



# Altenheim Line Framework Plan

September 2022

# Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to the Stakeholder Advisory group and others who participated in and the development of this plan.

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A special thank you to all who participated in the online survey and public meetings.

The Altenheim Line Framework Plan was funded by the City of Chicago and was prepared by SOM, Latent Design, SB Friedman Development Advisors, Hood Design Studio, Ware Realty Group, HNTB, Engage Civil, and NLCCC.

This document has been prepared in coordination with representatives from the North Lawndale and East and West Garfield Park communities, local aldermen, the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Chicago Department of Transportation, DCASE, and Department of Housing.

This plan is not a replacement of the City of Chicago zoning and building permit processes or City ordinances. All diagrams included in the plan are conceptual and included for illustrative purposes only.

The recommendations outlined in the plan depend on the availability of funding mechanisms (private and/or public), and consent from property owners. Additional coordination will be necessary to implement any of the strategies included in this plan.

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# Letter from the Commissioner

**The Altenheim Line is an important part of the City of Chicago's commitment to equity and resilience in North Lawndale and in all Neighborhoods citywide.**

As a "trail with rails", the approximately two-mile-long CSX Railroad right-of-way offers opportunities for recreation, transportation, beautification and other benefits that enhance community connectivity and cohesion along its entire length. The corridor's partial reuse as a public amenity also offers support for other community-driven initiatives involving arts and culture, nature, and the neighborhood's unique heritage and history.

To help maximize the trail's positive impact in years to come, the Altenheim Line Framework Plan identifies six focus areas adjacent to the

corridor to implement community development strategies. The strategies include efforts to promote new retail and entertainment options, improved access to affordable housing, job growth, and other amenities that enhance the lives of current residents and workers.

In conjunction with complementary City initiatives such as INVEST South/West and We Will Chicago, the framework's equitable investment and ant-displacement techniques will ensure the neighborhood's future does not arrive at the expense of current community stakeholders. Local residents will remain at the forefront of the City's planning initiatives on the West Side for years to come.

On behalf of the City of Chicago, I want to thank all participants in the framework planning process and the ongoing revitalization of the North Lawndale and Garfield Park communities.



Sincerely,  
Maurice Cox  
Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development



# 1 Executive Summary



# Vision

**A “Beloved Community” that empowers residents, facilitates economic prosperity and sparks joy for all.**

The Altenheim Line Framework Plan builds on the constellation of anchors and opportunities organized around the activation of the CSX Altenheim rail line, a two-mile-long recreational and cultural “rail and trail”.

The line leverages and connects existing assets and links a chain of Focus Areas for housing, economic development and public realm into an ecosystem for equitable investment for Lawndale communities.

# Project Goals

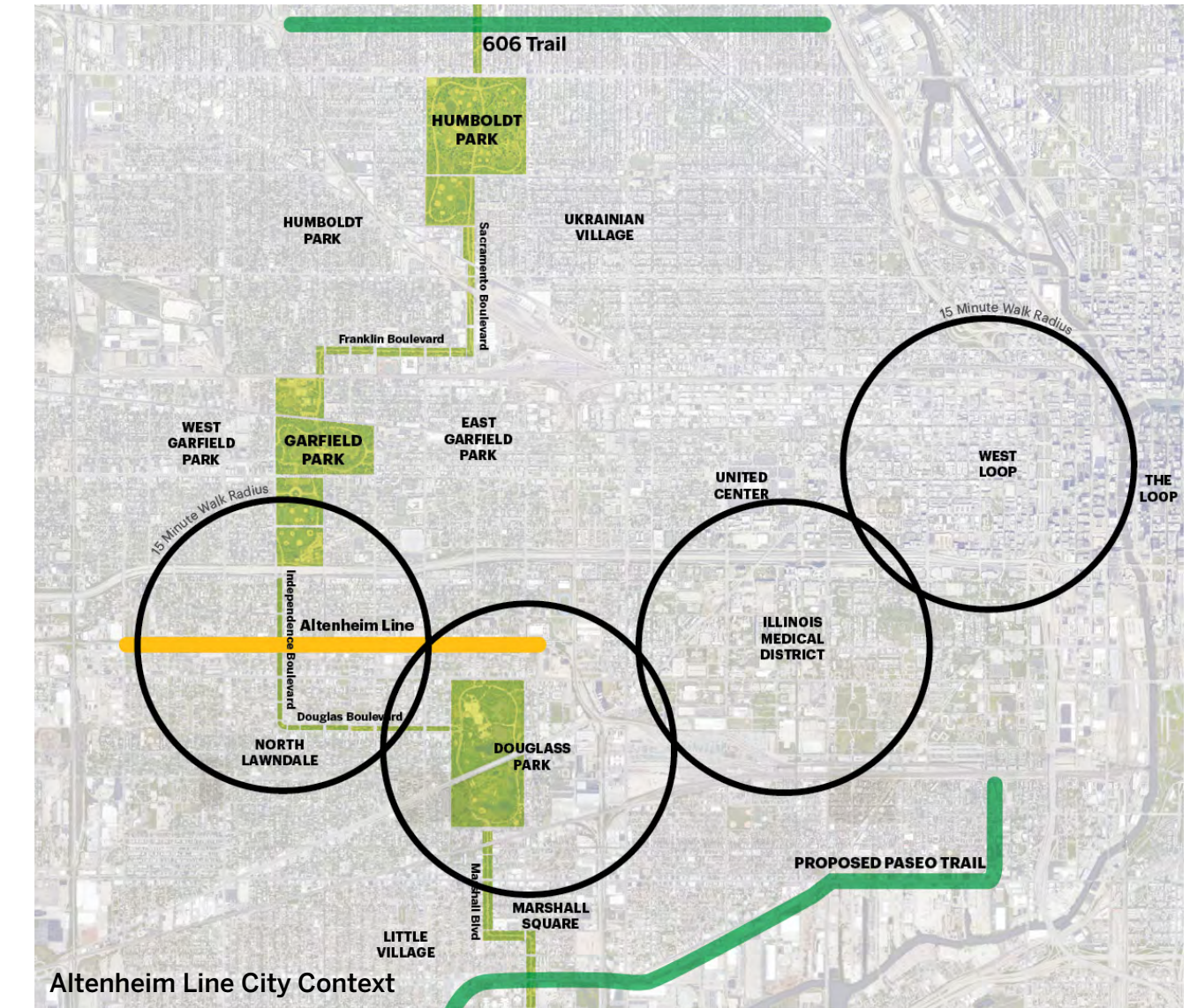
**Exploring recreational opportunities for the Altenheim elevated rail right-of-way**

**Identifying the highest-and-best-use of industrial and commercial parcels**

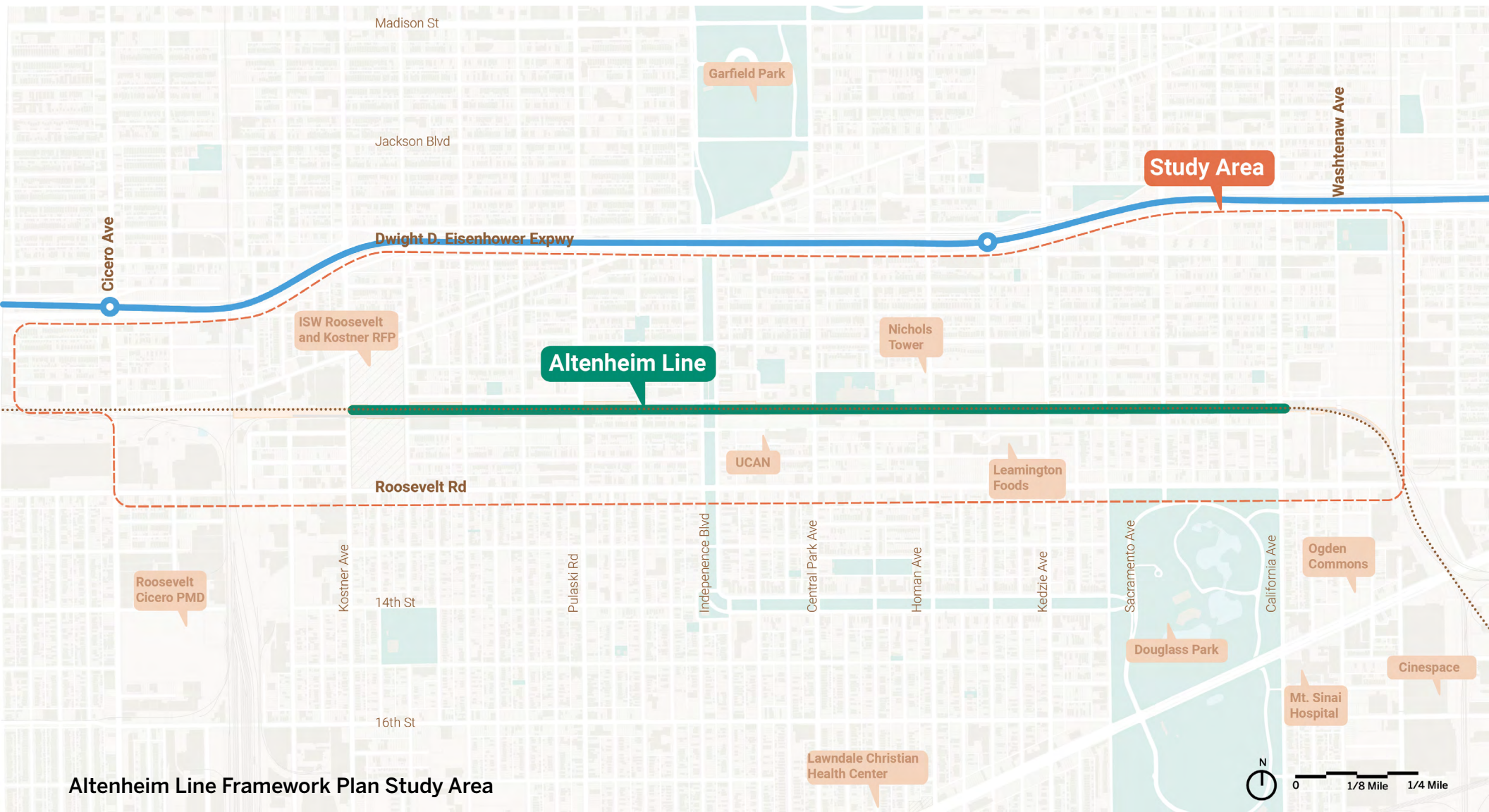
**Building a sense of community ownership and control**

**Supporting local economic growth**

**Developing strategies for equitable investment and anti-displacement**



# A Vibrant Community



This community has a history of leading change, from being the headquarters of Sears to the activists that worked with Dr. King to fight against housing discrimination.

While the surrounding communities have experienced a legacy of disinvestment, the resilience and fortitude of the residents and institutions have given us the opportunity to reconnect the fragments and create a framework for the “beloved community.”

We used data to map the existing assets, anchor institutions and job centers, transit, housing, and vacant properties to understand and align opportunities.

North Lawndale has various strengths we can build on and this framework is designed to connect and amplify equitable investment to address community needs and create a thriving community that balances economic prosperity, livability, health and wellness, and joy.



# Community-Driven Process

This process was community driven and we held a number of public sessions workshops, stakeholder meetings, and steering committee meetings as the team progressed through the design visioning process.

We created a framework that starts with identifying existing assets and anchor organizations in the surrounding community such as DRW College Prep high school, Homan Square Foundation, Hope Academy, Cinespace, UCAN, and many others.

We learned from the 2018 Lawndale Quality of Life planning effort and used its principles and themes to guide this framework plan which is the first step in a longer process to guide investment and ensure community.

We conducted both in-person and virtual meetings to reach as wide of an audience possible, and offered an online survey as an additional option for participation. Feedback gathered in the engagement process established a set of community planning principles that serve as the foundation for the plan. Key themes that emerged from engagement included:

- Reflect and celebrate heritage and culture
- Multi-generational mobility, programming and access
- Retain residents and increase homeownership
- Focus on equitable investment and anti-displacement
- Affordable and inclusive housing
- Center local job creation and community benefit
- Design that responds to context

This framework is the first step in a longer process to guide investment and intentionally ensure community benefit.



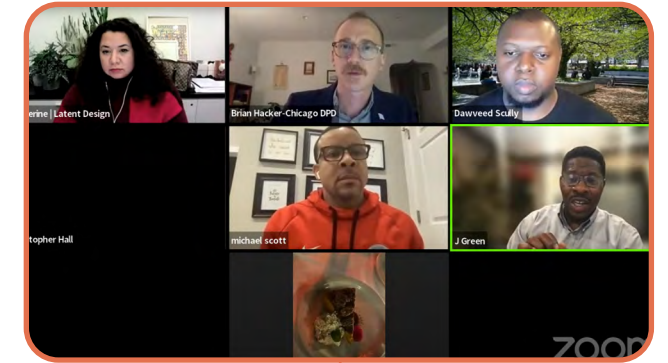
Community Meeting at Douglass Park Fieldhouse



Community Meeting at DRW College Prep



Community Meeting #1  
Douglass Park Fieldhouse



Community Meeting #3  
Virtual Meeting via zoom

Community Meeting #2  
DRW College Prep



Community Meeting #2  
Virtual Meeting and Survey



# Outcomes and Goals



## Represent local heritage, arts, and culture

Integrate and amplify local heritage, arts and culture through art at all scales, outdoor exhibits, gateways, digital installations (QR codes) and many other methods.



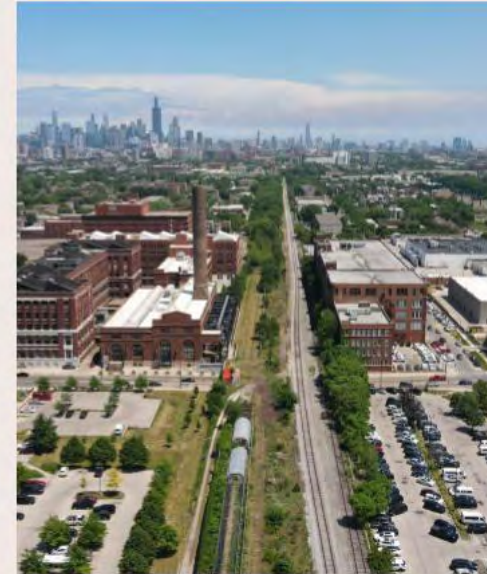
## Strengthen ecologies and programming

Understand and enhance existing ecological features and programming already on the line such as Homan Rails Farm and DRW College Prep.



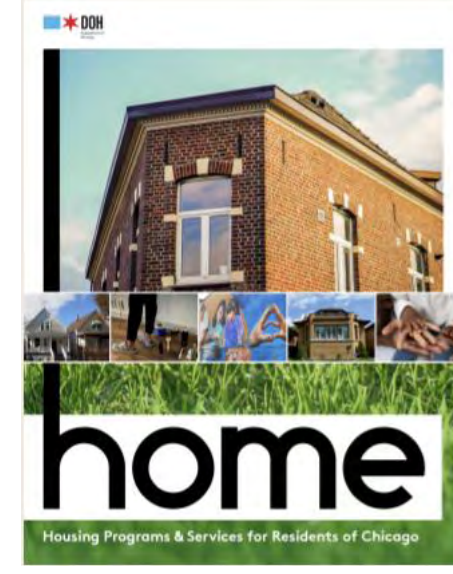
## Create spaces for active and passive recreation

Design space for both active recreation and natural ecology connected by the two-mile trail.



## Access for all

Easy consistent access to the trail with clear wayfinding and visible entry points.



## Support existing residents

Leverage City programs to support existing homeowners and renters in the surrounding area. Explore policies to address displacement pressures.



## Renovate and reactivate existing buildings

Focus on reactivating existing buildings stock for housing, retail, and commercial uses.



## Opportunities for infill housing + mixed use

Explore opportunities for future infill and larger scale developments by leveraging City-owned land resources in the community.



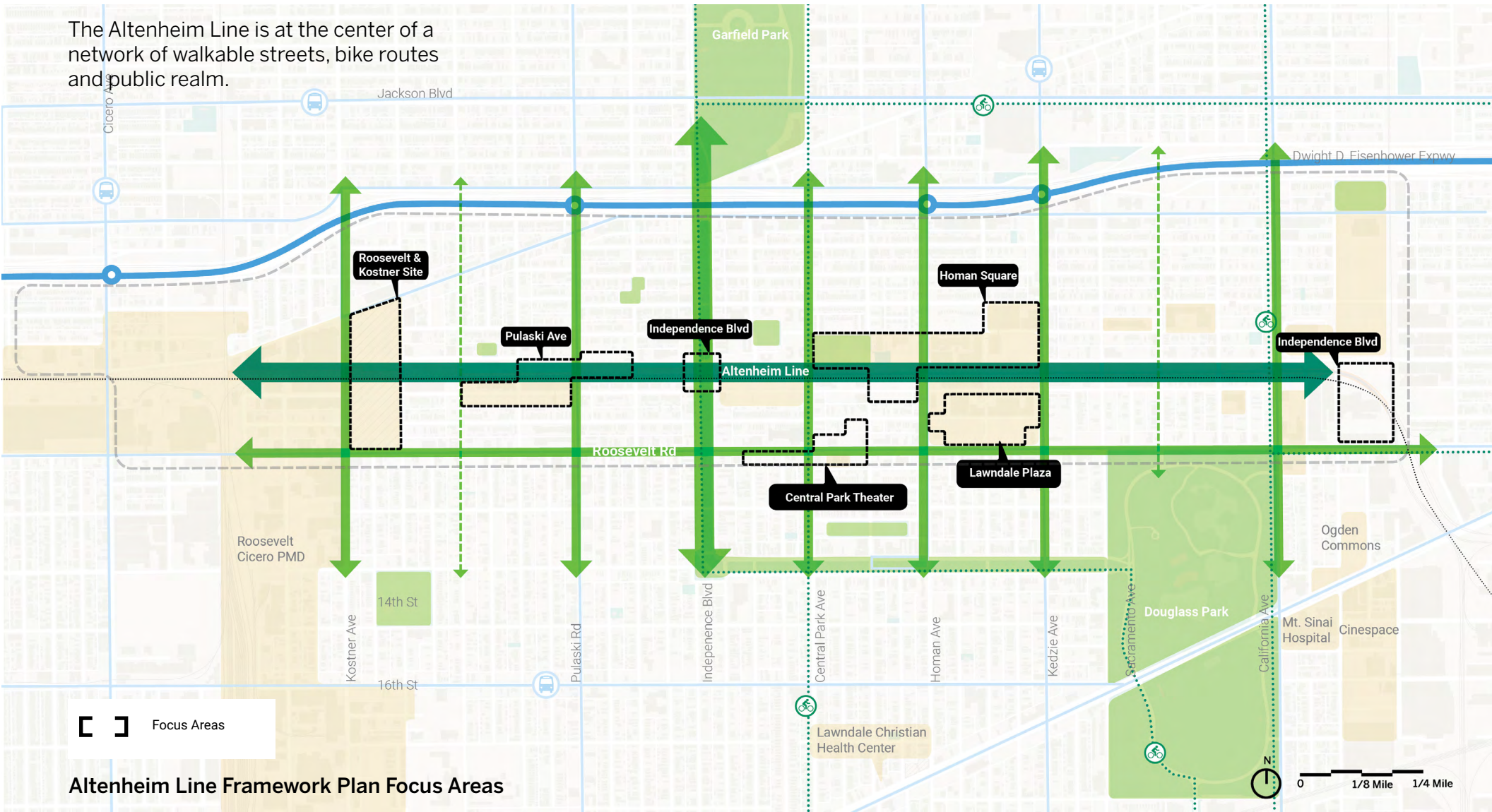
## Focus on local jobs

Outline opportunities for future commercial, retail, and light industrial that support local jobs and entrepreneurship.



# A Framework of Connectivity

The Altheim Line is at the center of a network of walkable streets, bike routes and public realm.



Altheim Line Framework Plan Focus Areas

# Market Summary



## RENTAL HOUSING

Market rate rents are lower than affordable rent limits

Higher density multifamily projects are likely to be LIHTC for the next 5-years until the market matures



## SALES HOUSING

Average sales price increased 250% over the last five years, indicating a strengthening "for sale" market

Opportunity for new single family, townhome, and two-flat construction, subsidies required

Existing initiatives emphasize a focused, block-by-block approach



## RENOVATION

Rehab of existing commercial structures is the most feasible

Potential uses: medical office, cafes, grocery, call center, institutional and other supportive uses

Most commercial developments will require public-private partnerships



## COMMERCIAL

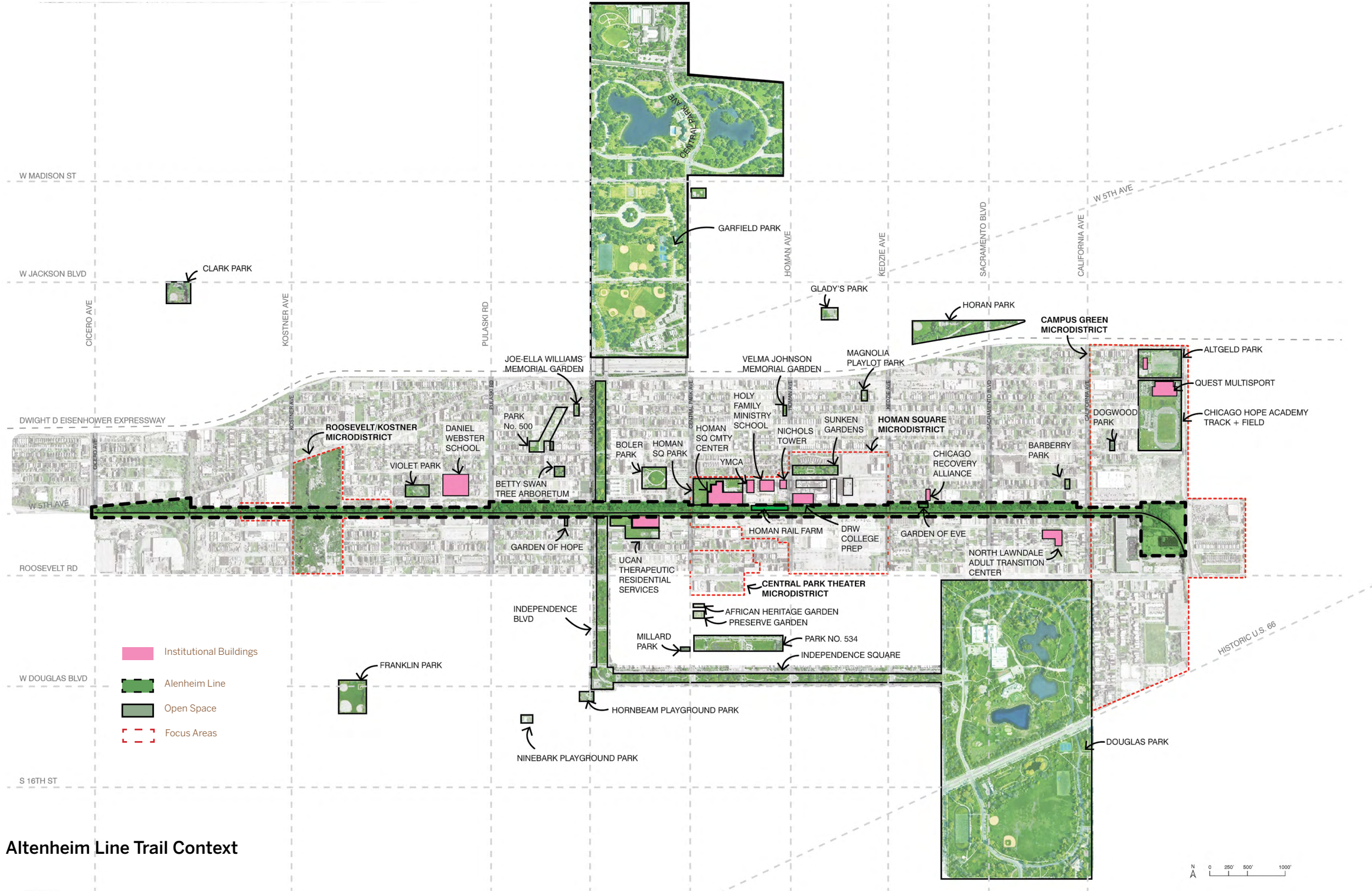
Existing industrial cluster to the west

Potential industrial sectors: last-mile distribution, food production, cold storage, film and TV back of house, flex industrial facilities

Opportunity to include workforce training and business incubator spaces

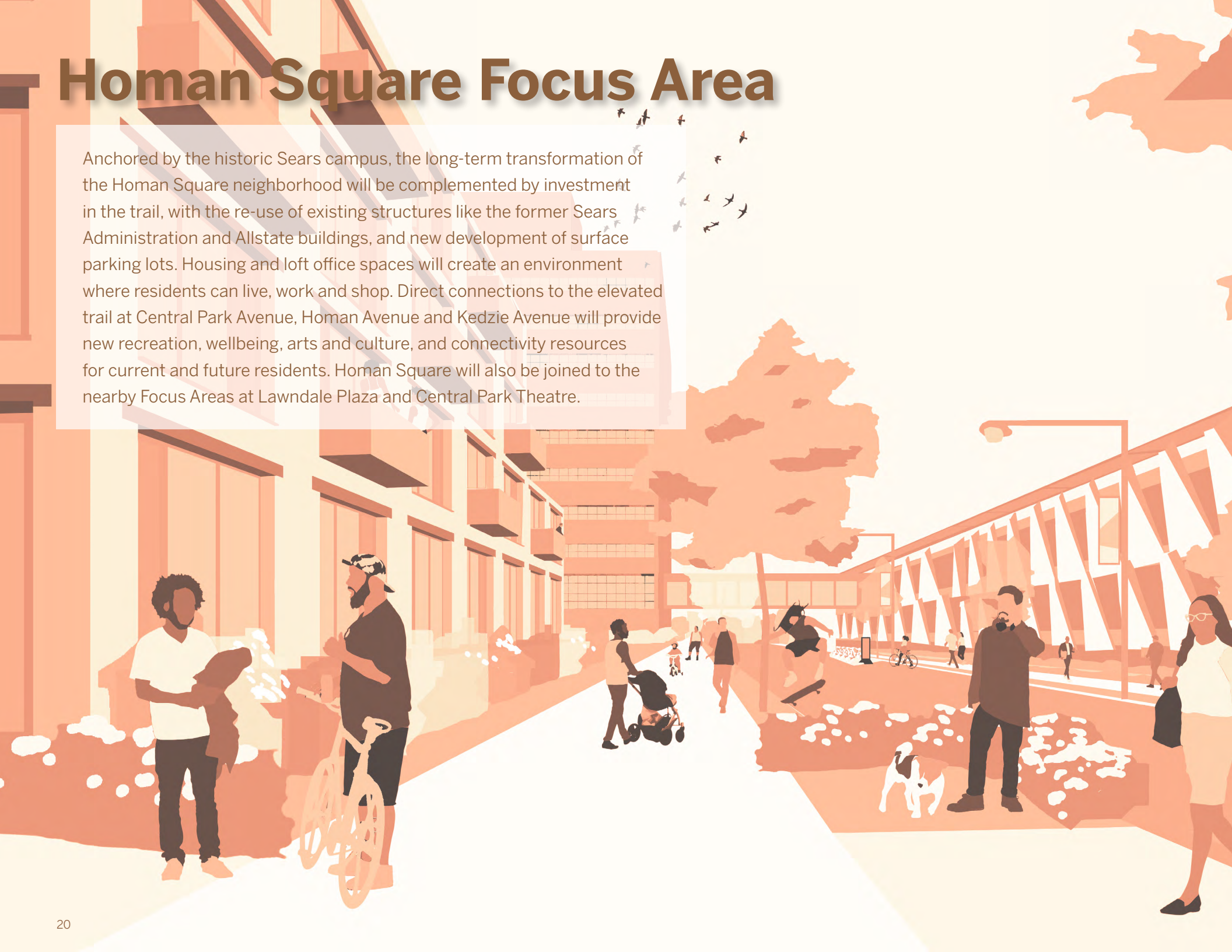
# The Trail

The Altheim Line will become a member of Chicago's family of recreational and commuter trails, providing walking and biking connections between communities, job centers, public open spaces and natural areas on Chicago's West Side. This trail will follow others in providing residents with more immediate access to nature, open space, recreation and wellbeing as well as key connections to employment centers and commercial amenities. A range of access points designed in the context and the elevated rail infrastructure and the surrounding neighborhood will bring people from street level to the trail. Diverse ecologies will be supported along its route, with key park rooms provided at Focus Areas where the culture and heritage of the North Lawndale and Garfield Park communities are celebrated. Investment in the trail will be an economic driver of equitable development in the surrounding communities to encourage renovation, reuse and new construction opportunities.



# Homan Square Focus Area

Anchored by the historic Sears campus, the long-term transformation of the Homan Square neighborhood will be complemented by investment in the trail, with the re-use of existing structures like the former Sears Administration and Allstate buildings, and new development of surface parking lots. Housing and loft office spaces will create an environment where residents can live, work and shop. Direct connections to the elevated trail at Central Park Avenue, Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue will provide new recreation, wellbeing, arts and culture, and connectivity resources for current and future residents. Homan Square will also be joined to the nearby Focus Areas at Lawndale Plaza and Central Park Theatre.



# Lawndale Plaza Focus Area

A few minutes-walk south of Homan Square, reinvestment in the Lawndale Plaza shopping center will bring the former Cineplex building back into full use, and support a more attractive, pedestrian-focused retail environment. Surface parking lots will become retail out-lots and host new retail units close to the sidewalk, activating street edges. Enhanced landscape will draw pedestrians into the Plaza. Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue will provide clear street connections to the elevated trail a few blocks to the north.



# Central Park Theater Focus Area

West along Roosevelt Road from Lawndale Plaza, and anchored by the historic Central Park Theatre and a range of interim arts and culture programming, this Focus Area will see new micro-retail spaces, and new mixed-use residential and commercial development on currently vacant land. An outdoor gathering space close to the theatre will provide new activation opportunities and streetscape improvements will knit new investments together to create a pedestrian-scaled sense of place that will draw visitors to its entertainment and retail options. Central Park Avenue will provide a link to a new access point to the elevated trail just to the north.



# Pulaski Focus Area

Located on blocks adjacent to the elevated trail, this Focus Area will consist of a range of new housing options for current and future residents with a priority on affordability. Attractive infill development interwoven with the new open space and recreation amenities will promote healthy living in a green environment in harmony with the existing community.



# Campus Green Focus Area

This strategic corridor gateway location will leverage proximity to expressways, local industrial corridors, the Illinois Medical District and Cinespace to create a large-scale business and employment hub. Back office, light industrial and logistics uses can be accommodated in a range of tenant sizes. The existing historic industrial structure offers a unique adaptive reuse opportunity to be integrated with the new development. The beginning of the Altenheim line will be signaled with a new public open space on City-owned land at Taylor Street. This space will provide highly visible access to the line with a multi-season recreational area on a sloped lawn that serves as an eastern gateway to the elevated trail.



# Roosevelt Kostner Focus Area

This Focus Area at the planned western gateway to the trail combines employment opportunity, community-based economic development and attractive open space on a 21-acre City-owned site that is under development by a diverse team selected via an RFP process. The Roosevelt-Kostner site will be the future home to a roughly 350,000-square-foot light-industrial complex, with community and innovation hubs, that will bring jobs, local business development, green and clean energy, and high quality building design. The elevated trail runs through the center of the site, where, new public spaces and access points will be incorporated.



# 2 Planning Context

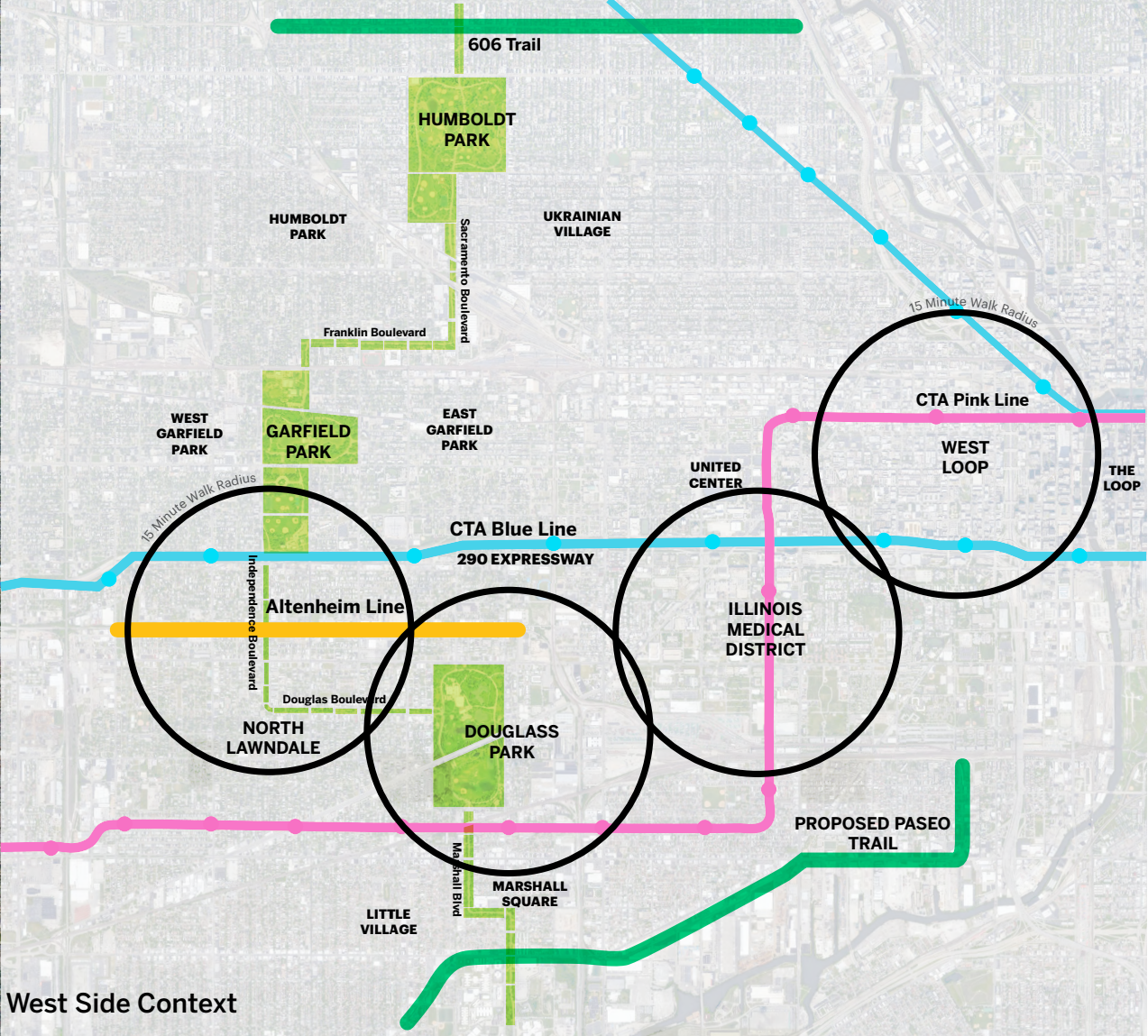


# Greater West Side

The two-mile long section of the Altenheim elevated rail line and surrounding study area covers portions of the West Side communities of North Lawndale, East Garfield Park and West Garfield Park.

The transportation assets of the Eisenhower Expressway (I-290) and CTA Blue Line define the northern boundary and the Roosevelt Road commercial corridor defines the southern boundary.

The study area is in proximity to both Garfield Park, to the north, and Douglass Park, to the south, and connected to these recreational amenities by Independence Boulevard. The study area also includes the Homan Square historic district, located near the intersection of Homan and Arthington Avenues. Homan Square is the former site of the Sears, Roebuck and Co. headquarters that has now been repurposed into affordable housing, a high school, community center and office space.



# Greater West Side

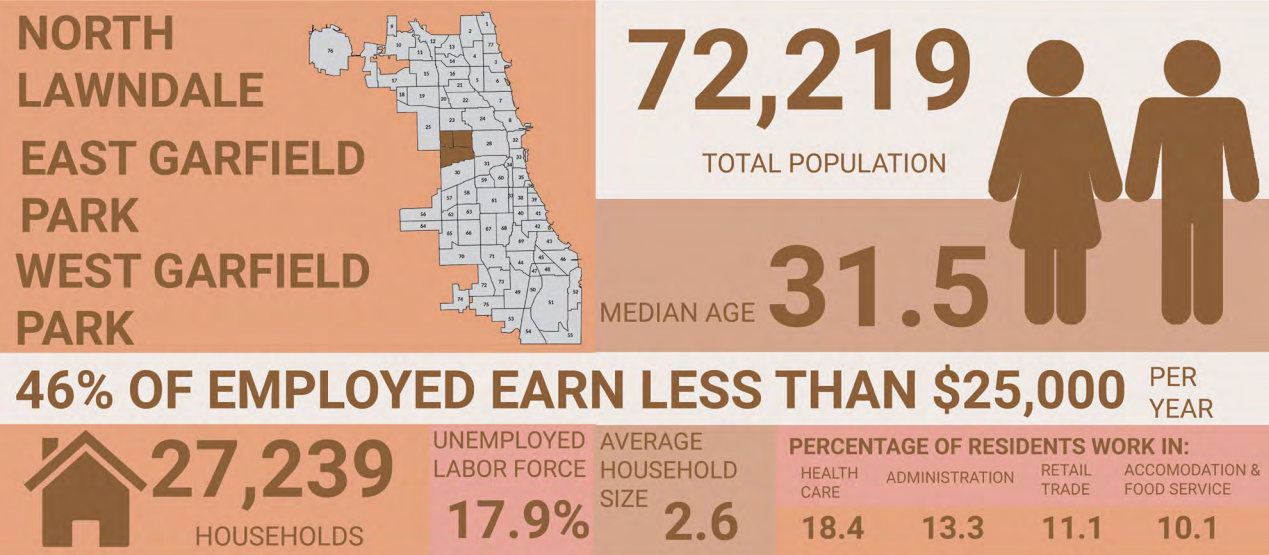
In addition to the presence of Sears, this area of the West Side became known as an industrial employment center in the early 1900's, driving rapid population growth in North Lawndale and East and West Garfield Park. Major commercial corridors developed on Madison Street, Ogden Avenue and Roosevelt Road, attracting a diversity of retailers and cultural destinations.

The mid-20th century saw a large migration of Black-Americans to communities on the West Side and the population of North Lawndale peaked in the 1960s at roughly 125,000 residents and combined population of roughly 112,500 residents in East and West Garfield Park. At this time, poverty began to spread in the community, prompting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to briefly move to 16th Street in North Lawndale in 1966 to call attention to discriminatory housing practices.



Existing ramp and retaining wall access to the trail

The social upheaval that occurred in the wake of Dr. King's assassination in 1968 precluded a decline in both the population and economy of the West Side. In addition to the loss of many retailers on the commercial corridors, North Lawndale's two major employers, Sears and International Harvester, both left the community in the 1970s, taking large numbers of quality jobs out of the community. In the following decades, these communities experienced severe impacts of poverty, crime and disinvestment. As of the 2020 census, the combined population of the three communities had decreased to 72,219 residents, roughly a third of its former peak.



Line Connecting through Lawndale

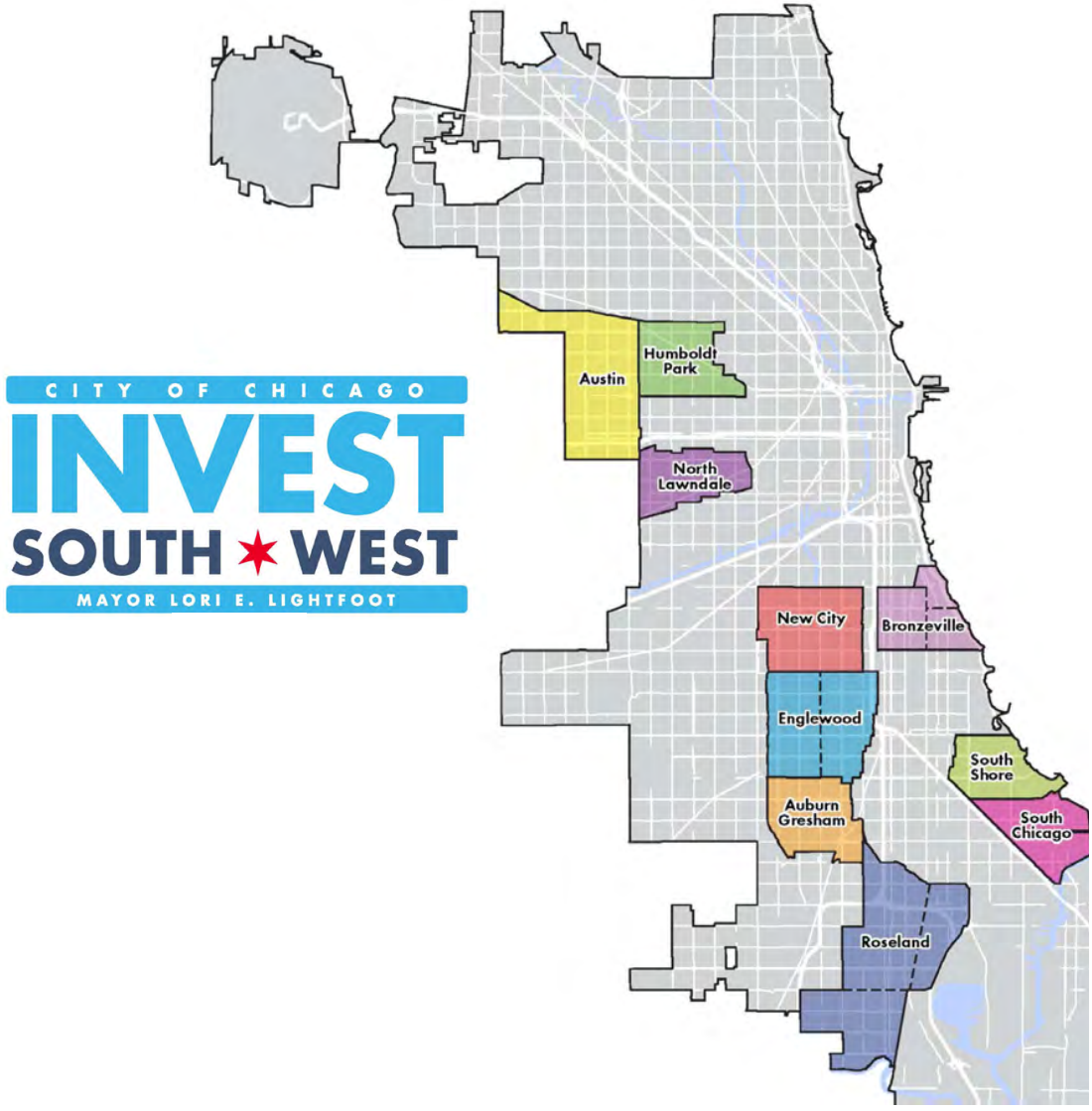


# Invest South/West

Invest South/West is an unprecedented community improvement initiative from Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot to marshal more than \$750 million in public funding while coordinating across multiple City departments, community organizations and corporate partners to reactivate 12 key commercial corridors across 10 neighborhoods on Chicago's South and West sides.

