



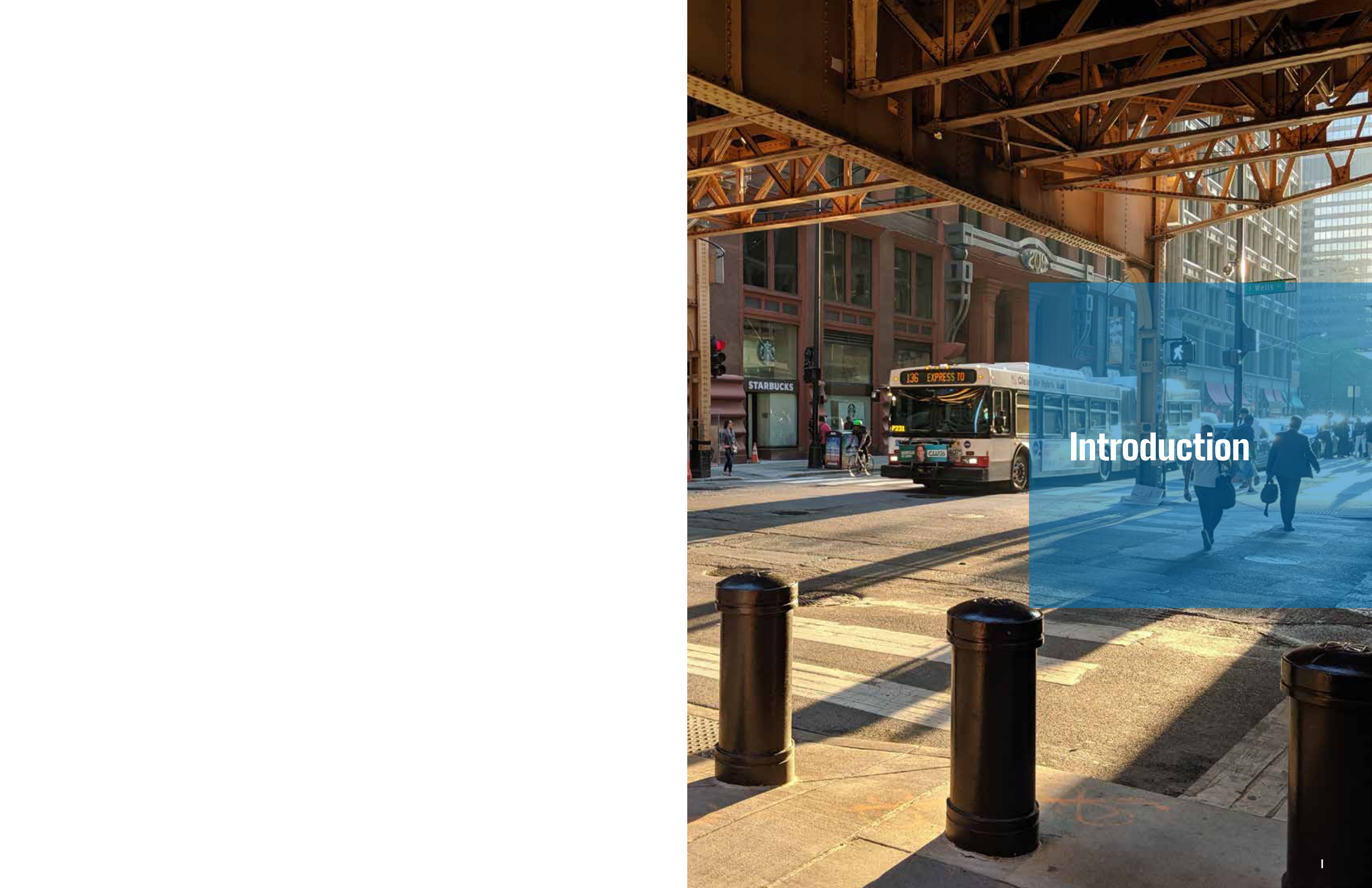
# Vision Zero Chicago Downtown Action Plan



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# Introduction

## Vision Zero Downtown

Photo: Chicago Loop Alliance

The *Vision Zero Chicago Downtown Action Plan* is a bold effort to improve traffic safety in Chicago's core.

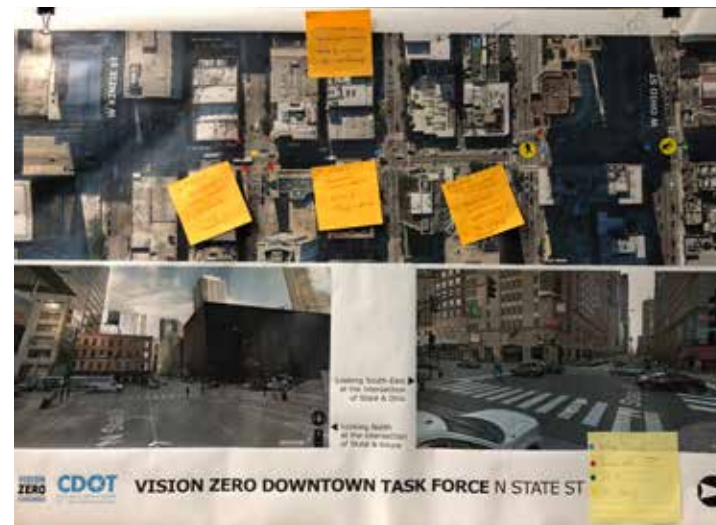
Every community in Chicago has a distinct character and faces different challenges; the strategies presented throughout this plan reflect the downtown's unique role as the economic and transportation hub for the region and the voices of those who live, work, and travel in the area.

## Vision Zero Downtown Task Force

Central Business District (CBD) stakeholders were invited to join the Downtown Task Force, chaired by 42nd Ward Alderman Brendan Reilly and Dr. Joseph P. Schwieterman of DePaul University's Chaddick Institute. No department or organization can single-handedly eliminate traffic fatalities, and throughout the development of the *Downtown Action Plan*, the Task Force provided invaluable leadership and input.

Representing City agencies, elected officials, community partners, residents, and advocates, the stakeholders contributed their unique perspectives on traffic safety concerns over five meetings in 2018 and 2019. Discussion throughout Task Force meetings was organized within three overarching Vision Zero strategy areas: **infrastructure, policy, and education.**

Task Force members will also be crucial to the success of plan implementation, providing policy expertise and support, and taking a lead role in the communications efforts that will be essential to successful implementation.



Workshop exercise performed by the Downtown Task Force.

## What is Vision Zero?

Vision Zero is a commitment and an approach to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries from traffic crashes.

## Vision Zero Principles

- 1. Even one life lost in a traffic crash is unacceptable.**  
All Chicagoans have the right to walk, bike, take public transit, and drive on streets that are safe for everyone, regardless of who they are or where they live. Vision Zero commits to this principle by devoting resources to improve traffic safety in eight High Crash Areas (HCAs) around the City — communities that experience significantly higher rates of crashes than Chicago's average. Site-specific plans are being developed for each HCA, including this plan for the CBD.
- 2. Traffic crashes are preventable.**  
Traffic crashes are not "accidents." Vision Zero brings together the policies, partnerships, and technologies to influence the conditions and behaviors that lead to serious crashes and prevent fatalities.
- 3. Traffic safety is a shared responsibility.**  
Chicago's Vision Zero initiative builds a partnership between City leadership and the public to prioritize human life and the safety of City streets. Vision Zero is committed to reducing traffic crashes that cause death and serious injury through an equitable distribution of resources and inclusive community engagement.

## 5 people

in Chicago are seriously injured in a traffic crash every day.

## Every 3 days

someone dies in a traffic crash in Chicago.

The **Vision Zero Chicago Action Plan** details the City's multidisciplinary actions to eliminate severe traffic crashes — those resulting in death or serious injury — by 2026. While the time frame is ambitious, continuous action is needed to achieve our traffic safety goals.

## Downtown Chicago in the Time of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the problem of traffic safety downtown even more critical.

At the time of this plan's release, COVID-19 has affected all aspects of daily life, including transportation. With physical distancing in mind, more people are using active transportation, such as biking and walking. In addition, with more people working from home, traffic volumes are down. While there have been fewer vehicles on the road, **traffic safety remains a serious concern**. There has been an uptick in speeding along with other dangerous driving behaviors. In 2020, total traffic fatalities rose by 45%, with 139 fatalities — 43 more deaths than in 2019. Looking just at fatal crashes involving people in motor vehicles, fatalities increased by 77% from 2019.

Throughout the pandemic, the City issued public health orders to limit travel and reduce transmission of the virus. As travel behaviors have changed, the City's streets have remained just as important. They are necessary to ensure essential workers can safely travel to and from work, and that freight can reach its destination. In 2020, streets also served as centers of activity in the City. From protests to dining to socially distanced walks, people have asserted ownership of the streets.

Through the height of the COVID-19 crisis, as the City recovers, and after the crisis is past us, one thing remains unchanged: **the need to make Chicago's streets safe for everyone.**

### Traffic data during Chicago's Stay-at-Home advisory

Comparing the period of time between 3/22/2020 - 12/26/2020 to respective period in 2019.

**43%**  
decrease in  
traffic volumes

**14%**  
increase in  
average  
traffic speed

## High Crash Areas

The downtown HCA, made up of the Near North Side and Loop Community Areas, has the highest overall number of severe crashes citywide.



**8 communities**

identified by the *Vision Zero Chicago Action Plan* as High Crash Areas.

**Only 25%**

of Chicago's total population resides in these eight HCAs.

**But 36%**

of all fatal crashes annually occur in these areas.

