



CHICAGO PLAN COMMISSION

Department of Planning and Development

CENTRAL AREA PLAN UPDATE
INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

Portions of Wards 2, 3, 4, 11, 25, 27, 28, 34 and 42

1/18/2024

The 2024

CENTRAL AREA PLAN

Update

A 20-YEAR VISION FOR EQUITABLE
DOWNTOWN GROWTH



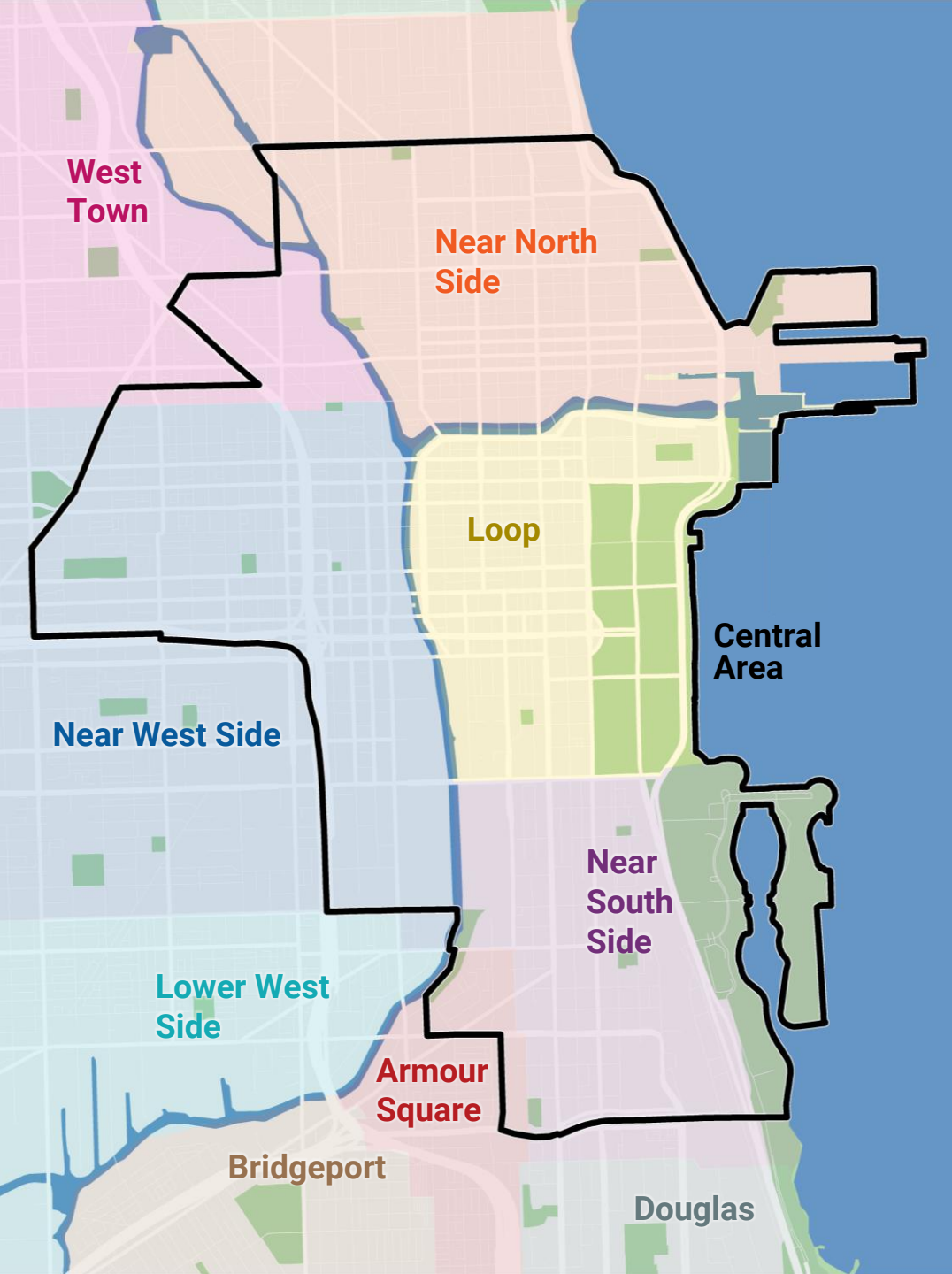
Chicago's Central Area Plans



Central Area Plan
(Adopted in 2003)



Central Area Action Plan
(Adopted in 2009)



Project Overview: Envisioning Chicago's Downtown informed by historic progress, recent trends, and community input

PHASE ONE (2023)

- ★ Tracked and reported on projects from the 2003 Central Area Plan and 2009 Central Area Action Plan
- ★ Analyzed existing conditions and trends in the Central Area
- ★ Engaged the community
- ★ Crafted a Central Area Vision and created scope of work for Phase Two

PHASE TWO (2024)

- ★ Development scenarios for focus areas
- ★ Engage the community
- ★ Implementation strategies and recommendations
- ★ Draft updated Central Area Plan

Building Off Citywide Framework Policy Plan Pillars & Principles

Organizing existing conditions and trends, engagement, and vision.

8 Pillars + Land Use

- ARTS & CULTURE
- CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE, & ENERGY
- HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS
- LIFELONG LEARNING
- PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY
- TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
- LAND USE

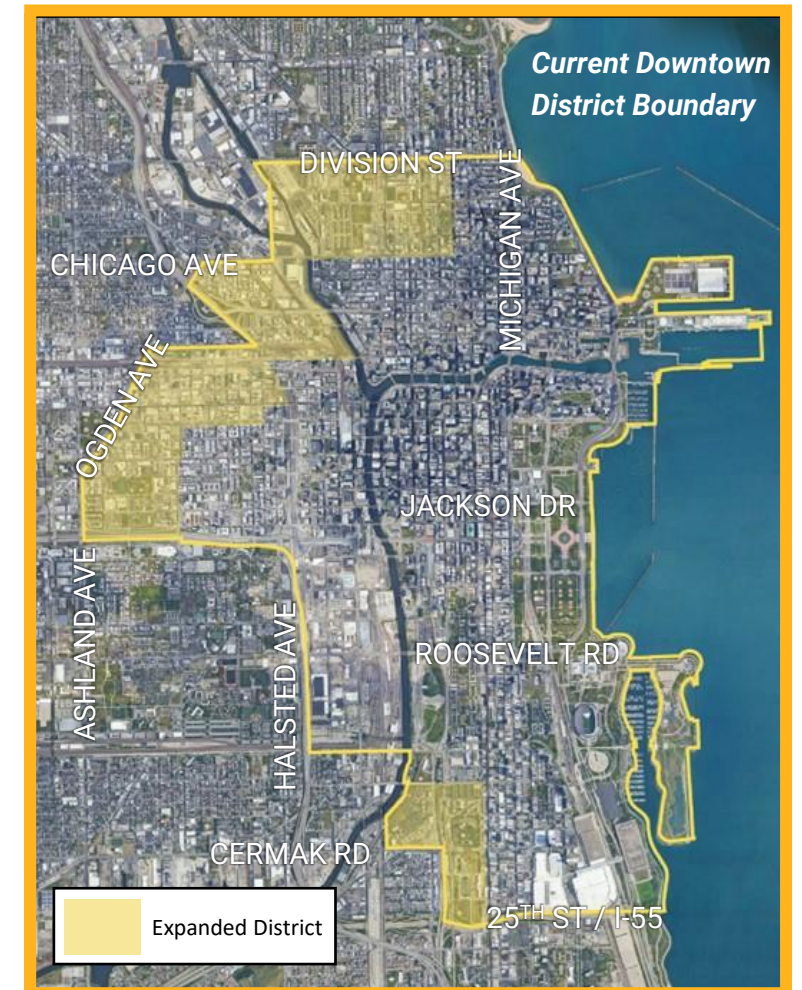
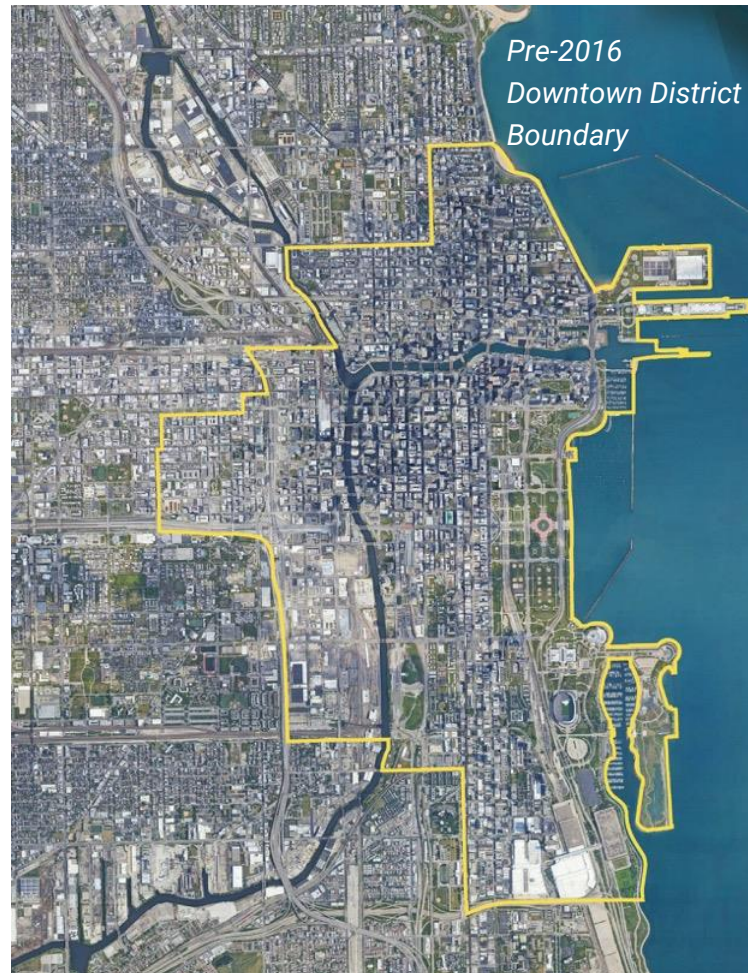
CITYWIDE
FRAMEWORK PRI
NCIPLES:
Equity and
Resiliency



Additional category
for Central Area
Plan Update

Boundary

Defining the boundary of the Central Area as the Downtown District (zoning overlay)



Engagement





300

Attendees

APR

1 Kick-off Webinar

Provided three words they believe are essential for the Central Area vision

200+

Participants

FEB - MAR and OCT

12 Focus Group Meetings

Discussed all pillar areas and engaged the Mayor's Youth Commission

200+

Participants

MAY

1 Public Open House

Gathered at the Harold Washington Library to engage with 10 interactive stations

1700+

Participants

JUN - AUG

8 Regional Pop-up Events

Selected top priorities for the Central Area. Sundays on State alone had 890+ participants

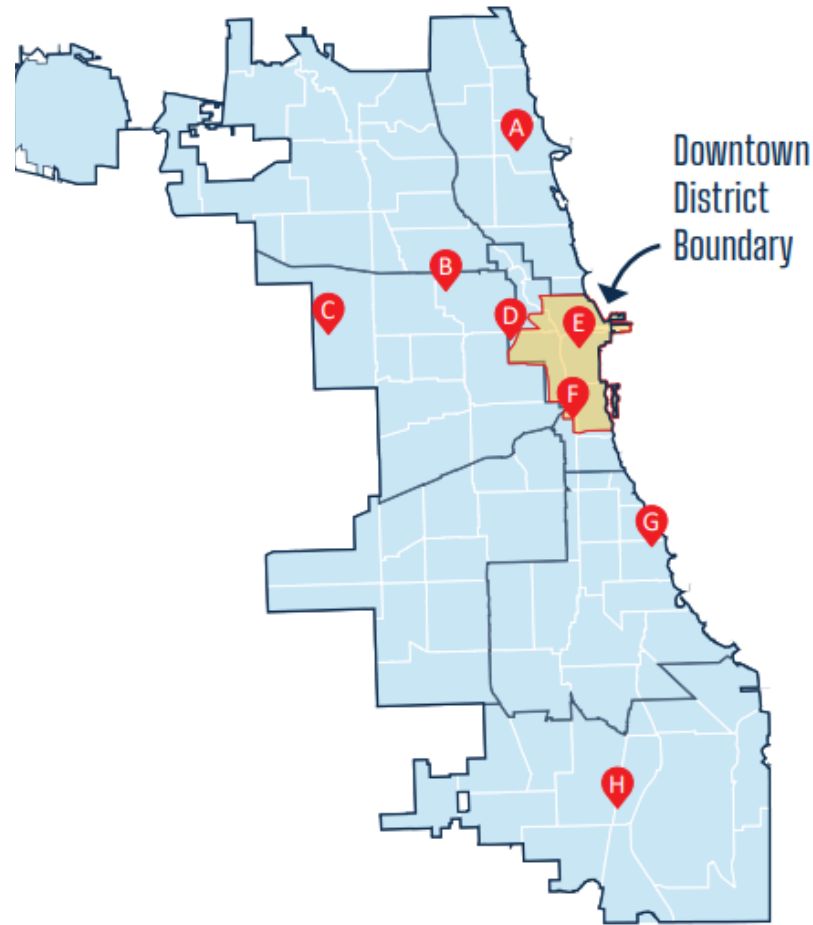
4200+

Respondents

MAY - SEPT

2 Online Surveys

Identified priorities for the Central Area, including a youth survey

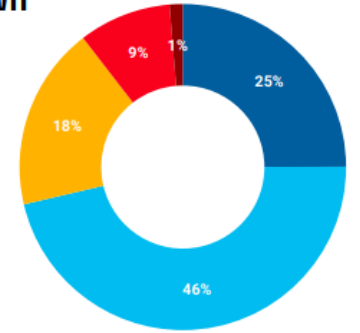


8 REGIONAL POP-UP EVENTS

- A** UPTOWN FARMERS MARKET
- B** TASTE OF CHICAGO - HUMBOLDT PARK
- C** AUSTIN TOWN HALL CITY MARKET
- D** 27TH WARD STAY IN SCHOOL EVENT
- E** SUNDAYS ON STATE
- F** CHINATOWN SUMMER FAIR
- G** HYDE PARK SILVER ROOM BLOCK PART
- H** TASTE OF CHICAGO - PULLMAN

Percentage of respondents who enjoy spending time downtown

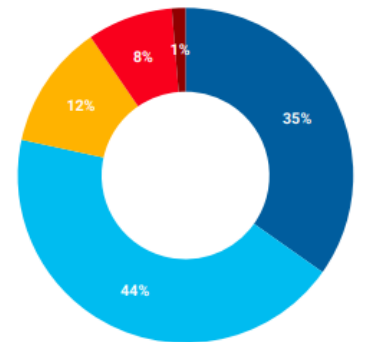
- Over 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoy spending time in the Central Area.



Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

Percentage of respondents who think downtown is easy to get to

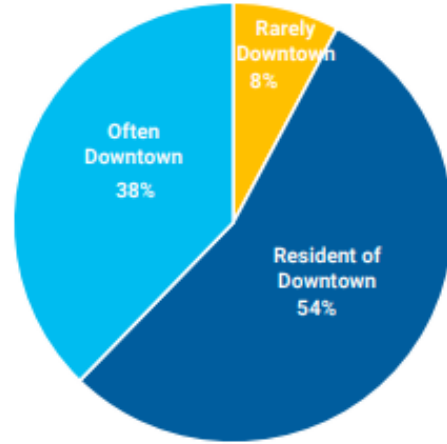
- 79% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Central Area is easy to get to.



Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

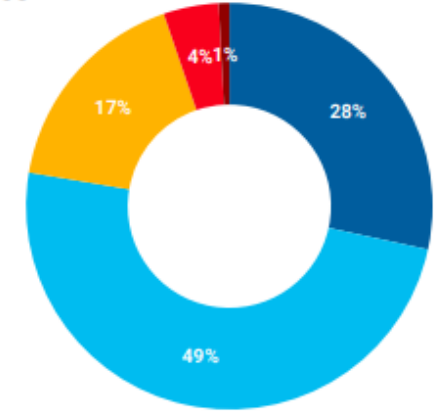
Visiting the Central Area

- Over 90% of respondents either reside in or often visit the Central Area.



Percentage of respondents who feel that the artistic and cultural activities reflect their interests

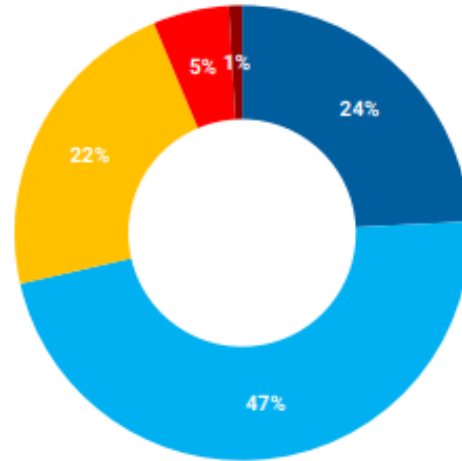
- 77% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the artistic and cultural activities in the Central Area reflect their interests.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Percentage of respondents who feel welcome in the Central Area

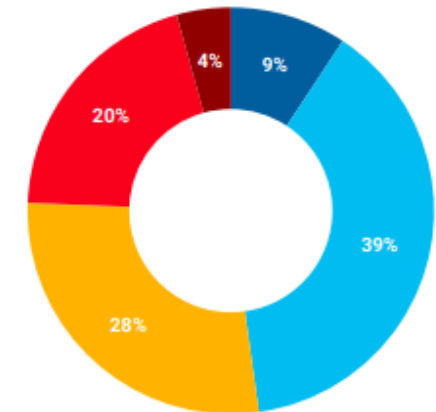
- Over 70% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel welcome in the Central Area.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree
Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Percentage of respondents who believe downtown is clean and comfortable

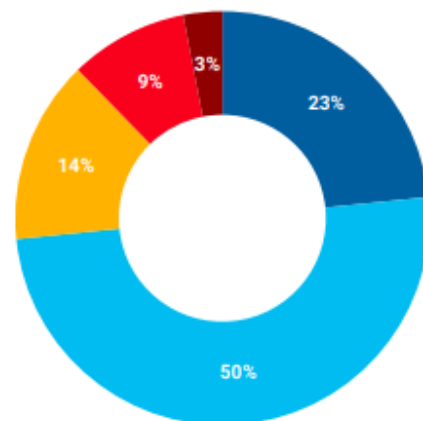
- 48% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Central Area was clean and comfortable. Half as many disagreed or strongly disagreed.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Percentage of respondents who feel safe during the day

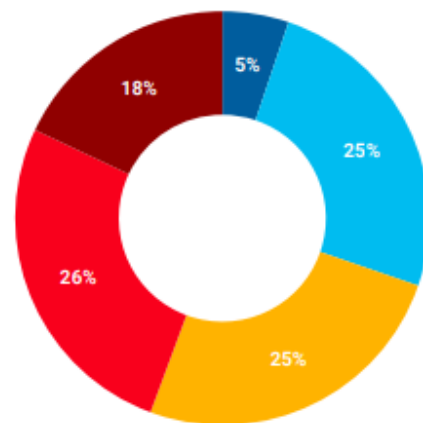
- 73% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe during the day in the Central Area.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree
Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Percentage of respondents who feel safe at night

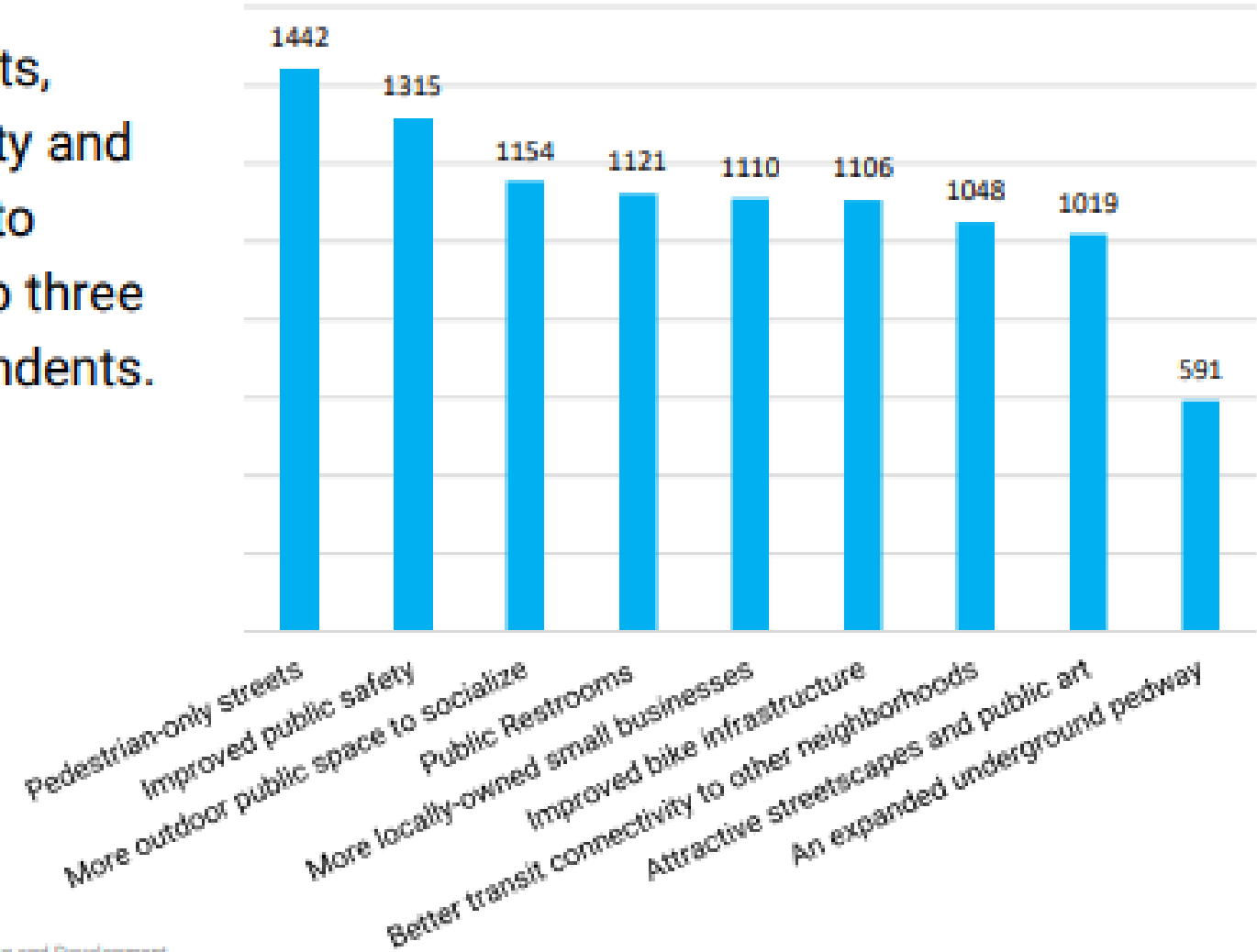
- Only 30% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe at night, with 44% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree
Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

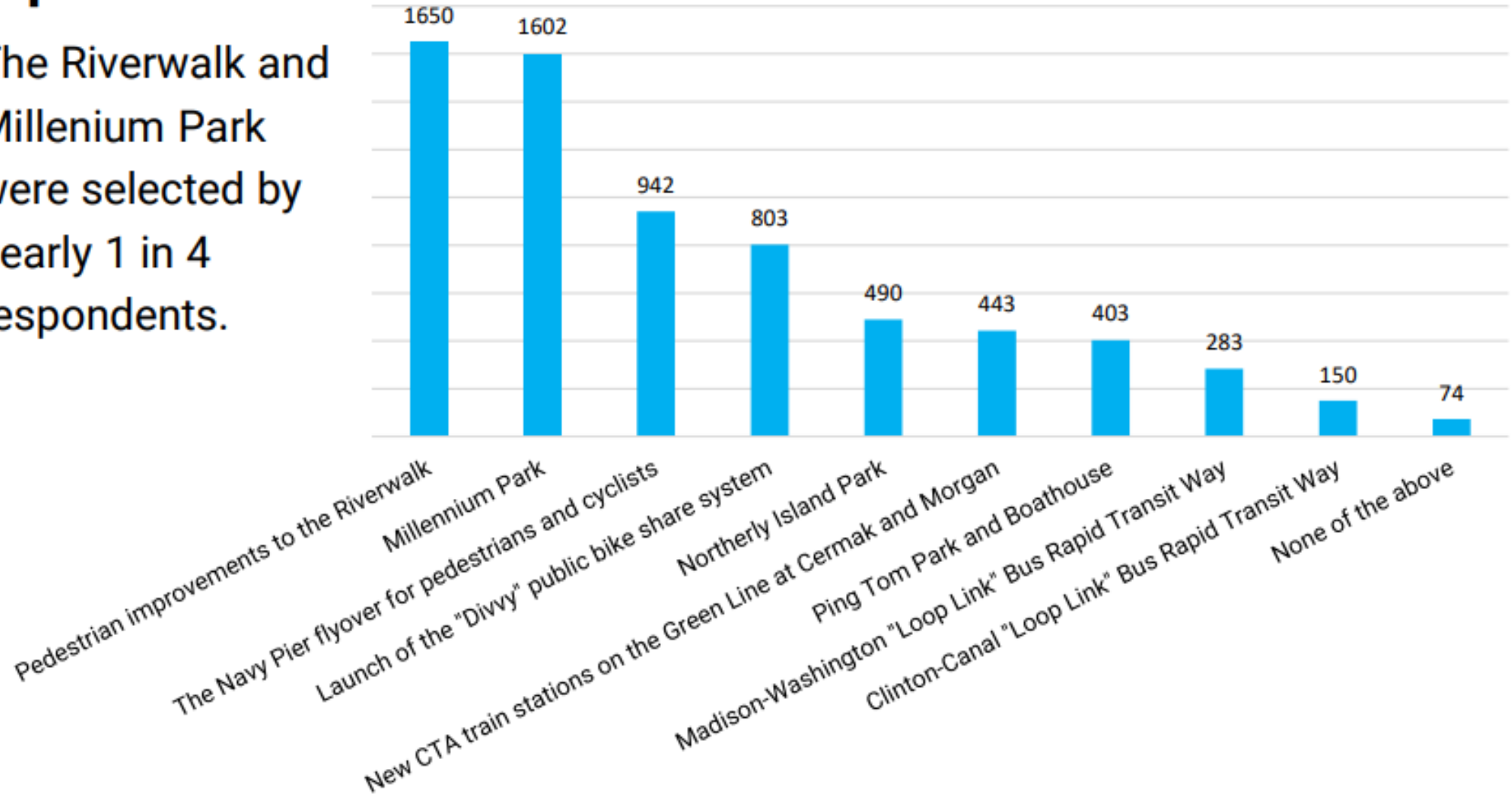
Number of respondents on what would make their time downtown more enjoyable (selected three)

- Pedestrian-only streets, improved public safety and more outdoor space to socialize were the top three picks from the respondents.



