

# STITCHING IT TOGETHER



Framework Plan for Brighton Park and Gage Park

# Acknowledgments

The Department of Planning and Development would like to recognize the contributions and support of the alderpeople, Community Advisory Group members, community organizations and partner agencies who participated in the development of this plan. A special thank you to all the community members who participated in public meetings, pop-ups and surveys.

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Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events  
Department of Environment  
Department of Family Support Services

## Additional Partners

Brighton Park Neighborhood Council  
Greater Southwest Development Corp.

# Land Acknowledgment

The City of Chicago is located on land that is and has long been a center for Native peoples. The area is the traditional homelands of the Anishinaabe, or the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other Nations consider this area their traditional homeland, including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo, and Mascouten. The City specifically acknowledges the contributions of Kitihawa of the Potawatomi in fostering the community that has become Chicago. We acknowledge all Native peoples who came before us and who continue to contribute to our City. We are committed to promoting Native cultural heritage.

*Adopted by the City of Chicago*

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# A note from the Commissioner

Dear Community Member,

On behalf of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), I am pleased to share ***Stitching It Together: A Framework Plan for Brighton Park and Gage Park***.

This plan provides a guide for City departments, sister agencies and other community partners to improve connections between communities, promote access to services and community assets, and address the needs of residents. More than 800 community members and other stakeholders were engaged through the process.

***Stitching It Together*** outlines recommendations that aim to increase housing options, expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts, prioritize safe streets and the public realm, foster a culture of community health and environmental justice, position opportunities for increased economic development, and enhance community programming for all generations.

Thank you for partnering with the City of Chicago to develop this framework and for voicing your needs and aspirations for a prosperous Brighton Park and Gage Park for everyone.

Sincerely,



**Ciere Boatright**  
Commissioner for the Department of Planning and Development



E

# Executive Summary

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Brighton Park and Gage Park





# Guiding Principles

## The Role of this Plan

**Stitching It Together** is a community-led framework plan to strengthen connections between Brighton Park and Gage Park and improve access to community services and spaces.

The plan is intended to offer flexible approaches to common goals that enhance both communities. Its action items are collectively intended as a development framework to be referenced by City of Chicago departments, sister agencies, businesses and individuals as these communities continue to evolve.

## Overview

The planning process was led by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to strengthen physical, social and economic connections between Brighton Park and Gage Park. The development of the new Chicago Park District Headquarters at 48th Street and Western Boulevard served as the initial catalyst for this plan.

## Project Approach

The study area is bounded by Western Avenue, CSX rail, the Chicago Sanitary Canal and 59th Street, with a particular focus on areas around the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor.

Initial community listening sessions helped establish preliminary planning goals and principles. Through subsequent engagement with Brighton Park and Gage Park residents, businesses and institutions, the preliminary goals evolved into specific strategies that reflect the communities' key priorities.

## Plan Goals

This framework plan articulated a set of preliminary goals that helped to inform the engagement process, identify potential topics, and create an inclusive process.

This plan seeks to:



**Improve the Public Realm** by enhancing transportation access, convenience, and safe spaces and connections within the study area.



**Support Local Business** by empowering entrepreneurs and local businesses to sustain and help create thriving business corridors.



**Reduce Impacts of Industrial Operations** by articulating ideas that help mitigate industrial issues.



**Increase Public Health and Safety** by implementing the communities' vision for the environment and urban form.

## Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were established to help frame conversations and decisions on priorities and potential strategies:

1. Establish meaningful links between neighborhoods currently divided by physical barriers
2. Activate vacant and underutilized lots
3. Foster community culture and identity
4. Create a holistic approach to placemaking
5. Green the district and improve the public realm
6. Support and strengthen the local business community
7. Create well-scaled and pedestrian-focused relationships between residential and industrial uses
8. Position the entire corridor for climate resiliency

# Community Engagement

## Engagement Time Frame

### Pre-Engagement Pop-Up

Gage Park Trunk-or-Treat 2023



### 1-on-1 Interviews with Key Community Partners

January-February 2024



# STITCHING

### Community Open House

May 29th 2024  
Saint Gall Church



### Community Survey #1

Spring 2024



### Community Advisory Group



### Spring 2024 Pop-Ups



### Community Survey #2

Spring-Summer 2024

### Community Advisory Group



### Summer 2024 Pop-Ups

SGA Kickbacks  
SGA Sawyer Block Party  
BPNC Community Fiestas  
Southwest Senior Fest