The Invest South/West neighborhoods (Auburn Gresham, Austin, Bronzeville, Greater Englewood, Greater Roseland, Humboldt Park, New City, North Lawndale, South Chicago and South Shore) were determined through a multi-departmental analysis. Vital criteria for the selection process were for each neighborhood to have a community plan that reflects the planning goals of local residents and stakeholders, and at least one active commercial district. Other factors considered include economic inequality, transit access and existing anchor retailers and institutions.

Leveraging existing plans and local partners, the City's focus on these initial neighborhoods is intended to facilitate near-term investments in public improvements, encourage outside investment in the surrounding area, promote cultural vibrancy and promote economic opportunity for residents. Through the collaboration of multiple public and private partners, Invest South/West engages community stakeholders throughout the South and West sides to build consensus around neighborhood needs and goals, identify opportunity areas, and ensure future investments will be developed through an equity lens.



Since it was launched in the fall of 2019, Invest South/West has resulted in a total of \$1.44 billion in combined private and public investment. This includes funding for public infrastructure improvements, local business development, affordable housing, retail space, public open space and community institutions. Central to these efforts is the issuance of ten Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in 2020 and 2021 for new development on City-controlled opportunity sites for each Invest South/West priority corridor.

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) partnered with local residents, stakeholders and elected officials to craft development visions for each priority corridor prior to the release of an RFP. Private development proposals were then evaluated with robust public input to select a project based on the community's vision.

To ensure the financial feasibility of the selected projects, the City is leveraging a range of financial incentives, such as Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). The result is an anticipated total investment of more than \$250 million towards projects that will bring new housing, retail amenities and community space to the South and West Sides.



# Recent Invest South/West Projects

One of the ten Invest South/West RFP projects is located on the North Lawndale priority corridor of Ogden Avenue on a block of vacant City-controlled land between Homan and Trumbull Avenues. The selected project, known as Lawndale Redefined, was announced in summer of 2021. It consists of multi-family housing, retail space, an arts and technology-focused community center and outdoor plaza. Additionally, the City is supporting equitable development on the Ogden Avenue Invest South/West corridor through financial assistance for a new affordable housing development, located across from the RFP site on the south side of Ogden on the site of an underutilized parking lot for the Chicago Police Department's 10th District. The project, known as Grace Manor, includes 65 units of housing with retail and community space on the ground floor and an innovative architectural style.

Beyond the Ogden Avenue priority corridor, DPD has selected a new development via RFP for a roughly 21-acre City-owned site at 4300 W. Roosevelt Road. Planned as the western terminus of the recreational trail, the Altenheim rail line runs through the middle of the site. The selected project consists of two large-scale industrial buildings and two smaller pedestrian-oriented buildings devoted to retail and a small-business development center. The development will build community wealth by generating hundreds of new jobs in the community with an emphasis on local hiring.



Grace Manor Apartments



Lawndale ReDefined



Lawndale Innovation Center

# North Lawndale Quality of Life Plan

Our work has built on the principles and priorities outlined in the 2018 North Lawndale Quality-of-Life Plan. North Lawndale has some major assets and the opportunity to leverage them to create a healthy, vibrant community with a diversified and innovative economy, competitive work force, engaged citizens and infrastructure that supports long-term, sustainable growth.

Some of the key takeaways from the plan highlighted:

- Affordable home ownership in the community, and address utility cost burden,
- Economic development, transportation and access to job centers
- Safer and greener public realm
- Equitable distribution of open spaces
- Support community arts and culture destinations
- Improve health outcomes in the community

The work groups that have continued to collaborate and focus on key areas of the Quality of Life Plan and this project builds on those principles, themes and priorities towards implementation and impact.

## NORTH LAWDALE THE NEXT CHAPTER



### **Housing**

We will invest in our community by promoting homeownership, empowering homeowners, preserving historic architecture, and providing a safe and affordable apartments

### **Economic & Workforce development**

This will help local entrepreneurs establish successful businesses and improve pathways to middle wage job opportunities and connect residents to local employers.

### **Greening & Open Space**

Greening efforts that beautify our neighborhood and expand opportunities

### **Transportation, Infrastructure & Technology**

Laying the groundwork for North Lawndale by expanding access to safe, well designed, multimodal transportation and infrastructure and harnessing innovative green technology.



### **Arts & Culture**

We will increase awareness, participation and expression in the arts including hosting annual events and building a network of artists.

### **Health and Wellness**

Address health inequities in North Lawndale to improve health and wellness.

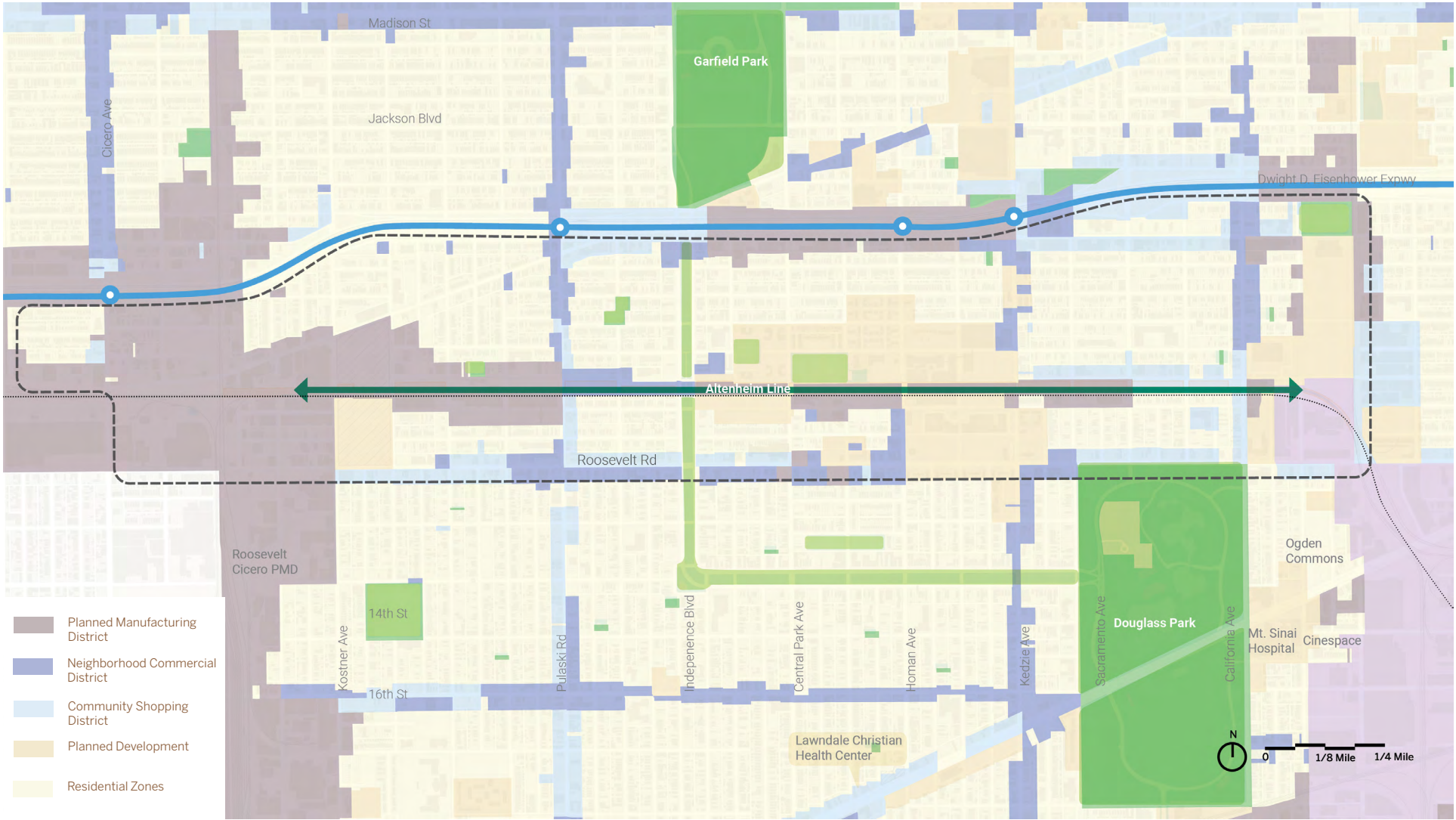
### **Public Safety**

We will create and maintain trustful relationships within the community to properly engage those who are in need of support to increase peace and safety.

### **Youth Education and Recreation**

North Lawndale will be a community where all children have the opportunity to learn and play in a safe and nurturing environment. We will ensure access to high-quality that equips youth to become leaders in our community

# Land Use



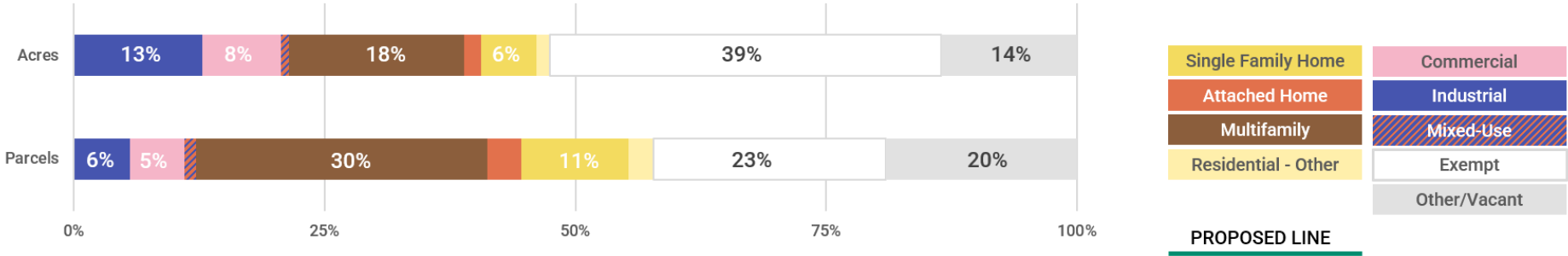
Existing Land Use

The plan study area contains a diverse array of land uses that overlap with the North Lawndale, East Garfield Park and West Garfield Park community areas. Roosevelt Road is the primary commercial corridor, consisting of a mix of shopping centers, automobile-oriented uses such as fast-food restaurants and gas stations, storefront churches and two to three-story traditional mixed-use buildings, which are punctuated by large stretches of vacant land. Pulaski Rd. serves as a secondary commercial corridor with smaller-scale retail and service uses combined with sections of industrial and residential development.

Industrial uses are concentrated towards the western and eastern bounds of the study area with the Roosevelt-Cicero Industrial Corridor to the west extending from Pulaski nearly to the City boundary in alignment with Roosevelt Rd. and the Altonheim rail corridor, as well as to the south along Kilbourn Ave. A smaller industrial area is located at the east side of the study area along the rail corridor, mainly between California and Washtenaw. Industrial operations vary from large, sprawling sites with indoor and outdoor facilities to small-scale buildings on typical residential-sized lots.



## Land Use Distribution



In between the commercial corridors and industrial centers are numerous tree-lined residential blocks that contain a healthy mix of single-family homes, townhomes, apartment flats and multifamily buildings that provide housing options for all manners of households. These include clusters of the historic “Greystone” buildings with limestone facades that are a point of pride and history for the North Lawndale community.

The Homan Square district, centered around the intersection of Homan Ave. and Arthington St., holds a concentration of institutional uses that include schools, recreation centers, social services and public safety facilities, as well as some small office spaces in Nichols Tower that

are mainly occupied by non-profit uses.

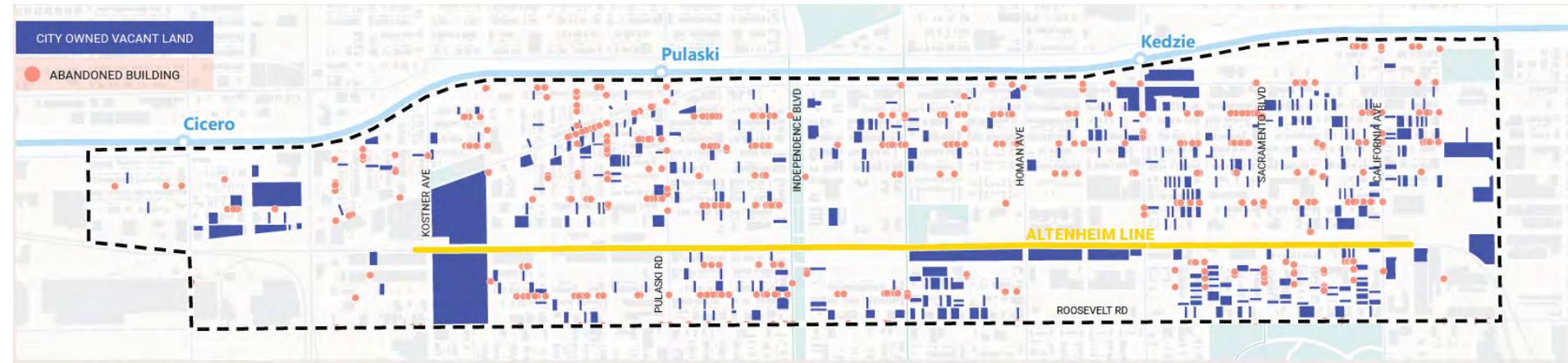
Despite these existing assets, a pervasive issue within the study area and surrounding communities is the large number of vacant lots that create visual blight due to litter and abandoned vehicles and encourage activities that can be detrimental to quality of life for surrounding residents. An analysis of Cook County Assessor’s Office data indicates that roughly 20% of parcels or roughly 14% of the parcel area within the study area are vacant. This includes over 400 parcels owned by the City of Chicago. Although publicly owned land can present an opportunity for redevelopment, the large volume of it poses a significant challenge.

## Vacant Land near the Altenheim Line

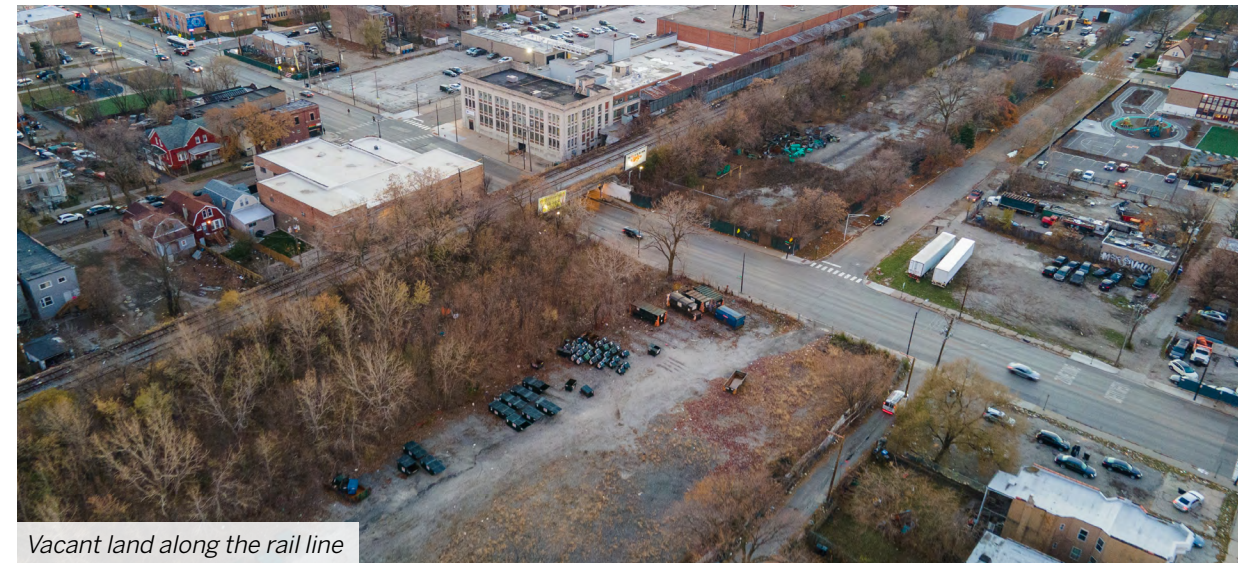
**1,396 Total Parcels**

**1,017 Privately-owned**

**379 City-owned**



Vacant Land



Vacant land along the rail line



Historic Greystones



DRW College Prep High School

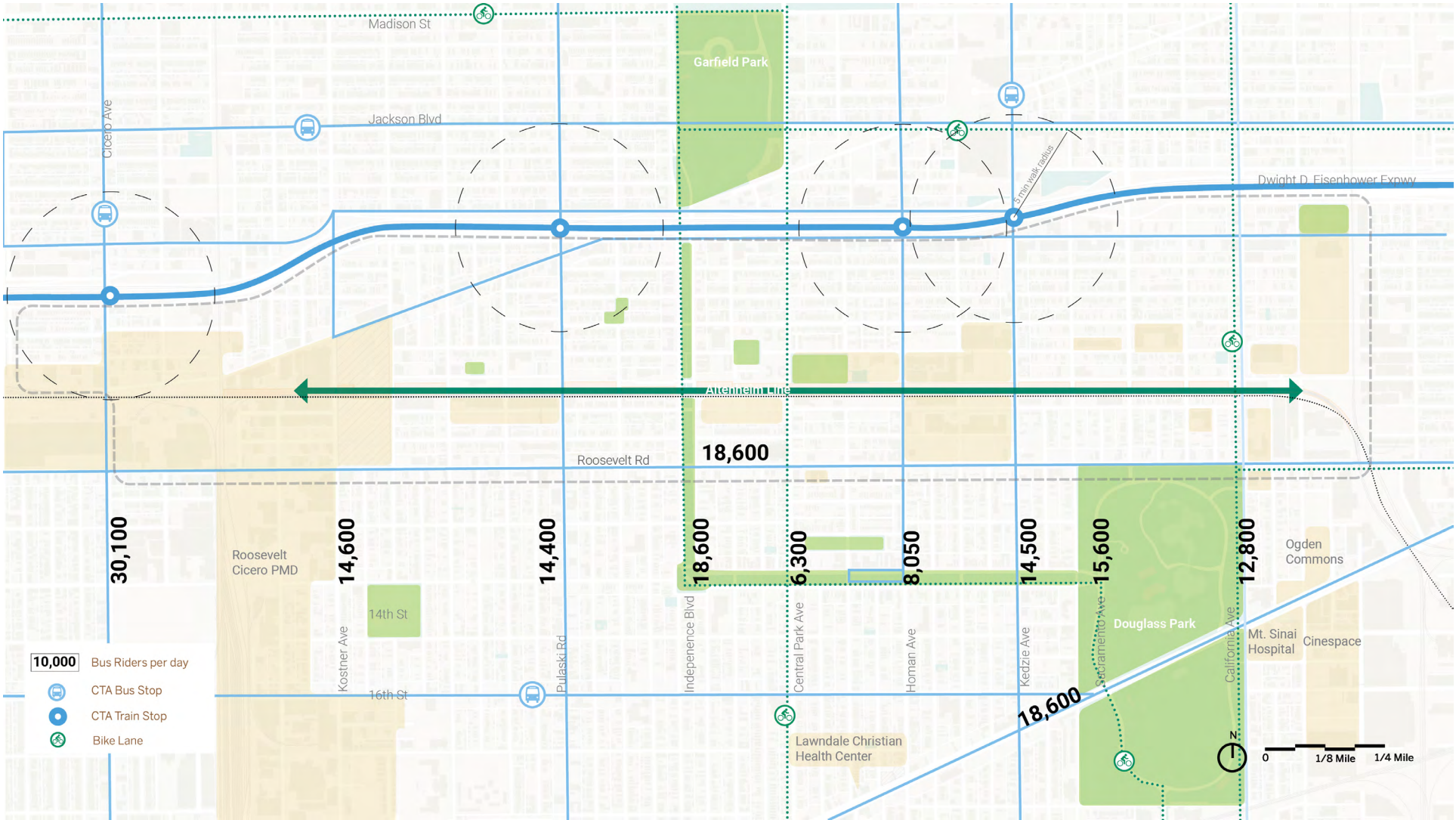


Residential blocks in North Lawndale



Strip retail at Pulaski and Roosevelt

# Mobility



Mobility Network

The study area is served by multi-modal options that include the Eisenhower branch of the CTA blue line, several CTA bus routes, and bike routes that provide connections to surrounding parks and the larger citywide bike network. Major transportation corridors such as Roosevelt Rd., Cicero Ave., Kedzie Ave., Independence Blvd, and Pulaski Blvd. provide city-wide connections.

CTA Blue Line stations at Kedzie-Homan and Pulaski are each located roughly a third of a mile north of planned trail access points and offer CTA bus connections. Several CTA bus routes intersect with the trail providing further access options: #12 Roosevelt, #52A South Kedzie, #53 Pulaski, #82 Kimball Homan and #94 California. Further, multiple Divvy bikeshare docks are located in proximity to the trail near the CTA Blue Line and Roosevelt Rd. to provide additional multi-modal connections and the increasing availability of dockless ebikes provides an even more flexible option for access.

Bike facilities on Keeler, Independence, Central Park and California intersect with the Altenheim Line and the nearby streets of Douglas and Roosevelt also provide bike route connections beyond the trail.

Beyond its function as a recreational amenity

that promotes wellness and pedestrian safety, the trail offers an opportunity for commuters in the community with potential connections to employment areas such as Homan Square, the Roosevelt-Cicero industrial corridor, the Roosevelt Road retail corridor and the Illinois Medical District further to the east.



Kedzie-Homan CTA station

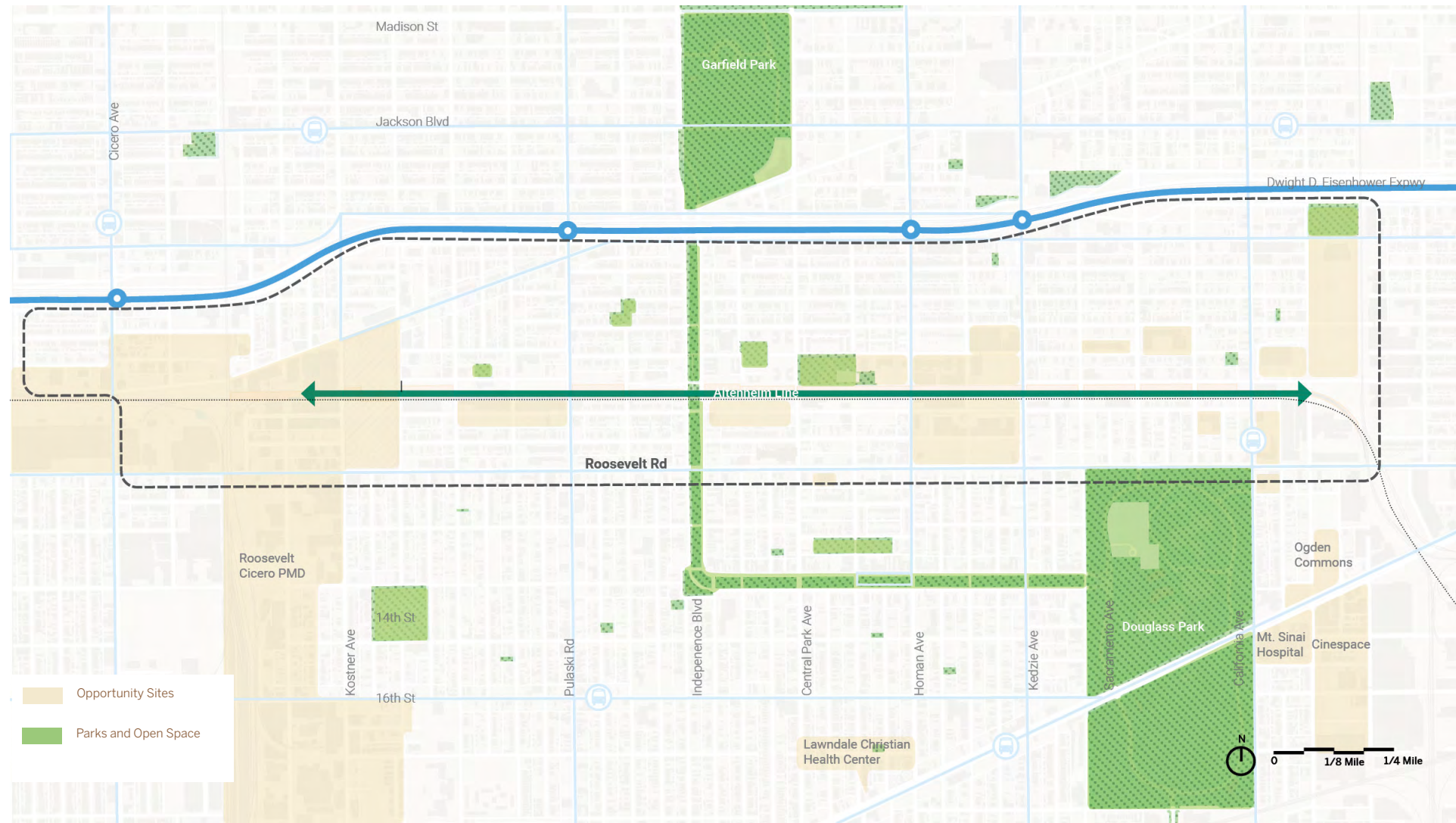


Bus public transit



Cycling public transit

# Open Space and Public Realm



Existing Open Space Network

The study area falls between Douglass Park and Garfield Park, two regional parks on the West Side that are among the largest in the City. They are connected by Independence Boulevard - part of the City's Boulevard System - which offers passive open spaces. Additionally, there is a small collection of local open spaces in proximity to the Altenheim Line like the Sunken Gardens at Homan Square, Homan Square Park, Boler Park and Park #534. The trail will also create connections to private recreation centers such as the Hope Academy sports complex at Washtenaw and Harrison, which is in the process of expanding its facility.

The Altenheim line will provide an important open space and recreational amenity within an area of extensive residential blocks, as well as a multi-modal connection to open spaces and community destinations. Its addition will foster a stronger sense of place and pride in the community, encourage physical activity that promotes health and wellness and even offer economic benefits by expanding the bike and pedestrian network to reduce vehicle trips.



Douglass Park fieldhouse



Douglass Park mini-golf course

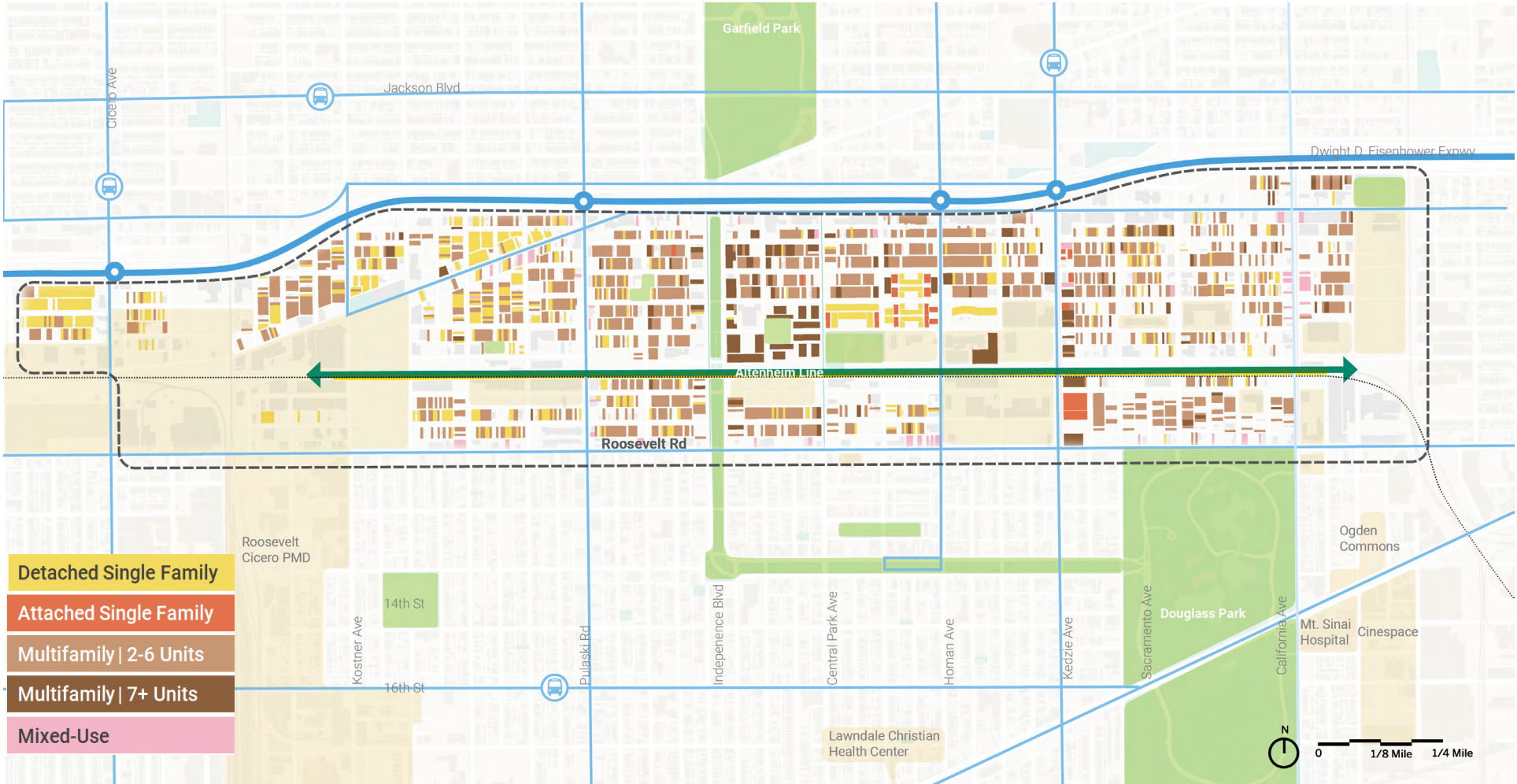


Homan Square Community Center



Community basketball court

# Housing Market



Existing Building Uses

## Housing Stock Composition & Condition

The blocks around the proposed Altonheim Line are predominately residential, and host to over 4,280 housing units. With few exceptions, most buildings were built between 1890 and the 1920s. Over 50% of all residential buildings are two-story walk-ups with two or more units. The older building stock is a defining characteristic within the community. Renovation and maintenance are issues for some older buildings.

The North Lawndale Quality of Life Plan describes many historic greystones as having 'serious building condition issues' which can 'limit the options of residents to purchase or improve properties because of the considerable costs associated with bringing some buildings – especially large, historic structures – up to code.'

At the same time, these homes are valued for their solidity, stability, resilience and character. There is also substantial new housing development, particularly associated with the Homan Square district, and other infill developments.

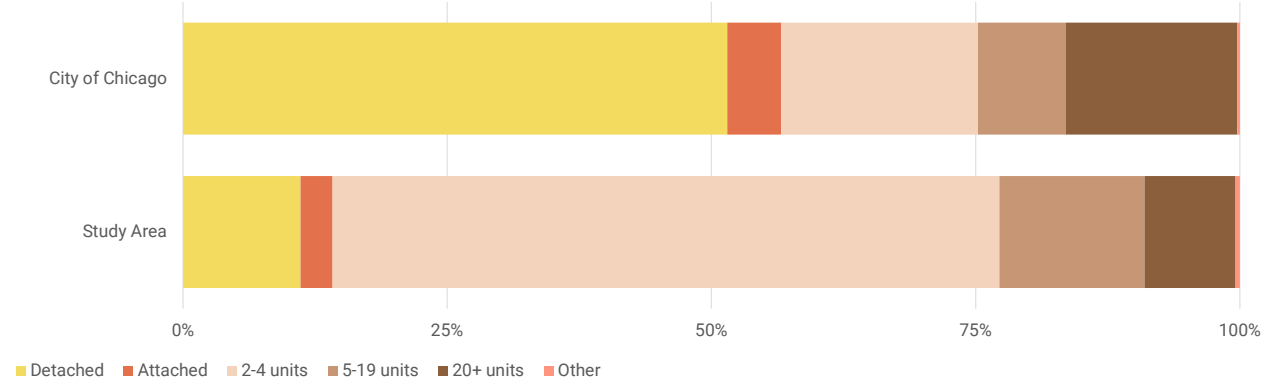
## Home Sales Prices on the Rise

Rising home prices suggest an improving for-sale housing market. There were approximately 80-100 sales per year from 2016 to 2020, meaning approximately 10% of the total owner-occupied building inventory exchanged hands annually. Nearly 50% of sales each year are two-flat properties, 15% are single-family, and 20% are three to four flat properties. Over the past five years the median sales prices for single family homes increased by 120% from \$73,000 to \$160,000. Sales prices for two-flats increased by 214% from \$61,000 to \$191,000.

Rising home prices are a clear indicator of stronger demand for residential buildings in North Lawndale and an opportunity for existing homeowners in the community to build wealth. However, rising prices are also a cause for concern as they are also a primary indicator of gentrification. Now is the time to enact policies and regulations that help prevent displacement and retain existing residents.

Current market rents range from \$500 to \$1,100 per unit. Rent for commercially managed properties without legal rent protections increased at a modest, below general inflation, rate of 1.7% annually from

## CHICAGO VS STUDY AREA HOUSING UNIT TYPE, 2019 (US CENSUS)





2015 through 2021. The gradual pace of rent growth in the area lags behind the increase in for sale housing price growth.

### Signs of Investment

Aging residential inventory has necessitated improvements to the existing housing stock. According to City permit data for the Study Area, approximately 140 residential renovation permits were issued from 2016 through 2020 valued at over \$12 million in investment. The average reported permit value was approximately \$100,000 and the scope of improvements ranged from minor stairwell upgrades to full interior renovations. Many permits were issued to entirely change the number of units, due to the addition of a dwelling unit or deconversion of a previously multi-unit home into a single-family home.

### Prioritizing Homeownership

The foremost housing strategy included within the Quality of Life Plan is to ‘activate homeowners and promote homeownership.’ While North Lawndale is home to many longtime residents, the neighborhood reports homeownership rates far below the City of Chicago. Within the Study Area, homeownership declined from 26% of all households in 2010 to 22% in 2019. Over

the same period, the homeownership rate citywide hovered near 45% of all households. According to Cook County Assessors data, 42% of all residential buildings (1,040 households) received a homeownership exemption in 2020. While the overall homeownership rate of the Study Area is about 22%, the higher percentage of buildings claiming a homeowners’ exemption suggests that many are living in multi-unit buildings and renting additional units.

Homeowners predominately live in single family homes (42%) and 2-6 unit buildings (57%). Multi-unit buildings present a challenge to initiatives focused on promoting homeownership as properties typically have a higher purchase price and require more maintenance. However, multi-unit buildings can also provide an income stream for homeowners interested in renting additional dwelling units.

### Initiatives to Increase Homeownership

North Lawndale has grappled with population decline and increasingly vacant land for decades. According to 311 data, there were 151 unique abandoned buildings reported within the Study Area between 2015 and 2018. Historically, abandoned buildings that became a threat to public safety were acquired by the

Proposed housing typologies



Proposed housing typologies



City and demolished or otherwise stabilized. 635 parcels are currently vacant and publicly owned within the Study Area. Vacant public parcels are interspersed throughout the Study Area. While some parcels are more suitable for commercial development, the majority of vacant publicly owned parcels are within residential blocks and best suited for residential development.

To increase homeownership, nonprofits in North Lawndale are seeking to leverage publicly owned land for construction of new single-family homes. The Lawndale Christian Development Corporation (LCDC) and United Power are currently piloting the Reclaiming Communities campaign which aspires to build 1,000 affordably priced homes on both the South Side and West Side of Chicago. The Reclaiming Communities campaign has begun an initial phase in which the City cleared the title, conducted sitework, and then transferred 100 parcels in a limited number of blocks to private ownership for development. Construction costs for the new single-family homes are projected to range from \$250,000 to \$300,000 while the target sale price is approximately \$200,000. The gap between

construction costs and sale price will be offset by a variety of public and philanthropic funding sources.

Still in an initial phase, the block-by-block approach of building new homes on publicly owned vacant land is a model which can be replicated across the Altenheim Line Framework Plan area. Both the Reclaiming Communities campaign and similar efforts elsewhere emphasize the need for a block-by-block redevelopment approach where an entire block is concurrently improved. Investing in a block at scale, rather than improving singular parcels scattered across several blocks, is far more attractive to prospective buyers who seek sense of community, neighborhood stability, and return on their initial investment.

*Neighborhood infill examples*



### **Ensuring Access to Affordable Housing through Multifamily Development**

There are nearly 1,600 commercially managed multifamily residential units in the Study Area. Over half of the existing multifamily units currently have legal rent restrictions ensuring long-term affordability for residents. Recent multifamily development in the Study Area has concentrated near Roosevelt Road and Independence Boulevard. Since 2015, nearly 330 new rent-restricted multifamily units were delivered split between three projects. In the same period, no market rate rental development occurred.

Current rents remain well below legal rent limits for new affordable housing developments. The future direction of rents is unclear, given the high recent rate of increase in the price of for sale units in the same area. The absence of rents at or near the level required to support new construction necessitates that multifamily development be reliant upon Low-Income Housing Tax Credits to be financially feasible in the near term.

As a result, multifamily development

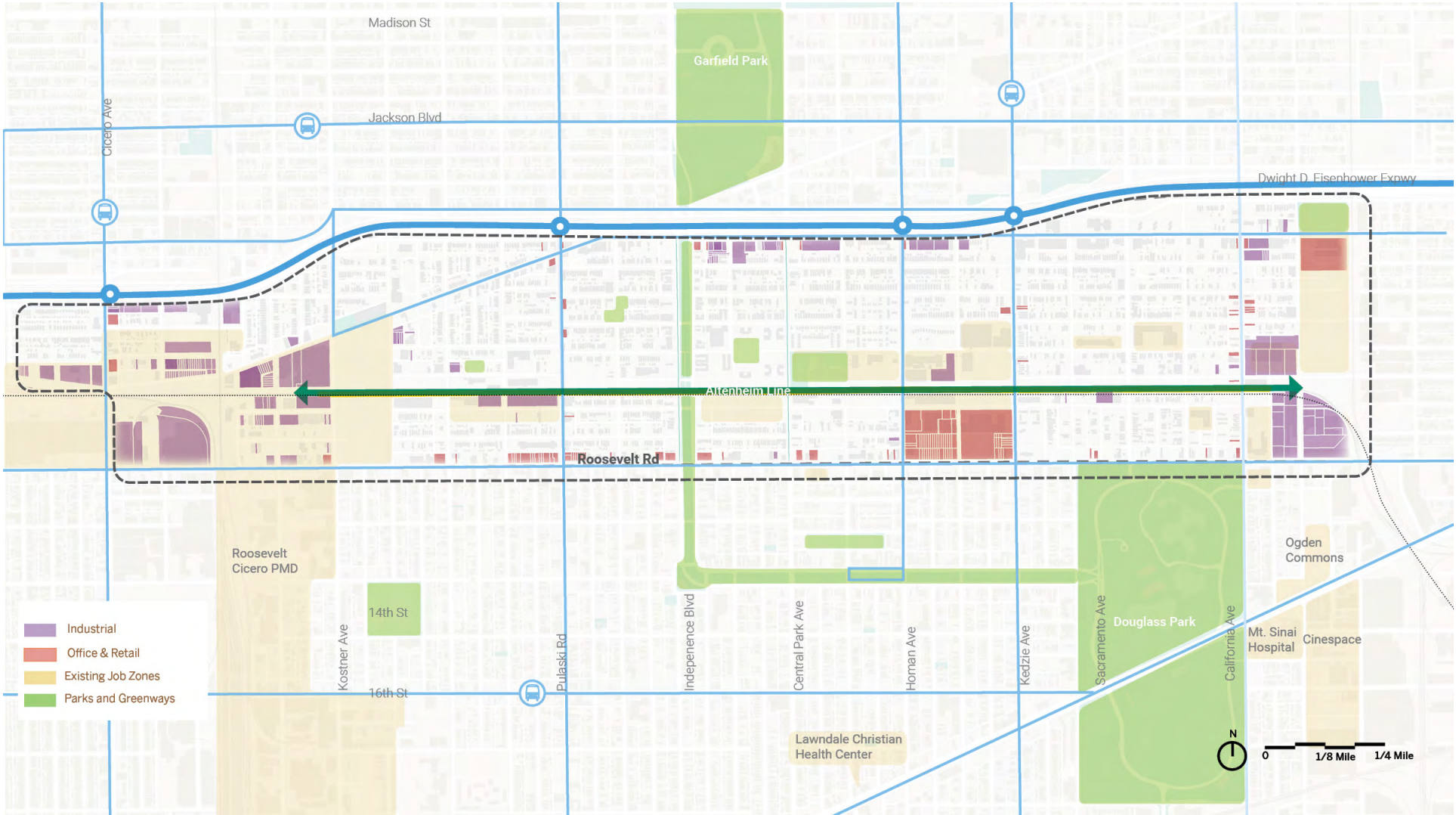
will continue to occur at a steady rate of approximately 100-units per year in the area, as tax credits and other public funding sources become available. If rents gradually increase for existing rental units, the potential for additional market rate residential development will also steadily increase.