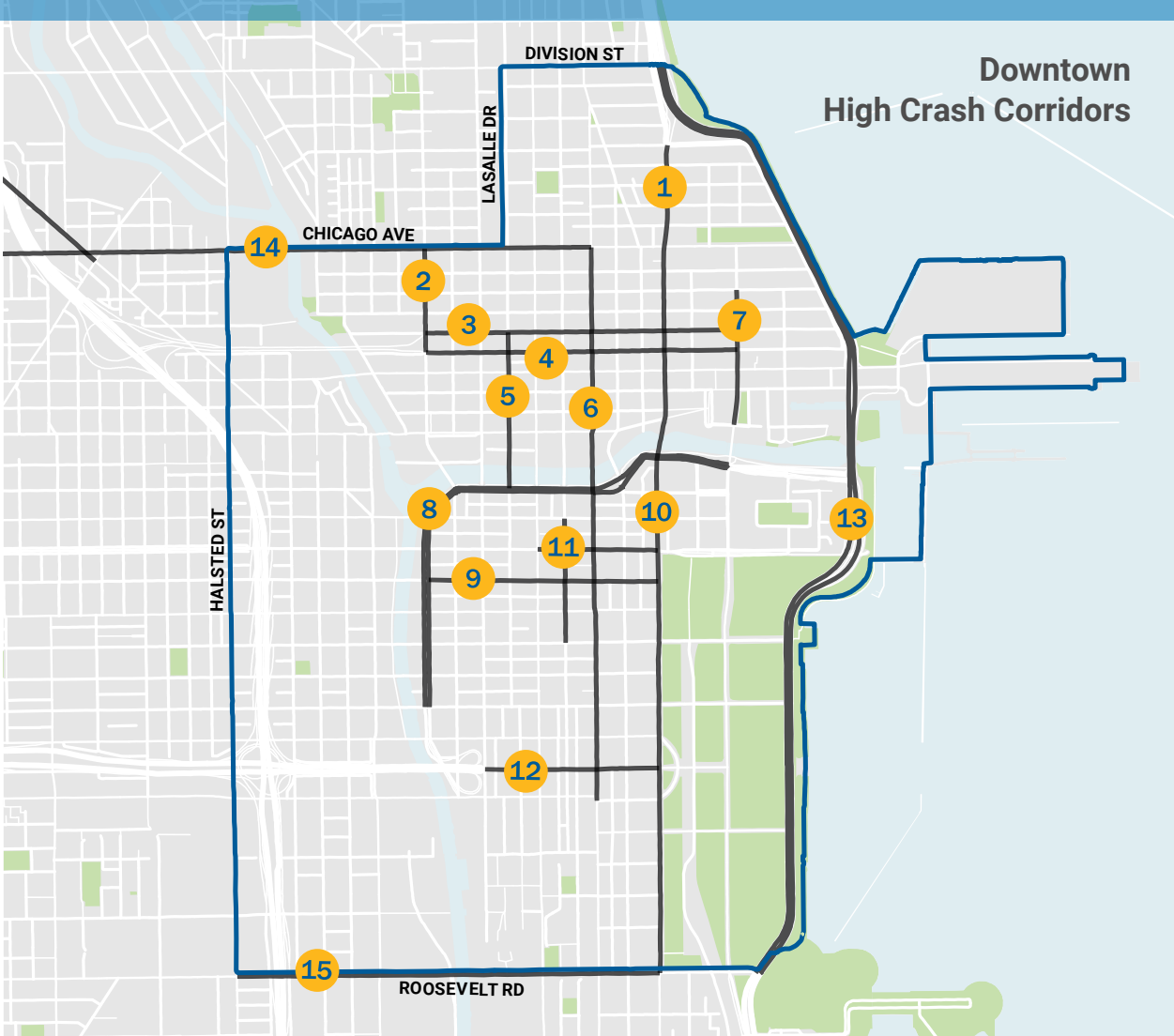
# The Central Business District & High Crash Corridors

Chicago's CBD is the economic and cultural hub of the City and the region, and includes neighborhoods with a growing number of residents. The area is encompassed by Roosevelt Road to the south, Halsted Street and LaSalle Drive to the west, Chicago Avenue and Division Street to the north, and Lake Michigan to the east (see facing map). The CBD is home to some of City's foremost cultural institutions, dense residential and office towers, and world class public spaces and amenities.

Downtown Chicago contains 15 of the City's 43 High Crash Corridors (HCCs), major streets identified as having disproportionately high rates of severe crashes.

## Downtown vs. Central Business District: what's the difference?

Chicago Community Area boundaries represent neighborhood boundaries, but the Loop and Near North Side Community Areas do not perfectly incorporate the transportation infrastructure and connections that must be considered to create a traffic safety plan for the area. As a result, the CBD was selected as the plan's study area. There is significant overlap between the CBD and Near North Side and Loop Community Areas. However, the CBD includes Union Station, Ogilvie Transportation Center and connections to area expressways, making it ideal for comprehensive planning. Throughout the plan, the terms "downtown" and "CBD" are used interchangeably, though the CBD defines the plan's boundaries.

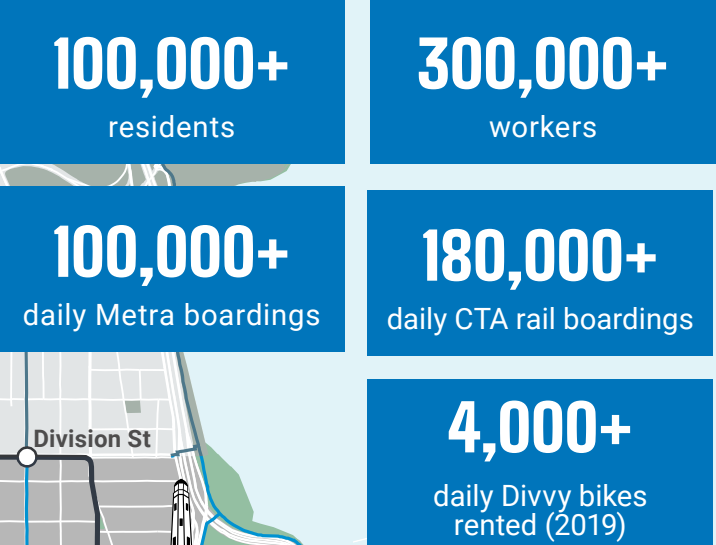


1	Michigan	Oak to Roosevelt	9	Washington	Wacker to Michigan
2	Orleans	Chicago to Ohio	10	Randolph	Clark to Michigan
3	Ontario	Orleans to Fairbanks	11	Dearborn	Lake to Monroe
4	Ohio	Orleans to Fairbanks	12	Congress	Wells to Michigan
5	LaSalle	Ontario to Wacker	13	Lake Shore	Division to Roosevelt
6	State	Chicago to Harrison	14	Chicago	Ogden to State
7	Fairbanks	Huron to North Water	15	Roosevelt	Halsted to Michigan
8	Wacker	Jackson to Columbus			

# Traffic Safety in the Central Business District

**The transportation hub of the City and beyond.**

Every day in Chicago's CBD, numerous residents, commuters, and visitors walk, hop in a taxi or rideshare, take advantage of the City's bike network on their own bike or on a Divvy, or drive to reach their destinations.



Severe traffic crashes happen more often downtown than anywhere else in the City.

The CBD is unique within Chicago and the region. As the center of the Chicago region's economy and transportation network, vast numbers of people enter and leave the CBD each day. This sheer volume of people, activity, and movement creates the conditions for the serious crashes that led to downtown's designation as a HCA.

- At nearly double the citywide crash rate, the CBD represents a disproportionate share of the City's severe crashes. Between 2012 and 2016, **the CBD experienced serious injury and fatal crashes at a rate of 742 crashes per 100,000 residents**, compared to the citywide rate of 398 of these crashes per 100,000 residents.
- Drivers failing to yield is the most common cause of crashes in the CBD. For these crashes, **67% of victims are walking or biking**, and over three-quarters of them occur at intersections.
- Speeding is another major cause of crashes in the CBD. This behavior puts everyone at risk, particularly people walking and biking who are the **victims in 25% of crashes caused by speeding**. Even when not the main cause of a crash, high speeds increase the likelihood of a crash happening and the severity of injuries.

**3 people**

are seriously injured or killed every week in traffic crashes downtown.

**55%**

of all traffic fatalities in the CBD are people walking or biking.

*All analyses use 2012-2016 crash data as released by the Illinois Department of Transportation. Post-2016 data released by the Illinois Department of Transportation & the City support the document's findings.*



## Infrastructure Recommendations

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

## Implement Rapid Delivery Projects throughout the CBD

### The Problem

Achieving Vision Zero downtown requires infrastructure changes to the CBD's roadways. However, traditional infrastructure improvements can be expensive, can take a long time, and cannot be easily adjusted based on post-installation project evaluation.

### Recommendations

#### *Concentrate Rapid Delivery Projects on the State Street HCC –*

Improvements are recommended along the State Street HCC, relying on tools that are detailed in the Vision Zero Rapid Delivery Toolkit on the following pages. These low-cost changes to the street use interim materials such as pavement markings and flexible posts. The projects are designed to produce high-impact results in a short time period.

#### *Implement Rapid Delivery Projects at select intersections throughout the CBD –*

Intersections have been selected for their locations on HCCs, based on high pedestrian volumes, and through crash analyses that identified intersections with high crash rates.

### Implementation

Rapid Delivery Projects can quickly make a significant impact on safety at a relatively low cost. The total cost of the corridor-wide infrastructure improvements across the State Street HCC and other identified high crash intersections is approximately \$400,000. This figure includes infrastructure improvements at up to 10 intersections, including signal improvements, with costs from \$17K - \$75K. For comparison, a single curb bumpout in concrete costs an average of \$40K and a single pedestrian refuge island in concrete costs between \$50K-\$75K.

Using the Rapid Delivery Toolkit allows for the improvement of more intersections with the same amount of funding and more quickly than with permanent treatments – even as making permanent improvements remains an eventual goal.

### CORRIDOR-WIDE RECOMMENDATION

## State Street HCC – Chicago Avenue to Kinzie Street

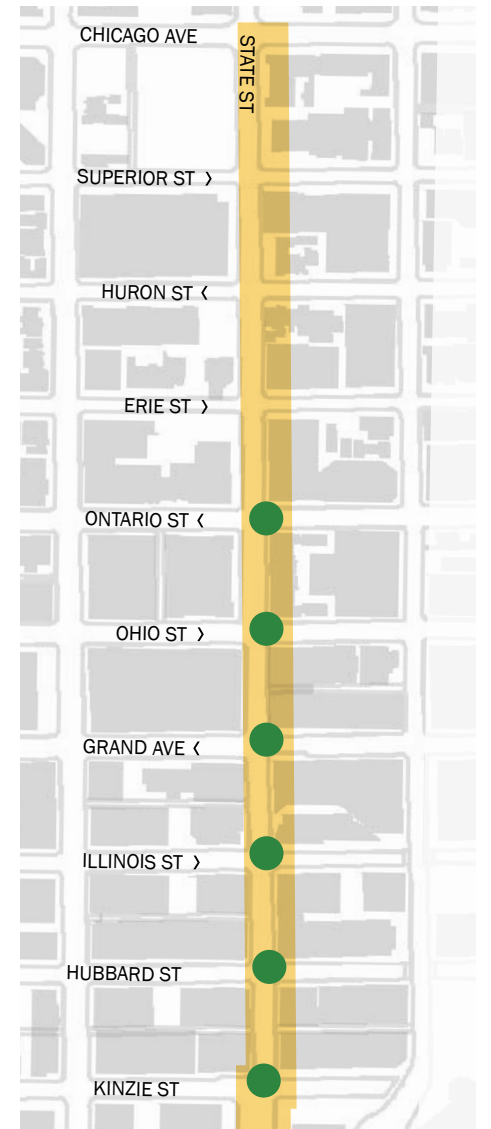
The State Street HCC (from Chicago Avenue to Kinzie Street) was selected as a priority recommendation to showcase how Rapid Delivery Projects can be implemented to address safety concerns in a short time frame.