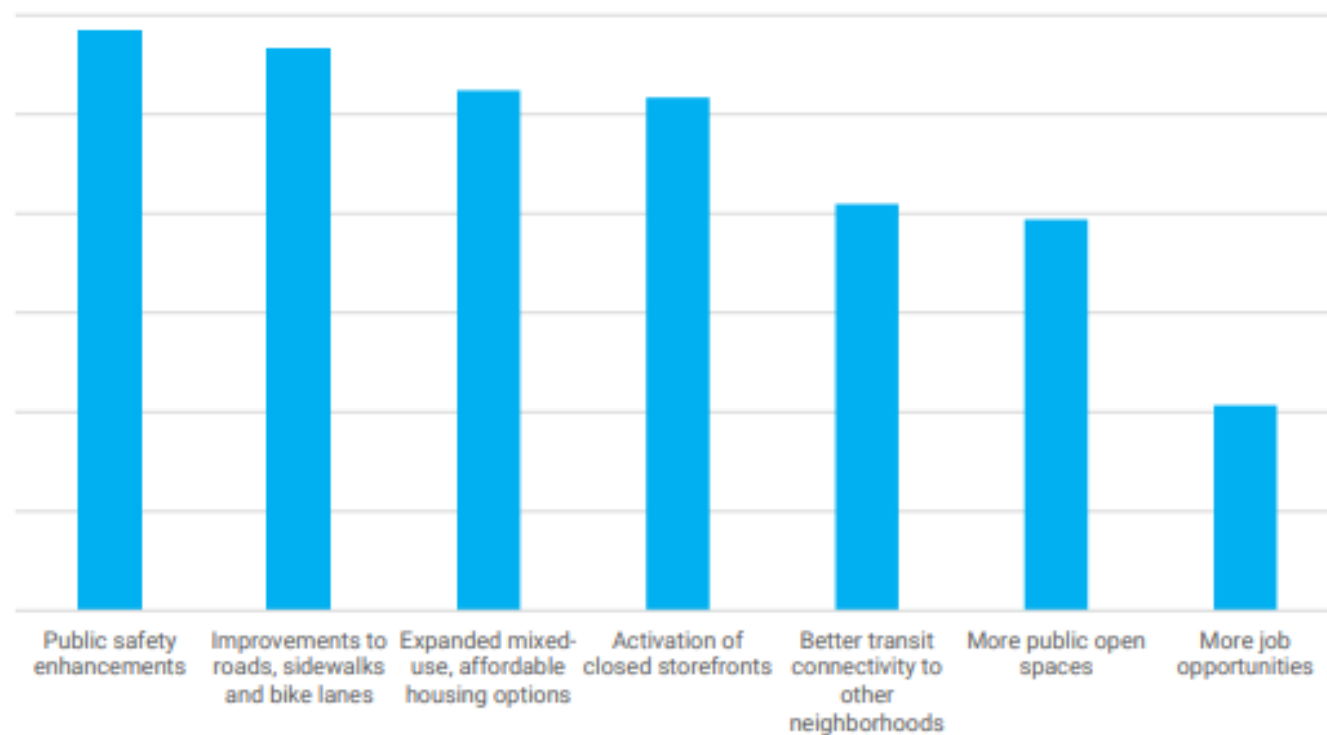
Most useful projects completed since 2003 according to respondents

- The Riverwalk and Millennium Park were selected by nearly 1 in 4 respondents.



Respondents' top priorities to complete in the next five years (selected three)

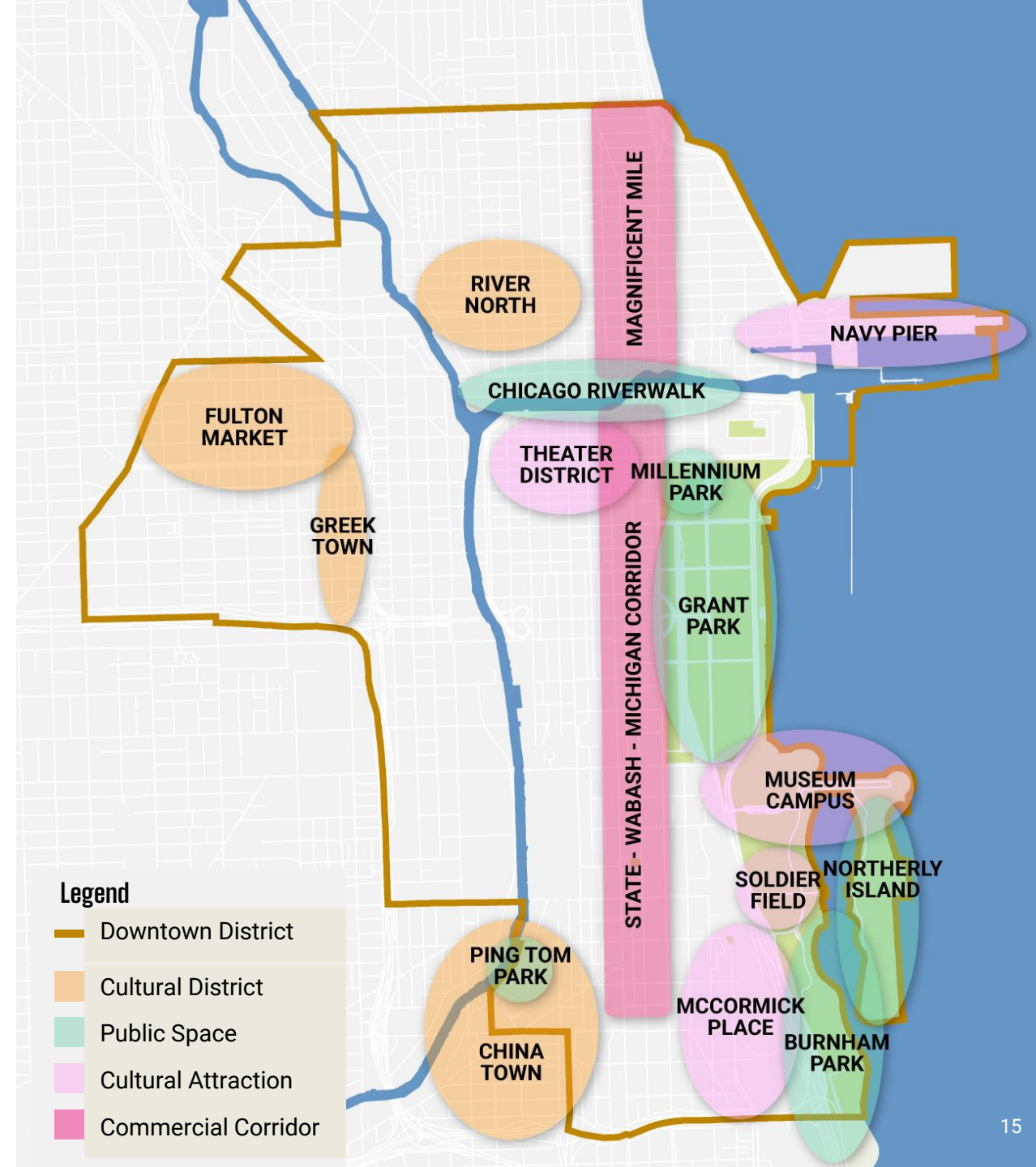
- Nearly half of the respondents selected public safety and infrastructure improvements as their top priority over the next five years.
- Approximately 44% of respondents selected expanding mixed-use affordable housing options and activating close storefronts.



Cultural Hub

The Downtown District is a dense collection of public spaces, cultural districts, commercial corridors, and world-renowned attractions that draws visitors from well beyond the city center

*Events have grown offshoots in the neighborhoods, or events that started in neighborhoods have evolved to have a presence Downtown – both of which **connect the Downtown to neighborhoods***



Parks and Open Space

While over 6% of the City's open space is located Downtown, the Near North and Near West community areas are in need of additional park space

| | Loop | Near South | Near North | Near West | Citywide |
|---|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Total Open Space (Acres)¹ | 310.7 | 430.0 | 94.3 | 86.7 | 14,050.9 |
| Acres per 1,000 Residents | 10.6 | 20.1 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 5.2 |
| Acres of Open Space Needed (2/1,000) | | | 66.7 | 23.1 | |

Source: Chicago Park District 2016 Land Acquisition Plan

1. Total open space is reflective of Chicago Park District owned land in 2016.



Existing Conditions & Current Trends



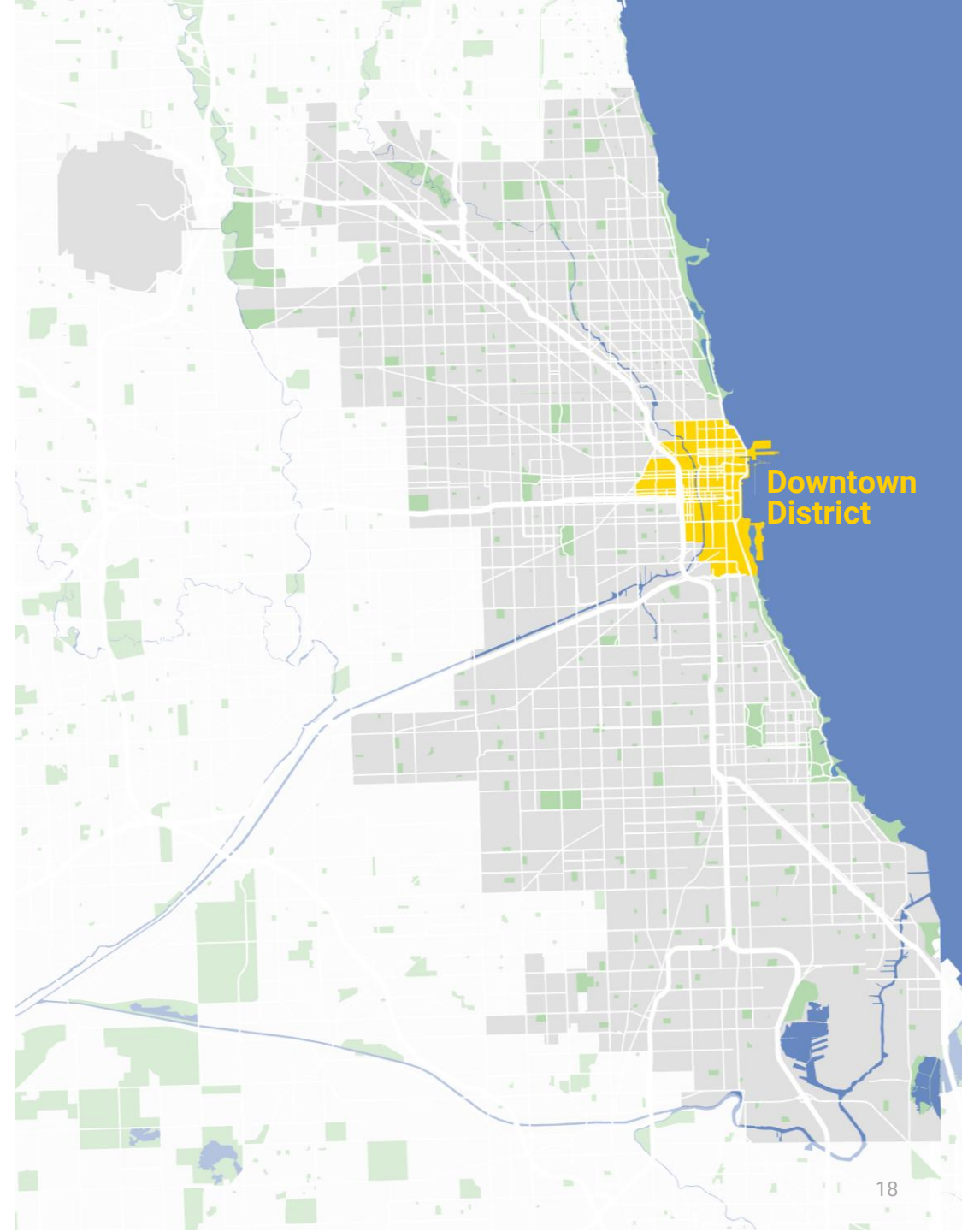
The Downtown District

The Downtown District is home to more than half of the City's jobs

| | Downtown District | Share of City |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Acres | 4,756 | 3% |
| Residents (2020) | 181,751 | 7% |
| Jobs* (2022) (Private Sector) | 623,504 | 53% |