Substantial public-realm or catalytic private investments could expedite the shifting price and value landscape and accelerate the feasibility of market rate multifamily development, which is not currently considered to be a near-term opportunity.

*New affordable multi-family housing*



# Commercial Market



Employment Locations

Commercial activity in the study area is focused on Roosevelt Road. The Lawndale Plaza shopping center, located at Kedzie and Roosevelt is the largest center. The plaza is anchored by Leamington Foods, a local grocer. It also has several vacant spaces. Other commercial businesses in the study are located almost entirely on Roosevelt Road which is the location of several fast food restaurants, convenience, phone and liquor stores as well as gas stations. There are concentrations around Independence Boulevard and Pulaski Avenue.

### Business Mix

There are over 70 businesses, occupying 300,000 square feet of commercial property across the area. Most businesses are food services and drinking places (22 businesses), food and beverage (15), health and beauty (9), or clothing stores (4). Approximately 20% of the total commercial tenants are national franchises. However, the vast majority of commercial tenants are locally owned retailers, and operate in spaces of under 2,000 square feet.

### Retail Centers within the Study Area

Retail activity located along Roosevelt Road, and clustered around two north-south arterials: Homan Avenue and Pulaski Road. The largest shopping center, Lawndale Plaza, is located at the intersection of Homan Avenue and Roosevelt Road. This retail center consists of over 150,000 square feet divided between approximately 10 retail spaces. The majority of national retailers in the Lawndale Line area are located within Lawndale Plaza, including a PNC Bank, Taco Bell, McDonalds, O'Reilly Auto Parts and more.

Despite the presence of multiple major credit tenants, the retail center struggles to maintain full occupancy. The two largest spaces are

Retailer Type	Business Count
Restaurant & Drinking Places	22
Food & Beverage	15
General Stores	10
Health & Beauty	9
Automotive/Gas Station	6
Clothing	4
Pharmacy	3
Bank	2
Grocery	1

a grocery store and former movie theater, 40,000 and 50,000 square feet respectively. The grocery store, a Freshway Market, is the only full service grocery store within the Study Area. The grocery store operator changed multiple times over the past decade. Prior to the current tenant, the space was home to Leamington Foods. Leamington Foods opened in 2020 after receiving a \$1.2 million Neighborhood Opportunity Fund Grant from the City for a \$2.4 million renovation.

The former movie theater is currently vacant and listed for sale. In addition to the vacant theater, five in-line shop spaces are currently vacant. Collectively, the vacant space within the shopping center accounts for nearly 45% of the total square feet.

The retail cluster at Pulaski Road and Roosevelt Road is far less concentrated, although it is anchored by the 29,000 square foot Jazz Plaza. The strip center currently includes a combination of health and beauty and fast food tenants. The largest space within the Jazz Plaza is vacant along with two others, a combined vacancy of 18,000 square feet (65%).

The majority of retailers along the remainder of Pulaski Avenue are locally owned restaurants or health and beauty stores in stand-alone single-story retail buildings.

### Recent Retail Investment

From 2016 to 2021, the Study Area only saw modest investments in commercial properties. City data reports 11 commercial permits were issued in the five-year period with a combined reported value of \$18.9 million. The renovation of 1111 S Homan from a former bank to a campus for the North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN) accounted for \$14 million of the total retail commercial investment. The new NLEN campus includes a Wintrust Bank, beelove® café, and NLEN office space. Renovation of the NLEN campus required a \$10 million capital campaign that received support from the Chicago Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (\$2.5M), JPMorgan Chase (\$1M), multiple foundations and the Chicago Community Trust. The beelove® café is a social enterprise through NLEN which prioritizes local employment and fostering community connections.

### Retail Leakage

Retail growth is contingent upon capturing unrealized sales potential within a defined 'trade area,' an approximate geography from where the majority (typically over 60%) of consumers are drawn. The Study Area retail trade area (Retail Trade Area) spans from

approximately the Eisenhower Expressway to the north, Ogden Avenue to the South, Douglass Park to the east and Kildare Avenue to the west. The Retail Trade Area was defined through analysis of surrounding competitive retail locations, a seven-minute drive time (the typical urban area drive time for neighborhood retail centers), and cell phone data tracking visitor home locations for customers visiting Lawndale Plaza.

Unrealized sales potential is illustrated through retail leakage analyses. Retail gaps or 'leakage' occurs when the cumulative household spending potential within a trade area exceeds the retail sales observed across existing businesses. Leakage analysis for the Retail Trade Area indicates several retail industry categories are presently leaking sales. While not all retailers are appropriate for the Study Area, the following retailer categories are presently leaking sales and may be suitable for improvement of existing retailers or attracting new tenants: Grocery Stores, Building Materials/Garden Equipment, Sporting Goods, and Food Services & Drinking Places.

### Food and Beverage Consumer Patterns

Despite recent investments to the Lawndale Plaza Freshway Market, the retailer continues



A Pete's Fresh Market outside the market area



North Lawndale Employment Network Campus

to attract consumer foot traffic well below other grocers in the surrounding areas. According to Placer.ai data, the former Leamington Foods attracted under 11,700 visitors per month in August 2021. The same data from January 2022 indicates nearly a 15% increase in monthly visitors since the change in ownership, up to 13,300 monthly. However, surrounding grocers including multiple Pete's Fresh Market locations (2333 W Madison, 2526 W Cermak Road) report substantially higher monthly visitor counts in excess of 60,000 unique monthly visitors. Consumer cell phone data from these surrounding groceries indicate households within the Study Area are opting to travel outside the Retail Trade Area to shop at different grocery stores despite the presence of alternatives closer to home.

The Retail Trade Area is estimated to be leaking approximately \$10 million in food and beverage sales annually. However, the underperformance of existing retailers suggests food and beverage retail demand is leaking due to consumer preference rather than lack of available retailers.

The combination of convenience stores and grocers presently available would meet Retail Trade Area household demand were foot traffic at the Freshway more comparable to other retailers. With continued improvements to the current retail properties, products and pricing available at existing grocers and food retailers, the full demand could be absorbed within existing space. Small-scale food and beverage retailers may be viable over time, however they would detract from the sales demand available to existing stores unless preceded by population growth.

### Other Retail Opportunities

Building Materials/Garden Equipment, Sporting Goods, and Food Services & Drinking Places categories each report sales leakage as well.

The lack of home improvement stores within the Study Area results in over \$9 million in reported sales leakage. Consumer foot traffic at the closest big box home improvement stores located on Cicero Avenue and 26th Street, including Home Depot and Menards, have a limited draw of visitors from the Study Area. The relatively low levels of patronization to home improvement stores from residents with the Study Area is likely attributable to the high rate of renters (78%) in the Study



Pet supply store



Home improvement retail

Area. Hardware and garden equipment stores will become increasingly viable opportunities as the Study Area sees additional residential investment and increases in homeownership through nonprofit and City initiatives.

Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music retailers also presently leak approximately \$3.7 million in sales outside the Retail Trade Area. The existing sales leakage could support 1-2 smaller retailers, up to 7,500 square feet collectively. Residents mentioned a desire for both bike shops and bookstores during community meetings.

Recreational retailers will be further attracted to the Study Area following any substantial investment into the Altnheim Line which will drive additional visitors from other neighborhoods. The combined buying power of existing residents and visitors will likely be needed to support these retailers.

The final retail category most likely to see growth within the Retail Trade Area is Food Services and Drinking Places which currently leaks \$5.2 million in sales annually. Consumers are typically less likely to travel further from home for restaurants than they would other more specialized retailers. Approximately 8,000 square feet, or 2-3 restaurants, would absorb the leaking

demand. The Study Area is relatively well-served by fast-food but is underserved by fast-casual and sit-down restaurants. Common fast-casual food and beverage retailer types, such as pizza stores or cafes, are either entirely absent or undersupplied and should be targets for future retail infill.

#### Future Retail Opportunities

During community meetings, residents expressed interest in additional commercial development, particularly restaurants, bookstores, bike shops, groceries, and entertainment venues. Many desired commercial development at a neighborhood scale, where residents could walk between establishments or buildings located in close proximity, creating the sense of a main street or central commercial corridor. Commercial potential is strongest near high-traffic corridors with existing retail activity.

In the near term, the focus should be on activating presently vacant commercial space. Ongoing vacancy is likely due to the pandemic which must stabilize prior to the addition of more space.



Recently opened restaurant in North Lawndale



North Lawndale storefronts

Commercial infill within the two major existing nodes on Roosevelt – at Homan and Pulaski – is most achievable, while other intersections with major arterials are also plausible long term.

Given the limited recent private sector investment, substantial public-sector assistance will be required to facilitate investment, and relatively greater opportunity for small-scale commercial users, development within the Study Area should be geographically targeted and smaller-scale.

#### Institutional Properties

The Altnheim Line runs adjacent to several significant institutional users which occupy large commercial spaces as a sign of the declining demand in the area. Nonprofits including UCAN and the Foundation for Homan Square are both centrally located, near Central Park Avenue and Homan Avenue respectively. UCAN is a social services organization which opened their new North Lawndale headquarters in 2016. The \$46 million campus investment includes a group home, classrooms and athletic facilities.

The Foundation for Homan Square is located within Nichols Tower. Vacant since 1987, the



UCAN in North Lawndale

14-story, 35,000 square foot building was renovated in 2015 and is now a hub for non-profit organizations, multi-media education, youth leadership and development, and job training.

Major tenants in surrounding commercial properties include the Chicago Police Department, DRW College Prep (90,000 SF), the North Lawndale YMCA (25,000 SF) and the Homan Square Community Center/ Chicago Park District Fitness Center (50,000 SF).

Much of the large-scale commercial investment over the past 2-decades has been championed by the Foundation for Homan Square and is centrally located within the Homan Square Campus. However, there continue to be large vacant properties within the campus that require activation. Two of the largest vacant properties are located at 3333 W Arthington (Sears Administration Building) and 3245 W Arthington (Allstate Building). The two buildings combined are over 600,000 square feet. Both properties, in addition to an adjacent parking garage, are currently privately held and listed for sale.

### Broader Commercial Initiatives

Through its Tulsa 1920 Project, the Steans Foundation has committed \$25 million to create a vibrant commercial corridor of Black-owned businesses in North Lawndale. To begin encouraging Black businesses to relocate to the Study Area, the Foundation plans to provide free rent to an initial group of Chicago businesses interested in opening a second location. The Foundation is gradually implementing the Tulsa 1920 vision, acquiring four properties as of 2021 within the Study Area that will be used kickstart the initiative. The long-term vision is to attract 2,000 Black-owned businesses to the corridor, creating an epicenter of Black commerce comparable to the 'Black Wall Street' in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the early 20th century.

The Foundation for Homan Square also continues to advocate for large-scale activation of vacant properties. A 2019 Greater Homan Square Strategic Development Plan defines a vision for additional mixed-use and non-residential development.

The Sears Administration Building and Allstate Building have both been contemplated for artist live/work and makerspace, non-profits, small businesses, retail and multifamily housing. Additional discussions with stakeholders indicate the following uses could be well-suited for large commercial properties in the Study Area:

- Call center – well-suited for building reuse, call centers can occupy over 100,000 SF and house a substantial number of jobs.
- Trade school / workforce training – non-profit partners expressed an interest in building a 50,000 SF+ trade school in conjunction with City Colleges.
- Commercial kitchen / event space – aging buildings are well-suited for creative repurposing into unique event spaces. Similar models in Chicago, such as Lacuna Lofts, have been successful in rehabbing vacant industrial properties into unique co-working, event, and catering space.
- Studio and/or medical vendors – nearby community employment hubs, including Cinespace Studios and Mt Sinai Hospital, drive demand for third-party vendors in close proximity. Vendors may include caterers, security companies, storage, lighting companies, last-mile production, etc.

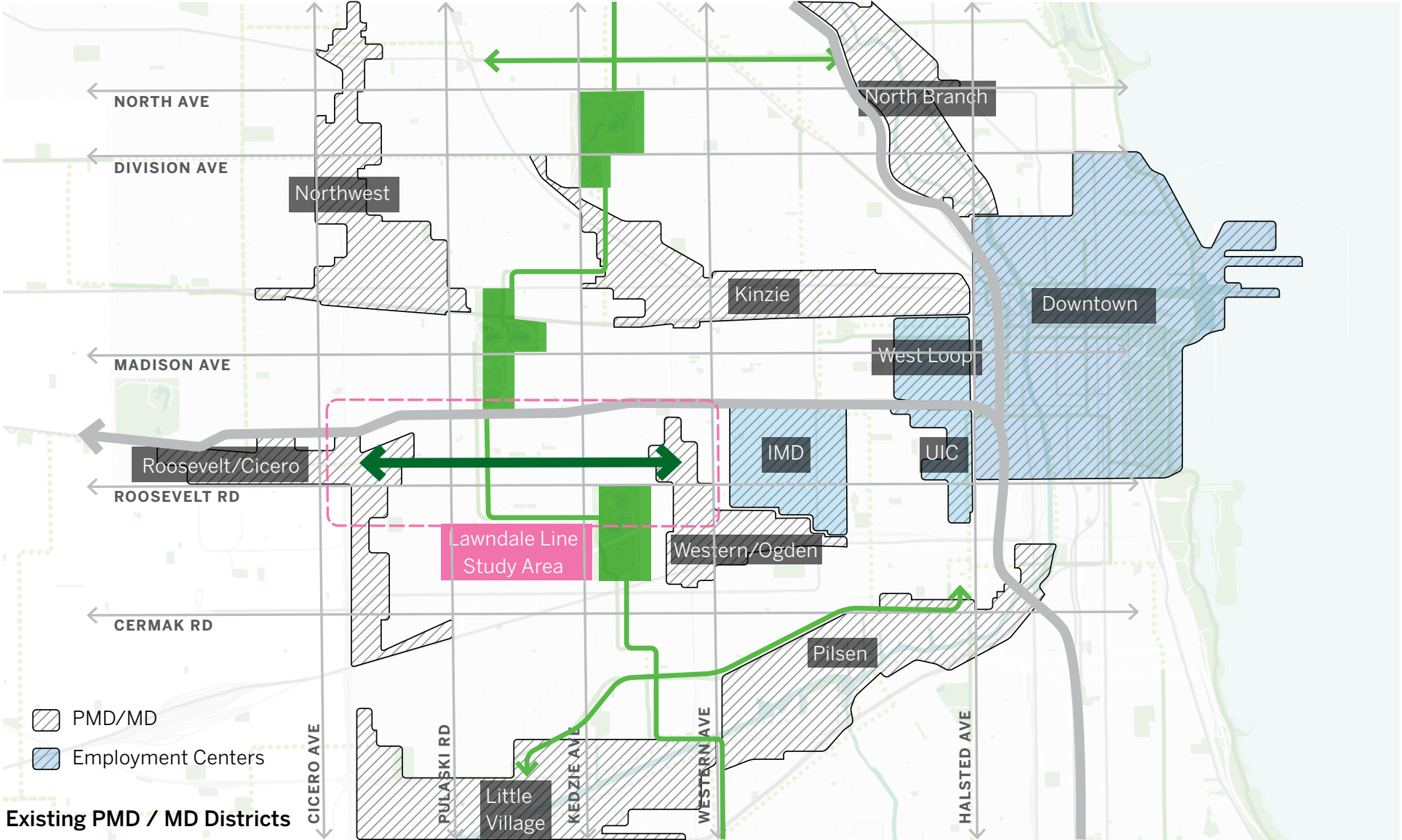
Large commercial properties are likely to require a combination of users to be successful. The ultimate mix of tenants will be dependent upon additional analysis of the building conditions, including ceiling heights and building floorplates. As has historically been required for large commercial renovations in the Study Area, renovation of both the Administration Building and Allstate Building are anticipated to require public assistance.



Cinespace in North Lawndale



# Industrial Market



The Study Area is strategically located on Chicago's West Side with several major arterials passing through it and providing access to the interstate highway network via the Eisenhower Expressway. Industrial activity is primarily concentrated in two clusters that bookend the Lawndale Line area:

- (1) Roosevelt Road and Kostner Avenue at the west
- (2) Roosevelt Road and Washtenaw Avenue at the east

There are currently 2.6 million square feet of occupied industrial space in the area. Industrial buildings are primarily manufacturing (22% of all SF) and warehousing (69%).

The building stock tends to be older, with few exceptions. The median age of industrial properties within the Area is 81 years old.

During community meetings, residents expressed openness to additional industrial development to the extent that new development provides jobs for neighborhood residents. Current employment data shows that 98% of workers within the Study Area commute from elsewhere within the region. Additional industrial development has the



1. Roosevelt Road & Kostner Avenue



2. Roosevelt Road & Washtenaw Avenue

potential to help connect residents with jobs and increase the number of residents that both live and work in the Area.

Future development should account for the training necessary to hire the local workforce to increase the live/work ratio. In particular, City initiatives that provide land or public assistance to industrial developers should include community benefits agreements to maximize the local benefit.

### Recent Investment Indicates a Growing Industrial Market

The Area has seen investment interest in multiple properties in recent years. In 2020, the Will Group K-Town Business Center, a 60,000 square foot light manufacturing facility, was built on a 3.3-acre site at Polk Street and Kilpatrick Avenue.

The \$20 million facility was made possible through grants from the State's Commerce Department as well as a loan from the Advantage Illinois program. The completed development created 100 jobs, at least 20 of which were set aside for community residents. The Will Group is working with local institutions to create employment pipelines to continue to recruit more members of the community.

In addition, the City of Chicago recently announced Related Midwest and 548 Development have been selected to develop a 302,000 square foot industrial and innovation complex on the Invest South/West site at Roosevelt Road & Kostner Avenue. The site includes two sizeable parcels that flank the north and south side of the Altenheim line, a combined 21 acres.

The \$38.4 million center will include two primary buildings. Each proposed building is approximately 180,000 square feet. There will be approximately 170 parking spaces and 27 loading docks on the north parcel and 200 parking spaces and 27 loading docks on the south parcel. Anticipated tenants include freight, distribution, and cold storage users. The development will also include the North Lawndale Innovation Center, which will house workforce training programs, retail, and offices for community members. The Innovation Center buildings will be occupied by New Covenant Community Development Corporation and Black Men United. The development is expected to create 700 temporary and permanent jobs.



### Future Opportunities

As evidenced by recent investment and national trends, the industrial market will continue to be a strong opportunity for the area.

It is strategically located with access to Chicago's major arterial street network and the regional expressway network. The Eisenhower, Kennedy and Dan Ryan Expressways can all be reached within a few minutes. This area is also close to the expanding West Loop and Fulton Market office and mixed-use districts, the Illinois Medical District, the Western Avenue Industrial Corridor and a nearby film and TV production cluster. Businesses in this area can be strategically positioned to supply and service businesses and major institutions in nearby economic hubs, as well as those further afield.

Future industrial development will be limited by the availability of parcels that meet industrial building and parking requirements. Industrial buildings can range in size from 50,000 square feet to hundreds of thousands of square feet.

Given the community's focus on job-generating uses, industrial development conducive for manufacturing tenants should be prioritized, as manufacturing yields a greater number of jobs than other industrial space alternatives (e.g., distribution). Manufacturing is the second largest industry sector in the area and the sixth largest industry employing residents.





# 3 Equitable Investment



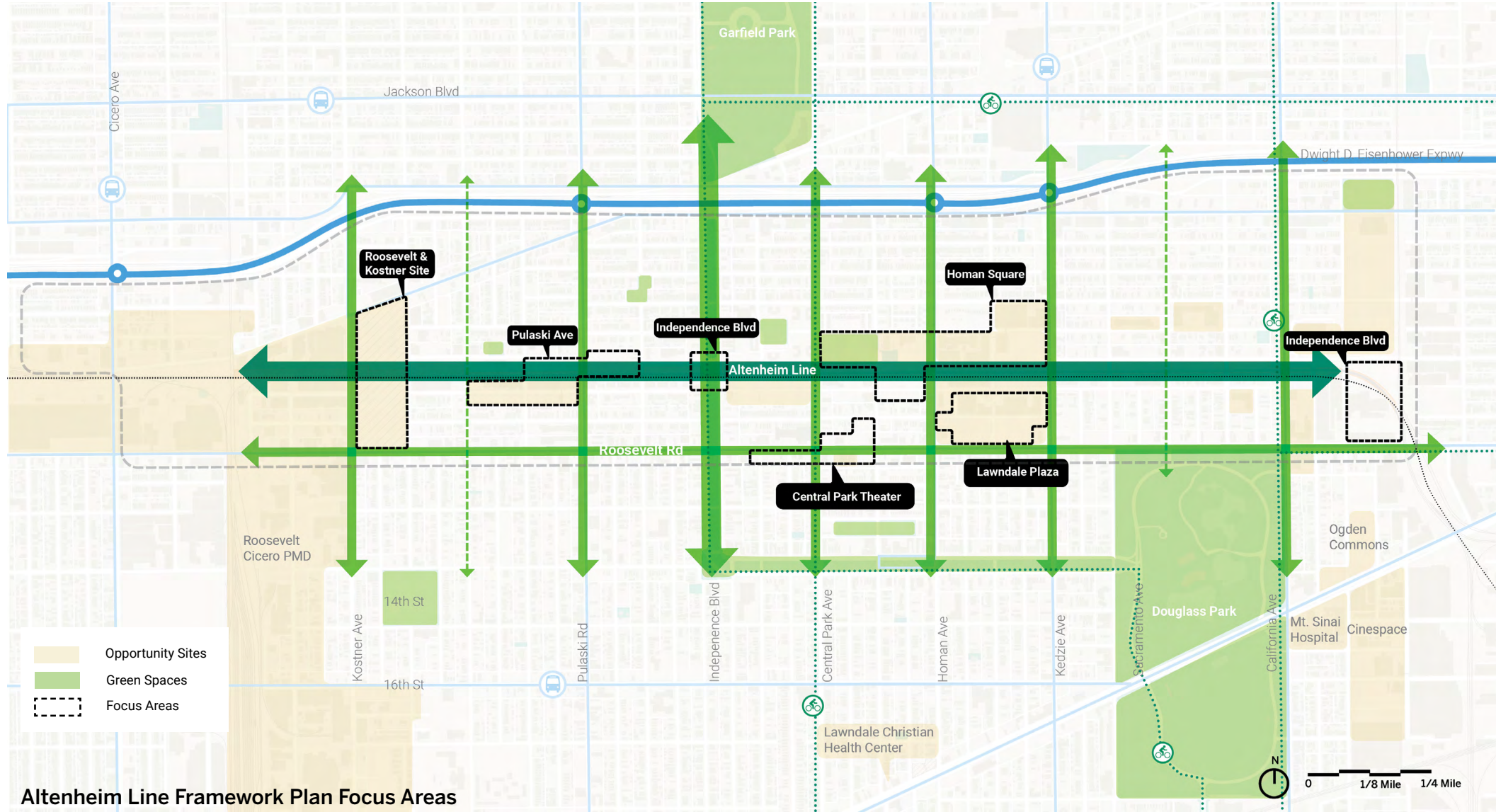
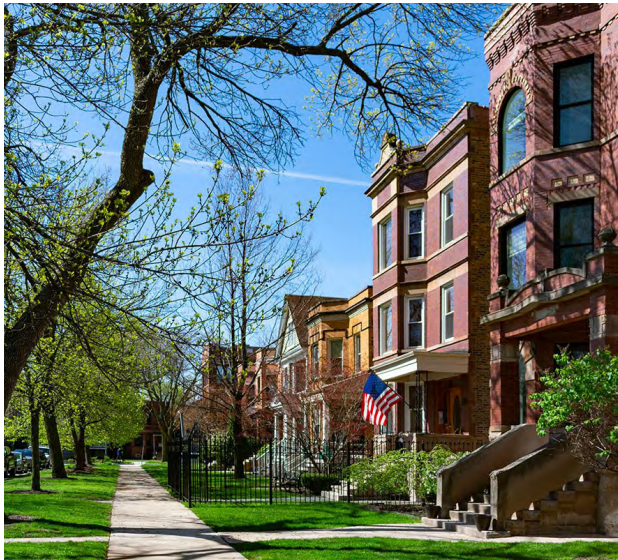
# Equitable Investment Framework

This plan is focused around several principles and priorities to support equitable community development within the study area.

Investment in a large-scale community amenity such as the Altenheim Line trail will bring multiple health, connectivity and public space benefits. This framework plan and seeks opportunities for new development that can deliver local jobs, retail amenities and renovated and new housing.

Careful management and application of resources will be needed to address the risk of displacement for current residents, in the event that housing and other living costs increase.

To mitigate these potential impacts the neighborhood, City of Chicago, Cook County and philanthropic partners have multiple tools that can be deployed to support and include existing residents and businesses in future change.



Altenheim Line Framework Plan Focus Areas

# Equity Objectives

## Support Existing Residents

Prices had been rising in the area along the 606 before it was installed. With only a limited number of housing policies in place, the continued increase in housing values along the line negatively impacted some longtime residents as rents increased beyond an affordable level. As a predominantly low-income area, community residents have raised concerns for a similar trend occurring in relation to the Altenheim Line elevated trail. Working in coordination, DPD and DOH must leverage existing retention and maintenance assistance programs to ensure housing remains affordable for existing residents.



## Renovate and Reactivate

There are a large number of existing buildings that can be reactivated as housing and commercial space. We have seen this recently with Nichols Tower and DRW College Prep. The existing character of the neighborhood can be preserved through re-use of heritage buildings.

This provides the opportunity to reactivate residential units as well as explore reuse or conversion of existing commercial and retail buildings to build capacity in the neighborhood without only relying on new construction.



## Leverage City-owned Land for Long-term Affordability

City-owned land gives the community significant leverage over the future of these sites and the strategic disposition of city-owned land within the study area because the City can prioritize development that advances community goals and priorities.

This land has the potential to support a range of investment to achieve the overall vision, and preserve long term affordability within the study area.



## Focus on Equitable Development and Job Generating Uses

Job creation for residents and supporting local economic development is key to this plan having a positive impact on this community and anti-displacement.

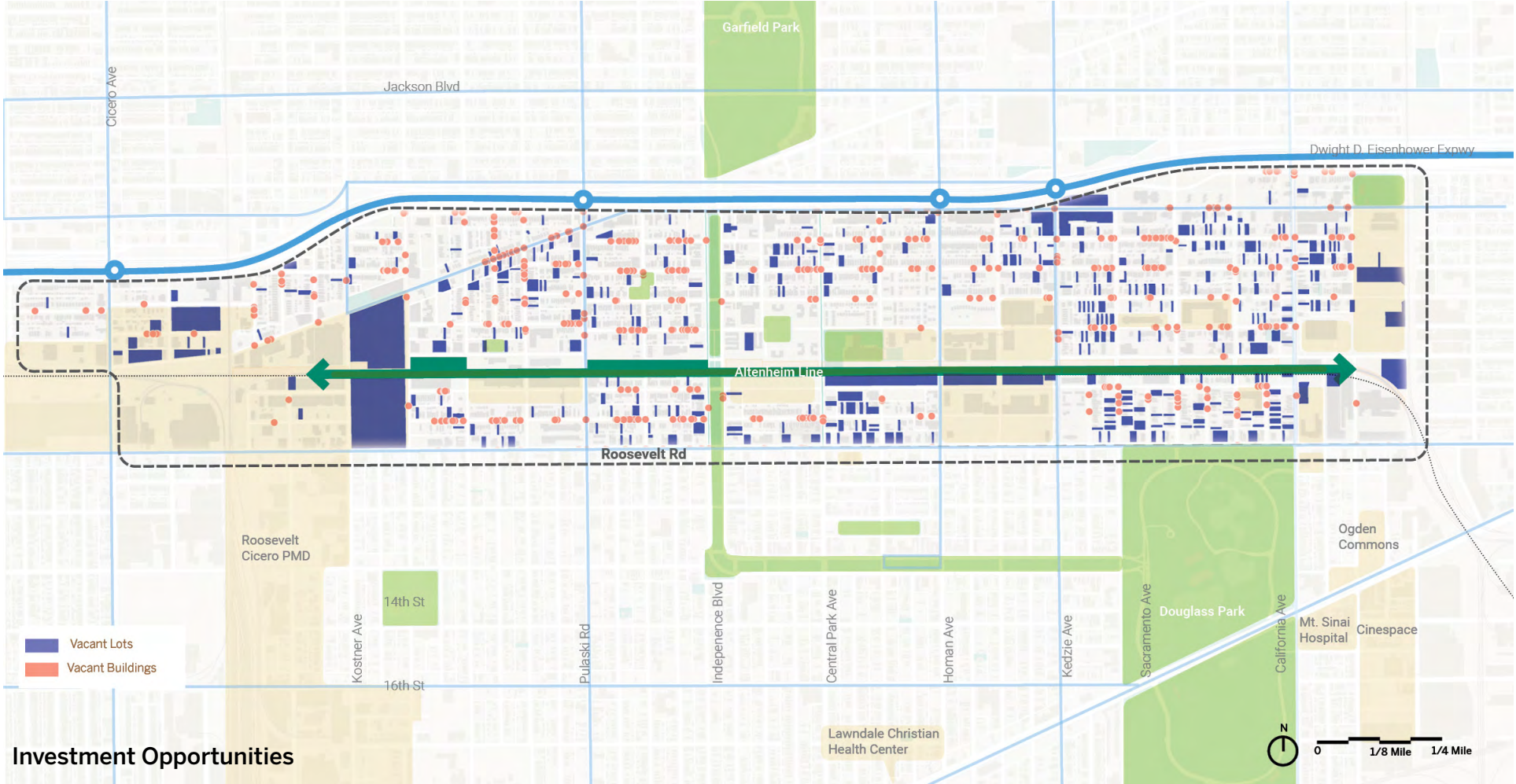
This plan looks to create more opportunities for small businesses to scale-up and supports efforts like Tulsa 1920 and North Lawndale Employment Network to build black-owned and local businesses in the community.



# Anti-Displacement Strategies

Significant investment in public realm improvements can have a catalytic impact, oftentimes stimulating subsequent development activity by the private sector in the surrounding area. This inflow of investment can accelerate neighborhood change, increasing home

prices and leading to displacement pressures for existing residents. This was a key lesson learned from the City's first rails to trails linear open space on the northwest side: the 606. This is a different market context, and this plan provides specific strategies to limit risk.



Investment Opportunities

In the context of an already rising market, and with only a limited number of housing policies in place, the increase in housing value along the line negatively impacted some long-time residents as rents increased beyond an affordable level.

Therefore, it is critical to have policies and programs that support housing affordability in place before any investments are made. Catalytic public investments must benefit and serve existing residents and businesses and must be designed to avoid displacement. Within North Lawndale, there are already indicators of increasing housing prices – signs that displacement due to housing costs may already be occurring.

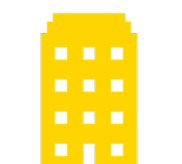
Prioritizing equity means that anti-displacement policies and related programs should be intentionally designed prior to catalytic investments to ensure that all residents are able to benefit from and gain access to the wealth-building opportunities provided by development occurring in city neighborhoods.



Increase Affordable Homeownership



Expanding Downpayment Assistance Programs



Building Affordable Rental Housing



Shared Ownership/ Co-op Housing



Preserving Existing Lower-Cost Housing



Community Land Trust

# Anti-Displacement Strategies

To preserve affordable units and avoid displacement, three key housing priorities should be addressed in the near term in the area surrounding the Altenheim Line, including:

1. The preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing
2. Investment in homeownership initiatives
3. Development of income restricted affordable housing

## Preserving Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Units

Naturally occurring affordable housing is existing market-rate housing affordable to households earning less than 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). Rents and pricing of these units are not legally restricted and therefore are at risk of losing affordability over time as markets evolve following major investments. Without appropriate planning, the NOAH stock within the Study Area could decrease as increased demand for housing in the Study Area may cause rents to rise. The following programs and strategies should be targeted in the Study Area to protect NOAH units:

- Neighborhood Lending Program (NLP) – The NLP provides loans and grants to single family and 2-4 multifamily property

owners to help cover home improvement expenses. The loans of up to \$15,000 can be used for down payment assistance, closing cost assistance, or to reduce a monthly mortgage payment.

- Property Tax Abatements – Property taxes represent a major expense for homeowners. Particularly in an area with quickly appreciating home values, the corresponding increase in property taxes can reduce affordability for longtime homeowners. Property tax abatements can be used to reduce the impact. The City and County previously considered programs for the area surrounding the 606, such as a grant exemption or defined abatement period, to reduce the impact of rapidly rising taxes. The City has also considered a Community Land Trust ‘Opt-In’ program for homeowners who wish to place their homes in the Chicago Community Land Trust in exchange for reduced property taxes and/or a home improvement grant.

## Investing in Homeownership Initiatives

Homeownership is a critical means to ensuring residents can stay in their community as well as build wealth. Key tools to improve homeownership rates include:

- Public Property Disposition City land can be strategically transferred to private ownership for the development of affordable housing. The City Lots for Working Families (CL4WF) program sells vacant, city-owned lots to developers of affordable two-flat and single-family homes intended for buyers with incomes up to 140% AMI. The Reclaiming Communities Campaign is a similar initiative led by a joint venture between Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives and Lawndale Christian Development Corporation in partnership with United Power for Action and Justice to build affordable for-sale homes in North Lawndale. Under the first phase of Reclaiming Communities, the City will sell 250 city-owned lots to the joint venture for \$1 each and streamline the acquisition process to reduce construction costs.
- Down Payment Assistance Programs – Down payment assistance programs typically offer either a grant or second mortgage which reduces the upfront barrier to purchasing a home. The Building Neighborhoods and Affordable Housing Program (BNAH) provides grants of up to \$60,000 to prospective homeowners of single-family homes built under the Chicago Lots for Working

Families (CL4WF) program in Englewood Square, North Lawndale, South Lawndale, Humboldt Park/Garfield Park, and Woodlawn.

- Homeownership Education and Support Services – Housing Counseling Centers (HCC) are HUD-Certified Housing Counseling Agencies that provide resources and support for prospective first-time homeowners. Financial empowerment/homeownership counseling is already available through local nonprofits including the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation.
- Community Land Trust In exchange for upfront subsidies that increase affordability for prospective homebuyers, homeowners within a community land trust commit to reselling properties to other low or moderate-income families at an affordable rate. The Chicago Community Land Trust is a nonprofit managed by the City of Chicago. Homeowners within the program have access to pre-purchase homeownership counseling, post-purchase educational programming and estate planning.

## Developing Income Restricted Affordable Housing

Income-restricted affordable housing ensures long term affordability. Various funding mechanisms are available to support the development of income-restricted housing:

- Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) – LIHTC is a federal tax credit provided in exchange for affordable housing investments. The City awards credits annually for new and rehab developments affordable to households earning less than 80% of AMI. Rents must be kept affordable for an initial 15-year compliance period and a subsequent 15-year extended use period. LIHTC is used to fund approximately 90% of all affordable rental housing nationwide and would play a significant role in the development of new affordable units within the Study Area.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – Affordable housing requires sources beyond LIHTC. The City Multi-Family TIF Purchase-Rehab Program provides an additional 30-50% of the total cost to acquire and/or rehab multifamily and mixed-use buildings in need of substantial rehabilitation. Properties must have 5 or more units and be located within designated TIF districts on the South and West sides. Units

receiving TIF assistance must be made available to households earning no more than 80% of area median income for a 10-year period. The program is not currently available within the Study Area, but could be expanded.

- Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund (CLHTF) – The CLHTF seeks to provide housing stability for low-income households. The largest CLHTF program is the Rental Subsidy program which provides rent subsidies to owners of qualified buildings or developments. Units receiving a subsidy must be rented at an affordable level to households earning below 30% of area median income. The majority (50%+) of units are set aside for households earning less than 15% of area median income.

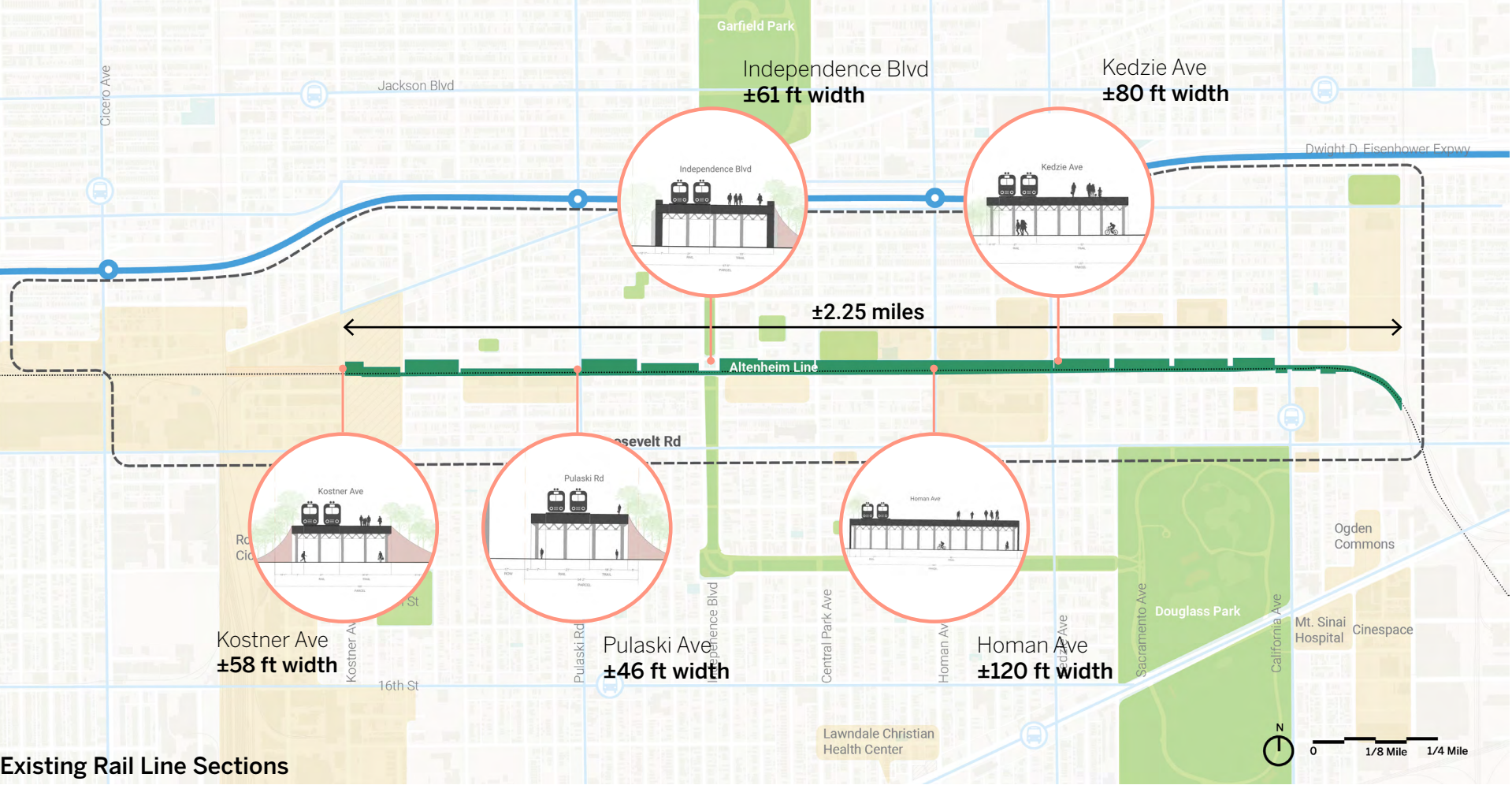
# 4 The Trail



# The Rail and Trail Opportunity

Rail land ownership includes the rail line and its operating alignment. Much of this is elevated. There is also land owned by the railroad at grade, particularly along the north side of the embankment. This was previously used as storage yards or to support rail operation.

These diverse conditions allow a dynamic response across recreation, programmable spaces celebrating history, art and culture and ecological restoration.



Existing Rail Line Sections



# Understanding Rails with Trails

Rails-with-Trails are publicly accessible bike and pedestrian trails located adjacent to active rail lines. They are valuable assets that create safe transportation networks for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as provide recreational and community programming spaces. Rails-with-Trails development has increased in the past 20 years as communities explore opportunities to reclaim underutilized portions of existing trail lines.

The required pedestrian clearance for one width of railroad track can range from the width of the track itself to as or as wide as a football field. Separation from rail operations are required which can be a constructed or natural barrier between the trail and railroad. The most common barrier used is fencing. The type and height of barrier varies based on existing site conditions and constraints. Safe rail crossings are an important consideration if the trail must cross the active rail corridor.