# IT

### Business Survey

Summer 2024

# TOGETHER



### Fall 2024 Pop-Ups

Trick-or-Trunk - Brighton Park  
Trick-or-Trunk - Gage Park  
Fall Kermes - Gage Park

### Student Workshop

Solorio High School



Community Advisory Group



**Community Open House**  
March 5th 2024  
Brighton Park Community Campus/  
Park District HQ



**Community Exhibition**  
October 2024  
Brighton Park Library Branch

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Engagement Time frame:</b> | Fall 2023-Fall 2024                              |
| <b>People Engaged:</b>        | 800+ people of all ages                          |
| <b>Events Attended:</b>       | 15 community events                              |
| <b>Community Survey:</b>      | 250 responses from individuals, families, groups |
| <b>Business Survey:</b>       | 77 responses                                     |
| <b>Student Work session:</b>  | 30+ participants                                 |

**Community Priorities**

The community engagement process, surveys, group meetings, and planning activities helped to identify community members' key concerns and planning priorities:



**INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPTIONS**



**EXPAND OPEN SPACE ACCESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS**



**PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM**



**FOSTER A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**



**POSITION OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



**ENHANCE COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL GENERATIONS**



## 1. INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPTIONS

Supporting and expanding housing resources while maintaining affordability is essential, especially with rising housing costs. In Brighton Park and Gage Park multi-generational households are common, making family units important for current residents.



### 1.1 Support pathways to affordable homeownership and increase community amenities

#### 1.1.1

Expand programs that offer and support homeownership education.

#### 1.1.2

Encourage new housing units that support existing and incentivize new community services such as cafes, places to eat and other entertainment to help activate corridors.

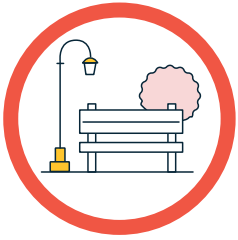
### 1.2 Build more units to sustain housing affordability

#### 1.2.1

Support new housing development that expands housing offerings and options, including nontraditional housing units like accessory dwellings, ground floor residential, equitable transit-oriented development near multimodal transportation options, and new community assets and amenities.

#### 1.2.2

Encourage dwelling unit configurations for multi-generational households.



## 2. EXPAND OPEN SPACE ACCESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS

Parks in this region are heavily used community destinations. Improved access to parks and green spaces, proper maintenance, beautification and the creation of new open spaces should be prioritized.



### 2.1 Continue to maintain and improve parks and open spaces

#### 2.1.1

Continue to repair facilities and develop a maintenance program to promote community park stewardship.

### 2.2 Increase access to open space amenities

#### 2.2.1

Improve and provide new connections between public spaces that increase overall safety, activate underutilized areas, and increase accessibility.

#### 2.2.2

Increase the number of open space options and encourage the creation of different sized spaces that activate underutilized areas and are near areas with less access.

### 2.3 Support efforts and local participation in neighborhood beautification efforts

#### 2.3.1

Find opportunities to expand neighborhood art initiatives that celebrate the community and invite local residents to participate.

#### 2.3.2

Promote efforts to increase overall neighborhood greenery and landscaping that are multifunctional, offer access to fresh foods, produce, and gardening activities through community garden spaces and partnerships, and provide opportunities for community use.





### 3. PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Safer streets and more community spaces can help bring people together, support programming and services, and promote more equitable access to public assets.



#### 3.1 Prioritize pedestrian safety and multi-modal options for transportation

##### 3.1.1

Integrate traffic calming measures at crosswalks to provide safer accessibility.

##### 3.1.2

Improve streetscapes with features like street furniture, greenery, bike lanes, sidewalk connections and other inviting beautification elements.

##### 3.1.3

Make infrastructure barriers, like viaducts and rail crossings more permeable and traversable to improve access to community amenities.

#### 3.2 Target spaces that impact public safety perceptions like underutilized lots and walkways

##### 3.2.1

Target and activate vacant and underutilized lots through programming, development, and improved maintenance.

##### 3.2.2

Maintain and improve essential city infrastructure through appropriate maintenance schedules, reporting and enforcement.