### Recommended Improvements

1. Leading pedestrian intervals and lagging left turns at all five State Street HCC intersections where they are currently lacking.
2. Pedestrian countdown timers at all four State Street HCC intersections where they are currently lacking.
3. Remove rush hour parking restrictions to allow for Vision Zero Rapid Delivery Projects.

### Coordination with the CTA

CDOT collaborated with the CTA on corridor-wide recommendations to ensure the treatments would not adversely impact bus operations. Design concepts were shared with the CTA and adjusted to accommodate bus routes. In addition, CDOT staff observed that the rush hour parking restrictions are not currently respected on State Street, and the CTA confirmed that removing the restrictions would not change bus operations.



Intersections with installed safety improvements.

### An overview of the infrastructure project development process:

1. **Identify a location** that needs safety improvements through analyzing data and listening to constituents.
2. **Assess local conditions** by observing current behaviors.
3. **Develop a preferred concept** that addresses safety concerns at that location.
4. **Estimate the costs and find funding.** Depending on the investment required, funding can be sought from local, County, State, or Federal sources.
5. **Develop detailed designs and construction documents.**
6. **Install the designs.**

# Rapid Delivery Toolkit

Downtown Rapid Delivery Projects use design elements recommended in the *Vision Zero Chicago High Crash Corridors Framework Plan* as well as treatments used elsewhere around the country. The following are some design elements CDOT is employing to improve traffic safety in the CBD:

## 1. Rapid delivery bumpouts

Rapid delivery bumpouts use pavement markings and flexible posts to designate space for pedestrians at intersections. They reduce crossing distances, slow turning speeds, increase pedestrian visibility, and prevent illegal parking near crosswalks. Moreover, the rapid delivery bumpout designs are less expensive and quicker to install than concrete bumpouts.



## 2. Pedestrian refuge space

Paint and post pedestrian refuge spaces provide people walking a designated place in the middle of the street to wait for a break in traffic, shorten the distance necessary for a person to cross to a safe place, and improve visibility between people walking and driving.



## 3. Hardened centerlines & rubber median bumps

Left turns can be particularly dangerous because drivers typically take them at a faster speed than other maneuvers and the car frame may block the driver’s view of pedestrians in the crosswalk. Hardened centerline and rubber median bump treatments “calm” left turns by guiding drivers to take a safer turning path, making pedestrians more visible, and encouraging turns at slower speeds.



## 4. Crosswalk striping changes

Crosswalk striping changes add striping to existing crosswalk markings to better match the paths that people naturally use while walking. Wider striping better accommodates the crowds of people walking through downtown. As a result, people driving notice the crosswalk and expect pedestrians along these paths and can yield appropriately. In addition, people walking can reach destinations more directly and with less frustration.

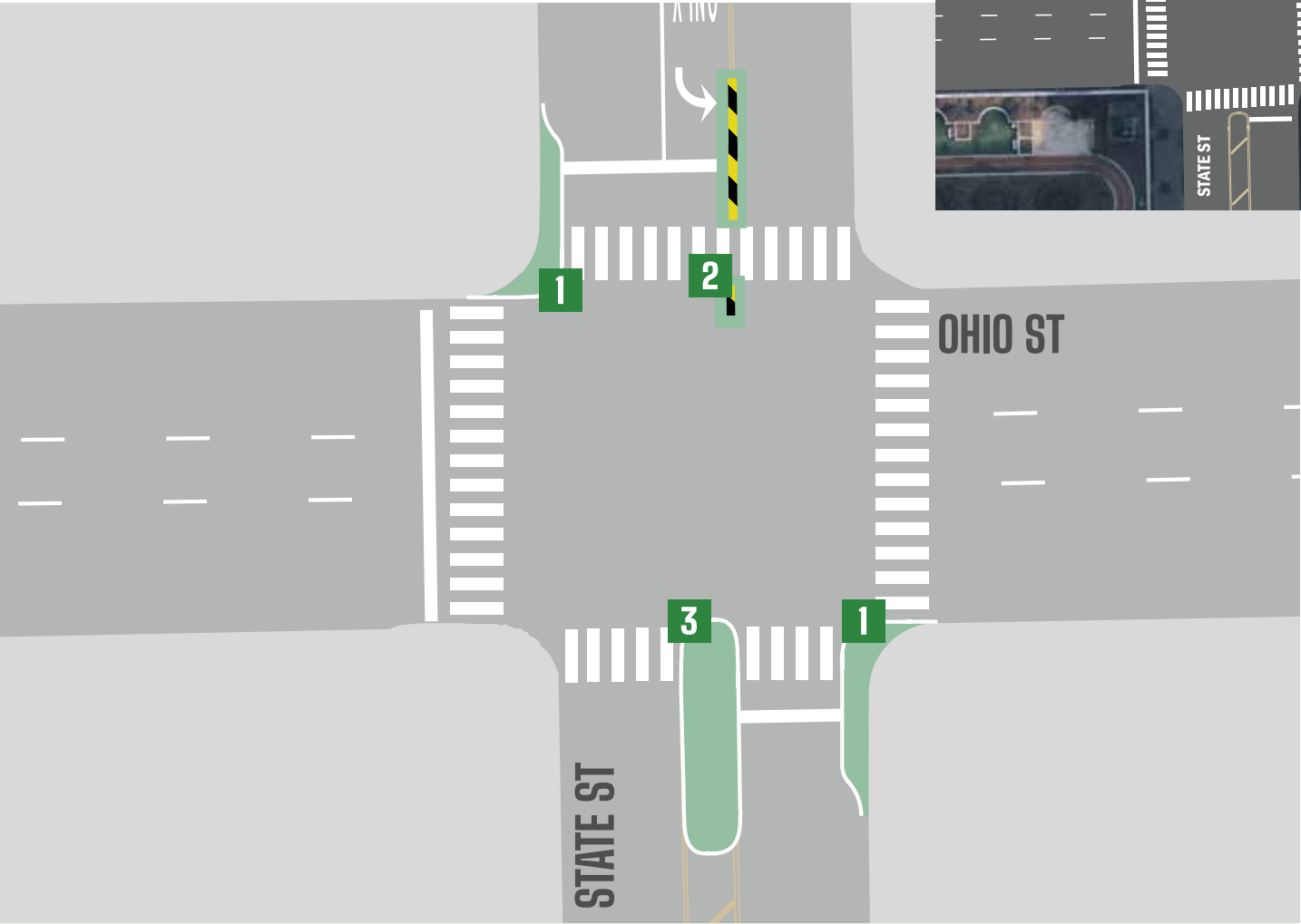
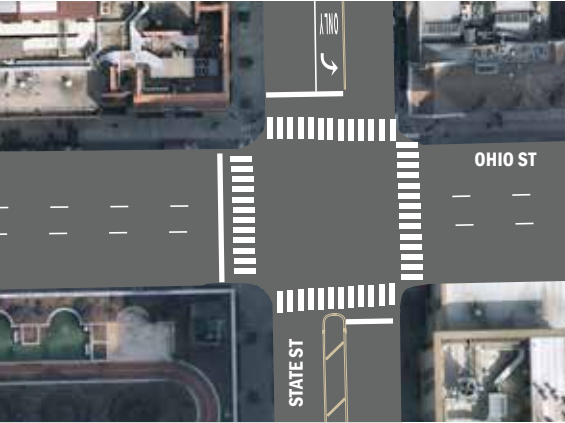


# State Street & Ohio Street

This intersection sits at the junction of two HCCs. Many State Street intersections have a similar configuration— two-way traffic on State Street intersecting with a one-way corridor. This intersection has been selected as a template for safety improvements at other similar intersections.

INSTALLED IMPROVEMENT

PREVIOUS LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Rapid delivery bumpouts
2. Hardened centerline
3. Pedestrian refuge space

Benefits:

- Shorter crossing distances
- Slower turning speeds
- Higher pedestrian visibility

Cost estimate:

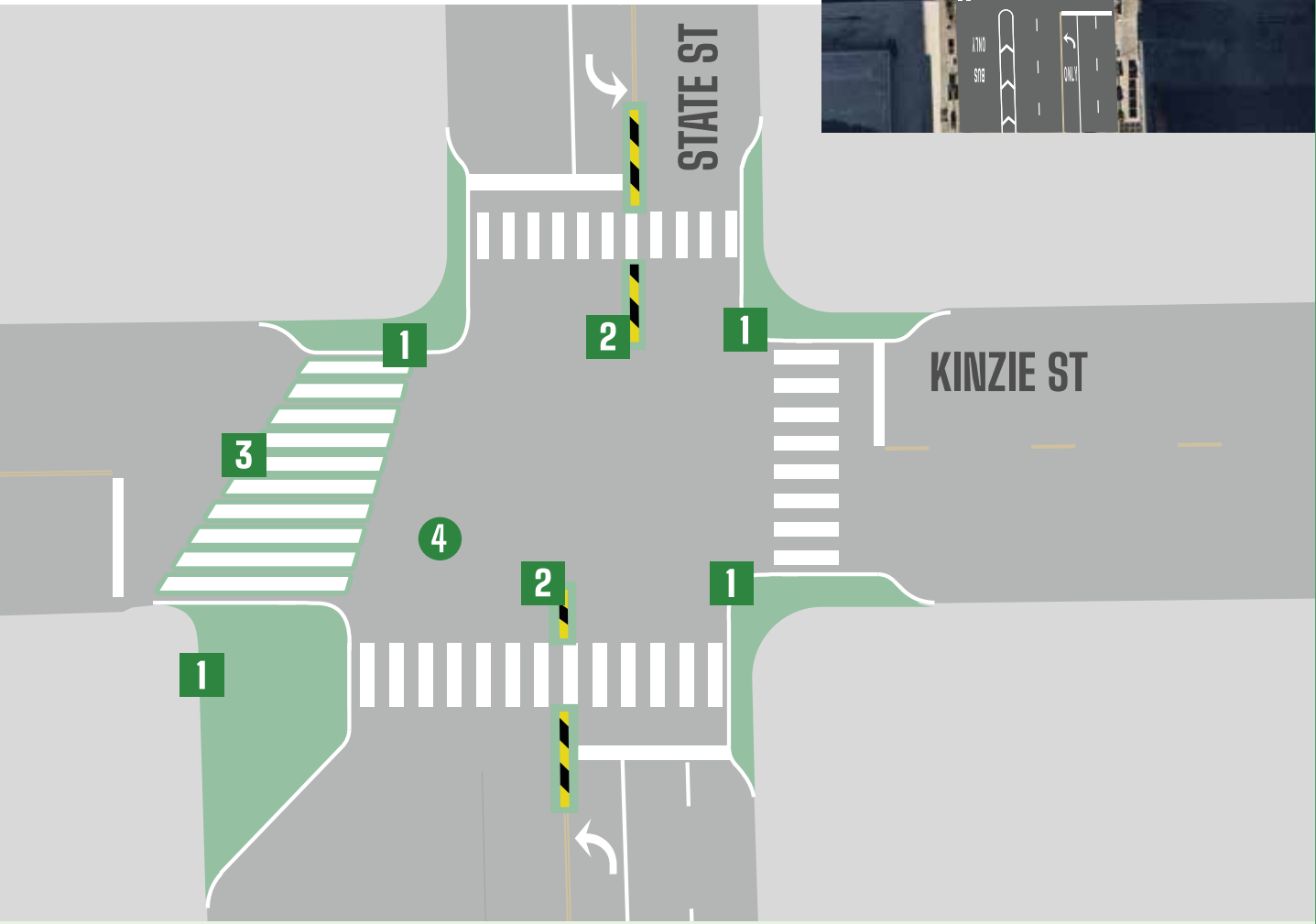
**\$25,000**

# State Street & Kinzie Street

This is an atypical intersection on the State Street HCC. The crossing distance on the south leg of the intersection is significantly wider than most intersections in the CBD.

