

STATE STREET COMMISSION

State Street Commission Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

2:00 PM

190 North State Street, ABC 7

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Greg Cameron
Kristin Duncan
Konstantine “Gus” Drosos
Brian Grossman
John Idler
La Verne Morris
Ryan Segal

Commission Members Absent

Mark Anderson
Ciere Boatright
Clinèe Hedspeth
Aimeabilomon Ochiekeleye
Cole Stallard

Others Present

Arturo Rodriguez
Cindy Roubik
Erika Coldman
Noel Valenzuela (Debbie De Lopez proxy)
Michael Edwards
Ryan Greenlaw
Kate Guercio
Randall Harrington
Captain Sheamus Mannion
Dan Luna
Tom McCay
Katie Ostrowski

AFFILIATION

Joffrey Ballet
Renaissance Hotel
Palmer House Hilton
Walgreens
ABC 7
20 N. State Condo Assn.
Acadia Realty Trust

Hines
DPD
DCASE
Macy’s on State Street
Streets & Sanitation

CDOT
DPD
Chicago Loop Alliance
Streets & Sanitation
Chicago Loop Alliance
DPD
Hard Surface Finishers, Inc.
Ald. Reilly’s Office
CPD 1st District
Ald. Conway’s Office
Burns & McDonnell
Ald. Robinson’s Office

Call to Order

Ryan Segal called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by John Idler and seconded by Konstantine Drosos to approve the July 15, 2025 Minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Financial Statement

Michael Edwards presented the financial statements for the SSA through September 30, 2025, noting that the fiscal year is approximately 75% complete. He emphasized that Commissioners should not rely solely on budget management to control expenses, particularly as several line items remain under the 75% expenditure threshold.

Edwards, with confirmation from Ryan Greenlaw of DPD, reported that CLA has not yet received the second installment of tax payments, which are expected in the coming weeks. As of September 30, SSA expenditures totaled \$2.4 million, while revenues amounted to only \$1.8 million. To bridge this gap, CLA has been utilizing its reserves and recently drew \$250,000 from its \$400,000 line of credit with Wintrust to maintain operations.

Edwards clarified that while the use of CLA reserves does not incur costs to the SSA, the Wintrust line of credit will result in approximately \$25,000 in interest charges—comparable to last year's expense. Greg Cameron encouraged CLA to continue identifying strategies to strengthen its reserves to better support SSA cash flow needs.

Following discussion, a motion to approve the financial statements as presented was made by John Idler and seconded by Kristen Duncan. The motion carried unanimously.

Q3 Sole Service Provider Report

Michael Edwards noted that the Q3 Performance Matrix Report had been distributed earlier and is included in the Commission packet. He invited any questions or comments from the Commissioners. Following brief discussion, a motion to approve the Q3 Performance Matrix Report as presented was made by Konstantine Drosos and seconded by Greg Cameron. The motion carried unanimously.

Fall Programming

Michael Edwards referenced the *Falling for the Loop* promotional materials included in the Commission packet. He reported that the SSA hosted two highly successful *Sundays on State* events. The first drew an impressive 107,000 attendees, while the second—held during heightened federal National Guard activity—saw attendance decrease to 66,000.

Edwards also highlighted the successful launch of the *Better Cities Film Festival*, marking a strong start for this new initiative. He took a moment to commend the *Arts in the Dark* parade, emphasizing its positive impact on State Street and the Loop.

Upcoming *Falling for the Loop* events includes the *Lurking in the Loop Bar Crawl* scheduled for Saturday, October 25, 2025, and a reminder was shared about the November 14th Gala.

Infrastructure Repair Strategy

Ryan Segal expressed interest in gaining a clearer understanding of the cost and process involved in undertaking major repairs to the State Street aggregate sidewalks. He proposed a phased approach to upgrading the sidewalks and exploring funding strategies that could involve contributions from property owners, the City of Chicago, and the SSA. As an initial step, CLA invited Kate Geurcio of Hard Surface Finishers (HSF) to provide insight into the scope and logistics of such a project.