Metropolitan Branch Trail, DC/Maryland



Hockhocking Adena Bikeway, Ohio



San Clemente Beach Trail, California



Hiawatha LRT Trail, Minnesota

# Learning from other Trails

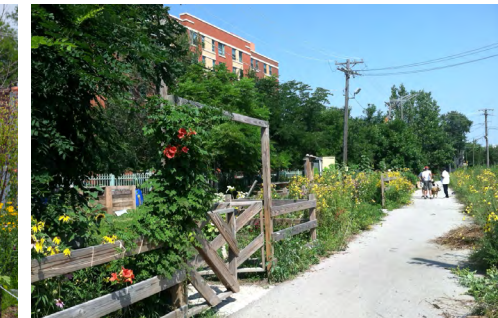
## The 606 Chicago, IL

- 2.7 mile linear park
- A multi-use trail on an abandoned rail line through Humboldt Park, Wicker Park, Bucktown and Logan Square communities
- Displacement and gentrification has become an issue in communities surrounding the trail



## El Paseo Trail (Proposed) Chicago, IL

- An at-grade 4.2-mile-long proposed multi-use path
- Will reactivate an abandoned rail line through Little Village and Pilsen communities
- DPD, CDOT and DOH working to develop tools and policies to address displacement before the project is designed



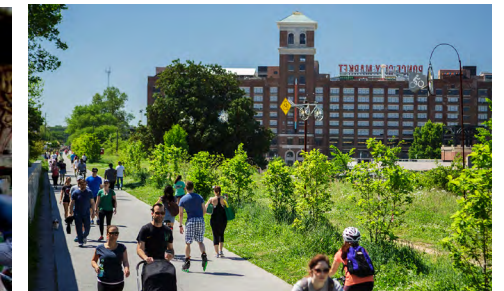
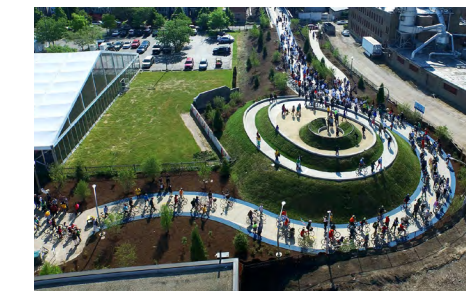
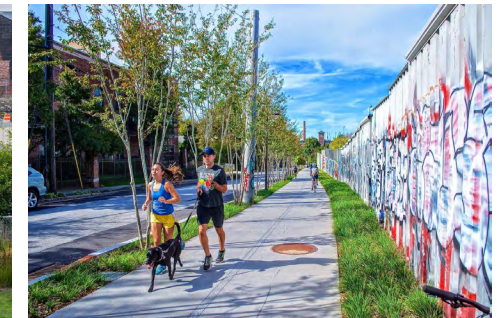
## Dequindre Cut Detroit, MI

- At-grade/below grade 2-mile-long, multi-use path
- Reactivated and abandoned rail line to the Detroit river
- Detroit Riverfront Conservancy works to program and manage the greenways



## Atlanta Beltline Atlanta, GA

- A circular greenway surrounding the city of Atlanta
- Reactivated an abandoned rail line, with future transit planned
- Connects communities together through a multi-use trail network



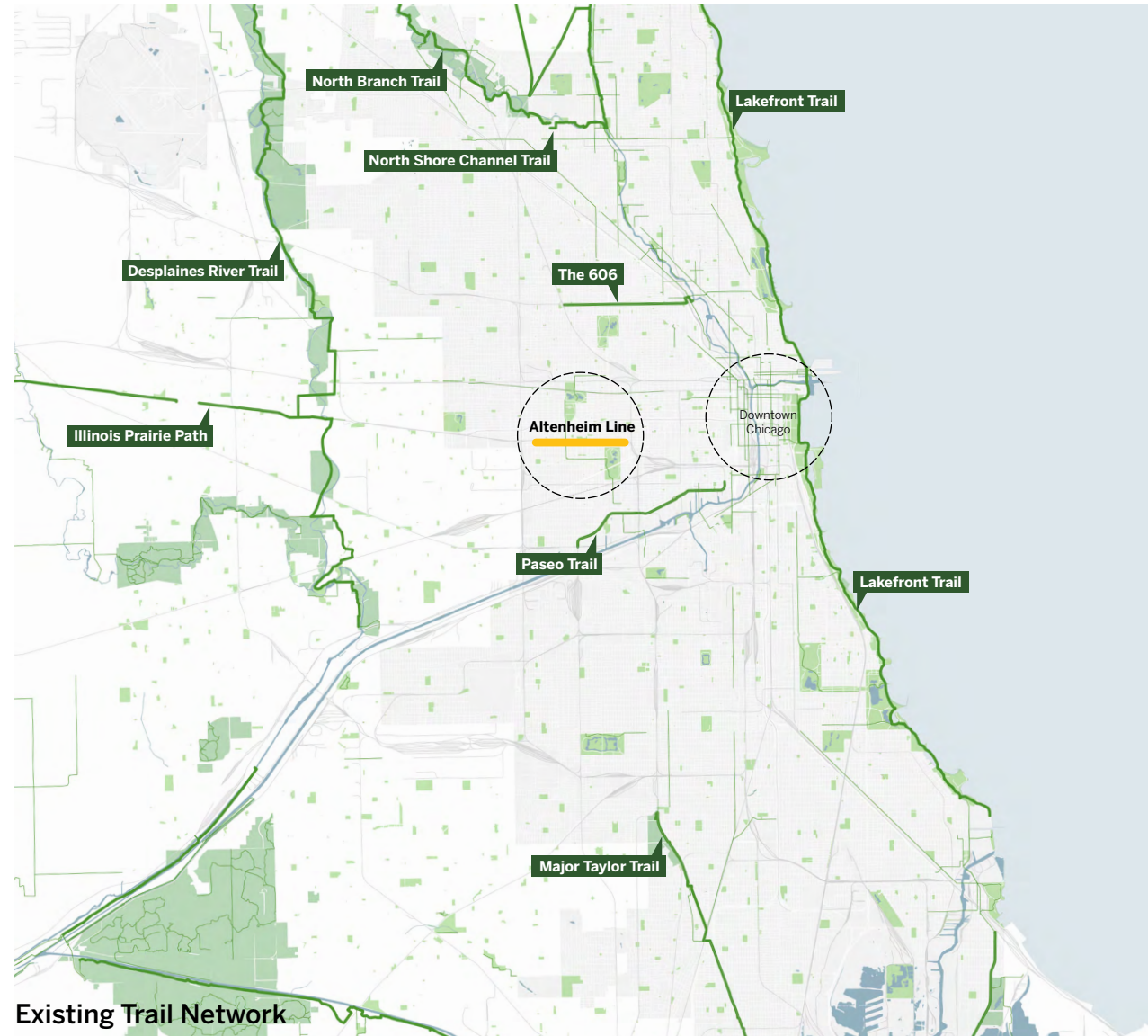


# Chicago's Trail Network

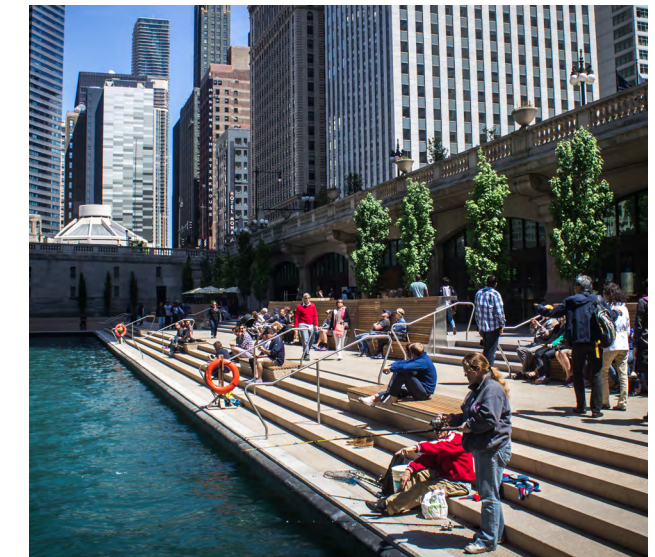
The Altenheim Line is among a growing series of new trail projects aiming to create greater regional and neighborhood connections between communities, job centers, public open spaces and natural areas using pedestrian paths, bikes, e-bikes, e-scooters and other modes. These trail networks also provide residents a more immediate and connected access to nature.

The Altenheim Line intersects with Chicago's renowned green boulevard system, and can play a key role in offering more equitable access to recreational resources to the surrounding communities.

Additional trails are currently being studied which would continue to expand the comprehensive network and connectivity throughout the city and region.



Multiple trail types accorss Chicago



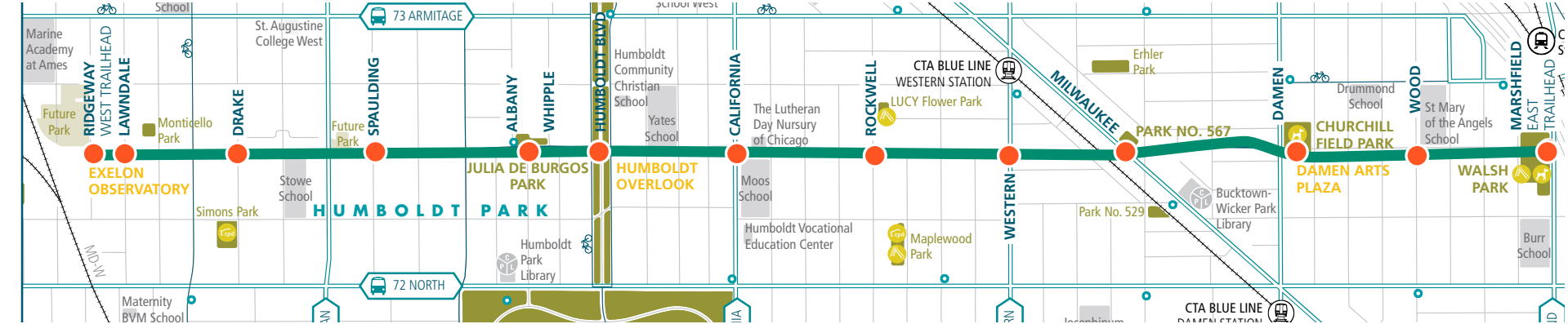
# Learning from the 606

The 606 Trail offers lessons on achieving equitable outcomes for surrounding communities. Multiple and frequent access points are key to community access.

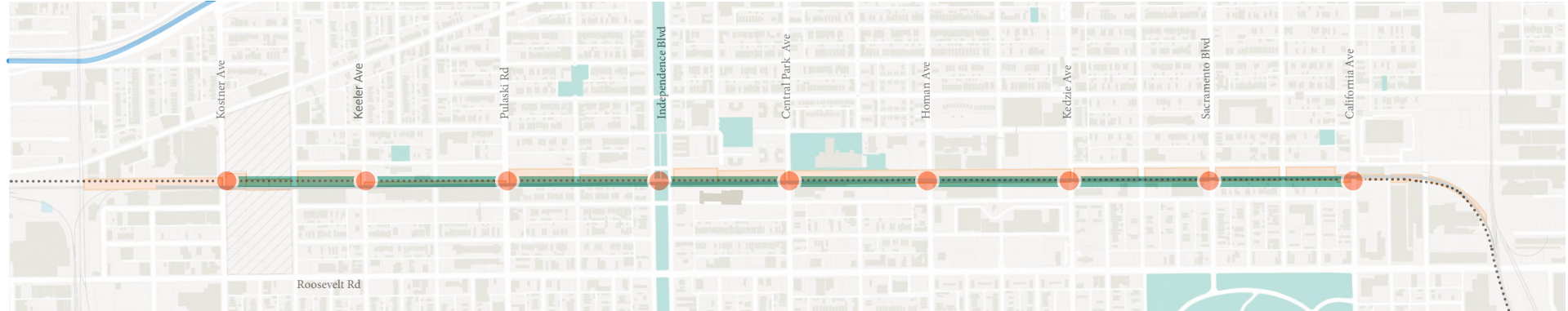
The diagram below compare the spacing of access point along the 606 to potential access points to the Altenheim Line.

While the 606 is a great amenity it is constrained by the width of the elevated structure the historic rail was located on, and the close proximity of surrounding development.

The Altenheim Line benefits from a wide right of way in many locations, as well as under-used adjacent sites that can accommodate trail activities and programmable space.



The 606 Trail Access Points

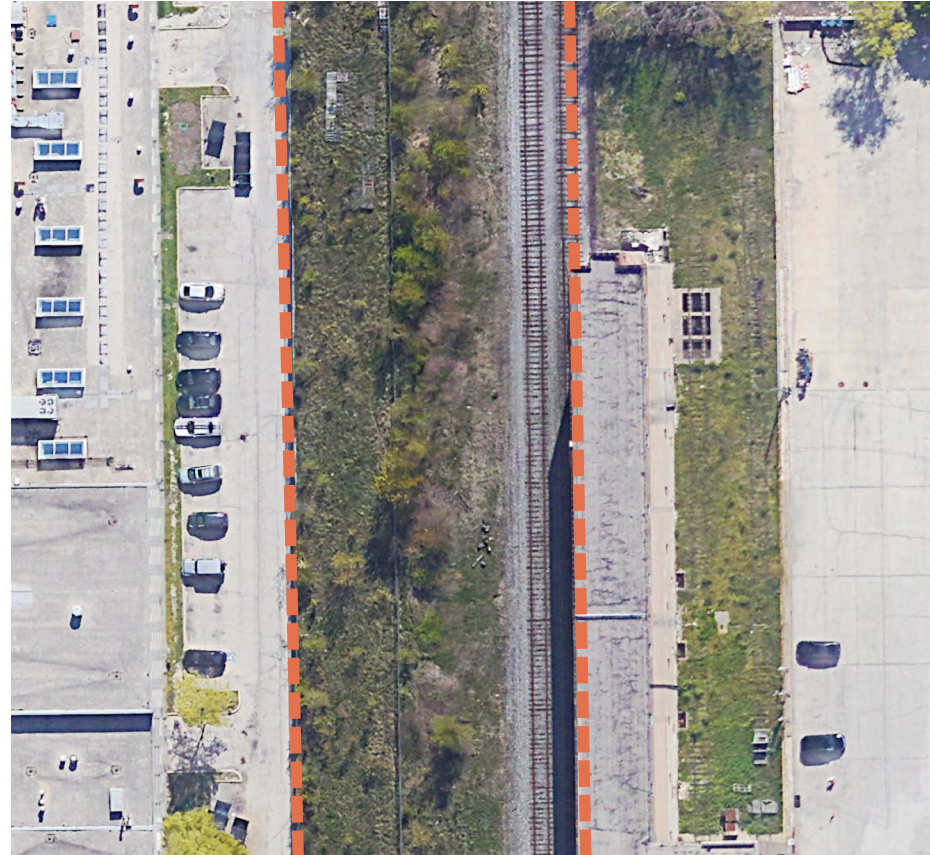


Altenheim Line Proposed Access Points



606 Trail

± 40'  
(14' trail)



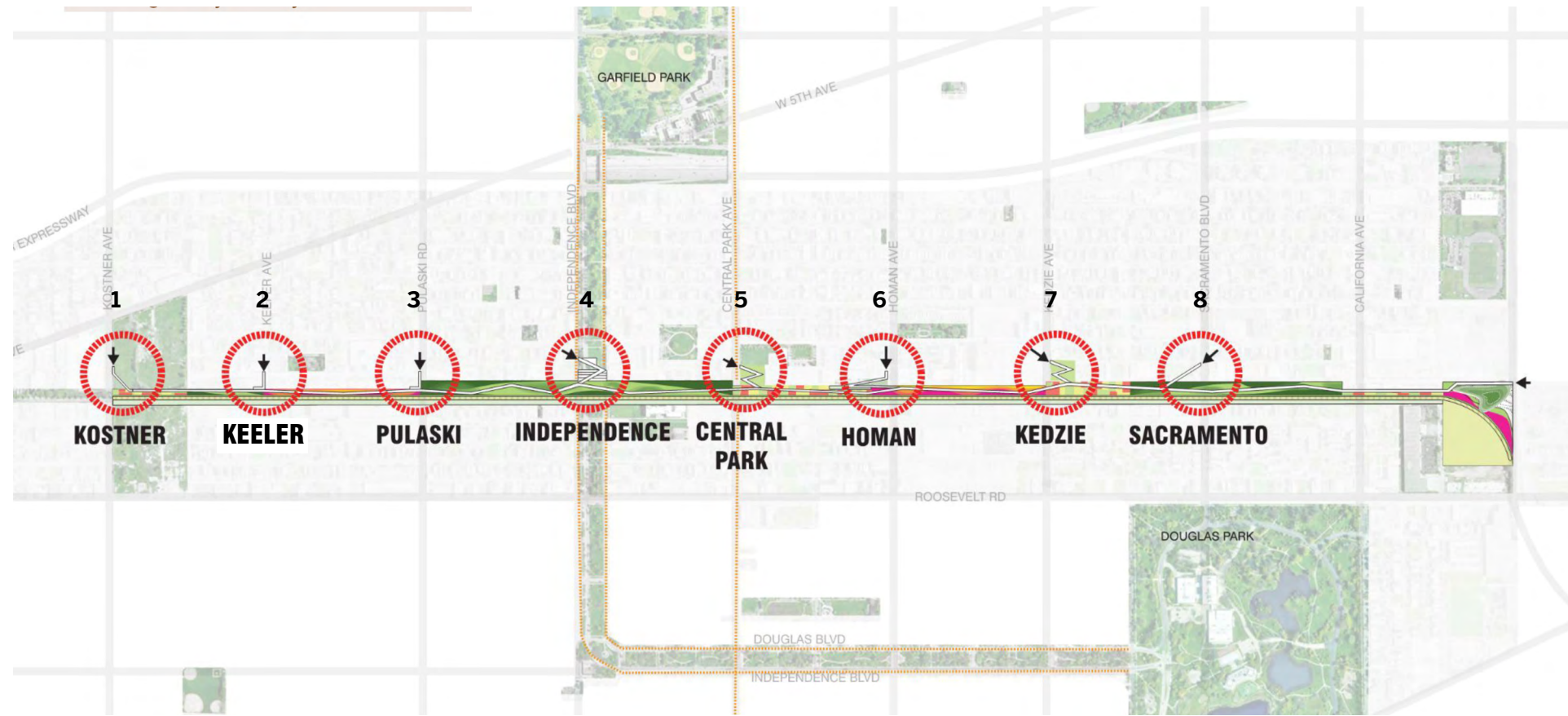
Altenheim Line

± 110'

# Accessing the Line

The Altenheim Line will be accessed from intersecting streets and boulevards. Regular access points will provide a recreational and transportation resource across the community. Multiple techniques will be used to access the trail, responding to site specific conditions

and elevations. The existing rail right-of-way presents a variety of conditions in relation to the width of available land and the property edge, which consists of both retaining walls and embankments.



Altenheim Line Proposed Access Points

## Variety of edge conditions



Retaining wall and Ramp



Soft Embankment



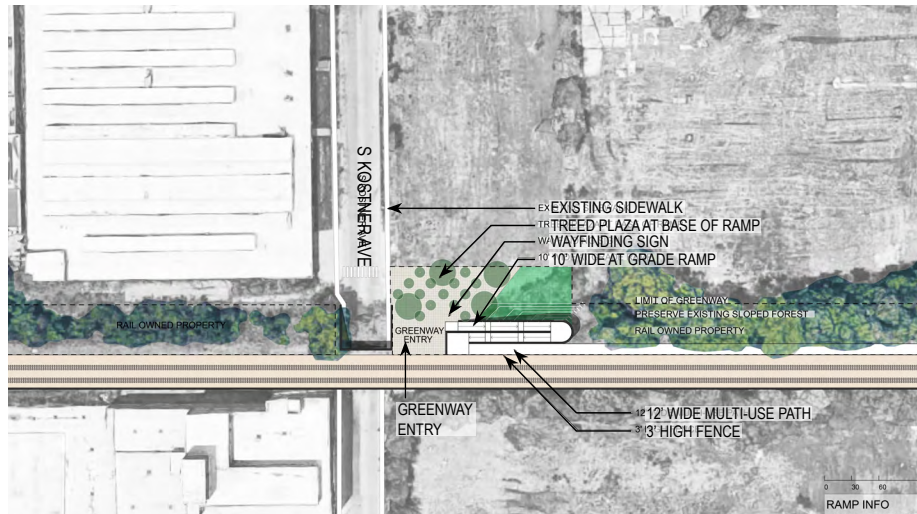
Viaduct over Sidewalk



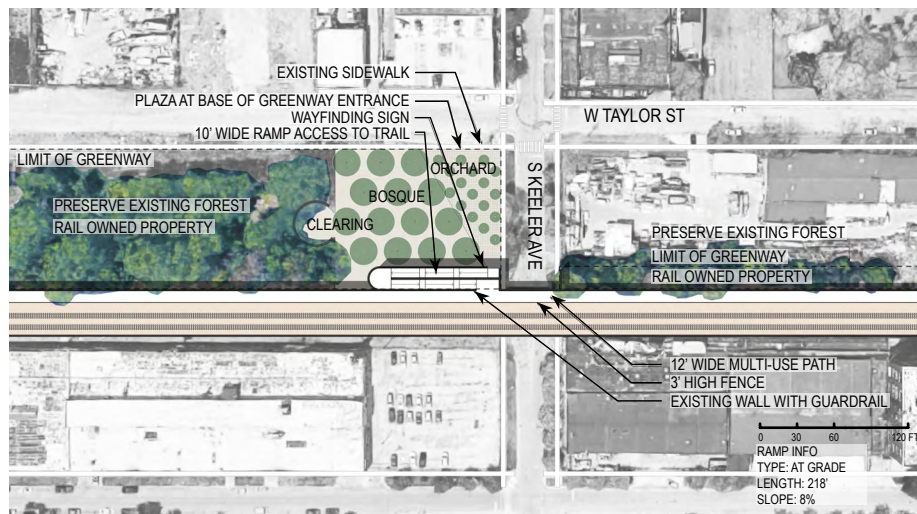
Hard Sheet

# Accessing the Line

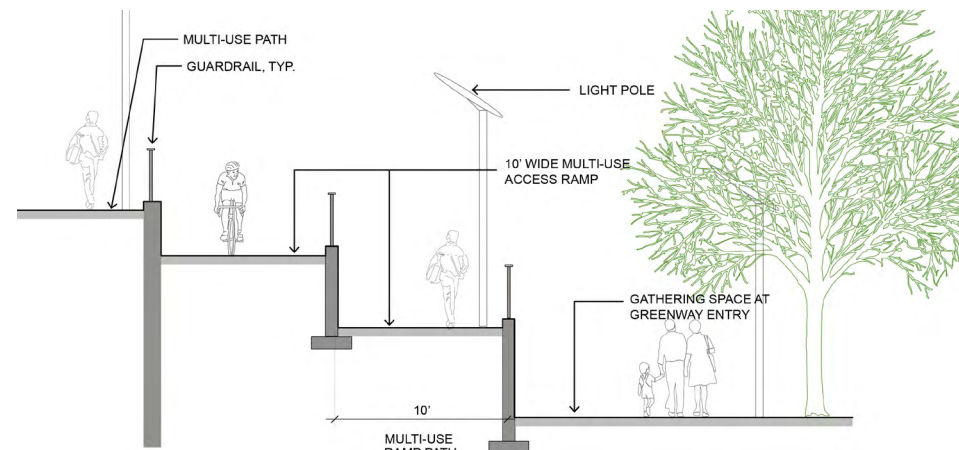
1 Kostner Avenue Access Point



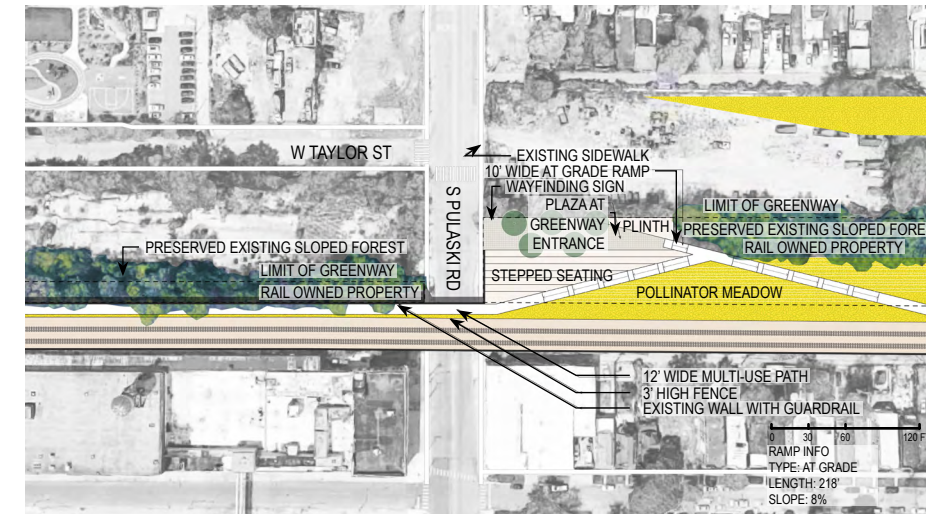
2 Keeler Avenue Access Point



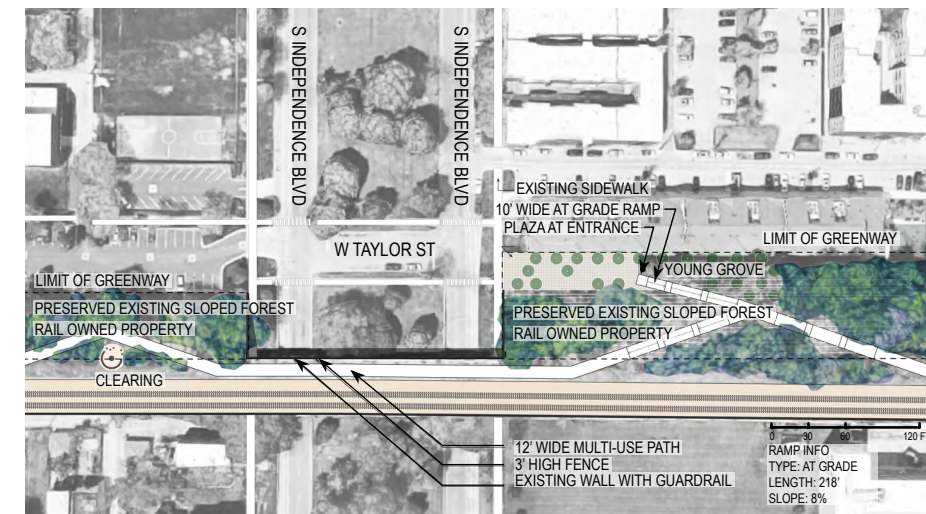
Switchback Ramp Access



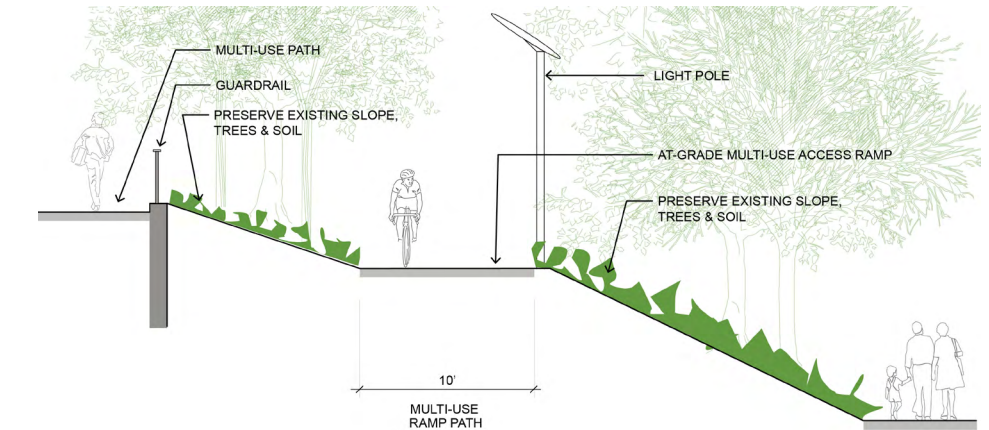
3 Pulaski Road Access Point



4 Independence Boulevard Access Point

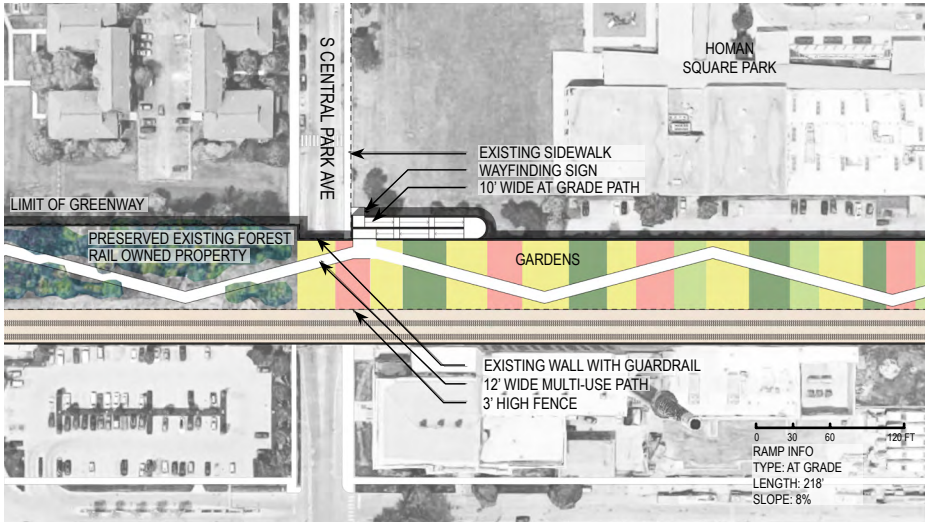


Embankment Ramp Access

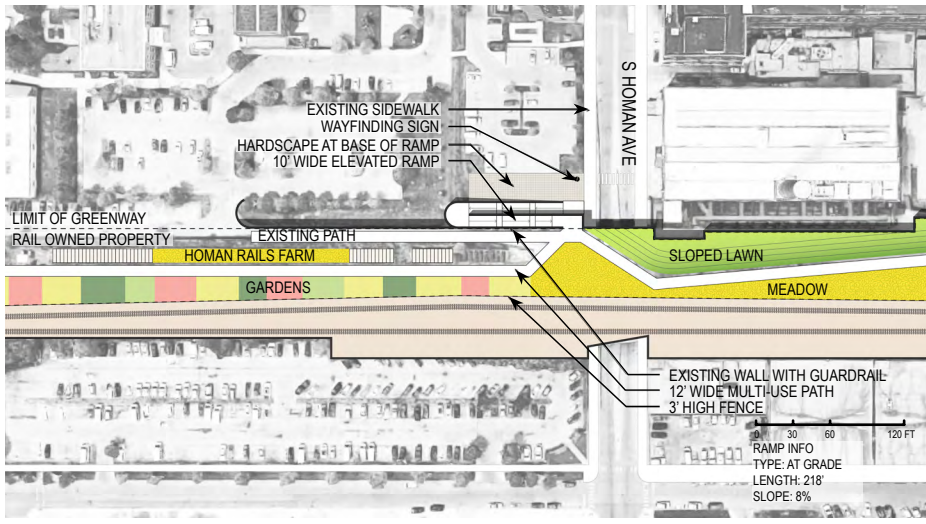


# Accessing the Line

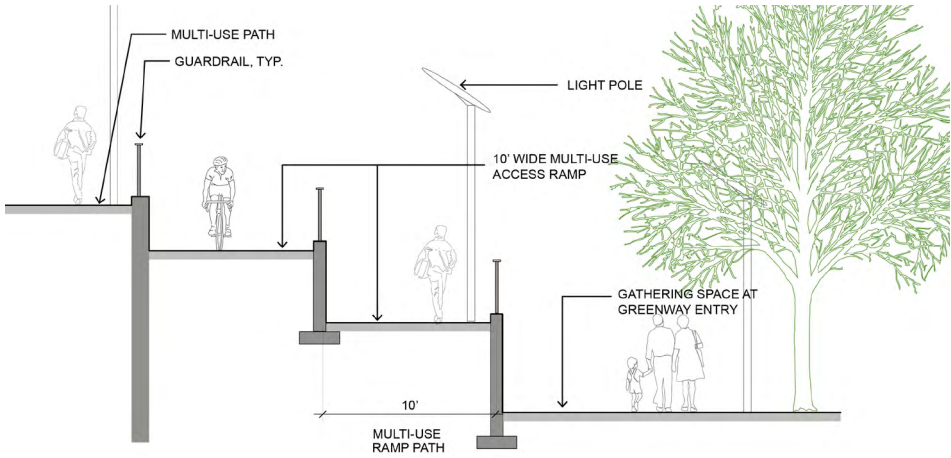
5 Central Park Avenue Access Point



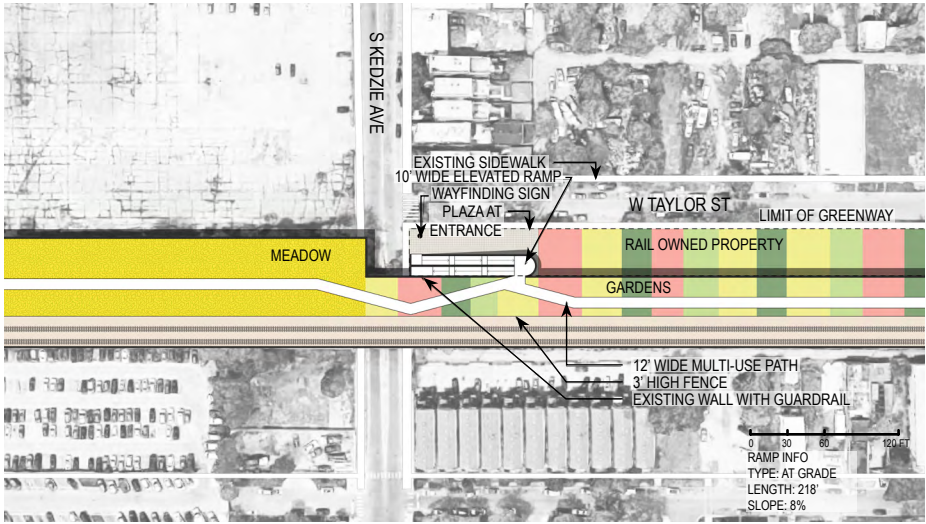
6 Homan Avenue Access Point



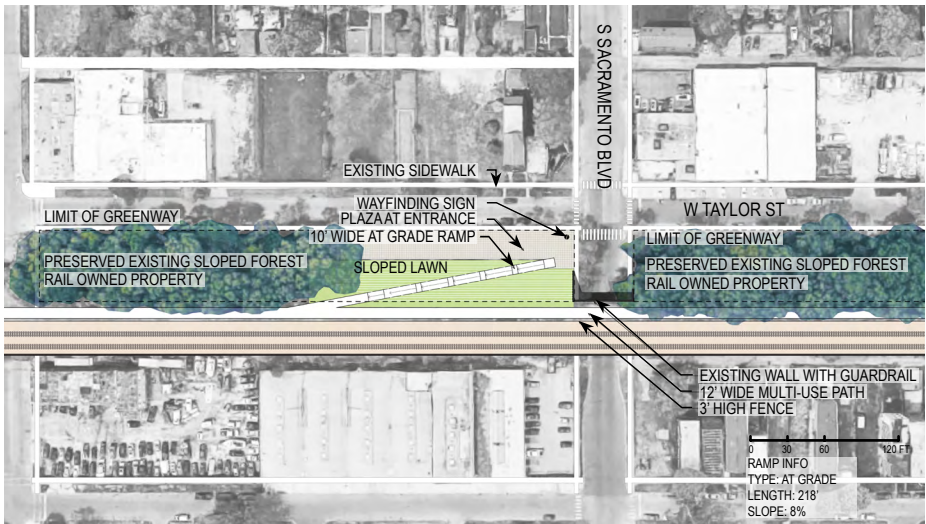
Switchback Ramp Access



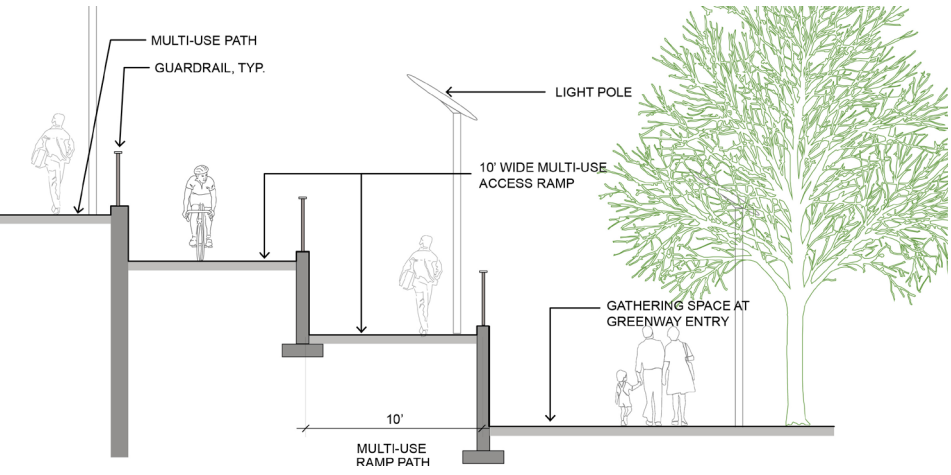
7 Kedzie Avenue Access Point



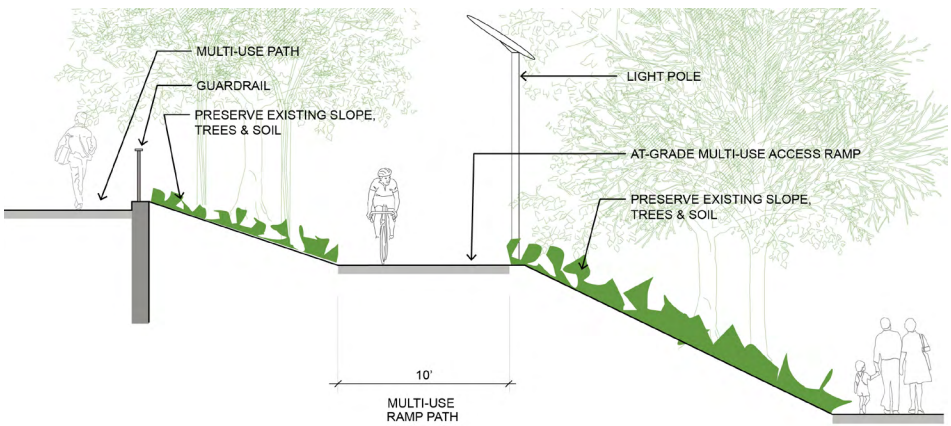
8 Sacramento Boulevard Access Point



Switchback Ramp Access



Embankment Ramp Access



# Building on Existing Ecologies

Today a variety of ecologies exist along the length of the line. The plan works to build from these existing ecologies and foster the habitats that already exist.

Each of these ecologies provide a number of opportunities for programming, access, active and passive recreation, ecological restoration, food and many other activities.

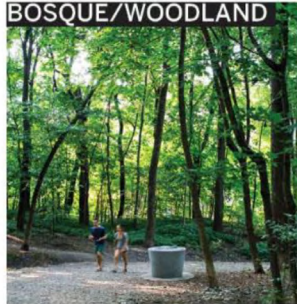


Vegetation Plan

## FOREST



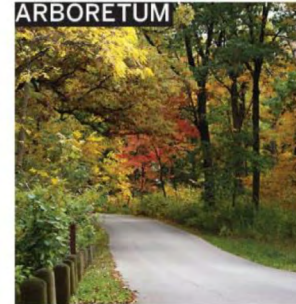
## BOSQUE/WOODLAND



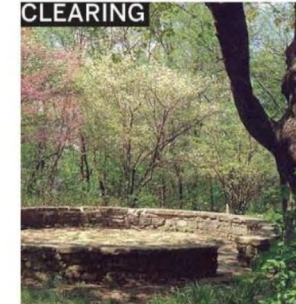
## ORCHARD



## ARBORETUM



## CLEARING



## GROVE



## MEADOW



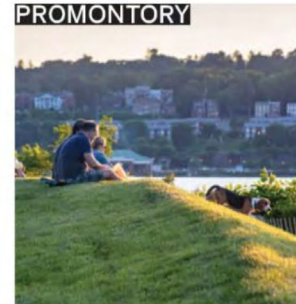
## PRAIRIE



## LAWN (WINTER SLEDDING)



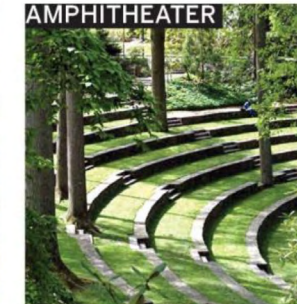
## PROMONTORY



## LANDFORM



## AMPHITHEATER



## GARDEN



## POLLINATOR GARDEN



## STORMWATER GARDEN



## BEER GARDEN



## FARM GARDEN



## SOLAR GARDEN



# Art, Heritage and Gateways

Each of the unique access points, gateways, and transitions between park and community offer additional opportunities to integrate art and heritage along the trail network. A series of “gates” mark unique moments along the trail and offer opportunities to integrate

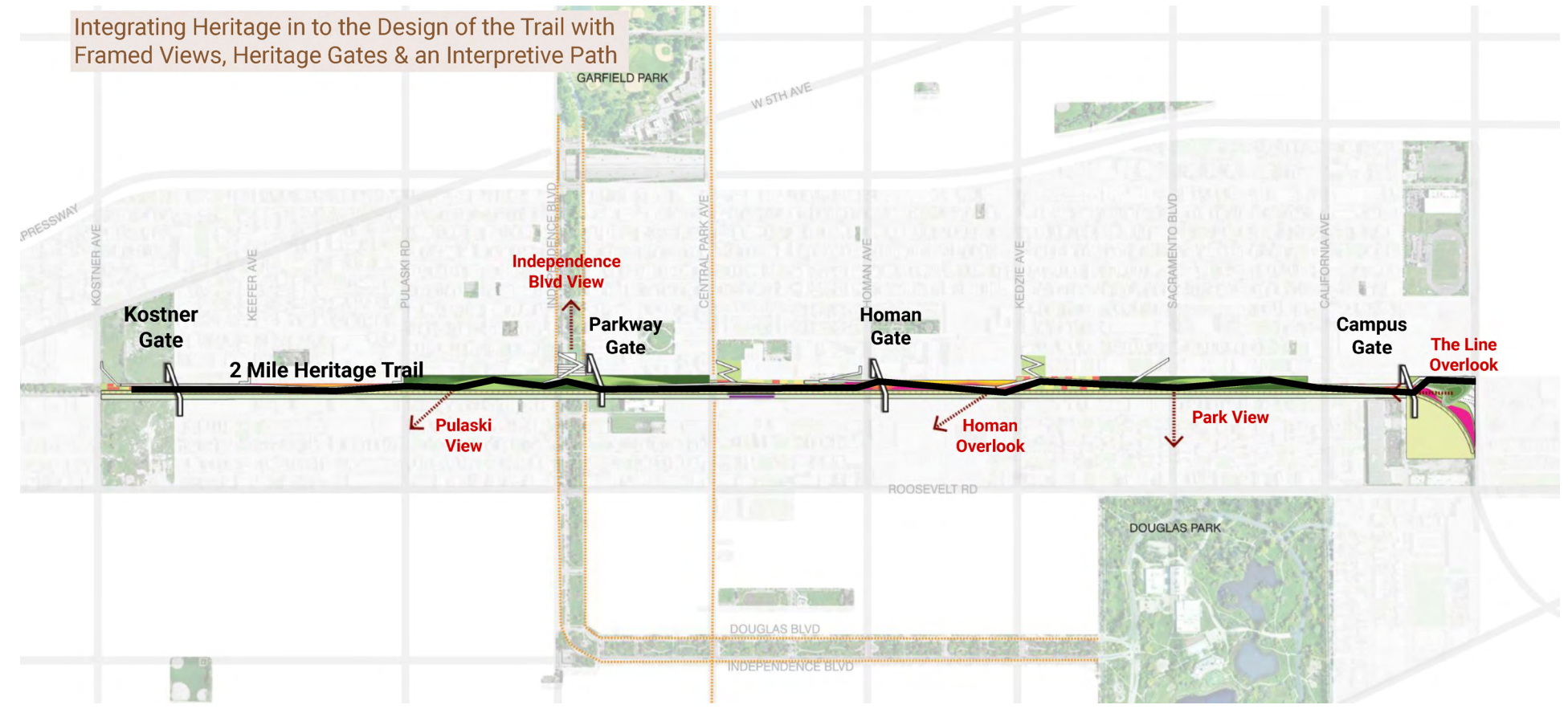
community and heritage themes into the park system. Because a portion of the trail is to remain an active rail line, fencing will be required to separate the train line from the trail network. The fencing provides a location for art installatins and murals along the trail.

