



McKINLEY PARK
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

City of Chicago McKinley Park Neighborhood Plan

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Acknowledgements

Steering Committee

Tony Adams, McKinley Park Development Council
John Belcik, McKinley Park Development Council
Dayna Calderon, McKinley Park Development Council
Amber Cicotte, Resident
Vernalynne De La Rosa, Midwest Asian Health Association
Mario Diaz, McKinley Park Development Council
Billy Drew, 12th Ward Independent Precinct Organization
Liliana Escarpita, 12th Ward Alderman George A. Cardenas
Kelly Fitzpatrick, 11th Ward Alderman Patrick D. Thompson
Kensen Lam, McKinley Park Community Church
Mayra Lopez-Zuñiga, State Representative Theresa Mah (2nd District)
Beata Skorusa, Business Owner
Marya Spont-Lemus, Resident
Irene Lopez-Santoyo, 7th District Cook County Commissioner
Alma Anaya
Nurys Uceta Ramos, Chicago Public Schools, Network 5: McKinley Park

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Chapter 1

Introduction



The McKinley Park Neighborhood Plan presents a framework for future decision-making rooted in the community's vision. It is the result of two years of work led by the McKinley Park Development Council (MPDC), Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD), and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) with McKinley Park's residents, business and property owners, workers, and community leaders.

Located on the southwest side of Chicago, McKinley Park is less than five miles from Chicago's Loop. For this planning effort, MPDC chose the planning area boundaries defined by the McKinley Park Chicago Community Area, with the exception of its south boundary, which is extended south to the rail corridor to include Chicago's Central Manufacturing District (CMD). The CMD was the first planned manufacturing district in the United States and one of the largest industrial parks in the world. It includes two CTA Orange Line stations (35th and Archer, and Halsted) that serve the neighborhood; three main commercial corridors: the Archer Avenue, Ashland Avenue, and 35th Street; and the South Branch of the Chicago River.

Organization of the Plan

This Plan is a distillation of CMAP's research, findings, and recommendations for Chicago's McKinley Park neighborhood. The plan is organized into the following chapters:

- Executive Summary
- Chapter 1. Introduction
- Chapter 2. A Vision for McKinley Park
- **Chapter 3. Preserve Neighborhood Diversity**
- **Chapter 4. Promote Equitable Transit-Oriented Development**
- **Chapter 5. Revitalize Commercial Corridors**
- **Chapter 6. Modernize the Central Manufacturing District**
- **Chapter 7. Enhance and Expand Parks and Recreational Opportunities**
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- **Chapter 9. Implementation**
- Appendix A. Key Intersection Improvement Concepts
- Appendix B. Existing Conditions Report
- Appendix C. Outreach Activities and Results

Each of the bolded chapters represents a goal. Each chapter includes a vision statement, highlights of key findings, and a set of recommendations followed by an implementation table that provides a description of actions to be undertaken. Appendix A provides conceptual drawings for potential improvements at six key intersections in the study area. Appendix B is the Existing Conditions Report, an interim deliverable for this plan that summarizes current conditions in the area at the outset of the planning process and identifies issues and opportunities for the plan to address. Appendix C includes summaries of all the outreach activities and results throughout the process.

McKinley Park's Need for a Neighborhood Plan

McKinley Park is a working-class neighborhood located on Chicago's southwest side. Throughout its long history, McKinley Park has served as an important industrial job center. Its strong transportation network and proximity to the South Branch of the Chicago River speak to the neighborhood's history as a thriving industrial center. Today, McKinley Park's location continues to play an important role. Its proximity to multimodal transportation options, parks and open space, as well as regional economic centers bolster its potential as a desirable location for residential and commercial investment. However, like many neighborhoods in Chicago, McKinley Park wrestles with reduced housing affordability, disinvested corridors, and unattractive vacancies.

McKinley Park has never had its own plan to guide development in ways that align with community priorities. The neighborhood plan presents a unified vision of what the community aspires to be and provides a roadmap to achieve that vision. This vision of what could be is what inspired MPDC to produce a neighborhood plan that builds upon the community's valuable assets, as well as past and current planning efforts, to complement and continue these endeavors.

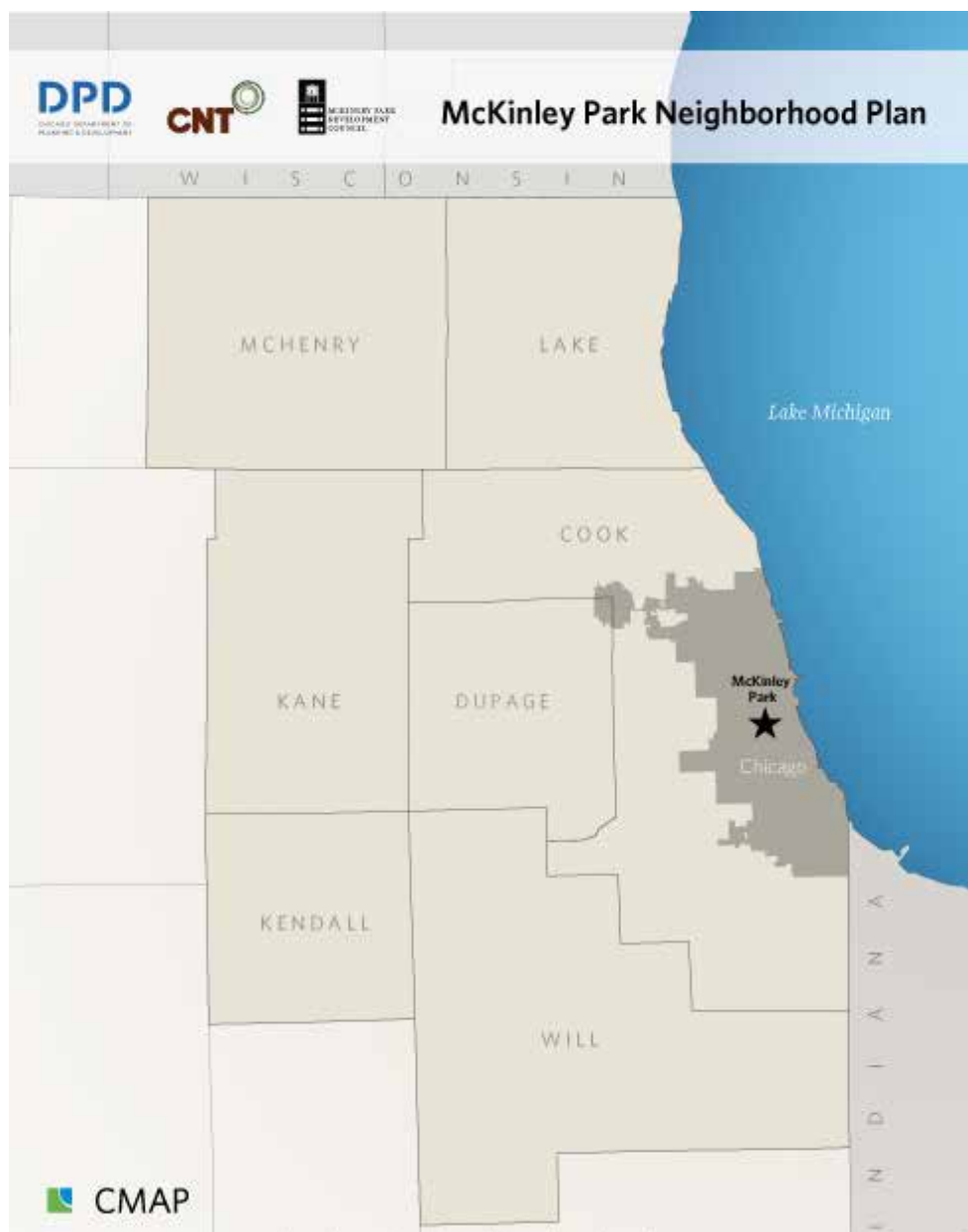
While the focus of the plan is McKinley Park, the plan also acknowledges planning activities in adjacent communities, including Pilsen, Bridgeport, Back of the Yards, and Brighton Park. Key areas of emphasis for the plan include, but are not limited to, equitable transit-oriented development, revitalization of commercial corridors, modernization of the CMD, as well as climate resilience.

Planning Process

In early 2018, MPDC began a community-driven process to create their first ever neighborhood plan as part of CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program. The process to create this plan included multiple steps that were undertaken over approximately two years. The planning process was crafted with assistance from MPDC, DPD, and the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), and was designed to include input from residents, stakeholders, and business owners throughout. This plan outlines the community's shared vision and defines policies and steps to help achieve that vision.



Figure 1. McKinley Park Area Study Context



Community Engagement

One of the primary goals of the Neighborhood Plan planning process was to fully and effectively engage the community. McKinley Park is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse communities in the City of Chicago. To provide mechanisms for meaningful outreach in such a diverse community, CMAP staff devised a public outreach strategy with MPDC and the steering committee to execute several approaches for public participation. The project team used one-on-one confidential interviews, steering committee meetings, a focus group, listening meetings, and an interactive online survey, and also attended several events and meetings in the community.

The outreach efforts had five major goals:

1. Engage a broad representation of the community in the planning process.
2. Educate the community about the purpose of the project.
3. Garner public input on key issues and opportunities for McKinley Park.
4. Create a shared vision for McKinley Park.
5. Build community capacity to implement the plan.





Outreach Results

More than 820 residents and stakeholders have contributed their input since the start of the formal planning process. Overall, participants held many of the same concerns and generally expressed the desire to build upon the many assets of the neighborhood. Most participants want to maintain the industrial heritage of the neighborhood but also expressed health and nuisance concerns related to those uses. The new asphalt plant rose as a major concern related to environmental quality and highlighted the need for improved transparency in the development approval process. The community envisions a new direction for industrial uses and sees public engagement in the development process essential to realizing that vision.

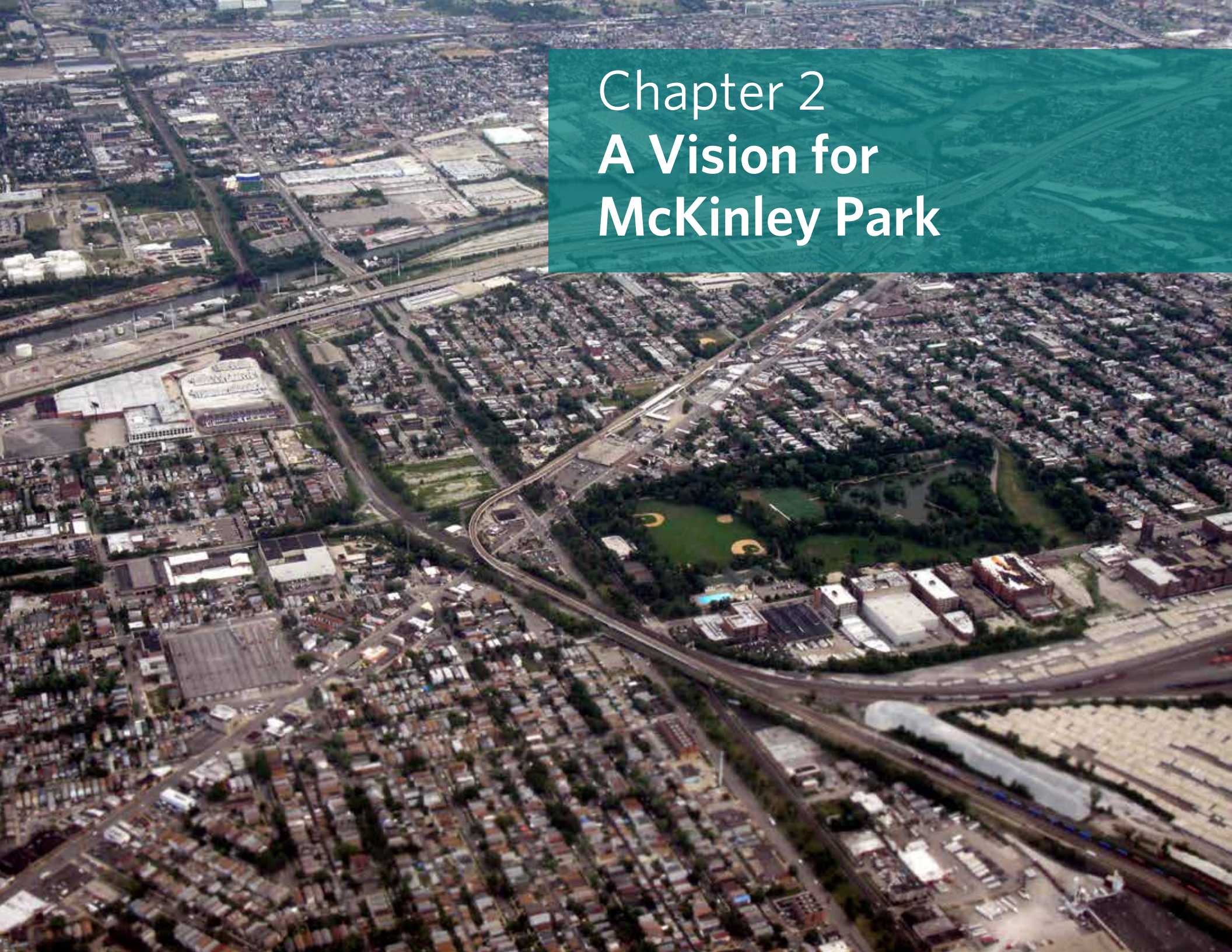
Longtime residents reported their desire to preserve the close-knit and diverse culture that exists in their community. Gentrification and displacement were identified as priority concerns, and residents stressed the importance of preserving housing affordability to combat displacement. Stakeholders mentioned the need to support local businesses, particularly along 35th Street, and prioritize economic development along main commercial corridors.

Safety for those walking and biking in the neighborhood is a primary concern, particularly along high-traffic-corridors like Archer Avenue. Many people would like to see designated bike lanes and trails for active transportation, as well as streetscape improvements for pedestrians. Community-based programming for all ages was also a key priority for many residents.

In addition, many stakeholders would like to capitalize on their neighborhood parks, connection to the boulevard system, and proximity to the river to promote livability and attract residents, visitors, and shoppers to the neighborhood. Photos from outreach events are found in Appendix C.

IN 2030, MCKINLEY PARK
WILL...
MAS DIVERSA

MCKINLEY PARK
PROGRAMA DE DESARROLLO
COMUNITARIO
DPD CNT
CMAP

An aerial photograph of a city neighborhood. A large green park with baseball fields and a swimming pool is the central focus. The park is surrounded by dense residential housing, industrial buildings, and a major highway. A semi-transparent green box is overlaid on the top right of the image, containing the chapter title.

Chapter 2 A Vision for McKinley Park

The Vision

McKinley Park's long history of cultural diversity is celebrated, valued, and preserved through its wide range of housing options. It strives to create a neighborhood where walking and biking is a safe and comfortable way to get around; where social gatherings attract residents and people from around the region; and frequenting unique local businesses and dining al fresco at an array of restaurants is encouraged.

McKinley Park envisions nurturing creativity and innovation in a modernized manufacturing district, accompanied by a strong labor force fueling our region's economy.

McKinley Park is an oasis of natural and recreational amenities with picturesque parks and riverfront, where people can discover all that the city has to offer — an experience unlike any other.

Guiding Principles

It is clear that the McKinley Park community has great pride and ambitions for the future. Six overarching principles emerged to guide the strategies outlined in the McKinley Park Neighborhood Plan:

1. Maintain the neighborhood's diversity by preserving a wide range of housing options, supporting local businesses, and continuing to celebrate and welcome culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse residents.
2. Focus equitable mixed-used development in areas with access to transit and amenities.
3. Identify missing connections and infrastructure improvements so that pedestrians, bicyclists, commuters, and drivers can move around with ease.
4. Target new sustainable development and adaptive reuse projects to maintain local jobs and ensure the health and well-being of residents.
5. Preserve and expand the natural assets of the neighborhood, and ensure that residents have access to natural amenities and community programming in the future.
6. Achieve resilience by making natural systems and economic and social structures more durable for years to come.

Chapter 3

Preserve Neighborhood Diversity



THE VISION

McKinley Park will be celebrated as a community that supports local businesses and welcomes culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse residents. We will elevate our diversity by preserving a wide range of housing options, promoting homeownership, empowering homeowners, and providing affordable apartments.



Introduction

Cultural diversity is an important part of McKinley Park's identity. Diversity, here, refers to residents' racial background, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and is an asset that helps distinguish McKinley Park from other Chicago neighborhoods. The wide variety of housing options in the neighborhood helps make local diversity possible. However, given the trend of gentrification that other neighborhoods similar to McKinley Park have experienced, a wide range of housing options must not only be preserved but also expanded in order to maintain the neighborhood's diversity and economic stability in the long term. The contributions of residents, businesses, and organizations in McKinley Park make the community stronger. Recommendations to preserve neighborhood diversity revolve around building and sustaining community, bolstering local business, and cultivating and celebrating neighborhood identity.

Key Findings

- **Residents and stakeholders identify housing affordability as one, if not the main, attribute associated with them moving to McKinley Park.** Maintaining diversity by preserving affordable housing choices is essential to the neighborhood plan. About 62 percent of housing units in the study area are in multifamily buildings, and 87 percent are renter-occupied. 70 percent of rental units in McKinley Park are affordable to those earning less than 60 percent of Area Median Income (AMI), but only 10 percent of those units are legally restricted. Almost all of the affordable units in McKinley Park are naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH). The diversity of housing options has been a source of stability, allowing residents who may initially rent smaller units to move up to larger units, and eventually to homeownership.
- **While housing costs have increased since the 2008 recession, McKinley Park prices remain low compared to other neighborhoods in Chicago.** Preserving and creating opportunities for affordable housing will help protect existing residents against market pressures that could burden or displace them. Households spending more than half their income on housing are considered severely cost-burdened. Based on data specific to the McKinley Park community area in the period between 2012 and 2016, 38 percent of owner households and 53 percent of renters were burdened by housing costs. This impacts their ability to spend money and support local businesses, as well as access necessities like health care.

- **McKinley Park has long been a port of entry for many immigrants.** Today, McKinley Park's population remains steady, increasing 2.9 percent from 2010 to 2016 (greater than Chicago's 0.7 percent or the region's 0.8 percent). This growth is largely attributed to the continued growth in the Asian population (16 percent). On the contrary, the Black, Latino, and White populations have decreased by 40 percent, 3 percent, and 3 percent respectively during this same period. Stakeholders consider the community's diversity to be one of its greatest assets to preserve and celebrate. The plan explores ways to market the neighborhood's diversity to preserve and attract new residents, visitors, customers, and investment.



Recommendations

Although the housing market is strengthening, it is not too late for the community, aldermen, and partners to implement affordability strategies before market forces drive land and home values higher. Community advocates can find opportunities to take advantage of market forces to leverage developer interest and drive the construction of new affordable housing. The following strategies, many of them low-budget and involving strategic partnerships, offer concrete ways to better engage and involve the community in projects and decision-making. Successful implementation of this plan will rely in large part on community engagement. Given the study area's demographics, several strategies are targeted to specifically engage underrepresented populations in McKinley Park. Recommendations in this chapter also focus on building off existing efforts and resources to strengthen and support existing and new local businesses.



3.1 Maintain Housing Affordability, Choice, and Quality

McKinley Park's variety of housing types allows for people of different socioeconomic and racial/ethnic backgrounds to live in the neighborhood, thereby contributing to McKinley Park's identity. While housing costs have increased since the 2008 recession, McKinley Park prices remain low compared to other neighborhoods in Chicago. Preserving and creating opportunities for housing affordability, choices, and quality will help attract new residents and protect existing residents against market pressures that could burden or displace them.

Form a neighborhood coalition to coordinate housing advocacy

To tackle a complex challenge like housing affordability, a community needs stakeholders who are energized, committed, and coordinated. McKinley Park has the advantage of having many passionate residents and advocates who are involved in numerous community organizations. MPDC should establish a housing coalition to guide the community's work on housing affordability, choices, and quality. Communities United has organized stakeholders from a variety of Chicago neighborhoods to work for equity and social justice, including in the housing sector. MPDC should partner with Communities United to form a neighborhood coalition that can organize and coordinate key stakeholders who seek to preserve and expand housing affordability.

This new MPDC housing coalition should include a broad set of stakeholders to address the many issues outlined in this chapter. MPDC should work with Community United and other local housing advocates, such as The Resurrection Project and Greater Southwest Development Corporation, and to identify stakeholders who could be added to the committee to ensure it draws on the expertise and local knowledge required to implement this plan's recommendations. This coalition will provide a platform that leverages the combined resources, knowledge, and energy of organizations and institutions to implement the recommendations described in this plan. It would also demonstrate the community's broad, organized support for affordable housing, which can make developers and elected officials more confident in siting new affordable housing developments in the neighborhood.

The Equitable Transit-Oriented Development chapter of this plan (Chapter 4) also recommends that neighborhood stakeholders form a coalition of community organizations, local businesses, affordability advocates, and public sector stakeholders to advocate for the community's vision for equitable development. Ideally, the same group — a strategically expanded MPDC housing coalition — could serve both functions. Nonetheless, taking on the formation of this coalition will be a demanding task, and MPDC should seek grants or other assistance to help enhance their capacity to coordinate the project. The Chicago Community Trust, Enterprise Community Partners, mission-driven community financial institutions, and philanthropic foundations with a focus on equity may be able to support this work.

Advocate for the protection and production of on-site affordable units

The City has a number of tools in place to help preserve and produce affordable housing units. One tool is the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO), which requires residential developers that receive financial assistance, city-owned land, or a zoning change to provide a percentage of units at affordable prices. In 2019, the Chicago Department of Housing (DOH) created an Inclusionary Housing Task Force with members of diverse backgrounds to inform how affordable housing is created throughout Chicago.¹ The culmination of the ARO Task Force, focus groups, public meetings, public comment, and the City's budget and policy priorities is expected to result in a revised ordinance in 2021.

MPDC's new housing coalition should monitor current and future change in the ARO to advocate for the creation of more on-site affordable housing in new developments. Moreover, the housing coalition should monitor the implementation of the ARO in McKinley Park to assess its impacts. Finally, the housing coalition should maintain regular communication with community stakeholders and work with the alderman to incentivize or require the construction of affordable units on site.

Work with DPD to tailor existing city-wide programs to meet the needs of residents of McKinley Park

During the community engagement process, discussion took place regarding ways in which existing housing programs could assist residents as they purchase, repair, and rehabilitate properties that have deferred maintenance. The following programs often require a period of occupancy and are limited to low- and moderate-income households.

- *Owner-Occupied Repair Programs to Assist with Deferred Maintenance*
These programs help existing owners remain in their one- to four-unit homes while addressing health and safety repairs, improving energy efficiency, and increasing household affordability. The program can also be used to improve rental units on the property so long as they are rented affordably. This program often requires a period of occupancy and is limited to low- and moderate-income households.
- *Purchase Assistance Program for Owner-Occupant Homebuyers*
This program provides purchase assistance for occupant homebuyers purchasing a one-to-four unit home. Funds can be used to assist with the acquisition of the property. This program often requires a period of occupancy and is limited to low- and moderate-income households.
- *Purchase Rehab Assistance Programs for Owner-Occupant Homebuyers*
Homes with extensive deferred maintenance, or those in need of repair, often require a “purchase rehab loan” to acquire the property. This federal program provides rehab assistance for occupant homebuyers purchasing a one- to four-unit home in need of extensive renovation. This program often requires a period of occupancy and is limited to low- and moderate-income households.

- *Chicago Community Land Trust for Buyers*

Chicago Community Land Trust (CCLT) was founded in 2006 to address the increasingly limited supply of funding for affordable housing. The goal of the CCLT is to preserve long-term affordability of homes, created through City programs, and maintain a permanent pool of homeownership opportunities for working families. The CCLT maintains a resale pool of homeownership opportunities for working families. Properties purchased through the trust often require a period of 30-year occupancy and are limited to low- and moderate-income households.

The most current list of housing programs can be found online at www.cityofchicago.org/DPD.

Other strategies:

- *Increase MPDC’s capacity to engage the community, support and market small businesses, and lead the community to better respond to development proposals. See Chapter 4 for ideas on how to accomplish this strategy.*
- *Work with key partners like the City of Chicago and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to identify opportunities to implement inclusive and supportive housing initiatives.*
- *Pursue a targeted historic resource inventory to explore increasing the number of properties protected by historic preservation rules.²*

3.2 Celebrate McKinley Park's Diversity through Cultural Programming

Livable communities draw their strength and vitality from a unique “sense of place” that attracts people and makes them feel at home and welcome. McKinley Park already has a distinct sense of place deeply rooted in the neighborhood’s diversity. McKinley Park can raise its profile throughout Chicago and the region by celebrating this diversity through arts and culture planning that is creative, smart, and resourceful. In addition to several government offices, McKinley Park has a number of schools, religious institutions, a library, parks and recreational facilities, and other cultural organizations that demonstrate the depth of the neighborhood’s passion. This passion can be leveraged to promote the diversity and character of the community.



Develop an alliance for arts and culture stakeholders to leverage resources through coordination and collaboration

A new Arts and Culture Alliance can coordinate the variety of arts and culture activities and initiatives taking place in the community, and work in partnership to help McKinley Park reach its potential, and expand its future capacity. Similar to the proposed MPDC housing coalition, this new alliance could more efficiently identify opportunities and prioritize focus areas for the arts community. Through coordination and collaboration, the new alliance would better leverage resources, reveal unnecessary redundancies, and identify gaps to be filled by appropriate members of the group.

The Arts and Culture Alliance can give a stronger voice to grassroots efforts by including the participation of local artists, gallery owners (including The Bridgeport Art and Zhou B Art Centers), museum administrators (Chicago Maritime Museum), and representatives from school art departments, the public library, and other private and public entities. This alliance would create a single information point for arts and culture initiatives.

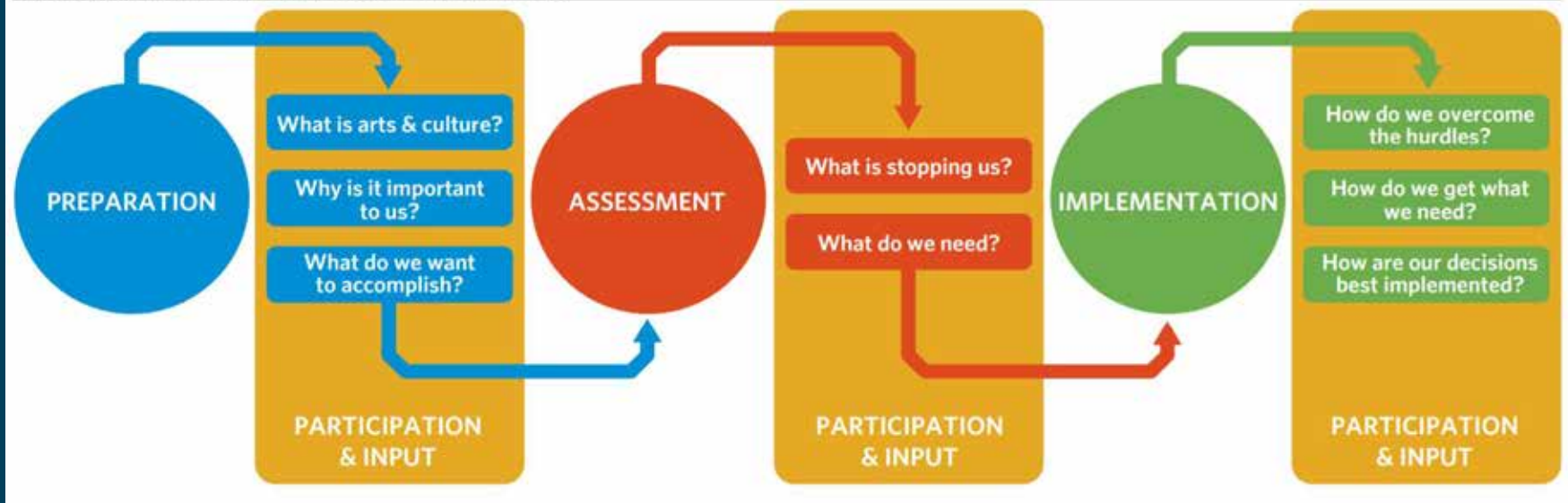
CMAP has created a toolkit that helps communities assess their options and choose the arts and culture policies that are right for Arts and Culture Alliance. The toolkit is detailed enough that the members of the new Arts and Culture Alliance could use it to guide their arts and culture initiatives, step-by-step, with little or no additional assistance.