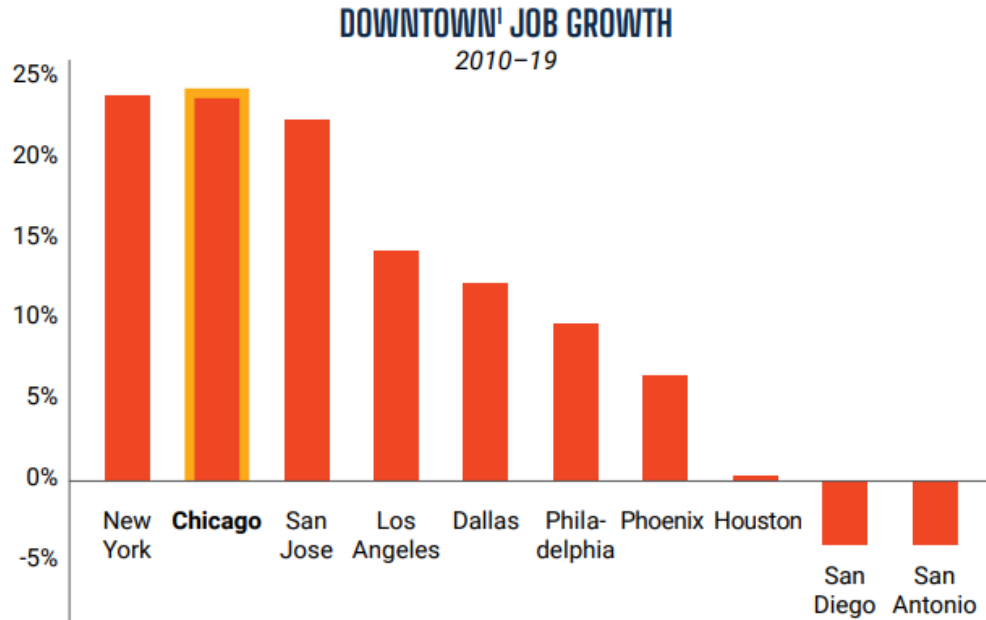
Source: 2020 Decennial Census, City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Department of Employment Security (2022), SB Friedman

*Jobs are based on IDES zip code data that overlap the Downtown District. Overlapping Downtown District zip codes are: 60601, 60602, 60603, 60604, 60605, 60606, 60607, 60610, 60611, 60616, 60654, 60661



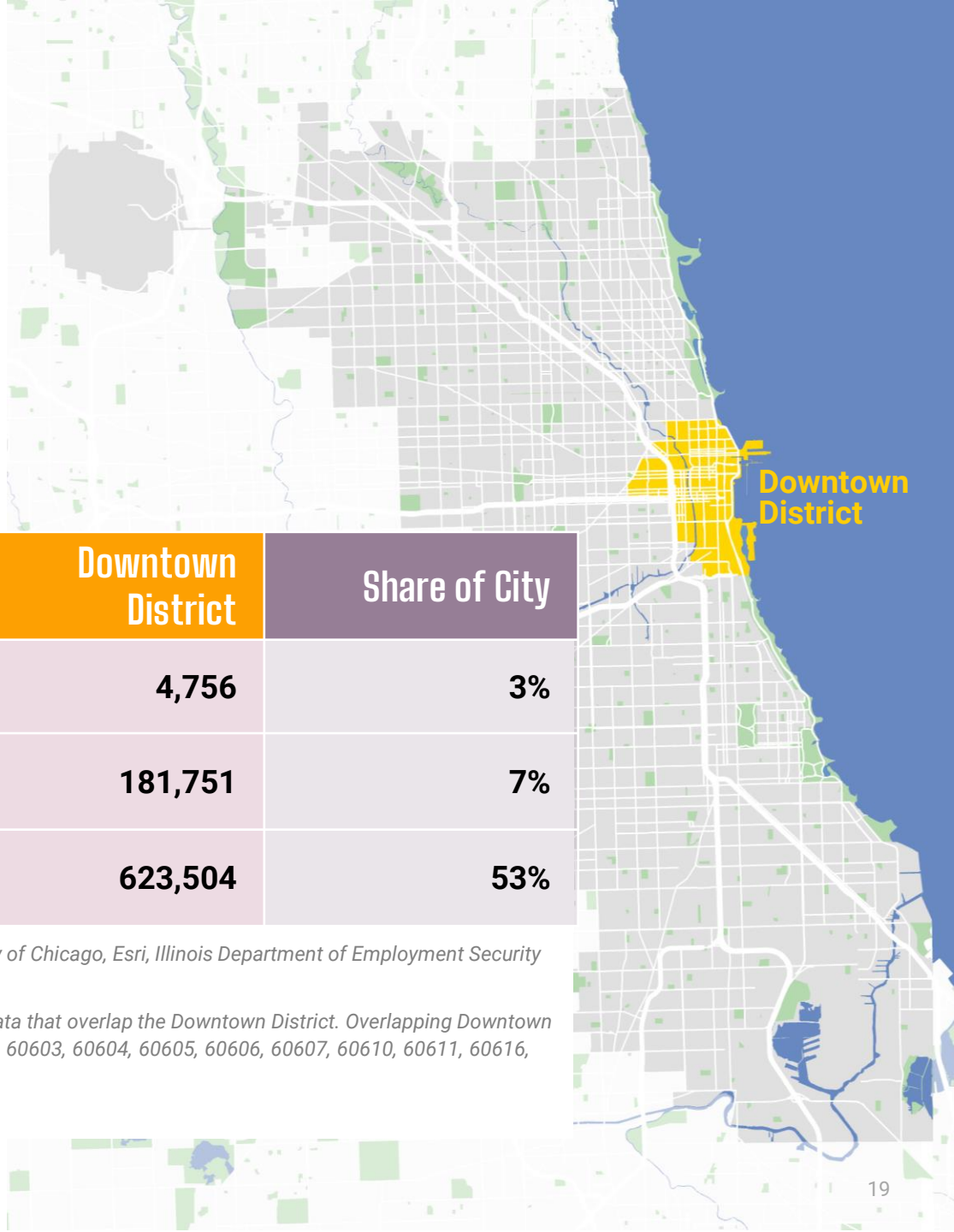
Downtown Job Growth

The Downtown District is home to more than half of the City's jobs



Source: LEHD, SB Friedman

1. Downtown is defined as the original Central Business District (CBD) identified in the 1982 Census of Retail Trade as well as all 2020 census tracts that share a boundary with the 1982 CBD geography.



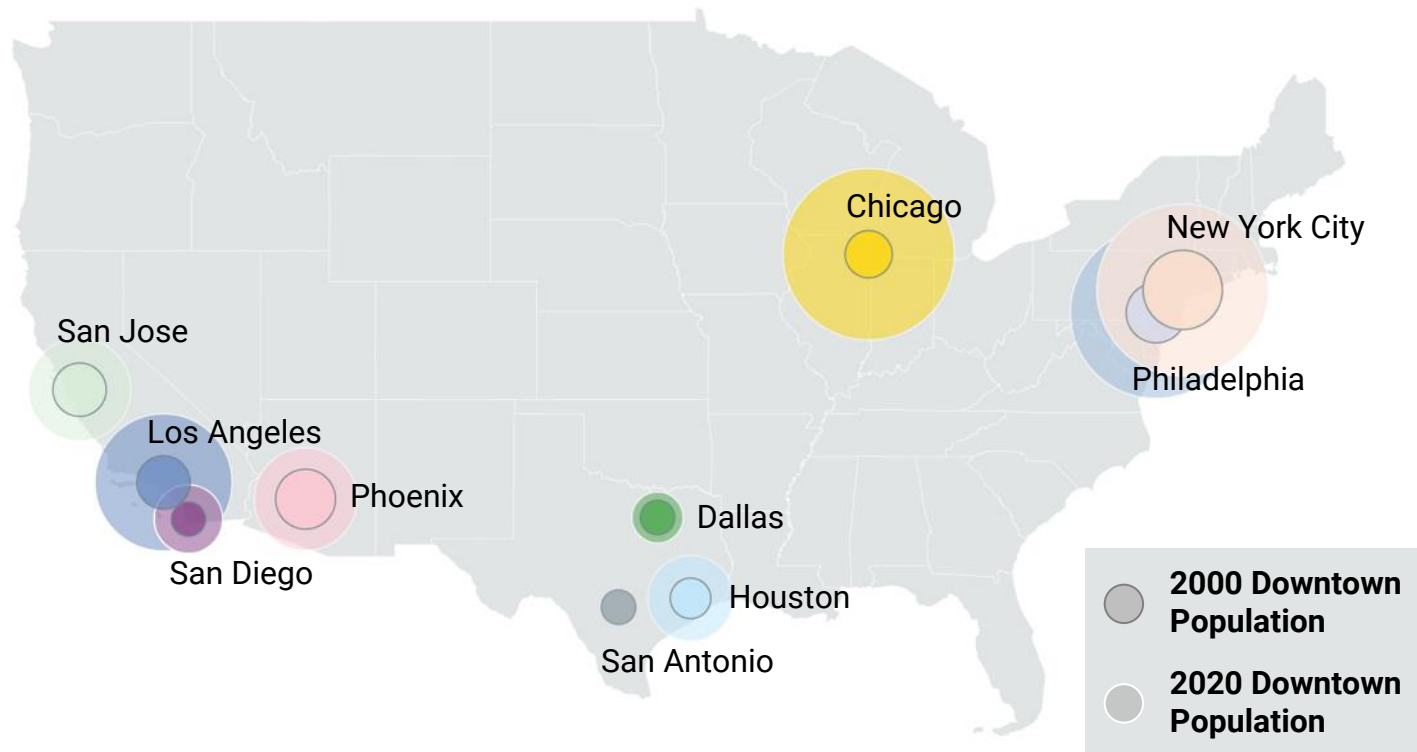
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Fastest Growing Downtown

Chicago's downtown* is the fastest growing population among the nation's largest downtowns



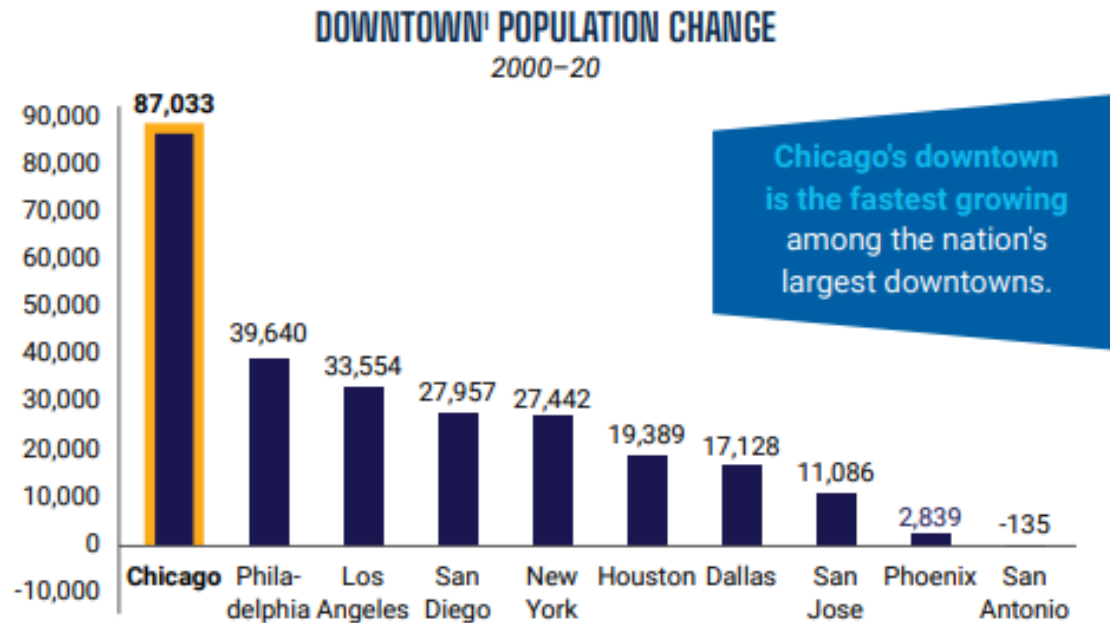
| | 2000 Population | 2020 Population | Population Change |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| New York City | 84,460 | 111,902 | +27,442 |
| Philadelphia | 69,382 | 109,022 | +39,640 |
| Phoenix | 63,207 | 66,046 | +2,839 |
| Los Angeles | 56,335 | 89,889 | +33,554 |
| San Jose | 54,555 | 66,641 | +11,086 |
| Chicago | 40,714 | 127,747 | +87,033 |
| Houston | 32,722 | 51,111 | +19,389 |
| San Antonio | 22,094 | 21,959 | -135 |
| San Diego | 20,106 | 48,063 | +27,957 |
| Dallas | 19,386 | 36,514 | +17,128 |