#### 3.3 Provide well-distributed and inclusive community spaces

##### 3.3.1

Consider social and physical barriers and develop strategies to make community assets accessible for everyone.

##### 3.3.2

Promote the creation of inclusive spaces that can be inviting for recreation, learning and activities for everyone.



## 4. FOSTER A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The negative impacts of industrial land uses on nearby residential areas must be more directly addressed. Increased use of multi-functional spaces as buffers can promote healthier lifestyles and environmental benefits.



### 4.1 Strengthen the health and wellbeing of the community

#### 4.1.1

Encourage opportunities that support walking, biking and other physical activity by connecting community amenities and improving multimodal connections.

#### 4.1.2

Promote access to healthcare services for all ages.

### 4.2 Incorporate green infrastructure that mitigates industrial and other intensive land uses

#### 4.2.1

Develop policies that address issues with truck and freight traffic, pollution and other congestion.

#### 4.2.2

Promote efforts to increase urban greenery and landscaping along intensive land uses to mitigate their impacts.



## 5. POSITION OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Skills training and workforce development programs are important to the area for economic prosperity. Incentives and outreach to small businesses are essential for economic success.



### 5.1 Support incentives and workforce development opportunities that meet the needs of the community

#### 5.1.1

Continue to expand and create new workforce development opportunities that support the needs of local businesses and aspirations of the community.

#### 5.1.2

Adapt existing incentive programs to meet the needs of local businesses and improve program outreach efforts by the City, its partners and community enterprises.

### 5.2 Activate vacant and underutilized sites

#### 5.2.1

Target vacant and underutilized sites and provide support for future development of housing, community amenities, businesses, or other site improvements.

#### 5.2.2

Promote uses that increase foot traffic, activate ground floors and empty storefronts, and provide amenities and services that foster lively corridors.





## 6. ENHANCE COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL GENERATIONS

Multi-generational public programming is essential for Brighton Park and Gage Park, along with adequate facilities, staffing and related resources.



### 6.1 Provide multi-generational programming and spaces

#### 6.1.1

Expand and provide services and year-round programming for youth and the elderly.

#### 6.1.2

Provide more opportunities for education and community classes, new skills, hobbies, and wellness activities.

### 6.2 Create and support opportunities for the community to gather

#### 6.2.1

Promote the creation of spaces that can serve multiple functions and host different kinds of community events.

### 6.3 Celebrate the local culture

#### 6.3.1

Create and support events that celebrate the cultural richness of the community.

#### 6.3.2

Support and expand beautification efforts and neighborhood cultural spaces by community members and local organizations.

# Implementing a Vision

## A Plan Informed by the Community

The year-long *Stitching It Together* community engagement process shaped the plan's priorities and action items as well as their strategies for implementation. *Stitching It Together* creates a foundation for planning collaboration with multiple community partners and individuals representing a diversity in ages, knowledge, culture and social backgrounds.

The plan's recommendations are intended to foster improvements to the area's built environment, especially local housing, public facilities and relevant infrastructure. The action items also identify other improvements that expand public programming and policies that accommodate people of all ages and interests, especially their safety and well-being.

The implementation of these recommendations will require the collaboration of multiple City departments, sister agencies, and community partners to realize the communities' vision for the future.

## Implementation Strategies

The methods and techniques for implementation include:

- 1 Plan recommendations can guide resources, decisions, and initiatives.
  - The plan can be used to inform City departments, sister agencies, and community partners for programming, incentives, and investments.
  - Recommendations can serve as a guide to potential implementation tasks and actions.
- 2 City departments, sister agencies, and community partners can collaborate to provide a greater and more effective impact.
  - Coordination can include funding, resource alignment and related financial efforts.
  - Inclusive partnerships with residents are encouraged, where possible.
- 3 Continually update community members and partners on the implementation progress.
  - Update opportunities could include progress reports from City departments, sister agencies, and community partners.
  - Community group meetings like the Brighton Park Neighborhood Network (BPNN) provide ongoing opportunities to share implementation updates.

# 1 Introduction

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### The Impetus for a Plan

In Summer 2023, the Chicago Park District opened the Brighton Park Community Campus. The campus includes the Chicago Park District Headquarters and recreation center, referred to in this planning document collectively as “Park District HQ.” This new facility provides much-needed open space and recreational opportunities for the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as creates a new center for community programming.