Arts and Culture Toolkit

CMAP's *Arts and Culture Planning: A Toolkit for Communities* offers a primer on the different mediums of arts and culture, including visual arts, theater arts, music arts, culinary arts, applied arts (such as industrial design and graphic design), fashion design, and media arts (such as film and animation). The toolkit can help participants think through the complexity and richness of the local arts and culture community. The toolkit details the primary functional and spatial needs that each medium of arts and culture needs to be successful.

The toolkit explains how adaptive reuse can take advantage of existing physical resources to create productive spaces, as well as how temporary uses provide a unique opportunity to further expand opportunities. The toolkit details typical regulatory considerations that are key to the implementation of these and similar strategies. It provides model regulatory language that could be used to define allowed arts and culture activities within a zoning district, standards for uses to mitigate impacts, provisions to allow and encourage the adaptive reuse of existing institutional structures, as well as guidance as to how to construct an arts district.

Four key components of Arts and Culture Planning



The toolkit is available for download at <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs/community-development/arts>

Case Study: Chicago for Chicagoans' McKinley Park Tour

On April 28 and June 1, 2019, Chicago for Chicagoans offered a 2.5-hour walking tour through McKinley Park, taking participants to discover the rich history, landmarks, and towering structures of a neighborhood that's long been responsible for much of Chicago's bricks, iron, meat, furniture, and Goodyear tires, while also housing an ever-changing, diverse immigrant population. The tour began at the 35th/Archer Orange Line station and ended at the Huck Finn restaurant.

Chicago for Chicagoans offers "pay-what-you-can" tour services and is a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit that creates inclusive walking tours by and for Chicago residents, designed to represent the histories of all Chicagoans.



Source: Chicago for Chicagoans

Strengthen the neighborhood's sense of heritage and identity by pursuing targeted arts and cultural endeavors

While the process to develop an arts and culture alliance and a comprehensive arts and culture plan with identified priorities will take some time, there are small steps that can be taken to continue the momentum of arts initiatives in the neighborhood. These are mostly efforts that will help to bring positive attention to the neighborhood and sustain ongoing efforts.

1. *Boost visitor attractions to strengthen McKinley Park's sense of heritage and identity*

McKinley Park already offers a number of events that attract residents and visitors from surrounding neighborhoods. Events like the Farmers Market Concert Series, Ice Skating at McKinley Park, Arts and Crafts Indoor Market at Kristoffer's Cakes, Jazz on Marz with the Jazzeros, and Chicago River Day on Bubbly Creek are just a few of many events. Other ideas to help boost visitors are walking and biking tours, architectural and photography tours, and tours that make use of educational boards and historic photos can be used to promote the extensive natural and historical resources in the neighborhood. Efforts to boost visitors could start right away with an educated citizenry willing to dedicate time by hosting a photography meetup group. A more official connection to the architectural history could result from a partnership with the Chicago Architecture Foundation or other local tour groups.

2. Create a comprehensive inventory of space available for cultural uses

An inventory of cultural spaces, such as sites for public display of art, venues for concerts and plays, gallery spaces, outdoor venues, and streets that are preferred for street festivals could be developed. Bridges and exterior walls of public buildings are examples of spaces that could be appropriate for rotating exhibitions or accommodate permanent installations. The inventory should also be used in the process to improve neighborhood gateways and transportation hubs, as an opportunity to integrate local cultural assets into the design of the improvements. See Figure 5.5 for suggested gateway and signage locations.

3. Add public art installations at strategic locations

McKinley Park already has a number of beautiful public art installations (see Figure 3.1). More efforts to engage the public as they walk through the neighborhood will improve the overall experience, as will more public art and tours, which would also increase foot traffic at those sites. Creating a community identity through public art is an effective way to show support for the arts community and prioritize the community's emphasis on arts and culture. The Arts and Culture Alliance can begin to identify locations throughout the neighborhood that would be appropriate for display of public art. The alliance can also identify funding sources and/or developer donations, grants, and private donations as well as potential contributions in order to add more public art to the neighborhood.





Figure 3.1 Hoyne Park Mural

Source: DNAinfo/Casey Cora

3.3 Engage the Diverse Population of McKinley Park

The diversity of McKinley Park's residents is a major asset to the community. A commitment should be made by MPDC to actively engage all stakeholders and residents in plan implementation activities. The continued growth of McKinley Park's Asian population will make it essential to target this important demographic in community planning activities for years to come. Best practices and existing resources should be identified to increase community engagement with residents across the entire community. Outreach efforts should include translated materials for existing programs and services.

Work should also build ties with existing institutions, faith-based organizations, community leaders, and other programs that serve these populations. Some ways to engage the neighborhood's diverse population include:

Youth engagement: Even though 27.5 percent of McKinley Park's population is youth, community participation by this group was not well represented during the planning process. Engaging youth lends a unique perspective to the implementation of the neighborhood plan. Numerous recommendations in the plan will be more successful if they involve the school-aged population, including forming part of a beautification committee to coordinate community-driven enhancements (Goal: Revitalize Commercial Corridors), and promoting active transportation and healthy living through programs and activities (Goal: Enhance and Expand Parks and Recreational Opportunities). Engaging with local schools (including public and parochial), the McKinley Park Public Library, and the Park District can strengthen the impact and outcome of the plan's recommendations by directly engaging with youth and their parents.

Immigrant integration: As further indication of the diversity within McKinley Park, nearly 36 percent of its population is foreign born. Throughout the planning process it was difficult to fully engage McKinley Park's growing Asian population, despite a sincere interest in engaging them. Difficulties ranging from language barriers to different cultural expectations about the role of civic organizations can complicate efforts to connect. Steps should be taken to ensure that foreign-born residents and stakeholders are provided with the same opportunities to engage in community planning activities as other resident groups. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) and CMAP have developed an Immigrant Integration Toolkit that presents a variety of techniques that municipalities have successfully implemented to address integration and to create a culture of inclusion. The toolkit addresses common challenges associated with engaging immigrant populations, such as marginal participation in community meetings, lack of representation on local boards, mistrust of government, and language issues. This toolkit should be utilized to identify relevant case studies that can be implemented successfully.



Immigrant Integration Toolkit

Facilitating greater integration of foreign-born residents into the community is an important part of embracing diversity. McKinley Park should continue to celebrate and encourage diversity, including the cultural history of different ethnicities.

Embracing diversity could occur in several ways. CMAP's Immigrant Integration Toolkit is one of many resources that the community can use to consider appropriate ways to make existing and new residents, especially those from minority and immigrant backgrounds, feel welcome and celebrated. McKinley Park hosts several annual celebrations and events that have become staples of the community, such as the McKinley Park Farmers Market. The community should continue to work with the park's advisory groups and partner with the public library and the schools to consider the addition of events and programs to celebrate diversity and promote respect and understanding of all cultures in the community.

The toolkit is available for download at <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs/local-ordinances-toolkits/immigrant-integration>

Make public engagement accessible

A critical component to making public engagement accessible is to make public meetings and materials appropriate for participants. Input should be solicited from leaders and organizations in determining the best models of engagement. MPDC could help mediate this process by serving as a sounding board to assist, guide, and offer input on existing issues and opportunities based on their knowledge, and reviewing outreach strategies and meeting materials. Public meetings for future developments should be broadcast on Facebook Live when possible to provide increased transparency and awareness of new development projects.

Outreach strategies may need to vary depending on which community group engagement is sought. For example, phone calls may be more effective than emails. Radio stations, newspapers, and media outlets that target the specific groups should be utilized.

In addition to the standard practices for engagement, such as choosing meeting sites that are welcoming, safe, and accessible, and selecting dates and times for meetings when more people can participate, the following practices should also be considered:

- **Outreach:** Ensure that outreach and other meeting materials are available in multiple languages. Mention if there will be translation services available at an event. Social media, such as Twitter or Facebook, is a good way of connecting with people.
- **Incentives:** Provide small incentives as a way to increase participation. Examples include providing food and childcare, holding raffles for donated items, and recognizing participants. One idea is to ask local restaurants and businesses to donate gift cards to reward participants for their time. This will help encourage public participation while marketing local business.
- **Agenda:** Create an agenda that reflects the community's priorities, including those of the Asian and Latino population. Ensure that there is a common understanding about the goals and processes of the meeting.

Improve language access

Improving language access is a critical aspect of integrating McKinley Park's foreign-born population, and is important from a public safety, civic life, and economic perspective. The following activities are designed to assist immigrants' ability to access information in a language they understand and the neighborhood's ability to communicate effectively with residents who speak limited or no English.

Utilize community interpreters and establish a volunteer language bank. Community volunteers are an important and often untapped resource. Local bilingual residents should be invited to serve as volunteers offering language and cultural guidance or informal translation or interpreting services. A good way to connect with potential volunteers is to partner with local faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, and college and university student groups. A partnership should be created with Aquinas Literacy Center to start a dual language community program and offer a certification, including language proficiency assessment and basic training, in order to help ensure and improve the quality of volunteer services. Engaging young people is a great way to get entire families involved in the community. When recruiting interns and volunteers, communities should take advantage of younger residents' cultural diversity and language abilities.

3.4 Market the Neighborhood's Diversity through Small Businesses

McKinley Park's economy is largely made up of a network of small and locally owned businesses. While this contributes to the neighborhood's diverse and unique commercial offerings, it can also make it difficult to coordinate and organize the business community. Throughout the planning process, community stakeholders emphasized their desire to maintain the diversity of the neighborhood's businesses. Embarking on joint promotional campaigns and better equipping local businesses to work together will help McKinley Park better capitalize upon and attract business from residents and visitors.

Rather than relying upon each business to conduct individual marketing, the community should develop more community-wide promotional events and campaigns that highlight the diversity of restaurants and stores in McKinley Park. One strategy is to work closely with Choose Chicago, whose mission is to promote Chicago businesses to visitors, including developing collective web and print promotional materials that can greatly increase the advertising reach of McKinley Park establishments.³ Supplying Choose Chicago with a current directory and map of McKinley Park businesses — as well as basic text and other materials that provide cultural, commercial, and historical information about McKinley Park — will help Choose Chicago promote or cross-promote McKinley Park to potential visitors in other venues on behalf of the community.

Figure 3.2 Example of Neighborhood Branding and Marketing Formats



Wayfinding signage depicting a local neighborhood directory.

A coordinated marketing campaign focused on the diversity of McKinley Park can help draw visitors, customers, and potential residents. A good starting point would be to make sure MPDC's website and Facebook page reflect the diverse businesses and services of the neighborhood. In addition to continuing to promote community-wide events and programs, MPDC should use online guides and social media to create clear connections between festivals in the community and local businesses. Posting more physical signage or web-based directories about the many retail and dining options in McKinley Park can help direct visitors to more places when they arrive in the community. Putting up a comprehensive directory and map of businesses in areas like 35th and Archer, the Ashland commercial plaza, the CMD, or along the Archer corridor will help orient visitors when they arrive in commercial nodes and provide suggestions of places that they should visit.

A QR code feature could provide further information, such as recommended dishes and other guidance for visitors unfamiliar with the community. MPDC may explore the possibility of developing a mobile and web app that can provide directory information and dish recommendations. The "Go Lakeview" app from the Lakeview and Lakeview East Chambers of Commerce may provide a good model that could be adapted by MPDC.

Figure 3.3 Example of Neighborhood Branding and Marketing Formats

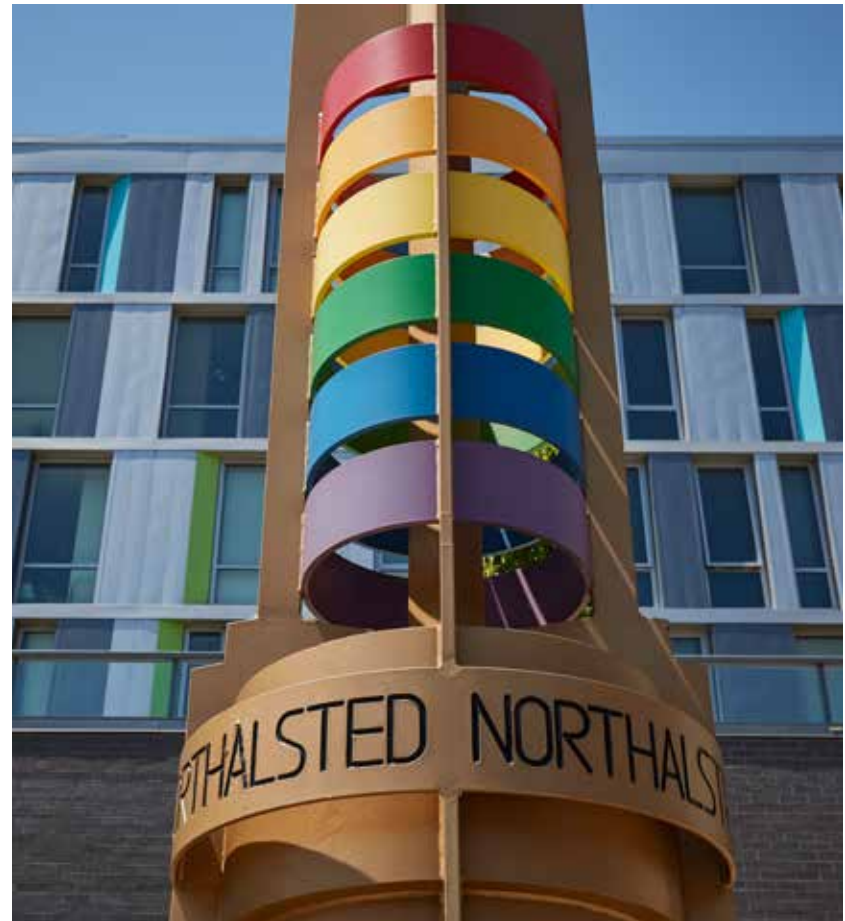


Street light banners created from students' artwork.

Partner with a marketing program at a local university to develop a marketing campaign

As part of a larger marketing initiative, a good practice would be for business development groups (such as MPDC and 36Squared Incubator) to organize local business owners to design an innovative marketing campaign that highlights events and the diversity of restaurants and stores in the community. A partnership with a marketing strategy firm or marketing program at a local university would be one effective approach to developing a campaign. Potential partners include Illinois Institute of Technology's Stuart School of Business, University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Business Administration, or Arturo Velasquez Westside Technical Institute's Business and Professional Services program. Giving existing local businesses a central role in developing the campaign can help ensure that the strategy supports the longtime business owners who have invested in the neighborhood and its residents for decades, rather than just attracting new investors from elsewhere.

The marketing campaign should initially highlight the businesses that distinguish McKinley Park from other neighborhoods. For example, popular restaurants, bakeries, and grocery stores that offer products that are hard to find elsewhere. It could be helpful to create a practical guide to the different cuisines currently available in the community, making it easy for the uninitiated to try an establishment — and perhaps a cuisine — they have never tried before. This practical guide can be made available at local businesses along the community's commercial corridors, as well as online.





Case Study: Winter Walk on Wilson

Winter Walk on Wilson is a self-guided tour designed to bring residents and visitors to Uptown for a night of family-oriented activities. The free event features sweet treats, warm drinks, and menu samples offered by local Uptown businesses and organizations as well as live holiday music along the Wilson and Broadway commercial corridors. Participants include churches, barbershops, and restaurants among other local shops. This annual event is hosted by Business Partners, The Chamber for Uptown, and is a great way for residents to meet their neighbors while also supporting local businesses and organizations. These open door events offer an opportunity for people to walk in to a business that they would otherwise not.

For more information, visit exploreuptown.org/winter-walk/

Organize community events designed to bolster visitors

Recognizing that events often require significant financial or staff support, the community should continue to employ strategies to help reduce barriers to event organizing. Some activities only require coordinated business promotion and advertisement rather than any active oversight or management. The typical preparations, labor, and costs associated with major events can be avoided by using decentralized event formats, for example, having a variety of stores and restaurants host informal musical performances throughout the day. Working closely with local businesses, as well as other partners such as local elected officials' offices, MPDC should develop additional events designed to bolster visitors and stimulate the local economy. Some ideas include:

- Coordinating a Taste of McKinley Park or other themed dining promotions on a regular basis to showcase local cuisines and provide visitors with tips and suggestions about specialty dishes.
- Developing guided or self-guided tours of the neighborhood, with an attention to cultural or historic landmarks.
- Organizing art, film, or performance fairs that celebrate Latino/a, Chinese, and Chinese-American artists, filmmakers, musicians, and chefs (similar to the McKinley Park Farmers Market Concerts, Otro Ritmo Punk Music Concert Series, and the Make Music Chicago and Ma's Day of Action with Yo-Yo Ma).
- Coordinating a scavenger hunt as a fun and participatory way to bring people to different places within McKinley Park and learn more about the community.

These activities can help to bring more foot traffic into local businesses and provide more visible advertising for McKinley Park's many commercial establishments. To better meet this need, the community should develop campaigns that entice visitors to stay in McKinley Park for dining and shopping after such events through restaurant deals and storefront open houses.

3.5 Support, Strengthen, and Grow Local Businesses

In the 21st-century economy, local small businesses of all kinds face challenges, especially competition from national chains and online retailers. Support and guidance from trusted allies, such as MPDC and local government offices, could help small business owners navigate many common difficulties. 36Squared Incubator, and local elected officials' offices already provide a variety of assistance programs and resources to local businesses to help them address many of the common challenges that they face, such as the need for façade and awning improvements, guidance on signage, and city permitting.

Beyond the common challenges facing small businesses, there are particular elements of McKinley Park's business environment that present unique hurdles for economic development in the community. Some business owners, for example, are not familiar with city programs or other business assistance models. Community engagement efforts revealed that despite available programs business owners are often are not aware of such resources and many struggle going through the city permitting process. Business owners and advocates alike expressed a desire to increase connections between businesses and existing business assistance programs.

Building entrepreneurial and management capacity for existing businesses is critical to maintaining a thriving local economy in McKinley Park. Feedback from the community identified a strong need for more resources to help business owners understand regulations, address common challenges and questions, and provide translation for business resources.

Establish specialized efforts for growing small businesses

Small businesses add to the resilience of any community. International Economic Development Council (IEDC) research suggests that smaller and more agile businesses can better respond to shocks such as changing consumer preferences and economic downturns. The study also suggests that entrepreneurs can enter niche markets much faster than large firms can. In order to activate underutilized space and grow small and niche businesses, more tools should be developed to empower entrepreneurs and existing businesses. Identifying and addressing gaps in service, as well as coordination of physical and programmatic resources, is needed. MPDC could play a role in facilitating the coordination of physical and programmatic resources for local businesses and entrepreneurs. One idea is creating a one-stop shop on MPDC's website for small businesses looking for support programs. MPDC should work with state, city, and local organizations like the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC) and Somercor to identify and align resources applicable to the needs of McKinley Park entrepreneurs through the MPDC website, informational forums, trainings, and one-on-one consultations in the community.

Conduct cross-cultural outreach in collaboration with trusted partners

MPDC needs to successfully engage and build support for small and minority-owned businesses. To offer the right assistance, it will be essential to gain a thorough understanding of the practical needs of business owners, commercial property owners, and aspiring entrepreneurs — as well as the resources they currently rely on. A first step would be to focus on increasing communication: surveying business owners on needs and providing information on available business assistance resources in some of the community’s most commonly spoken languages other than English, such as Mandarin and Spanish. Translated materials can promote existing programs and services to help with common needs such as façade improvement, business attraction, district marketing, start-ups, expansion, referrals, and loan assistance.

This effort should also seek the wisdom, guidance, and assistance of knowledgeable community partners. MPDC should consult community partners and local financial institutions to gain knowledge of existing initiatives and programs aimed at serving the needs of small and minority-owned businesses in the neighborhood. Even if they do not work specifically in the study area, trusted institutions with strong connections to economic development groups and familiarity with city programs, can help establish contact and communication.

The Economic Strategies Development Corporation (ESDC) stands out as a strong partner for helping MPDC implement this strategy. ESDC has served the Pilsen community for over 43 years, providing technical and financial assistance to over 1,000 businesses and entrepreneurs, and helping to retain and create new jobs. They have a history of strong relationships with the businesses that populate a vibrant and diverse neighborhood and could help bridge cultural gaps between other business advocacy groups and business owners.

Expand technical assistance for local business development, including incubator resources for startups and accelerators for growing businesses

The 36Squared Incubator is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation in McKinley Park offering onsite training, classes, and one-on-one counseling to help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses. Incubators and accelerators support first-time entrepreneurs, emerging technologies, and untested business models. The services that incubators and accelerators provide vary by community. Accelerators are typically started by investors and often focus on providing technology-oriented startups with mentoring and seed funding. Incubators, according to the National Business Incubator Association, primarily focus on creating community jobs, improving the entrepreneurial and business climate, retaining businesses, building or accelerating growth in local industry clusters, and supporting economic diversity in local economies.

Affordable space is often a challenge for businesses, so some communities operate “incubators with walls.” The “incubator with walls” approach could be helpful for small businesses and entrepreneurs who are currently operating home-based businesses. Most often, incubators provide services such as networking opportunities, marketing assistance, accounting or financial management assistance, and access to resources.

Case Study: Latinx Incubator

The Latinx Incubator is a first-of-its kind partnership between the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and 1871, a Chicago-based tech incubator. Its mission is to grow the pipeline of Latinx and entrepreneurs participating in and contributing to the Chicago tech and innovation economy. The three-month program takes 10 to 12 startups through a rigorous curriculum that tests their ideas, helps them develop a product, and vets customer potential.

Program sessions focus on educating participants on financial tool and the various forms of capital available. Program participants have access to co-working space within 1871, exclusive networking events, extensive public exposure, tailored educational sessions, and workshops to help their businesses gain traction. Since its inception, Latinx Incubator has supported 72 startups, raised more than \$6.5 million, and created over 190 jobs.

More information available at www.ihccbusiness.net/latinxincubator



Attract and support businesses that will increase the diversity of McKinley Park's retail to meet residents' needs

Community engagement efforts revealed a strong demand for increasing the diversity of McKinley Park's retail to include stores catering to daily needs. Because the majority of McKinley Park's economy is dependent upon local businesses, the community should focus on strategies that provide greater support for new and potential entrepreneurs in the long run. Expanding bilingual services and encouraging immigrant entrepreneurship is a major cornerstone of the Chicago New Americans Plan. Working with the Office of New Americans and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, the community should look into opportunities to educate more people about opening and operating small businesses through current and new workforce development and job training programs. As many planning programs to support immigrant entrepreneurship through the Chicago New Americans Plan are still in nascent stages, the community should also make sure to stay informed about new pilot projects or training initiatives that arise so that they can connect more people, particularly new immigrants, to ongoing city efforts in local economic development.

Additional Resources

Accion Chicago (Rec 3.4, 3.5)

Accion is an alternative lending organization providing credit and other business services to small business owners who do not have access to traditional sources of financing. <http://www.accionchicago.org/>

Aquinas Literacy Center (Rec 3.3)

Through one-on-one tutoring, supported with conversation classes, writing workshops, book clubs, computer learning opportunities, and job assistance workshops, Aquinas Literacy Center helps learners improve their English-language literacy and achieve their personal goals. <http://aquinasliteracycenter.org/>

Arturo Velasquez Institute (AVI) (Rec 3.4)

AVI is the satellite campus of Richard J. Daley College, a public post-secondary institution, which offers a variety of programs to enrich the personal and professional lives of the communities it serves. AVI provides advanced and basic certificates to assist individuals in gaining the skills necessary to obtain entry-level jobs in manufacturing, offices, and health care. <http://www.ccc.edu/colleges/daley/departments/Pages/Arturo-Velasquez-Institute.aspx>

City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (Rec 3.4, 3.5)

The City of Chicago's Small Business Center (SBC) is the business licensing division of the City of Chicago's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) and the city's "one-stop-shop" for business licensing, public way use permitting, and connecting entrepreneurs to business resources.⁵

https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/bacp/sbc/contact_us.html

City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) Grant (Rec 3.5)

SBIF promotes economic development by providing small businesses with financial assistance for building improvement costs. SomerCor is the program administrator contracted by the city's Department of Planning and Development for the SBIF program. The maximum grant assistance for an industrial property is \$150K; for a single-tenant commercial property \$100K; and for a multi-tenant commercial property, \$50K. <http://www.somercor.com/sbif/>

ChiBizHub (Rec 3.4, 3.5)

An initiative of World Business Chicago, ChiBizHub's mission is to help Chicago entrepreneurs grow and succeed. ChiBizHub provides small businesses with free, easy access to the help and information they need by connecting them to a large network of primarily nonprofit service providers. Their network resource partners provide a wide range of business-related services, including:

- Business planning
- Loans/financing
- Marketing/sales
- Licenses/permits
- Startups
- Product development
- Training classes
- Government contracts
- Operations

<https://www.chibizhub.com/about-chibizhub>

Chicago Innovation (Rec 3.5)

Chicago Innovation's mission is to empower the Chicago innovation ecosystem by educating, connecting, and celebrating innovators. The nonprofit is united around a purpose to harness the power of innovation to grow organizations, boost the economy, create jobs, and change the Chicago narrative. <https://chicagoinnovation.com/>

Communities United (Rec 3.1)

Communities United (CU) is a grassroots, intergenerational racial justice organization in Chicago. At the heart of CU's organizing is the development of grassroots leadership to build collective power to achieve racial justice and transformative social change. With this approach, CU focuses on advancing health equity, affordable housing, education justice, youth investment, immigrant rights, police accountability, and shifting resources from the criminal justice and juvenile justice systems into restorative justice alternatives. <https://communitiesunited.org/>

Greater Southwest Development Corporation (GSDC)

(Rec 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5)

GSDC's primary goal is to improve the quality of life in southwest Chicago through entrepreneurial, commercial, and residential real estate development, as well as a variety of business and residential resources. Since its establishment in 1974, GSDC's initiatives have resulted in over \$500 million in development activity in southwest Chicago. <https://greatersouthwest.org/>

Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC) (Rec 3.5)

IHCC empowers entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses. IHCC contributes to the financial strength of the economy by helping businesses create jobs, increase their revenue, and be more profitable. <http://www.ihccbussines.net>

Instituto del Progreso Latino (Rec 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)

Instituto's mission is to contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training, and employment that fosters full participation in the changing US society while preserving cultural identity and dignity. https://www.institutochicago.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=372458&type=d&pREC_ID=837880

LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois (Rec 3.4, 3.5)

The mission of the LGBT Chamber is to promote opportunities for the LGBT community by being an advocate and resource for all member businesses that encourage equality. The chamber works tirelessly to promote their members through marketing initiatives, public relations campaigns, and cooperative advertising that reach local, regional, and national markets. The chamber serves the community at large with educational projects and neighborhood initiatives that benefit everyone. <http://lgbtcc.com/>

National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)

(Rec 3.4, 3.5)

NAWBO propels women entrepreneurs into economic, social, and political spheres of power worldwide by strengthening the wealth-creating capacity of their members and promoting economic development within the entrepreneurial community. NAWBO propels women entrepreneurs into economic, social, and political spheres of power worldwide by strengthening the wealth-creating capacity of their members and promoting economic development within the entrepreneurial community; creating innovative and effective change in the business culture; building strategic alliances, coalitions, and affiliations; and transforming public policy and influencing opinion makers. <https://www.nawbo.org/about/about-nawbo-our-vision-and-mission>

National Latino Education Institute (NLEI) (Rec 3.2, 3.3, 3.5)

NLEI's ultimate goal is to provide quality workforce initiatives leading to economic independence for Latinos. NLEI provides comprehensive employment services and in-demand education training through a holistic-centered assessment inclusive of career, financial, and health and wellness mapping to create a pathway for sustained self-sufficiency. <https://nlei.org/>

SomerCor (Rec 3.5)

SomerCor works with lenders and economic development organizations to help business owners access loan or grant opportunities. <http://www.somercor.com>

The Resurrection Project (Rec 3.1)

For over 30 years, The Resurrection Project has been committed to its mission of creating community ownership, building community wealth, and serving as stewards of community assets in Chicago's southwest neighborhoods. Since its founding, The Resurrection Project has grown to secure \$537 million in community investments through homes for ownership, rental housing, and community services throughout Chicago's southwest neighborhoods and the western suburbs. <https://resurrectionproject.org/>



Chapter 4

Promote Equitable Transit-Oriented Development



THE VISION

Diverse and sustainable development near our transit-rich hubs offer residents and visitors a vibrant retail district with services, balanced parking needs, and a variety of housing prices and choices.