Source: Esri, US Census Bureau, SB Friedman

*Downtown is defined as the original Central Business District (CBD) identified in the 1982 Census of Retail Trade as well as all 2020 census tracts that share a boundary with the 1982 CBD geography. This methodology is borrowed from a Brookings Institute report, which can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/big-city-downtowns-are-booming-but-can-their-momentum-outlast-the-coronavirus/>

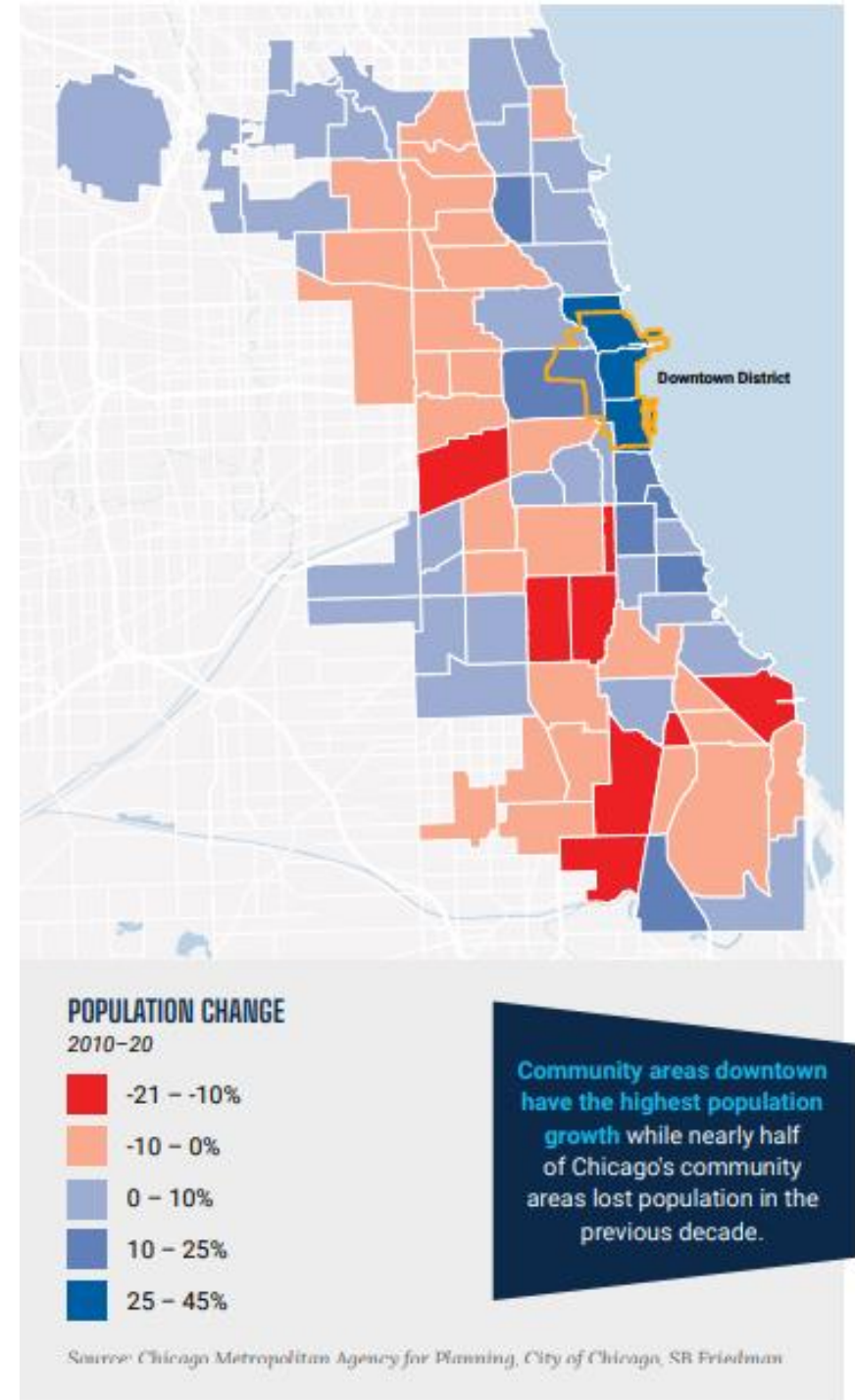
Fastest Growing Downtown

Today, Chicago's downtown is the most populous downtown in the country



Source: Esri, US Census Bureau, SB Friedman

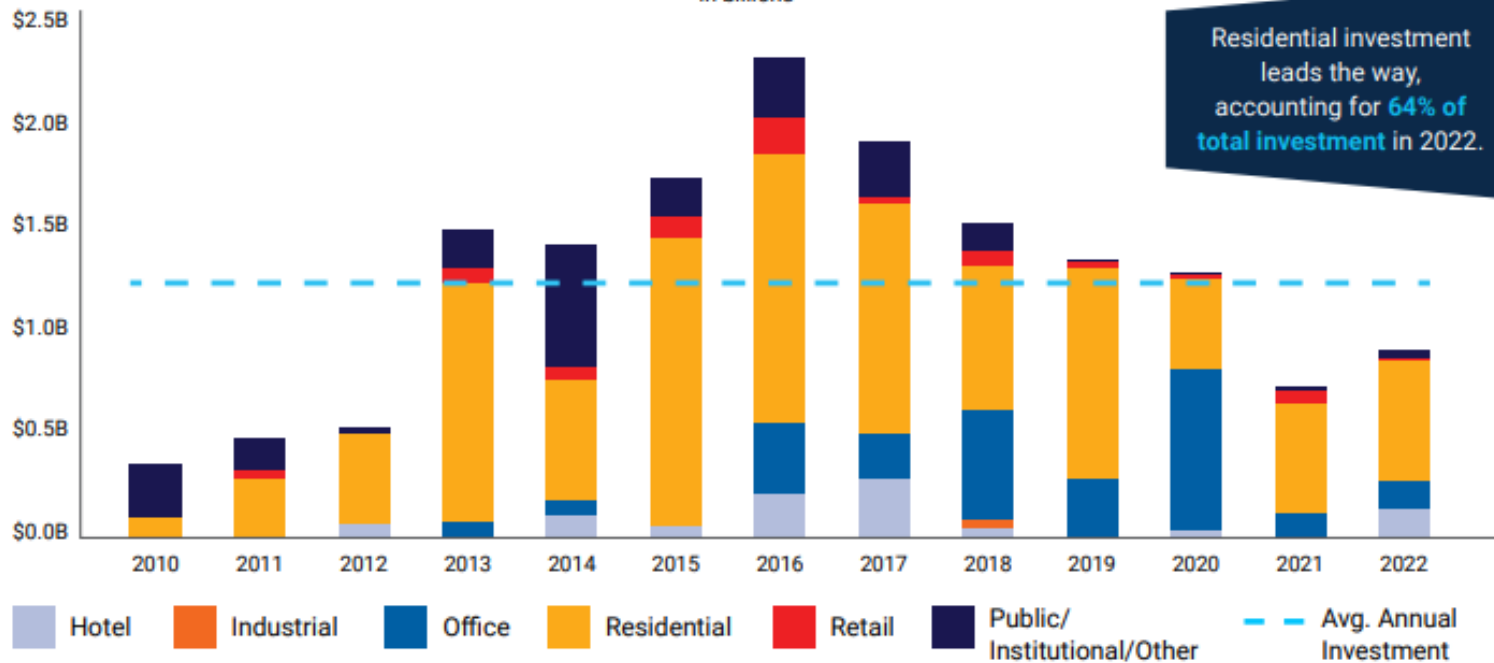
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Downtown Real Estate Investment

Since 2010, more than 60 million square feet of development has been completed or is under construction in the Downtown District. Most of the new construction has been multifamily rental and office space.

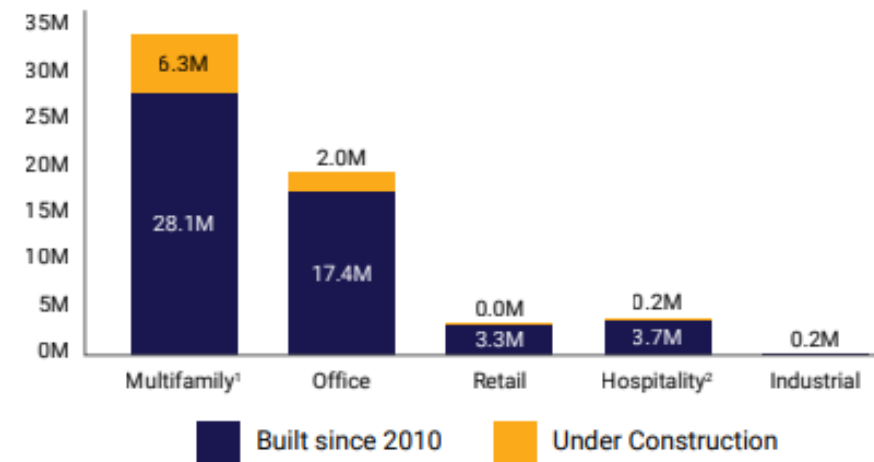
ANNUAL NEW CONSTRUCTION COSTS¹ IN THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT
in billions



Source: City of Chicago Permit Data, Esri, SB Friedman

1. Defined as materials and labor in application.

SQUARE FEET DEVELOPED OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION
since 2010, excluding For Sale Residential



Source: CoStar, CNBC

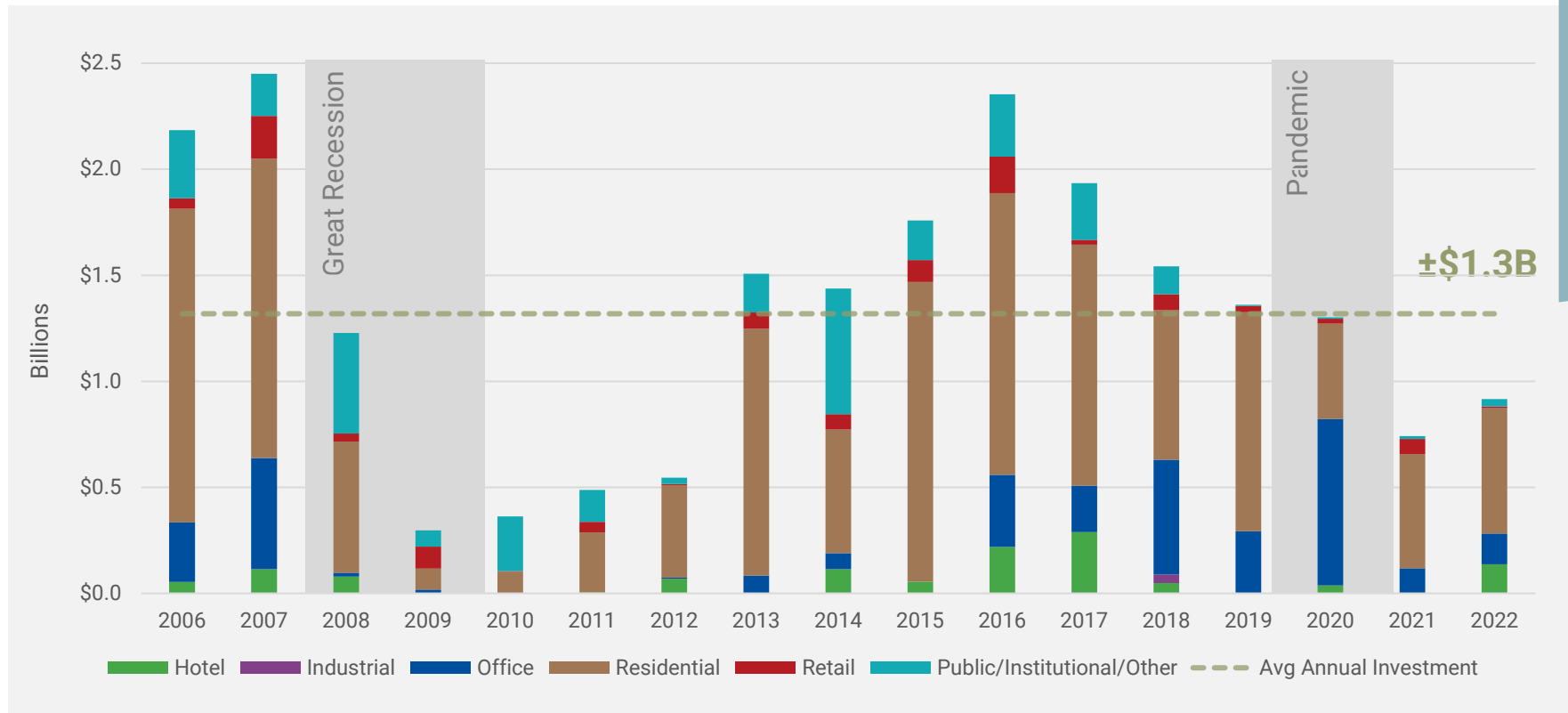
1. Square feet calculated by multiplying number of units by average unit size

2. Square feet calculated by multiplying number of units by average hotel room size as reported by CNBC, 330 square feet

Continued Investment in the Downtown District

±\$1.3B in avg. annual investment in the Downtown District from 2006–22

ANNUAL NEW CONSTRUCTION COSTS¹ IN THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT



Residential investment leads the way, accounting for 64% of total investment in 2022.