Its unique location sits at the nexus of industrial and residential zones, and at the intersection of three community areas: Brighton Park, Gage Park, and New City (Back of the Yards). While intended to serve as a community resource for the surrounding residents, connections to the facility are difficult in some areas. In addition to exploring improved connections between communities, there is also a need to consider how the different land uses come together, and how these relationships could be improved.

*Stitching It Together* aims to create a community vision and framework for improved connections, future redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lots to meet community needs, and the promotion of a more connected region.



This plan explores ways to provide better access for the community through an improved public realm, support for local businesses, reduced impacts of industrial operations, and increased public health and safety. This plan will propose new programming, improved connections, and increased opportunities for the community to come together. During the initial engagement process, the plan’s scope expanded to include a more general vision for Brighton Park and Gage Park, beyond the context of the Park District HQ.

### Evolving Communities

Brighton Park and Gage Park, on Chicago’s Southwest Side, are home to a vibrant and dynamic mix of land uses, residents, businesses, and institutions who care deeply about their communities.

The neighborhoods are some of the oldest in Chicago and were built close to industrial jobs. Over the decades, both communities have continued to see dynamic changes including the:

- Consolidation of and relocation of manufacturing.
- Growth of logistics and distribution uses.
- The communities becoming more ethnically diverse.
- Changing economic trends and the post-Covid economy impacts on traditional neighborhood retail strips.
- Shifting commuting patterns now that residents work across the Chicagoland area.
- Growing numbers of vacant and underutilized lots and empty storefronts.
- Rising housing costs impacting housing affordability.
- Construction of new institutional investment such as elementary and high schools, the Park District HQ and community health centers that offer new services that are eroding the historic industrial core.

In spite of these changes, fundamental land use patterns have remained, with a primarily residential character, core industrial and rail infrastructure, and neighborhood commercial corridors. Major streets, the CTA Orange Line and bus service offer citywide connections, but the scale of the existing infrastructure creates physical barriers, especially for everyday activities and services.

In addition to the above dynamics, the following four observations informed the approach to *Stitching It Together*:

- **Recent Investments** have been predominantly institutional – educational and healthcare-related – and have eroded the existing industrial corridor.
- **Land Uses** are highly integrated, with residential and industrial uses in close proximity to one another and few buffers or transitions between the two.
- **Open Space** While the Park District’s access to open space goal (to have residents within a 10-minute walk to an open space) is achieved in the Brighton Park and Gage Park communities, open space is still under-supplied when compared to the Park District’s citywide goal of two acres per 1,000 residents, even with the addition of the Park District HQ.
- **Underutilized and Vacant Land** is both a challenge and an opportunity in these communities: while currently idle and not being maintained, vacant and underutilized lots provide an opportunity for the creation of new businesses and open space that serve these communities.

## Purpose of the Plan

Through a robust yearlong engagement process that engaged more than 800 community members, the plan captures important issues and concerns as well as overall community aspirations. Central to *Stitching It Together* is the Park District HQ and the various community assets that have limited accessibility due to existing infrastructure and lack of connections in the neighborhood. Brighton Park and Gage Park are surrounded by rail infrastructure and industrial land uses, impeding access to important community assets and services between neighborhoods. New institutional investment has eroded the historic industrial character of the area, causing conflict between industrial and non-industrial land uses.

*Stitching It Together* addresses these issues through action items that will require collaboration among key City departments, sister agencies, and community partners. Prior City planning efforts in Brighton Park and Gage Park were completed in 1967. Since then, the City adopted a Citywide plan called *We Will* (2023), which helped to inform recommendations.

## Plan Goals

This plan seeks to:



### Improve the Public Realm

by enhancing transportation access, convenience, and safe spaces and connections within the study area.