INSTALLED IMPROVEMENT

PREVIOUS LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Rapid delivery bumpouts
2. Hardened centerlines
3. Crosswalk striping changes (angled to match existing paths)
4. Pedestrian countdown timers & leading pedestrian interval

Benefits:

- Shorter crossing distances
- Slower turning speeds
- Higher pedestrian visibility
- Crosswalk alignment with natural pedestrian paths

Cost estimate:

**\$75,000**

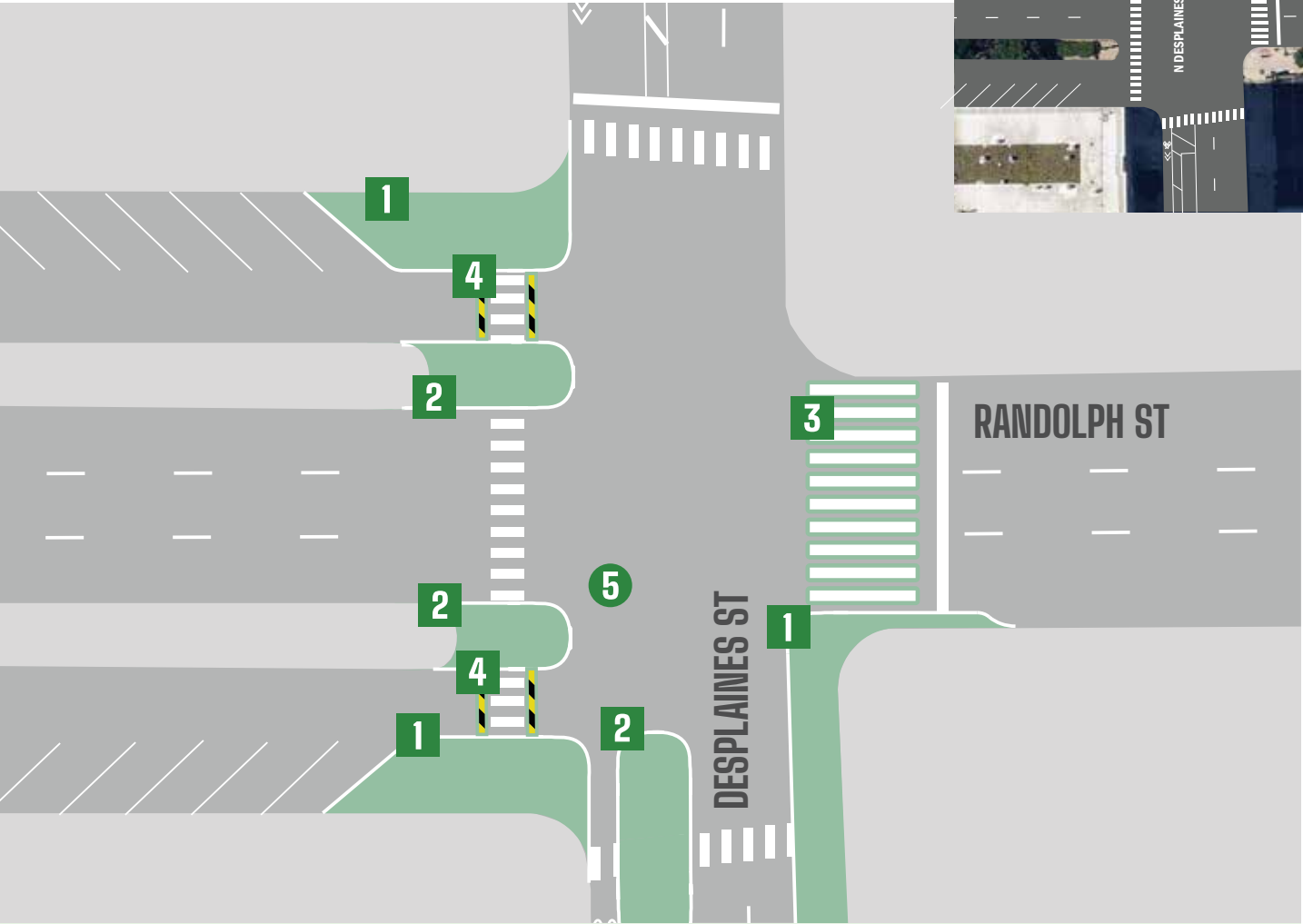
INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATION

# Des Plaines Street & Randolph Street

This intersection serves as a gateway to the booming West Loop neighborhood and sees heavy vehicle traffic during peak hours due to its proximity to the expressway. There are multiple opportunities to improve safety for people walking and better organize the use of service drives.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT

EXISTING LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Rapid delivery bumpouts
2. Pedestrian refuge space
3. Wider crosswalk striping
4. Rubber speed bump
5. Pedestrian countdown timer & leading pedestrian interval

Benefits:

- Shorter crossing distances
- Higher pedestrian visibility
- Discourages the use of service drives by through traffic

Cost estimate:

**\$65,000**

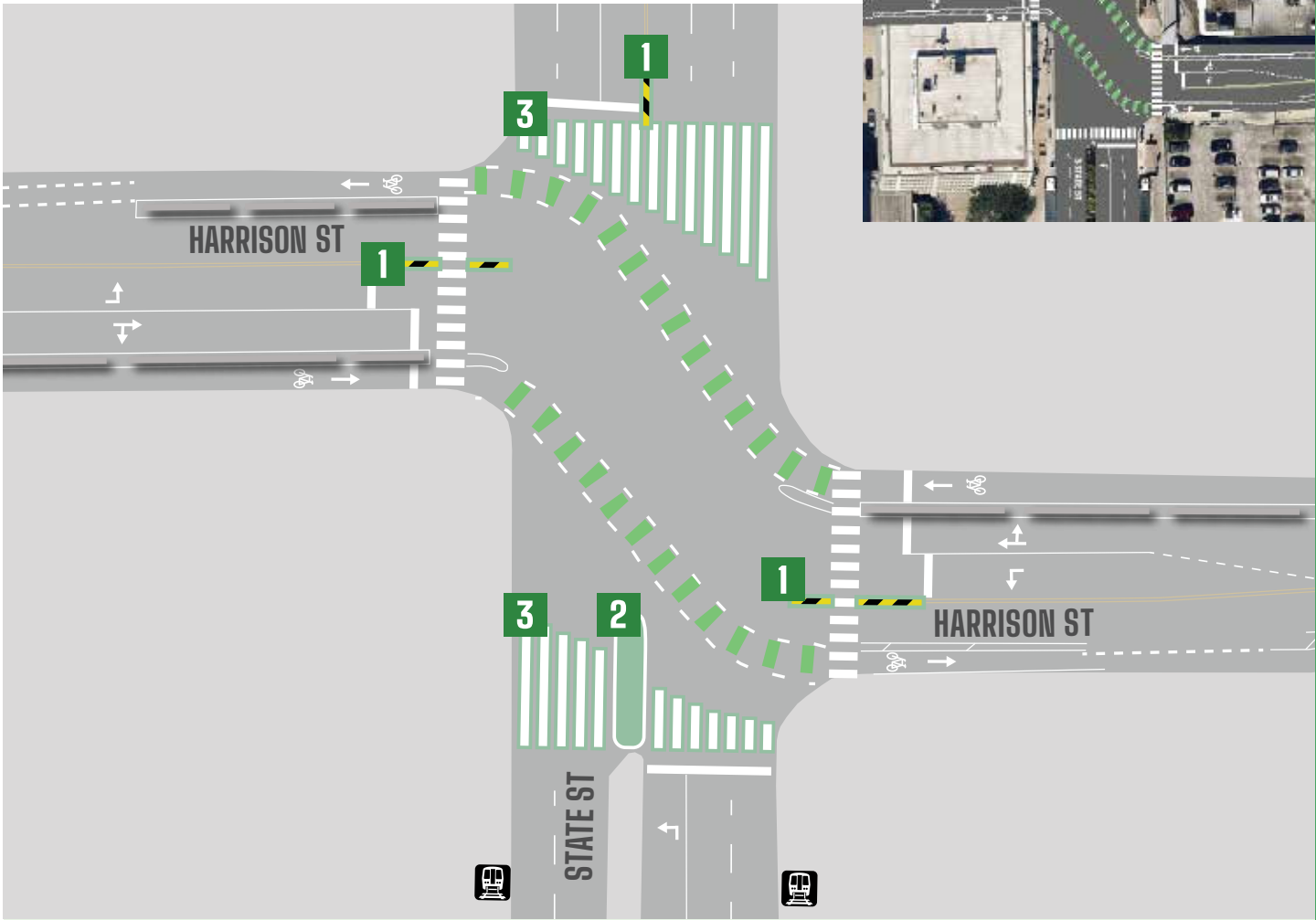
INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATION

# State Street & Harrison Street

This intersection has an offset configuration and is located on the State Street HCC. The crosswalks at the intersection can be better aligned to the current pedestrian desire lines, resulting in improved pedestrian visibility.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT

EXISTING LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Hardened centerlines
2. Pedestrian refuge space
3. Crosswalk striping changes (angled to match existing paths)

Benefits:

- Higher pedestrian visibility
- Slower turning speeds
- Crosswalk alignment with natural pedestrian paths

Cost estimate:

**\$17,000**

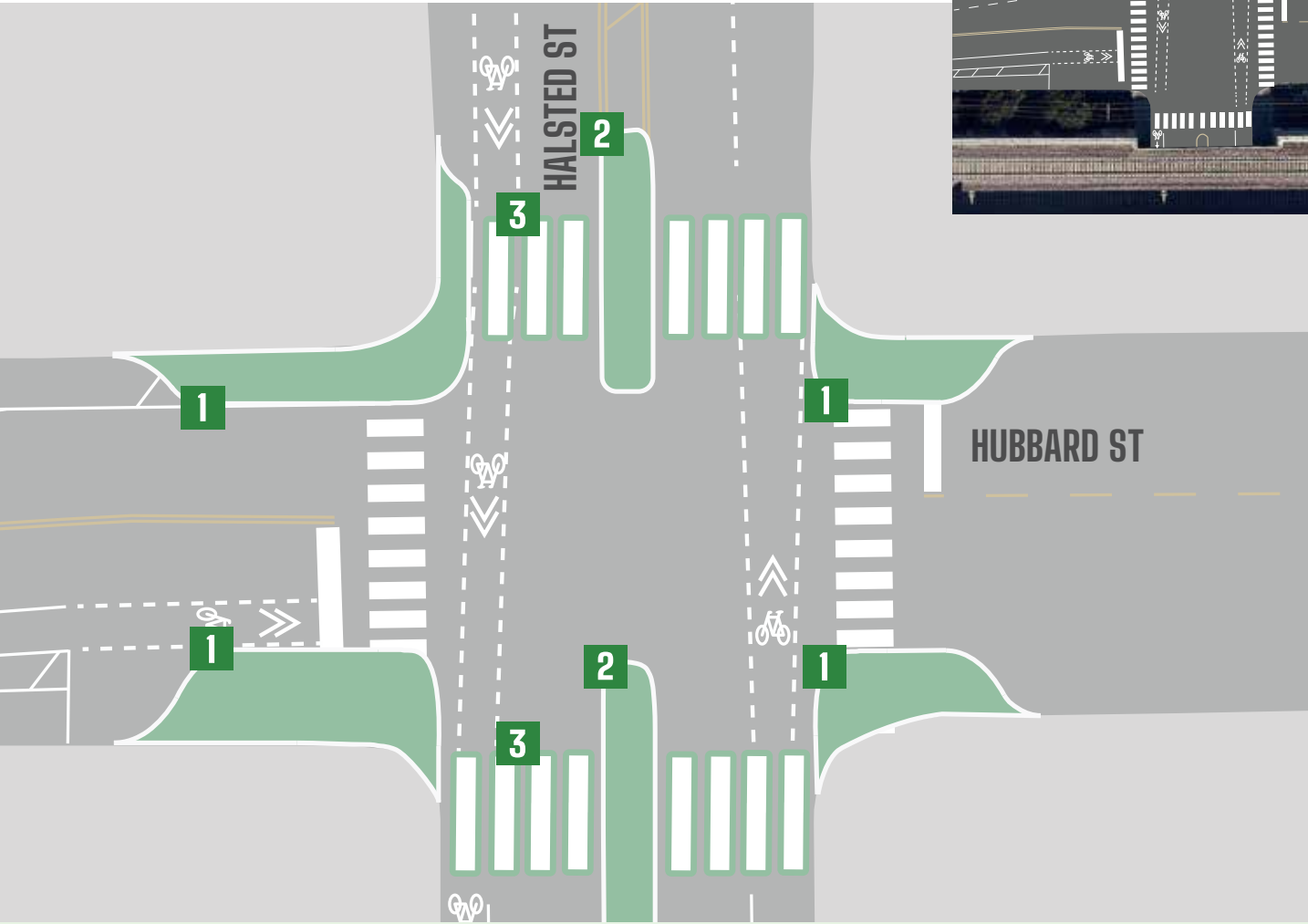
INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATION

# Halsted Street & Hubbard Street

This intersection was identified as a high crash intersection for people walking, biking, and driving based on crash history. The Halsted Street crosstown bike route and Hubbard Street neighborhood bike routes cross at this two-way stop intersection.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT

EXISTING LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Rapid delivery bumpouts
2. Pedestrian refuge space
3. Wider crosswalk striping

Benefits:

- Shorter crossing distances
- Higher pedestrian visibility
- Slower turning speeds

Cost estimate:

**\$27,000**

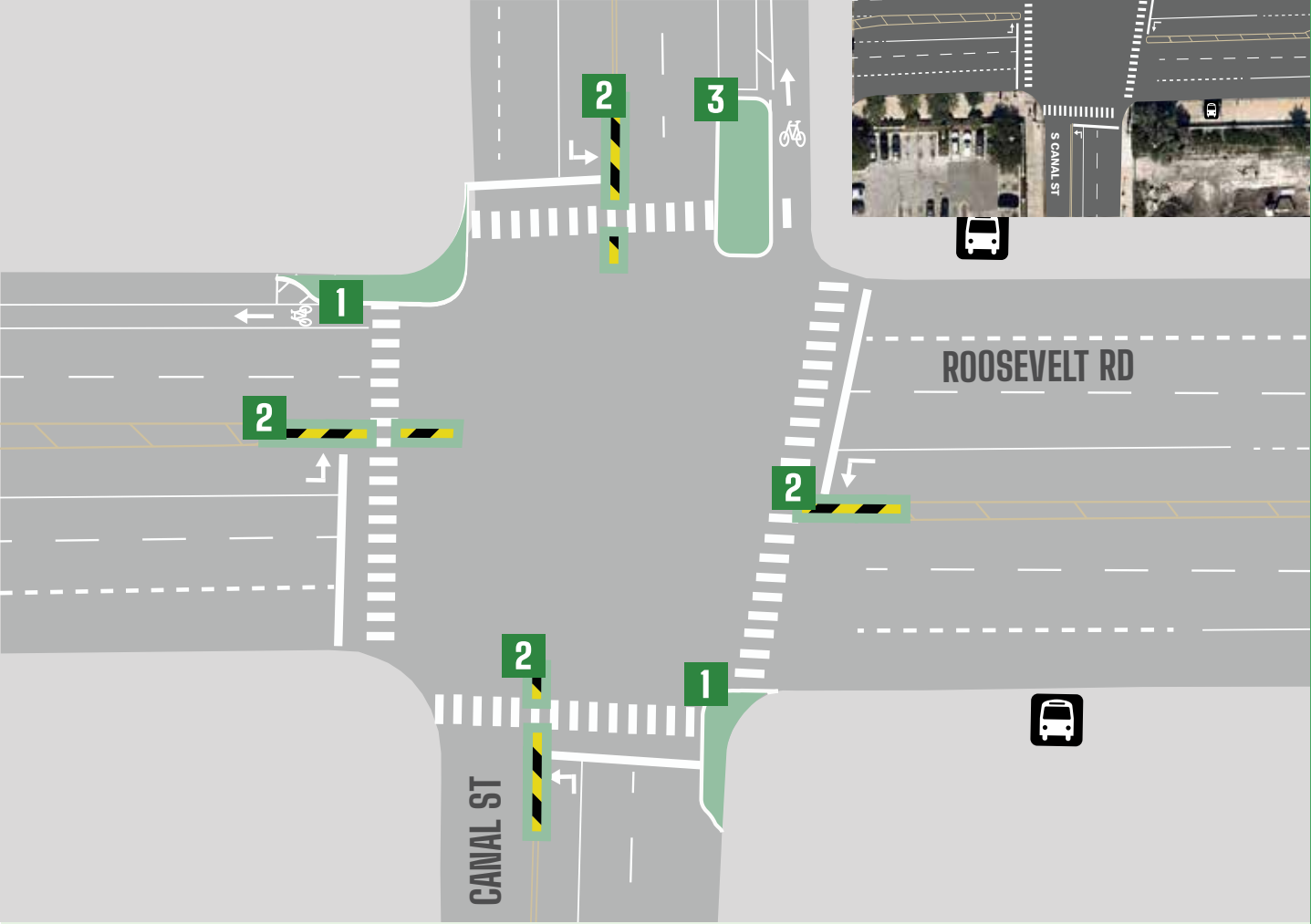
INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATION

# Canal Street & Roosevelt Road

This intersection is on the Roosevelt Road HCC (Halsted Street to Michigan Avenue) and was identified as a high crash intersection for people walking and biking based on its crash history.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT

EXISTING LAYOUT



Recommended improvements:

1. Rapid delivery bumpouts
2. Hardened centerline
3. Pedestrian refuge space

Benefits:

- Slower turning speeds
- Higher pedestrian visibility

Cost estimate:

**\$41,000**

# Supporting Infrastructure Recommendations

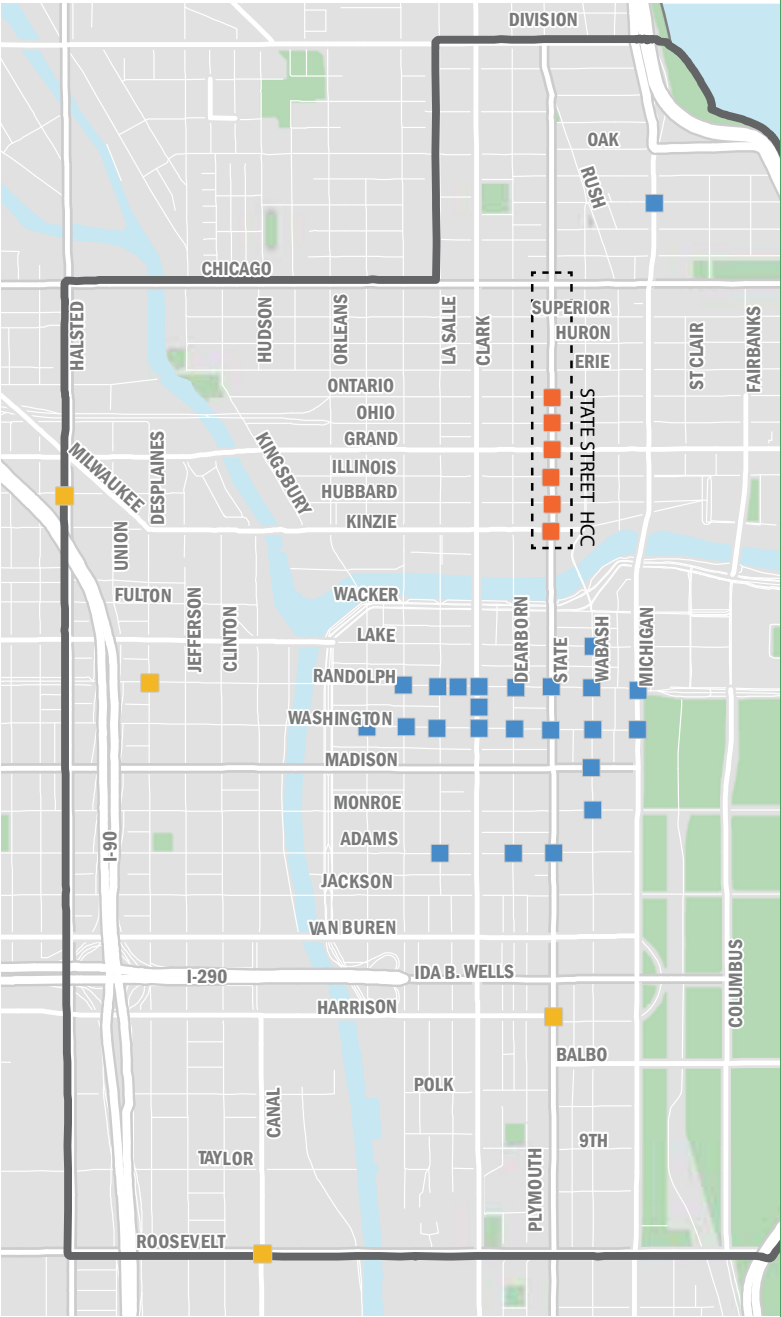
- **Implement additional Rapid Delivery Projects**  
Using crash analyses, the Rapid Delivery Toolkit, and insights from the before/after study of priority projects, identify locations where Rapid Delivery Projects will be successful in improving safety.
- **Remove rush hour parking restrictions**  
Rush hour parking restrictions limit street parking during morning or afternoon commuting hours and were historically designed to create additional travel lanes for vehicles. The restrictions are not strictly enforced, often resulting in dangerous behaviors as drivers weave in and out of lanes, and their presence makes the installation of high-impact safety improvements difficult.  
  