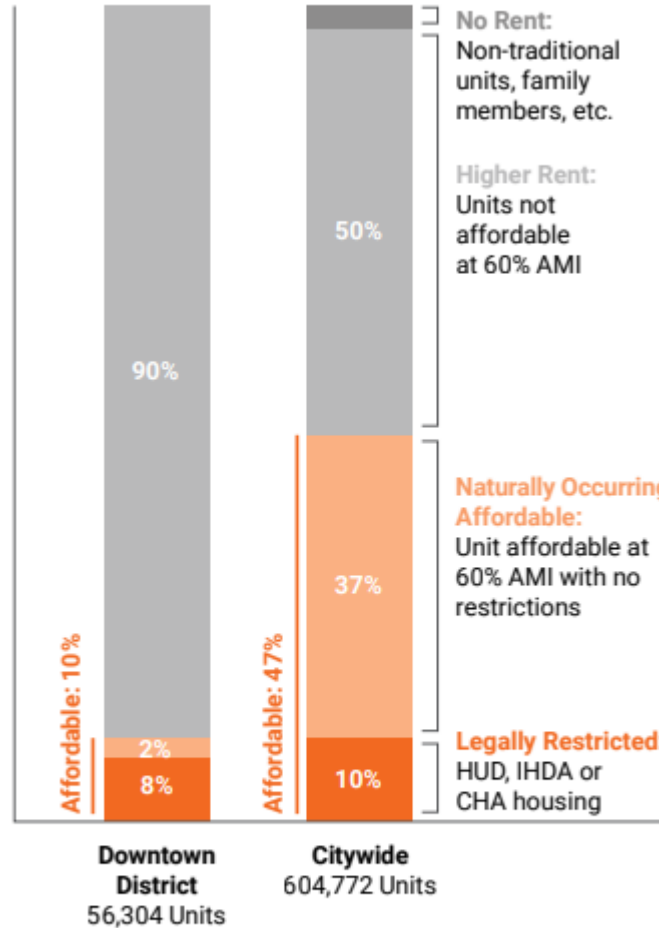
Source: City of Chicago Permit Data, Esri, SB Friedman

1. Defined as materials and labor in application.

Downtown Housing Market

An average of close to 3,000 rental units are developed per year in Downtown. Rental occupancy is at 93% with average rental costs similar to downtown San Diego, San Jose and LA.

In the Downtown District, only 10% of rental units are affordable or naturally occurring affordable compared to 47% citywide.



Source: Chicago Housing Authority, City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Housing Development Agency, US Census Bureau, SB Friedman



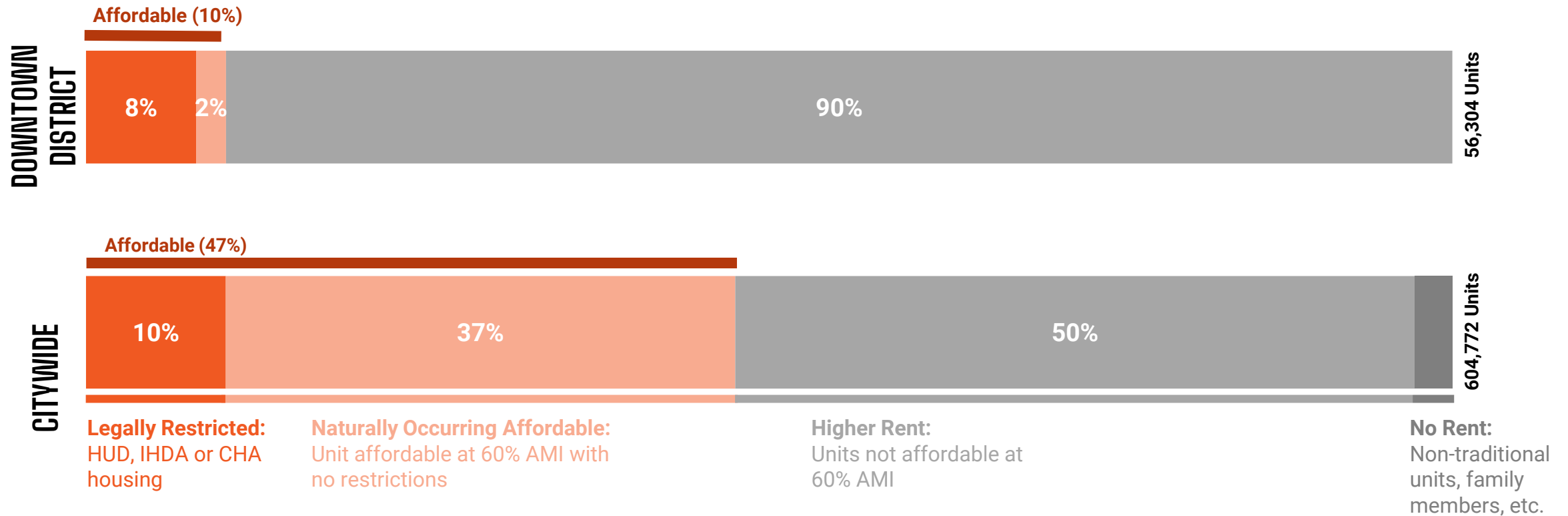
NUMBER OF LEGALLY RESTRICTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING (LRAH) UNITS
2021, Downtown District

- <51
- 51 - 200
- >200

Source: Chicago Housing Authority, City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Housing Development Agency, SB Friedman

Affordable Housing - Rental

The share of affordable units Downtown is much lower than the City overall



Source: Chicago Housing Authority, City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Housing Development Agency, US Census Bureau, SB Friedman

Downtown Office

The age of office buildings and the shift to work from home has negatively impacted Loop office occupancy

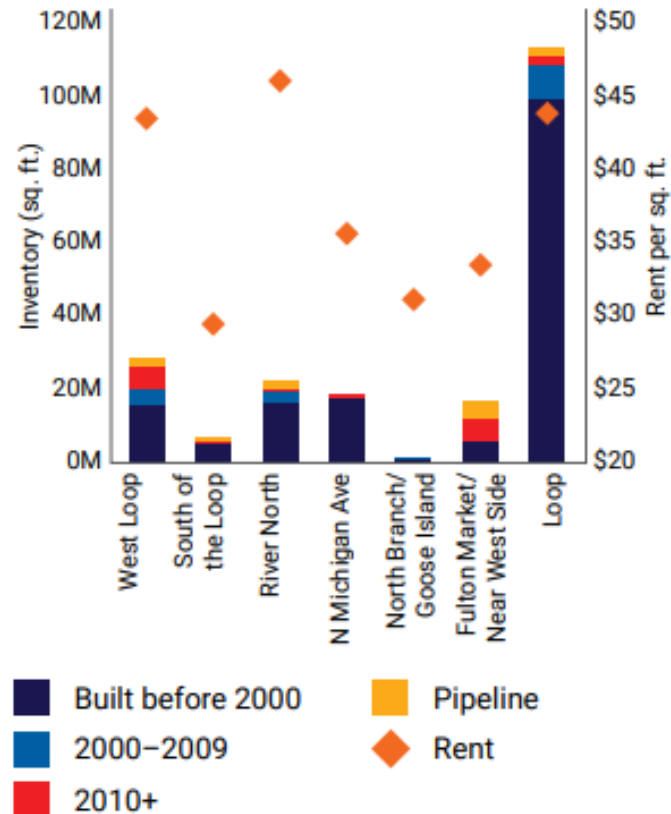
WEEKLY IN-PERSON OFFICE OCCUPANCY

March 2020 to September 2023

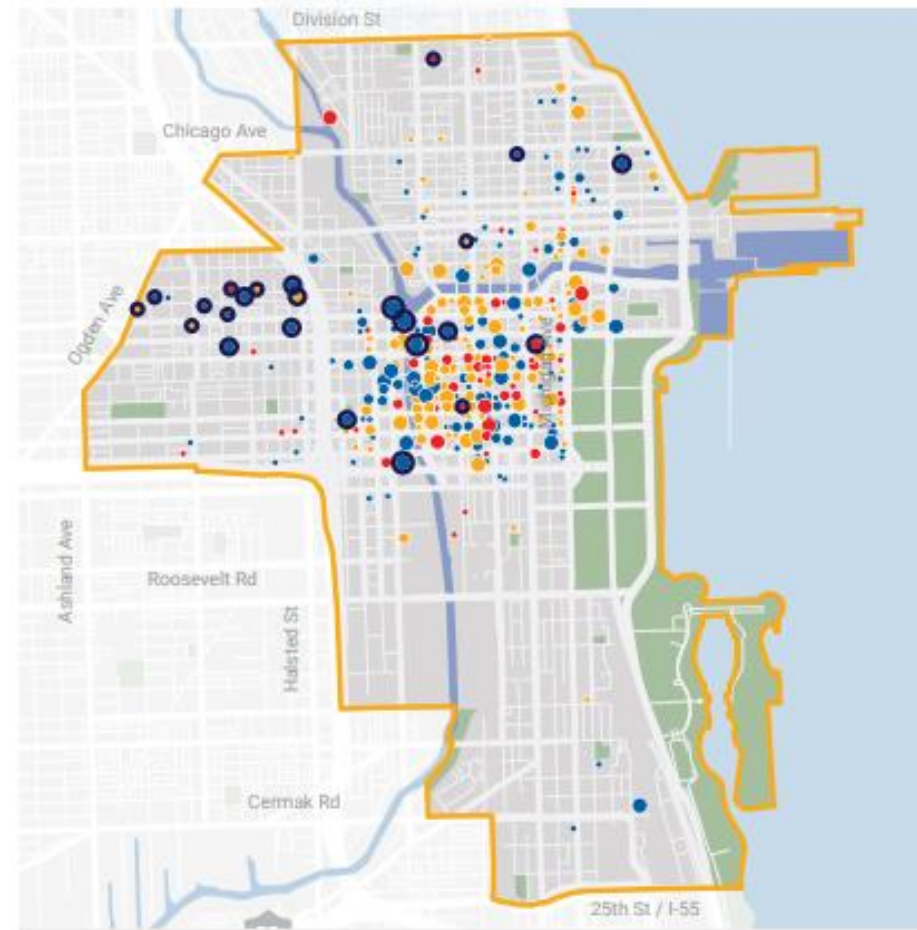
| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Houston metro | 61.6% |
| Austin metro | 59.3% |
| Dallas metro | 54.9% |
| Chicago metro | 53.6% |
| 10-Metro Average | 50.3% |
| New York metro | 50.1% |
| Los Angeles metro | 49.4% |
| D.C. metro | 47.9% |
| Philadelphia metro | 42.7% |
| San Francisco metro | 42.6% |
| San Jose metro | 41.5% |

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT OFFICE INVENTORY

2023, by submarket



Source: CoStar, SB Friedman



OFFICE BUILDING OCCUPANCY

2023, in square feet, built prior to 2021, 100,000 sq. ft. or larger, Downtown District