Kate thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak and shared that HSF has partnered with the Chicago Loop Alliance since 2009–2010 to address sidewalk maintenance, including replacing trip hazards and damaged concrete squares. Historically, HSF conducted regular walkthroughs of State Street with CLA staff to identify areas needing repair. Initially, all cracked squares were replaced, but as costs increased and funding became constrained—particularly post-COVID—the focus shifted to addressing only trip hazards, significantly reducing the number of annual replacements.

Michael Edwards noted that the Commission is now considering a larger-scale sidewalk replacement initiative. Kate explained that in 2021, HSF developed cost estimates for full block replacements, factoring in numerous logistical challenges:

- Street closures requiring Jersey barricades and pedestrian rerouting
- Coordination with storefronts to maintain access and fire exits
- Relocation of infrastructure, including Divvy stations (approx. \$18,000 per station), CTA bus stops (approx. \$8,000), and CTA entrances
- ADA compliance, including transition ramps for pedestrian access
- Unmapped sidewalk vaults, which vary in condition and require waterproofing repairs
- Exclusion of curb replacement, as it would necessitate repaving State Street due to its depth and proximity to the asphalt

Kate provided two cost scenarios:

- Specialty Aggregate Concrete:
 - \$1,200 per cubic yard
 - \$450,000 per block (one side)
 - \$900,000 per full block
 - Total for 9 blocks: \$8.1 million
- Standard Dyed Concrete (maintaining current patterns with potential color changes):
 - \$335,000 per block (one side)

- \$670,000 per full block
- Total for 9 blocks: \$6.1 million

Both estimates include contingencies and phasing considerations.

Michael Edwards thanked Kate for her detailed presentation and emphasized the importance of understanding the scale of the project. He suggested that while an \$8 million initiative may not be immediately feasible, the Commission could explore partnership opportunities with the City, property owners, and the SSA.

Ryan Segal shared that while he hopes the SSA will lead the effort, he recognizes that sidewalk maintenance is ultimately a property owner's responsibility. He proposed developing a partnership program that would allow property owners to undertake repairs independently using SSA-issued specifications. The Commission agreed and directed staff to continue working with HSF and City representatives to explore phased implementation and funding strategies for future budgets.

Edwards also directed Commissioners to the asset inventory report included in the Board packet. He noted that CLA maintains a comprehensive inventory of public assets and infrastructure, including lampposts, broken globes, lighting outages, sidewalk curbs, CTA headhouses, planter repairs, and more. While the SSA has not historically budgeted for major capital improvements due to financial constraints, Edwards suggested that future planning could include dedicated funding for such upgrades, ideally in partnership with the City.

Repairing CTA Headhouses

Michael Edwards shared that he has been working closely with the CTA to address the deteriorating condition of three CTA stations along State Street. He emphasized that in alignment with CLA's mission to restore confidence in the Loop, the experience visitors have at CTA headhouses often serves as their first impression of State Street and the surrounding area. Unfortunately, many of these headhouses are currently in poor condition, with visible disrepair and cleanliness issues.

In collaboration with CTA, CLA has obtained pricing to pressure wash all three stations—extending from the street level down the stairs to the turnstiles—on a monthly basis. The estimated annual cost for this service is approximately \$80,000.

Additionally, CTA has acknowledged ongoing issues with non-functioning escalators and water-damaged stairways, contributing to an overall negative experience for riders. Edwards directed Commissioners to review the proposal included in their packets, which outlines a phased plan from CTA to rehabilitate the headhouses. The plan includes repairing two sets of headhouses per year, at a cost of \$137,000 annually, with the goal of addressing all three to four sets over a four-year period. CTA is currently working to secure funding to support this initiative.

Segal expressed strong support for the phased approach, noting the importance of improving the headhouses. He referenced the Sullivan Center, where his company is located, and pointed out the poor condition of the headhouse in front of Target, stating that the glass is so dirty it's no longer transparent.

The Commission acknowledged the importance of this initiative and will continue working with CTA to support the proposed improvements and explore potential funding partnerships.

Business Enhancement

Edwards directed Commissioners to the Real Estate Report included in their meeting packets. He explained that this quarterly report is a curated summary of current activity along State Street and throughout the Loop. The Chicago Loop Alliance distributes this report to over 100 property owners and real estate brokers to provide timely, relevant information that supports positive decision-making by investors, prospective tenants, and stakeholders considering a presence downtown.