### Support Local Business

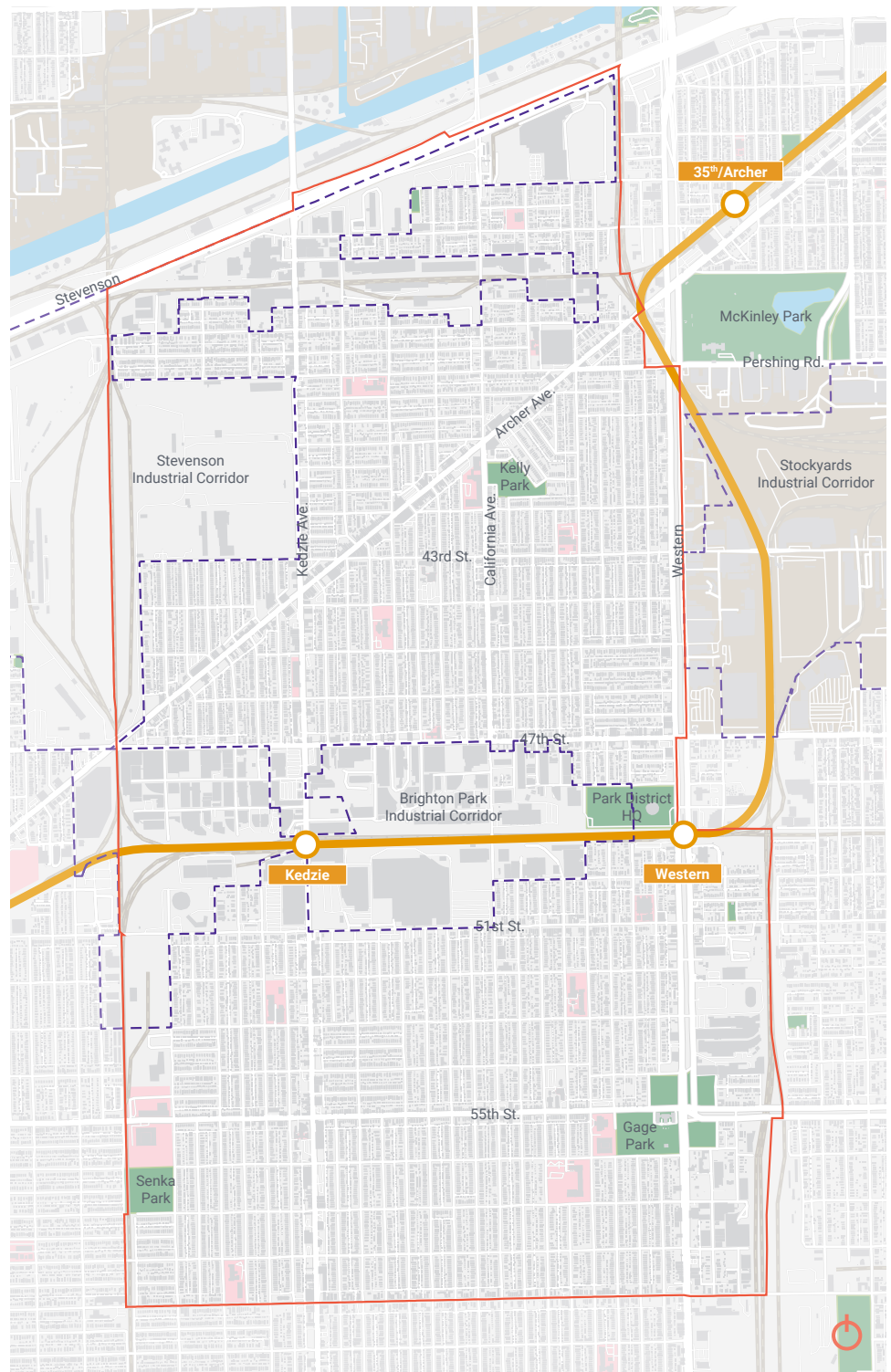
by empowering entrepreneurs and local businesses to sustain and help create thriving business corridors.