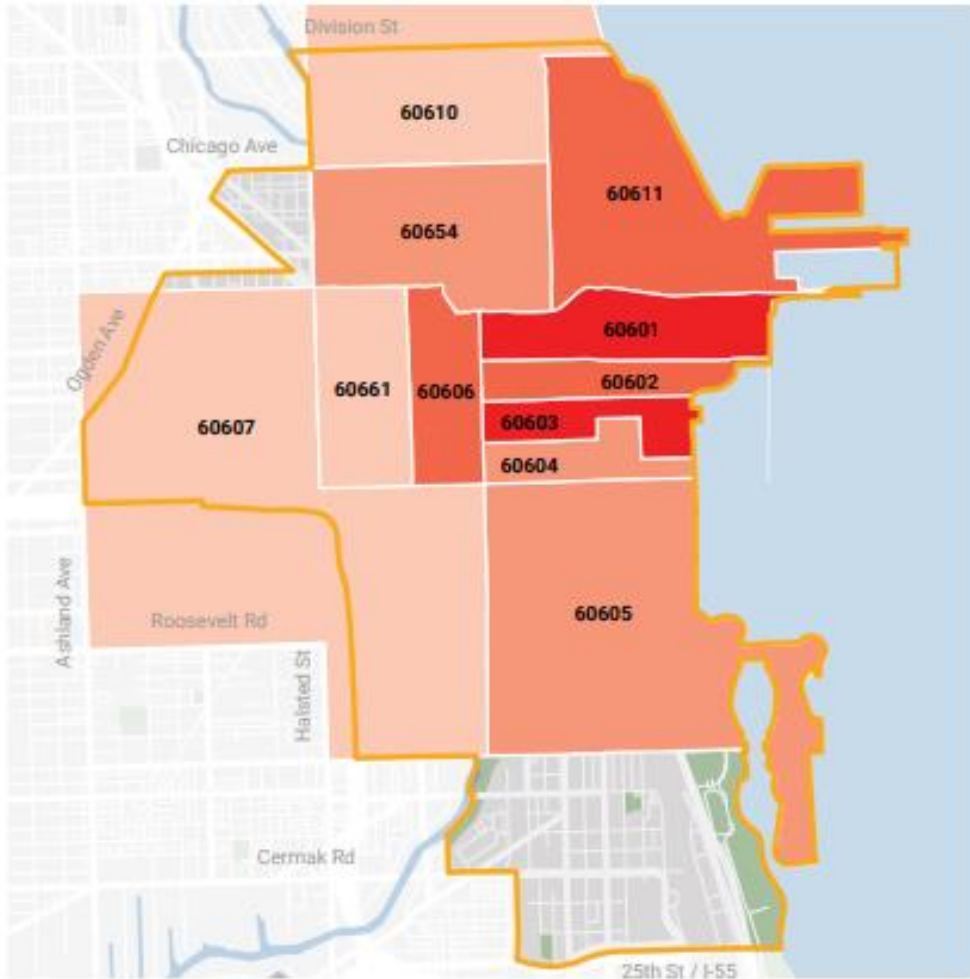
- 100,000 – 400,000 sq. ft. < 70% Occupied
- 400,001 – 1,000,000 sq. ft. 70% – 90% Occupied
- 400,001 – 1,000,000 sq. ft. > 90% Occupied
- Trophy Buildings¹

Source: CoStar, SB Friedman

1. Trophy Buildings are defined here as Class A buildings greater than 100,000 sq. ft. built since 2010

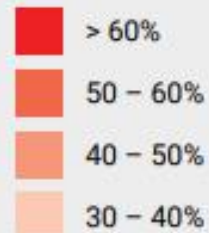
Downtown Retail

The rise of e-commerce and the pandemic has negatively impacted downtown retail.



SALES TAX REVENUE DECREASE

2019-20, Downtown District



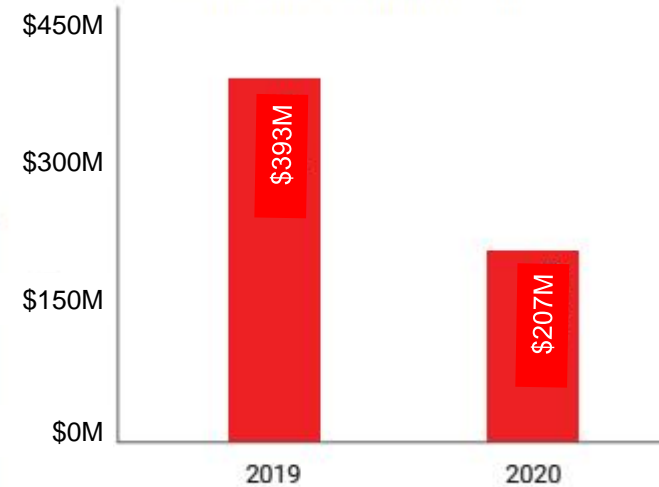
Source: City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Department of Revenue, Chicago Sun Times, SB Friedman

Sales Tax Revenue in Downtown District zip codes **decreased by 47%**. The reduction in Sales Tax Revenue totaled **\$186 million**.

Citywide sales tax revenue **decreased by 27%**.

REDUCTION IN SALES TAX REVENUE¹

2019-2020, Downtown District

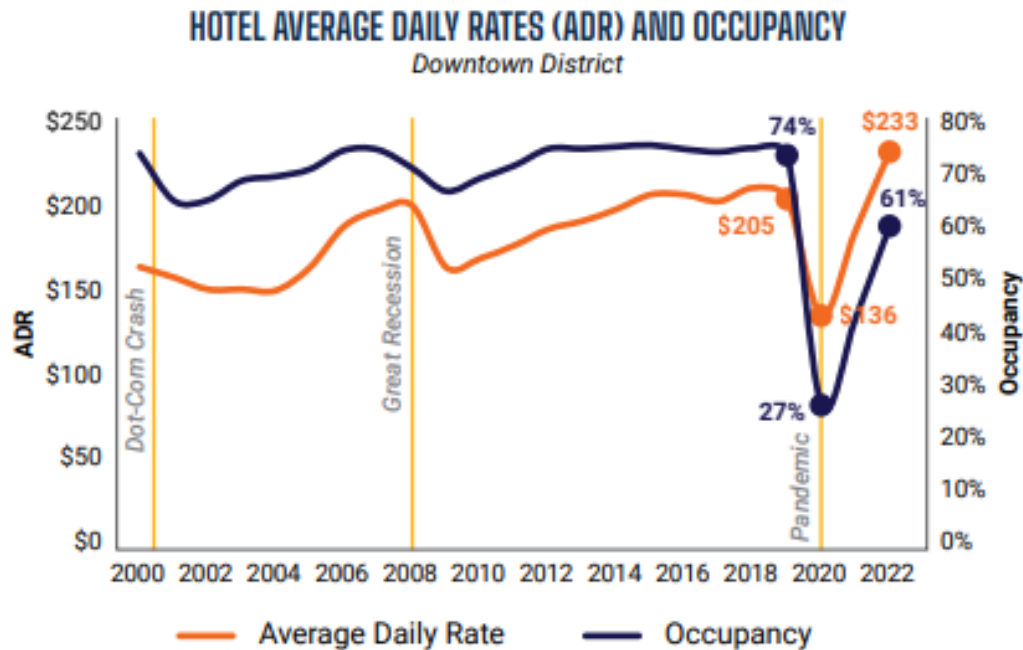


Source: City of Chicago, Esri, Illinois Department of Revenue, Chicago Sun Times, SB Friedman

1. State's portion of sales tax revenue collected

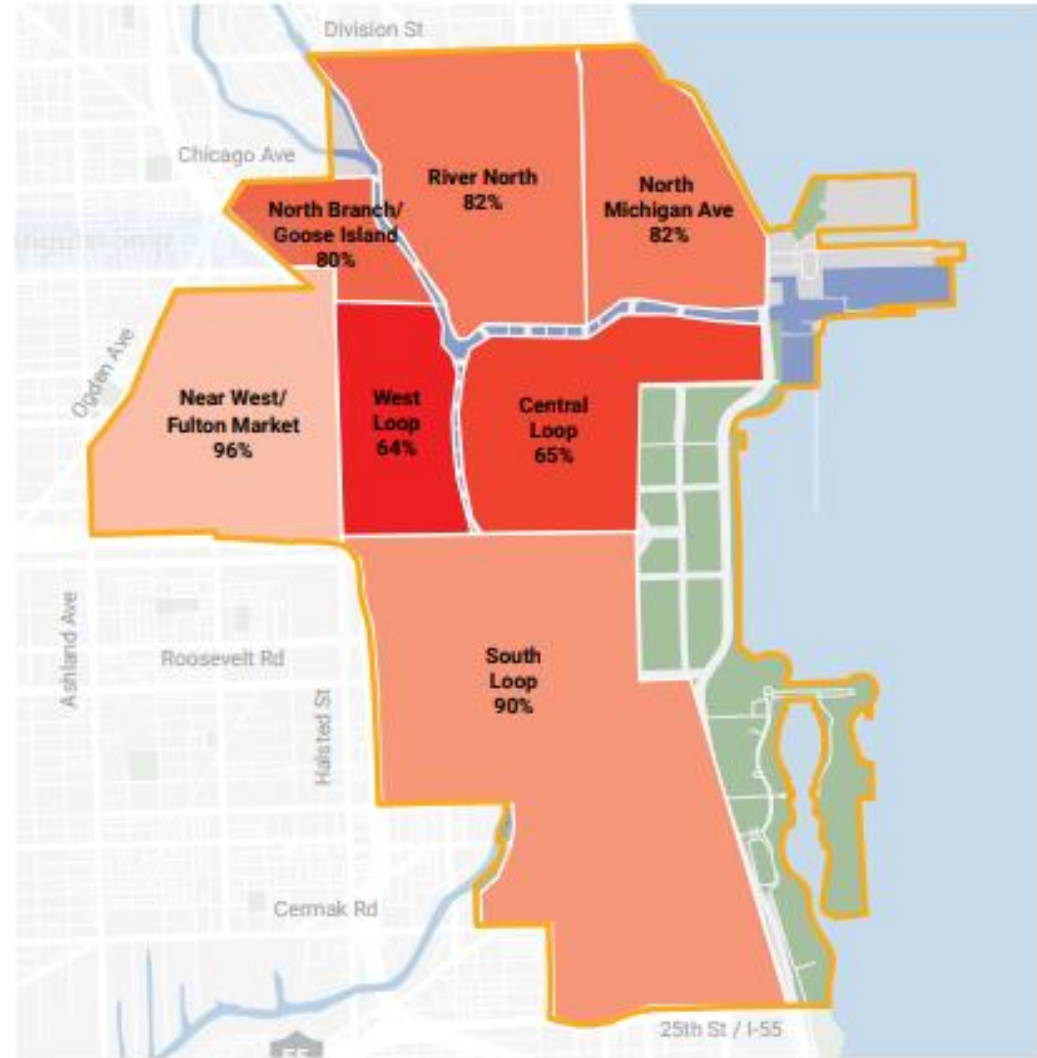
Downtown Hotels and Visits

Nearly 140 hotels downtown provide approximately 44,400 rooms for business and leisure travelers.



Source: CoStar

HOTEL INVENTORY:
 139 Hotels
 44,380 Keys



VISITS' RECOVERY FACTOR BY SUBAREA

January–June 2019 to 2023, Downtown District



Source: Placer AI, SB Friedman

1. Visits by visitors, employees, and residents

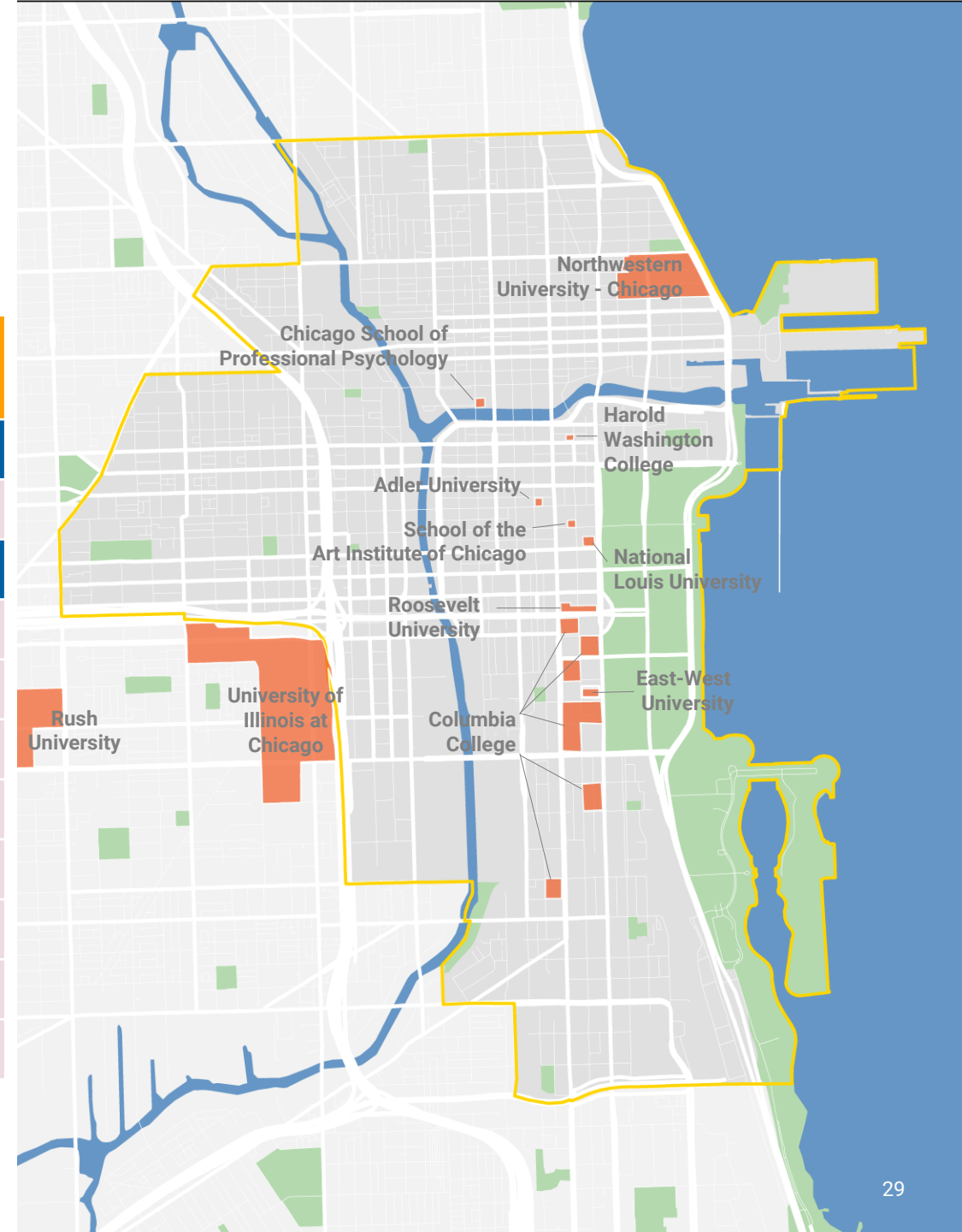
Center for Lifelong Learning

ENROLLMENT AT COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES DOWNTOWN*