The second page of the report highlights the Loop's performance over the past quarter, with a notable emphasis on the economic impact of arts and culture—generating \$514 million in direct economic activity. Pedestrian traffic data collected from counters along State Street is also included, showing the highest foot traffic near Randolph and Lake Streets, with a noticeable decline near the southern end by the universities.

This disparity is reflected in retail vacancy data: there are only eight vacant storefronts north of Monroe, compared to 45 south of Monroe. The report includes a detailed list of all retail vacancies along State Street. Edwards emphasized that while State Street retail differs from Michigan Avenue's offerings, it remains vibrant, with over 20 solid retail stores operating downtown.

Additionally, the report highlights over 30 new businesses that opened in the Loop last quarter, including a newly opened Panera Bread, which Edwards encouraged Commissioners to visit if they hadn't already.

Status Reports/Outstanding Issues

Safety

Captain Mannion reported that as of now, no replacement has been named for Commander David Harris, who retired in July. While his departure is a significant loss, the First District remains actively engaged in supporting State Street, the Chicago Loop Alliance, and the broader Loop community. Edwards assured the group that updates will be shared as soon as a new commander is appointed.

Captain Mannion then reviewed public safety data through the end of September. Overall, crime indicators relevant to the Loop and of concern to CLA and the State Street Commission are trending positively, with most categories in the "green." Notably:

- Gun arrests and overall arrest numbers have increased
- Robberies are down 25%
- Motor vehicle thefts are down 50%
- General thefts are down 10%

He emphasized that while these numbers are encouraging, they should be interpreted thoughtfully, considering broader context and contributing factors. He thanked the Commission and partners for their continued support in improving safety.

To ensure officers are informed about ongoing developments, including new businesses opening in the area, CLA will provide summaries of key updates. Officers Theo and Razielis will visit new stores to establish relationships and ensure business owners have direct points of contact. As the saying goes, “The time to exchange business cards is not during an emergency.”

Captain Mannion also reflected on the past weekend’s events, noting the remarkable ability of the Loop to host large-scale gatherings. Despite a protest march involving approximately 75,000 participants, the area quickly transitioned to host tens of thousands for the successful *Arts in the Dark* parade.

Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming Conversation with the Cops, scheduled for tomorrow at 3:00 PM in the Walnut Room at Macy’s. Last year’s event was well-attended and played a key role in shaping the First District’s strategic plan.

Regarding the upcoming *Lurking in the Loop* event, Captain Mannion confirmed that bike patrols, watches, and CERT teams will be notified, especially given the presence of masks and costumes. CLA also offered to present at roll call if helpful to ensure officers are fully briefed.

Kristen Duncan expressed appreciation to Captain Mannion for his continued support in addressing safety concerns in Garvey Court, Lake Street, and the area surrounding the 7-Eleven at Lake and Dearborn.

Streets & Sanitation

Noel Valenzuela reported that the Department of Streets and Sanitation will continue monitoring the alleys adjacent to the Joffrey Ballet and Cadillac Palace Theatre. The department completed cleanup efforts following the *Arts in the Dark* parade. As always, he encouraged Commissioners to report any issues directly via email to either himself or Debbie De Lopez, assuring that concerns will be addressed promptly.

Ryan Segal inquired whether Streets and Sanitation could assist with replacing the etched glass panels on the CTA headhouses. Noel responded that the department can address the issue provided the etching is not too deep, in which case replacement may be more complex.

CTA

Tom McCay, recently hired by CDOT as the project manager for the CTA station renovation, introduced himself to the Commission. He noted that approximately 90% of his role involves stakeholder engagement and coordination. Having previously worked with Edwards on the Washington/Wabash project, he emphasized his commitment to ensuring that businesses and organizations along State Street are properly accommodated throughout the construction process.

To date, the project has encountered several delivery-related challenges, particularly with new tenants such as Panera Bread. The current Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) configuration has shifted operations toward the curb line, but the contractor has remained flexible in accommodating deliveries. Tom highlighted ongoing coordination efforts to maintain access for show trucks servicing the Chicago Theatre and the Nederlander Theatre.