Corridors with existing rush hour parking restrictions should be evaluated for potential removal of the restrictions, beginning with HCCs. The corridor evaluation should consider the best possible use of curbside lanes, including bumpouts and bus improvements.
- **Pursue targeted capital & street transformation projects on CBD High Crash Corridors**  
As defined by the *HCC Framework Plan*, continue the process of securing funding for and developing improvements along the CBD’s HCCs.
- **Expand the CBD bike network**  
Continue expansion of the protected bike lane network using the *Streets for Cycling Plan* as a guide. The downtown expansion network will focus on ensuring that all Chicagoans and visitors can bike comfortably to work, to shop, to visit cultural institutions, and to connect with public transit. Expanding the protected bike lane network will help grow the existing enthusiasm for biking in the CBD and improve the safety and convenience of all people moving throughout the neighborhood.

# Additional Rapid Delivery Projects

**Implementation & Maintenance**  
As funding is secured, intersection proposals will move to engineering design, with installation following. Once installed, Rapid Delivery Projects will require routine maintenance like the replacement of flexible posts that can be reported to aldermanic ward offices or CHI 311.

- Evaluation**  
In addition to tracking impacts at the intersections on crash occurrence and severity, before and after observations and traffic counts will be conducted at select locations to measure:
- Vehicle speeds
  - Vehicle yielding behaviors
  - Vehicle paths on left turns
  - Pedestrians crossing outside of the crosswalk
  - Pedestrians remaining in an intersection after the signal changes

- STATE STREET HCC PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS (INSTALLED 2019)
- 2020 PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS (INSTALLED 2020)
- OTHER PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS (RECOMMENDED BY TASK FORCE)



# Plan Progress

Following Task Force guidance, CDOT installed pedestrian safety improvements along the State Street corridor in fall 2019. These improvements included rapid delivery bumpouts and left-turn traffic calming (such as hardened centerlines & rubber median bumps) at six intersections in River North as recommended in the plan. CDOT collected data on traffic safety and vehicle behavior before installing the project and will collect post-installation data as the pedestrian volumes become comparable to the fall of 2019.

HARDENED CENTERLINES

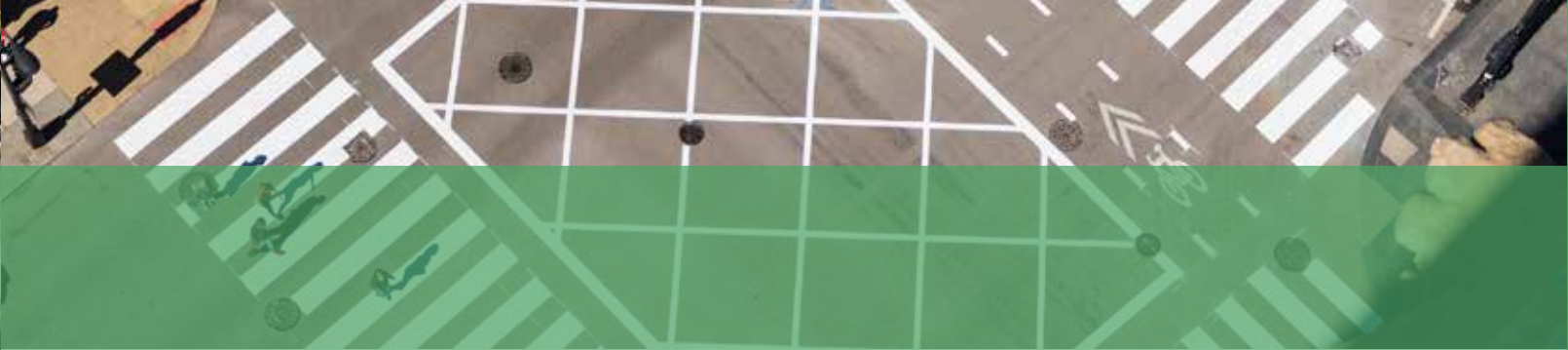


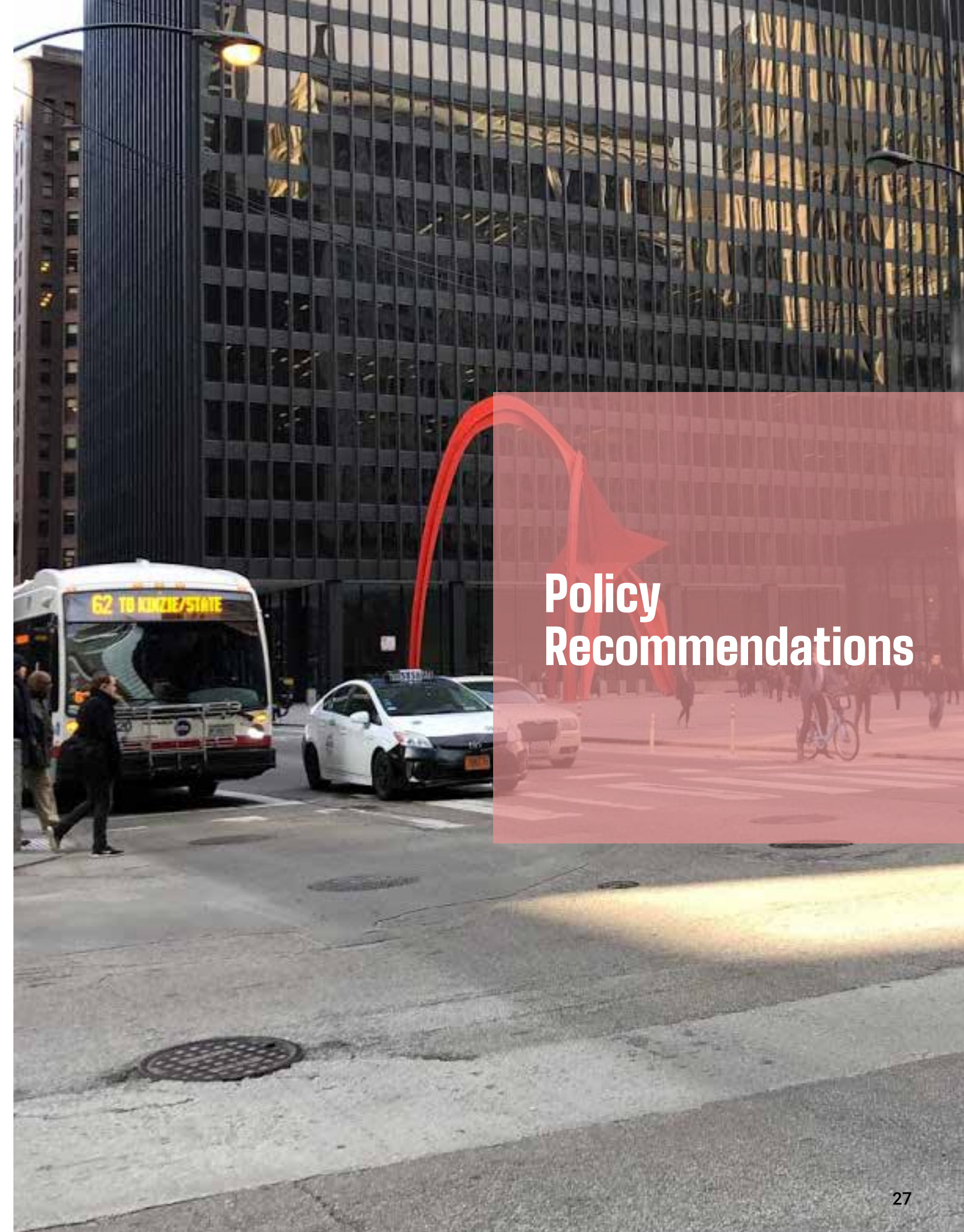
RAPID DELIVERY BUMPOUTS



## Rapid Delivery Projects in the Time of COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, CDOT expedited the installation of rapid delivery bumpouts in downtown Chicago where high pedestrian volumes are anticipated. In the fall of 2020, the City installed rapid delivery bumpouts at over 20 downtown intersections. The bumpouts expand pedestrian space on the streets and allow people to safely distance themselves from others when waiting to cross at intersections.





## Policy Recommendations

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

## Enact a consistent speed limit of 20 mph in the CBD

### The Problem

The CBD is unique with very high concentrations of people walking, biking, and riding transit. Many intersections in the CBD during rush hours have more people walking than driving, and even during less busy times, pedestrian volumes remain high. While the perception is that the CBD is too congested to allow for high speeds, studies have found that people in the area are driving fast throughout the day.

Despite the area's unique qualities, the default speed limit on the majority of CBD streets is the same as the citywide default — 30 mph.

Lowering vehicle speeds will have the most immediate and substantial impact on traffic safety throughout downtown.

### Recommendations

Enact a 20 mph speed limit throughout the CBD. A 20 mph speed limit is designed to change the behavior of people driving so they travel at a consistent, safe speed throughout downtown rather than speeding to the next red light.

#### *Safer speeds mean —*

- More crashes can be avoided before they happen. The faster people drive, the less they can see their surroundings and the longer it takes a vehicle to stop.
- When crashes do happen, they will have less severe consequences.

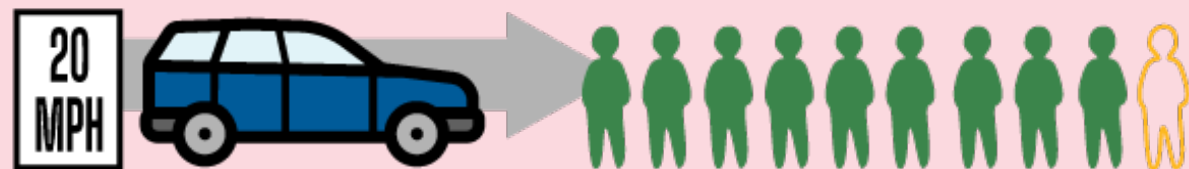
### Implementation

To enact the 20 mph speed limit, the City Council must pass an ordinance. Implementation of the policy requires the installation of signs throughout the CBD at a cost of approximately \$75,000. A marketing campaign would be designed to ensure widespread knowledge and understanding of the new speed limit.