Along the trail will be opportunities to integrate various landscape habitats, seating areas, lighting, and public art. These amenities can be used to create gathering spaces for both casual and programmed gatherings. A continuous multi-use path will accommodate

pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized forms of travel. Wider sections of right-of-way offer a chance to create secondary paths where visitors can slow down and enjoy the scenery. Curves and elevation changes in the path will create interest for travellers.



Points of Interest



Gateway Moments

# Trail Focus Areas

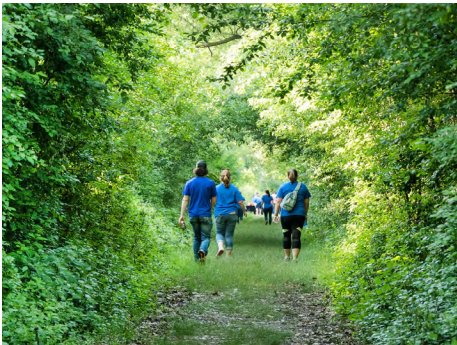
The following focus areas along the trail system are high visibility opportunities with convenient access and other anchor activities nearby. They can create a diverse collection of park “rooms” along the

continuous trail network. Responding to the unique site conditions and surrounding context each focus area creates a distinct place for community events, gathering, and play.



Trail Focus Areas

nature  
and garden



arts  
and culture



recreation  
and activity



access  
and gateways



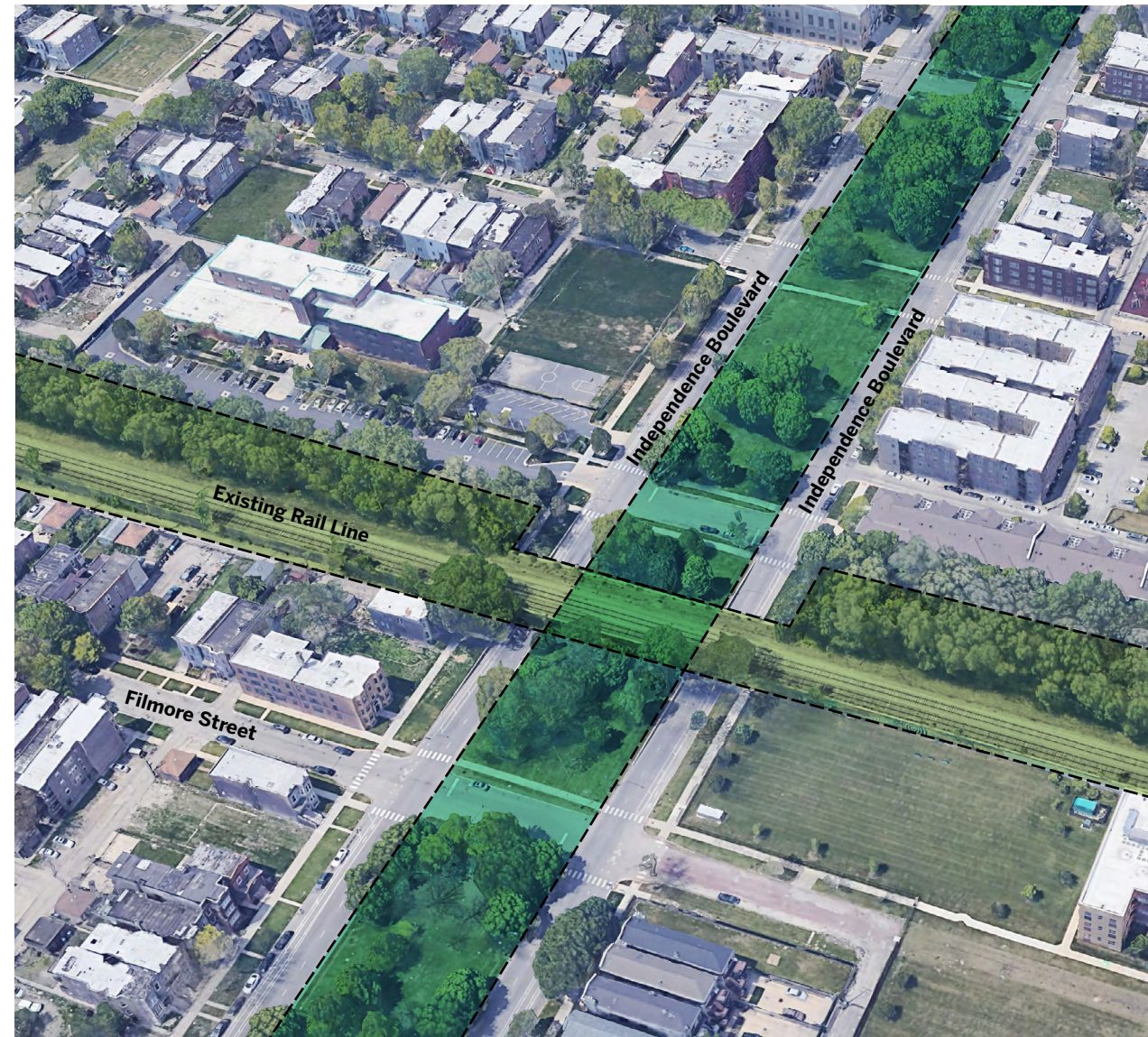


# The Parkway Theater

As a central crossing of the Altenheim Line and the existing Chicago boulevard network, Independence Boulevard creates a unique opportunity to link the raised parkspace to the larger set of city wide parks. The boulevard connects directly north to Garfield Park and down to Douglas Park creating an interconnected green network.

The plan positions this unique crossroads with an urban theater connecting the different elevations from the boulevard up to the raised trail system.

The Parkway Theater also builds off the existing ecological assets along the trail by focusing either side of the Independence Boulevard crossing on the existing dense forested trees adjacent to the rail line.

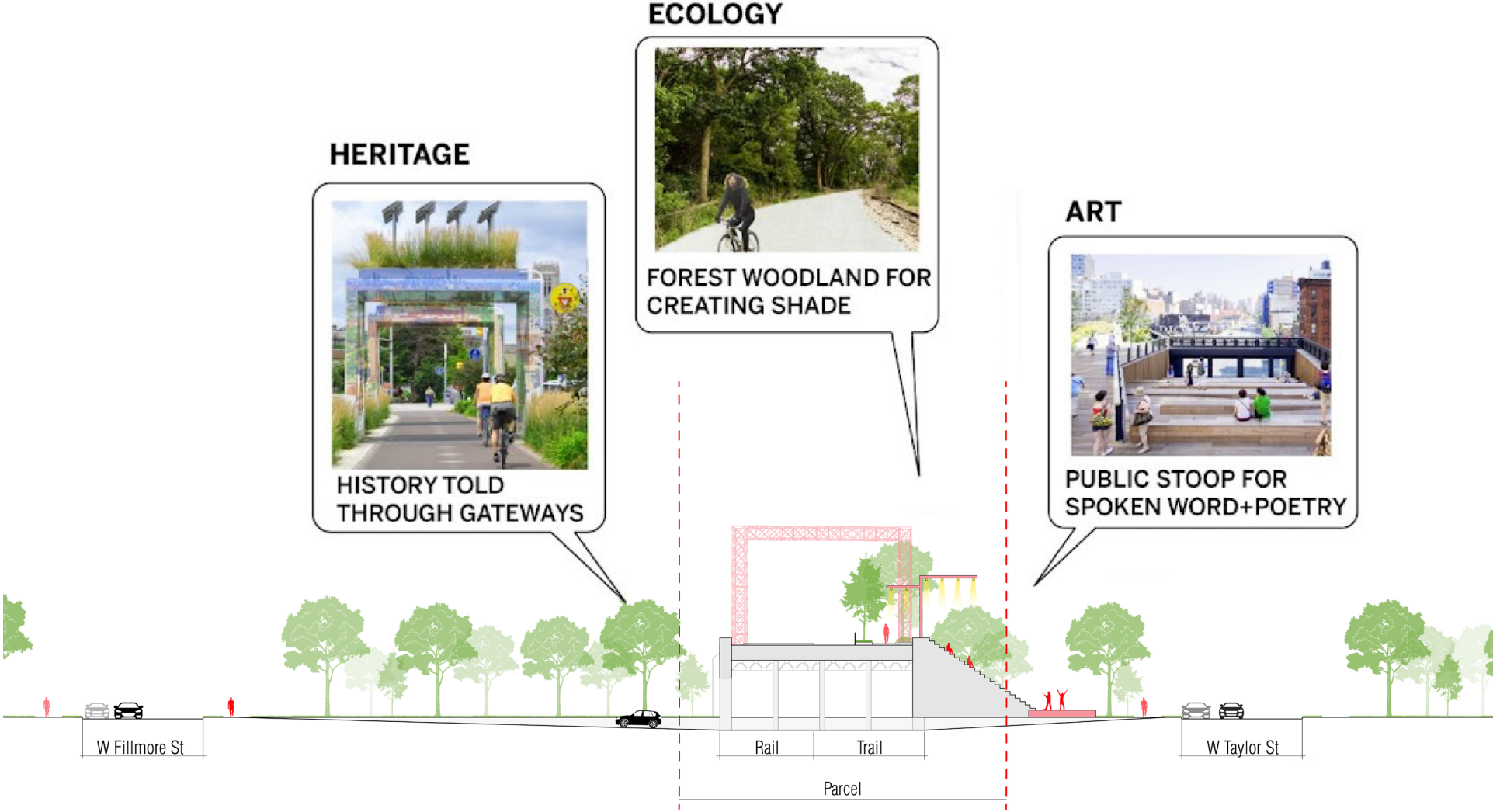
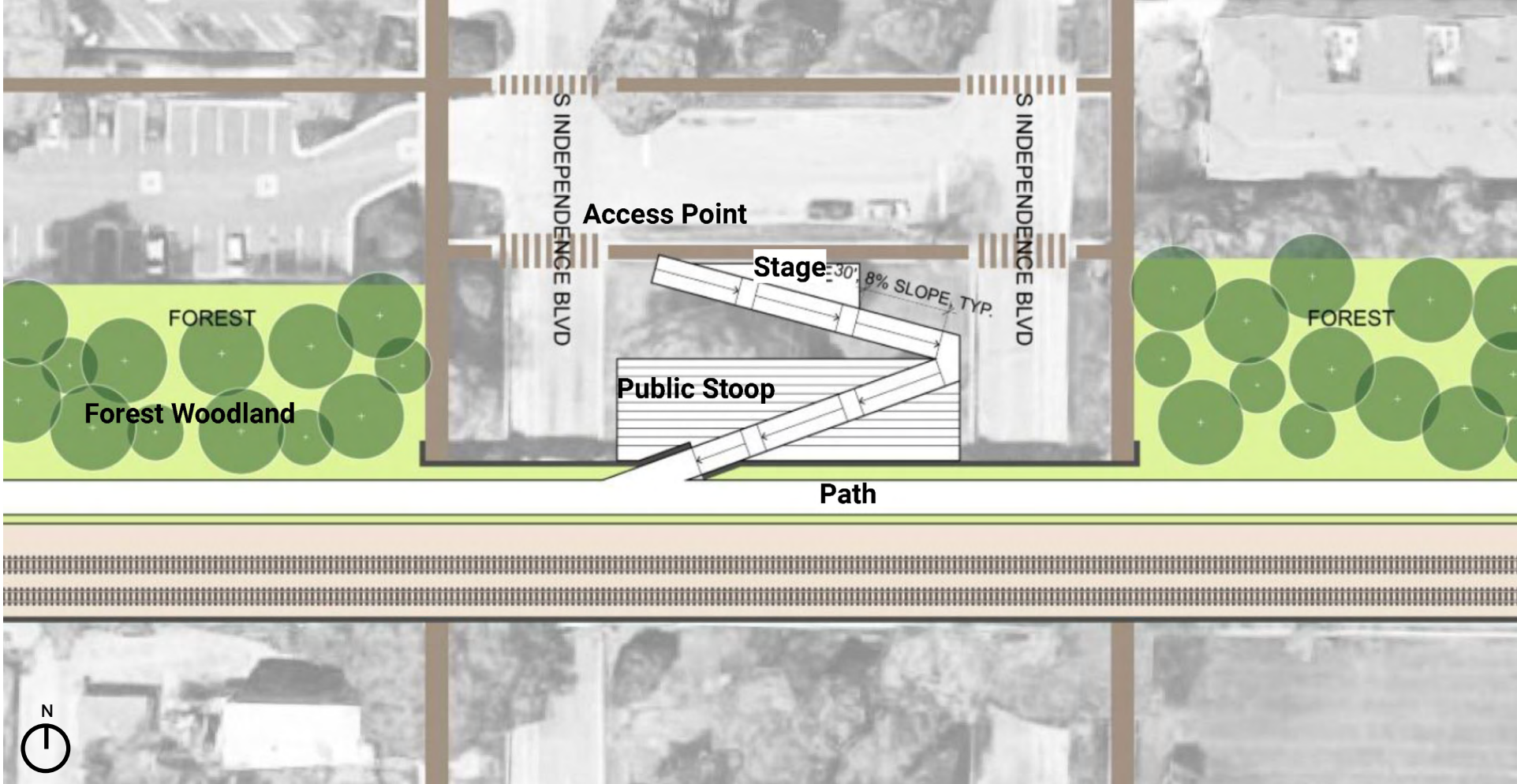


Connecting the Trail and the Boulevards

# The Parkway Theater

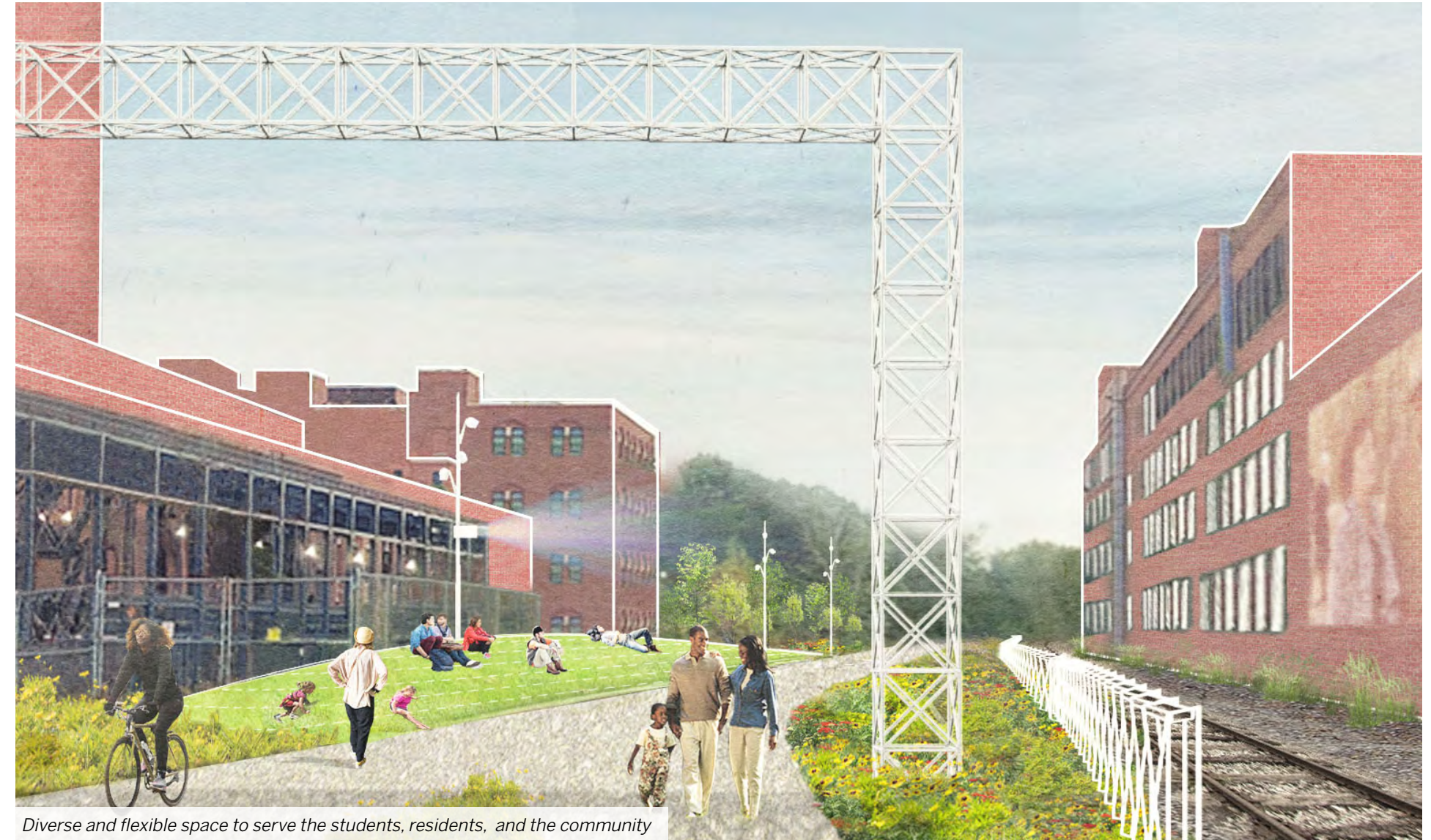
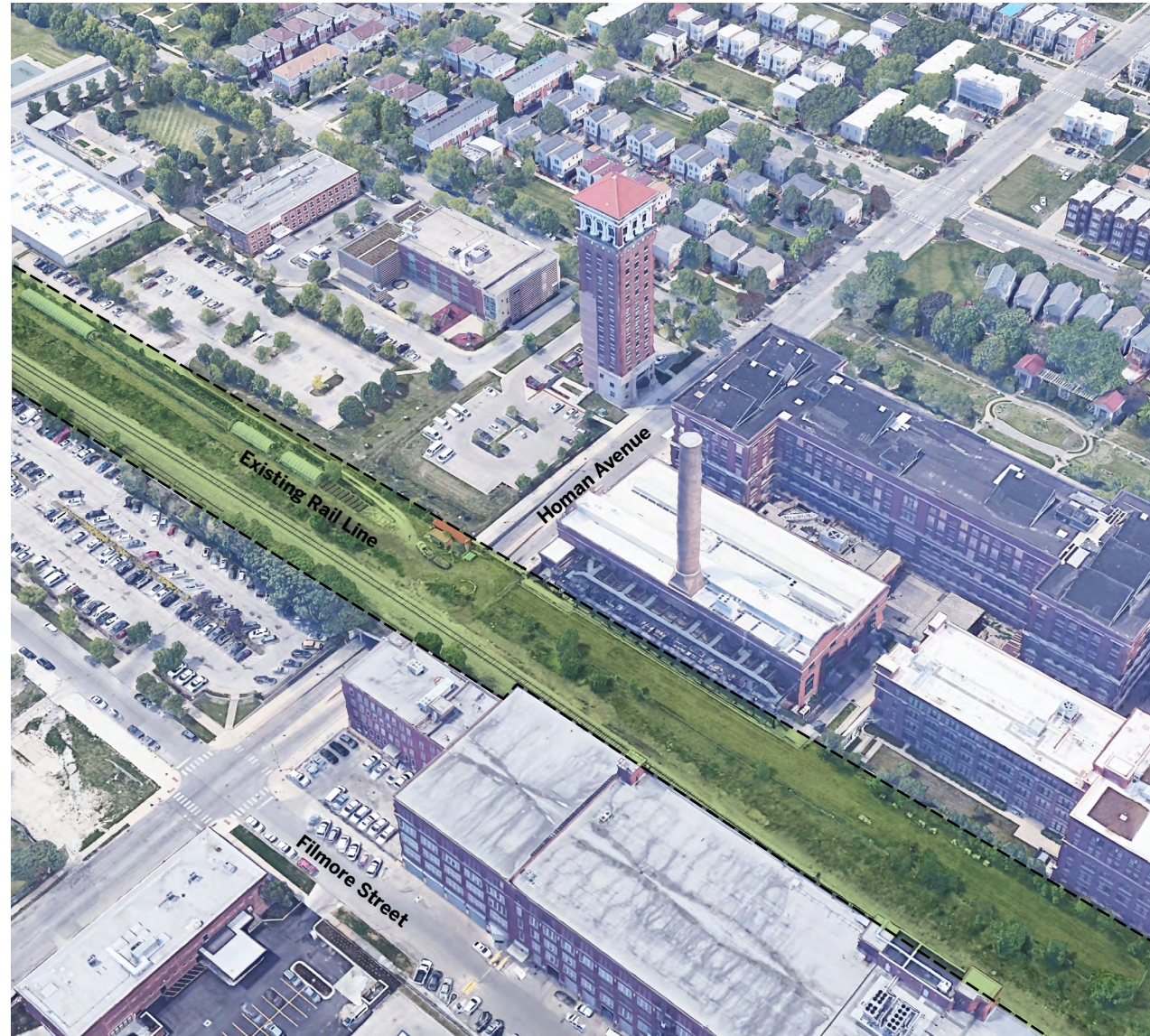
The Parkway Theater connects the City's green boulevard network into the raised trail system with a series of steps and ramps linking the elevation changes with a flexible public gather place.

Because the trail is narrower at the road crossing, utilizing space within the boulevard provides the opportunity to incorporate accessible ramping between the two park spaces.



# Community Arts and Music Center

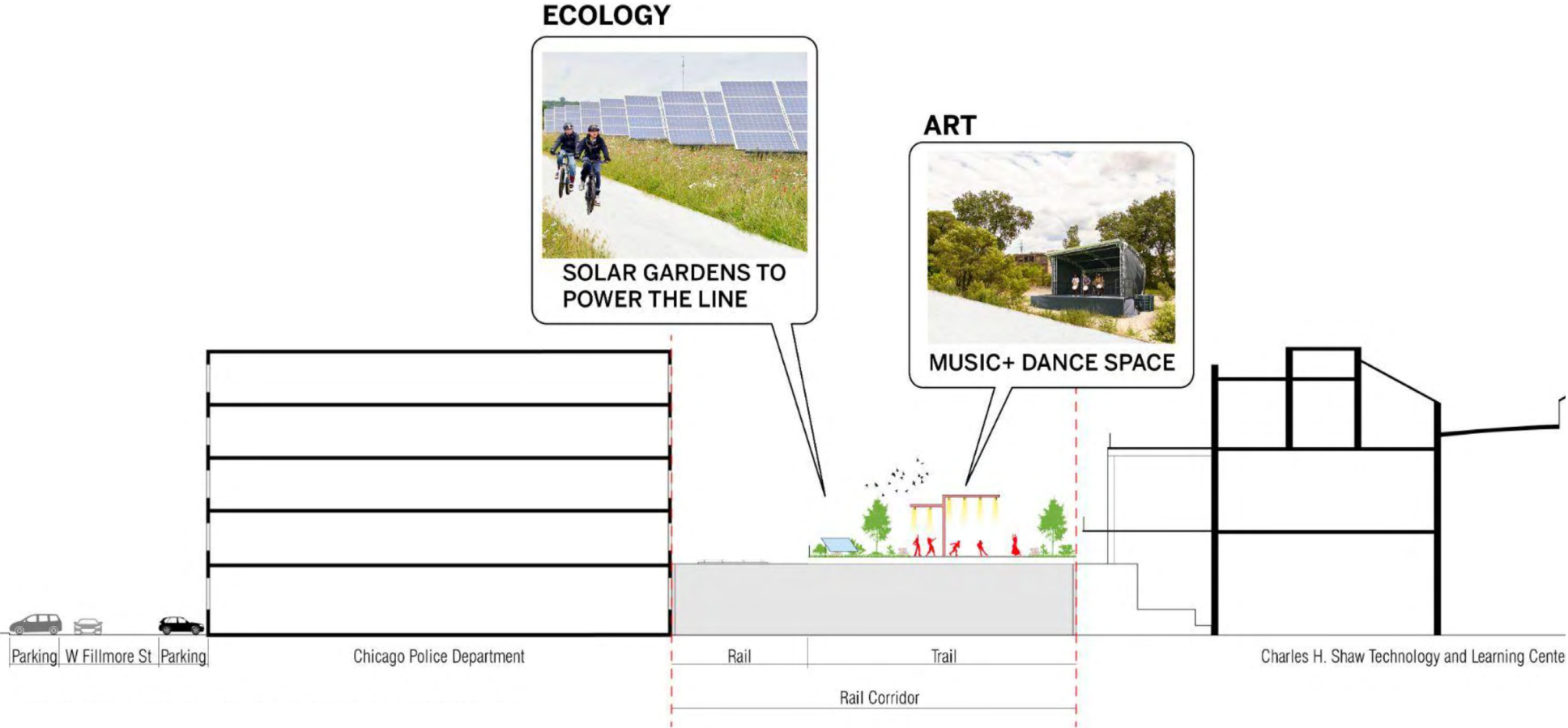
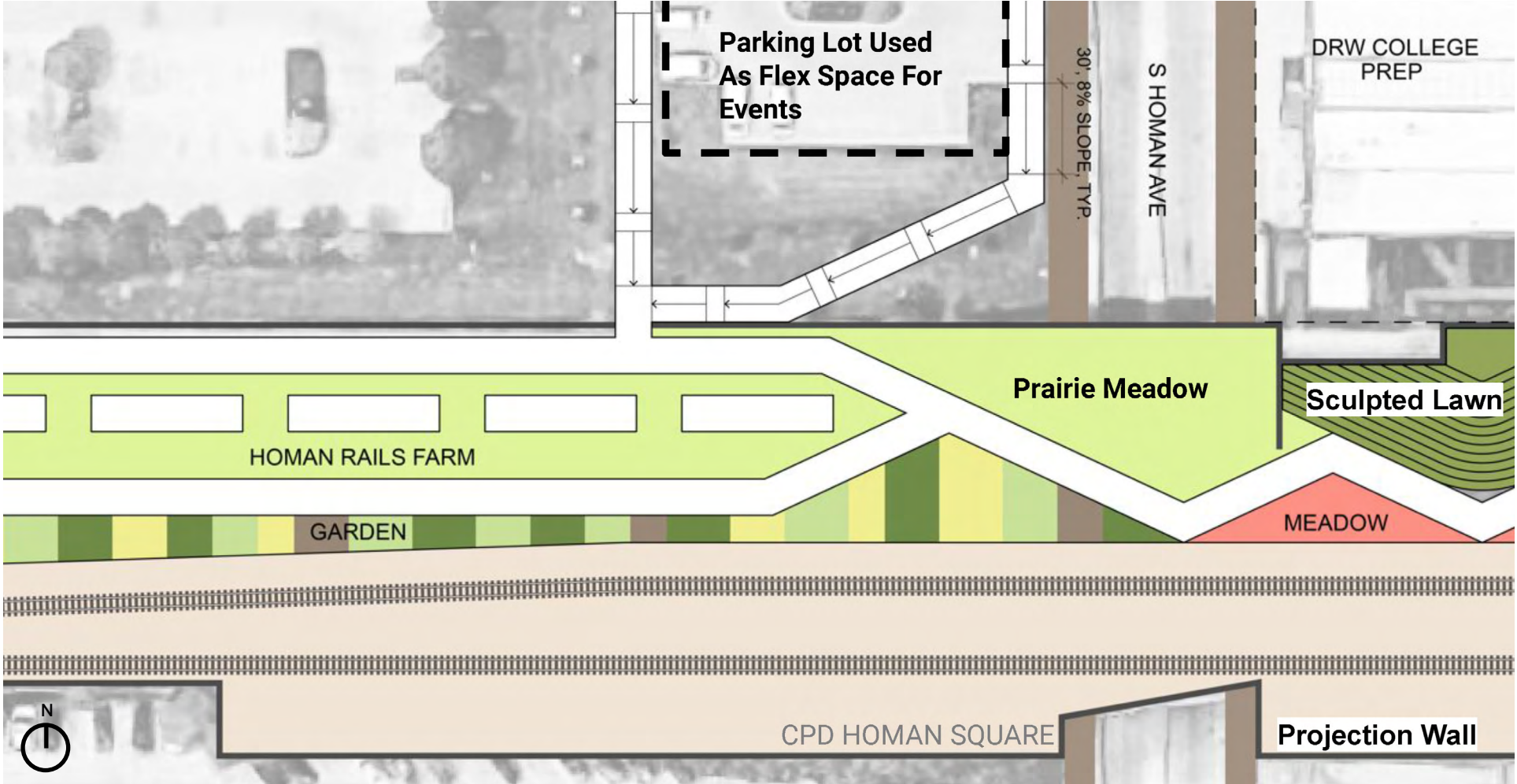
Located at the crossroads of Homan Avenue and the Altenheim Line, the Community Arts and Music Center builds off the existing assets surrounding the site today such as the DRW College Prep School, the existing Homan Rails Farm, Homan Square Community Center, the historic Nichols Tower offices and future development opportunities in the Homan Square campus.



# Community Arts and Music Center

The available space along the raised trail widens at this location, offering opportunities for an arts and music focus identity at the Homan Avenue intersection.

A sculpted lawn, projection wall, gardens, and farming incorporate a diverse and flexible space to serve the surrounding students, residents, and community gatherings.



# The Campus Green

Located on the eastern end of the Altenheim Line, the Campus Green offers an opportunity to create a unique trail head inviting the surrounding community onto the raised park system.

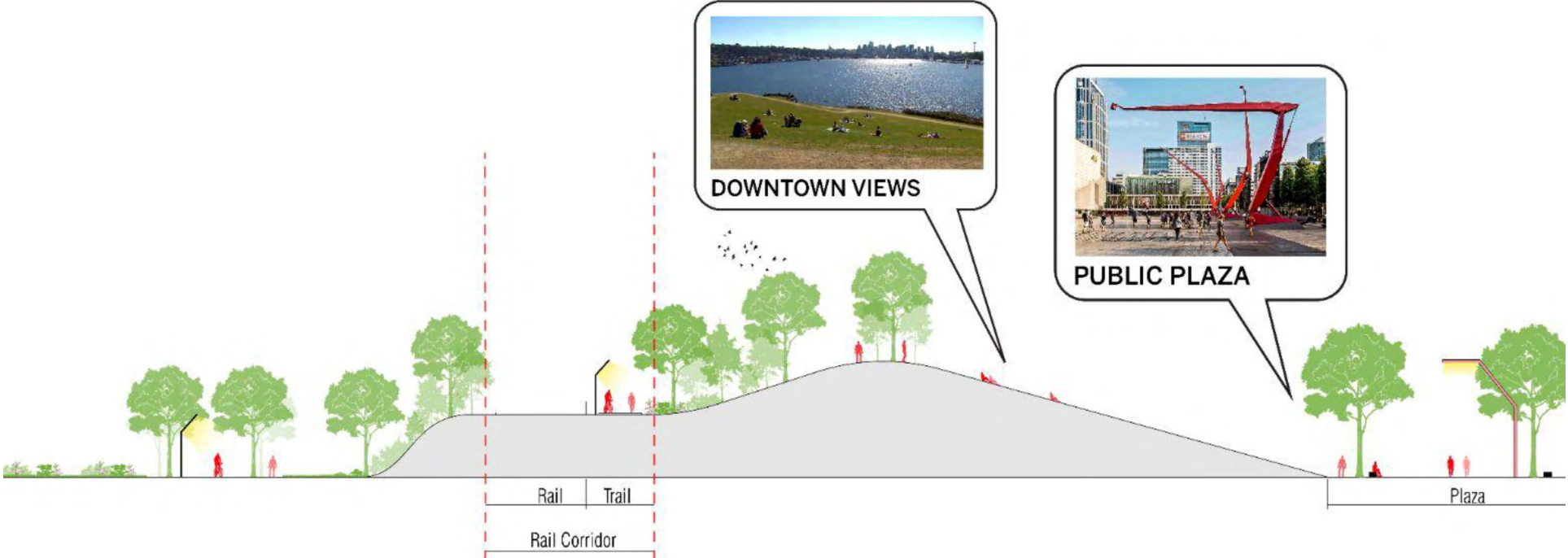
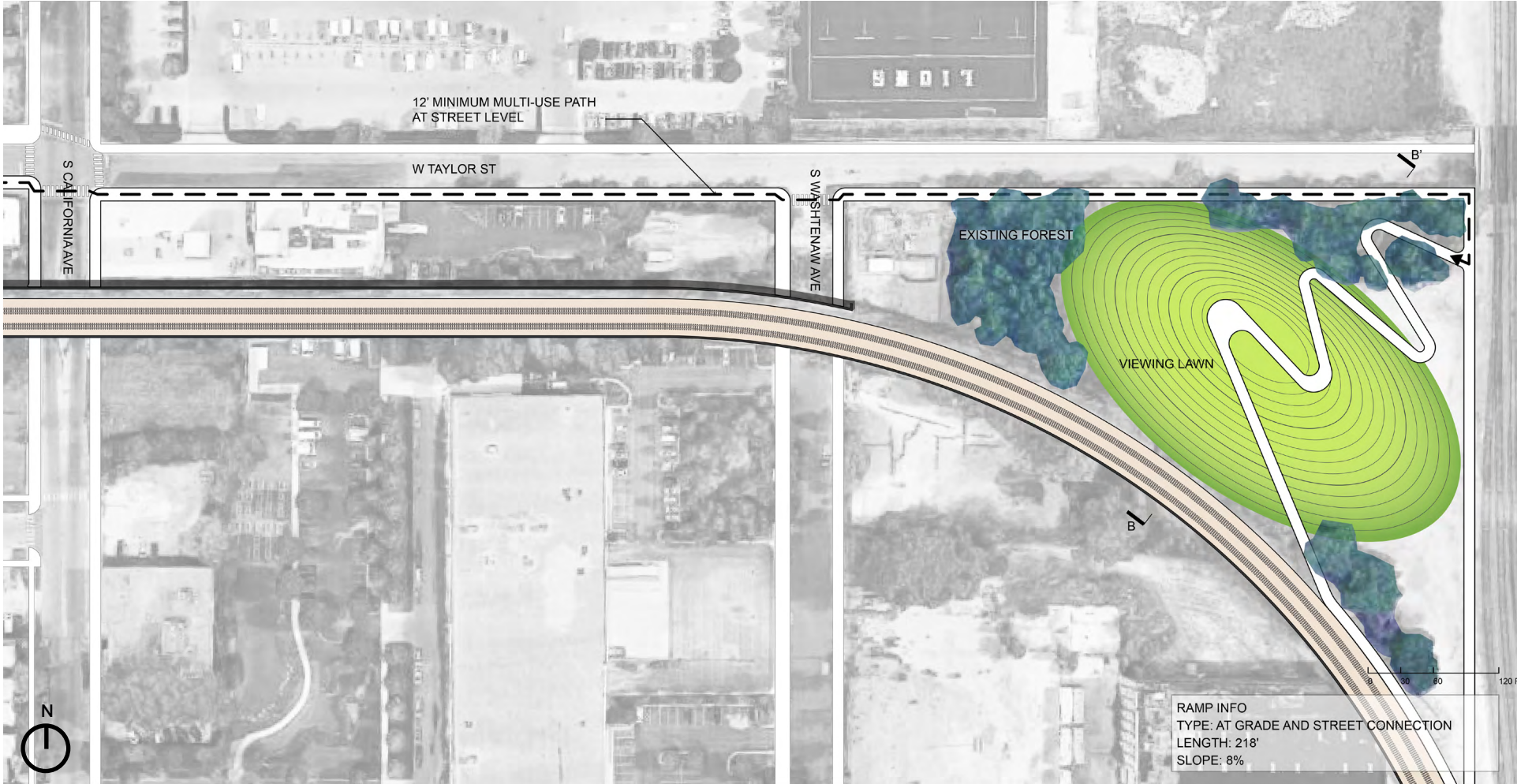
A sloped lawn creates a gathering place for picnics and community events in the summer and sledding in the winter. The sloped lawn also provides an easy transition from the upper trail and the new park space at grade.



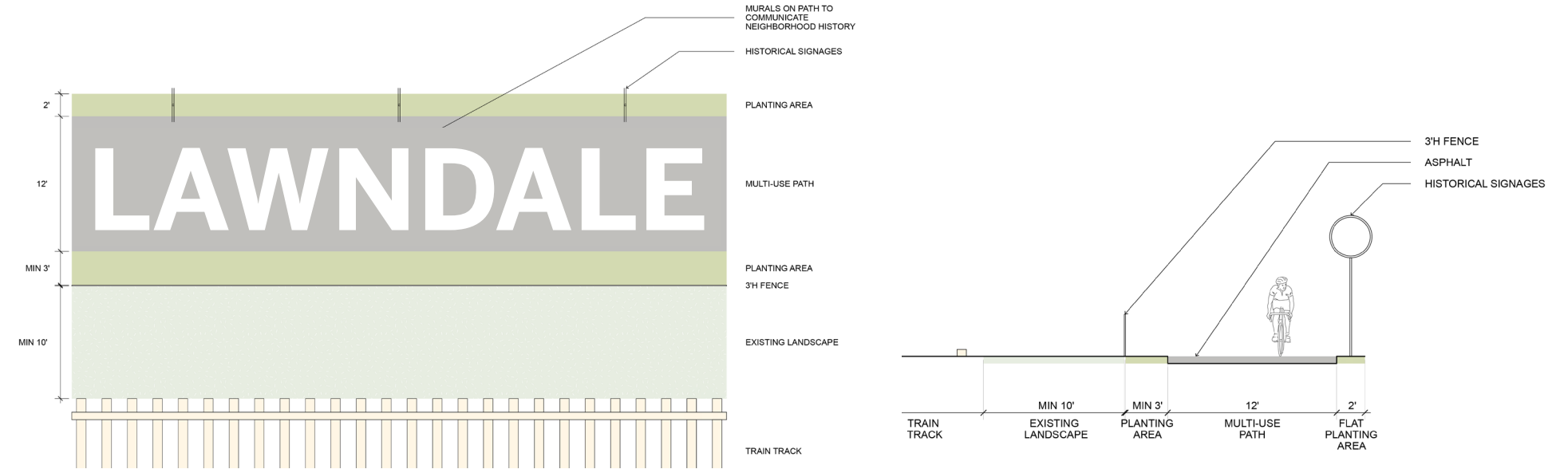
Sloped Lawn and Recreational Area

# The Campus Green

The Campus Green creates a multi-season recreational area serving as the eastern gateway to the trail. The primary feature of the green is a large sloped lawn providing seamless access from a new park space and the raised trail system.



# Trail and Open Space Design Guidelines



**The Trail and Open Space Guidelines are intended to be used for future public investment in the development of an open space network that consists of an elevated trail on the existing Altenheim Rail Line and access paths developed on adjacent property. The guidelines reflect DPD’s design excellence principles and planning priorities shared by community members and stakeholders throughout the outreach process conducted in support of the Altenheim Line Framework plan. Their application to the future design of the open space network will create a unique and consistent identity, making it identifiable for residents across the City of Chicago.**

## 1. Access points

- Access points should provide ADA compliant connections to the trail for pedestrians and cyclists using designs that are responsive to the existing infrastructure while maintaining an aesthetic that is recognizable to the trail. At locations where embankments currently exist next to the elevated rail line, prioritize continuous, sloping paths to create connections. At locations where retaining wall currently exists, prioritize ramps to create connections.
- Prioritize access points at locations where additional right-of-way width allows for adjacent open spaces that connect the elevated trail to street-level. This will

allow for better visibility and more-easily accessible connections .

- Access points should provide clear sight lines between ground-level and the trail to promote visibility and security while avoiding features like blind corners and visually-isolated areas.
- Access infrastructure should be designed in a manner that offers unique experiences at the various points by emphasizing the existing features of the rail right-of-way.
- Consider features to improve the pedestrian experience of access ramps such as reducing the height of the retaining wall adjacent to the ramp and providing generous-sized landings with seating at switchbacks.

## 2. Elevated Trail

- Provide minimum twelve-foot wide multi-use path throughout the entire length of the trail to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. For sections of the right-of-way that extend to a greater width - such as locations near Kedzie and Homan Avenues - consider adding secondary routes such as jogging paths or unpaved nature trails.
- Incorporate curvature and elevation changes to the multi-use path to add interest for all users and moderate the speed of cyclists
- At various locations where bridge width is not adequate to support an active rail line and a multi-use path consider strategies to maintain continuity by widening the path or installing an adjacent “flyover”. If this

is not feasible the path should be routed to street-level and cross the intersecting street. At these locations, provide pedestrian safety measures such as bulb-outs, aesthetic crosswalks and signage.

