

# INTRODUCTION

# CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS NOW

## WHAT IS CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOODS NOW ACTION PLANNING?

Chicago is one of the world's great cities because it is a city of vibrant neighborhoods. But as wonderful as they are, **our neighborhoods can always become even better**, if we work together. Chicago Neighborhoods Now is our framework for **investing in our neighborhoods** to make them more vibrant. Every one of our neighborhoods is included in our sixteen Planning Areas, which use natural market boundaries and breaks in the physical environment – expressways, rivers, and rail lines – to suggest **common needs and interests between neighborhoods**.

## HOW WILL AN ACTION PLAN HELP IMPROVE MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

Ideas for investing in each Planning Area will be documented in a Chicago Neighborhoods Now Action Plan. First, the plans will help orient readers to the area's **history** and the **current assets** to build upon in each of the neighborhoods in the Planning Area. The plans will provide **data** on demographics, housing, retail, land use, and more to help identify the strengths of the area as well as its greatest needs. The plans will capture several of the great ideas that have been generated by **previous planning efforts** and focus on how to make those proposals happen.

Then, the plans will describe the **guiding strategies** for how to address each area's needs. The plans will then out-

line the **priority projects** – the actions – that we are undertaking together, including how much we're investing and when each neighborhood should start enjoying the results of that work. We'll include good ideas regardless of who proposed them, provided we have figured out a way to make them happen.

## HOW WILL THESE ACTION PLANS BE CREATED?

Over the last year, the City's Department of Planning and Development has worked with the Chicago Community Trust, LISC Chicago, the Metropolitan Planning Council, the Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University, and the architecture and design firm Houseal Lavigne to **research the city's sixteen Planning Areas** and design the CNN Action Plan framework. Twelve City departments and sister agencies will **contribute their investment ideas** and their understanding of the needs of the city.

Most importantly, the plans will be informed by **input from aldermen, community leaders, residents and the recommendations included in previous planning efforts**. This collaboration will continue over time so that these Action Plans will improve.

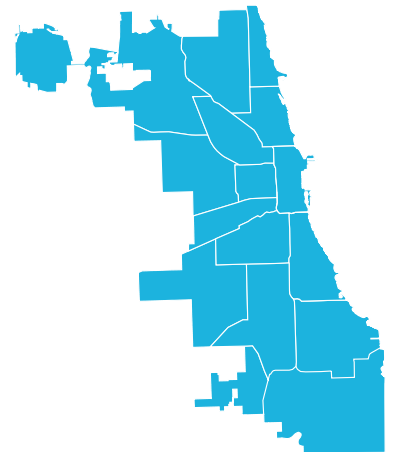
## HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN CREATING THE ACTION PLAN?

**These plans are not designed to be written, discussed, and then shelved.** After the initial Action Plans are published, we will update these Action Plans based on the input of community

stakeholders including residents, local leaders, interested investors, and other planners. We'll keep thinking, keep talking, and keep acting on these ideas over time.

City planners, aldermen, and community leaders will **organize community meetings** in each Planning Area in order to share progress of the current plan and listen carefully to new ideas that should be added to the plan. Summaries of those community meetings will be captured in the next update of the Action Plans.

Updates will also be shared on the Chicago Neighborhoods Now website: [cityofchicago.org/cnn](http://cityofchicago.org/cnn). The site will include the latest Action Plans and a calendar of upcoming community meetings. Coming soon, the site will also provide a way to **share your ideas** on how to improve your neighborhood online. In the meantime, please send your input via email to [CNN@cityofchicago.org](mailto:CNN@cityofchicago.org).