Introduction

Several stakeholders have expressed interest in using the neighborhood's strong access to transit to attract transit-oriented development (TOD) to the neighborhood. The CTA Orange Line runs through the study area with stops at Ashland and 35th/Archer. Though the existing density of single-family dwellings surrounding the stations makes the area less prime for TOD, there are ample opportunities near each of these stations, where vacant and/or underutilized lots could support new, denser development.

Well-planned development that capitalizes on the central locations of these two CTA stations could be catalytic projects for McKinley Park, enlivening the existing commercial corridors by bringing additional customers, increasing high-quality retail and restaurant space, and enhancing the streetscape.

What is Transit-Oriented Development? TOD concentrates residential and commercial development near transit infrastructure to create density around transit and lessen residents' dependence on automobiles. By generating compact, mixed-use development and facilitating diverse activities within walkable distances around transit facilities, TOD can lower household transportation costs, improve access to economic opportunities, and enhance quality of life for residents.

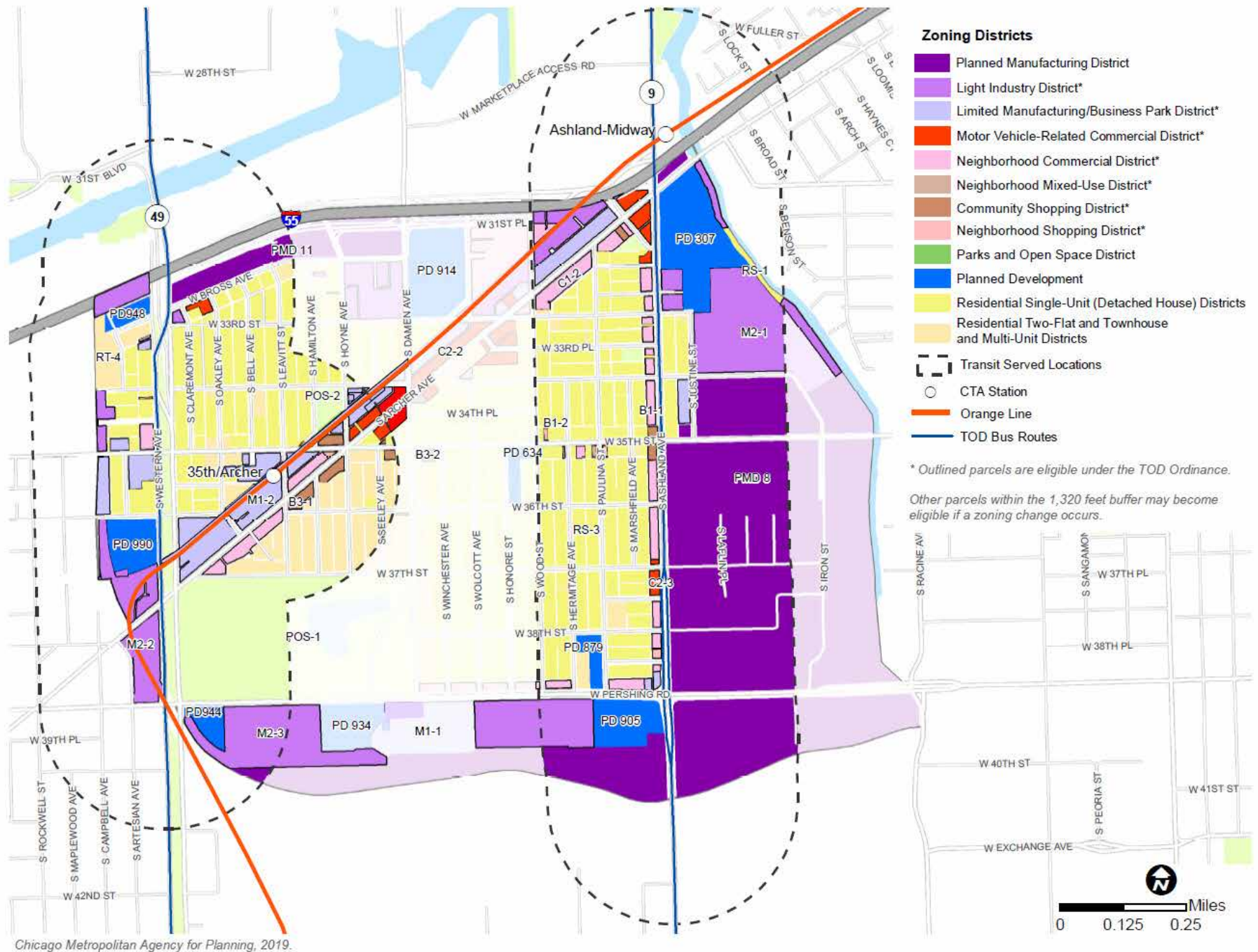
Key Findings

Generally, the design of TOD forges a relationship between the built environment and transit — for instance, through the orientation of buildings, walkways, and greenways — to encourage ridership and an active relationship between residents and their transit assets. While TOD is a healthier and more sustainable way of building cities than auto-oriented development, TOD can be a driver of displacement, reducing a neighborhood's affordability and resulting in advantages that cannot be enjoyed by existing and long-time residents.

If planned and implemented inclusively and intentionally, **equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD)** could serve as a driver of positive transformation, ensuring that a more vibrant, prosperous, healthy, and resilient community — connected to opportunities throughout the city and region — may be enjoyed by all residents, and in particular, low-income communities and residents of color who stand to gain the most from greater prosperity and connectivity.

- **Under the 2019 Chicago TOD ordinance, a large number of properties in the study area are TOD eligible.** Eligible properties include those that are in the zoning districts and within 1,320 feet of the centerline of bus routes No. 9 Ashland, No. 39 Pershing, and No. 49 Western, as well as those within the same distance from the CTA Orange Line Stations at Ashland and at 35th/Archer.
- **Residents and stakeholders identified preserving housing affordability as a top priority for the community.** The TOD ordinance stipulates a density bonus allowing development projects an additional floor-area-ratio (FAR) increase from 0.25 to 3.75 if at least 50 percent of the required affordable housing units are provided on-site and an additional 0.5 to 4.0 for 100 percent. Developers could also qualify for a parking reduction of up to 100 percent, which reduces the overall cost of construction, making housing units much more affordable.
- CTA rail ridership at McKinley Park stations has declined in recent years. This could be attributed to the fact that the number of workers in McKinley Park decreased by 15.3 percent between 2005 and 2015. **A TOD approach could spark economic development, helping retail developments near transit increase their customer base.**
- **Transit-served areas conflict with high intensity permitted uses.** This poses safety concerns to many pedestrians due to high traffic volumes. A TOD approach offers opportunities to create a safer pedestrian environment because more destinations can be accessed by transit and walking, and parking spaces can be shared between many locations.
- **Investment in the community and transit infrastructure can significantly enhance opportunity for low- and moderate-income families, though resulting property value increases can jeopardize this outcome.** Strategies in the plan promote e-TOD to help developers, community organizations, and stakeholders fully understand the social and economic impacts of development near transit areas.

Figure 4.1 Zoning and Parcels in McKinley Park Eligible under the 2019 Chicago TOD Ordinance



Recommendations

While many stakeholders expressed interest in the potential of TOD to spur development and improvements to the neighborhood's commercial corridors, they also expressed reservations about how it could change the neighborhood. For some, TOD calls to mind other Chicago neighborhoods, such as Logan Square and Wicker Park, that have seen luxury apartments and condominiums built near CTA stations. Stakeholder interviews and public survey input during the planning process suggest that many want to preserve the diversity of the community and make sure the area remains affordable to low- and moderate-income families.

“We need the density to support and attract local businesses,” said one resident, “but it should include affordability and the preservation of the neighborhood’s diversity and character.”

The plan recommends an equitable framework to transit-oriented development that measures the social and economic impacts of future development near transit areas to help keep the neighborhood affordable, while still enjoying the benefits of transit-oriented redevelopment and economic development.

4.1 Engage Stakeholders to Define Community Priorities for Future Development within TOD Areas

The McKinley Park Development Council should continue to facilitate discussions of future development with developers while ensuring adequate outreach and engagement is provided to residents. Potential options include MPDC creating a subsidiary (such as a community development corporation) or partnering with an existing organization (such as The Resurrection Project) to lead resident engagement and advocacy efforts. Ultimately, MPDC should continue to work on developing and growing trust with the community so that they are most effective in contributing to future equitable development within TOD areas.

Developing a community strategy for “equitable transit-oriented development” (eTOD) is one way to ensure that high-opportunity areas surrounding the 35th/Archer station remain inclusive and also provide opportunities for longtime residents. In short, eTOD makes sure that the benefits of living near transit are available to people of all income levels, and aligns public and private investments for optimal returns for communities. To ensure that the goals of affordability, transit access, and economic development are met, successful eTOD requires engagement and collaboration between the housing and transportation sectors, various levels of government, and organizations and groups within the community. A group comprising members of community organizations, local businesses, affordability advocates, and the public sector can be instrumental in coordinating this engagement.

Continue to build MPDC's technical capacity and look to existing community development organizations for ideas, support, and resources

From an outreach endeavor (eTOD Expert Panel), CMAP and local stakeholders worked with a group of experts who have dealt with TOD or are currently working with TOD developments in their communities. This group helped explore ways to create a guideline for McKinley Park's future TOD development. They identified some shared principles to guide future TOD in the area. The group also established priorities, including the importance of including affordable housing in future TOD, a broad desire for maintaining the diverse and family-friendly character of the neighborhood, and using TOD as a means to gain more public gathering places and further strengthen the Archer and 35th Street retail districts near transit.

The eTOD Expert Panel also discussed the importance of offering good models for providing collaborative leadership. MPDC is uniquely positioned to build on these coalitions and convene a new partnership to develop and communicate a shared vision for eTOD. In addition, given the close connection between the goals of eTOD and those of housing affordability, and those of housing affordability and retail, MPDC may choose to form a single coalition to implement this plan's eTOD and housing recommendations, in order to collectively advocate for broad implementation of equitable principles.

A coalition can help explain the opportunities and potential consequences of eTOD to the community and get its input. Guidance emerging from this group would help political leaders and developers shape projects that they can be confident the community will support, making the development approval process more stable and predictable. It could also help reform codes and policies that influence station area development when necessary. In addition to the overall guiding role of this coalition, there are several specific strategies that it may want to pursue the goal of equitable transit-oriented development.

Use public engagement tools, such as visual preference surveys, to educate residents, and establish community goals for the form and design of new development projects.⁶

To ensure that new TOD development is consistent with the existing urban fabric of the neighborhood, stakeholders should include discussion of form and design in their outreach efforts. Guidelines for development can incorporate considerations for density, street frontage, setbacks, massing, and other urban design or architectural elements. There are many existing studies and other resources to aid in this effort, and zoning and development regulations can provide tools to communicate and achieve the desired forms for new development.

McKinley Park is a community with a high level of civic engagement and energy. Community organizations and religious groups have engaged neighbors to work together to address the evolving needs of the neighborhood. As the neighborhood has experienced shifting patterns of immigration to and within Chicago, MPDC and other civic groups have incorporated new populations into their organizations. To respond successfully to evolving challenges and opportunities, MPDC will need to continue community involvement. Public outreach for this plan has similarly struggled to gain the participation of Latino and Asian residents at a level comparable to their share of the neighborhood population. Going forward, engaging all residents and other stakeholders needs to be a greater priority for civic organizations in the community and the upcoming effort to create an eTOD framework and implement this plan.



Designing a framework for eTOD based on civic engagement will help ensure that new development is based on the community's needs and wants. One example of achieving this goal is through a visual preference survey. A visual preference survey (VPS) is a way to receive public feedback through illustrated and physical design choices. It is often used when designing new development in the community. A VPS may consist of a sequence of images that residents must rank according to their preferences and needs. Images may be a combination of actual photographs from the community or other communities illustrating potential designs. Residents share their input, which is later used to make decisions about future development. In order to understand the community's needs, a VPS must be tailored to the community.

The planning process did a lot to help McKinley Park figure out what the vision is for transit-oriented-development is in the community. But there is still a need for community education and involvement. One way to do so would be for MPDC to keep conducting VPS periodically with different groups.

Build strong working relationships with local business and property owners through continued outreach

Throughout the planning process, community stakeholders emphasized their desire to maintain the signature diversity of the neighborhood's small businesses. McKinley Park's commercial corridors have provided entrepreneurial opportunities, and have been part of the overall business and service ecosystem that has made the community an ideal location for families and newly arriving residents. With new development and in the 21st-century economy, local small businesses of all kinds face challenges, especially competition from national chains and online retailers. Support and guidance from trusted allies and local government offices can help small business owners navigate many common difficulties. Chapter 3 offers detailed recommendations on how the community can build upon these programs to further assist neighborhood businesses.



On June 13, 2019, CMAP convened a technical panel of experts to help establish an equitable framework that measures the social and economic impacts of future development around transit areas in McKinley Park. The McKinley Park eTOD Panel was composed of individuals representing a wide variety of perspectives. The panel included CMAP staff with expertise in development, housing, and transportation, as well as external partners, including DPD, nonprofit developers, and representatives from community development corporations. Findings from the panel helped inform the strategies in this chapter.

Property owners and advocates alike expressed a desire to increase connections between existing business and property owners. MPDC stands out as a strong partner for implementing this strategy. It is essential to gain a thorough understanding of the practical needs of business owners, commercial property owners, and aspiring entrepreneurs — as well as the resources they currently rely on. By working together to successfully engage and build support for local property owners, businesses, and entrepreneurs, they will also be able to provide strong impetus for future development.

A major step would be to focus on increasing communication, such as: surveying business owners and property owners in order to provide them with information on community events, developments, and other programming; providing information in the community's most commonly spoken languages other than English — such as Spanish and Mandarin; and creating translated materials that can promote existing programs, services, and community meetings where the opinions of community members are valuable.

4.2 Implement Land Uses that Align with Community Vision and Priorities

McKinley Park residents emphasized the importance of maintaining and preserving the level of housing affordability found in the neighborhood over the next few decades to prevent the displacement of existing and long-time residents. Future development within TOD areas should add to the neighborhood's supply of affordable units and the alderman, MPDC, and city officials should encourage the maintenance and modernization of existing housing stock surrounding transit areas. In addition, any future development and potential improvements should increase pedestrian safety and encourage multi-modal transportation through traffic calming techniques, roadway improvements to reduce bus delays, and other general safety initiatives.

Preserve overall community affordable housing

Throughout the planning process, community stakeholders made clear the importance of preserving the existing housing stock in the neighborhood, which has provided natural housing affordability for generations of families. Preserving housing affordability was identified as a top priority for the community. Preserving the affordability of existing housing, particularly in the neighborhood's many two- to four-flat buildings, offers a great opportunity to provide housing for working families, today and into the future. The neighborhood is fortunate to already have a diverse stock of homes.

The TOD ordinance stipulates a density bonus allowing development projects an additional FAR increase from 0.25 to 3.75 if at least 50 percent of the required affordable housing units are provided on-site and an additional 0.5 to 4.0 for 100 percent. Developers could also qualify for a parking reduction of up to 100 percent, which reduces the overall cost of construction, making housing units much more affordable. Organizing in support of the connection between equity and transit-oriented development is key to shaping the future of the CTA station areas. It can also be key to attracting new housing for working residents and families. Community support is a crucial ingredient for successful affordable developments.

Preserve affordable housing by limiting the conversion of two- to four-flats into single-family homes

McKinley Park has a large number of owner-occupied two-flats that supply rental units to the neighborhood. We have heard from residents that this stock of buildings is at risk of deconversion or teardown. The neighborhood should consider preservation programs to protect them before this trend accelerates.

There are a number of preservation advocates around the city who have been working to stop the deconversion of two- to four-flats. Communities United created ROOTS (Renters Organizing Ourselves to Stay), an organization based out of Albany Park that has been working to address recent neighborhood change issues. Like McKinley Park, Albany Park saw an increase in small multifamily buildings being lost to teardowns or deconversions. ROOTS was organized in response to this rapid community change. ROOTS identifies at-risk small multifamily properties and rehabs them to preserve them as rentals. There is an opportunity to partner up with this organization in order to slow down the deconversion process in McKinley Park.

Pursue strategic partnerships to require the construction of affordable units on site

Collaborative partnerships offer the best platform for preserving the affordability of existing rental housing. Preservation poses challenges both in identifying opportunities and in funding activities to keep units affordable. During the planning process, neighborhood stakeholders and developers stressed the importance of collaboration. Mission-oriented developers cited the critical importance of local knowledge to help identify opportunity properties, and local advocates would like to connect with experienced organizations that can finance preservation efforts, which have a high degree of complexity.

Housing advocates and mission-oriented developers will help create affordable housing for the community. The ROOTS program — a joint effort of Communities United, Enterprise Community Partners, and the Chicago Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation (CMHDC) — has bought two- to four-flat buildings to rehabilitate and rent at below-market rates. ROOTS has succeeded by bringing together Communities United's knowledge of local housing opportunities, the Enterprise Community Partners' financing capacity, and CMHDC's experience with financing and carrying out the rehabilitation and management of housing units while keeping them affordable.

Target active uses for ground-floor spaces that increase access to goods and services for current and future residents

(Potential sites include NE lot at Archer and Leavitt, SW lots of Archer and Leavitt, as well as the SW lot at 35th and Leavitt) Local stakeholders can also help advance the possibility of new development including workforce housing by working to identify potential sites to accommodate new development. There is a need for a neighborhood housing coalition with a broad representation of different stakeholders would have access to knowledge about suitable parcels that may become available, and can help connect mission-oriented developers with these opportunities. Sites that are good candidates for workforce housing development include larger parcels within walking distance (one half-mile) of public transit, especially sites that are currently underutilized. Vacant parcels, parcels with unoccupied buildings, and parcels with surface parking or low-density commercial uses are all examples of sites that could be better used for housing or other ETOD developments.

During the eTOD expert panel, there was a discussion about the many vacant parcels as seen in Figure 4.3 near the transit station. The panel identified the potential for redeveloping the parcels as multi-family housing. In particular, the participants identified site number seven as a good location for a four- to five-story multi-residential building. This location is currently outside of the TIF district, but there needs to be further research on TIF parameters and how much money is in the TIF fund as there is a possibility of implementing an ordinance that amends the TIF boundaries. While the panel did not conduct a detailed analysis of the redevelopment feasibility of these sites, they were selected as examples to demonstrate the type of property that may be appropriate to seek out. These sites, three of which are privately owned, do not currently host active uses but could support developments in the future.



Figure 4.3 Vacant parcel information

The most effective ground-floor spaces in TODs are attractive and flexible enough to house a variety of uses. To accommodate evolving long-term needs for space, developers could be encouraged to build flexible spaces that can be converted with ease to suit different uses. For example, developments that allow property managers to adjust the building depth or alter landscaping and elevated entranceways can create ground-floor space that meets the privacy and security needs of residential space while allowing an active street presence if the space is converted to retail. Innovations in materials, such as using engineered wood beams and columns, can reduce construction costs for building alternative ground-floor spaces and allow more flexibility in configuring space. Stakeholders can work with developers to explore options for designing flexible spaces at ground-level and incorporate the design guidelines into TOD development. Ground-floor spaces that are inviting and attractive to pedestrians have different design requirements than residential or office uses. For instance, transparent façades with large windows and tall ceilings can create open and welcoming environments. Attractiveness of space also extends to its frontage and sidewalk. Landscaping, distinct signage, and good exterior lighting are required to invite people into the space and create

a sense of security. There may also be more stringent requirements for access, in order to establish visibility and easy entry. Stakeholders can incorporate ground-floor design best practices into the typologies and guidelines for TOD development to communicate the vision for active ground-floor uses.

Instead of retail, community stakeholders can collaboratively identify other desired amenities or services that may be currently lacking in the neighborhood. Possible uses can widely range from civic facilities to institutional uses, such as childcare, health clinics, arts/theater/museum spaces, hackerspaces or makerspaces, libraries, and social services, among others. During the project development stage, it will be crucial to plan for the desired use and design spaces accordingly, following design best practices or flexible space guidelines, to ensure the success of the community space.

4.3 Proactively Address Parking Implications

Parking is often a concern for existing residents of areas seeking TOD. Anticipating that potential residents will own fewer cars since they will be located close to convenient transit service, TOD projects typically offer fewer off-street parking spaces than would a project located far from transit. The City of Chicago TOD ordinance leverages this trend to reduce per-unit parking requirements, allowing developers to use more of a building's space for residential or commercial tenants. Existing residents often express concern that because a new development offers less off-street parking, its residents will park on adjacent streets, increasing competition for limited on-street parking. However, by appealing to potential tenants who do not own a car or would prefer not to own a car, TOD projects may not increase demand for on-street parking, and strategies exist to prevent and mitigate additional demand. Developers and community organizations should be proactive about potential parking concerns, drawing on best practices from TOD projects in Chicago and elsewhere. The plan will include examples of pricing and residential parking permit approaches, as well as other parking management strategies for balancing the needs of current residents while still pursuing TOD.

Conduct outreach to identify resident and business concerns

Community engagement that seeks stakeholder input can identify areas in the community where parking is in high demand. Local residents are often very knowledgeable about the busiest streets and the busiest times of day for parking, as well as where parking is in high demand for commuters, customers of businesses, and other visitors. Effective outreach can also help educate communities about the inherent trade-offs of different parking policies and strategies, giving them an opportunity to work together to identify shared priorities and preferred strategies going forward.

To plan for parking, it is crucial to accurately assess current parking conditions and have a clear understanding of resident perceptions on the issue. CMAP has developed a Parking Strategies toolkit that provides a step-by-step guide for communities to create and conduct comprehensive parking surveys and engage in effective public outreach. But these studies require considerable time and resources. If limited resources and time make a full-scale parking inventory study too difficult to accomplish, the community can consult the toolkit's guidance on conducting a smaller study of parking spaces and regulations, which can be incredibly useful but easier to implement.

Partner with new TOD property managers to mitigate new parking demands

Reducing new demand is the first course of action for better parking management. Even if TOD provides less off-street parking for residents, developers can provide benefits for riding transit, biking, walking, or carsharing to attract potential tenants who prefer non-car-dependent lifestyles. The City's TOD ordinance also supports the inclusion of active transportation facilities like bicycle parking by requiring developments taking advantage of TOD bonuses to address parking demand. The following strategies should supplement parking management strategies identified through the parking study, but can also be applied as a standalone set of recommendations to curb future demand.

Apply parking management best practices

Even with high demand for on-street parking, several parking management strategies exist to extend the capacity of the existing supply. Even at times when drivers cannot find parking, there are often spaces that are not being used. Difficulty in finding them may be the result of a lack of information or of policies that do not offer enough flexibility. Applying parking management best practices can help a community take better advantage of currently underutilized spaces and reduce competition for highly sought-after parking spaces. If the demand for parking increases, there are several options to alleviate competition.

Improve signage and use apps to clearly indicate where parking is available

Clear and easily accessible information can help drivers find parking to suit their needs and alert them to open spaces at nearby parking lots or facilities. The community can work with the city and aldermen to create and disperse signage throughout the neighborhood to highlight different types of parking areas and underutilized lots. As much of commercial and private parking information and reservation services are available online through apps like SpotHero, organizations such as MPDC or the alderman's office can also help market these technologies to promote awareness and usage.

Allow shared parking arrangements

Nearby businesses and institutions can share parking spaces if they each require parking at different times of the day or different days of the week. For example, TOD developments can share parking with nearby office buildings or commercial establishments so that commuters can park at night while employees and customers can park during business hours. Additionally, several churches near station areas have private parking spaces, which can be used on weekdays. Organizations like MPDC and the alderman can play a role in facilitating connections between local parking lot owners and partnering with programs like SpotHero to incorporate reserved spaces for shared parking.

Offer transit passes or bike-share membership as part of rent

Developers can choose to offer a complimentary or discounted transit pass or bike-share membership to tenants. Divvy already has a Corporate Membership program that provides partner organizations with discounts for employees, residents, and members. Including these benefits in rent can encourage tenants to commute and travel by biking or transit and lower the demand for parking spaces.

Provide bicycle parking or storage in developments

Several surveys and studies from across the country have shown that secure bicycle parking and storage is one of the top factors contributing to bike ridership.⁷ The TOD ordinance requires developments taking advantage of parking reductions to provide at least one bicycle parking space for each automobile parking space that would otherwise be constructed and additionally waives the “no more than 50 bicycle parking spaces per building” limit. Fully utilizing parking reductions and providing an appropriate number of bicycle parking and storage can significantly bring down the cost of development and mitigate new parking demand.

Consider using the residential parking permit system to manage parking

One of the greatest concerns of existing residents is that the reduced number of off-street parking spaces for new TOD residents would increase the competition for on-street parking. If the results of the parking study indicate a need for better residential permit parking management or anticipate greater demand than the supply allows, stakeholders can work with aldermen to explore additional restrictions. In some recent TOD projects in Chicago, a clause in the leasing agreement restricts tenants from receiving residential parking permits on neighboring streets. By attracting tenants who prefer to walk, bike, and take public transit, these developments have filled their units despite the restriction on parking permits.

Case Study: 1611 W. Division (Wicker Park, Chicago)

The 1611 W. Division apartments in Wicker Park, located at the intersection of Division Street and Ashland Avenue, are an example of TOD that has successfully applied many of the parking strategies discussed in this chapter. Steps away from the Division CTA Blue Line station, and close to six bus stops and a Divvy station, the apartments were designed and marketed specifically to cater to tenants attracted to a walkable environment and car-free lifestyle. Instead of parking spaces for cars, the building offers 100 bicycle parking spaces and a carshare vehicle with a discounted membership. To promote transit use, a monitor in the lobby provides CTA Bus and Train Tracker times. Additionally, a clause in the leasing agreement makes tenants ineligible for residential parking permits on neighboring streets.

Through the combination of incentives and regulations to mitigate the creation of new parking demand, the 1611 W. Division development has had minimal effects on parking congestion and spillover parking in the neighborhood. As tenants choose the building for its convenience to transit and multiple mobility options, the lack of parking has also not served as a disincentive for leasing.⁸

4.4 Advocate to Include 35th/Archer Orange Line Station as a Future Elevated Chicago eHub

Be aware of any forthcoming eHub selections

Elevated Chicago is a collaboration of 17 public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including CMAP, that have come together to build equity into transit-oriented development in Chicago by improving health, safety, climate resilience, and cultural vitality indicators of people of color living and working near transit. A key challenge that Elevated Chicago is addressing is the displacement of people of color in connection with TOD, both where rapid development leads to gentrification, and where TOD bypasses communities that have been disinvested for decades. MPDC should work with relevant partners and Elevated Chicago to explore the feasibility of including the 35th/Archer Orange Line Station as a future eHub (equitable hub).