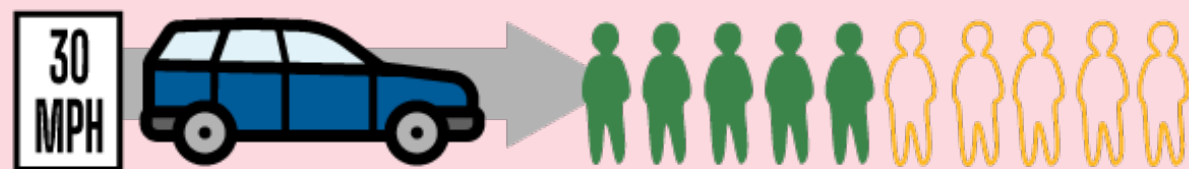


### Speed matters:

If hit by a vehicle traveling at 20 mph, 9 out of 10 pedestrians survive.



If hit by a vehicle traveling at 30 mph, only 5 out of 10 pedestrians survive.



### Lower speed limits are already working in Chicago and around the country.

Chicago has enacted 20 mph speed zones around schools and parks and on neighborhood commercial corridors. On Milwaukee Avenue between Western Avenue and Division Street, lowering the speed limit led to 43% fewer drivers traveling above 20 mph.

Cities such as Portland, Seattle, Minneapolis, Memphis, Boston, and New York have reduced speed limits either in specific areas or citywide and have seen positive results. After lowering speed limits in its city center, Seattle saw a 20% decrease in severe crashes.



PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Implement leading pedestrian intervals and lagging left turns throughout the CBD

## The Problem

Failure to yield is reported as the number one cause of crashes in the CBD. While around 30% of serious CBD crashes are caused by a failure to yield, nearly 50% of serious crashes with a person walking as the victim have failure to yield as a cause.

## Recommendations

Assess all CBD intersections based on the criteria for leading pedestrian intervals and lagging left turns set forth in the *Chicago Pedestrian Plan* and implement these signal changes to reduce conflicts between people walking and drivers turning at intersections. Some observations in Chicago have also found that providing the pedestrian head start and/or lagging left turn phase results in less “racing to the red light” driving behavior.

## Implementation

Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, at high crash intersections, and on wide streets with long crossings.



PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Install pedestrian countdown timers at signalized intersections throughout the CBD

## The Problem

There are many signalized intersections within the CBD that do not currently have pedestrian countdown timers. Without a countdown, pedestrians may enter the intersection without enough information to know when the light will change.

## Recommendations

Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, at high crash intersections, and on wide streets with long crossings.

## Implementation

Depending on the existing equipment, signals can typically be upgraded to include countdown timers for \$20K - \$50K per intersection.



## What is a leading pedestrian interval?

A leading pedestrian interval gives pedestrians a head start into an intersection before drivers. The WALK signal is turned on approximately three seconds before vehicles moving the same direction are given a green signal, making people walking more visible to any drivers making a turn.

## What is a lagging left turn?

A lagging left turn is a signal timing sequence in which the left-turn arrow is given after vehicles traveling straight have passed through the intersection. By allowing pedestrians to cross the intersection at the beginning of a signal cycle, conflicts between pedestrians and drivers turning left are reduced while improving vehicle operations.

## What is a pedestrian countdown timer?

Pedestrian countdown timers provide information on the amount of time in seconds remaining to cross the street at signalized intersections. Countdown timers are now standard as part of the installation of new signals and many existing signals can be upgraded to add countdowns.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

## Implement no turn on red at all CBD intersections

### The Problem

Turns on red adversely impact pedestrian comfort and safety. As a person driving looks to the left for oncoming traffic, they may fail to see a pedestrian in the crosswalk to the right. And while they wait for a gap in traffic, drivers also tend to advance and block the crosswalk. Turn-on-red restrictions exist currently in the CBD but are inconsistent, causing confusion for people driving and walking.

### Best Practices

Designing an intersection to accommodate or favor turns on red is not a preferred practice. Researchers have found that turns on red should be prohibited in areas with high pedestrian volumes to improve safety. Consistency across the CBD is also likely to increase compliance with the restriction.

### Recommendations

Following the recommendations of the *Chicago Pedestrian Plan* and *Complete Streets Design Guidelines*, turns on red should be eliminated CBD-wide.

### Implementation

Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, at high crash intersections, and at intersections with high CTA bus ridership. Each intersection must be signed individually for restrictions to take effect. The cost will be approximately \$100K - \$155K to sign all intersections within the CBD.



## Supporting Policy Recommendations

- **Assess opportunities for additional strategic automated enforcement in the CBD where allowed by state law**

The City of Chicago currently operates Red Light Camera and Automated Speed Enforcement programs. Annual reporting finds that automated enforcement changes driver behavior and improves intersection safety. In an effort to reinforce the infrastructure and policy recommendations, CDOT will evaluate additional locations based on crash data analysis, state and local law, and established methodologies.

- **Explore state policy that would allow for additional safety-enhancing automated enforcement**

The Task Force recommends expanding the violations for which the City can issue automated tickets to improve safety for all users of the transportation system. Informed by best practices in other cities, the Task Force recommends exploring legislation and technology to enforce:

- Blocking the box
- Blocking a crosswalk
- Driving or parking in a bus lane
- Standing or parking in a bike lane

### How are automated Red Light Camera Enforcement locations selected?

Three hundred red light cameras operate at 149 intersections in the City. Red light cameras require a community meeting prior to installation, removal, or relocation. Like Automated Speed Enforcement, the Red Light Camera program is reviewed annually to assess its effect on traffic safety.

View the *City of Chicago Automated Enforcement Program Annual Report* here: [www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/automated\\_enforcement.html](http://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/automated_enforcement.html)

### How are Automated Speed Enforcement locations selected?

Chicago operates Automated Speed Enforcement within Child Safety Zones (within 1/8 mile of a school or park). Enforcement now takes place in 68 Child Safety Zones around the City with a 30-day grace period after camera installation, a zero fine warning for a first violation, and tickets issued only after vendor and Department of Finance review.



## Education Recommendations



PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Engage the public with a citywide traffic safety marketing campaign

## The Problem

Residents of Chicago and visitors to the City may not be aware of the effect their own behavior has on traffic safety.

## Recommendations

The Task Force recommends a marketing campaign that will raise awareness about traffic safety, including messaging designed to influence individual behavior around the priorities of turning/yielding, speeding, and distracted driving. These messaging priorities were identified by the Task Force in response to crash data and knowledge of the area.

## Implementation

Sustained resources and coordination on a large scale are necessary to mount successful marketing campaigns. Because of this, in combination with the large number of Chicagoans who are in the CBD at some point during a typical week, the Task Force recommends that the marketing campaign be disseminated citywide and throughout the region, with potential for tailored messages for specific geographies. As an example, to be effective in lowering speeds, the marketing campaign necessary to implement the speed limit change in the CBD will need to reach people throughout the region who travel downtown, not just people in the area on a daily basis.

## Existing Assets

In addition to paid media that will be necessary for a citywide marketing campaign, there are a number of resources owned by or available to the City that should be used for Vision Zero messaging:

- City vehicles/buildings
- Bus shelters
- Electronic billboards
- CTA vehicle exteriors
- CTA vehicle and station interiors
- Divvy stations
- Street banners
- Public service announcement airtime

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Develop a standard partner communications release

## The Problem

Task Force members and other downtown partners are willing to share Vision Zero materials as outlined in the Communications Framework (see below). Many times, though, partner organizations learn of new infrastructure projects only by a chance encounter or when fielding a media request.

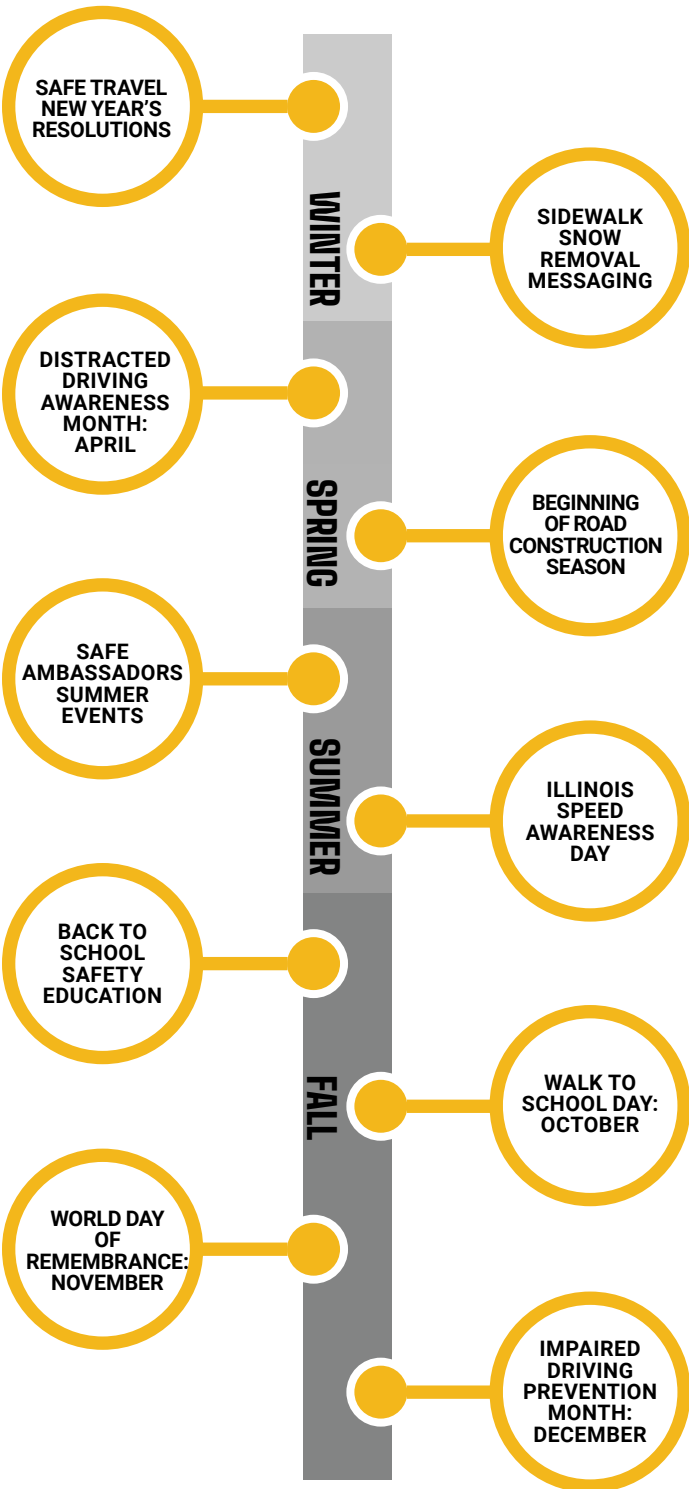
## Recommendations

A partner release, formatted as a fact sheet or FAQ along with sample social media posts, would allow CDOT and partners to share information about Vision Zero projects with relevant stakeholders at the time of project implementation. By preparing partners with background information, these groups would be better prepared to celebrate victories, champion projects, and respond to media.



PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Utilize partner communications framework and build upon seasonal milestones, existing expertise, & resources



## Existing Task Force resources

The Task Force membership includes representatives from City agencies, residents' organizations, and business organizations. Together, these groups have a wide communications reach to the people who live in, work in, and visit the CBD. Downtown partners will share messages around the seasonal Vision Zero communications milestones that occur annually (listed in the image to the left).

In addition to these seasonal milestones, success of the recommendations within this plan will require marketing coordination between relevant groups. The structure recommended as the Partner Communications Framework is built upon the existing foundation that these groups use internally and is meant to serve as a model for the types of information that can be communicated across recommendation types.

## Recommendations

The Task Force recommends that stakeholders, in partnership with City agencies, use this communications framework to share messages about the City's Vision Zero projects and initiatives.

## Partner communications framework

TYPE OF INTERVENTION	INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT	POLICY CHANGE	EDUCATION CAMPAIGN
RESOURCES PROVIDED BY CDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fliers to share electronically or display in a business's window.</li><li>Paragraphs of text that can be adjusted to use across communication platforms such as social media and email.</li><li>Images that can be shared through email and social media.</li><li>CDOT staff available to speak at organization/committee meetings or consult with organization leadership in advance of a meeting so they can share updates.</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Messaging packet for use across platforms, complete with key messages &amp; draft language for communication.</li><li>Campaign timeline.</li><li>Virtual/in-person training for communication staff volunteers.</li></ul>
MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION	<p>The media recommended varies based on the scale and uniqueness of the project.</p> <p><b>Baseline Media:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Email</li><li>Social media</li><li>Website updates/blog post</li><li>Print</li></ul> <p><b>Supplemental Media:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In-person meetings</li><li>Programming in public spaces</li><li>Advertisement assets</li></ul>		
TARGETED OUTCOMES	Community members know a project is happening, when it is happening, why it is important, and how to use new infrastructure.	Community members understand the policy and why it is being implemented.	Road users are aware of their dangerous behaviors and have the information necessary to change those behaviors.

## PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

# Initiate on-location education and signage

# Supporting Education Recommendations

## The Problem

City staff and other Task Force stakeholders have noted that transportation infrastructure and services have been rapidly evolving over recent years. Through our Vision Zero efforts, new types of infrastructure are appearing on the roadway. While infrastructure is designed to be intuitive, some explanation is necessary to acquaint people with the new infrastructure. This may be particularly true with the recommended Rapid Delivery Toolkit items that look less familiar than equivalent treatments made from concrete.

## Recommendations

- **Teams on the ground:** The CDOT SAFE Ambassadors should be dispatched to priority intersections where new treatments are being installed or have been installed to answer questions and distribute project educational materials.
- **Fliers on-site:** Customizable fliers should be created for each treatment in the Rapid Delivery Toolkit to explain the infrastructure and how to use it. Fliers would be posted for a period of time at the project site and distributed by partner organizations through their existing networks.

- **Educate taxi/rideshare drivers & passengers**

Taxi and rideshare drivers and passengers are an accessible audience that can be reached through partnership with the department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection. The department has drafted content addressing driver behavior and passenger safety that should be formatted and distributed using the City and other Task Force stakeholders' networks. These audiences can be reached via print materials and app-based messaging.

- **Develop & implement training for professional drivers**

The CBD contains a concentration of commercial traffic, deliveries, and visitor tours. The City has designed a driver training curriculum for its employees that emphasizes safety practices while driving in a dense urban environment. This curriculum can be expanded in cooperation with commercial partners to reach more professional drivers.

- **Assess & improve wayfinding at complex intersections**

When assessing an intersection for safety improvements, especially at complex intersections, existing signage and pavement markings should be included in the evaluation. For example, at highway entrance ramps, sign and pavement marking placement and clarity can play a critical role in reducing crash frequency.

- **Install pedestrian-oriented signage**

Many streets in the CBD are one-way and have street signs that are oriented only to vehicle traffic. Supplemental signs should be added to provide information to people walking. As part of the *Vision Zero Action Plan* mode shift goals, it is important to make navigating as a pedestrian easy and comfortable.



Photo: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

# Recommendations Summary

The charts below list the plan recommendations by strategy area, with an overview of implementation steps. Priority recommendations maximize benefit across the CBD or can be replicated at multiple locations. Supporting recommendations either require longer-term phasing or are discrete in impact. However, the Task Force has identified them as essential to achieving Vision Zero in downtown.

Plan implementation will be led by CDOT with support from partner and sister City agencies as well as advocacy, community, and business partners. Task Force members will be invited to join citywide Vision Zero working groups to maintain their involvement in Vision Zero Chicago and to contribute to the implementation of this plan.

Infrastructure	
Recommendation Type	Implementation Steps
CONCENTRATE RAPID DELIVERY PROJECTS ON THE STATE STREET HCC	
Priority	Rapid Delivery Projects were installed in fall 2019. Pre-installation behavior observations were completed and post-installation data will be collected when traffic volumes return to levels comparable to before the COVID-19 pandemic.
IMPLEMENT RAPID DELIVERY PROJECTS AT SELECT INTERSECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE CBD	
Priority	Develop designs and installation plans for intersection proposals as funding is secured.
IMPLEMENT ADDITIONAL RAPID DELIVERY PROJECTS	
Supporting	Rapid delivery bumpouts have been installed at 20 CBD intersections to provide additional space for pedestrians during the COVID-19 pandemic.
REMOVE RUSH HOUR PARKING RESTRICTIONS	
Supporting	Prioritize removal along HCCs and at high crash intersections, in coordination with the CTA.
PURSUE TARGETED CAPITAL & STREET TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS ON CBD HIGH CRASH CORRIDORS	
Supporting	Evaluate funding options from local and state sources for each corridor.
EXPAND THE CBD BIKE NETWORK	
Supporting	Focus on routes along Randolph St, Franklin St, and Dearborn St as priorities for the next 2-4 years.

Policy	
Recommendation Type	Implementation Steps
ENACT A CONSISTENT SPEED LIMIT OF 20 MPH IN THE CBD	
Priority	Create actionable timeline for implementation with stakeholders.
IMPLEMENT LEADING PEDESTRIAN INTERVALS AND LAGGING LEFT TURNS THROUGHOUT THE CBD	
Priority	Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, at high crash intersections, and on wide streets with long crossings.
INSTALL PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN TIMERS AT SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE CBD	
Priority	Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, at high crash intersections, and on wide streets with long crossings.
IMPLEMENT NO TURN ON RED AT ALL CBD INTERSECTIONS	
Priority	Prioritize upgrades on HCCs, high crash intersections, and at intersections with high CTA bus ridership.
ASSESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL STRATEGIC AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT IN THE CBD WHERE ALLOWED BY STATE LAW	
Supporting	Evaluate additional locations based on crash analysis and existing regulations.
EXPLORE STATE POLICY THAT WOULD ALLOW FOR ADDITIONAL SAFETY-ENHANCING AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT	
Supporting	Explore legislation and technology to improve safety downtown.

Education	
Recommendation Type	Implementation Steps
<b>ENGAGE THE PUBLIC WITH A CITYWIDE TRAFFIC SAFETY MARKETING CAMPAIGN</b>	
Priority	Convene marketing working group to guide campaigns.
<b>DEVELOP A STANDARD PARTNER COMMUNICATIONS RELEASE</b>	
Priority	Develop a template that can be easily customized and shared by CDOT.
<b>UTILIZE THE PARTNER COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND BUILD UPON SEASONAL MILESTONES, EXISTING EXPERTISE, &amp; RESOURCES</b>	
Priority	Rely on the framework to share information about <i>Downtown Action Plan</i> recommendations.
<b>INITIATE ON-LOCATION EDUCATION AND SIGNAGE</b>	
Priority	Pilot on-site communications with existing infrastructure.
<b>EDUCATE TAXI/RIDESHARE DRIVERS &amp; PASSENGERS</b>	
Supporting	Create a distribution plan for education materials with BACP and other Task Force members.
<b>DEVELOP &amp; IMPLEMENT TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS</b>	
Supporting	Create driver training for City employees; expand training to other commercial drivers.
<b>ASSESS &amp; IMPROVE WAYFINDING AT COMPLEX INTERSECTIONS</b>	
Supporting	Include signage as part of existing conditions assessments for high crash intersections.
<b>INSTALL PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED SIGNAGE</b>	
Supporting	Prioritize installation at intersections with high CTA ridership.

## Acknowledgements

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### Chicago Department of Transportation:

- Sean Wiedel, Assistant Commissioner
- David Smith, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager

### Consultant Team:

- Stacey Meekins, Sam Schwartz
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## Downtown Task Force members:

### Chairs

Alderman Brendan Reilly, 42nd Ward

Dr. Joseph P. Schwieterman, DePaul University

### City Agencies

Office of the Mayor of Chicago  
Chicago Department  
of Transportation (CDOT)  
Chicago Department  
of Public Health (CDPH)  
Chicago Police Department (CPD)  
Chicago Park District  
Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

Business Affairs & Consumer  
Protection (BACP)  
Chicago Public Schools (CPS)  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
& Special Events (DCASE)  
Mayor's Office of People  
with Disabilities (MOPD)

### Elected Officials

Alderman Brendan Reilly, 42nd Ward  
Alderman Brian Hopkins, 2nd Ward  
Alderman Sophia King, 4th Ward

Alderman Patrick Daley Thompson, 11th Ward  
Alderman Walter Burnett, Jr., 27th Ward

### External Partners

AARP  
Active Transportation Alliance  
Ann & Robert H Lurie Children's  
Hospital of Chicago  
Art Institute of Chicago  
Business Owners and Managers  
Association (BOMA)  
Chicago Central Area Committee (CCAC)  
Chicago Cultural Mile Association  
Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA)  
Choose Chicago  
Consortium to Lower Obesity  
in Chicago Children (CLOCC)  
Columbia College  
DePaul University  
Friends of Downtown  
Gold Coast Neighbors Association  
Greater South Loop Association

Loyola University  
Magnificent Mile Association  
Navy Pier  
Near South Planning Board  
New Eastside Association  
of Residents (NEAR)  
Neighbors of West Loop (NOWL)  
North Dearborn Association  
Northwestern Memorial Hospital  
Northwestern University  
River North Business Association  
Roosevelt University  
South Loop Neighbors  
Streeterville Chamber of Commerce  
Streeterville Organization  
of Active Residents (SOAR)  
West Loop Community  
Organization (WLCO)



[visionzerochicago.org](http://visionzerochicago.org)