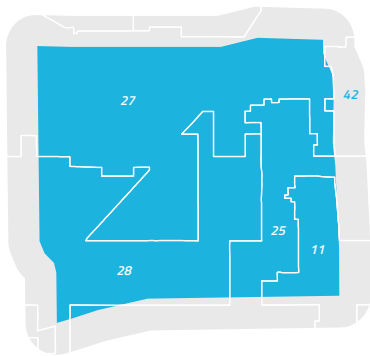
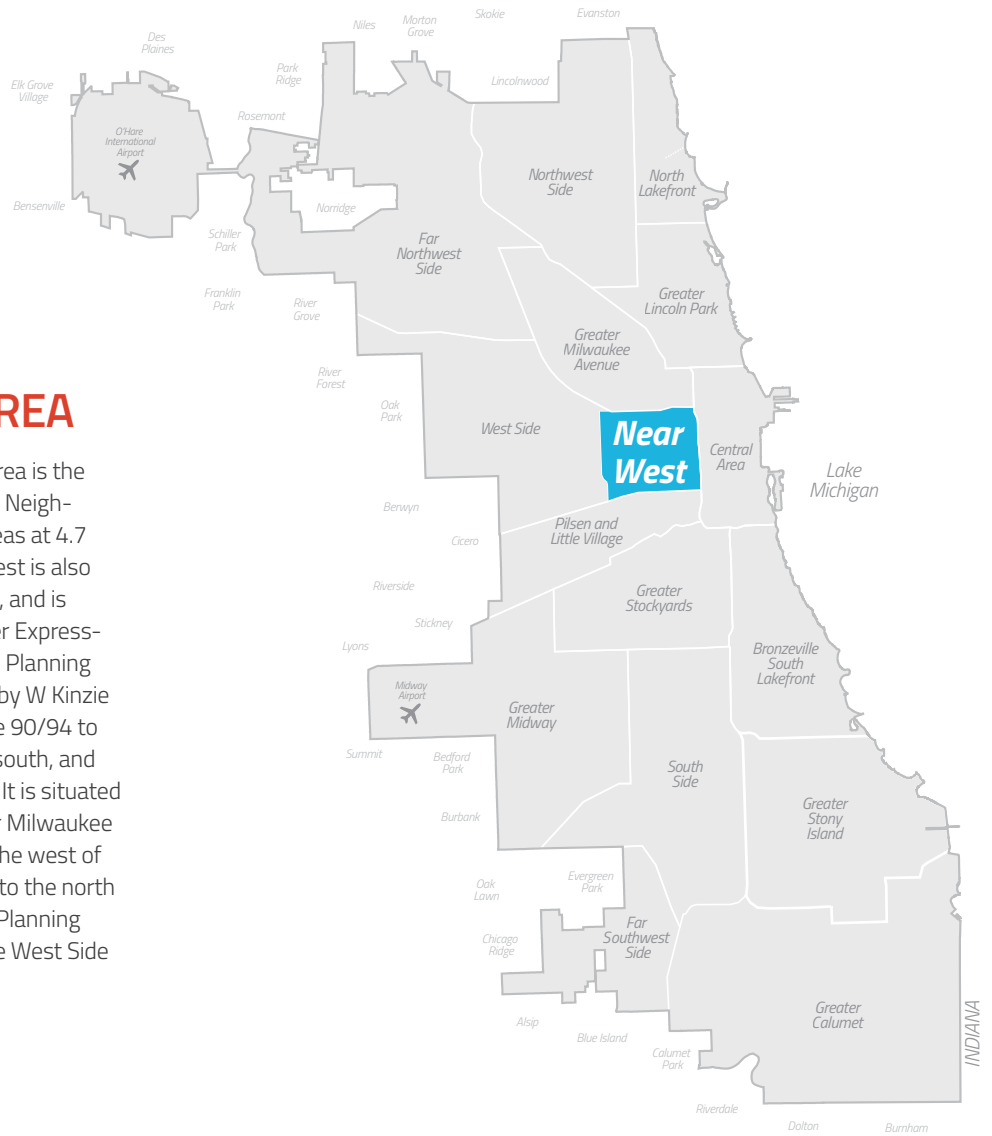


## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

THIS PAGE WILL HIGHLIGHT WHAT WE LEARN FROM COMMUNITY MEETINGS FOR THIS ACTION PLAN. THOSE DISCUSSIONS WILL BEGIN IN 2015 AND CONTINUE IN THE FUTURE.

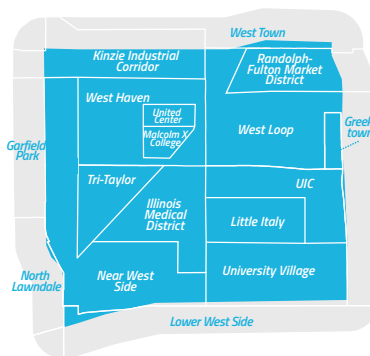
## NEAR WEST PLANNING AREA

The Near West Planning Area is the smallest of the 16 Chicago Neighborhood Now Planning Areas at 4.7 square miles. The Near West is also centrally located in the city, and is bisected by the Eisenhower Expressway and Ashland Ave. The Planning Area is generally bounded by W Kinzie Ave to the north, Interstate 90/94 to the east, W16th St to the south, and Rockwell Ave to the west. It is situated to the south of the Greater Milwaukee Avenue Planning Area, to the west of the Central Planning Area, to the north of Pilsen and Little Village Planning Area, and to the east of the West Side Planning Area.