- Provide seating and gathering space at “gateway” locations along the trail that emphasize local landmarks and broader views of the city. These areas should incorporate public art or other features that highlight the heritage and culture of the community and incorporate priorities of youth engagement and health and wellness. Partnerships with local artists via the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) are encouraged.

- Trail designs should conform with all applicable railroad standards and practices for accommodating authorized access to the railroad property for operations, maintenance and emergency purposes

## 3. Open Space

- Where the width of the rail right-of-way allows, create complementary open spaces on the land located at street-level and integrate it with the elevated trail to provide uninterrupted connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Create multi-function spaces that promote gathering, relaxation, play and small-scale performance. Open spaces should offer a sense of enclosure from street activity,

# Trail and Open Space Design Guidelines



- while also ensuring users feel safe in them.
- Landscaping and hardscaping should be applied in a unique manner to draw visual interest to the trail and distinguish the various supportive open spaces.
- Open spaces and plazas along the trail should complement existing development and activity that is adjacent to the trail as much as possible such as the Homan Square, Lawndale plaza and Independence Boulevard locations. They should also complement existing programming on the trail, such as Homan Rails Farm.
- Open space programming should integrate the heritage and culture of the surrounding communities through public art, informational signage and in the overall design of the spaces.

## 4. Trees and Vegetation

- The existing vegetation and ecology should inspire the landscape design for the trail and open space. Inspect existing trees and vegetation to identify those that can be retained and contribute to the design vision of the project.
- Create transition points in the ecosystems and planting palettes at multiple points along the trail to provide an engaging experience for users and support biological diversity.
- Install mature or semi-mature canopy trees from the beginning to provide shading at selected locations along the line and at adjacent open spaces.

- Emphasize native plant species that can more easily tolerate the Chicago region climate through all seasons.
- Species should be resilient and require low levels of maintenance.
- Prioritize plant species that will maintain greenery throughout most of the year and provide seasonal color interest. Select species that will also create an ecosystem for native insects and birds.

## 5. Stormwater

- Use stormwater best management practices to capture, retain and infiltrate precipitation water in landscaped areas.
- Collect, store, and reuse storm-water for landscape irrigation.
- Use permeable or porous paving materials to define key locations along the trail.
- Facilitate sustainable water use by using automated, weather-based watering systems and drip irrigation to water landscaped areas.

## 6. Seating

- Locate seating at places with distinctive views, of local landmarks such as the Homan Tower and, Independence Boulevard, as well as broader views of the city skyline.
- Use landscaping to buffer seating from the multi-use path integrate seating with the existing topography where possible by utilizing changes in elevation.

## 7. Lighting

- Trail lighting should be provided through elevated lights and those at hip height, along fencing, walls or through bollards.
- Park lights will be coordinated with Chicago Park District standard lights.
- Energy efficient lighting is encouraged.



# Trail and Open Space Design Guidelines



## 8. Signage

- A specific graphic identity associated with the Altenheim Line should be created.
- Signs directing people to the trail should be placed in the community, on nearby bike routes and at community facilities and institutions. Additional signage should be provided for access points that are not located at major intersections.
- Mileage signs on the trail should give distances to access and egress points and community destinations, bike routes and transit routes. Additionally, signs along the trail should mark the distances travelled from the east and west trailheads.
- Interpretive signage along the trail and open spaces should share Lawndale's community history, including

- Major industrial era employers and businesses: Sears
- Industrial worker and community growth
- Rail infrastructure
- Early 20th Century Russian Jewish communities
- Growing Black communities as part of West Side transformation
- The civil rights era and Dr. Martin Luther-King
- Local community empowerment, leadership, innovation and service
- Interpretive signage should also share landscape, vegetation and habitat information.

## 9. Fencing

- Fencing will be required to separate the trail from any active rail lines that may remain on the right-of-way. Fencing should be designed specific to the trail to create a consistent theme for its entirety. Special treatments such as artistic lighting installations or public art can be added at key points to create a sense of place
- Fences and railings are encouraged to be steel and cable to encourage views from and to the trail, encouraging access and visibility, supporting public safety.
- Low maintenance systems and easy to replace components are encouraged.

# Infrastructure Design Guidelines

## 1. Streetscape

- Extend corridor streetscaping along Roosevelt Road, using trees, planters, pedestrian scaled lights and local directional signage to improve the appearance and functionality of the wider, unshaded sidewalks along Roosevelt Road.



## 2. Viaducts

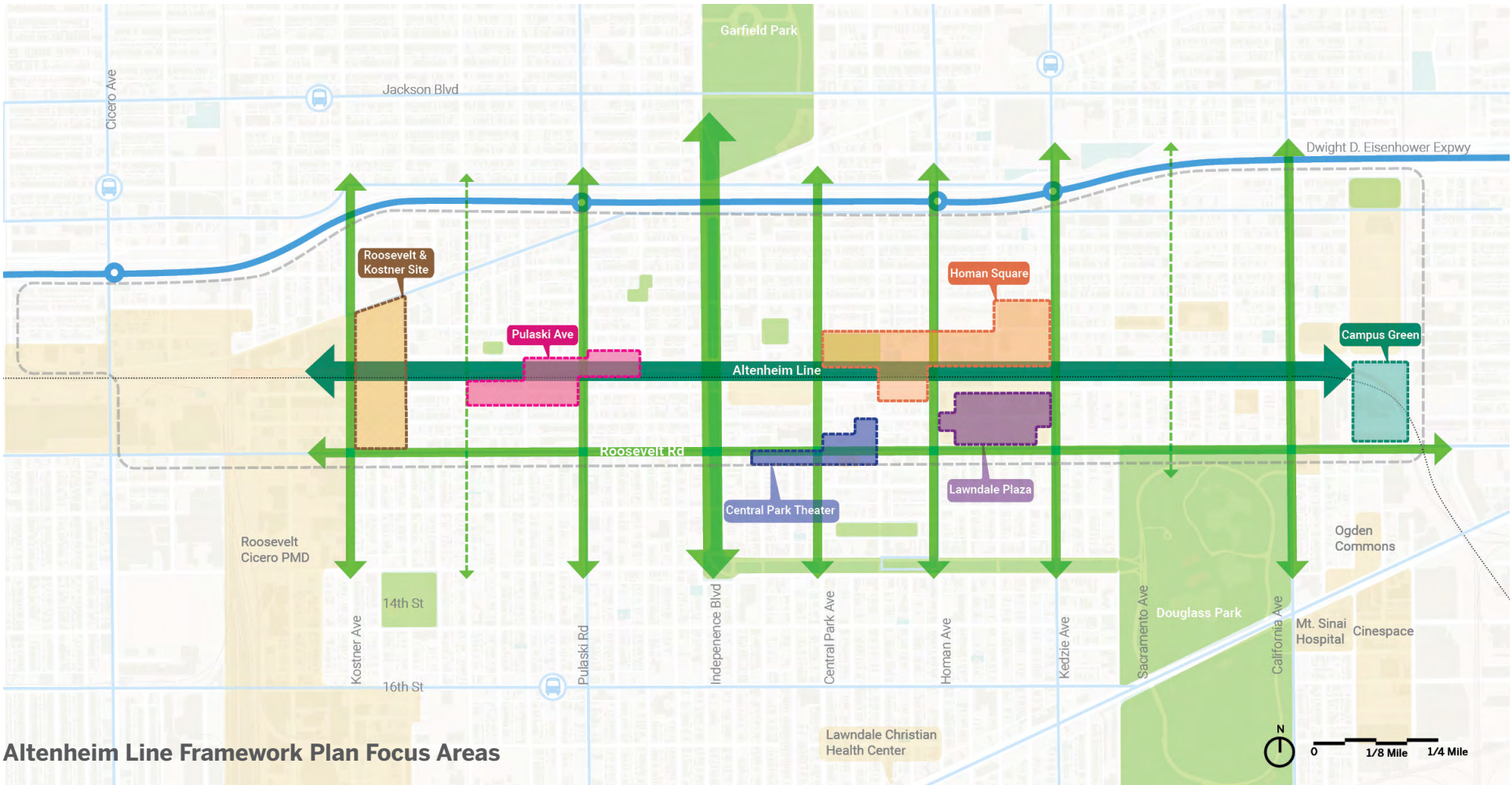
- Enhance pedestrian lighting at all viaducts under the elevated trail, encouraging north south movement and supporting public safety.
- At locations where the elevated right-of-way is not wide enough to accommodate the railroad the multi-use trail, provide pedestrian safety measures at street-level, such as high-visibility crosswalks and curb bulb-outs, where feasible.
- Artistic lighting installations and murals are encouraged at viaducts near access points. Partnerships with local artists via the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) are encouraged.



# 5 Development Framework



# Connected Focus Areas



Altonheim Line Framework Plan Focus Areas

The Altonheim Line Framework Plan focuses community-directed design and development aspirations into Focus Areas, where new amenities, services, housing, jobs and public realm will create great and distinctive places.

### Defining Focus Areas

There are several large-scale development initiatives in progress in and around North Lawndale that will benefit residents and businesses in the Lawndale Line Area. Along the diverse corridor the Altonheim Line runs through, there are several places where existing momentum, opportunity, targeted new investments and the proposed rail and trail project will come together to lead change. Reflecting lessons from other rail and trail projects across the country, the Altonheim Line has the potential to leverage new investment to benefit local communities.

### Focus Areas Characteristics

- Clusters of key development sites planned, in progress, or recently completed within three blocks of the Altonheim Line.
- Includes larger opportunity sites that can have a catalytic impact (0.5+ acres)
- Distinctive identities based on historic roles and buildings, or more recent developments.
- Carries significance in history, location, or program to the community
- North-south community connections along the east-west corridor.
- Holds strategic design possibility adjacent to the proposed Altonheim Line.
- Prioritized by community and the City of Chicago

### Leveraging Existing Activity

Focus Areas will complement, add momentum to and achieve critical mass for the many in-progress neighborhood initiatives. This includes the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation led Reclaiming Chicago Communities Initiative. Single family homes are coming to the community through the locally driven “1000 Homes” project.

At the west end of the corridor, the Roosevelt-Kostner site will be brought back to productive use through the City of Chicago’s INVEST South/West Initiative, delivering a new 21 acre, job-generating, industrial development, including the new Lawndale Innovation Center.

# Focus Area Overview



**Roosevelt Kostner: A Working Community**



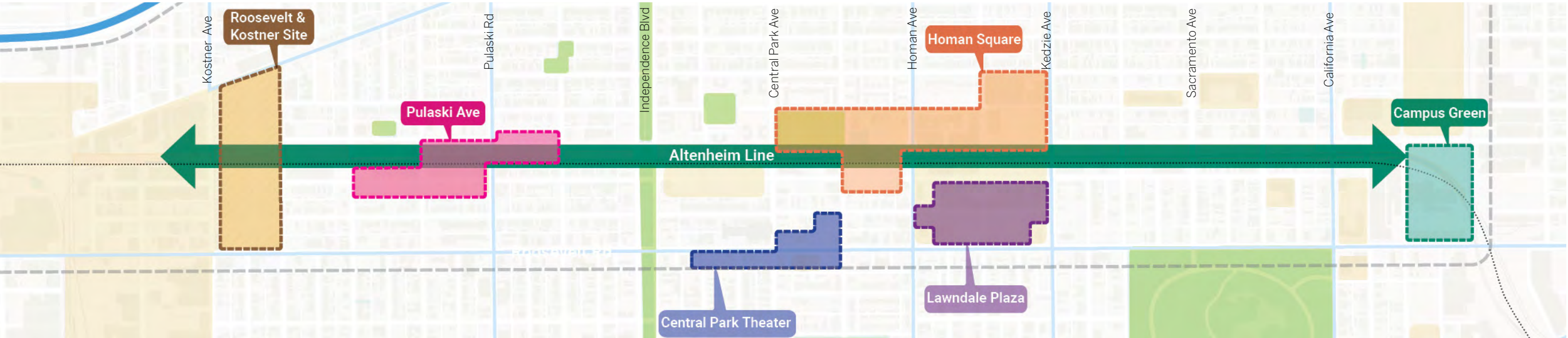
**Homan Square: Live and Work**

**Altenheim Line Focus Areas**

The Focus Areas are (from west to east):

- Invest South/West: Roosevelt - Kostner
- Pulaski Avenue
- Central Park Theater
- Homan Square
- Lawndale Plaza
- Campus Green

Each will leverage existing strengths, assets and character and offer a specific investment strategy for housing, employment, retail, recreation or and arts & culture that will support the transformation of the corridor.



**Campus Green: Economic Gateway**



**Pulaski Ave: A Place to Live**



**Central Park Theater: Active Destination**



**Lawndale Plaza: Retail & Economy**

# Focus Area Roles



**Homan Square: Live and Work**

The long-term transformation of this Focus Area will continue, with the re-use of major historic office buildings, and new development intensifying the use of surface parking lots. Housing and loft office spaces will bring residents and workers to the area. Direct connections to the Altenheim Line will provide a recreation and healthy living resources for current and future residents.



**Lawndale Plaza: Retail & Economy**

The former Cineplex will be brought back into full use, supporting neighborhood economic development. Surface parking lots will host new retail units at the sidewalk, activating street edges. Enhanced landscape will draw pedestrians to the Plaza. Streets will provide a clear access to the Altenheim Line.



**Central Park Theater: Active Destination**

Anchored by the historic Central Park Theatre with a range of interim arts and culture programming this Focus Area will see new micro-retail spaces, and new mixed-use residential and commercial development. An outdoor gathering space close to the theatre will provide new activation opportunities. Streetscape improvements will knit new investments together.



**Pulaski Ave: A Place to Live**

A residential focus with a range of new housing types for current and future residents. Family housing will be provided through single family homes and townhomes.



**Campus Green: Economic Gateway**

This strategic corridor gateway location will leverage proximity to expressways, local industrial corridors, the Illinois Medical District and Cinespace to create a large-scale business and employment hub. Back office, light industrial and logistics and a range of tenant sizes can be accommodated. Full use of available land will also resolve the future use of an historic industrial structure. The beginning of the Altenheim line will be signaled with a new public open space and high visibility access to the line.

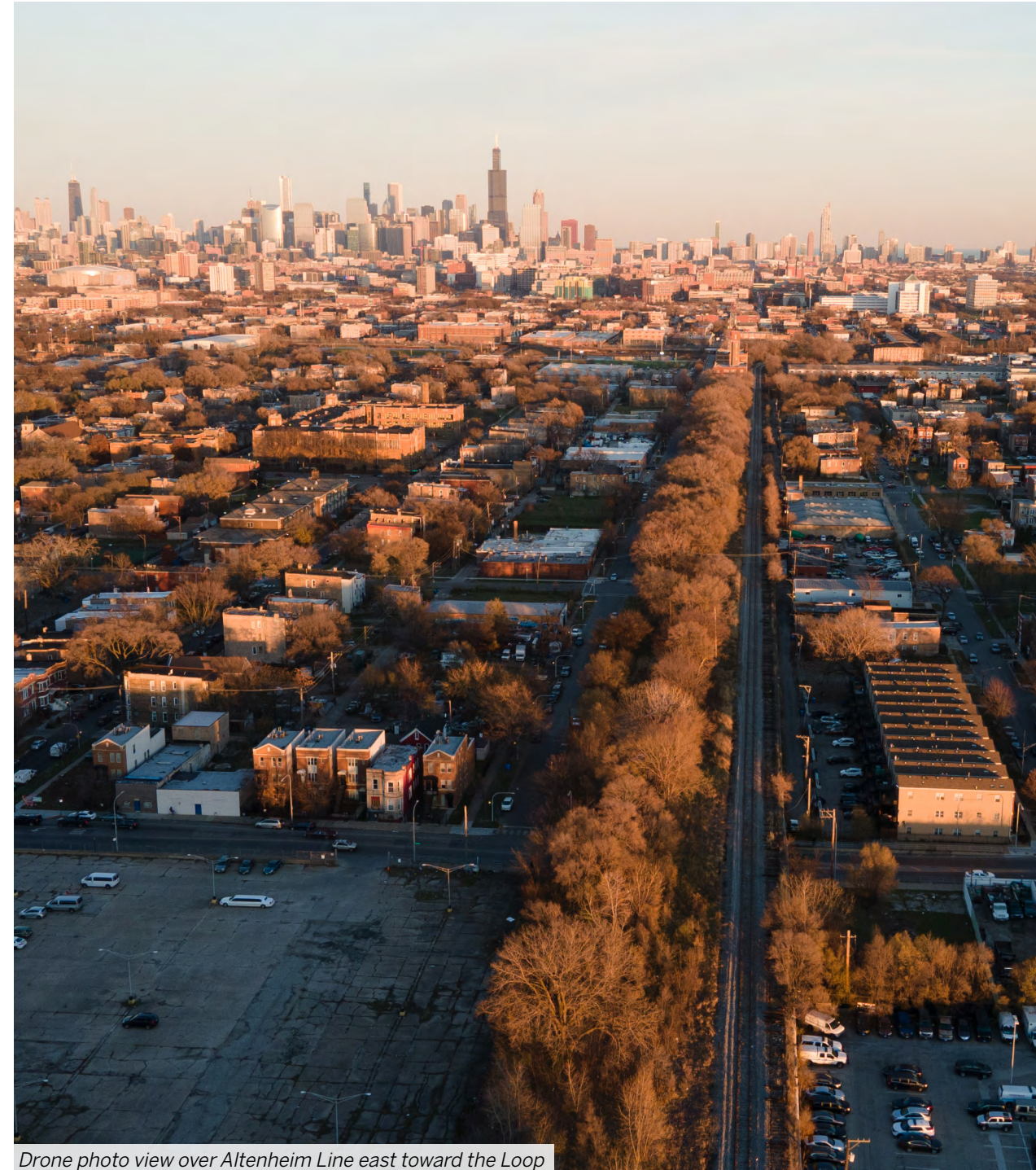


**Roosevelt Kostner: A Working Community**

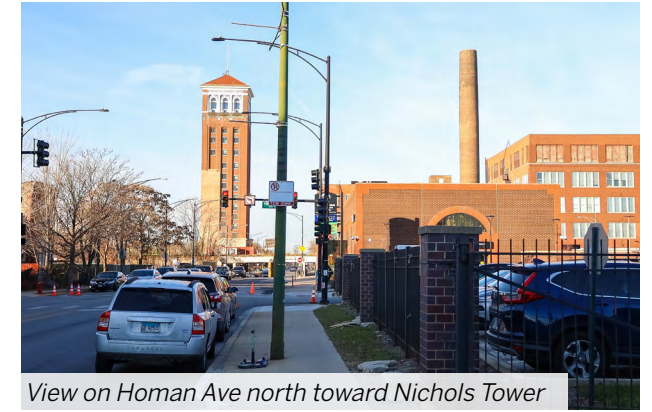
A jobs-driven redevelopment of a 21-acre site into a 350,000-square-foot light-industrial complex, with community and innovation hubs, bringing jobs, innovation, green and clean energy, high quality building design and a foundation for a public space along the Altenheim rail line.

# Homan Square Focus Area

Anchored by the historic Sears campus, the long-term transformation of the Homan Square neighborhood will be complemented by investment in the trail, with the re-use of existing structures like the former Sears Administration and Allstate buildings, and new development of surface parking lots. Housing and loft office spaces will create an environment where residents can live, work and shop. Direct connections to the elevated trail at Central Park Avenue, Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue will provide new recreation, wellbeing, arts and culture, and connectivity resources for current and future residents. Homan Square will also be joined to the nearby Focus Areas at Lawndale Plaza and Central Park Theatre.



Drone photo view over Altenheim Line east toward the Loop



View on Homan Ave north toward Nichols Tower



View on Homan Ave south toward Roosevelt Rd

The Homan Square Focus Area is centered around the historic former Sears campus, and offers building renovation and site intensification and development opportunities.

The long-term transformation of this Focus Area will continue, with the re-use of major historic office buildings, and new development intensifying the use of surface parking lots. Housing and loft office spaces will bring residents and workers to the area. Direct connections to the Altenheim Line will provide a recreation and healthy living resources for current and future residents.

# Existing Conditions

The Homan Square Focus Area is located between Homan Avenue and Central Park Avenue, north and south of the Altenheim Line, between Polk Street and Fillmore Streets. It is also close to the Central Park Theatre and Lawndale Plaza Focus Areas creating the potential for synergy.

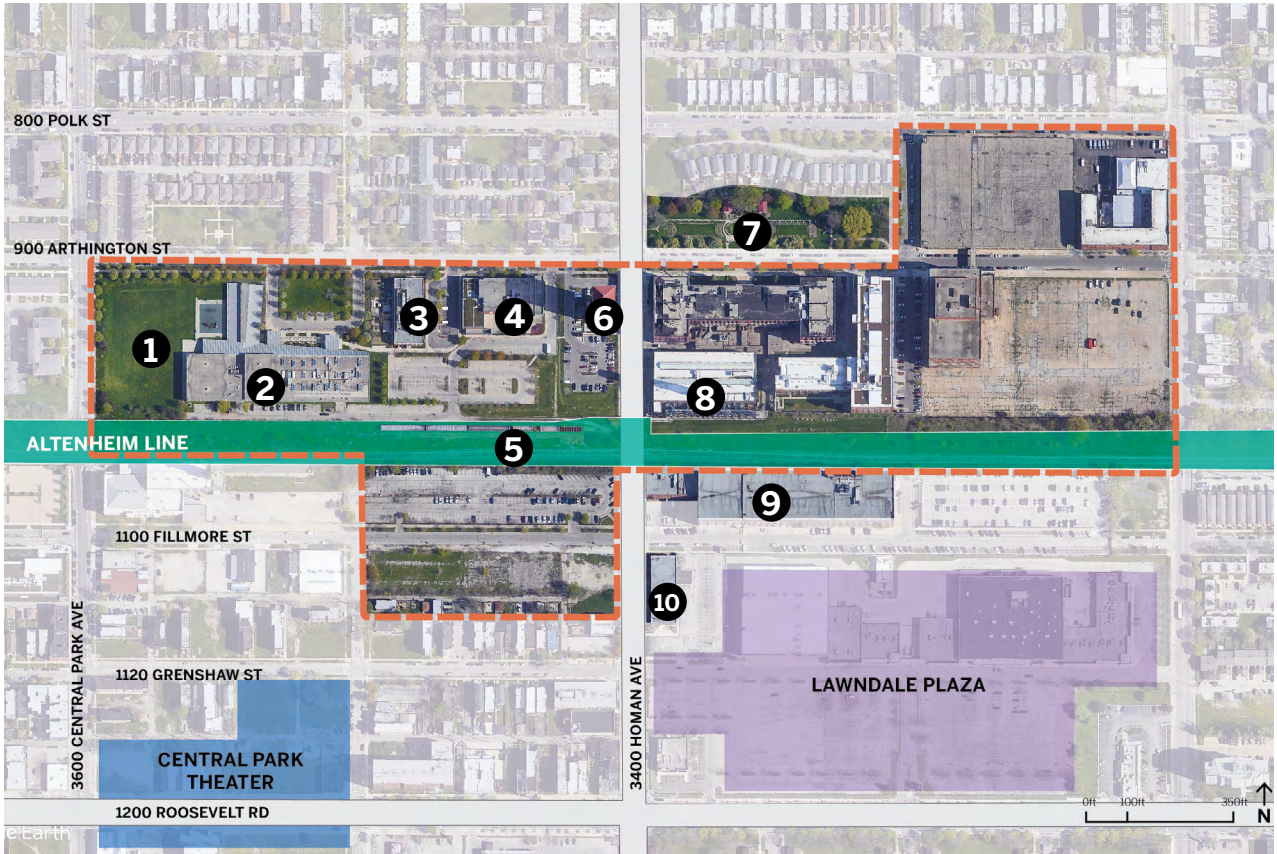
It is centered around the former Sears campus, which has seen on-going re-use and redevelopment over recent decades, with significant new housing development.

Key local assets include the North Lawndale YMCA, Homan Square Park, Nichols Tower, which is home to several organizations, and the DRW College Prep high school and Homan Rails Farm. There is also a large Chicago Police Department facility to the south of the Altenheim Line. There have also been multiple residential developments in recent years.

Local organizational assets include the Homan Square Foundation and the North Lawndale Employment Network.

Transit connections include bus routes on

- Homan Avenue
- Kedzie Avenue
- Roosevelt Road



**Asset Map**

- |                                |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Homan Park                  | 6. Nichols Tower                      |
| 2. Homan Community Center      | 7. Sunken Gardens                     |
| 3. YMCA                        | 8. DRW College Prep                   |
| 4. Holy Family Ministry School | 9. Chicago Police Department          |
| 5. Homan Rails Farm            | 10. North Lawndale Employment Network |



Homan Square Park



DRW College Prep High School



Sunken Gardens



Homan Rails Farm



Homan Square Community Center



Nichols Tower



Sears Administration Building



Homan Square public art

**Community Aspirations**

The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire to:

- Adapt vacant Sears administration building and Allstate site with mixed use
- Improve connections to nearby transit
- Enhance walkability and create an enjoyable pedestrian experience
- Improve community safety
- Bring additional housing and residents to the area
- Support economic revitalization



# Market Dynamics

The Homan Square Focus Area has been a community focal point within the Corridor. It is home to major institutions, and has seen several recent investments. This Focus Area also includes underutilized properties and vacant land. The former Allstate and Sears Administration buildings account for over 600,000 square feet of vacant floorspace. The presence of underutilized parking lots also presents an opportunity for infill development.

The Homan Square Focus Area can increase the number of local quality jobs, provide a foundation for local entrepreneurs to launch new business and continue to grow a diverse housing stock. Activating buildings and developing land, while linking to existing assets will grow a vibrant live-work community.

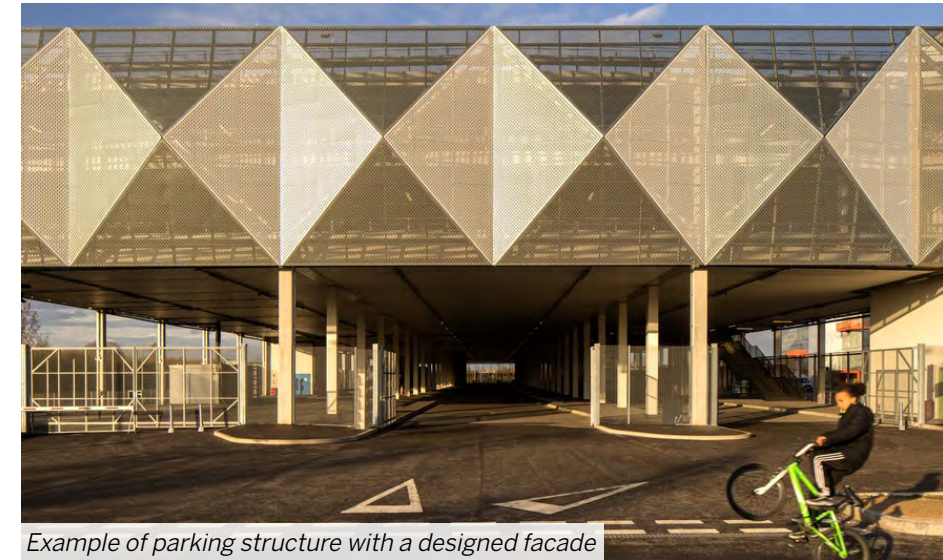
Implementation partnerships can be advanced among private and public sector property owners, local community development organizations, foundations with a focus on North Lawndale and city-wide non-profit financial intermediaries. Any active parking lots will require alternative parking resources.



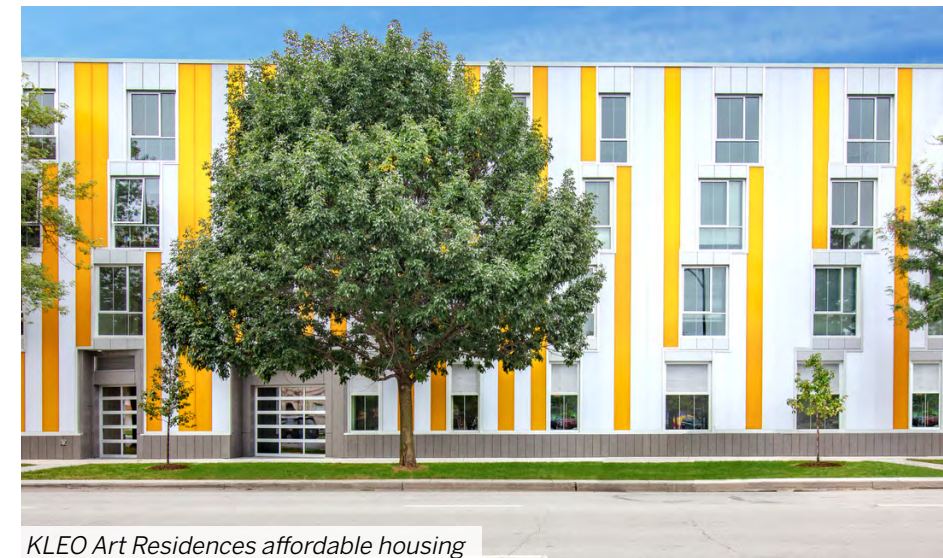
Contemporary townhomes



Taylor St Apartments Mixed-Use Development



Example of parking structure with a designed facade



KLEO Art Residences affordable housing

## Redevelopment Priorities

**1. Sears Administration Building** - Interviews and prior plans suggest this building is best suited for an adaptive re-use to multifamily residential. A combination of historic tax credits, low-income housing tax credits, and tax increment financing could be used to fund property improvements.

**2. Allstate Building** - The larger office floorplates make it suitable for office, non-profit or other institutional users. Development should engage foundations active in North Lawndale including the Foundation for Homan Square and the Steans Family Foundation.

**3. Allstate Building Surface Parking Lot** - This large site could accommodate a mix of townhomes and multifamily development. Densities should be highest adjacent to the 11-story Allstate building and step-down in height closer Kedzie Avenue, with up to six units of two to three flats. This area accommodates a 200,000 SF five-story multifamily development with up to 50 units at 1,200 SF each.

**4. Allstate Parking Structure** - The 1,100 space existing parking structure has the potential for reuse as parking for renovated Allstate building and surrounding future investment. Re-cladding the facade or using murals as well as integrating sustainable technologies such as solar panels on the roof and integrating EV charging could allow the parking structure to serve the future users, visitors and residents

**5. Chicago Police Department Parking** - This small site is well-suited for townhome development. The southern lot accommodates about 16 townhomes, 2,400 SF each. Townhomes align with the overall community priority of increasing homeownership and the development community's desire for opportunities to improve multiple sites concurrently. Adjacent to the line allows for taller 3-story multifamily residential development with an estimated 24 units each, at 1,200 SF each. New retail catered to smaller storefronts totally 10,500 SF fronts Homan Ave.

# Development Opportunities



Aerial of the Homan Square Focus Area

### Street Improvements

1. Improved landscaping and sidewalk trees along Arthington St from Homan Ave to Kedzie Ave
2. Improved viaduct condition at Homan Ave underneath Altenheim Line for pedestrian access to neighborhood plaza with improved viaduct and pathway toward access point

### Proposed Altenheim Line

3. Improved vehicle access path
4. New pedestrian access path
5. Native meadows
6. Art+Sculpture Garden Access Park

### Development

7. Multifamily Residential
8. Townhomes
9. Low density retail
10. Renovated Sears Administrative Building Mixed Use
11. Renovated Allstate Office Building
12. Rooftop Community Solar and Improved Parking Garage Exterior



New residential and commercial development promote a lively street scene Arthington

# Public Realm

A vibrant public realm framework will connect residents via high quality streets to the Altenheim Line and a network of neighborhood public spaces. This will include:

- Access to the Altenheim Line from Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue.
- The sidewalk environment will be enhanced on Homan Avenue, connecting to the Altenheim Line.
- New resident, business and employee movement will increase pedestrian and bike traffic through the viaduct underpass at the Altenheim Line. The viaduct underpasses will be enhanced, with new lighting and public art.
- A new neighborhood plaza will be created at Homan Avenue south of the Altenheim Line.
- As new development occurs, publicly accessible open space will be provided at S.Kedzie and W. Arthington.

There is opportunity partner with an array of organizations to create public art installations throughout this Focus Area. Potential partners include: Nichols Tower, DRW College Prep, School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Asphalt Art Initiative.



Detroit's Reflector Midtown Viaduct Project imagines art and light



Bloomingdale Trail "606" vibrant access park



Austin neighborhood's POPCourts! intersection



North Lawndale's Walk-H Project vision of Harrison and Homan Ave intersection

# Lawndale Plaza Focus Area

A few minutes-walk south of Homan Square, reinvestment in the Lawndale Plaza shopping center will bring the former Cineplex building back into full use, and support a more attractive, pedestrian-focused retail environment. Surface parking lots will become retail out-lots and host new retail units close to the sidewalk, activating street edges. Enhanced landscape will draw pedestrians into the Plaza. Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue will provide clear street connections to the elevated trail a few blocks to the north.



*Drone photo view of Lawndale Plaza toward Nichols Tower*



*Kedzie Avenue and Grenshaw Street, view South, 1945*

The Lawndale Plaza Focus Area targets investment toward new retail development along Homan Avenue and Roosevelt Road. Coupled with the re-activated former Cineplex building, new activity in the Lawndale Plaza shopping center will draw visitors to the area and connect people walking and biking to the Altenheim Line.

This Focus Area is made up of retail and restaurants of varying scales made up of retail restaurants of varying scales located on a large surface parking lot that is underutilized.

The 1945 photograph is of the Kedzie Avenue and Grenshaw Street intersection, looking towards Roosevelt Road where the Lawndale Terrace affordable housing complex now stands.

# Existing Conditions

The Lawndale Plaza Focus Area is located between Homan Avenue and Kedzie Avenue, just north of Roosevelt Road and south of Fillmore Street.

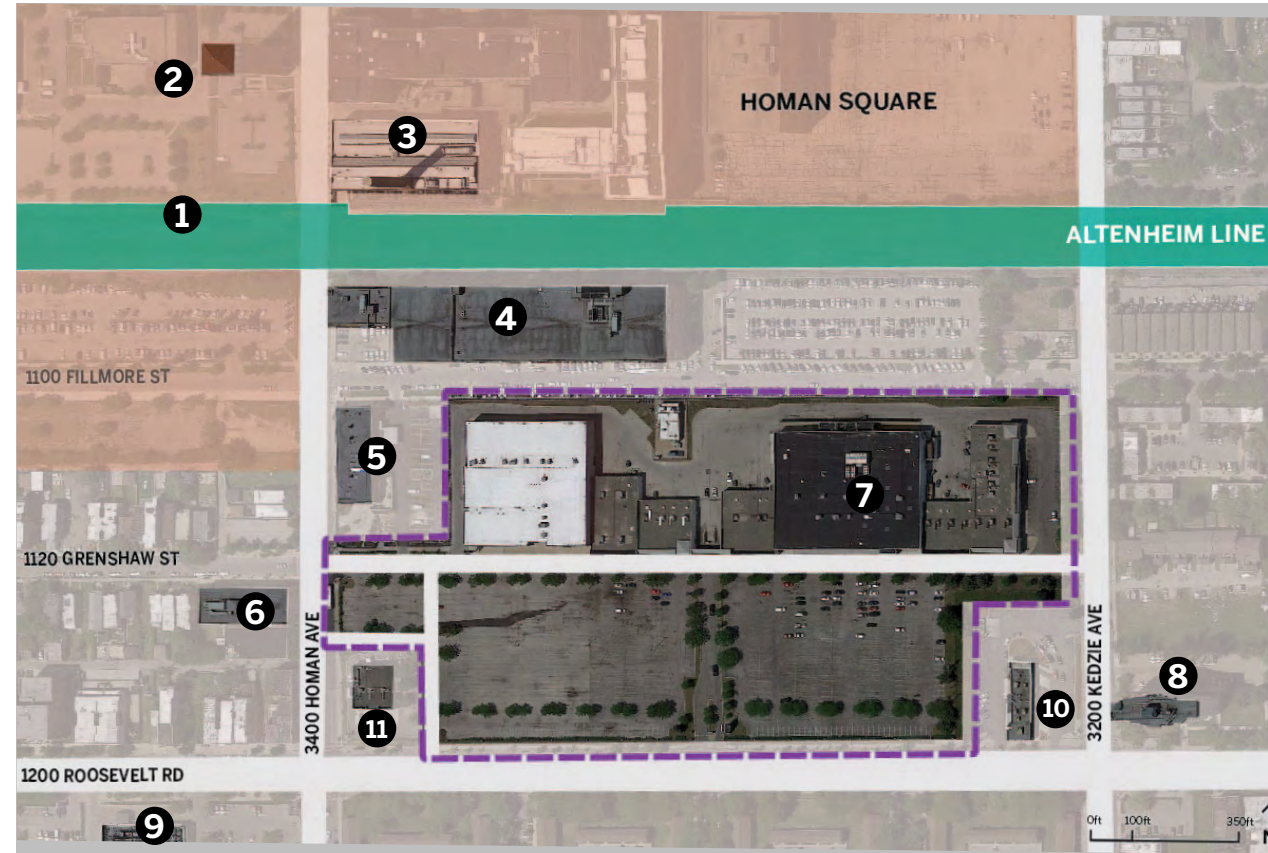
The shopping center that anchors this Focus Area is made up of a larger grocery store, several retail spaces varying from 1,000 to 10,000 SF each, and the former Cineplex, which currently sits vacant. The shopping center shares the large surface parking lot with two fast food restaurants and drive-thru, a bank, and the re-activated Liberty Bank Building. This building is home to the North Lawndale Employment Network.

The Lawndale Plaza Focus Areas sits immediately south of the Homan Square Focus Area and just to the east of the Central Park Theater Focus Area.

Key local assets include the North Lawndale Employment Network and its tenant Beelove Café, a Fresh Way Market store, and Lawndale Terrace, an affordable housing community.

Transit connections include bus routes on

- Homan Avenue
- Kedzie Avenue
- Roosevelt Road



### Asset Map

- |                              |   |                                |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Homan Rails Farm          | 5. North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN) | 8. Lawndale Terrace Apartments |
| 2. Nichols Tower             | 6. LEARN Romano Butler Campus               | 9. Walgreens                   |
| 3. DRW College Prep          | 7. Freshway Market                          | 10. McDonalds                  |
| 4. Chicago Police Department |   | 11. PNC Bank and Taco Bell     |



Vacant cinema building



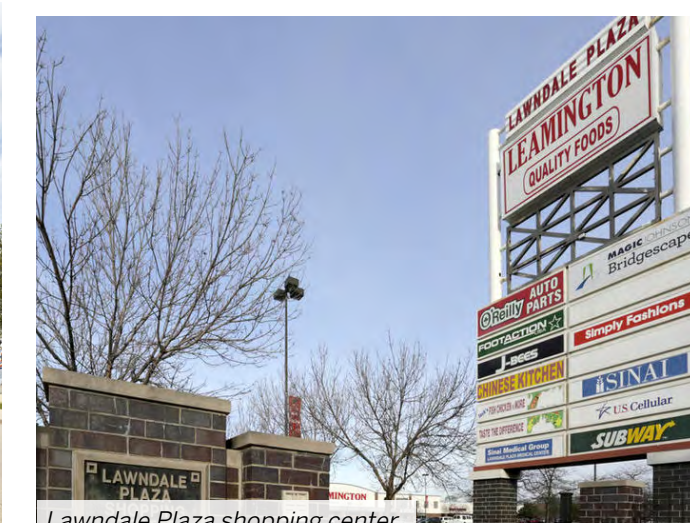
Lawndale Plaza grocery store



North Lawndale Employment Network's Beelove Cafe



North Lawndale Employment Network campus



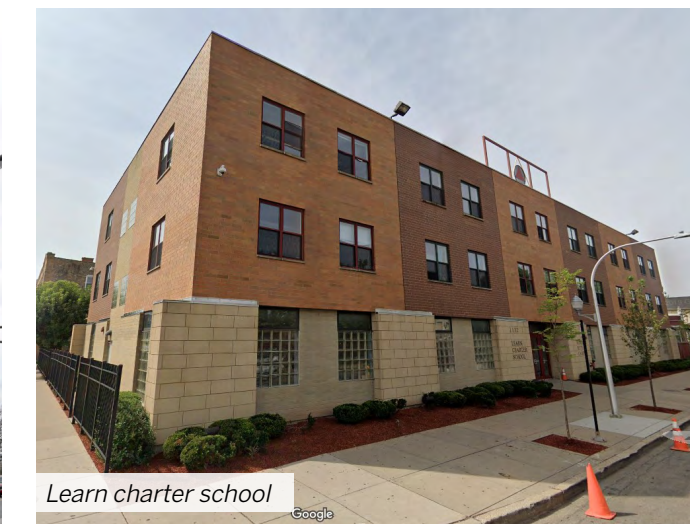
Lawndale Plaza shopping center



Homan Square



Lawndale Terrace



Learn charter school

### Community Aspirations

The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire to:

- Expand grocery options in the neighborhood
- Re-activate or re-use the former Cineplex building for local jobs
- Develop Roosevelt Road at the Cineplex parking lot
- Support local entrepreneurs and businesses.
- Improve public realm and walkability

# Market Dynamics

The Lawndale Plaza shopping center and surrounding retail parcels is the strongest performing retail node in this Corridor, with several national retailers. This Focus Area has also struggled to maintain and retain retail tenants, and includes more parking than necessary for existing retailers.

## Redevelopment Priorities

**1. Former Cinema** – A 50,000 square foot former movie theater that has been vacant for over three years. Potential options for repurposing this big-box space include a workforce training center for construction trades, call center, or flex-industrial use. Stakeholders also identified community interest in repurposing the space into a recreation use (e.g., indoor hockey or soccer).