Elevated Chicago started its work around seven CTA train stations, establishing eHubs within the half-mile radius circle around each station. The eHubs are generally grouped into four geographies: Logan Square Blue Line station; California Pink Line station; Kedzie/Lake Green Line and Kedzie-Homan Blue Line (Kedzie Corridor) stations; and 51st Street, Garfield, and 63rd Street Green Line stations. With a neighborhood plan in place, McKinley Park can advocate for the work Elevated Chicago is doing around the city. Currently, there is no talk of adding new eHubs, but McKinley Park can position itself for when the next call for projects becomes available.

Elevated Chicago believes capital investments and programming, paired with systemic policy and narrative change, will positively impact the communities they work in. The Elevated Chicago workplan aims to leverage existing resources to activate the people, places, and processes necessary to drive racially equitable transit-oriented development in Chicago:

- People: Build capacity promote local ownership amplify power & narratives
- Place: Invest in health & climate resilience; support transit-oriented community spaces create; and preserve healthy, green, affordable housing
- Process: Promote meaningful community engagement; adopt a common diversity, equity, & inclusion (DEI) framework; elevate eTOD & resident and business retention in policy agendas; increase community access to adequate, responsive capital sources

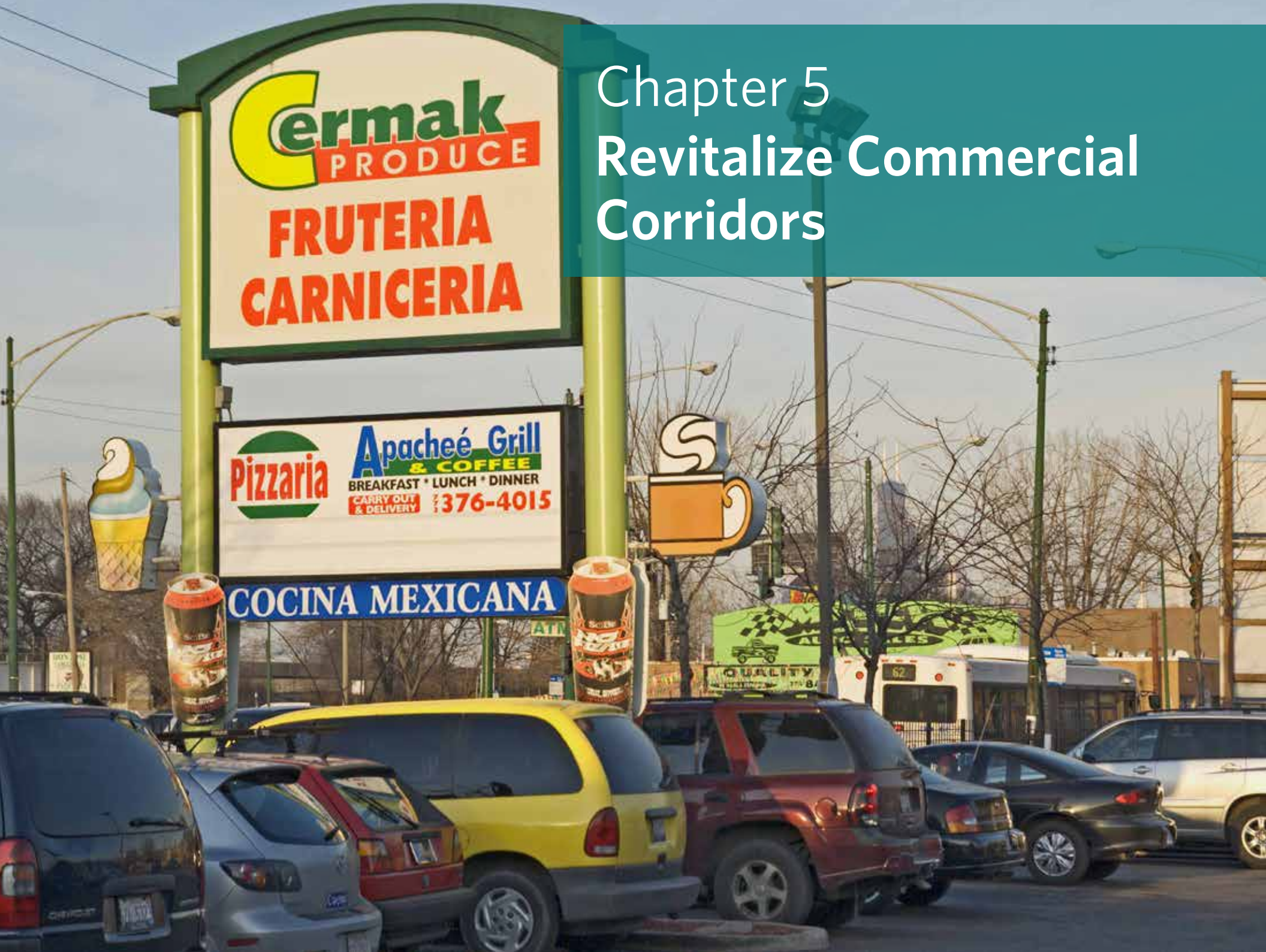
The community has actively asked for support to avoid residential displacement. With this being a primary concern, McKinley Park should also act to ensure that residents are not left out from neighborhood changes. One way for all of the stakeholders to support this kind of meaningful integration and request is through the creation and request of an eHub.

There is an opportunity for promoting social cohesion and giving the residents the tools to garner the benefits of positive neighborhood change. McKinley Park strives to look at innovative and comprehensive ways to ensure equity in the neighborhood's future developments.



Chapter 5

Revitalize Commercial Corridors



THE VISION

McKinley Park's commercial corridors, despite their unique contexts, will become vibrant, accessible, and safe for all residents, commuters, and visitors.



Introduction

McKinley Park's commercial corridors serve as main gateways into the neighborhood. Many of the recommendations in this chapter will require infrastructure investments and the continued support of community volunteers, as well as the coordinated efforts of key partners who have jurisdiction over 35th Street, Archer Avenue, Ashland Avenue, and Western Avenue/Boulevard. These key partners include the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH).

Key Findings

- Commercial corridors in McKinley Park are heavy traffic roadways that make walking and biking uncomfortable and unsafe. This is particularly true for main north-south roads that connect to I-55 like Ashland, Damen, and Archer avenues. While sidewalks are available on both sides of most roads, the proximity to fast-moving traffic and lack of streetscaping elements make biking and walking uncomfortable, particularly along Archer and Ashland avenues.
- While the community faces strong competition from nearby shopping retailers, customers from McKinley Park and surrounding areas come in to the community to shop. Retail demand data indicates potential to capture some retail dollars currently being spent outside of the market area.
- There is significant concern over vacancy and turnover rates along the 35th Street corridor. As it is designed to accommodate pedestrian-oriented commercial development, 35th Street provides a desirable location for many businesses. With innovative approaches, a supportive business environment can address high vacancy and turnover rates.

Table 5.1 Crash Data at Key Intersections in McKinley Park

Intersection	Total Crashes	Bicycles	Pedestrians
Archer Ave & Ashland Ave	103	7 (7%)	3 (3%)
Archer Ave & Damen Ave	94	4 (4%)	2 (2%)
Archer Ave & Leavitt St	18	1 (6%)	1 (6%)
Archer Ave & Western Ave/Blvd	203	6 (3%)	4 (2%)
Western Ave/Blvd & 33rd St	35	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Western Ave/Blvd & 35th St	173	4 (2%)	5 (3%)
Western Ave/Blvd & Pershing Rd	262	5 (2%)	3 (1%)
Total	893	27 (3%)	18 (2%)

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

Recommendations

The proposed recommendations fall into four categories: 1) street and site design standards, 2) complete streets guidelines, 3) sustainability, and 4) community identity. The recommendations provided in this chapter are in support of the City of Chicago's complete streets guidelines. These guidelines are in place to ensure that streets and transportation infrastructure are safe and designed for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, freight, and motor vehicle drivers, and in particular, the most vulnerable populations including children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

Streetscape illustrations for Archer Avenue and Western Avenue/Boulevard are meant to be conceptual in nature. It should be noted that feasibility level planning — such as analyzing traffic count information or running auto-turn geometric analysis — was not conducted. Such follow-up work should be undertaken to ensure the recommendations proposed in this plan are the best possible solutions. The illustrated concepts are only meant to show the possibilities of how each of these corridors could be repurposed to provide greater access, improve safety, and reduce congestion. Proposed improvements at the Archer Avenue intersections do not substantially alter the way traffic operations function. However, the Western Avenue/Boulevard corridor recommendations (converting from two-way operations to one-way couplets) are a transformative change.

5.1 Enhance the Built Environment along Ashland Avenue

In 2014, CDOT removed the Ashland Avenue viaduct over Pershing Road and reconstructed the roadway. Despite these improvements, Ashland Avenue remains uninviting and unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians due to high traffic levels, auto-oriented zoning, proximity to the Stevenson Expressway (I-55), and many vacant parcels. The plan recommends focusing on infill sites and improving the aesthetics of the corridor to create a safer and more inviting environment for businesses and all users.

Prioritize infill development with support from the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC)

MPDC should seek technical assistance through MPC's Community Development Program to create a targeted vision for the segment of Ashland Avenue between Pershing Road and 35th Street. There are great opportunities for infill development and redevelopment along this segment of Ashland Avenue, which is largely vacant (see Figure 5.1).

The 2019 TOD Ordinance, which includes the Ashland bus route as a TOD-eligible area, should be considered as the community prioritizes opportunities for potential developments at these sites.

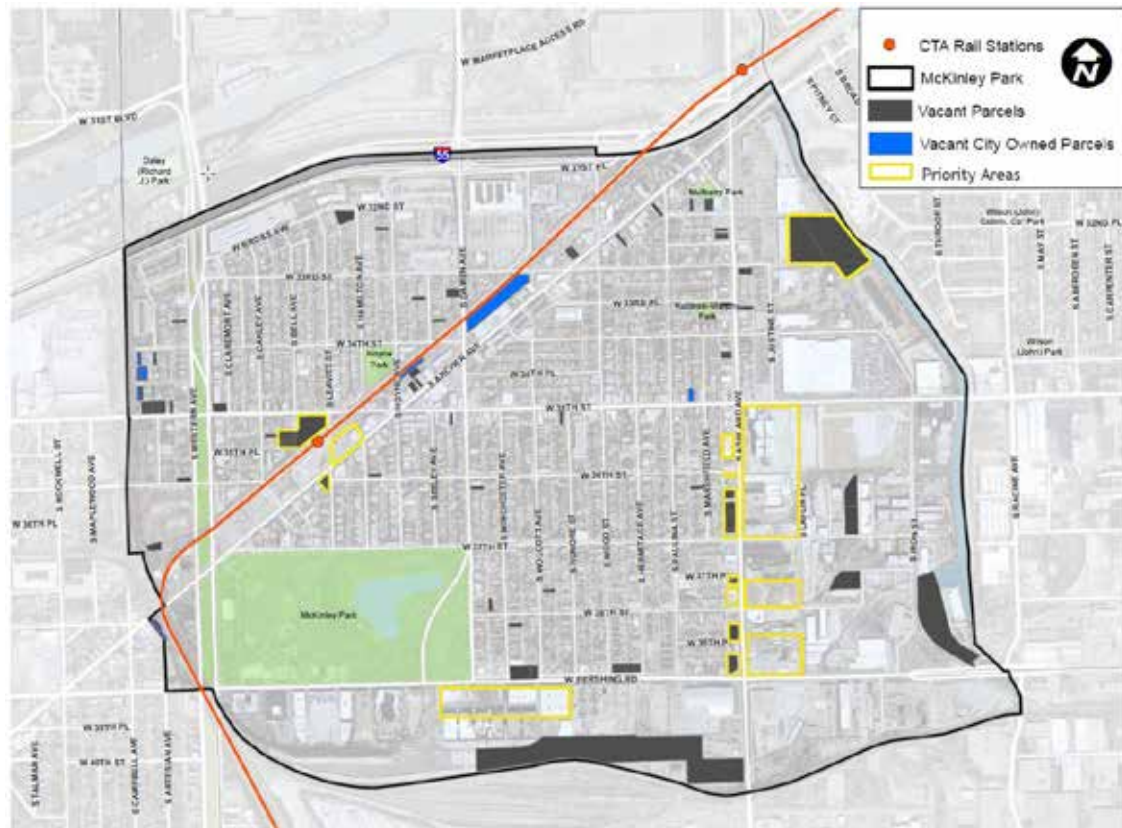
Prioritizing sites for infill development and redevelopment will help bridge the gap between businesses and uses in different parts of the neighborhood. Additionally, mixed-use sites along the corridor will result in increased property values, convenient access to jobs, services, and housing.

MPDC's new beautification committee should target Ashland Avenue for landscaping and beautification improvements

Equally important is the maintenance of attractive landscape amenities along the corridor. MPDC's new beautification committee should pursue grant opportunities to maintain the Avenue's median and parkways with landscaped ornamental grasses and pyramidal street trees, and periodically install artistic street banners on light poles to promote the image and identity of the community. Potential funding programs include the City of Chicago Mayor's Landscape Awards.

The committee should also explore creating its own "Adopt-A-Street" program to encourage partnerships between local merchants and residents as a way to organize community cleanups and maintenance, as well as other landscaping and beautification activities.

Figure 5.1. Priority Areas for Infill Development



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2019

5.2 Make Archer Avenue a Livable Street

Archer Avenue carries 27,000 vehicles a day. Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc. conducted 24-hour traffic counts at Archer Avenue in March 2018. Throughout the count period, heavy freight traffic was captured at each intersection within the study area. This high level of traffic impacts not only the design of the roadway but also the experience of pedestrians and bicyclists. Despite these challenges, Archer Avenue is a tremendous asset to the community. Because of the shops, services, and transportation that it provides, Archer Avenue functions as more than a route for travel — it is a community space. This corridor includes the densest concentration of shops and restaurants, as well as the 35th/Archer and Ashland CTA Orange Line Stations.

The following strategies align with the City's complete streets policy to improve access, safety, and mobility. Implementing these strategies will make Archer Avenue a livable street, allowing it to continue to provide for residents' everyday needs, attract new patrons and visitors, and provide for a diversity of housing options near transit, as presented in chapter 4.

Encourage mixed-use developments that promote convenient, safe, and efficient travel

Mixed-use development promotes walkability, livability, and transportation efficiency. There are several locations for mixed-use development at key nodes along the highly trafficked commercial corridor. For example, the intersection of Archer Avenue and Leavitt Street provides a major opportunity because of its access to major arterial roads and residential neighborhoods, and proximity to the CTA station. More information on transit-oriented development can be found in chapter 4.

Target safety improvements at key intersections along Archer Avenue

Complete streets are designed to facilitate all modes of travel, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Streetscape improvements can make streets safer and more attractive. By calming traffic, improving visibility, and accommodating pedestrians, streetscape can make people feel welcome, safe, and comfortable walking throughout a commercial corridor, encouraging the foot traffic vital for local businesses. This section focuses on enhancing four strategic locations along the Archer Corridor — at Ashland, Damen, Leavitt, and Western (under strategy 5.4a). While the entire length of Archer Avenue is important to McKinley Park, focusing on these key areas will help community stakeholders prioritize future investment in the most important locations.

The following streetscape concepts illustrate a variety of potential interventions to improve the mobility, accessibility, safety, and appearance of the Archer Avenue corridor. The intent of these strategies is to create a thriving commercial corridor that is safe, sustainable, and can accommodate a variety of transit-oriented uses in the future. Consideration of these treatments requires further engineering analysis. The neighborhood plan calls for the city and IDOT to study infrastructure treatments that alert drivers, slow down traffic, and guide pedestrian safety. A potential funding opportunity to study these improvements is IDOT's Statewide Planning & Research Funds Program Guidance.⁹

Archer and Ashland: Residents identified the intersection of Archer and Ashland as being uncomfortable and unsafe to pedestrians due to higher traffic volumes and faster traveling vehicles. Changes to travel lanes and vehicular operations at this intersection would be difficult to employ due to the heavy volume of both vehicles and freight trucks traveling through this intersection. Similarly, curb bump-outs to reduce pedestrian crossing distances would impede a freight vehicle's ability to maneuver. Removing travel lanes along Archer Avenue to install bicycle lanes or employ traffic calming measures could potentially increase congestion at both the intersection and throughout the McKinley Park study area.

A potential treatment to consider would be the addition of a refuge island on the south approach along Ashland Avenue. This would shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians (see Exhibit 5.1). In addition, adding extra sidewalk width on the northwest side of Archer Avenue would provide extra comfort for pedestrians walking along the roadway.

These two improvements are intended to provide additional comfort and safety for pedestrians traveling to the CTA Orange Line Ashland Station, connections to nearby CTA bus stops, and surrounding commercial uses along Ashland Avenue.

Exhibit 5.1 Archer Avenue & Ashland Avenue



Image 5.1 Example of a Refuge Island



Archer and Damen: The intersection of Archer Avenue and Damen Avenue is another key intersection to consider for roadway improvements. Because of the I-55 ramp at Damen Avenue, more than 23,000 vehicles pass through this intersection each day. Potential treatments to consider include widening sidewalks on both sides of Archer Avenue to provide extra comfort for pedestrians, which has been described as an uncomfortable walking environment.

During the planning process, CMAP's engineering consultants found that motorists traveling northbound and southbound along Damen Avenue approach the intersection as if there were left-turn lanes, despite there being no striping to denote two separate lanes. Therefore, another potential treatment could be the addition of left turn lanes and accompanying traffic signal phasing along Damen Avenue on the northbound and southbound approaches. The left turn phasing will allow more motorists to turn onto Archer Avenue from Damen Avenue.

Exhibit 5.2 Archer Avenue & Damen Avenue



This could increase safety for pedestrians crossing through the intersection, as fewer vehicles will idle in the middle of the intersection waiting to turn left onto Archer Avenue.

In addition to these recommended treatment options, the installation of trees along each side of both roadways, as well as clear painted crosswalks, will increase the comfort and safety of pedestrians crossing this intersection.

Exhibit 5.3 Archer Avenue & Leavitt Street



Archer and Leavitt: This intersection is especially critical because of the Orange Line Station and bus hub. From 2013 to 2017, there were 18 total crashes at this intersection, with one crash involving a bicyclist and one crash involving a pedestrian. The majority of crashes were rear-end collisions and striking a parked vehicle.

Exhibit 5.3 displays several design elements to explore for further pedestrian safety and mobility at this key intersection. Potential treatments include adding a pedestrian refuge island on the southwest approach along Archer Avenue to provide a “break” while crossing Archer Avenue and serve as a safety refuge (see image 5.1). Additionally, curb bump-outs at the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the intersection would also help achieve shorter crossing distances and increase the separation between pedestrians and vehicles. The bump-out in the northeast corner should also avoid impeding the turning of buses onto northbound Leavitt Street coming from either direction of Archer Avenue.

When decreasing the width of the driveway on North Leavitt Street and West Archer Avenue, a 5-foot distance must be maintained between the turning vehicle and fixed object, such as the curb. Bus Operations under the Chicago Transit Authority would need to approve any changes regarding road infrastructure improvements.

In the northeast quadrant of the intersection, an access drive permits ingress/egress directly into the Archer Avenue & Leavitt Street intersection. This access drive is unsafe and should be closed. Patrons can easily access the parking lot through the two other existing access points. In addition to these proposed treatments, the installation of trees along each side of both roadways, as well as clear painted crosswalks at the intersection and at both CTA driveways, will add to the comfort and safety of commuters. The current designated Kiss N’ Ride Zone along Archer should be clearly signaled to deter drivers from parking on the north segment of Leavitt Street to drop-off and pick-up commuters.

Use tactical urbanism to demonstrate potential improvements

Tactical urbanism is a strategy to install temporary improvements to streets to make them more oriented toward people than motorized vehicles. These improvements often serve as the framework of complete streets, a policy and design approach that allocates space in the roadway for all users. During a tactical urbanism event, volunteers use tape, cardboard, scrap wood, chalk, and other common materials to cordon off portions of the roadway so that cars will not use them. They might build a raised crosswalk, which is a technique to get drivers to be aware of pedestrians. They might put in a temporary bike lane so that people can see what one would look like before it becomes a permanent fixture. Treatments that benefit bus operations and customer safety such as painted posts for bus boarding bulbs should also be considered.

Tactical urbanism uses low-cost and easily deployable placemaking interventions that improve spaces and neighborhoods. MPDC should pursue one or more of these activities as an early action after the plan is completed, and the blocks near the Archer-Leavitt intersection (the 35th/Archer CTA Station area) would be an ideal location for the first event. When installations are proposed, the Chicago Transit Authority needs ample time to review and comment on them. Potential partners that have engaged in tactical urbanism in Chicago in the past include Active Transportation Alliance, Congress for the New Urbanism, and CDOT's Make Way for People initiative.

Image 5.2. Examples of Tactical Urbanism



Source: 8 80 Streets Danforth



Source: Buffalo Rising



Source: Lakeview Chamber of Commerce
Photo Credit: Site Design Group

Case Study: Placemaking Project at the Six-way Intersection on Southport, Lincoln, and Wellington Avenues

CDOT's Make Way for People initiative could be one way to improve safety and create new public spaces for gathering.¹⁰ This program aims to create public spaces that build community and enliven neighborhoods by opening streets, parking spots, and alleys to new uses that prioritize people over vehicular traffic. The program consists of four types of "people spaces" that modify existing transportation rights-of-way: people spots, people streets, people plazas, and people alleys.

In the Lakeview neighborhood, CDOT worked with the Lakeview Chamber of Commerce to create spaces for seating, walking, and calming car traffic at the six-way intersection on Southport, Lincoln, and Wellington Avenues. Large-scale people streets projects require a sizable local match from a community partner, which may require neighborhood stakeholders to raise funds or seek private-sector sponsors.

Install green infrastructure along the right-of-way for stormwater management

As part of this planning process, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) provided pro bono assistance through their Rain Ready program to assess flooding in McKinley Park. The report found areas with the highest runoff along the Archer Avenue corridor and in industrial areas in the community. This has detrimental effects on our aquatic habitats and our water supply. Installing green infrastructure along the right-of-way for stormwater management is a top priority of this plan as our region experiences more frequent and severe weather events, extreme heat, and flooding.

Currently, there are few street trees and little landscaping along Archer. Between Ashland Avenue and Western Avenue/Boulevard, areas with green infrastructure include the parkway at the 35th/Archer CTA Station; four trees between Hamilton and Leavitt; landscape buffers at the two commercial parking lots adjacent to Damen Avenue; and street tree coverage between Damen Avenue and 33rd Street.

Chicago's Resilient Corridors Project has installed attractive, dual-purpose, site-scale stormwater sites across the city. DPD should prioritize the right-of-way along Archer Avenue with linear infiltration and detention, similar to what was implemented in Pilsen along along Cermak Road and Blue Island Avenue.¹¹ Bioswales, small native plantings, and/or permeable pavers could be added along the corridor to help mitigate stormwater (see Figure 5.2).

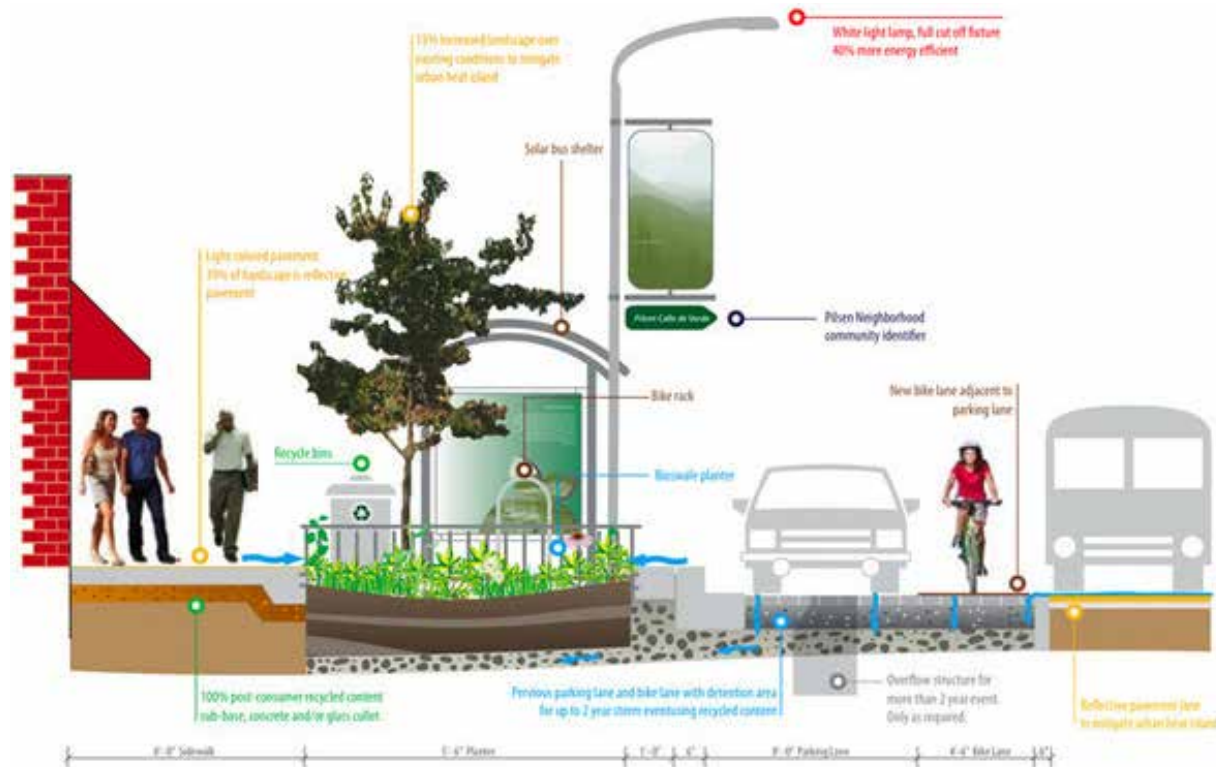
Equally important is prioritizing the installation of street trees throughout commercial corridors. Increased tree canopy coverage has been linked to numerous health and social benefits, including improved air quality, lower crime rates, and a whole host of other benefits. Furthermore, these trees will be grown within the McKinley Park community and will allow some residents to develop and hone urban agriculture skills while fostering a sense of environmental stewardship.

MPDC's new beautification committee and volunteer groups should lead maintenance responsibilities of green elements of the proposed rights-of-way if the roadway agencies are willing to make upfront investments.



Source: The Nature Conservancy

Figure 5.2 Cermak/
Blue Island Sustainable
Streetscape



Source: Chicago Department of Transportation

Widen the sidewalks along Archer Avenue

While Archer Avenue has the most pedestrian traffic of any corridor in McKinley Park, narrow sidewalks through much of the corridor create little to no barrier between pedestrians and high-speed traffic, making sidewalks unsafe and not ADA accessible (see Image 5.3). In order to improve feelings of safety along Archer Avenue, the Institute of Transportation Engineers recommends that a sidewalk be at least 9 feet wide, although it is ideal to be 16 feet wide to accommodate not only the movement of pedestrians but also the social space where people interact and walk together.¹² Within a sidewalk that is 9 feet or wider, street trees and other street furniture amenities, like trash receptacles and benches, can be placed without blocking the movement of foot traffic.

Image 5.3 Archer Avenue Sidewalk, Looking South Towards Wood Street



Source: Google

There appears to be potential to separate the sidewalk from the curb in the northwest quadrant of the Ashland and Archer intersection. In order to provide a good bicycling, pedestrian, and transit environment along Archer Avenue, the city should work with IDOT to widen the sidewalk by 1-2 feet to obtain increased comfort and safety. Appendix A offers potential concepts that show how public rights-of-way could be rearranged to provide more space for the sidewalk.

Reconfiguring the right-of-way to provide more sidewalk space is an expensive long-term improvement. In the shorter term, the city should also investigate options that would not require the reduction of lane widths, such as adding curb extensions at key intersections where trees can be planted (reference strategy 5.2b).