McCay also shared that he is in regular communication with WLS and CLA staff, including Laura Graves and Brad Renner, often speaking with Laura multiple times a week. Construction activities are being scheduled around WLS’s broadcast hours, and no night work is planned

through the end of the year—except for occasional MOT-related adjustments. Current work includes demolition and utility location, with a major ComEd operation underway that must be relocated before excavation begins for the new elevator platform.

The new elevator will be installed directly in front of WLS, providing access from street level to the mezzanine. Tom expressed concern about the impact of upcoming nighttime demolition on nearby hotels. This phase, expected to begin in late December or January, will last approximately eight weeks, with three to four weeks involving heavy demolition of platform steel adjacent to hotel properties. While efforts will be made to mitigate noise, the presence of trucks, backup alarms, and continuous activity may affect hotel guests.

CLA has proactively removed two planters in front of WLS and preserved the granite and railing materials, which are now stored in the Palmer House basement along with other inventory. Additionally, CLA cleared the gateway area—including chairs and umbrella holders—to accommodate a planned vehicle turnaround.

During the discussion, Greg Cameron asked about the timeline for the State Street Bridge repairs. Art Rodriguez responded that the bridge was originally scheduled to reopen by Thanksgiving, but the timeline has now shifted to the first or second week of December.

Segal noted he had received notification that train service through the Loop would be suspended over the upcoming weekend. Rodriguez confirmed that a detour plan had been distributed.

Department of Planning & Development

Segal introduced Cindy Roubik from the Department of Planning & Development. Roubik shared that the department has released the 2045 Central Area Plan for public comment, with the feedback period open through October 27. Input received will help refine recommendations, action items, and mapping details. The department is targeting a November hearing before the Chicago Plan Commission for formal adoption.

Roubik also highlighted two major LaSalle Street redevelopment projects recently approved by City Council:

- 105 West Adams – a \$185 million adaptive reuse project converting office space into residential units
- 135 South LaSalle – a \$241 million investment for mixed-use conversion

Currently, the City is supporting six adaptive reuse projects through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which will result in 1,765 new residential units in the financial district—over 500 of which will be designated as affordable housing.

Encouragingly, private investment in the Loop continues, with ten additional office-to-residential conversion projects underway, funded independently.

Roubik clarified that the LaSalle Street conversions are mixed-use developments, incorporating ground-floor retail and a combination of residential, office, or other uses on upper floors.

Other Business

Segal thanked Roubik for her informative report and reminded Commissioners that the next meeting will be held on November 18, 2025. He also encouraged everyone to purchase tickets

and attend the November 14 Gala at the Palmer House, noting it as a key opportunity to support and celebrate the work of the Chicago Loop Alliance.

Segal then invited Edwards to provide a brief overview of the materials included in the Commission packet. Edwards asked Commissioners to take time to review the packet, which includes several important items:

- A report on global urban trends over the past 10 years
- The September performance report for CLA's largest program—Clean & Safe Services. Edwards noted that surveyors have been active on State Street, gathering feedback from pedestrians to assess the impact of ambassador services. The survey asks whether people feel safer and whether the street appears cleaner compared to last year. Results will be shared at the November meeting, as this program is central to CLA's mission.

Edwards also highlighted the October President's Report, a first-person summary of current initiatives and priorities. He praised the CLA staff for their outstanding work and noted that the report is intended to capture the breadth of efforts underway across the organization.

Alderman Office Reports

Segal introduced Katie Osatrowski from Alderman Robinson's office. Ostrowski acknowledged that recent federal-level developments and ongoing events have made things particularly hectic. She extended thanks to the Chicago Police Department for their continued support and noted that the City is now entering budget season.

Randall Harrington, representing Alderman Reilly's office, echoed Ostrowski's comments regarding the impact of federal actions and Loop activity. He shared that Alderman Reilly is closely monitoring federal policy changes, although local officials are often among the last to be informed. As budget discussions begin, Alderman Reilly—who generally opposes tax increases—is working to hold the line on taxes this season. Harrington also mentioned ongoing bridge repair projects, including work on State Street and Lake Street, and expressed optimism that once completed, the area will benefit from new, improved infrastructure. Dan Luna, from Alderman Conway's office, offered his apologies at the beginning of the meeting for needing to leave early.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

La Verne Morris, Secretary