**2. Vacant In-Line Stores** – Activating underutilized space is essential to attracting additional retailers. The commercial center includes nearly 20,000 square feet of vacant in-line space, across five storefronts. Potential users include community healthcare, or a service use such as fitness or hair, nail salons.



The Strand, contemporary performance theater, San Francisco



Low density storefronts activating public realm



Boxville micro-retail market



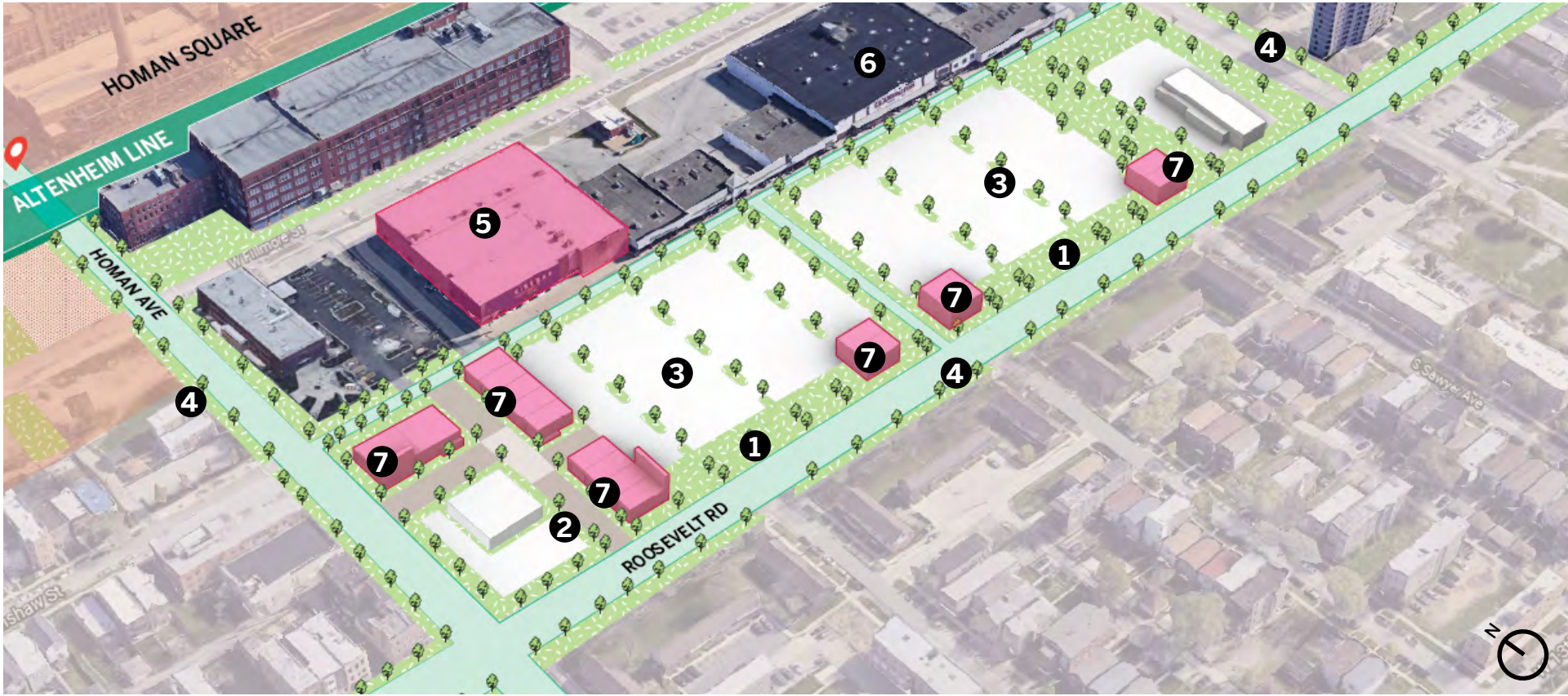
Micro-retail plaza



Chicago outdoor dining winter plans

**3. Outlot Retail** – Fast casual restaurants and service commercial uses could be developed on surface parking lots fronting Roosevelt Road as out-lot retail. Infill commercial development should have high visibility from Roosevelt Road to capture passing traffic, while maintaining views to existing businesses within the site.

# Development Opportunities



- Street Improvements**
- 1. Landscape buffer
  - 2. New shared street
  - 3. Improved landscaping to existing surface parking lot
  - 4. Improved streetscape along Homan Ave, Roosevelt Rd, and Kedzie Ave.

- Development**
- 5. Reactivated Cineplex
  - 6. Improved Fresh Way
  - 7. New Retail



An Activated Lawndale Plaza

# Public Realm

This Focus Area's segment of Roosevelt Road has thriving sidewalk trees, high-quality pavers along the street, and the sidewalk is in relatively good condition. New retail proposed here would bring additional foot traffic from surrounding residential blocks, along Roosevelt Road and from the Altenheim Line. Enhancements can include:

- Expanded landscape buffer along Roosevelt Road
- New pedestrian street connecting Homan Avenue, Grenshaw Street and Roosevelt Road

There is opportunity to partner with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Homan Square and the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation to re-imagine the future of the former Cineplex building.

Additionally, new retail at the Lawndale Plaza Shopping Center can partner with the North Lawndale Employment Network to support business incubator programs and pop-up activities.



Improved parking lot and landscaping



Parking and retail



Lonsdale St Landscaped Sidewalks, Dandenong, Australia



Red Planet, public realm playscape between retail stores



Sidewalk landscaping



Assembly Row, Somerville MA



# Central Park Theater Focus Area

West along Roosevelt Road from Lawndale Plaza, and anchored by the historic Central Park Theatre and a range of interim arts and culture programming, this Focus Area will see new micro-retail spaces, and new mixed-use residential and commercial development on currently vacant land. An outdoor gathering space close to the theatre will provide new activation opportunities and streetscape improvements will knit new investments together to create a pedestrian-scaled sense of place that will draw visitors to its entertainment and retail options. Central Park Avenue will provide a link to a new access point to the elevated trail just to the north.



The historic Central Park Theater on Roosevelt Road



Central Park Avenue and Roosevelt Road, 1955

The Central Park Theater Focus Area centers around the ongoing efforts to preserve and reactivate this historic building. There are currently several vacant lots surrounding the Theater itself, several active churches, and a collection of smaller open green spaces.

This Focus Area straddles Roosevelt Road with small scale storefronts and several vacant lots. A mix of auto-oriented commercial businesses also use this stretch of Roosevelt Road. The activity here can be amplified by leveraging the activity and community interest in the Central Park Theater to encourage a mixed-use hub at the intersection of Central Park Avenue and Roosevelt Road.

The 1955 photograph is of the 12th Street (Roosevelt Road) and Central Park Avenue northwest intersection (*Chicago Area Pharmacy Photograph Collection in the University of Illinois at Chicago Library Special Collections Department*). The Community State Bank building site is now a single-story brick building with a dental practice.

# Existing Conditions

The Central Park Theater Focus Area is located between Lawndale Avenue and St Louis Avenue, reaching north to Grenshaw Street and just south of Roosevelt Road.

It is centered around the Central Park Theater, which currently sits vacant, but hosts programming in the surrounding lots and occasional tours of the historic building, hosted by the Central Park Theater Restoration Committee.

The Central Park Theater Focus Area is also located within an areas influenced by activity from the Homan Square and Lawndale Plaza Focus Areas.

Key local assets, in addition to the theater, include Roosevelt Tower, a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit apartment building, and UCAN's campus adjacent to the Altenheim Line. In addition, Independence Boulevard sits just one block west of this Focus Area. Soule, a new restaurant, will be opening in this area in 2022.

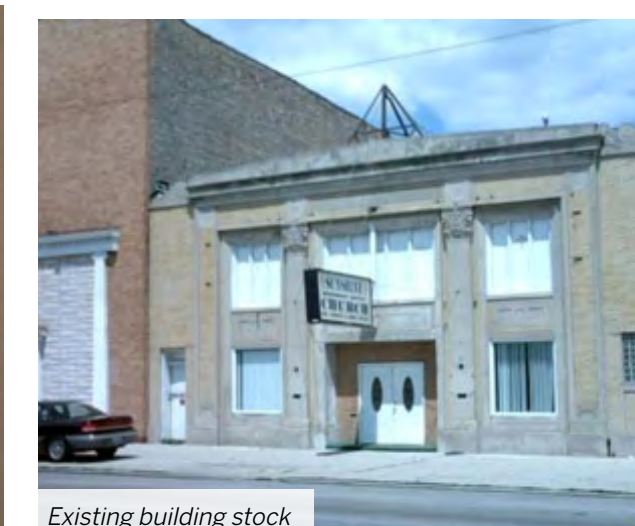
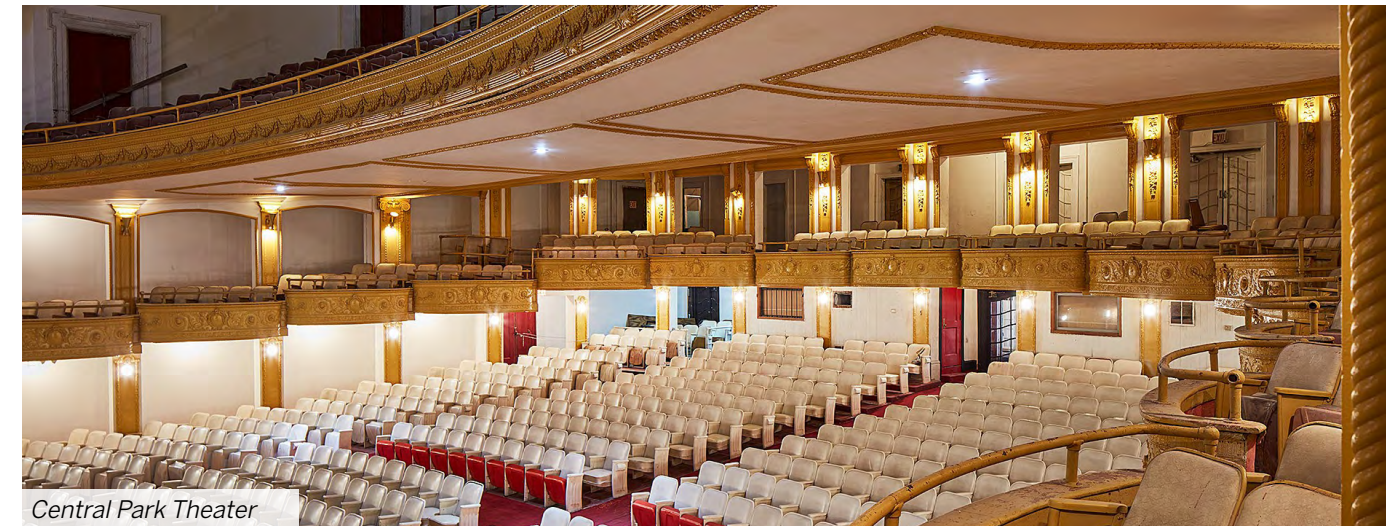
Transit connections include bus routes on

- Central Park Avenue
- Roosevelt Road
- Independence Boulevard



### Asset Map

1. UCAN
2. LD Food Distributors
3. Soule
4. Central Park Theater
5. Dunkin
6. Roosevelt Tower



### Community Aspirations

The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire to:

- Increase available and diverse affordable housing for purchase
- Preserve existing affordable housing
- Bring mixed-use (residential and commercial) and institutional (public, medical, education) development to Roosevelt Road

# Market Dynamics

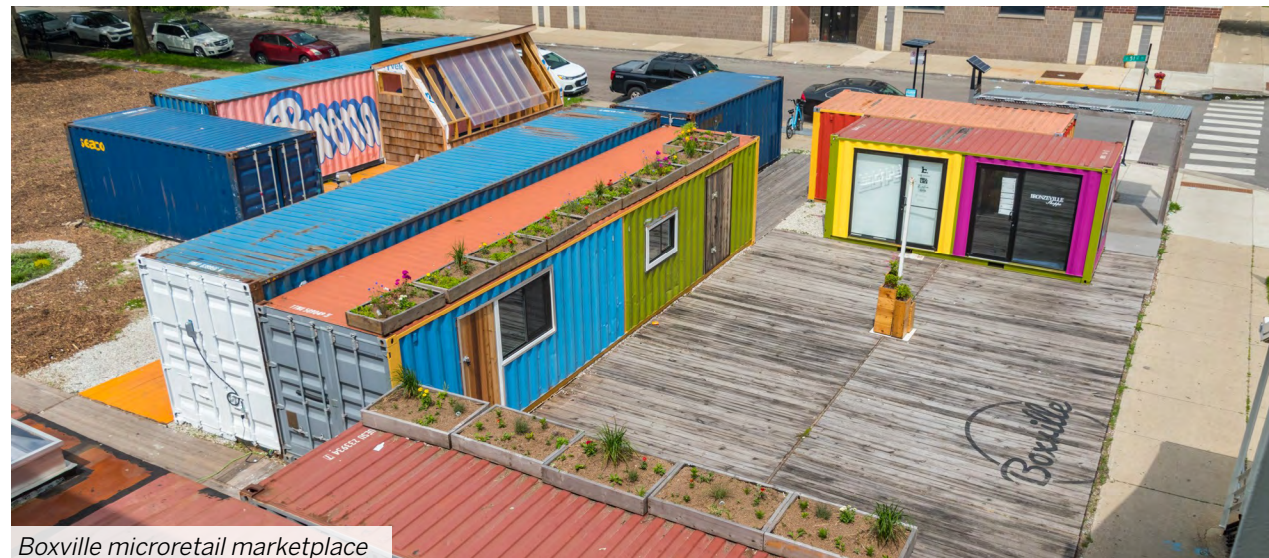
With the exception of the historic Central Park Theater, this Focus Area largely consists of vacant land owned by City of Chicago and several private entities. The House of Prayer Church of God in Christ owns the Theater as well as the surrounding parking lots. Upcoming new development consists of two single-story restaurants on Roosevelt Road. This Focus Area should include retail and higher-density residential to the greatest extent possible to match the surrounding context and density.

## Redevelopment Priorities

**1. Central Park Theater** – Investment at the Theater and surrounding parking lots could precipitate additional investment on surrounding blocks. Several non-profits have considered a range of activation scenarios, all requiring philanthropic or public sector assistance. Activation would drive foot-traffic, ultimately increasing retail sales potential on adjacent properties. Retail should be small-scale and experiential (e.g., restaurants or services uses).



MLK Plaza Residence, New York NY



Boxville microretail marketplace



Cox Communications, Topeka KA



Ogden Commons mixed use development. Photo by Jack Crawford

**2. Vacant Land Along Roosevelt Road** – Affordable multifamily housing is the most achievable development opportunity in the near-term for the multiple vacant sites here. Development at the intersection of Central Park Avenue and Roosevelt Road should include ground floor commercial to activate the intersection. Commercial should be limited in the near term.

These new developments would require re-zoning of sites from Manufacturing to Business, as well as retiring the 2001 Planned Development 793 to allow for the new housing along Roosevelt Road and St Louis Avenue.

# Development Opportunity



**Street Improvements**

1. Improved landscaping and sidewalk trees along Roosevelt Rd from Lawndale Ave to St Louis Ave.
2. Improved sidewalks along Central Park Ave and St Louis Ave toward the Altenheim Line

**Parks**

3. New 1,000 SF Microretail Plaza

**Development**

4. High Density Multifamily Residential
5. Mid Density Residential
6. High Density Mixed Use
7. 25,000 SF Commercial



*Infill development and a renovated theater foster a new node of activity on Roosevelt*

# Public Realm

The sidewalks on Roosevelt Road are generous today. Encouraging a vibrant public realm on Roosevelt Road requires further delineation between pedestrian and vehicle realms. Enhancing intersections to make them more pedestrian friendly will bring people across Roosevelt either toward the Altnheim Line or toward the Theater.

- Planted landscaping along Roosevelt Road from Lawndale Avenue to St Louis Avenue
- Improved sidewalk conditions along Central Park Avenue north from Roosevelt Road to the Altnheim Line and at St Louis Avenue.
- Improved intersection at Central Park Avenue and Roosevelt Road, with pedestrian islands and bus bulbs.
- A new 1,000 SF Micro-retail Plaza for pop-ups to occur adjacent to the Central Park Theater where pop-up events already take place, moving the existing parking lot to the east of the Theater.

There is opportunity to partner with the Central Park Theater Restoration Committee and UCAN as active community organizations to lead and direct near-term temporary installations and support community collaboration on potential development partners that would thrive in this part of the Roosevelt Road corridor .



A landscaped pedestrian island in New York



Bus bulb traffic-calming measure in New York



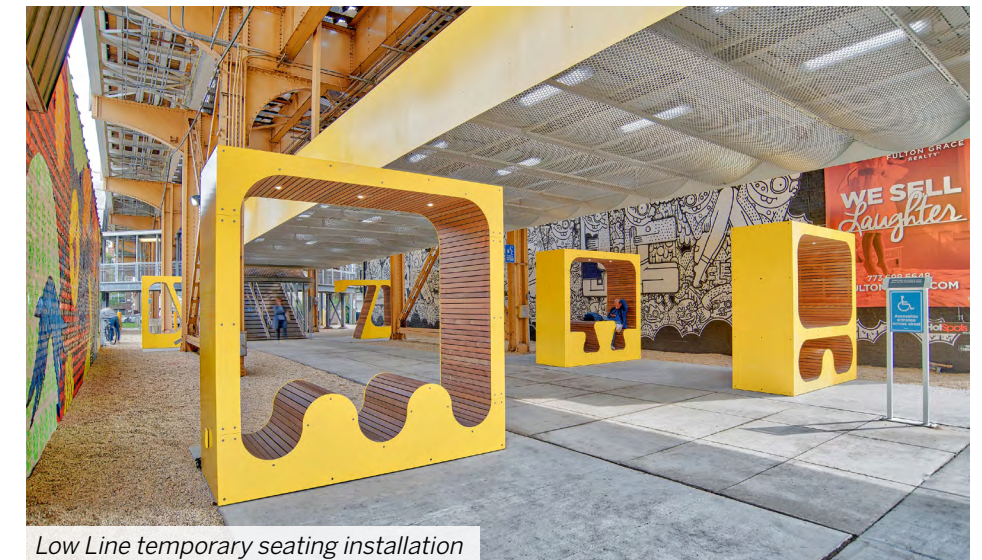
Lakeview Lincoln Hub intersection



Landscaped sidewalks



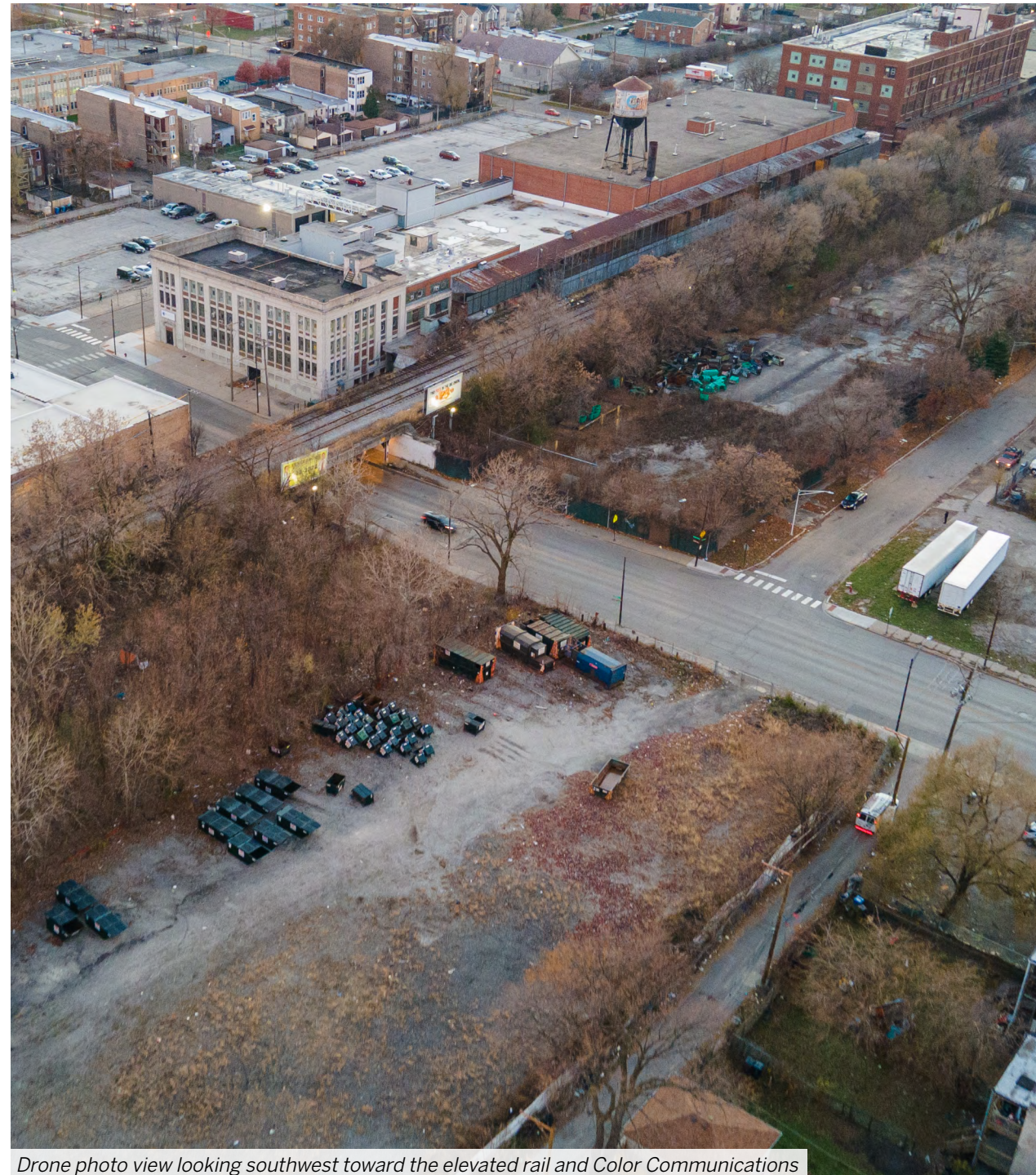
Boxshops microretail market



Low Line temporary seating installation

# Pulaski Focus Area

Located on blocks adjacent to the elevated trail, this Focus Area will consist of a range of new housing options for current and future residents with a priority on affordability. Attractive infill development interwoven with the new open space and recreation amenities will promote healthy living in a green environment in harmony with the existing community.



Drone photo view looking southwest toward the elevated rail and Color Communications



View of Pulaski Road toward Altenheim Line



View of Pulaski Road toward Roosevelt Road

The Pulaski Focus Area presents a strong residential base to support the surrounding activity. Two vacant blocks on either side of the Pulaski corridor offer opportunity for two flats, townhomes, and apartment units. The neighborhood's Violet Park and Daniel Webster Public School are flanked by a densely residential area. The underutilized land sitting between the Altenheim Line and these residential amenities is a prime location for residential development.

# Existing Conditions

The Pulaski Focus Area is located between Keeler Avenue and Springfield Avenue, north to Taylor Street and south of Fillmore Street.

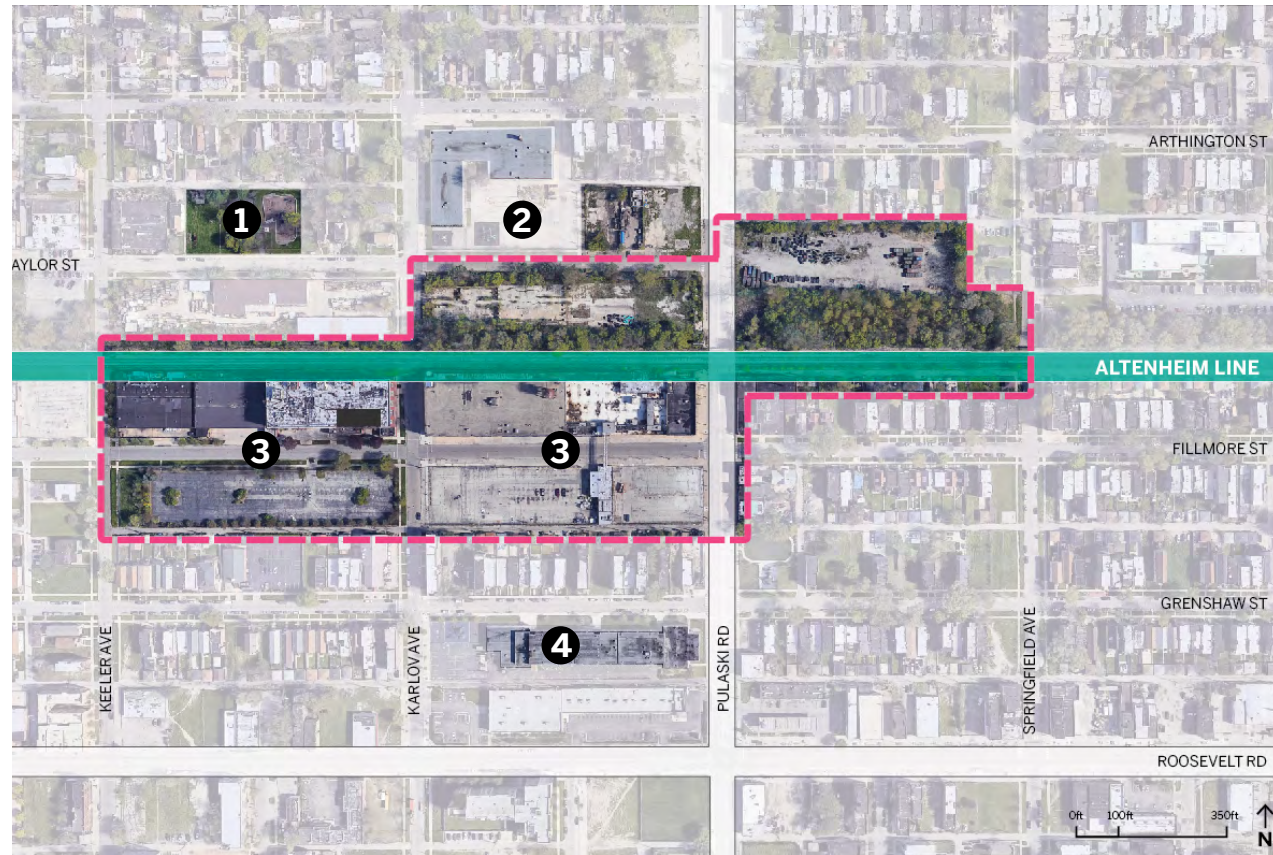
To the south of the Altenheim Line, Color Communications occupies two blocks of warehouse and two surface parking lots. The company is one of the largest employers in the Study Area. The Pulaski Road and Roosevelt Road intersection is also an active retail node with several restaurants and services. There are also a few churches and educational institutions.

The Pulaski Focus Areas sits just east of the Roosevelt Kostner Focus Area. The impacts of the employment hub from the Roosevelt Kostner Focus Area will greatly benefit this area.

Key local assets include Color Communications, Frazier International Magnet Elementary School, Daniel Webster Public School, and Violet Park.

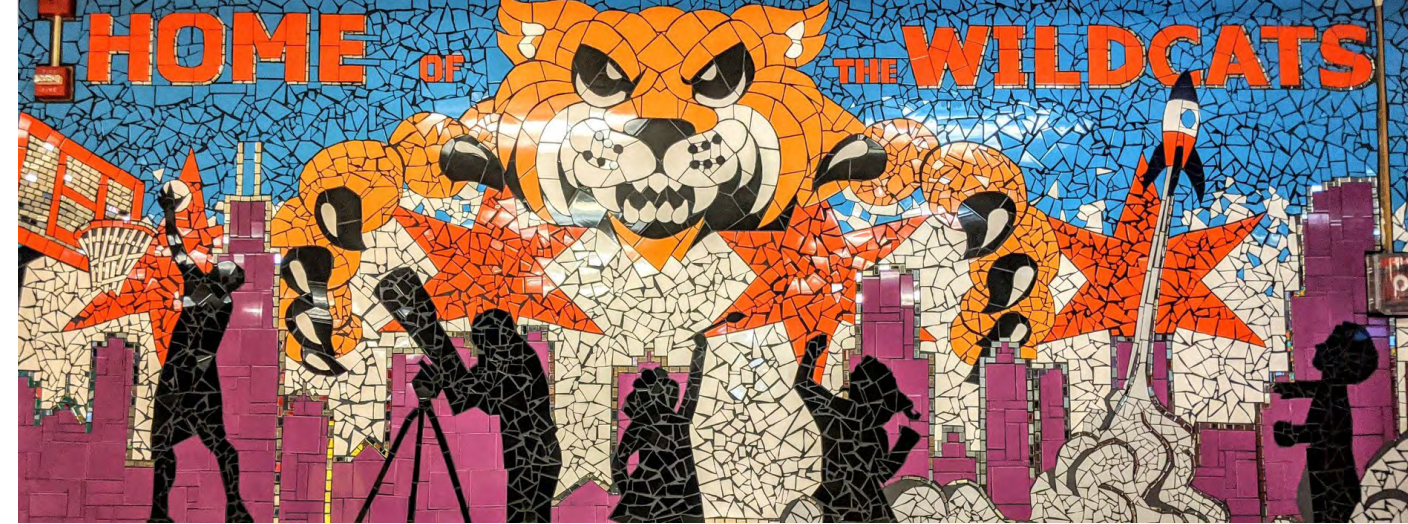
Transit connections include bus routes on

- Pulaski Road
- Roosevelt Road



### Asset Map

1. Violet Park
2. Daniel Webster Public School
3. Color Communications
4. Frazier International Magnet Elementary



### Community Aspirations

The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire for:

- Affordable and market rate housing options
- Diverse housing types
- Walkable environments

# Market Dynamics

The Pulaski Avenue Focus Area currently consists of both active industrial properties and vacant land adjacent to the proposed Altenheim Line. With limited frontage on a major arterial, the Focus Area is a better-suited for residential development opportunities:

- **Vacant Land North of Altenheim Line** – Nearly all of the property immediately to the north of the proposed Altenheim Line is currently vacant. The zone, encompassing nearly 6 acres, could accommodate a mix of residential typologies. Higher-density multifamily development, which would require low-income housing tax credit funding in the near-term, should front Pulaski Road. A combination of single family homes, townhomes, or 2-flats are also near-term opportunities. For-sale housing has the two-fold benefit of:
  1. Requiring less public assistance per unit than multifamily alternatives and
  2. Aligning with community objectives to increase homeownership

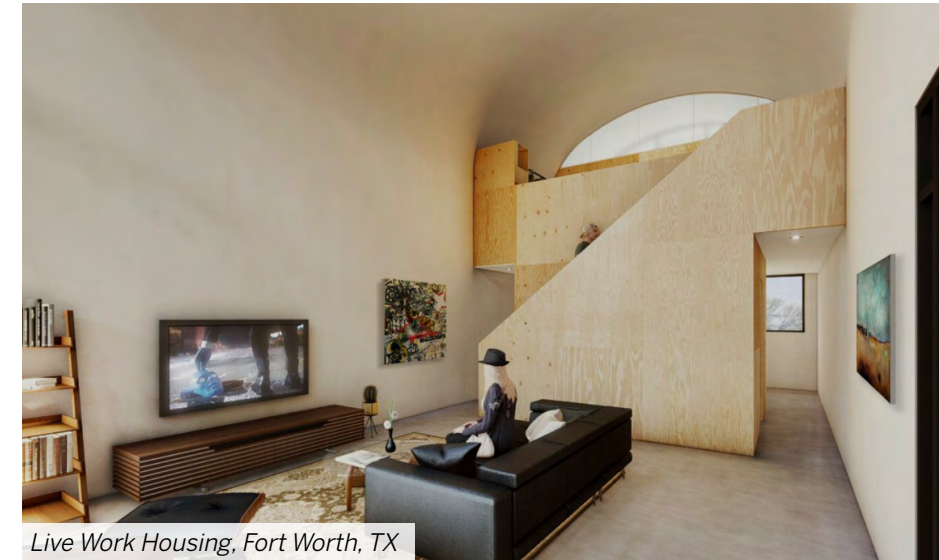
There is opportunity to partner with the Steans Family Foundation and the Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, NLCCC and other partners in this area. While the Pulaski Focus Area proposes residential development, Pulaski and Roosevelt will remain a strong retail node.



City Gardens Mixed-Income Development, Chicago, IL



City Gardens Mixed-Income Development, Chicago, IL



Live Work Housing, Fort Worth, TX



Live Work Housing, Fort Worth, TX



Basecamp Townhomes, Bend, OR



Basecamp Townhomes, Bend, OR



# Development Opportunity



**Street Improvements**

- 1. Improved landscaping and sidewalk trees along Taylor St and Pulaski Ave to connect Pulaski CTA station to Roosevelt Rd
- 2. Improved viaduct condition at Pulaski Ave underneath Altenheim Line for pedestrian access with opportunity for creative reuse of existing billboards
- 3. Improved landscaping to existing surface parking lot

**Proposed Altenheim Line**

- 4. Neighborhood Access Park
- 5. Neighborhood Amenity Park

**Development**

- 6. Multifamily Residential
- 7. Townhomes
- 8. Two-Three Flat Homes
- 9. Community Room

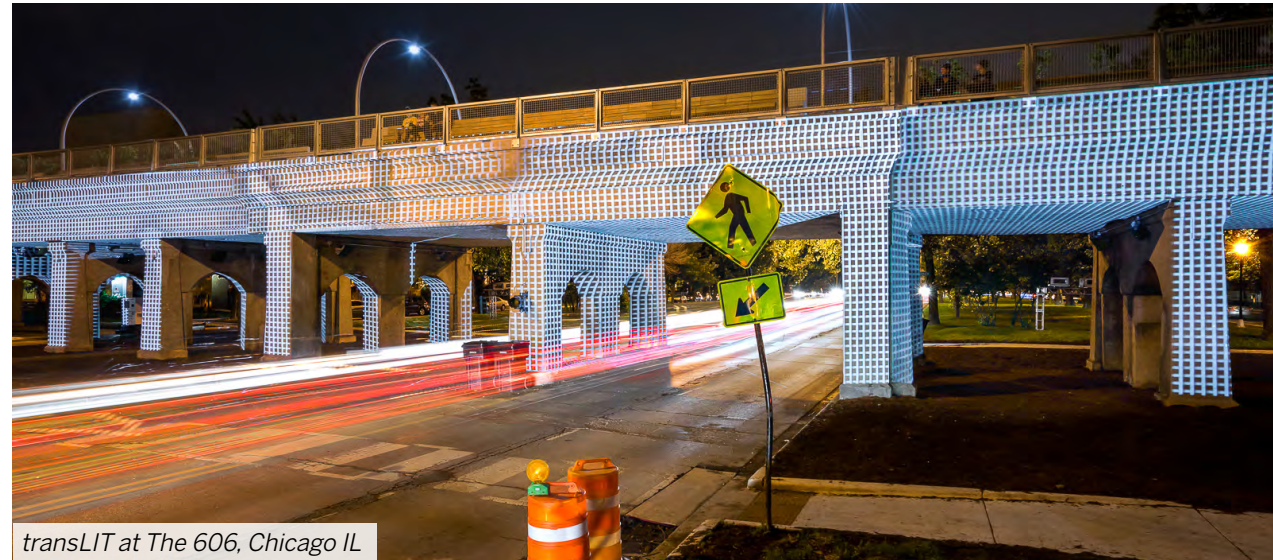


*New housing, open space and recreation transform a currently vacant area on Pulaski Rd.*

# Public Realm

The Pulaski Focus Area is more densely forested along the Altenheim Line than other focus areas. The sidewalk elevation dips under the viaduct and meets the rail as an embankment rather than a retaining wall. New residential proposed here would bring additional foot traffic from surrounding residential blocks, along Roosevelt Road and from the Altenheim Line. Enhancements can include:

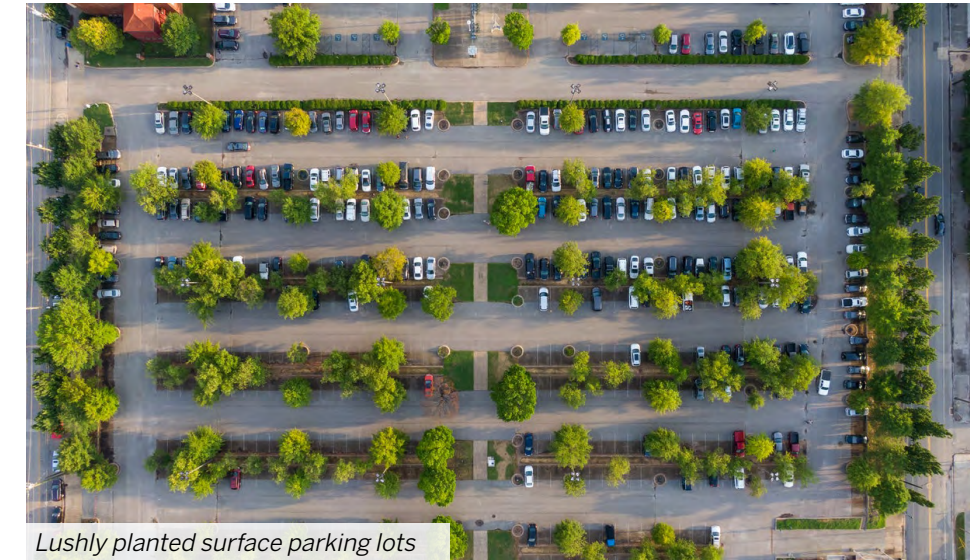
- Bringing the east Color Communications surface parking lot up to Landscape Ordinance requirements to mimic the west parking lot.
- Improvements along Pulaski Road from Roosevelt Road to Taylor Street such as widening setbacks where possible to add sidewalk trees.
- Landscaping the northwest corner of Taylor Street and Pulaski Road, connecting Daniel Webster Public School to the Altenheim Line proposed access park.
- Enroll existing billboards owned by CSX on either side of Pulaski Road into a public art program to become non-advertising.



*transLIT at The 606, Chicago IL*



*Widened curbs for additional landscaping*



*Lushly planted surface parking lots*



*Gwang-ju View Folly installation*



*City Gardens Community Spaces, Chicago IL*



*Sidewalk trees and vegetation separating pedestrians from cars*

# Campus Green Focus Area

This strategic corridor gateway location will leverage proximity to expressways, local industrial corridors, the Illinois Medical District and Cinespace to create a large-scale business and employment hub. Back office, light industrial and logistics uses can be accommodated in a range of tenant sizes. The existing historic industrial structure offers a unique adaptive reuse opportunity to be integrated with the new development. The beginning of the Altenheim line will be signaled with a new public open space on City-owned land at Taylor Street. This space will provide highly visible access to the line with a multi-season recreational area on a sloped lawn that serves as an eastern gateway to the elevated trail.



Drone photo view of Roosevelt Rd looking northeast toward the Loop



Drone photo view southwest on Taylor St



View from Washtenaw Ave toward Roosevelt Rd

The Campus Green Focus Area abuts the active freight rail bordering North Lawndale and the Tri-Taylor area. Manufacturing and residential areas meet here, with proximity to Douglass Park and a few recently completed affordable housing and mixed-use developments. There is opportunity for a light industrial development partner to set up this Focus Area as an employment hub for the neighborhood.

# Existing Conditions

The Campus Green Focus Area is located between California Avenue and the west face of the freight rail, just north of Roosevelt Road and south of Taylor Street.

The Campus Green Focus Area completes a recreational stretch of green open space from Altgeld Park north of Harrison Street, Chicago Hope Academy's Athletic fields, to the Altenheim Line. Several light industrial employers are in the area west and south of the Focus Area. New single-family developments were recently completed east of the freight rail viaduct, which is planned to expand north from Roosevelt Road. CDOT plans for capital improvements to restore the early rail & retaining wall stone abutments in the next three to eight years. The northeast corner of the Focus Area is City-owned.

The Campus Green Focus Areas terminates the east end of the Study Area.

Key local assets include the Chicago Fire Department, Chicago Hope Academy, Chalmers Elementary School, Safe Haven Foundation, North Lawndale Adult Transition Center, and Douglass Park.

Transit connections include bus routes on

- California Avenue
- Roosevelt Road



- Asset Map**
- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Brink's Doc Destruction              | 5. A Safe Haven                |
| 2. Chicago Hope Academy Athletic Fields | 6. DEKS                        |
| 3. Icon Group                           | 7. Douglass Park               |
| 4. Chicago Fire Department              | 8. Chalmer's Elementary School |
|   | 9. Iron Mountain               |



A Safe Haven planned facility



Chalmers grade school



Cinespace studio



Douglass Park fieldhouse



Ogdan Commons retail and medical offices



Hope Academy planned expansion

- Community Aspirations**
- The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire to:
- Expand recreational spaces and activities in the Study Area
  - Amplify recent investments by Hope Academy to the north
  - Opportunity for job generating uses that support nearby local anchors such as the Illinois Medical District, Mt. Sinai Hospital, or Cinespace Film Studios

# Market Dynamics

The Campus Green Focus Area is one of the largest contiguous vacant sites within the Study Area. The Focus Area formerly housed multiple warehouse and industrial properties, however all but one building were demolished over the past two decades. The remaining structure is a historic property in shell condition which requires improvement prior to return to productive use.

## Redevelopment Priorities

**1. Historic Structure** – The historic industrial building is currently listed for sale for \$2.1 million. Reuse of the structure is challenged by both the existing building condition and accessibility limitations, as the surrounding vacant parcels are under different ownership. Niche users, such as a brewing company or film studio, may be potential solutions. However, development strategies that assume site assembly to include the surrounding parking lots are more likely to be financially feasible.

**2. Vacant Land** – Vacant land surrounding the historic structure is under common ownership. The vacant land is well-suited for a sizeable industrial user. Industrial should be rear-parked to continue the street-wall precedent set by surrounding buildings. Community stakeholders expressed a preference for light industrial, cold storage or other flex uses rather than a distribution center due to the higher number of jobs generated and lesser impact on traffic.