While periodic curb extensions will not address the central issue of a narrow sidewalk throughout Archer Avenue, they will provide more space for the amenities that help make a street more pedestrian-friendly. This strategy should be designed to maintain as much of the on-street parking as possible as well as in coordination with other parking strategies (please reference recommendation 4.3 for more on parking management strategies).

Image 5.4 Examples of Artistic Murals and Lighting in Underpass Viaducts



LightRails project by Bill Fitzgibbons, 18th Street viaduct, downtown Birmingham, Alabama.

Source: Bill Fitzgibbons



Mural sponsored by the Rogers Park Business Alliance, intersection of Lunt and Glenwood, Chicago.

Source: WBEZ¹³

Improve the appearance of viaduct underpasses

Local residents expressed great interest in improving the appearance and safety of community viaducts to promote safe passage for students, commuters, and visitors. Viaducts that run below the rail tracks adjacent to Archer Avenue are in various states of disrepair, often creating an uninviting environment for both pedestrians and cyclists. Residents do not feel safe walking, especially below the railyards. With different jurisdictions responsible for maintenance and improvements, it is difficult for local residents to know whom to talk to for changes. When residents do not want to walk in certain places, they end up driving for short trips.

The planning process identified viaduct enhancement opportunities, including the installation of murals that acknowledge McKinley Park's history and welcome visitors into the neighborhood. The plan recommends installing artistic murals and lighting in the walkway to increase security and safety for pedestrians (See Image 5.4). One strategy is to work with the Chicago Public Arts Group and solicit bids from artists to create an LED lighting display prioritized intersections. MPDC should also work with CDOT, as they have a being they have a viaduct lighting improvement program that replaces old lighting with brighter, whiter smart LED lighting. While all underpasses need attention, the community has identified the viaduct adjacent to the 35th/Archer CTA Orange Line Station as a top priority given its high pedestrian traffic.

5.3 Develop a “Main Street” Experience along 35th Street

35th Street runs through the center of McKinley Park and connects Archer and Ashland avenues. While the corridor is designed to accommodate pedestrian-oriented development, residents and business owners are concerned with the high vacancy and turnover rate of businesses along the corridor. This corridor remains central to the community’s identity and there is a strong desire from residents to revive a portion of the corridor as a main street district. The community envisions 35th Street, from Hoyne Avenue to Ashland Avenue, as a potential main street corridor with gathering spaces to socialize, work, and shop. Residents would like to see small-scale commercial uses that meet daily needs like dry cleaners and restaurants with outdoor café-style seating. Through physical improvements, and coordinated placemaking and programming, 35th Street can become a main street destination that showcases the neighborhood’s character and diversity.

Pursue pedestrian street designation from Hoyne Avenue east to Ashland Avenue

The city’s pedestrian street (P-Street) designation is used to identify pedestrian-oriented shopping districts and streets throughout the city. P-Streets establish a set of regulations that preserve and enhance the character of these shopping districts by prohibiting auto-oriented land uses, such as curb cuts, driveways, parking lots, and other features more typically found in suburban commercial areas, while encouraging dense development.

35th Street, with its mixture of small independently owned shops and restaurants with apartments above, fit the P-Street character. CDOT and DPD should consider P-Street zoning designation for 35th Street, from Hoyne Avenue east to Ashland Avenue, to protect and promote the existing pedestrian-oriented environment.

Activate ground-floor spaces with active uses

The 35th Street corridor has a number of parcels designated for mixed-use (residential above ground-floor retail). However, due to the high turnover in small businesses, many of the ground floors are used for residential. Building off the P-Street designation, pursuing active ground-floor uses that are not limited to retail could help revive the corridor into a vibrant and walkable destination. There is already an abundance of commercial retail on Archer Avenue, which offers opportunities to explore options for providing other needed services and amenities for residents. Other uses can help meet community needs while providing the kind of continuous façades that make a street welcoming for people walking. Possible uses can range from civic facilities to institutional uses, such as childcare, health clinics, social services, or arts/theater/museum spaces.

Attractive and inviting ground-floor spaces are integral to shaping the pedestrian experience in a community. MPDC should engage the community to work with developers to consider a variety of innovative possibilities for ground-floor use, and apply best practice strategies that utilize attractive, flexible design guidelines that can accommodate a range of uses. Additionally, MPDC should work with property owners to invite existing local businesses and entrepreneurs to open pop-up shops as temporary uses that activate empty storefronts in visible locations.

Alternatively, MPDC can work with property owners to fill windows with works by local artists. Engaged property owners with temporary vacancies may be open to displaying work by local artists while their space remains vacant, providing an opportunity for artists to showcase their work. MPDC’s new arts and culture committee could serve as the coordinator of an art windows program, acting as a liaison between artists and property owners to coordinate access, installation, and relocation of artwork when the vacant space finds a tenant.

Reinforce the sense of place through beautification improvements

McKinley Park already benefits from vibrant parks, but it also has many other places in the public realm — such as sidewalks, streets, and vacant lots — that can serve functions similar to traditional public spaces through innovative and resourceful “placemaking” and beautification efforts. Well-designed spaces for community amenities not only improve the streetscape, but can also cultivate a distinct sense of place, enliven public life, and provide places outside of the home and work for residents to convene and enjoy their communities.

Image 5.5 Example of Window Display



Developers of a mixed-use building in Logan Square invited the community to suggest what they would like to see on the ground floor via text message.

Placemaking is an approach to enlivening neighborhoods by making their public spaces enjoyable, vibrant, and inviting.¹⁴ Placemaking strategies can result in creating a “place brand,” a unique experience that a visitor will remember and attribute to this area. By shaping the public realm in the image of a community, placemaking deepens the social and cultural connections between people and the physical spaces of their neighborhood. Public art and various interactive activities can all result in creating a place brand, as well as helping unsafe areas get more activity and “eyes on the street.”

An easy-to-implement, temporary placemaking strategy to improve streetscapes is to paint decorative, potentially branded crosswalks at major intersections throughout 35th Street. Colorful designs can have a traffic calming effect on roadways, and create more comfort for pedestrians. This also creates an opportunity for local artists to take part in community improvements. In addition to installing pedestrian-level lighting, banners, and landscaping, community stakeholders should explore the conversion of underutilized sections of 35th Street. As recommended in strategy 5.2c, CDOT’s Make Way for People initiative could be one way to create new public spaces. Community stakeholders should work with the 12th Ward alderman and CDOT to identify areas for public space through the people spots and people alleys. These projects will enable temporary installations for outdoor seating, dining, and performances.

Image 5.6 Placemaking Examples



Source: Reliance Foundry

In July 2019, Marshfield Courts received a face-lift thanks to the efforts of local volunteers and McKinley Park neighborhood artist Juan Chavez.¹⁵ The city-owned lot located at 1642 W. 35th Street has been abandoned as long as residents can remember. The neighborhood plan recommends preserving this lot as a public space for year-round community programs and activities. MPDC's new arts and culture alliance and beautification committees should work together to ensure the upkeep and programming of this space. CDOT's People Plaza is a resource available to support these initiatives to ensure the vibrancy of this city-owned space.



Source: Chicago Detours

5.4 Design Western Boulevard as a Multi-modal Thoroughfare

The Western Avenue/Western Boulevard Streetscape Plan, completed in May 2011, was created to provide the City of Chicago with a guide for future streetscape and right-of-way improvements along the corridor.¹⁶ The project area encompassed Western Avenue/Boulevard from 31st Street on the north, to 49th Street on the south. The overall focus of the plan is to identify streetscape recommendations that could be possible within the existing environment. The plan was designed as a framework for future improvements, to be supplemented with all available best management practices for streetscape conditions. The project evaluated both the aesthetic considerations and functional needs as a system, including drainage, circulation, maintenance of existing trees, and code and standard compliance. Plan goals include:

- Utilize the existing right-of-way in a manner that balances the needs of vehicular, bus, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation.
- Protect pedestrians from possible swift-moving vehicular traffic at crossing sites.

Image 5.7 Marshfield Courts Gets Face-Lift



Source: McKinley Park News

- Encourage walking, bicycling, and transit usage along the corridor by improving transfer point facilities between different modes of travel.
- Encourage the use of the parkway and its development for uses such as cafés, bench seating, bicycle parking, and bus stops.
- Provide complete streets and appropriate facilities for all users, including pedestrians, children, people with disabilities, and bicyclists.

This section of the neighborhood plan presents strategies that align with the goals presented in the Western Avenue/Boulevard Streetscape Plan. The recommended strategies focus on providing greater access, improving safety, and reducing congestion while improving the overall livability of residents through expanded open space areas.



Source: McKinley Park News

Explore the feasibility of converting Western Avenue/Boulevard to a one-way couplet from 35th Street to Pershing Road

The conversion of Western Avenue and Western Boulevard from two-way operations to one-way couplets would provide benefits to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. Creating one-way couplets reduces many potential modal conflicts and provides opportunities to expand sidewalk width, add buffer space, and expand bicycle infrastructure. The motivation behind this idea stems from the Midway Plaisance, which is a boulevard style one-way couplet roadway located just south of the University of Chicago. The traffic calming and increased safety benefits provided to pedestrians and bicyclists through converting Western Avenue/Boulevard to one-way couplets would also allow the green space between the roadways to experience greater activation and use. Additionally, proposed improvements should examine the integration of shared-used paths and curb bump-outs to create safer access to and from McKinley Park.

Studies concerning bus turnings, routing, bus stop locations, and traffic modeling congestion should consult CTA. CDOT should coordinate with IDOT and the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways to examine this concept idea through an engineering study. This project could be funded through CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program.

Image 5.8 Examples of People Spots



Concept ideas for further study

The illustrated streetscape concepts are only meant to show the possibilities of how each of these corridors could be repurposed to provide greater access, improve safety, and reduce congestion. A feasibility study would be an appropriate next step to ensure the recommendations being proposed are the best possible solutions.



Western and 33rd: Western Avenue should maintain the current two-way operations north of 35th Street. Facilitating one-way operations north of the existing 35th Street intersection could have a negative impact on safety due to roadway geometrics and sightline restrictions caused by Western Boulevard traversing above Western Avenue.

At its intersection with 33rd Street, Western Avenue currently has a striped center median separating two lanes of traffic in each direction. CDOT should explore the addition of a landscaped barrier island that supports a pedestrian refuge where the previous striped center median is located to provide a safer experience crossing Western Avenue.

The curb line of the existing parcel located in the northeast quadrant of the Western Avenue and 33rd Street intersection could be extended westward and the recaptured area should be repurposed as parkway. This parkway would provide increased separation between traveling vehicles and pedestrians.

Exhibit 5.4 illustrates potential treatments that could be proposed with the curb line being extended westward. These include pushing the stop bar location for westbound 33rd Street vehicles further west. The current stop bar location has sightline issues due to the viaduct of Western Boulevard being located immediately south of the intersection. A sidewalk extending fully across Western could also be beneficial.

Additionally, a median extension at the southwest corner of the intersection will prevent vehicles traveling along the one-way northbound continuation of Western Boulevard from attempting to turn left and head back southbound on Western Avenue.

Currently, westbound traffic along 33rd Street is restricted from making left turns on Western Avenue through signage; however, vehicles probably still make this dangerous maneuver. Both the landscape barrier median and the curb bump-out physically prevent the left-turning maneuver and should increase safety at the intersection.

Exhibit 5.4 Western Avenue & 33rd Street



Exhibit 5.5 Western Avenue & 35th Street



Western and 35th: 35th Street marks the northern terminus of the proposed one-way couplet along Western Avenue/Boulevard. The south legs of both Western Avenue and Western Boulevard would have reduced pavement sections under the proposed one-way reconfiguration. This will allow crossing distance for pedestrians to be shortened in half by converting existing pavement to parkway.

Due to the conversion from two-way operations to one-way couplets, the north leg of the Western Boulevard and 35th Street intersection has the opportunity to provide a landscaped median with a pedestrian refuge.

There is currently a 12-foot shared-use path in disrepair that runs north-south along the boulevard median between Western Avenue and Western Boulevard. It is recommended that this path be repaved, as it would require no tree removal due to its existing location.

The sidewalks that border the boulevard median are recommended to be 10 feet in width and buffered roughly 5 feet from the roadway where possible. This change would create a more friendly and inviting pedestrian environment within the boulevard median and ideally lead to an activation of the green space.

Exhibit 5.6 Western Avenue & Archer Avenue



Western and Archer: CTA Route No. 49, which travels on Western Avenue, would travel on the east roadway northbound and the west roadway southbound. This treatment recommends exploring the relocation of existing bus stops or shelters on the northbound side of the existing Western Avenue to the one-way northbound lane.

It should be noted that heavy freight traffic is currently allowed along Western Avenue and restricted along Western Boulevard. One downside of converting Western Avenue/Boulevard from two-way operations to one-way couplets would be the heavy freight traffic utilizing both roadways. Findings from CMAP's Chicago Southwest Communities Truck Abatement Study should be considered during the exploration of this concept idea.

Western and Pershing: The Western Avenue/Boulevard and Pershing Road intersections experience the most crashes in the study area. The high number of crashes is likely the result of confusing roadway geometrics along with both the grade-separated freight and CTA railroad tracks running over the top of the intersection. As previously stated, converting Western Avenue/Boulevard to one-way couplets would reduce the potential for modal conflicts at both of these intersections. Pedestrians and transit riders would have reduced crossing distances at the intersections and bicyclists would be able to navigate with reduced points of conflict.

This concept recommends studying the continuation of the one-way conversion pair to 49th Street. Due to the conversion from two-way operations to one-way couplets, there is an opportunity to add a landscaped median with a pedestrian refuge to the east side of the Pershing Road and Western Boulevard intersection. See Exhibit 5.7.

As previously mentioned, heavy freight traffic is currently allowed along Western Avenue and restricted along Western Boulevard. A downside of converting Western Avenue/Boulevard from two-way operations to one-way couplets would be the heavy freight traffic utilizing both roadways.

Exhibit 5.7 Western Avenue & Pershing Road

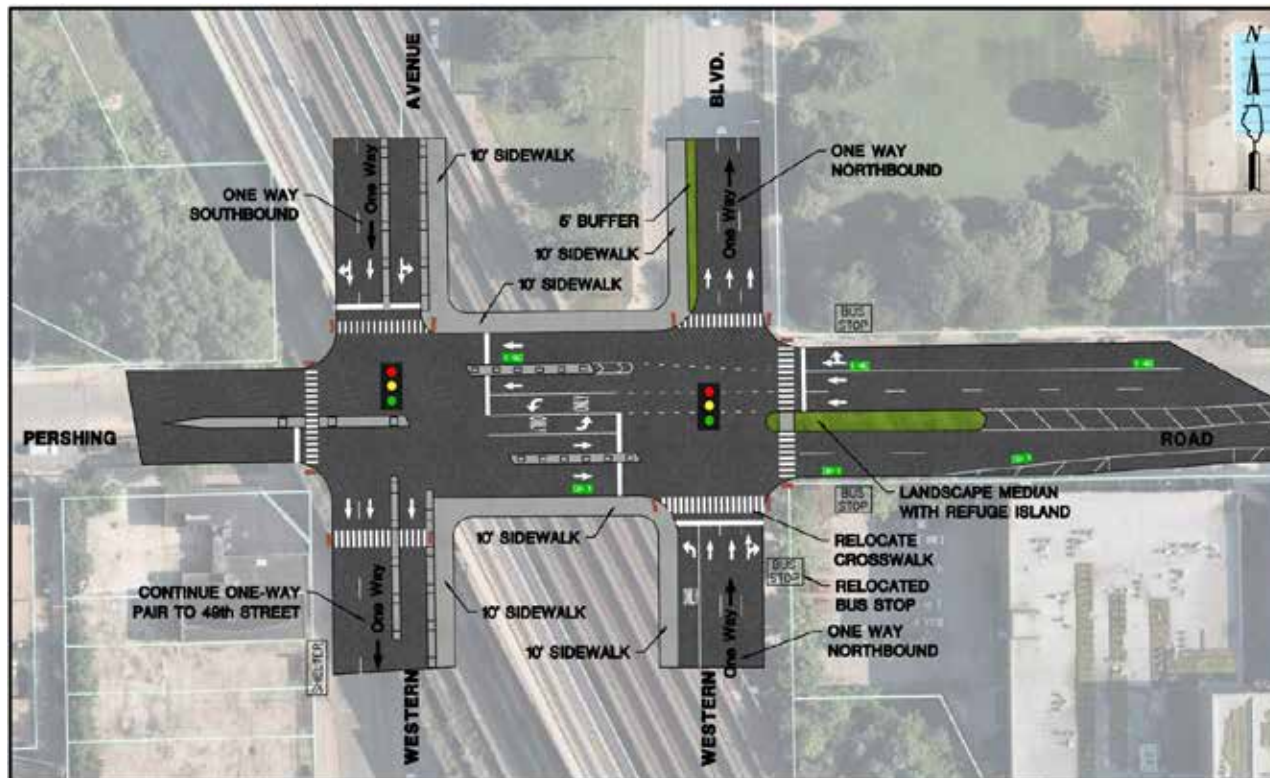


Image 5.8 Western Avenue/Boulevard and Pershing Road Viaduct



Source: Google

The viaduct on Western Avenue/Boulevard and Pershing Road is particularly unsafe due in large part to its many railroad support columns (see Image 5.8). This viaduct creates a visual and physical barrier between McKinley Park and neighborhoods to the west and south. Currently, Norfolk Southern Corporation and CSX only use one track to access the BNSF Corwith Intermodal Facility.

CDOT should revisit conversations with railroad owners to determine if some of the spans are approaching the end of their design life. A key recommendation for this intersection is for CDOT to work with Norfolk Southern Corporation to explore the feasibility of demolishing the two western-most viaducts span of the intersection that no longer have tracks on them. Norfolk Southern supports the removal of the westernmost bridge bays. Potential funding opportunities include the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP), administered by IDOT, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), both administered by CMAP.

Activate and celebrate the Western Boulevard

Community residents would like to build upon the assets and opportunities provided by having a boulevard in their community. Throughout the planning process, stakeholders expressed a desire to celebrate the boulevard as a community amenity for public gatherings, celebrations, and recreational use. Prioritizing the Western Boulevard as a key community asset will enhance overall enjoyment for residents and visitors, and improve the quality of the environment.

In addition to improving traffic safety, the reconfiguration of Western Avenue/Boulevard will provide newly added space for wider sidewalks and parkways. These infrastructure enhancements should be paired with other smaller improvements to the boulevard such as multi-generational gathering spots, community gardens, public art, cultural installations, natural areas, and stormwater management features. Implementing these changes will improve feelings of safety and draw people to the boulevard.

MPDC's new beautification and arts and culture committees should utilize tools such as visual preference surveys (VPS) and tactical urbanism to engage community residents in prioritizing and coordinating these public installations, including opportunities for community programming activities and events. Further, MPDC should work with the Chicago Park District and the Department of Transportation to formalize an agreement for the beautification and maintenance of the boulevard.

Study off-street connections between educational and recreational facilities

If the proposed El Paseo comes to fruition, the community would like CDOT and DPD to explore the feasibility of connecting McKinley Park to the proposed linear park system through the Western Boulevard. A possible appendage to El Paseo would be an off-street trail system that would connect McKinley Park to the campuses of community institutions located along Western Avenue near 26th Street. These institutions include Instituto del Progreso Latino, the Rauner Family YMCA, and the Arturo Velasquez Institute. These facilities are interested in creating a pedestrian linkage that would provide a safe passage between them for their students and clients in order to create more of a "campus" setting.



5.5 Connect McKinley Park through New and Improved Bicycle Facilities

While cars may continue to be the primary mode of transportation for most residents, other modes — like walking and bicycling — could make up a greater share of trips in the future. These active modes of transportation would activate the neighborhood sidewalks and improve the community’s overall health and well-being. Sidewalks throughout McKinley Park are prevalent on both sides of the street in residential and commercial areas, which is an important factor in encouraging walking as a mode of transportation. However, limited bicycle infrastructure in the community poses a barrier to encouraging a wide use of this type of transportation. Designated bike lanes along Pershing Road between Western Avenue and Ashland Avenue have helped. However, community members noted that cycling along major corridors such as Western Avenue and Archer Avenue can be difficult due to the lack of right-of-way and high traffic speeds.

Chicago’s Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 presents a blueprint for a bikeway network connecting neighborhoods and destinations throughout Chicago.¹⁷ The plan identifies a network of innovative bikeways using three guiding principles:

- Provide a bicycle accommodation within 1/2 mile of every Chicago resident.
- Provide a greater number of bikeways where more people live.
- Increase the amount of infrastructure where ridership is high, while establishing a strong backbone of infrastructure where ridership is currently lower, but has the potential to grow.

The city’s bike plan identified future routes, including 35th Street east of Iron street as a neighborhood bike route connecting to the CTA Orange Line Ashland Station via 34th Avenue and Justine Street, Western Avenue as a crosstown bike route, and Archer Avenue as a spoke route (see Figure 5.4).

Strategies to encourage the use of bicycles for transportation and recreation rely heavily on public infrastructure investments and community education. Recommended streetscape treatments such as traffic calming techniques, clear crosswalks, updated viaducts, bike infrastructure and street landscaping will improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and create a more welcoming commercial district for residents and visitors. With the help of input from residents and stakeholders, a proposed system of additional neighborhood routes has been identified, along with recommended improvements to strengthen existing bicycle facilities.

Advocate for the implementation of a safer Archer Avenue

Although CDOT’s Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 designated Archer Avenue as a “spoke route,” one of Chicago’s most direct routes in and out of the downtown area for bicyclists, most people do not feel safe riding alongside speeding and parked cars and prefer to take indirect routes instead. Currently, this major thoroughfare has a number of barriers to providing a safe bicycling experience, including heavy truck traffic and a lack of designated bike lanes. MPDC should advocate CDOT to implement spoke route design elements, such as barrier/buffer protected bike lanes, and improved bike parking along Archer Avenue. A potential partner for this initiative is the Active Transportation Alliance, which is currently spearheading a campaign for a safer Archer Avenue.¹⁸

This map illustrates the McKinley Park area, highlighting various land use and transportation features. The map includes a legend in the top right corner with the following categories:

- CTA Rail Stations:** Indicated by red dots.
- McKinley Park:** Indicated by a black outline.
- Vacant Parcels:** Indicated by dark gray shading.
- Vacant City Owned Parcels:** Indicated by blue shading.
- Priority Areas:** Indicated by yellow outlines.

The map shows the following streets and landmarks:

- Streets:** W 31ST BLVD, W 32ND ST, W 33RD ST, W 34TH ST, W 35TH PL, W 36TH PL, W 37TH ST, W 38TH ST, W 39TH PL, W 40TH ST, W 31ST PL, W 32ND PL, W 33RD PL, W 34TH PL, W 35TH ST, W 36TH ST, W 37TH PL, W 38TH PL, W 39TH ST, W 40TH ST, W 31ST AVE, W 32ND AVE, W 33RD AVE, W 34TH AVE, W 35TH AVE, W 36TH AVE, W 37TH AVE, W 38TH AVE, W 39TH AVE, W 40TH AVE, S 31ST ST, S 32ND ST, S 33RD ST, S 34TH ST, S 35TH ST, S 36TH ST, S 37TH ST, S 38TH ST, S 39TH ST, S 40TH ST, S 31ST PL, S 32ND PL, S 33RD PL, S 34TH PL, S 35TH PL, S 36TH PL, S 37TH PL, S 38TH PL, S 39TH PL, S 40TH PL.
- Landmarks:** McKinley Park, Daley (Richard J.) Park, Mulberry Park, Kucinski-Murphy Park, Wilson (John) Comm. Ctr. Park, Wilson (John) Park.
- Other Features:** CTA Rail Line, I-55, S 31ST ST, S 32ND ST, S 33RD ST, S 34TH ST, S 35TH ST, S 36TH ST, S 37TH ST, S 38TH ST, S 39TH ST, S 40TH ST, S 31ST PL, S 32ND PL, S 33RD PL, S 34TH PL, S 35TH PL, S 36TH PL, S 37TH PL, S 38TH PL, S 39TH PL, S 40TH PL.

Create neighborhood greenways

The plan recommends that CDOT explore the feasibility of two new neighborhood greenways: along Leavitt Street, from 37th Street to Bross Avenue, and along Wood Street, from Pershing Avenue to Archer Avenue. Leavitt Street is an optimal location for a neighborhood greenway, accommodating two-way bike traffic between the neighborhood's namesake park and the CTA Orange Line station at 35th and Archer. Four CTA bus routes access the station via Archer or 35th Street. Additionally, a Divvy bike sharing station is located along Archer Avenue just south of the CTA station. Approximately 800 feet south of the subject intersection along Leavitt Street is the park (McKinley Park), making Leavitt Street an acceptable location for a greenway to accommodate two-way bike traffic.

The proposed Wood Street neighborhood greenway will provide north-south service to the east half of the neighborhood, connecting the Pershing bike lane to the proposed 35th Street bike lane, and the future Archer Avenue spoke route. This proposed route will provide access to several nearby destinations, including Namaste Charter School, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Evergreen Academy Middle School, Nathanael Greene School, Aquinas Literacy Center, and the McKinley Park Branch of the Chicago Public Library. Additionally, a Divvy bike sharing station is located on the southeast intersection of Wood Street at 35th Street.

Recommend 35th Street neighborhood bike route

Chicago's 2020 bike plan include 35th Street east of Iron Street as a neighborhood bike route connecting to the CTA Orange Line Ashland Station via 34th Avenue and Justine Street. The McKinley Park Neighborhood Plan recommends extending the bike route from Iron Street west to the proposed Western Avenue crosstown bike route to provide east-west access to the neighborhood. This strategy is in line with the neighborhood's vision of creating a main street experience along 35th Street, and will help draw residents and visitors.

Strengthen existing local bicycle facilities

Bicycle infrastructure in McKinley Park includes a buffer-protected bike lane located along Pershing Road between Western Avenue/Boulevard and Ashland Avenue, and a marked bike lane along Western Boulevard north of 33rd Street to 31st Street connecting to California Avenue. Additionally, Western Avenue is designated as a signed bike route from 33rd Street to Archer Avenue, traveling southwest to California Avenue where the signed route continues to the south. Divvy bike stations are located at the 35th/Archer and the Ashland CTA Orange Line Stations, along Wood Street, south of 35th Street, and along Pershing Road at Damen Avenue and at Ashland Avenue.

Despite efforts in recent years to install bicycle facilities, local bicyclists do not feel safe traveling with the high volume of freight trucks and high-speed vehicles. Chicago's Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 classifies Pershing Road and Western Avenue as crosstown bike routes. MPDC should advocate CDOT to enhance existing routes with design elements, such as barrier-protected bike lanes to guarantee the safety of users. A potential partner for this initiative is the Active Transportation Alliance.

Image 5.10 Example of Neighborhood Bike Route & Signage



Neighborhood Greenway along Glenwood in Edgewater, Chicago.
Source: DNAinfo



Source: John Greenfield, Streetsblog Chicago

5.6. Coordinate Attractive Gateway Entrances and Wayfinding Signage

People familiar with McKinley Park know that it is a special, unique neighborhood. But for the many other people who pass through the neighborhood along Archer Avenue, there are no visual signifiers that clearly indicate they are entering the McKinley Park community. By placing iconic markers, public art, and wayfinding signage at key areas in the neighborhood, the community would provide attractive, useful signifiers to let people know they have arrived in a place they will want to remember.

This recommendation aligns closely with the proposed placemaking strategies in prior sections (sections 5.2c, 5.2f, and 5.3c). A coordinated system for attractive gateway entrances and wayfinding signage, together with innovative placemaking efforts — parklets, pop-up markets, and community events — will not only bring a sense of place to McKinley Park, it will also help improve the safety of the streets and public spaces.

