reported concerns regarding:

- APS volume levels at high-noise intersections.
- Variability in user experiences across locations.
- Speech messages versus rapid percussive tones.
- The value of optional extended-press information.

CDOT explained current federal requirements governing APS audio messages which require percussive tones.

CDOT reported that staff are reviewing configuration standards and exploring optional extended-press features while maintaining focus on rapid deployment. Extended press features would require additional maintenance, staff attention, and education efforts.

b. Specific Locations / APS Issues

No additional locations were brought up.

CDOT encouraged committee members to continue submitting location-specific feedback so operational adjustments, maintenance reviews, and design improvements can be considered.

4. New Business

Committee members discussed the importance of long-term maintenance planning as the APS program continues to expand.

CDOT confirmed that maintenance planning remains an ongoing priority and continues to be incorporated into program implementation efforts.

5. Public Comment

No formal public comments were received during the public comment period.

CDOT reminded attendees that comments may also be emailed to CDOTaps@cityofchicago.org or mailed to:

CDOT Division of Engineering
ATTN: APS Coordinator
2. North LaSalle, Suite 820,
Chicago, Illinois, 60602.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned following closing remarks from CDOT.

Next Meeting: November 17, 2026, at 2:00 PM.