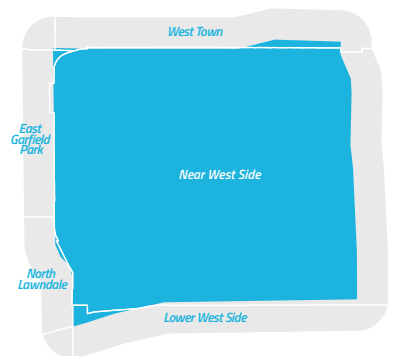
### Wards

Chicago's 50 wards are represented by a locally-elected alderman, and the Near West Planning Area is home to five in whole or in part: the 11th, 25th, 27th, 28th, and 42nd wards.



### Neighborhoods

Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, but there is often friendly disagreement on where one neighborhood ends and another begins. Generally, the Near West Planning Area is home in whole or in part to at least 13 neighborhoods, per the map above.

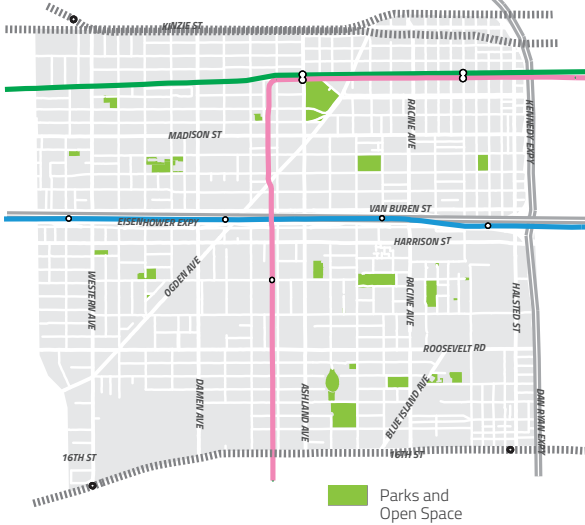


### Community Areas

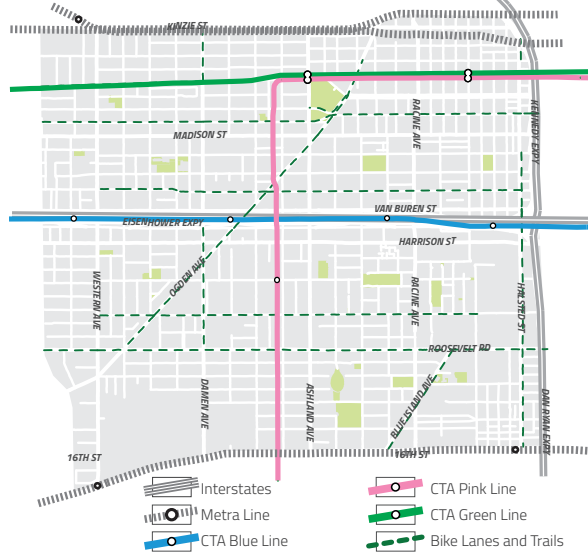
Chicago's neighborhoods were grouped into community areas by researchers in the 1920s. Aside from the two small changes in the 1950s and the 1980s, these community areas have remained static for nearly 100 years, which allows researchers to closely study neighborhood changes over time. The Near West is home to just one of Chicago's 77 community areas, and is the only Planning Area to so closely align with a single community area.

# NEAR WEST ASSETS AT A GLANCE

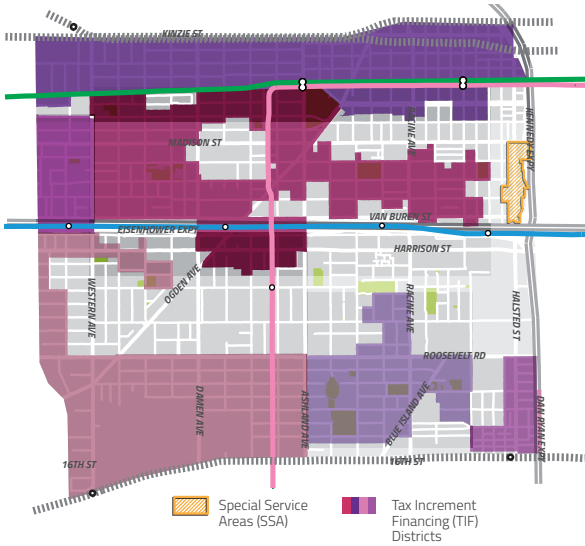
## OPEN SPACE



## TRANSPORTATION



## TIF AND SSA



## WHERE PEOPLE WORK