Prioritize gateway entrances along prominent corridors

Gateways are especially important, as they provide a first impression for visitors, whether they are entering the neighborhood by car, bike, or foot. Highlighting neighborhood entrances will emphasize the identity of McKinley Park and create a sense of community. If done in coordination with local artist groups, gateways can incorporate art into road treatments.

Image 5.11 Spoke Route



Source: Chicago Streets for Cycling 2020



Source: Chicago Streets for Cycling 2020

Archer Avenue functions as a gateway of sorts, since people arriving by public transit arrive first in the neighborhood via the Ashland and the 35th/Archer CTA Orange Line stations. Other gateway features include the Western Boulevard, the neighborhood's namesake park (McKinley Park), and the river crossing at 35th Street. These sites should be prioritized as key areas for attractive visual signifiers to inform residents they are entering McKinley Park. Some gateway entrances are viaduct underpasses, but these will need to be evaluated for appropriate lighting and cleanliness, as well as aesthetics as discussed in strategy 5.2f. Potential gateway sites include the viaduct at Damen north of Archer, at Leavitt north of Archer, and at Pershing and Western. These gateways will serve as bookends to the neighborhood's commercial corridors, providing a sense of arrival for residents as well as visitors.

Neighborhoods in Chicago and elsewhere have used archways as effective ways to distinguish themselves visually, such as the Little Village arch, the Lincoln Square entrance arch, and the Puerto Rican flag archways in Humboldt Park. However, a gateway feature does not need to arch over the road to achieve a similar welcoming effect. Murals, pedestal signs, and other markers can do so as well. In addition, signs, banners, and public art can incorporate the visual themes of the gateways in other parts of the neighborhood to show visitors that businesses and cultural opportunities can be found throughout McKinley Park.

Coordinate informative and attractive wayfinding signage for all modes

A clear wayfinding system placed at popular destinations, cultural landmarks, parking lots, transit, and schools can increase walking and allow for easy transition between modes. Wayfinding and pedestrian signage helps to improve the overage appearance of the streetscape, while adding to the safety of all visitors. Possible elements of such a system include the number of minutes it would take to walk between destinations, clear parking information, historic and cultural information, and ecological information. All signage should have a streamlined and uniform look to help create a sense of place. Combined, these elements will promote the character and beauty of the street, corridor, and neighborhood.

Signs should be strategically placed in high-traffic areas throughout McKinley Park so that they are visible to residents and visitors. Signage at the 35th/Archer CTA Station, where many visitors enter the neighborhood, would be a strategic way to welcome and orient people. Other potential areas include the intersections of Archer and Western, Archer and Damen, 35th and Ashland, and at the commercial plaza at Archer and Ashland. As the CMD becomes modernized with diverse new uses, MPDC should consider adding a sign at Pershing and Damen to inform residents and visitors about the CMD's historic significance and its current tenants.

Similarly, as efforts to restore the South Branch of the Chicago River proceed, MPDC should prioritize the installation of educational and wayfinding signage as an opportunity to engage residents and visitors to learn about the river's natural habitat, and draw visitors from the river into the neighborhood to shop and eat.

MPDC should work through its new beautification committee to create neighborhood-specific signs that highlight popular destinations; mark pedestrian and bike routes; pinpoint bus, rail, and Divvy stations; and tell people where the preferred and underutilized parking areas are in the community.



Additional Resources

Active Transportation Allianc (ATA)

ATA is a nonprofit advocacy organization that works to improve conditions for bicycling, walking, and transit, and engage people in healthy and active ways to get around. <https://activetrans.org/>

Chicago Public Arts Group (CPAG)

Operating on the belief that public art projects strengthen communities, CPAG engages residents in the design and implementation of pieces of public art that reflect the social and cultural values of the community. <http://www.chicagopublicartgroup.org/>

City of Chicago: Department of Transportation's Make Way for People

This initiative aims to create public spaces that cultivate community and culture in Chicago's neighborhoods through placemaking. Make Way for People supports innovation in the public way by opening Chicago's streets, parking spots, plazas, and alleys to new programming and market opportunities via public and private partnerships. In addition to improving safety and promoting walkable communities, this initiative supports economic development for Chicago's local businesses and neighborhoods. The four Make Way for People program are: People Spots, People Streets, People Plazas, and People Alleys. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdot/supp_info/make_way_for_people.html

City of Chicago: Department of Planning and Development's Open Space Impact Fee

When a new development takes place in the city, there is a certain amount of land the developer must leave as green space. If the developer cannot provide for it, they must pay what is called an "open space impact fee." The money is used by the city to increase green space and recreational facilities for the neighborhood residents. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/open_space_impactfee.html#:~:text=The%20Open%20Space%20Impact%20Fee,range%20from%20%24313%20to%20%241%2C253

City of Chicago: Mayor's Landscape Awards

Every year, the city recognizes residents and businesses in Chicago that help to beautify their neighborhoods through landscaping. The awards are open to all residents of Chicago, and nomination forms are available on the website. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/supp_info/chicagoawards.html

Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU)

CNU's mission is to champion walkable urbanism. The organization provides resources, education, and technical assistance to create socially just, economically robust, environmentally resilient, and people-centered places. <https://www.cnu.org/what-we-do/education-trainings>

Placemaking Chicago

A neighborhood guide to placemaking in Chicago. <http://www.placemakingchicago.com/>

Tactical Urbanist's Guide

A website intended to serve as a hub of information about tactical urbanism, focusing on the information from the Tactical Urbanist's Guide to Materials and Design, and highlighting additional resources by Street Plans and other partners. <http://tacticalurbanismguide.com/about/>



Chapter 6

Modernize the Central Manufacturing District

THE VISION

A modernized Central Manufacturing District with new sustainable development and adaptive reuse projects that maintain local jobs and ensure the health and well-being of residents.



Introduction

McKinley Park has a strong industrial heritage, and the Central Manufacturing District (CMD) exemplifies that legacy. The CMD was once the first planned manufacturing district in the nation and housed big name companies like Goodyear, Wrigley, and Spiegel. A wide variety of industrial businesses still operate in McKinley Park, some in close proximity to residential areas. Through the neighborhood planning process, residents and stakeholders reimagined the CMD as a space for modern and innovative uses that contribute to the local economy without having a negative environmental impact on the community.

Key Findings

- **A significant portion of McKinley Park (26.6 percent) is devoted to manufacturing and industrial uses.** In addition to the historic Central Manufacturing District, the neighborhood is located within the boundaries of the Stockyards Planned Manufacturing District. Industrial uses are primarily located east of Ashland Avenue, and along Pershing Road.
- **Excellent access to the region's freight rail network and the interstate makes it appealing for industrial businesses to locate in McKinley Park.** Businesses ranging from home goods and food manufacturers to wholesale distributors operate within the neighborhood. Industrial uses have an economic benefit for the neighborhood and the city as a whole, but also pose environmental and mobility challenges to local residents.
- **While the CMD remains a strong economic asset, residents are concerned about the close proximity of industrial uses to residential areas.** Stakeholders are particularly concerned about the impacts of truck traffic on the neighborhood's air quality. The community envisions a new direction for industrial uses, one that maintains local jobs, but also ensures the health and well-being of residents.
- **Fostering a business-friendly environment is an important aspect of keeping industrial businesses and jobs in the neighborhood.** McKinley Park is home to a wide variety of businesses that foster the neighborhood's industrial base. Emphasis should be placed on connecting existing and potential new businesses with assistance programs and resources, as well as encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **The CMD's historic buildings are a neighborhood asset.** Although many of the buildings are currently vacant, they present opportunities for future redevelopment. The CMD buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, which offers various financial incentives for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of designated buildings.

Recommendations

The CMD's central location, large vacant spaces, and proximity to a robust transportation network are all assets that can help modernize the historic complex into a 21st-century manufacturing hub. Modernizing the CMD offers an opportunity to attract environmentally sustainable businesses to the neighborhood, and target light industrial uses that will be compatible with nearby residential areas. Modernization efforts should focus on preserving the historic building stock and unique character of the CMD, creating a supportive business environment for existing and potential entrepreneurs, and prioritizing the environmental and public health of the neighborhood. The following strategies aim to modernize the CMD into the regional economic asset that it is historically known for by attracting new sustainable development and adaptive reuse projects that maintain local jobs and promote the well-being and health of all residents.

In 2018, the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development, in partnership with C40, marketed three city-owned properties in the Central Manufacturing District for redevelopment. While this process ultimately was unsuccessful, DPD is committed to continuing to work with diverse stakeholders, including C40 and the McKinley Park community, to create a vision for these buildings in a way that creatively incorporates green and carbon-neutral strategies, identifies appropriate adaptive reuse options that can serve the community, thoughtfully addresses existing and potential land use conflicts, and respects the historical character of the CMD.

6.1 Prioritize the Health and Well-Being of Residents

While maintaining industrial jobs in the neighborhood is an important aspect of any future redevelopment of the CMD, the health and well-being of residents should be prioritized. A number of strategies can be used to mitigate potential adverse effects of industrial development, and balance environmental challenges with the economic benefits of industrial businesses.

Advocate for environmental justice and transparency in the development process

McKinley Park's residents are engaged and passionate about improving the environmental quality of their neighborhood, as exemplified by the formation of the Neighbors for Environmental Justice group. An important accomplishment of this group is a resident-led initiative to install air quality monitors around the neighborhood, which allows community members to be more informed about McKinley Park's air quality. Residents should continue to demonstrate leadership by advocating for environmental justice, and enhance these efforts by engaging the wider community and elected officials. Advocating for improved transparency in the development process, through activities like forming a volunteer zoning committee, is another way that McKinley Park residents can improve the environmental quality of their neighborhood. Community leaders should work with the neighborhood's elected officials to ensure that residents can provide input on any major neighborhood development, and voice any concerns related to environmental or public health.

Target light industrial uses and modernize the CMD as a green manufacturing hub

The city's zoning code permits light industrial uses, such as food manufacturing, in McKinley Park's CMD and Planned Manufacturing Districts (PMD). Many of these types of businesses already operate in the neighborhood, and make up a substantial portion of McKinley Park's industrial base. The CMD modernization efforts should build on already existing light industrial uses, and target non-intensive manufacturing businesses and sustainable renewal projects that will not have an adverse environmental impact on the surrounding community.

Case Study: The Future Baltimore Food Hub

The Baltimore Food Hub is a historic renovation project aimed at restoring a blighted, 3.5-acre brownfield with a campus of food related enterprises. The goal is to revitalize a former industrial site by growing food businesses that can provide accessible, quality jobs for the surrounding community. Potential businesses within the food hub include catering companies, food manufacturers, and wholesale distributors. Moreover, the campus will include shared commercial kitchens, workforce-training programs, and a business incubator for entrepreneurs in the food industry. The project is expected to bring more than 300 permanent jobs to a largely disinvested area with high rates of unemployment.¹⁹



Source: Baltimore Food Hub

Case Study: Make City, ICNC's Business Incubator

The Make City incubator is located in Chicago's Kinzie Industrial Corridor and houses over 100 companies within three buildings on the Near West Side. The incubator was opened by the Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago (ICNC), which is a partner agency of the city's Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) program.²⁰ The 416,000 square-foot incubator provides growing companies with affordable space, business assistance, workforce development programs, and an entrepreneurial community. Use of the incubator space is specifically intended for light industrial activities, including manufacturing of food and beverages, personal and home care products, clothes, and textiles.

Source: Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago

Prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists in modernization efforts

Currently, McKinley Park's industrial areas lack proper pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, which discourages many residents to walking or biking through this portion of the neighborhood. Incorporating pedestrian and bicycle-oriented improvements, such as designated bike lanes, clearly marked crosswalks, and enhanced streetscapes would result in a safe and efficient transportation network for all users, and improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the river. MPDC should collaborate with aldermen, CDOT, and community stakeholders to identify and prioritize improvements to the right-of-way within the CMD. Modernization efforts that include new development and adaptive reuse projects should prioritize treatments such as wayfinding, street furniture, bike parking, creative drinking water fountains, and public art to make the experience of walking and biking even better (see Chapter 5 for illustration examples).

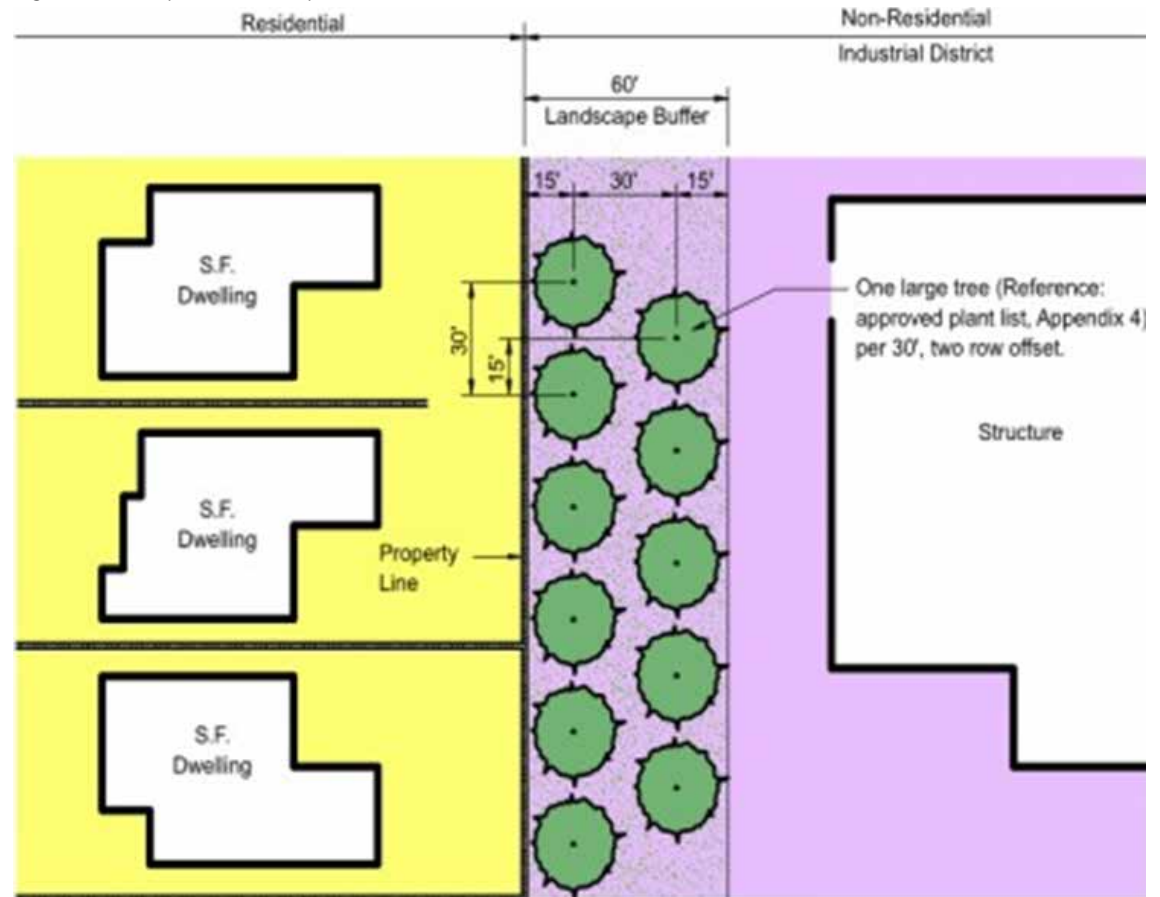
Create ecologically functioning and aesthetically pleasing landscapes to buffer freight activity from nearby residential uses

While freight activity in McKinley Park provides economic benefits to the region's industrial sector, it can have adverse effects on nearby residential areas. Truck and rail traffic can cause noise, congestion, and negative air quality impacts. One way to reduce the impact of freight activity on McKinley Park's residents is to use landscape buffers to minimize the interference of freight on the community's quality of life. Creating landscape buffers between freight intensive activities and residential areas can insert space between these two incompatible uses. The use of a landscape buffer in strategic locations, particularly in areas where residential property lines are next to industrial uses, could provide an aesthetically pleasing barrier to help improve issues of noise and air pollution. See recommendation 7.4 under the *Enhance and Expand Parks and Recreational Opportunities* chapter for opportunities to create landscape buffers for any new development along Bubbly Creek.

6.2 Maintain a Supportive Business Environment

McKinley Park's manufacturing district is home to a variety of industrial businesses that make it an important neighborhood economic center. There are a number of resources and assistance programs available to entrepreneurs, such as the City of Chicago's Small Business Improvement Fund; however, many businesses owners are not aware of them.²¹ A potential partner in advocating for the neighborhood's industrial base is the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council.²² The organization serves McKinley Park's CMD and the larger PMD, and is a delegate agency of the Chicago Department of Planning and Development's Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) program.²³ The LIRI program connects potential employees to workforce training programs, and provides economic development services to businesses located in and around industrial corridors. Available services include marketing and public incentives assistance, city services facilitation, as well as educational and networking opportunities. Connecting businesses to resources available through programs like LIRI would foster the CMD's business community, and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation.

Figure 6.1 Example of Landscape Buffer



Source: Courtesy of Keep Waxahachie Beautiful

Create networking opportunities for resource sharing and business support

Networking and resource sharing opportunities are important tools for supporting small ventures and first-time entrepreneurs. In many instances, business incubators provide these services. McKinley Park's 36Squared Business Incubator serves entrepreneurs by offering free trainings, connecting business owners to resources, and renting mixed-use spaces to interested tenants. In order to foster a supportive business environment in the CMD, regular networking events should be organized in partnership with the 36Squared Business Incubator and the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, to facilitate connections and collaboration between the neighborhood's industrial businesses. Resource sharing within the CMD should be explored as a way to support small ventures and entrepreneurs, especially in buildings like 36Squared where multiple tenants work in close proximity to one another. Shared resources could include co-working spaces, shared commercial kitchens for food entrepreneurs, shipping and receiving services, as well as joint marketing and promotional assistance.

Develop a workforce training program with local operators

Growing McKinley Park's industrial workforce is an important component of supporting the neighborhood's industrial businesses. The city's LIRI program offers a variety of workforce training assistance to industrial businesses in the CMD. MPDC should coordinate with the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council to market available workforce development programs like TIFWorks to the neighborhood's industrial and manufacturing firms.²⁴ Another available workforce development resource is the National Latino Education Institute, which offers workforce development and job training services for various types of trades, including jobs in the energy and construction sectors. These existing resources should be marketed to the community through avenues such as workforce development resource fairs, and networking events for industrial businesses. Recommendation 8.4 under the Create a Resilient Community chapter provides more information on available workforce training resources.

Identify opportunities to locate space for startups and other ventures

Traditionally, manufacturing has needed at least 500 square feet of space per employee,²⁵ which has left the CMD with large vacant spaces. This offers an opportunity for startup and other ventures to locate in the neighborhood's manufacturing district. Sites like the two city-owned CMD buildings on Pershing Road have the potential to accommodate multiple firms and offer shared space, with room for startups to grow. The momentum from the C40 Reinventing Cities competition should be used to market these sites to potential entrepreneurs and light manufacturing businesses. Doing so would encourage the adaptive reuse of these historic spaces and support modern uses of the CMD. Recommendation 8.3 under the Create a Resilient Community chapter provides more information on marketing McKinley Park's assets to potential entrepreneurs.

6.3 Encourage Preservation and Reuse of Historic Buildings

Although many of the buildings within the CMD are currently underutilized, their unique character and historical significance are neighborhood assets that can aid their future redevelopment. In 2014, Preservation Chicago listed the CMD as one of the most endangered sites in the city.²⁶ Many of the CMD buildings are registered under the National Register of Historic Places, which offers financial incentives for rehabilitation projects.²⁷ Encouraging preservation and reuse of historic buildings for modern uses would help activate the once bustling CMD, retain its unique character, and ensure that it remains a strong economic asset for the neighborhood.

Consider applying for Chicago Landmark designation

Landmark status can enhance a building's prestige, as well as increase the value of the property and its real estate marketability. Moreover, a building's landmark status unlocks various incentive programs to owners who make significant investment in rehabbing their property. The community should consider creating a landmark district that encompasses the CMD's historic buildings, which would incentivize rehabilitation and preservation of this important asset. The process for creating a landmark district requires a substantial number of residents to express their desire to create such a designation to their alderman and the Commission on Chicago Landmarks. MPDC should organize a neighborhood campaign that can facilitate community discussions and educate the public about the benefits of the landmark status designation. Historic preservation organizations, like Preservation Chicago, have provided educational and outreach resources that could be used for these efforts.²⁸

Case Study: Ukrainian Village Landmark District

A cycle of demolition and redevelopment of early 1900s buildings in Ukrainian Village threatened the neighborhood's architectural assets. Concerned residents built community and aldermanic support to create a landmark district that maintains the historic buildings and unique character of this community.

Source: Preservation Chicago

DPD should encourage developers to seek resources and financial incentives that preserve and restore historic buildings

Historic preservation financial incentives should be used to rehabilitate and preserve the unique character of the CMD. Property owners who are interested in receiving incentives for rehabbing qualifying properties can participate voluntarily. Available incentives include the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program, which encourages the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings by offering a 20 percent rehabilitation tax credit. Moreover, the Illinois Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program provides a 25 percent tax credit to building owners who undertake rehabilitation of their certified historic structures. Other potential incentives include the city's Façade Rebate Program, funded through the Community Development Block Grant program. The program offers up to a 50 percent rebate on approved rehabilitation projects of industrial buildings. An eligible "façade" is the front face of the building, which typically faces the street and contains windows and the principle entrance to the building.

Identify educational opportunities to promote the CMD

Promoting the CMD can help efforts to preserve and rehabilitate its historic buildings. MPDC should coordinate with advocacy organizations like Preservation Chicago to educate the public on the historic significance of the district, and encourage adaptive reuse of its buildings. Preservation Chicago champions the city's historic built environment through advocacy, programming, and events, such as lectures and tours. MPDC could use educational materials created by Preservation Chicago, like neighborhood preservation toolkits, which empower resident stakeholders to become advocates of historic preservation in their communities.

6.4 Promote Environmentally Sustainable Practices

Any future redevelopment in the CMD represents an opportunity to enhance the environmental performance of a property and contribute to local natural resource enhancement. Integrating sustainable practices into the redevelopment process has the potential to improve climate resilience, water conservation, stormwater management, and water quality. Much of the land in McKinley Park's industrial area is covered by impervious surfaces, which contribute to larger amounts of stormwater runoff during rain events, and an intensified urban heat island effect during hot days. Green infrastructure solutions, like native landscape materials and trees, can help mitigate the urban heat island effect, retain stormwater, promote carbon sequestration, and improve public health. These types of solutions should be promoted and incentivized in any future redevelopment of the CMD.

Consider design and policy guidelines for stormwater management treatments, including bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavers

In order to mitigate the adverse effects of stormwater runoff in McKinley Park's industrial areas, stormwater management treatments, such as bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavers, should be considered during any development or redevelopment project. The Bubbly Creek design guidelines outlined in Recommendation 7.4 discuss stormwater management requirements for any new developments along the river.

Recommendations related to city-wide green infrastructure programs, and strategies for encouraging these practices in the community, are found in recommendations 8.1 and 8.2 under the Create a Resilient Community chapter.

Rain gardens are planted depressions that allow rainwater runoff from impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, roofs, and sidewalks, to filter into the ground.

Bioswales are broad, vegetated channels used for movement and temporary storage of stormwater runoff. These channels are often planted with deep-rooted native vegetation that can reduce the rate and volume of runoff.

Permeable pavement are pavers, asphalt, or concrete that allow for the absorption of rainwater. This system is applicable for alleys and parking stalls that are relatively flat and tend to pond during heavy rain events.

Image 6.1 Example of Rain Garden



Image 6.2 Example of Bioswale



Source: City of Chicago

Image 6.3 Example of Permeable Pavement



Source: City of Chicago

Incorporate sustainable design features in the restoration and construction of buildings

The large flat roofs of buildings in the manufacturing district offer an opportunity to integrate sustainable design features such as solar panels or rooftop gardens. All renovations and new construction should incorporate to the greatest extent possible the strategies outlined in the Chicago Sustainable Development Policy.³³ Available incentives and resources for incorporating sustainable design features into the restoration or construction of CMD buildings should be promoted to building owners and developers.

Consider recommendations from previous city industrial planning efforts

Many of the plans created as part of the city's Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative include recommendations related to sustainability.³⁴ Any modernization effort of McKinley Park's CMD should be consistent with the city's previous recommendations for industrial corridors. Recommendations related to stormwater management, air and water quality, and the impact of industrial development on the community's environmental and public health should be considered during any future redevelopment of the CMD.

Prioritize rehabilitating and improving structures over teardowns

Tearing down structures like the historic CMD buildings can release dust containing lead and asbestos into the air. This can have negative effects on the air quality of the surrounding area, and may pose health concerns to nearby residents, especially children and those with existing respiratory problems. Moreover, demolition of buildings produces debris that is often not recycled and can contain hazardous material that ends up in a landfill, which can contribute to groundwater contamination. Any redevelopment in the CMD should prioritize rehabilitation of existing buildings over teardowns to ensure the health and well-being of McKinley Park's residents and preserve the unique character of the CMD. A number of financial incentives for rehabilitating historic buildings are outlined in recommendation 6.3.



Additional Resources

2019 Chicago River Design Guidelines (Rec 6.1)

The Chicago River Design Guidelines, adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission in January 2019, outline how properties along the Chicago River should be developed and improved. All new development within 100 feet of Chicago waterfront triggers a mandatory Planned Development and need to provide a minimum setback of 30 feet (60 feet for Bubbly Creek) from the top of the river's bank, and will need to comply with the general goals set forth in any waterway design guidelines adopted by the Plan Commission. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/chicago-river-design-guidelines-update.html

City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (Rec 6.2)

The Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) program uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues to help owners of commercial and industrial properties within specific TIF districts to repair or remodel their facilities for their own business or on behalf of tenants. Program participants can receive grants to cover between 25 percent and 75 percent of the cost of remodeling work, with a maximum grant of \$100,000 for commercial properties and \$150,000 for industrial properties. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/small_business_improvementfundsbf.html

Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) (Rec 6.2)

Chicago's Department of Planning and Development funds several nonprofit organizations as delegate agency partners for the LIRI program. LIRI agencies provide assistance to industrial businesses primarily in the city's industrial corridors with the purpose of retaining those businesses in the city and supporting the industrial corridors. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/local_industrialretentioninitiativeliricouncils.html

City of Chicago Landmark Designation Process (Rec 6.3)

An outline of the city's landmark designation process. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/landmarks_designationprocess.html

Preservation Chicago (Rec 6.3)

Preservation Chicago protects and revitalizes Chicago's irreplaceable architecture, neighborhoods, and urban green spaces. The organization influences stakeholders toward creative reuse and preservation through advocacy, outreach, education, and partnership.

- **Landmark Designation Resources:** <https://preservationchicago.org/neighborhood-preservation-workshops/>
- **Neighborhood Preservation Toolkits:** <https://preservationchicago.org/neighborhood-preservation-toolkits/>
<https://preservationchicago.org/creating-landmark-district/>

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program (Rec 6.3)

The program encourages private sector investment in the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings, through a variety of tax incentives. <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>

Illinois Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program (Rec 6.3)

The program offers tax incentives to owners of certified historic structures who undertake certified rehabilitations. <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Preserve/Pages/statecredit.aspx>

Chicago Sustainable Development Policy (Rec 6.4)

The goal of the policy is to enhance the sustainable performance of projects receiving city assistance. It requires development projects that are receiving financial assistance or special approvals from the city to include sustainable elements. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/sustainable_development/chicago-sustainable-development-policy-update.html

Future Energy Jobs Act (Rec 6.4)

The state of Illinois provides hundreds of millions of dollars to support community solar programs in lower-income neighborhoods. <https://www.futureenergyjobsact.com/>

Chapter 7

Enhance and Expand Parks and Recreational Opportunities



THE VISION

Protect, preserve, and expand the natural assets of the neighborhood, and ensure that residents have access to natural amenities and community programming in the future.