*New City Moving, Chicago, IL*



*Awesomeness TV, Santa Monica CA*



*Bestseller Logistics Centre North*



*West Drive Industrial Center*

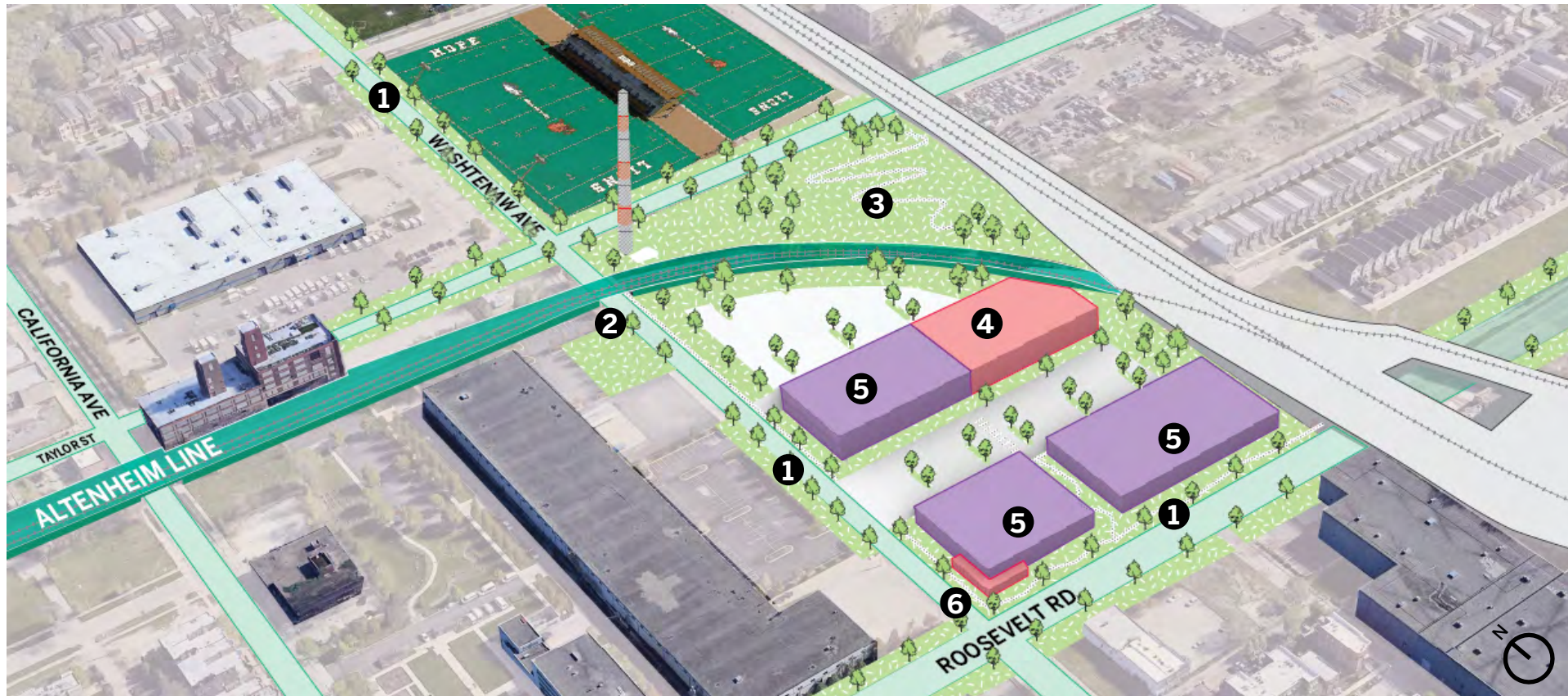


*Gotham Green Pullman, Chicago IL*



*Evergreen Cooperatives Green Growers, Cleveland OH*

# Development Opportunity



**Street Improvements**

- 1. Improved landscaping and sidewalk trees along Washtenaw Ave and Roosevelt Rd
- 2. Stabilized and renovated viaduct condition at Washtenaw Ave underneath Altenheim Line for renewed vehicle and pedestrian access from Roosevelt Rd to Chicago Hope Academy athletic fields.

**Proposed Altenheim Line**

- 3. Recreational Neighborhood Park

**Development**

- 4. Adaptive Reuse of Warehouse into Office
- 5. 100,000 SF New Light Industrial
- 6. Commercial Restaurant Tenant Space



*A large scale business and employment hub at the Campus Green site*

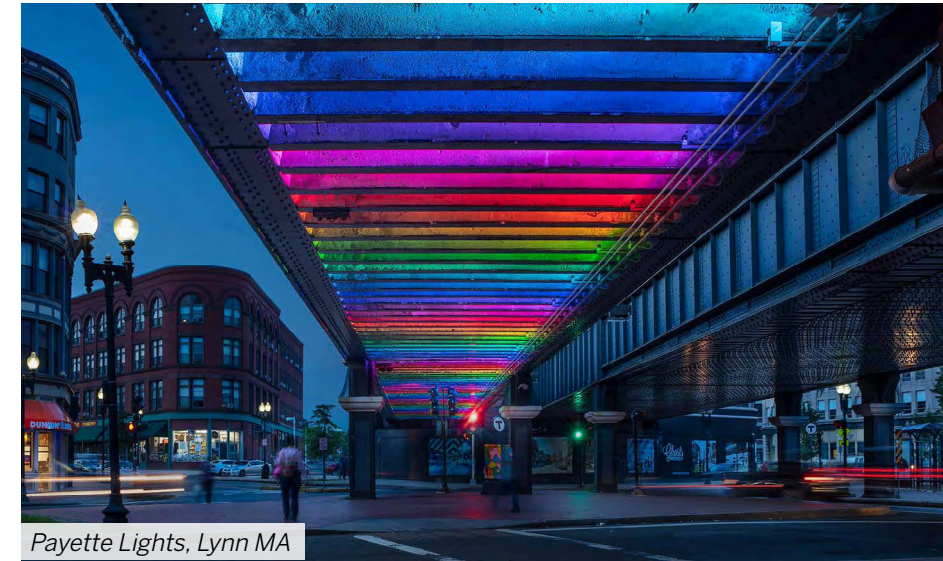
# Public Realm

Public realm improvements to the Campus Green Focus Area focus on the street edge of Roosevelt Road and Washtenaw Avenue. The proposed development creates a vibrant connection north and south from Roosevelt Road to Chicago Hope Academy. Enhancements can include:

- Enhanced sidewalk landscaping along Roosevelt Road and Washtenaw Avenue
- Renovated viaduct condition and street repair at Washtenaw Avenue
- A new neighborhood park and plaza at Taylor Street
- Landscaped surface parking for the proposed developments south of the elevated rail.



*Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Streetscape, Buffalo NY*



*Payette Lights, Lynn MA*



*Pen Factory, Santa Monica CA*

There is an opportunity for collaboration with Cinespace. It currently rents the vacant lots for parking, but intends to expand its campus operation to the north to these sites.



*Bloomingdale Trail "606 access park at Damen and Churchill St*



*Bioswale parking lots*



*Spring Garden Connector, Philadelphia PA*

# Roosevelt Kostner Focus Area

This Focus Area at the planned western gateway to the trail combines employment opportunity, community-based economic development and attractive open space on a 21-acre City-owned site that is under development by a diverse team selected via an RFP process. The Roosevelt-Kostner site will be the future home to a roughly 350,000-square-foot light-industrial complex, with community and innovation hubs, that will bring jobs, local business development, green and clean energy, and high quality building design. The elevated trail runs through the center of the site, where, new public spaces and access points will be incorporated.



Aerial diagram of Roosevelt Kostner Focus Area



View of Roosevelt Kostner from Roosevelt Rd



View of Roosevelt Kostner from Altheim Line

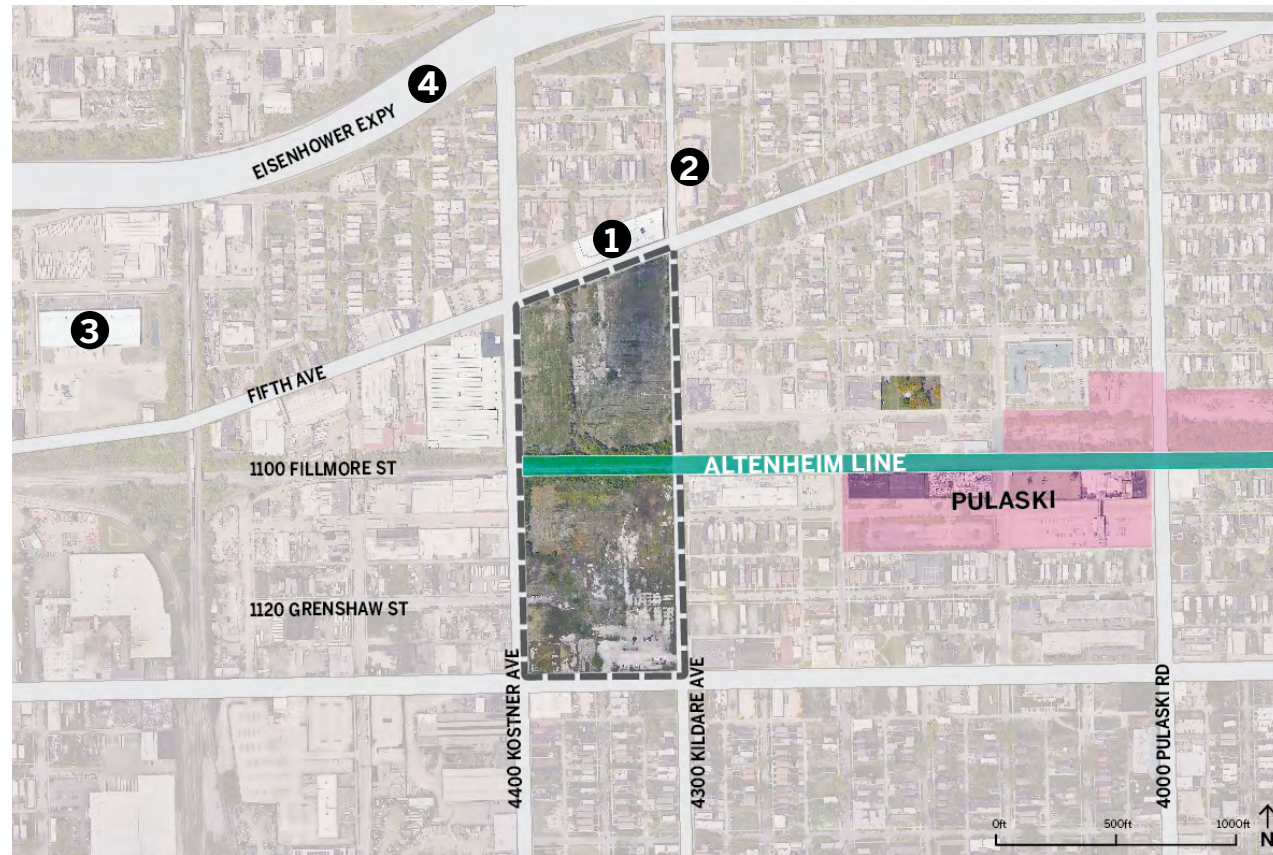
The Roosevelt-Kostner Focus Area is a gateway location for the Lawndale Line corridor. The Roosevelt-Kostner Focus Area will be transformed by the new Lawndale Innovation Center. The project is expected to create hundreds of permanent and temporary jobs.



# Existing Conditions

It is primarily made up of a 21-acre former industrial site. Long-vacant, this site is bounded by 5th Avenue on the north, S. Kildare on the east, W.Roosevelt on the south and S.Kostner on the west. The site is also bisected by the Altenheim Line. The context area includes industrial businesses to the west, and residential blocks to the north and east.

Nearby Cicero Avenue provides freight connections to the I-290 Eisenhower Expressway to the north. Transit connections are provided via the Roosevelt Road bus route.



- Asset Map**
1. Charles Sumner Math & Science Community Academy
  2. Sumner Elementary School
  3. The Will Group K-Town Business Center
  4. Eisenhower Expressway

## Community Aspirations

The community engagement process highlighted a significant desire to:

- Create local employment opportunities, both for construction and permanent jobs
- Provide local workforce development services
- Expand retail options in community



Eisenhower Expressway



Sumner Math and Science Academy



K-Town Business Center

This site was the subject of a 2021 City of Chicago INVEST South/West request for developer proposals to bring it back to full use. Primary objectives included creating jobs and wealth in the neighborhood, and being a good neighbor to residents and other businesses.

# Selected Development Proposal



548 Development and Related Midwest proposed development

1. Warehouse
2. Bioswale and access to elevated trail
3. New Covenant CDC Innovation Center
4. Black Men United Innovation Center



The Roosevelt-Kostner Focus Area will be transformed by the new Lawndale Innovation Center. The project is expected to create approximately 700 permanent and temporary jobs.

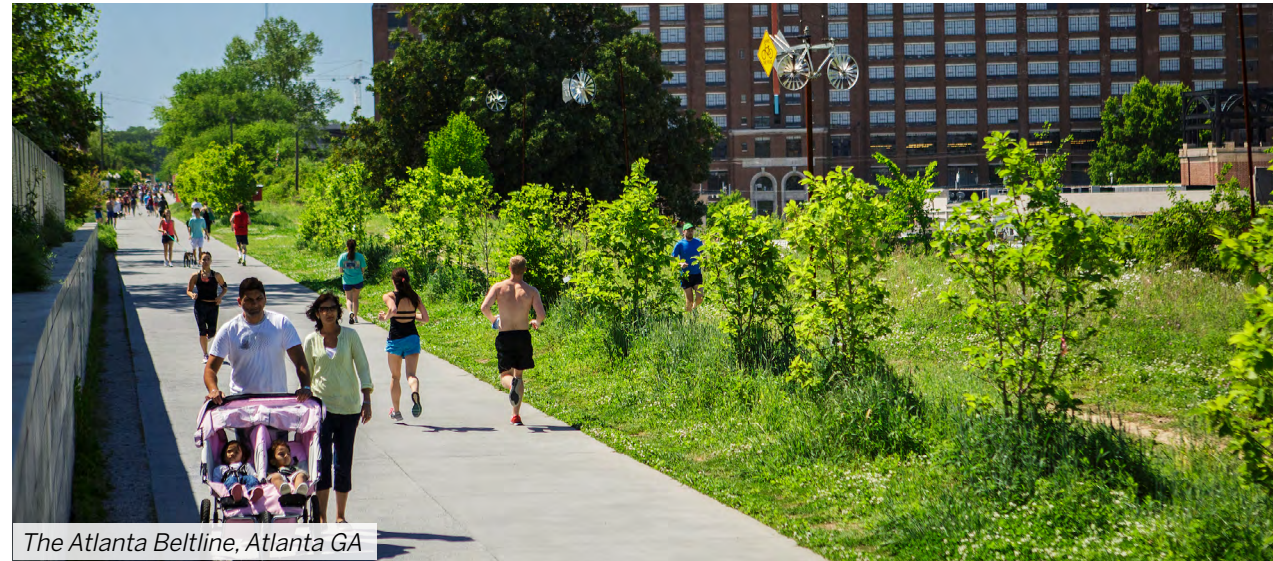
The Lawndale Innovation Center will tap strategic highway connections to develop two 180,000-square-foot solar-powered industrial buildings that will be joined by a pair of community centers occupied by Black Men United and New Covenant Community Development Corporation.

Developed by 548 Development and Related Midwest, industrial buildings will include a roughly 182,000 square foot structure with 27 docks to the north and a roughly 182,000 square foot structure with another 27 docks to the south. The new North Lawndale Innovation Center, providing two buildings for community-based retail, workforce training, and office uses in partnership with local community organizations will be located close to Roosevelt Road.

# Public Realm

The Lawndale Innovation Center will provide a welcoming gateway to the corridor. It will also provide a high-quality frontage for Roosevelt Road and other surrounding streets with landscaped edges.

A new public open space and direct connections to the elevated trail will be provided. A community park will offer outdoor gathering space for community residents. Elevated trail connections will be provided from a passive recreation area on the northern half of the site.



The Atlanta Beltline, Atlanta GA



Werkspoorpad Walking Path, Utrecht The Netherlands



Assembly Row, Somerville MA



Path400, Atlanta GA



Rail Park, Philadelphia PA



Turning Sky The 606 lighting installation, Chicago IL

# Development Design Guidelines



The Development Design Guidelines are intended to be used for future public and private investment in the renovation of existing buildings and construction of new buildings in proximity to the Altenheim Line elevated trail and open space network. These guidelines reflect DPD's design excellence principles and planning priorities shared by community members and stakeholders throughout the outreach process conducted for the Altenheim Line Framework Plan. Their application to future real estate development in the



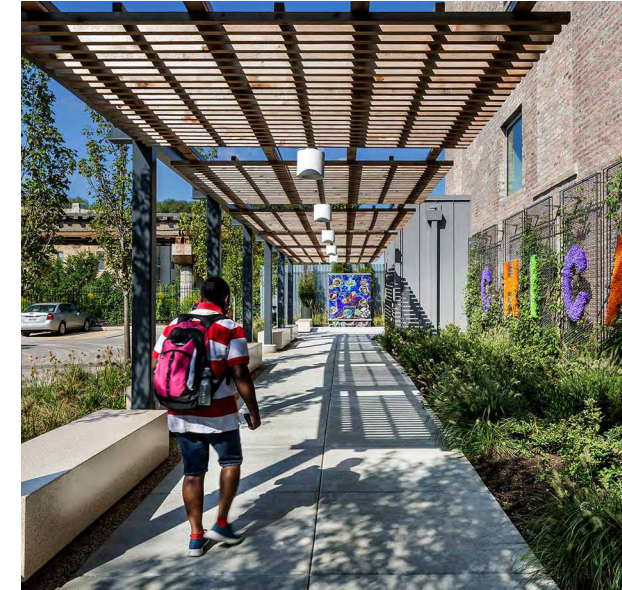
adjacent communities will encourage unified development that complements the existing character of the urban fabric and enhances the sense of place through human-scaled design.



## Industrial Development Design Guidelines

### 1. Building and Site Design

- Buildings should be oriented towards primary street frontages to screen parking and loading areas. For primary street frontages that are predominately residential, setbacks are required. Street frontages along/adjacent to commercial areas should have active street frontages.
- Multiple vehicular access points are discouraged to limit the impact of truck traffic on surrounding areas. When a facility is located in proximity to residential areas ingress/egress for delivery trucks



- and vans will be restricted to no more than two points and limited to primary/commercial thoroughfares only.
- Place employee entrances where they are visible from the street.
- Promote entries through the use of awnings or canopies, shelters, exterior lighting, variation in color or material, signage or special planting, especially on south-facing facades.
- Place building signage close to the building entrance, and set height and size and information so that it is visible and readable to pedestrians.



### 2. Façade and Materials

- Larger building walls should be articulated through the use of texture, color, material changes, shadow lines, and other façade treatments. Align changes in wall materials to variations in building mass.
- On ground floor frontages, introduce transparency and visual interest to bring natural light into work spaces and make economic activity visible to neighbors.
- Use climbing vegetation or green walls as ways to articulate longer facades.
- Use high-quality materials for trim, metal and woodwork, lighting and other details on public-facing facades to convey a sense of permanence.



- Place exterior lighting on buildings to illuminate the site and provide safety-enhancing light to complement public street lighting. Use consistent and glare-free lighting on building walls.
  - Require all facades to reflect these guidelines, understanding that the rear and sides of buildings will be viewed by neighbors and from the Altenheim Line.
- ### 3. Sustainability
- Use solar powered exterior lighting to increase energy efficiency. Larger industrial buildings of 100,000 square feet or more in floor area should incorporate solar arrays on rooftops.

# Development Design Guidelines



- Use white or reflective paint on rooftops and light paving materials or “green roofs” to reflect heat away from buildings and reduce the need for mechanical cooling.
- Incorporate environmentally sustainable stormwater features, such as bio-swales and performative landscaping, into the overall stormwater management system. Additionally, the Chicago Sustainability Development Policy will apply for all on-site stormwater detention.
- Facilities should provide infrastructure for commercial driver comfort (including waiting areas and electric power sources for truck

#### 4. Landscaping and Fencing

- All landscaping should be designed

to meet the requirements of the City of Chicago zoning ordinance and be consistent with recommendations in the *Guide to Chicago Landscape Ordinance*.

- Within the required public way setback a landscape buffer is required. Features such as berms, bio-swale and dense tree plantings are encouraged.
- Landscape plans should be designed to actively mitigate air pollution through performative plantings.
- A minimum of 25 percent of the net area for industrial projects should be reserved for open space, including publicly-accessible amenities.
- Ensure passers-by can see through fencing to the building and activity inside, and building occupants can see

surrounding streets, supporting public safety.

- Avoid excessive use of security measures such as barbs or pickets.

#### 5. Parking

- Place on-site parking at the side or rear of buildings to reduce the impact on Roosevelt Road or more significant north south streets.
- Where a facility is located immediately adjacent to a residentially-zoned district; truck and van movement, staging and loading areas should be situated at the furthest furthest location from residential users on the facility.
- When a facility is located in an urban infill location where there is proximity to

transit and availability of other modes of transportation, reduce parking according to percentages provided in the Chicago Zoning Ordinance.

#### Renovation and Re-use Guidelines

##### 1. Commercial and Mixed-use Buildings

##### Materials

- Materials should be high-quality and durable. The use of traditional building materials-such as wood, cast iron, structural metal, glass, stone, brick, -is encouraged.
- Colors of exterior materials, signs, window frames, storefronts and other buildings' features should be coordinated.
- Use compatible colors to unify a building frontage with multiple businesses.
- Use materials and colors to differentiate businesses in the same district.

- For historic buildings, consider exterior colors that are compatible with historic character:

1. The historic early 20th century Sears campus makes extensive use of brown / purple brick, with lighter colored contrasting stone details and features.
  2. Many industrial and industrial loft buildings use brown / purple brick.
  3. Lawndale has an extensive collection of two and three flat Greystone buildings using lighter colored stone facades.
- Incorporate high quality, culturally and historically relevant murals, designed or installed by local artists in coordination with DCASE.

# Development Design Guidelines



## ***Façade and Signage***

- On commercial corridors, 50 percent of a ground floor façade between sidewalk grade and 10 feet above grade is encouraged to be translucent or transparent glass should be that allows views of indoor commercial space or product display.
- Retain a building's original window pattern.
- Remove temporary signs and leave clear lines of sight between the business and the sidewalk. Avoid sign clutter, especially when it obstructs views of interior spaces and activities. Signage should be used to contribute to the neighborhood character

and identity by using color, style, and architectural integration appropriate to the context.

- All replacement windows should be constructed of wood, clad wood, or metal.
- Locate sign in the traditional section of the building facade or signage band and use durable materials, such as exterior grade wood or metal.
- Limit Signage to building name and business name. Discourage advertising signs and mass produced signs supplied by national distributors

## ***Lighting***

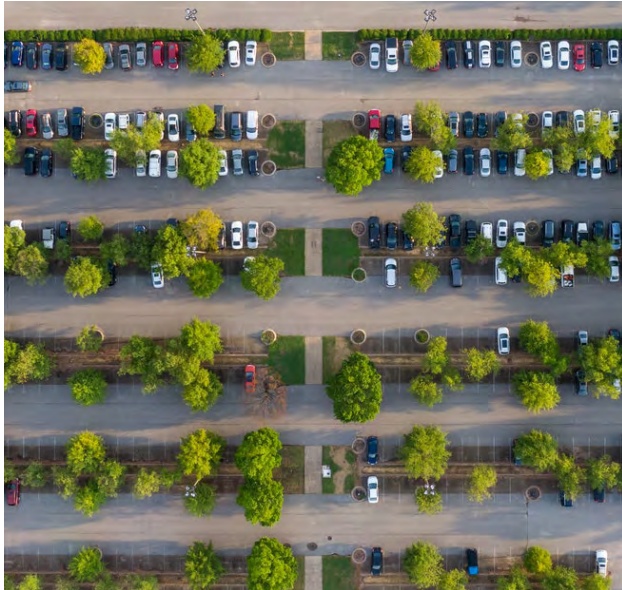
- Support street illumination through interior and exterior lighting to complement street lighting and enhance public safety.
- Lighting that illuminates signage or the sidewalk is encouraged

## ***Historic Features***

- Renovations should retain and complement a building's original character, highlighting distinctive architectural elements. Avoid alterations that attempt to make the building look older or newer or change the architectural style

- Original window and door openings should be retained
- Original building materials and architectural features should not be covered by other materials
- For historic buildings, incorporate design features that increase natural light internally, such as lightwells and atriums. Consider strategies to retrofit floor plans to be more and marketable to commercial and residential use.
- Incorporate sustainability features such as vegetated roofs to reflect heat away from buildings and reduce the need for mechanical cooling and permeable pavers to promote stormwater infiltration on-site.

# Development Design Guidelines



## 2. Residential Buildings

### Materials

- Materials should be high-quality and durable. The use of traditional building materials that complement the existing urban fabric such as wood, cast iron, structural metal, glass, stone, brick, is encouraged.
- Colors of exterior materials, signs, window frames, storefronts and other buildings' features should be coordinated.
- Use compatible materials and colors to unify a building frontage with multiple businesses.

- For historic buildings, consider exterior colors that are in line with historic character.

### Facade

- For mixed-use buildings, ground floor frontages should be primarily clear, non-reflective windows that allows views of indoor commercial space or product display
- Retain original window patterns when renovating existing building facades.
- All replacement windows should be constructed of wood, clad wood, or metal.

- Locate building entries towards primary streets. Translucent or transparent elements to doors are encouraged as well as illuminated entries.

### Historic Features

- Renovations should retain and complement a building's original character, highlighting distinctive architectural elements. Avoid alterations that attempt to make the building look older or newer or change the architectural style.
- Original window and door openings should be retained
- Original building materials and

- architectural features should not be covered by other materials
- For historic buildings, incorporate design features that increase natural light internally, such as lightwells and atriums. Consider strategies to retrofit floor plans to be more open and marketable to commercial and residential use
- Incorporate sustainability features such as vegetated roofs to reflect heat away from buildings and reduce the need for mechanical cooling and permeable pavers to promote stormwater infiltration on-site.

- Window and door openings should be retained. Original building materials and architectural features should not be covered by other materials. Highlight distinctive architectural elements.

### Parking

- Park residential units from alleys, avoiding curb cuts.

# Development Design Guidelines



## General Development Guidelines

### 1. Locally Relevant Color and Materials

Selectively use and include exterior materials and colors that are compatible with Lawndale’s historic character.

- The historic early 20th century Sears campus makes extensive use of brown / purple brick, with lighter colored contrasting stone details and features.
- Many industrial and industrial loft buildings use brown / purple brick.
- Lawndale has an extensive collection of two and three flat buildings using lighter colored stone facades.



### 2. Massing

- Determine street-facing building height based on adjacent and surrounding building heights to provide variety and visual interest within a unified street character. Where a building is taller than surrounding developments, building height should transition by stepping down to better relate to adjacent buildings.
- Encourage a 45-degree maximum lateral height transition between buildings facing streets and corridors. Avoid transitions of more than three stories for adjacent buildings.
- Encourage a 30-degree maximum height



- transition from the rear of commercial corridor buildings, stepping down to adjacent blocks.
- Identify opportunities for outdoor space, including porches, balconies, and roof decks, that are designed in a way that is consistent with surrounding buildings and sensitive to the public realm, such as on top of a stepped back floor.
- Where new construction occurs near existing landmark buildings, incorporate themes and massing from existing structures to complement the urban fabric. New structures should be fronted to the existing street wall established by existing structures, where relevant.



### 3. Ground Floor

- Apply B2.2 and B2.3 zoning to allow and encourage residential uses at the ground floor in appropriate locations, moving away from B and C zoning where business and commercial uses can no longer be supported. This can be applied to areas of Roosevelt Road and north-south arterial streets where commercial use is not concentrated. Ground floor residences may be buffered by larger front yard setbacks or slight variations in elevation.



- For Mixed-use and commercial buildings, ground floor frontages should be primarily clear, non-reflective windows that allow views of indoor commercial space or product display. Incorporate additional design features to increase ground-floor permeability, such as outdoor cafe space and bi-fold storefront windows that can be opened during warmer weather.
- Buildings located at major intersections should reinforce the architectural definition of the corners of the block by building to the corner. Strategies for



strengthening the corner can include adding an architectural feature, special facade treatment, primary building entrance, or other variation in massing.



# 6 Implementation Roadmap



# Implementation Roadmap

This Framework Plan is the first step in the process to realize the vision for the Altenheim Line trail and equitable investment in the Focus Areas and the surrounding Lawndale communities. There are several work streams that will need to operate in parallel.

An Equitable Investment Framework which focuses on anti-displacement strategies will provide a foundation to ensure that change in the corridor benefits the community. A highly collaborative effort between the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Department of Housing (DOH), Department of Transportation (CDOT) and local elected officials as well as many local non-profits and community development groups will be needed to realize this goal.

The development of Focus Areas will require intentional engagement, collaboration with land owners, and continued engagement and outreach to realize the vision for each. There are several opportunities to leverage city owned land and facilitate land assembly to realize the vision.

Implementing the trail requires a series of steps focused on obtaining site control and owned by land, pursuing funding, completing the required engineering and design process, and establishing a long-term management. Evaluation of potential site remediation and any needed structural and engineering repairs will be required. The process of implementing the vision of the framework plan and securing the necessary funding streams needed to implement, maintain and program the trail in the future will be carried out in coming years.

The following implementation recommendations outline the primary components of each of the framework plan's three pillars, and suggest partners that can lead each. Collaborations among local organizations and non-profits, City of Chicago departments and agencies, the private sector and CSX railroad will be required.

The following action will have overlapping timeframes. There are many that can be initiated in the next two years, while achieving the full vision will extend beyond this period. Each implementation action is assigned a rough timeframe under the categories of short-term, mid-term, long-term and ongoing to prioritize needs once funding is secured for the project to progress.

## 1. EQUITABLE INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 Advance anti-displacement strategies to protect existing residents and businesses

Increase communication regarding existing DOH programs for renters and owners through community engagement and distribution of the DOH informational resources.

*Potential Partners: DOH, community-based partners*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

Neighborhood Opportunity Fund grants can be targeted to the Corridor to strengthen existing businesses and encourage local hiring.

*Potential Partners: DPD, community-based partners*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

Establishes a neighborhood community land trust available to existing property owners on an opt-in basis, to prevent sudden increases in home values negatively impacting affordability for existing homeowners. The Cook County Land trust and City Land Sales program can also be leveraged to promote development that is aligned with community planning priorities.

*Potential Partners: Cook County Land Trust*

*Timeframe: short-term*

### 1.2 Expand affordable home ownership initiatives

It is recommended that local and City partners continue to support homeownership education and marketing programs to increase homebuyer interest.

*Potential Partners: DOH, Lawndale Christian Development Corporation,*

*United Power for Action, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS)*

*Timeframe: short-term*

### 1.3 Promote the use of public sector land for housing

Increase awareness of development opportunities available for affordable housing developers and leverage Cook County Land Bank and City-owned land assets for non-profit and affordable housing developers.

*Potential Partners: Cook County Land Bank, DOH, DPD, Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA),*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

An increase in housing supply can be achieved by making City-owned property available for the development of affordable multifamily buildings in areas identified for higher-density and those where density and parking bonuses exist.

*Potential Partners: DOH, DPD*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

Create portfolios of publicly owned properties for larger and more diverse investment opportunities that could attract a more diverse range of potential development partners, including those with more patient capital and longer-term investment horizons.

*Potential Partners: DPD, DOH, Cook County Land Bank*

*Timeframe: mid- to long-term*

#### **1.4 Steer housing funding to North Lawndale**

It is recommended that partners establish a targeted revolving loan fund (similar to the Neighborhood Lending Program) to improve the condition of two- to four-flat multifamily properties within the Corridor.

*Potential Partners: DPD, DOH*

*Timeframe: mid- to long-term*

Additional investment to benefit the community can be achieved by prioritizing low-income housing tax credit projects within the Focus Areas.

*Potential Partners: DOH*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

There is the opportunity to facilitate partnerships between Chicago based financial institutions and community-based housing development organizations.

*Potential Partners: DOH*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

#### **1.5 Promote development which increases the number of local jobs**

Early wins could be achieved by enhancing enforcement of building codes to prevent long-term vacancies.

*Potential Partners: Department of Buildings*

*Timeframe: short-term*

It is recommended that partners advocate for changing Cook County Assessor's Office assessment practices regarding buildings that carry

above-market vacancy rates to discourage owners from carrying long-term vacancies for tax benefit purposes.

*Potential Partners: DPD, Cook County Assessor*

*Timeframe: long-term*

Activation of underutilized retail space can be prioritized by providing TIF, NOF, SBIF or other grant sources to existing property owners or prospective businesses.

*Potential Partners: DPD, DOH*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

Early wins could be achieved by proactively engaging institutional, nonprofit or other private users which are well-suited to occupy currently vacant spaces (e.g., All State Building).

*Potential Partners: DPD, DOH*

Issue a request for proposals on City-owned land targeted for industrial development to increase job opportunities within the Corridor.

*Potential Partners: DPD, DOH*

## **2.0 ADVANCE FOCUS AREA INITIATIVES**

### **2.1 Identify Lead Local Organizations**

Identify institutions, community-based organizations or other anchors to advocate for, coordinate and monitor investments for each Focus Area.

*Potential Partners: DPD*

*Timeframe: short-term*

### **2.2 Implement Near Term Initiatives within each Focus Area**

The daily experience of the corridor can be improved by incentivizing site owners to install fencing, landscaping and lighting surface parking areas.

*Potential Partners: Existing owners, DOH, DPD*

*Timeframe: ongoing*

Cleaning, painting and lighting maintenance at all viaducts that the Altenheim Line will cross. This will also provide a community benefit by supporting pedestrian and bike activity on north-south streets.

*Potential Partners: CDOT, DPD*

*Timeframe: short-term*

Cleaning, pruning and landscape maintenance of embankments 100 feet east and west of all viaducts intersecting with the Lawndale Line can be coordinated through the alderman's office, land owners and public agencies. This can provide an early and visible signal that the rail corridor is undergoing a process of change.

*Potential Partners: CSX, Cook County Sheriff*

*Timeframe: short-term*

Implement pop-up arts, culture or retail business initiatives and tactical urbanism improvements - within streets, open spaces or surface parking lots. Temporary re-tenanting retail or commercial spaces with business, community service, arts and culture activities is encouraged.

*Potential Partners: DPD, DCASE*

*Timeframe: short-term*

### **2.3 Implement Streetscape recommendations**

It is recommended that DPD and CDOT identify a sequence for implementing streetscape improvements across the corridor. These can be linked to blocks within Focus Areas where renovation, re-use and redevelopment are proposed, as well as blocks on Roosevelt Road that have not seen streetscape improvements beyond street light installation in recent decades.

*Potential Partners: CDOT*

*Timeframe: long-term*

### **2.4 Advance Corridor Renovation, Re-use, and New Development Opportunities**

Hold a corridor-wide investor summit, bringing market rate, private sector affordable housing and non-profit housing developers and potential employers together to promote renovation, re-use, and new development opportunities identified in this framework plan. This can build on the momentum of the Roosevelt-Kostner project.

*Potential Partners: Department of Planning and Development, World Business Chicago*

*Timeframe: short-term*

#### **Pulaski Focus Area**

Primary initiatives can include:

- Review City code enforcement and condition reports to establish understanding of any issues at key sites.
- Conduct outreach to the three major property owners that in aggregate own up to one and a half blocks of land suitable for residential development (users/owners appear to be a recycler) to determine interest in relocation or redevelopment.

*Potential Partners: DPD, existing owners*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

### **Homan Square**

Primary initiatives can include:

- Conduct direct outreach to land owners and stakeholders including Mount Sinai Hospital, TREP and the Steans Family Foundation, and other institutions in area to explore opportunities to reuse existing vacant buildings.
- Initiate discussions with key property owners to determine plans.
- Promote investment in the former Sears Administration Building and the Allstate Building Surface Parking Lot.
- Encourage property owners to partner with developers and potential users.
- Explore strategic acquisition or partnerships for developer solicitation.
- Conduct developer RFP on public land or jointly with private property owners.

*Potential Partners: DPD, existing owners*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

### **Lawndale Plaza**

Primary initiatives can include:

- Work with the Lawndale Plaza property owner to identify:
  - Potential users for former Cineplex space (e.g. workforce training center, call center, and indoor sports).
  - Promote this location to potential tenants such as fast casual and fast-food restaurants that would consider out-lot retail

location.

- Continue to support the North Lawndale Employment Network and accommodate any future expansion needs that they may have.

*Potential Partners: DPD, existing owners*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

### **Central Park Theater**

Primary initiatives can include:

- Collaborate with Central Park Theater property owner to identify activation strategies for the property and potential funding opportunities.
- Consider rezoning to B2-2 and B2-3 at selected locations to allow residential development on Roosevelt Road.
- Partner with private property owners and/or strategically acquire sites to assemble land for development.
- Consider assembling larger sites from existing publicly owned sites to create more comprehensive RFP opportunities.
- Conduct a developer RFP on public land or jointly with private property owners.

*Potential Partners: DPD, existing owners*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

### **Campus Green**

- Collaborate with the existing property owner and the current lessee, Cinespace, to reuse the S. Washtenaw historic industrial structure, while also attracting light industrial or distribution activities to the north-east of California and Roosevelt.
- Partner with local community development entities to identify business incubator and workforce development opportunities at the site.

*Potential Partners: DPD, World Business Chicago*

*Timeframe: mid-term*

## **3.0 IMPLEMENTING THE TRAIL**

### **3.1 Advance Adjacent Projects**

There are several components of the overall vision for the Altenheim Line that can be advanced while access, design, funding and construction of the core trail is resolved.

**Campus Green:** The Lions for Hope and Hope Academy sports complex is a recreational development that complements the open space opportunity at this site and offers potential partnerships to enhance the public way and improve public safety. The viaduct at Washtenaw Ave. can also be upgraded, through cleaning, enhanced lighting and murals. This can be matched with infrastructure investments on Washtenaw Ave. to extend the roadway from Taylor St. to south of the rail right-of-way.

*Potential Partners: Department of Planning & Development, Department of Transportation, Hope Academy, Chicago Lions, Cinespace*

**Homan Square:** Ongoing activation of spaces adjacent to the trail can be continued through tactical urbanism projects. An art and sculpture garden at the southwest of Kedzie and Taylor can provide a visible destination. The viaduct at Homan ave. can also be upgraded, through cleaning, enhanced lighting and murals.

*Potential Partners: Department of Planning & Development, Department of Transportation, Homan Square Foundation/IFF, DRW College Prep*  
*Timeframe: short- to mid-term*

**Roosevelt-Kostner site:** Partners can work with Related Midwest and 548 Capital to integrate the trail concept into site plans for the Roosevelt and Kostner development as a near term implementation of

the elevated trail and open space network.

*Potential Partners: Department of Planning & Development, site developers*

*Timeframe: short-term*

General: Deployment of Divvy Bikeshare and “Divvy for Everyone” should be implemented at locations adjacent to the trail.

*Potential Partners: Department of Transportation.*

### **3.2 Advancing the Core Trail Facility.**

#### *Primary Steps*

While each rails-with-trails project has a unique path to implementation, the general workflow starts at the early conceptual and engagement phase, which is encapsulated by this framework plan.

The next steps are to determine the overall feasibility of the trail from a design and engineering standpoint, to determine the best location to fit the trail alongside the tracks and establish an agreement regarding right-of-way acquisition or leasing with CSX and future ownership of the Altenheim Line.

The bulk of the implementation process entails completion of Preliminary and Final Engineering plans that are to be reviewed and approved by specific governing bodies (e.g., Chicago DPD, CDOT, CSX, etc.) Environmental review and clearance are required and these technical studies are subject to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards to fully examine the environmental consequences associated with the construction and operation of the Altenheim Line. Funding will need to be identified to further advance the construction and operation of the trail and community partnerships will need to be established to assist with maintenance and programming.

### ***Ownership and Access Factors***

The majority of rails with trails projects involve easement acquisition, leases, or licenses that do not transfer ownership, but allow the project sponsor to use the land for trail purposes. Full transfer of ownership between the railroads and project sponsors is rare because it is the costliest option. CSX public documents state that parallel trails are not permitted on CSX property, and that parallel trails on neighboring properties must be at least 50 feet away from the nearest track center and be separated by fencing. For the Altenheim Line project to be possible, CSX will need to relax these rules either because of existing uses and relationships or trading of land to the railroad's benefit. City land adjacent to existing CSX yards might be seen as valuable to CSX for future expansion.

### ***Managing the Trail***

A Trail Manager, or owning entity, will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the Altenheim Line. Ownership and management models vary based on the project location, jurisdiction and governing authority, and established partnerships between the railroad company and local, state, federal, or non-profit entities. Potential managing authorities for the Altenheim Line may include the Chicago Park District, which currently manages over 35 paths and trails throughout the city or a non-profit entity operating under a conservancy model – as in the case with The 606.

While not typically an owning agency, trail maintenance can be supported by advocacy groups and community organizations. Local groups, such as Active Transportation Alliance, the North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council (NLCCC), Hope Academy, Homan Square Foundation and others can play an impactful role in routine maintenance of the trail, advertising and social media outreach about

events, and hosting educational classes on safety, exercise, and other recreational activities on the Altenheim Line.

### ***Operations and Maintenance Plan***

A comprehensive operations and maintenance plan will need to be developed. This document will identify all responsible parties, including a detailed work plan and designation of responsibilities between the Trail Manager and CSX. For example, the plan will state that service access to and along the trail will need to be maintained for CSX to respond to any routine or emergency track work. Additionally, the document will disclose that CSX will be responsible for the repair of any trail-related disturbances during these activities and that the Trail Manager will be responsible for all the infrastructure, access, and amenities associated with the Altenheim Line. Routine inspection of safety barriers, signs, trail surface materials, vegetation, and other amenities (benches, water fountains, etc.) will be the responsibility of the Trail Manager.