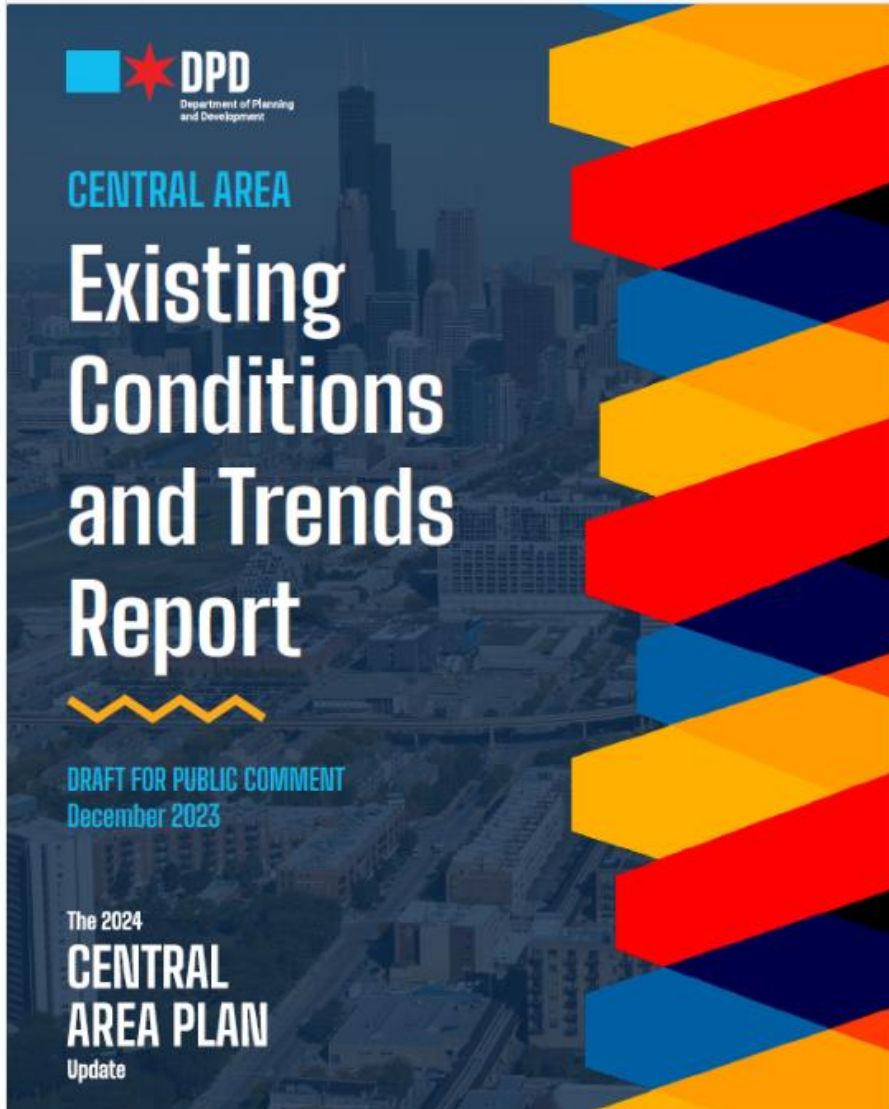
| Institution | Enrollment (Fall 2021) |
|--|------------------------|
| PUBLIC | |
| Harold Washington College (City Colleges) | 5,750 |
| PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT | |
| Adler University | 1,864 |
| School of the Art Institute of Chicago | 3,559 |
| The Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Chicago | 1,297 |
| Columbia College Chicago | 6,736 |
| East-West University | 487 |
| National Louis University | 7,315 |
| Roosevelt University | 4,127 |
| Total | 31,125 |

*Data includes only colleges and universities with main campuses Downtown

Source: Chicago Loop Alliance, Esri, National Center for Education Statistics, SB Friedman

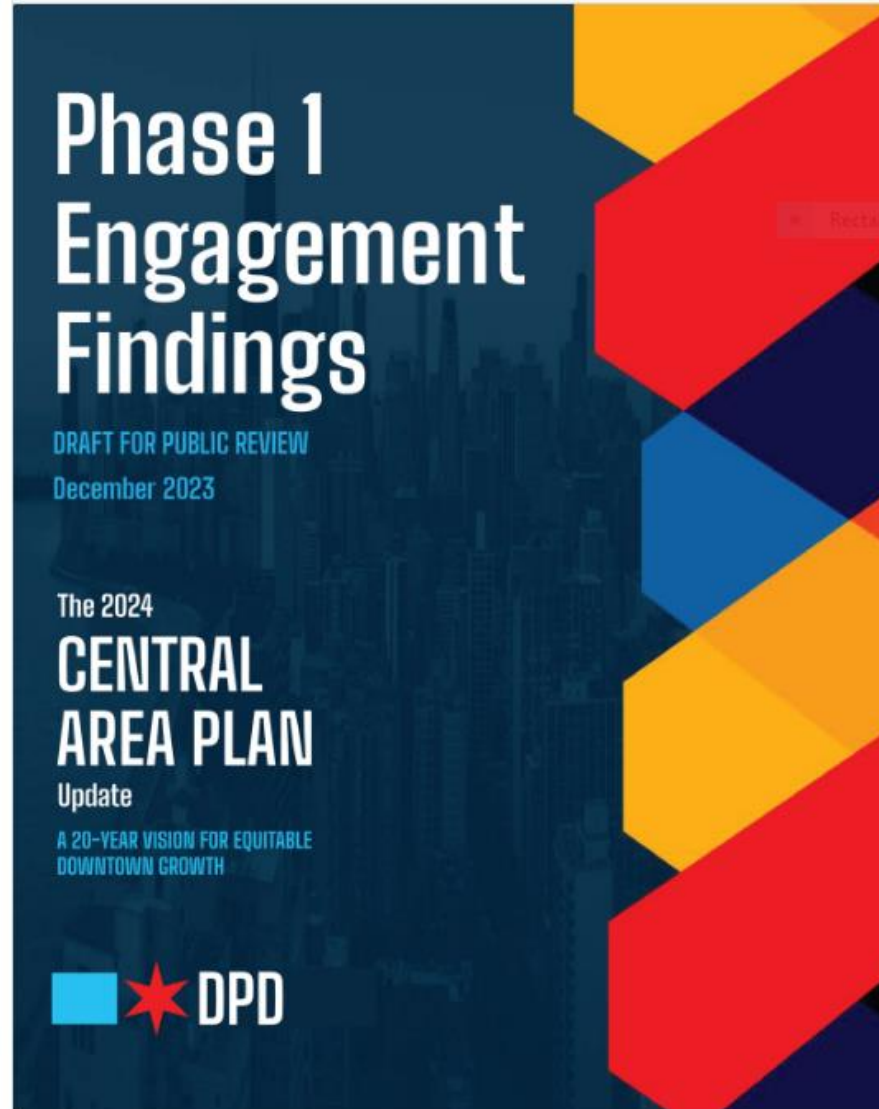


Existing Conditions and Trends Report



Read the full draft report, which was published for public comment in December 2023.

2023 Engagement Summary and Findings



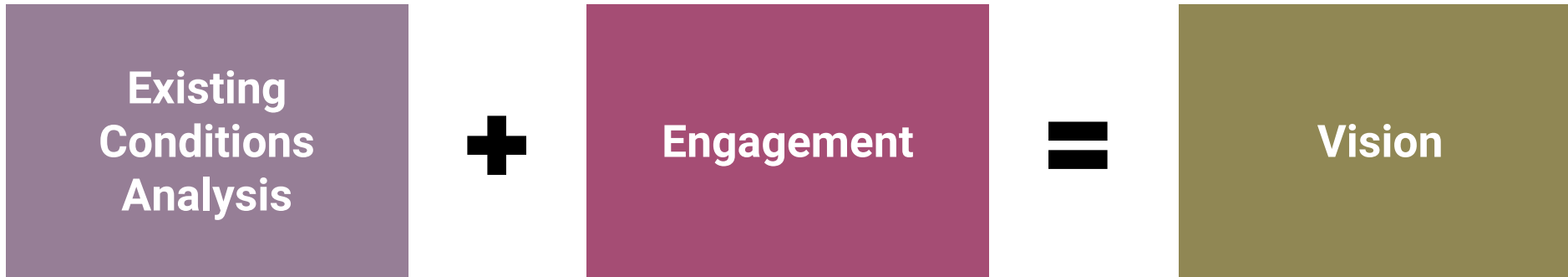
Review the draft report of the 2023 community engagement process and resulting findings.

**Two Reports On
[Chicago.gov/CAP2024](https://www.chicago.gov/CAP2024)**

PHASE TWO (2024)

- ★ Development scenarios for focus areas
- ★ Engage the community
- ★ Implementation strategies and recommendations
- ★ Draft updated Central Area Plan

Creating a Vision



EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

- ★ Section for each pillar (plus land use)
- ★ Working with DPD, other departments, and sister agencies
- ★ Context, Assets, Challenges and Ongoing Initiatives
- ★ Includes a lookback at completed projects identified by the 2003 and 2009 plans

Central Area Plan: a 20-year Vision for
Equitable Downtown Growth

DRAFT VISION STATEMENTS



CENTRAL AREA VISION STATEMENT

Chicago's Central Area is a **global destination** that has the fastest-growing residential population of any downtown in the country. It is the **economic, transit and cultural hub** of the region, sustained by Lake Michigan and the Chicago River. Chicago's downtown neighborhoods will strive to be a unified **model for resiliency, innovation and accessibility** that is welcoming to all.

Draft Vision Statements

Arts + Entertainment

Chicago's downtown is home to world-class cultural experiences and organizations that provide connectivity to other neighborhoods. Improving access to and support for arts and entertainment is critical for creatives to live, work and grow in the Central Area.

Lifelong Learning

The Central Area has a high concentration of students and numerous opportunities to learn and explore. Its future invites Chicagoans of all ages and backgrounds to meaningfully connect with downtown and a diverse range of learning options.

Land Use

Downtown is evolving, expanding its office core and residential options, which are complemented by restaurants, cafes, and open spaces. Its public services and amenities should support the needs of all residents, workers and visitors along vibrant, mixed-use corridors that cater to an active, live-work-play environment.

Draft Vision Statements

Housing + Neighborhoods

The Central Area is growing steadily and attracts new residents due to its walkability and proximity to transit, jobs and many cultural, recreational and dining experiences. More affordable housing options are needed to ensure all Chicagoans have equitable access to these opportunities.

Economic Development

The Central Area is the region's economic engine with more than half of all Chicago's private-sector jobs. Looking to the future, downtown should support retail and business innovation, connectivity and growth from an inclusive workforce.

Transportation + Infrastructure

The Central Area is shaped by the convergence of rail lines, highways, waterways and a network of streets, sidewalks and bicycle lanes. Providing reliable, safe and welcoming transportation options that link people to, from and within the downtown area is critical to its continued growth.

Draft Vision Statements



Environment, Climate + Energy

Chicago’s most important natural resources – Lake Michigan and the Chicago River – converge downtown and provide fresh water and recreation for the entire region. The Central Area’s growth should increase access to these natural resources and provide more public open spaces and ecological habitats that prioritize sustainability and stewardship.

Public Health + Safety

The Central Area is home to world-renowned health-care institutions and recreational opportunities. Looking ahead, a focus on safety, a sense of community and expanding access to healthy foods will be critical to downtown’s continued growth.

Next Steps



Next Steps – Phase 2

- ★ Create development scenarios for focus areas
- ★ Develop implementation strategies and recommendations
- ★ **Engage the community**
- ★ Draft updated Central Area Plan

Timeline

Phase 1 (Q4 2022-Q4 2023)

Phase 2 (Q4 2023-Q3 2024)





Thank You



 CHICAGO