Introduction

McKinley Park's access to open space and proximity to the Chicago River are strong neighborhood assets. Preservation of these natural resources is an important component of not only improving the neighborhood's air quality and community health, but also providing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.



Key Findings

- **McKinley Park's access to open space is one of the community's greatest assets.** McKinley Park residents enjoy access to over 70 acres of open space, most of which are located in the neighborhood's namesake park. The park offers passive and active recreational opportunities, as well as space for community events that attract residents and visitors from nearby areas.
- **The presence of the South Branch of the Chicago River along the neighborhood's eastern border could be better utilized.** Remediation of Bubbly Creek is an important component of improving its recreational opportunities and connecting McKinley Park residents to the waterway. Several initiatives to restore the river's ecosystems and enhance its recreational potential are underway. The community has a strong desire to build better connections between the riverfront and the neighborhood through improved amenities.
- **Numerous community programs make for an active and cohesive neighborhood.** Community initiatives and programming enhance the residents' quality of life and offer opportunities for community building activities. However, many of McKinley Park's community programs are volunteer-led, which poses challenges to expanding and enhancing these activities.
- **McKinley Park residents are passionate about maintaining their neighborhood's natural resources and enhancing recreational activities.** Initiatives like community gardens and the McKinley Park stewardship days exemplify residents' commitment to maintaining the neighborhood's natural resources. Residents have expressed a desire to continue delivering programs that improve the overall health of all residents.

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this chapter reinforce the community's commitment to maintaining the neighborhood's existing open space and natural resources, and identify strategies that could help activate parks and open space, support community programming, and encourage active transportation.

7.1 Encourage the Use of Active Transportation and Healthy Living through Programs and Activities

While cars may continue to be the primary mode of transportation for most residents, other modes — like walking and bicycling — could make up a greater share of trips in the future. These active modes of transportation would activate the neighborhood sidewalks and improve the community's overall health and well-being. Sidewalks throughout McKinley Park are prevalent on both sides of the street in residential and commercial areas, which is an important factor in encouraging walking and in turn promoting better health for residents. However, limited bicycle infrastructure in the community poses a barrier to encouraging a wide use of this type of transportation. Recommendation 5.5 outlines proposed public infrastructure investments to expand and enhance the bicycle infrastructure network in McKinley Park.

Equally important to investing in public infrastructure is organizing bicycling activities such as neighborhood rides and bicycle-themed events. Not only will this help build community, but it will also promote safety and education about biking in the city.

7.2 Enhance Parks and Recreational Opportunities

Parks and open space are central to the livability of a community and the quality of life of its residents. McKinley Park's residents enjoy access to 72.5 acres of open space, the majority of which are located in the neighborhood's namesake park. The park offers various leisure opportunities and recreational activities that attract both residents and visitors from surrounding neighborhoods. Preserving and enhancing these neighborhood assets is an important aspect of improving the quality of life of residents.

Preserve and enhance McKinley Park's natural resources, and improve recreational facilities at Hoyne Park and other smaller public parks

Preserving and enhancing McKinley Park's natural resources and recreational opportunities will ensure that the community is livable for generations to come. MPDC should coordinate with the neighborhood's park advisory councils to seek out programs and funding sources that can maintain and preserve the neighborhood's natural and recreational assets. A potential partner in these efforts is Friends of the Parks, an advocacy organization that supports park advisory councils throughout the city by providing technical assistance, workshops, networking meetings, and funding through Seed Grants.³⁵

Activate Western Boulevard and celebrate its historical significance as an extension of the Chicago boulevard system

The presence of Western Boulevard in McKinley Park is a neighborhood asset that should be activated and celebrated for its historical significance. Western Boulevard offers passive open space and is an important link between McKinley Park and other key destinations. Improving access to the boulevard with safe pedestrian connections and enhanced bike infrastructure could help activate this important extension of Chicago's boulevard system. The open space along Western Boulevard's median can also be enhanced with native plants that would not only create an aesthetically pleasing landscape, but also provide services like stormwater management. MPDC should coordinate with the alderman's office to engage the Chicago Department of Transportation in the activation and enhancement of Western Boulevard.

Engage McKinley Park Residents in the maintenance of their community park

The neighborhood's parks advisory councils are an important avenue for engaging residents in the maintenance of community parks, through events like McKinley Park Stewardship Day. To support existing efforts, MPDC should coordinate with all of the neighborhood's park advisory councils to organize and market regular community-wide volunteer days, and other opportunities for residents to become stewards of community parks.

7.3 Support Community Programming Activities

A number of community programs, like the farmers market, community gardens, and beautification initiatives, make for an active and cohesive neighborhood. However, many of these initiatives are run by volunteers, which poses a challenge to sustaining and expanding community programming. Volunteer-driven activities should be supported through available resources, so that community programming for all ages could be enhanced.

Encourage active transportation and healthy living through programs and activities

Throughout the planning process, residents expressed a desire for a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment, which can contribute to community health. Community-wide events should be organized in conjunction with partners like Active Transportation Alliance, the Chicago Park District, and local hospitals and health care providers to encourage the use of active transportation and communicate the benefits of walking and biking. Recommendation 7.1 outlines additional strategies for encouraging the use of active transportation in McKinley Park.

Support community programming volunteers

Supporting volunteers through available resources is an important component of sustaining and expanding community programming in McKinley Park. MPDC should seek grant funding, from organizations like the Chicago Community Trust, to support the work of volunteers. Volunteer fairs and other events should be organized to encourage more community involvement from the neighborhood's residents.

Continue to develop community programming for all ages

Residents and visitors of all ages should have opportunities to participate in McKinley Park's community programming. Programs for adults and seniors should be expanded to improve community engagement and the health and well-being of all residents. Potential programs could include adult health and wellness classes, a neighborhood runners club, and recreational opportunities for active seniors.

Strengthen year-round activities for youth

Young people make up a substantial portion of McKinley Park's population. Currently the neighborhood's youth has access to a variety of recreational opportunities, like the the Omega Delta Youth Baseball and Softball League. Outdoor activities are a great way to engage the neighborhood's young people during warmer months; however, year-round activities should be strengthened. The neighborhood's youth should be engaged in the development of year-round activities, to ensure that any future programs are of interest to the neighborhood's young residents.

Utilize public spaces for community-building activities

McKinley Park's public spaces have the potential to bring residents together to engage in community-building activities. For example, the neighborhood's namesake park could become a venue for annual arts and culture events that celebrate the diversity and unique character of the neighborhood. Smaller parks throughout the neighborhood should also be activated with community-building activities, such as painting of community murals, as well as events like movies in the park and park clean up days.

7.4 Activate the South Branch of the Chicago River

Historically, industrial uses along this stretch of the Chicago River have contributed to its environmental degradation. Currently, combined sewer overflows are the main source of pollution of Bubbly Creek. Work is underway to remediate the river and restore its natural habitat, which is an important component of improving its future recreational opportunities. Initiatives like the Great Rivers Chicago project are attempting to improve the connections between Bubbly Creek and the surrounding neighborhood, and enhance the recreational potential of this stretch of the river. More information about these projects can be found in the McKinley Park Existing Conditions Report. The recommendations in this plan reinforce these already initiated efforts, in order to ensure that the river is an ecologically healthy, well-utilized neighborhood asset.

Figure 7.1 Rendering of Bubbly Creek Design Guidelines



Source: [Chicago River Design Guidelines](#), 2019

Prioritize opportunities for open space amenities along the river

Bubbly Creek is an important natural resource for the community; however, its close proximity to industrial areas and lack of open space make it uninviting. In any future development along the river, open space should be prioritized to ensure that the residents have access to this natural amenity. Setback requirements outlined by the Chicago River Design Guidelines should be applied in any future development process, to create amenities like open space, public river walk trails, green infrastructure projects, as well as landscape buffers between the river and nearby industrial areas.

Ensure new development or property improvements that are within 100 feet of Chicago waterfront are consistent with the 2019 Chicago River Design Guidelines

Currently, Bubbly Creek is an underutilized asset that has the potential to improve the quality of life for McKinley Park residents. Any new development or property improvements along Bubbly Creek should be consistent with the 2019 Chicago River Design Guidelines, which guide waterfront development along the Chicago River. The design guidelines create a more unified aesthetic, enhance the natural environment and provide public access to the waterway, while balancing the importance of existing industrial uses along the river. Bubbly Creek has specific design guidelines that aim to mitigate the degraded conditions of the waterway. A wider set back of 60 feet is required for all new developments, to provide protection from sedimentation and erosion, as well as improve the river's water quality. This offers an opportunity to use stormwater management best practices, create a public riverwalk trail, and use landscape buffering that can provide a barrier between industrial uses and the river.³⁶

Enhance connections between the river and the neighborhood

Better connectivity between the river and the neighborhood should be promoted for all modes of transportation, by creating amenities like river walk trails and connecting them to the street and sidewalk network, open space, and key neighborhood destinations. Crossing improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians at key intersections should include lighting for visibility, signalization, and signage. Improvements such as wayfinding signs should direct riverfront users to local destinations.

Encourage pride and stewardship of the river through education

A program should be developed to educate residents and property owners near the river about the benefits of native vegetation and restoration of riverbanks, and its impact on improved water quality and stormwater management. MPDC can encourage McKinley Park residents to become stewards of the river by coordinating with organizations like Friends of the Chicago River on implementing river education programs and organizing community-wide river stewardship days.

Other strategies

- *Support Bubbly Creek restoration efforts*
- *Implement recommendations from the Our Great Rivers vision³⁷*

7.5 Evaluate Potential Areas to Expand Community Green Spaces

McKinley Park is home to many open space amenities; however, opportunities exist to increase community green spaces throughout the neighborhood. Community greening involves increasing the amount of green coverage, including recreational or passive park space, community gardens, landscaping, tree canopy, and green infrastructure. These efforts can achieve many benefits, including improved health and well-being of residents, and greater climate resilience. The following strategies focus on identifying areas to expand community green spaces and creating access points to existing amenities.

Identify priorities for increased community green space as part of future redevelopment projects

Future redevelopment and any potential eTOD projects can be leveraged to provide amenities like open space or community gathering spaces. MPDC should work with neighborhood stakeholders during the development process to identify opportunities for the creation of community green spaces and ensure that future development projects include these community amenities.

Capitalize on the presence of Western Boulevard and study off-street connections between educational and recreational facilities along the boulevard and other key destinations

Recommendation 7.2 outlines strategies for activating Western Boulevard, and creating better connections between the boulevard and other key destinations.

Other strategies

- *Continue to activate vacant lots and open spaces throughout the community by transforming them into community gardens and parks to benefit underserved areas of the community*
- *Prioritize the conservation of open space along the river*

Additional Resources

Friends of the Parks (Rec 7.2)

An advocacy organization that works to improve Chicago's parks system through education, cleaning and greening events, and supporting park advisory councils throughout the city. <https://fotp.org/about/>

Friends of the Chicago River (Rec 7.4)

The organization works to improve the health of the Chicago River system for the benefit of people, plants, and animals. Friends works in partnership with municipalities, businesses, community groups, schools, peer organizations, government agencies, and individuals on projects that benefit the river. The organization has outreach and education programs that cultivate awareness and stewardship of the river. <https://www.chicagoriver.org/>

Openlands Green Region Program (Rec 7.2)

A partnership between Openlands and ComEd that grants up to \$10,000 to support open space projects that focus on planning, acquisition, and improvements to local parks, natural areas, and recreation resources. <https://www.openlands.org/livability/greenregion/>

Active Transportation Alliance (Rec 7.3)

A nonprofit advocacy organization that works to improve conditions for bicycling, walking, and transit and engage people in healthy and active ways to get around. <https://activetrans.org/blog/help-create-vision-for-a-safer-archer-avenue>

Chicago Community Trust (Rec 7.3)

A community foundation dedicated to improving our region through strategic grant making, civic engagement, and inspiring philanthropy. <https://www.cct.org/>



Chapter 8

Create a Resilient Community



THE VISION

We will achieve resilience in McKinley Park by making natural systems, economic, and social structures more durable for years to come.



Introduction

By creating a resilient community, McKinley Park can prepare for and recover from acute shocks and chronic stresses both within and outside of the neighborhood. This requires making infrastructure, natural systems, and economic and social structures more durable. In addition to rebounding quickly from, for instance, stronger storms and frequent flooding, the community can actually capitalize on these challenges. By pooling resources, deploying new technologies, and strengthening local capacity, McKinley Park can plan collaboratively to provide essential services even as federal and state support continues to diminish. Our economy and the vitality of our skilled workforce to enhance access and services and improve future pathways to middle-wage job opportunities can also promote resiliency.

Key Findings

- **One-inch rain events typically yield ten million gallons of runoff per block in McKinley Park, particularly along Archer Avenue and the industrial districts.** If Chicago's combined sewer system is not able to handle this runoff, it could overflow into streets, yards, and basements. Experts expect the frequency and intensity of large storms to increase in the future, which will continue to put the community at risk.
- **55.4 percent of households in McKinley Park earn less than \$49,999, compared to 47.8 percent in the city and 38.1 percent in the region.** One factor that influences income levels is educational attainment; only 13.8 percent of the population has a bachelor's degree. The strategies in this chapter will identify how community leaders and stakeholders can align local economic development with education and workforce development opportunities to ensure every resident has the ability to fully contribute to and benefit from the economy.
- **McKinley Park's proximity to the Loop, commercial corridors, strong transportation network, and neighborhood charm are all assets that the community can use to stimulate and grow the local economy.** Although there has been a decline in jobs within the neighborhood, 65 percent of McKinley Park residents are currently in the workforce, so there is potential to revitalize local employment through workforce development programs aimed at local residents.
- **Although the residents of McKinley Park are passionate and involved, there is an opportunity to elevate MPDC's role with capacity building and the organizational tools to implement the neighborhood plan.** MPDC members want to learn how they can build capacity among themselves and other community groups so that they can work together to make improvements within McKinley Park that will work together to make improvements within McKinley Park.

Recommendations

The strategies in this chapter are more organized into three distinct areas — environmental, economic, and social — and aim to achieve resilience through green infrastructure, workforce development, and building community capacity, respectively. The recommendations will build upon the great work that MPDC has already done in an effort to keep the momentum going and get more people involved. MPDC should work in close coordination with city staff and the 11th and 12th Ward aldermen's offices to implement these strategies.

8.1 Pursue Existing Citywide Green Infrastructure Programs

A report produced by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) found that one-inch rain events typically yield 10 million gallons of runoff per block in McKinley Park, with the most affected areas being Archer Avenue and the industrial districts (see Chapter 10 of the existing conditions report for a detailed analysis on stormwater). As stormwater finds its way to the Chicago River, it flows down streets and through industrial areas, picking up oils, debris, road salts, and other harmful pollutants.

In 2016, the city of Chicago published a Stormwater Management Ordinance Manual that offers a set of best management practices to control the stormwater-related impacts of development and redevelopment in the city. The city also has several key initiatives that address stormwater and are available to McKinley Park residents. Many of these are pioneering the use of green infrastructure approaches and have gained national attention.

To mitigate the negative effects of stormwater, the neighborhood plan recommends that MPDC, with support from the aldermen's offices, promote and pursue existing citywide green infrastructure programs.

Recommended City of Chicago initiatives include:

- The Green Roof Initiative: Program awarding grants to residential or commercial projects to install a green roof.³⁸
- Green Alley Program: Program aimed to redesign city alleys for stormwater infiltration and storage using permeable pavement to capture stormwater.³⁹
- Basement Flooding Partnership: Partnership created to provide technical support to communities challenged with localized flooding.⁴⁰
- Private Drain Repair: No-cost repair service to homeowners who can prove they have broken tiles in lateral lines between the sidewalk and the main sewer line.⁴¹
- Space to Grow: Program aimed to transform Chicago schoolyards into vibrant green spaces while effectively managing stormwater. Led by Openlands and the Healthy Schools Campaign with funding from Chicago Public Schools, The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, and the Chicago Department of Water Management.⁴²

Images 8.1 Green Alleys in Chicago



Source: City of Chicago

Case Study: El Paseo Community Garden

Located in Pilsen, El Paseo Community Garden was founded in 2009 and provides an example of how vacant space can be transformed to benefit the surrounding community. It is a Neighborspace-protected and community managed space, maintained by volunteers.⁴³ Gardening is offered to residents through private allotment beds or collective beds. The garden is located on a former brownfield site and was constructed during the first phase of “El Paseo,” a rails-to-trails project. The garden features beautiful public art including El Abrazo Mural (pictured), the Shed Installation by Chip Thomas, and the Loomis River Bridge. The garden also puts on volunteer days, educational gardening workshops, potluck parties, and annual harvest festival, a Halloween haunted garden, pop-up markets, weekly yoga, and weekly meditation.



Source: El Paseo Community Garden

Work with city and local organizations to identify vacant land that is appropriate for green infrastructure projects in public or community managed open spaces

Vacant land in McKinley Park accounts for 6.6 percent (53.8 acres) of the overall land use. While robust redevelopment is desired in all zones over the long term, in the interim there are several strategies for repurposing vacant residential lots for uses other than new housing. For example, the McKinley Park Community Garden had its original home in a private, empty lot before relocating in 2016 to a new, permanent location that was approved by the Chicago Park District. Such strategies can improve quality of life while helping improve the local market and feasibility of future development. Potential uses for currently vacant lots include:

- Urban agriculture (gardens, apiary) and community gardens
- Community gathering and event spaces
- Expanded side lots for existing homes
- Temporary sports lots and play spaces
- Green infrastructure for stormwater management
- Public art

Image 8.2 Great Lakes Academy's Youth and Green Schools Program



Source: Illinois Green Alliance

Incorporate stormwater landscapes along designated bike routes within the neighborhood

Identify strategic locations along designated bike routes and on city-owned land to develop stormwater landscapes as part of the Department of Water Management's Green Stormwater Infrastructure Strategy. The plan recommends that key improvements focus on the main corridors that run through McKinley Park, such as Archer Avenue, 35th Street, Western Avenue, and Pershing Road, for such treatments as sidewalk tree pits that capture street runoff, parkway bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavement parking lanes. By integrating green infrastructure into streetscape projects, McKinley Park will be in a much better position to reduce flooding in future storms and protect the environment going forward (see strategy 5.2d).

Partner with the Illinois Green Alliance's Youth and Green Schools initiatives to implement carbon drawdown strategies

The Illinois Green Alliance's Youth and Green Schools initiative offers several programs that encourage students to promote sustainability within their own communities.⁴⁴ For example, the Green Apple Day of Service brings parents, teachers, students, companies, and local organizations together to transform schools into healthy, safe, and productive learning environments through local service events. The initiative also has a program called Green Ribbon Schools that recognizes schools that promote and educate people about sustainability through events, actions, or programs. The neighborhood plan recommends that MPDC reach out to this program to inquire about opportunities to partner.

8.2 Encourage Green Infrastructure Practices

A low-lying topography, changing climate, development and associated impervious surfaces, and an aging sewer infrastructure contribute to urban flooding within McKinley Park. Beyond the direct costs of property damage from flooding — carpets, furniture, and heating units — there are less direct costs; residents may lose valuable memorabilia, there are health and safety risks to children, seniors, and animals, and street flooding can damage parked cars and may hinder residents from traveling to work. To address this issue, MPDC should encourage neighborhood groups within McKinley Park to work together on implementing green infrastructure practices that reduce the heat island effect, mitigate stormwater, block traffic noise, and improve air quality. A multi-pronged approach would include applying for grants and citywide programs that provide green infrastructure guidance and materials, working with the alderman's office to identify areas for key spot improvements, and educating the public on the importance of sustainability and how they can change individual behavior. These efforts will undoubtedly have a long-term, positive impact on McKinley Park.

There are a number of excellent green infrastructure programs in the city that can serve as resources to MPDC and the residents of McKinley Park as they consider ways to address climate change. The plan recommends that MPDC further explore and prioritize the following initiatives and programs with support from the local alderman:

- **Chicago Downspout Disconnection Program:** The City of Chicago actively encourages homeowners to disconnect their downspouts from the sewer system in order to slow the flow of stormwater into the sewer system, relieve basement flooding, and redirect water to yards and gardens. This practice should be encouraged in McKinley Park where flooding is a concern.⁴⁵
- **Plant Chicago:** Plant Chicago is a nonprofit organization that supports a collaborative community of small food businesses focused on growing, producing, and/or sourcing a variety of food products, while striving to close loops of waste and energy. Located in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood, just south of McKinley Park, Plant Chicago offers a variety of different K-12 education programs that revolve around sustainability and food production. They are also home to a robust farmers market that provides locally grown food.⁴⁶
- **RainReady:** This is a Center for Neighborhood Technology program that helps property owners and communities implement infrastructure improvements to address sewage backup, seepage and building dampness, and yard and street flooding. RainReady programs are designed with equity, affordability, resiliency, and community in mind.⁴⁷
- **Chicago Tree Program:** In an effort to increase the amount of trees in the Chicago region, the Bureau of Forestry plants trees along the public right-of-way throughout Chicago. Benefits of street trees include improved air quality, increased physiological well-being, noise abatement, and stormwater attenuation. Chicago property owners who want a new tree planted on their parkways can call 311 or submit a request online to register for this free city service.⁴⁸
- **Streetscape and Sustainable Design Program:** The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Streetscape and Sustainable Design program strives to rehabilitate Chicago's neighborhood commercial areas, riverwalks, and bicycle facilities into active, attractive places for Chicagoans to live, work, and play. Using a variety of techniques, projects under this program aim to create flourishing public places while improving the functionality of infrastructure to support dense urban living.⁴⁹

Other Strategies

- Advocate for the targeted expansion of green stormwater infrastructure to reduce urban flooding
- Engage the community in flood mitigation solutions
- Create a youth-led neighborhood litter and recycling campaign
- Ensure clean energy and water efficiencies by connecting landlords to incentives and resources
- Implement sustainable practices in industrial areas (see Chapter 6 for strategies)
- Identify opportunities for urban agriculture
- Empower residents and organizations to create artistic, beautiful landscapes, and clean, environmentally diverse streetscapes (see Chapter 5 for strategies)

Case Study: Lincoln Square, Chicago — Lawrence Avenue Livable Streets Project

The livable streets project in Lincoln Square offers an excellent model for an environmentally diverse streetscape designed to mitigate flooding and beautify the neighborhood. The Lawrence Avenue streetscape was the city's first road diet project designed to balance the modal use on Lawrence Avenue by providing wider sidewalks and completing the City's longest designated bike lane street while also calming traffic and improving pedestrian crossings.

Improvements included new lighting, pedestrian refuge islands, narrowing the roadway, trees, bump-outs with bioswales, concrete bus pads, drainage improvements, resurfacing, and creating the Claremont Avenue plaza. The second phase of the Lawrence Avenue streetscape project will extend the streetscape from Western to the Chicago River and will build upon the success of the first section of the Lawrence Avenue streetscape.



Source: Chicago Department of Transportation

8.3 Market and Strengthen McKinley Park as a Business Hub

McKinley Park's proximity to the Loop and strong access to public transportation makes it a desirable place to live and work. An abundance of beautiful historical buildings present a great opportunity for development in the neighborhood. For example, Marz Community Brewing Co. in McKinley Park resides along an offshoot of the Chicago River, which has the potential to host a variety of water activities including kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. A formal business entity should be formed to serve as a resource, advocate, and convener for existing local businesses, while simultaneously working to attract new diverse businesses to industrial districts and the vacant storefronts along major commercial corridors. *Increase the capacity of MPDC to support local economic development initiatives (Please see Recommendations 3.4 and 3.5 for detailed strategies).*

Get expert advice on economic development

As local aldermen explore how to grow local employment opportunities in the industrial and advanced manufacturing sectors within their designated wards in McKinley Park, the plan recommends seeking advice from local economic development organizations that can provide insight and feedback to proposed developments. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) spearheads several economic development initiatives, which include a wide spectrum of financial assistance programs, business development efforts, and related quality-of-life endeavors for local neighborhoods.⁵⁰ DPD also provides funding to delegate agencies whose objectives include small business development, site development or area-wide marketing, maintenance and management within a specified commercial business district. Other resources include the Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago, and the Chicago Community Loan Fund.^{51, 52, 53}

Set up neighborhood tours to promote assets to prospective developers and businesses

In an effort to market business and development opportunities in McKinley Park, MPDC should organize tours of the neighborhood that showcase local assets and potential. Tours can be designed to highlight some or all of McKinley Park's many assets, including its transit-rich areas, natural amenities, local services, and properties available for purchase. Promotional videos and an online and social media presence could also showcase McKinley Park's assets to the business community.

8.4 Increase the Wealth and Buying Power of Residents

In order to prosper economically and sustain a high quality of life, McKinley Park needs to maintain a diversity of business types, a skilled workforce, and the capacity to adapt and grow. Preparing McKinley Park residents for good jobs requires access to a range of quality training and education programs for people with different educational needs. Local service providers should work together to ensure that all of McKinley Park's residents have equitable access to education and career development opportunities.

Establish the role of a workforce development coordinator to identify resources and connect workforce training providers and educational institutions with employers

Preparing our residents for the jobs of the future is essential for them to stay competitive throughout their careers. McKinley Park already has a number of resources available for parents, students, business owners, and job seekers that residents can take advantage of. For example, the McKinley Park Library offers resources on becoming a citizen, homework help for children and their parents, computers and wifi, and materials available in Chinese and Spanish. Another resource is 36Squared, a nonprofit organization offering onsite training, classes, and one-on-one counseling to help local entrepreneurs grow their businesses. These types of services are abundant in and around McKinley Park — they just need to be more visible. In order to make residents more aware of these types of services, the plan recommends that these organizations market their programs more heavily within McKinley Park. It is also recommended that organizations collaborate and partner with one another on various events throughout the year to strengthen the workforce development network in McKinley Park. One idea is to host an annual workforce development day in McKinley Park that provides residents with the education, tools, and resources they will need in their careers.

Another resource that MPDC should consider is the Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition's (CCLC) career pathways navigator. The CCLC's mission is to help Chicago's adult education organizations secure resources and training so that underserved adult learners can become economically successful. The CCLC reframes adult basic education as a critical public policy issue. Their career pathways navigator is based out of the Near West American Job Center (AJC) in Pilsen and connects adults that enter the AJC to adult education services. They collaborate with 13 other organizations in the area, including A Safe Haven, Literacy Chicago, and Richard J. Daley College. McKinley Park residents can take advantage of their services as they work to gain the skills needed for employment.

Continue to support and coordinate English as a Second Language (ESL) training and new occupational programs

McKinley Park has some outstanding resources for ESL learners and job seekers.

- The **Aquinas Literacy Center** offers a variety of programs for English-language learners, including one-on-one tutoring, small group instruction, conversation classes, family literacy nights, and a summer program for children.
- **National Latino Education Institute** (NLEI) offers training programs that are nationally accredited, recognized, and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. Their goal is to provide quality workforce initiatives leading to economic independence for Latinos.
- The **McKinley Park Library** provides an array of resources and services, with community space and programs for all ages. Additionally, the library features Chinese-language and Spanish-language materials and a "Citizens Corner" that offers English as a Second Language classes, citizenship workshops, and a wide selection of materials on immigration and U.S. citizenship.
- The City of Chicago's **One Summer Chicago** jobs program provides youth with employment and enrichment opportunities during the summer months.
- **The Chicago Urban League** offers a number of workforce development programs, such as the Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Training and a transitional job Training program in partnership with the Chicago Housing Authority.

Encourage businesses to hire local residents, and identify and address the barriers to doing so

There are many benefits to hiring locally. Local residents can more easily attend in-person interviews and likely have local references to provide recommendations. People who live in the neighborhood will also have a greater knowledge of local networks and resources. Having a local job also means shorter and often cheaper commutes. Lastly, people who live in the neighborhood will likely be more invested in the success of local organizations, schools, and businesses.

There are a few barriers to hiring locals that should be considered. First, people with the necessary job skills could be limited. The applicant pool will naturally be smaller in a local setting, and there might not be as many residents with specific work experiences and skills. Another potential barrier is that local applicants might not understand the company's values or standard practices. Unlike an internal hire or a candidate with the exact qualifications and experience, there will most likely be a steeper learning curve for local hires, especially if they enter a new field of work. While this might require more training and effort initially, there is a greater chance of long-term success due to the benefits mentioned above.

The plan recommends posting job opportunities in central locations with high visibility, such as community job boards (typically found at local grocery stores, libraries, community centers, and schools) and online platforms that receive a lot of local traffic. Using local networks for recruitment purposes will better ensure that local jobs are going to people who live in the neighborhood.

Chicago Anchors for a Strong Economy (CASE) is an excellent resource for employers. Their mission is to create inclusive economic growth by leveraging the buying power of small businesses, community partners, and anchor institutions to collectively impact neighborhoods in Chicago. Using an online matchmaking software called SCALE, they assess businesses'

readiness to service large contracts and provide direct access to contract opportunities with anchor institutions. Anchor institutions near McKinley Park include the University of Illinois at Chicago, Northeastern Illinois University, University of Illinois Hospital, and Mercy Hospital and Medical Center.

The ultimate goal of hiring local residents is to ensure that people can access jobs near where they live. Living close to work has been proven to reduce traffic congestion, travel costs, and pollution; increase productivity; minimize stress; create a better work-life balance; and improve quality of life. Organizations, schools, and businesses should seek opportunities to hire locals when possible.

Other Strategies

- *Expand access to City of Chicago services for McKinley Park's residents with limited English proficiency*
- *Prepare residents for employment in growing sectors that offer middle-skill, middle-wage job opportunities*
- *Increase the impact of existing local wealth-building programs to help residents*

8.5 Explore Innovative Public Engagement Methods to Implement the Neighborhood Plan

The following strategies offer concrete and sincere ways to better engage and involve the McKinley Park residents in projects and decision-making surrounding the neighborhood plan. Successful implementation of the plan will rely in large part on community engagement to help inform which strategies to prioritize and the best ways to achieve them.

Create a framework for sustained, inclusive community involvement in planning decisions

Throughout the planning process for this plan, CMAP received great community input from a wide range of residents. The strengthening of partnerships with residents and community groups, including local institutions and businesses, should continue and build off the momentum of this planning process. A first step is to develop and maintain a database of community leaders and organizations who were involved in the planning process. The database should include contact information for key individuals within each entity and should be periodically updated in order to maintain its effectiveness for communicating with stakeholders about the neighborhood plan and engaging them in activities. A precise and up-to-date listing of community leaders and local groups will make it easier to recruit partners and volunteers for specific objectives that relate to this neighborhood plan.

Re-engage existing resident groups and facilitate the creation of new community groups

Residents will always be the backbone of the McKinley Park community. Supporting an engaged, informed, and active resident base will not only improve implementation of the neighborhood plan, but it will also create a network of participants to move future plans and activities forward. An outreach plan should be developed based on the objective of the neighborhood plan and the opportunities to engage various segments of McKinley Park's diverse population. The planning process should be used to start the conversation with local community groups and use the plan's implementation strategies to provide these groups with new energy and focus.

While it is important to reconnect with existing community groups, assistance should also be given to the creation and coordination of new community groups. There may be opportunities to create new community groups focused on some of the objectives of the neighborhood plan, particularly as these objectives relate to specific plan recommendations.

Continue to hold educational forums

Although MPDC members will become well-versed in the recommendations of this neighborhood plan, residents, stakeholders, and community partners may not be as familiar with its content. In the months following completion of the plan, it is recommended that educational forums be held throughout the community to introduce the topics, challenges, and implementation activities related to the plan. These educational forums can be held in conjunction with community meetings, events, or other activities that already attract residents and stakeholders. Prior chapters in this plan identify opportunities for potential new MPDC committee groups to help lead implementation of plan strategies.

Dedicate webpages to the neighborhood plan and use social media outreach

A dedicated webpage should allow the public to read the plan in its entirety, keep track of plan progress, and access information on community events related to the plan. This webpage should also house interim plan materials, such as the existing conditions report, in order to view maps, demographic information, and community engagement materials. MPDC should post the neighborhood plan on its website, and provide updates to users through social media and community newsletters.



8.6 Strengthen Community Capacity

Another component of a resilient community is the residents themselves. The contributions of residents, businesses, and organizations in McKinley Park make the community stronger. Having a strong network of residents connected through a shared love for the neighborhood not only contributes to its character but also promotes a sense of respect, dignity, engagement, collaboration, and livelihood among neighbors. This strong sense of community exists within McKinley Park. Enhanced local capacity will help McKinley Park address future challenges and opportunities as well as longer-term projects, such as plan implementation. To this end, the plan seeks to get more people invested, engaged, and involved with the many commercial, cultural, and recreational opportunities within McKinley Park.



Build trust and collaboration with residents

Developing strong partnerships with organizations can help enhance cooperation and utilization of the existing capacity, expertise, and knowledge of community-based organizations. To do this, an up-to-date list of local existing businesses and institutions should be kept and individuals should become familiar with the services they provide. Local business and community meetings should be used to keep these groups informed, and support should be given to efforts to develop community leadership and participation. Potential organizations include:

- Property and business owners
- Industrial and commercial organizations
- Religious leaders and members
- Community groups
- Consulates
- Arts and cultural organizations
- Ethnic media
- Health organizations or centers
- Leadership, organizing, or advocacy groups (Asian and Latino)
- Parks, schools, and libraries
- Unions

Promote civic engagement

Turnout in local elections affects government spending priorities. By encouraging groups that have had historically low representation at the polls, priorities can start to reflect the real needs of the community. Encouraging participation in municipal elections leads to a stronger, more representative government. There are a number of strategies that can be used to increase voter turnout, such as posting election reminders in email newsletters, partnering with community groups to host meet and greets with local candidates, and working with schools to hold mock elections for local students to get young residents interested.

Organize community-building activities

In many cases, the most effective way to engage residents is through community events. Block parties, street fairs and festivals, and community gardens can all help bring different groups together and help residents feel more integrated. A number of community events are already being held, and these can be used as opportunities to bring different segments of the population together. Partnerships, including advisory boards, the alderman's office, local school councils, and community groups, should be used to figure out ways to engage diverse groups of residents in the process of designing, planning, and hosting year-round community activities in McKinley Park.

Components could also be added to existing events to help draw different audiences. Additional new events could be more low-key. For instance, the Village of Skokie has sponsored "Know Your Neighbor Week," during which residents are encouraged to invite their neighbor over for coffee in their homes. The village provided hosts with kits that included invitations, conversation starters, and coupons to local bakeries.

Additional Resources

Center for Neighborhood Technology (Rec 8.1)

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) is an organization that works to make cities more sustainable while raising the quality of life for vulnerable populations. Initiatives in transportation, water, climate, and public policy advance these goals, while research and consultations with City leaders and decision makers help find solutions to challenges. CNT also develops a host of data tools and analyses that help policymakers make more informed decisions about how best to support and enhance livability of a community. <https://www.cnt.org/>

Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition (Rec 8.4)

The CCLC mission is to help Chicago's adult education organizations secure resources and training so that underserved adult learners can become economically successful. The CCLC reframes adult basic education as a critical public policy issue. <http://www.chicagocitywideliteracy.org/>

Chicago Community Loan Fund (CCLC) (Rec 8.3)

CCLC provides flexible, affordable, and responsible financing and technical assistance for community stabilization and development efforts and initiatives that benefit low- to moderate-income neighborhoods, families, and individuals throughout metropolitan Chicago. <https://cclfcchicago.org/>

City of Chicago Environment and Sustainability Programs (Rec 8.1)

The City of Chicago has a robust environmental and sustainability program aimed at integrating sustainability in the places residents work, live, learn, and play while preparing for a resilient future. <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/progs/env.html>

City of Chicago Green Stormwater Infrastructure Strategy (Rec 8.1)

The city of Chicago's 2014 plan to improve the city's water quality, reduce flood risks, and build climate resilience. <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/progs/env/ChicagoGreenStormwaterInfrastructureStrategy.pdf>

Department of Planning and Development: Economic Development (Rec 8.3)

The Department of Planning and Development's economic development initiatives include a wide spectrum of financial assistance programs, business development efforts, and related quality-of-life endeavors for local neighborhoods. https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/provdrs/ec_dev.html

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago (Rec 8.3)

LISC Chicago is the local office of the nation's leading community development support organization, working in Chicago neighborhoods since 1980. With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America — great places to live, work, visit, do business, and raise families. <https://www.lisc.org/chicago/>

The Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement (Rec 8.3)

The Voorhees Center is a dynamic resource center that engages residents, leaders, and policymakers seeking effective strategies for advancing community livability and vitality. <https://voorheescenter.uic.edu/>

Aquinas Literacy Center (Rec 8.4)

Through one-on-one tutoring, supported with conversation classes, writing workshops, book clubs, computer learning opportunities, and job assistance workshops, Aquinas Literacy Center helps learners improve their English-language literacy and achieve their personal goals.

<http://aquinasliteracycenter.org/>

Arturo Velasquez Institute (AVI) (Rec 8.4)

AVI is the satellite campus of Richard J. Daley College, a public post-secondary institution which offers a variety of programs to enrich the personal and professional lives of the communities it serves. AVI provides advanced and basic certificates to assist individuals in gaining the skills necessary to obtain entry-level jobs in manufacturing, offices, and health care. <http://www.ccc.edu/colleges/daley/departments/Pages/Arturo-Velasquez-Institute.aspx>

Instituto del Progreso Latino (Rec 8.4)

Instituto's mission is to contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training, and employment that fosters full participation in the changing US society while preserving cultural identity and dignity.

<https://www.institutochicago.org>

National Latino Education Institute (NLEI) (Rec 8.5)

NLEI's ultimate goal is to provide quality workforce initiatives leading to economic independence for Latinos. NLEI provides comprehensive employment services and in-demand education training through a holistic-centered assessment inclusive of career, financial, and health and wellness mapping to create a pathway for sustained self-sufficiency.

<https://nlei.org/>

The Resurrection Project (Rec 8.4)

For over 30 years, The Resurrection Project has been committed to its mission of creating community ownership, building community wealth, and serving as stewards of community assets in Chicago's southwest neighborhoods. Since its founding, The Resurrection Project has grown to secure \$537 million in community investments through homes for ownership, rental housing, and community services throughout Chicago's southwest neighborhoods and the western suburbs.

<https://resurrectionproject.org/>

Illinois Green Alliance (Rec 8.1)

The Illinois Green Alliance is a membership-driven, nonprofit that works to promote green buildings and sustainable communities.

They believe that green infrastructure is key to strengthening neighborhoods and improving the quality of life for everyone. One way they do this is by partnering with local schools. The Green Apple Day of Service brings together parents, teachers, students, companies, and local organizations to transform schools into healthy, safe, and productive learning environments through local service events.

<https://illinoisgreenalliance.org/>

McKinley Park Public Library (Rec 8.4)

The McKinley Park Library offers a variety of programming and events, including resources on becoming a citizen, homework help for children and their parents, computers and wifi, and materials available in Chinese and Spanish. <https://www.chipublib.org/locations/50/>

Chapter 9

Implementation Matrix



Goal: Preserve Neighborhood Diversity

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
3.1 Maintain Housing Affordability, Choices, and Quality				
Form a neighborhood coalition to coordinate housing advocacy	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Communities United, The Resurrection Project, Greater Southwest Development Corporation	The Chicago Community Trust, Enterprise Community Partners
Advocate for the protection and production of on-site affordable units	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC's new housing committee	
Work with DPD to tailor existing city-wide programs to meet the needs of residents of McKinley Park	Ongoing	2	Lead: MPDC, City of Chicago Department of Housing	
Increase MPDC's capacity to engage the community, help support and market small businesses, and lead the community to better respond to development proposals	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: 36Squared, 11th Ward & 12th Ward alderman	The Chicago Community Trust, Enterprise Community Partners
Work with key partners like the City of Chicago and the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to identify opportunities to implement inclusive and supportive housing initiatives	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, City of Chicago Department of Housing, Illinois Housing Development Authority	
Pursue a targeted historic resource inventory to explore increasing the number of properties protected by historic preservation rules	Short: 0-2 years	3	Lead: MPDC Partners: Preservation Chicago	
3.2 Celebrate McKinley Park's Diversity through Cultural Programming				
Develop an alliance for arts and culture stakeholders to leverage resources through coordination and collaboration	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: The Bridgeport Art and Zhou B Art Centers, Chicago Maritime Museum, local artists, representatives from school art departments and the public library	DCASE
Strengthen the neighborhood's sense of heritage and identity by pursuing targeted arts and cultural endeavors	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC's new Arts & Culture Alliance Partners: Chicago Architecture Foundation, Chicago for Chicagoans, City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)	DCASE

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 =)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
3.3 Engage the Diverse Population of McKinley Park				
Make public engagement accessible	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: 11th & 12th Ward aldermen, public library, local schools and churches	
Improve language access	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aquinas Literacy Center	
3.4 Market the Neighborhood's Diversity through Small Businesses				
Partner with a marketing program at a local university to develop a marketing campaign	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, 36Squared Incubator Partners: Illinois Institute of Technology's Stuart School of Business, University of Illinois' College of Business Administration, Arturo Velasquez Westside Technical Institute's Business and Professional Services programs	
Organize community events designed to bolster visitors	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: 11th & 12th Ward aldermen, local businesses	
3.5 Support, Strengthen, and Grow Local Businesses				
Establish specialized efforts for growing small businesses	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC), SomerCor, City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP)	City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) Grant
Conduct cross-cultural outreach in collaboration with trusted partners	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Economic Strategies Development Corporation	
Expand technical assistance for local business development, including incubator resources for startups and accelerators for growing businesses	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, 36Squared Incubator Partners: ChiBizHub, Greater Southwest Development Corporation, BACP	
Attract and support businesses that will increase the diversity of McKinley Park's retail to meet residents' needs	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Office of New Americans, BACP, ChiBizHub, Chicago Innovation, BACP	City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) Grant

Goal: Promote Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (eTOD)

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
4.1 Engage Stakeholders to Define Community Priorities for Future Development within TOD Areas				
Continue to build MPDC's technical capacity and look to existing community development organizations for ideas, support, and resources	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC	
Use public engagement tools, such as visual preference surveys, to educate residents, and establish community goals for the form and design of new development projects	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aldermen	
Build strong working relationships with local business and property owners through continued outreach	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aldermen	
4.2 Implement Land Uses that Align with Community Vision and Priorities				
Preserve overall community affordable housing	Long: 5+ years	1	Lead: City of Chicago Department of Housing, Aldermen	City of Chicago Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund (AHOF)
Preserve affordable housing by limiting the conversion of two- to four- flats into single-family homes	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Communities United	
Pursue strategic partnerships to require the construction of affordable units on site	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aldermen, Communities United	
Target active uses for ground-floor spaces that increase access to goods and services for current and future residents	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC	

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
4.3 Proactively Address Parking Implications				
Conduct outreach to identify resident and business concerns	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC	
Partner with new TOD property managers to mitigate new parking demands	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC, aldermen	
Apply parking management best practices	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: Chicago Department of Transportation, aldermen	
Improve signage and use apps to clearly indicate where parking is available	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC, aldermen Partners: City of Chicago Department of Transportation	Aldermanic Menu Funding
Allow shared parking arrangements	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC, aldermen Partners: SpotHero, Chicago Department of Transportation	
Offer transit passes or bike-share membership as part of rent	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: TOD developers, Divvy, MPDC	
Provide bicycle parking or storage in developments	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: TOD developers, MPDC	
Consider using the residential parking permit system to manage parking	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC	
4.4 Advocate to Include 35th/Archer Orange Line Station as a Future Elevated Chicago eHub				
Be aware of any forthcoming eHub selections	Short: 0-2 years		Lead: MPDC	

Goal: Revitalize Commercial Corridors

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
5.1 Enhance the Built Environment along Ashland Avenue				
Prioritize infill development with support from the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC)	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: MPC	
MPDC's new beautification committee should target Ashland Avenue corridor for landscaping and beautification improvements	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: MPC	
5.2 Make Archer Avenue a Livable Street				
Encourage mixed-use developments that promote convenient, safe, and efficient travel	Long: 5+ years	3	Lead: DPD, CDOT Partners: MPDC	
Target safety improvements at key intersections along Archer Avenue	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: CDOT, IDOT	DOT's Statewide Planning & Research Funds Program Guidance (SPR)
Use tactical urbanism to demonstrate potential improvements	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Active Transportation Alliance, Congress for the New Urbanism, CDOT's Make Way for People initiative	
Install green infrastructure along the right-of-way for stormwater management	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: DPD, CDOT Partners: MPDC	
Widen the sidewalks along Archer Avenue	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT, IDOT	CDOT's Arterial Resurfacing (AR) program
Improve the appearance of viaduct underpasses	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: CDOT, railroads Partners: MPDC, 12th Ward alderman	
Widen the sidewalks along Archer Avenue	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC, aldermen Partners: Active Transportation Alliance	Aldermanic Menu Funding
5.3 Develop a "Main Street" Experience along 35th Street				
Pursue pedestrian street designation from Hoyne Avenue east to Ashland Avenue	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: CDOT, DPD Partners: MPDC, alderman	
Activate ground-floor spaces with active uses	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC, Alderman Partners: Property owners, developers, MPDC's new Arts and Culture committee	
Reinforce the sense of place through beautification improvements	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aldermen, CDOT	

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
5.4 Design Western Boulevard as a Multi-modal Thoroughfare				
Explore the feasibility of converting Western Avenue/Boulevard to a one-way couplet from 35th Street to Pershing Road	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: CDOT, IDOT, Cook County Department of Transportation Partners: CMAP	CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), IDOT's Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)
Activate and celebrate Western Boulevard	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: CDOT, Chicago Park District	
Study off-street connections between educational and recreational facilities	Long: 5+ years	3	Lead: CDOT, DPD Partners: MPDC, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Rauner Family YMCA, Arturo Velasquez Institute	
5.5 Connect McKinley Park through New and Improved Bicycle Facilities				
Advocate for the implementation of a safer Archer Avenue	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Active Transportation Alliance	
Create neighborhood greenways	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT Partners: MPDC, aldermen	CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, Aldermanic Menu Funding
Recommend 35th Street neighborhood bike route	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT Partners: MPDC, aldermen	CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, aldermanic Menu Funding
Strengthen existing local bicycle facilities	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: DPD, CDOT Partners: MPDC	
5.6 Coordinate Attractive Gateway Entrances and Wayfinding Signage				
Prioritize gateway entrances along prominent corridors	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC, aldermen	Aldermanic Menu Funding
Coordinate informative and attractive wayfinding signage for all modes	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, aldermen	Aldermanic Menu Funding

Goal: Modernize the Central Manufacturing District

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
6.1 Prioritize the Health and Well-being of Residents				
Continue to demonstrate leadership in improving environmental quality and transparency in the development process	Ongoing	1	Lead: MPDC, aldermen	
Target light industrial uses and modernize the CMD as a green manufacturing hub	Long: 5+ years	1	Lead: DPD, alderman Partners: MPDC	
Prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists in modernization efforts	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT, aldermen Partners: MPDC	Aldermanic Menu Funding, CDOT's Arterial Resurfacing (AR) program
Create ecologically functioning and aesthetically pleasing landscapes to buffer freight activity from nearby residential uses	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT, property owners, developers	
6.2 Maintain a Supportive Business Environment				
Create networking opportunities for resource sharing and business support	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC, Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council Partners: 36Squared Incubator	
Develop a workforce training program with local operators	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council Partners: National Latino Education Institute	City of Chicago TIFWorks program
Identify opportunities to locate space for start-ups and other ventures	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: MPDC, Aldermen, property owners Partners: DPD	City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) Grant

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
6.3 Encourage Preservation and Reuse of Historic Buildings				
Consider applying for Chicago Landmark designation	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC, aldermen Partners: Preservation Chicago	
Seek resources and financial incentives that preserve and restore historic buildings	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, property owners, developers	Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, Illinois Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, Chicago's Façade Rebate Program
Identify educational opportunities to promote the CMD	Short: 0-2 years	3	Lead: MPDC Partners: Preservation Chicago	
6.4 Promote Environmentally Sustainable Practices				
Consider design and policy guidelines for stormwater management treatments, including bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavers	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: Property owners, developers Partners: CDOT	
Incorporate sustainable design features in the restoration and construction of buildings	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: Property owners, developers Partners: City of Chicago	Future Energy Jobs Act, Chicago's Green Roof Initiative
Consider recommendations from previous city industrial planning efforts	Medium: 3-5 years	3	Lead: DPD, aldermen Partners: MPDC	
Prioritize rehabilitating and improving structures over teardowns	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: Property owners, aldermen Partners: MPDC	City of Chicago Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) Grant

Goal: Enhance and Expand Park and Recreational Opportunities

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
7.1 Encourage the Use of Active Transportation and Healthy Living through Programs and Activities				
Work to build community through bicycling activities such as neighborhood rides and bicycle-themed events	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: Aldermen, CDOT Partners: MPDC	CMAQ's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program, Aldermanic Menu Funding, CDOT's Arterial Resurfacing (AR) program
7.2 Enhance Parks and Recreational Opportunities				
Preserve and enhance McKinley Park's natural resources, and improve recreational facilities at Hoyne Park and other smaller public parks	Medium: 3-5 years	3	Lead: MPDC, McKinley Park and Hoyne Park advisory councils Partners: Friends of the Parks	Openlands Green Region Program, Chicago Parks Foundation, Friends of the Parks SEED Grant Program
Activate Western Boulevard and celebrate its historical significance as an extension of the Chicago boulevard system	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: CDOT Partners: Aldermen, MPDC	
Engage McKinley Park residents in the maintenance of their community parks	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: McKinley Park and Hoyne Park advisory councils	
7.3 Support Community Programming Activities				
Encourage active transportation and healthy living through programs and activities	Medium: 3-5 years	3	Lead: MPDC Partners: Chicago Park District, Active Transportation Alliance	
Support community programming volunteers	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Chicago Community Trust	Chicago Community Trust
Continue to develop community programming for all ages	Ongoing	1	Lead: McKinley Park and Hoyne Park advisory councils Partners: MPDC	
Strengthen year-round activities for youth	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: McKinley Park and Hoyne Park advisory councils Partners: MPDC	Chicago Parks Foundation
Utilize public spaces for community-building activities	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: McKinley Park and Hoyne Park advisory councils	

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
7.4 Activate the South Branch of the Chicago River				
Prioritize opportunities for open space amenities along the river	Long: 5+ years	3	Lead: Aldermen, property owners	
Ensure new development or property improvements that are within 100 feet of Chicago waterfront are consistent with the 2019 Chicago River Design Guidelines	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: DPD, Aldermen, developers	
Enhance connections between the river and the neighborhood	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: CDOT Partners: Aldermen, MPDC	CMAP'S Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program, Aldermanic Menu Funding, CDOT's Arterial Resurfacing (AR) program
Encourage pride and stewardship of the river through education	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Friends of the Chicago River	
Support Bubbly Creek restoration efforts	Ongoing	1	Lead: City of Chicago, MPDC	US Army Corps of Engineers
Implement recommendations from the Our Great Rivers vision	Ongoing	2	Lead: DPD Partners: Metropolitan Planning Council, MPDC	Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, Chi-Cal Rivers Fund
7.5 Evaluate Potential Areas to Expand Community Green Spaces				
Identify priorities for increased community green space as part of future redevelopment projects	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC, aldermen	
Capitalize on the presence of Western Boulevard and study off-street connections between educational and recreational facilities along the boulevard and other key destinations	Long: 5+ years	3	Lead: CDOT	CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), IDOT's Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)
Continue to activate vacant lots and open spaces throughout the community by transforming them into community gardens and parks to benefit underserved areas of the community	Short: 0-2 years	3	Lead: MPDC Partners: NeighborSpace	
Prioritize the conservation of open space along the river	Long: 5+ years	2	Lead: DPD, property owners Partners: MPDC	Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program

Goal: Create a Resilient Community

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
8.1 Pursue Existing Citywide Green Infrastructure Programs				
Work with city and local organizations to identify vacant land that is appropriate for green infrastructure projects in public or community managed open spaces	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Chicago Park District, NeighborSpace	
Incorporate stormwater landscapes along designated bike routes within the neighborhood	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: CDOT	EPA's Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program for Stormwater Management (IGIG)
Partner with the Illinois Green Alliance's Youth and Green Schools initiative to implement carbon drawdown strategies	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Illinois Green Alliance	
8.2 Encourage Green Infrastructure Practices				
Advocate for the targeted expansion of green stormwater infrastructure to reduce urban flooding	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: City of Chicago, CNT's RainReady Program	
Engage the community in flood mitigation solutions	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: CNT's RainReady Program	CNT's RainReady Program
Create a youth-led neighborhood litter and recycling campaign	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC	
Ensure clean energy and water efficiencies by connecting landlords to incentives and resources	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: City of Chicago	
Implement sustainable practices in industrial areas	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: Property owners, developers Partners: CDOT	Future Energy Jobs Act, Chicago's Green Roof Initiative
Identify opportunities for urban agriculture	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: NeighborSpace	
Empower residents and organizations to create artistic, beautiful landscapes, and clean environmentally diverse streetscapes	Short: 0-2 years	3	Lead: MPDC	

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
8.3 Market and Strengthen McKinley Park as a Business Hub				
Get expert advice on economic development	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: DPD, The Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement	Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Chicago, the Chicago Community Loan Fund, Department of Planning and Development: Economic Development
Set up neighborhood tours to promote assets to prospective developers and businesses	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Chicago for Chicagoans	
8.4 Increase the Wealth and Buying Power of Residents				
Establish the role of a workforce development coordinator to identify resources and connect workforce training providers and educational institutions with employers	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: 36Squared, McKinley Park Library, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition	
Continue to support and coordinate English as a Second Language (ESL) training and new occupational programs	Short: 0-2 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: The Aquinas Literacy Center, National Latino Education Institute, McKinley Park Library	
Encourage businesses to hire local residents, and identify and address the barriers to doing so	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: City of Chicago, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, anchor institutions	
Expand access to City of Chicago services for McKinley Park's residents with limited English proficiency				
Prepare residents for employment in growing sectors that offer middle-skill, middle-wage job opportunities	Long: 5+ years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Instituto del Progreso Latino, City Colleges of Chicago	Future Energy Jobs Act, Chicago's Green Roof Initiative
Increase the impact of existing local wealth-building programs to help residents	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC	The Resurrection Project

Recommendations and Strategies	Term	Priority (1 = high; 3 = low)	Lead and Partners	Funding Sources
8.5 Explore Innovative Public Engagement Methods to Implement the Neighborhood Plan				
Create a framework for sustained, inclusive community involvement in planning decisions	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC	
Re-engage existing resident groups and facilitate the creation of new community groups	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC	
Continue to hold educational forums	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Residents, community partners	
Dedicate webpages to the neighborhood plan and use social media outreach	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC	
8.6 Strengthen Community Capacity				
Build trust and collaboration with residents	Medium: 3-5 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: Property and business owners, religious leaders and members, parks, schools, libraries	
Promote civic engagement	Medium: 3-5 years	2	Lead: MPDC Partners: Aldermen	
Organize community-building activities	Short: 0-2 years	1	Lead: MPDC Partners: new Arts and Culture Alliance, community organizations	



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Appendix

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- A. [Key Intersection Improvement Concepts](#)
 - B. [Executive summary](#)
 - C. [Existing Conditions Report](#)
 - D. [Outreach Activities and Results](#)
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The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is our region's official comprehensive planning organization. The agency and its partners are developing ON TO 2050, a new comprehensive regional plan to help the seven counties and 284 communities of northeastern Illinois implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues. See www.cmap.illinois.gov for more information.



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

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433 West Van Buren Street
Suite 450
Chicago, IL 60657

cmap.illinois.gov
312-454-0400