**Reduce Impacts of Industrial Operations** by articulating ideas that help mitigate industrial issues.



**Increase Public Health and Safety** by implementing the communities' vision for the environment and urban form.

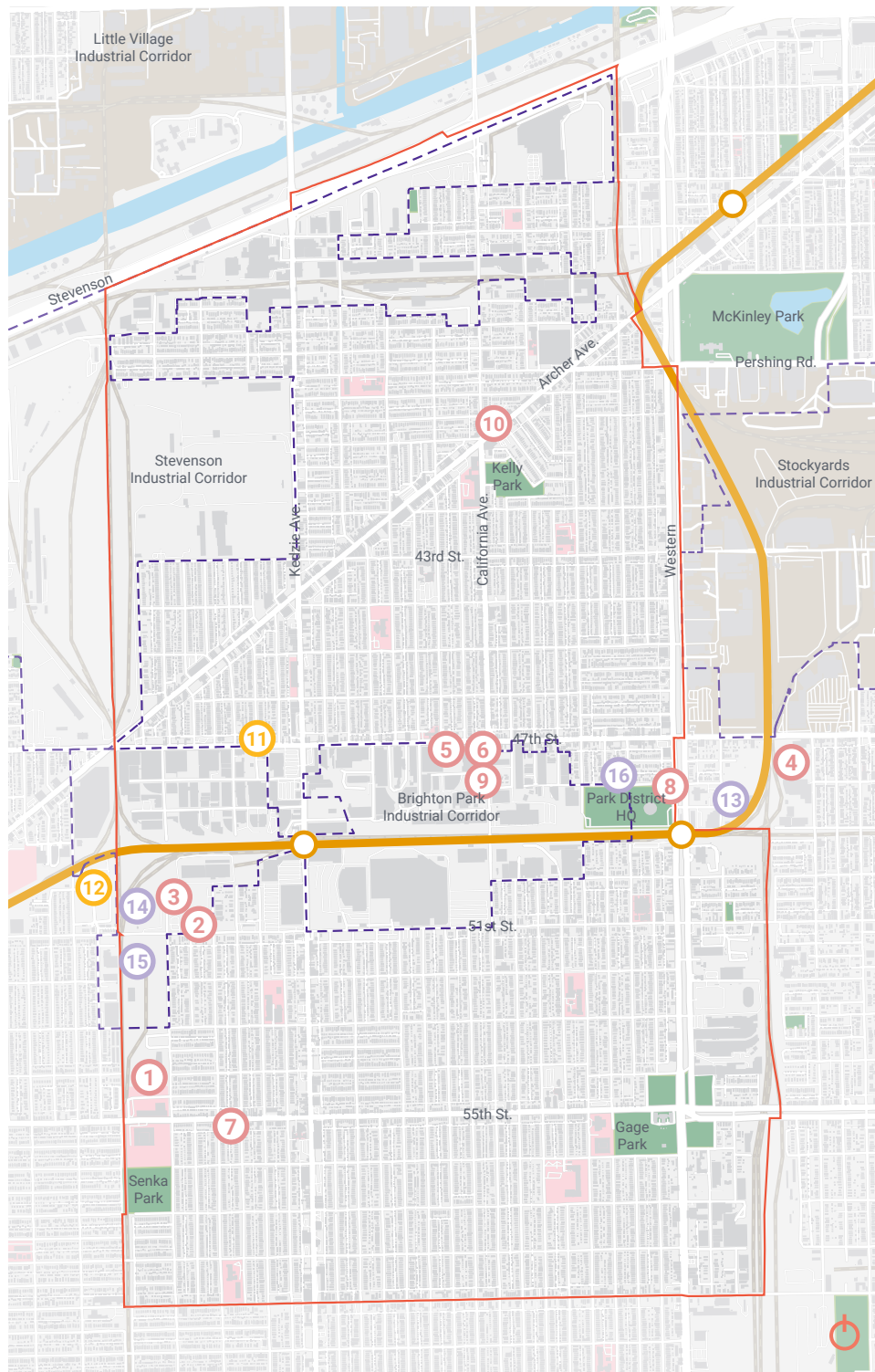


## Legend

- Parks
- Community Institutions
- Industrial Corridors
- CTA Orange Line



## Recent Investments



Source: City of Chicago

Within the past decade, investment in Brighton Park and Gage Park has included a wide variety of new uses from industrial to institutional. Large institutional investments have been constructed in the industrial corridor.

**Institutional**

- ① Solorio Academy High School (2010)
- ② Idár Elementary School (2011)
- ③ Soto High School (2013)
- ④ Back of the Yards College Prep High School (2013)
- ⑤ Mansueto High School (2018)
- ⑥ Esperanza Health Center (2019)
- ⑦ PODER (2022)
- ⑧ Brighton Park Community Campus/Chicago Park District Headquarters (2023)
- ⑨ Esperanza Health Center Annex (2023)
- ⑩ Brighton Park Neighborhood Network Community Center (Under Construction)

**Housing**

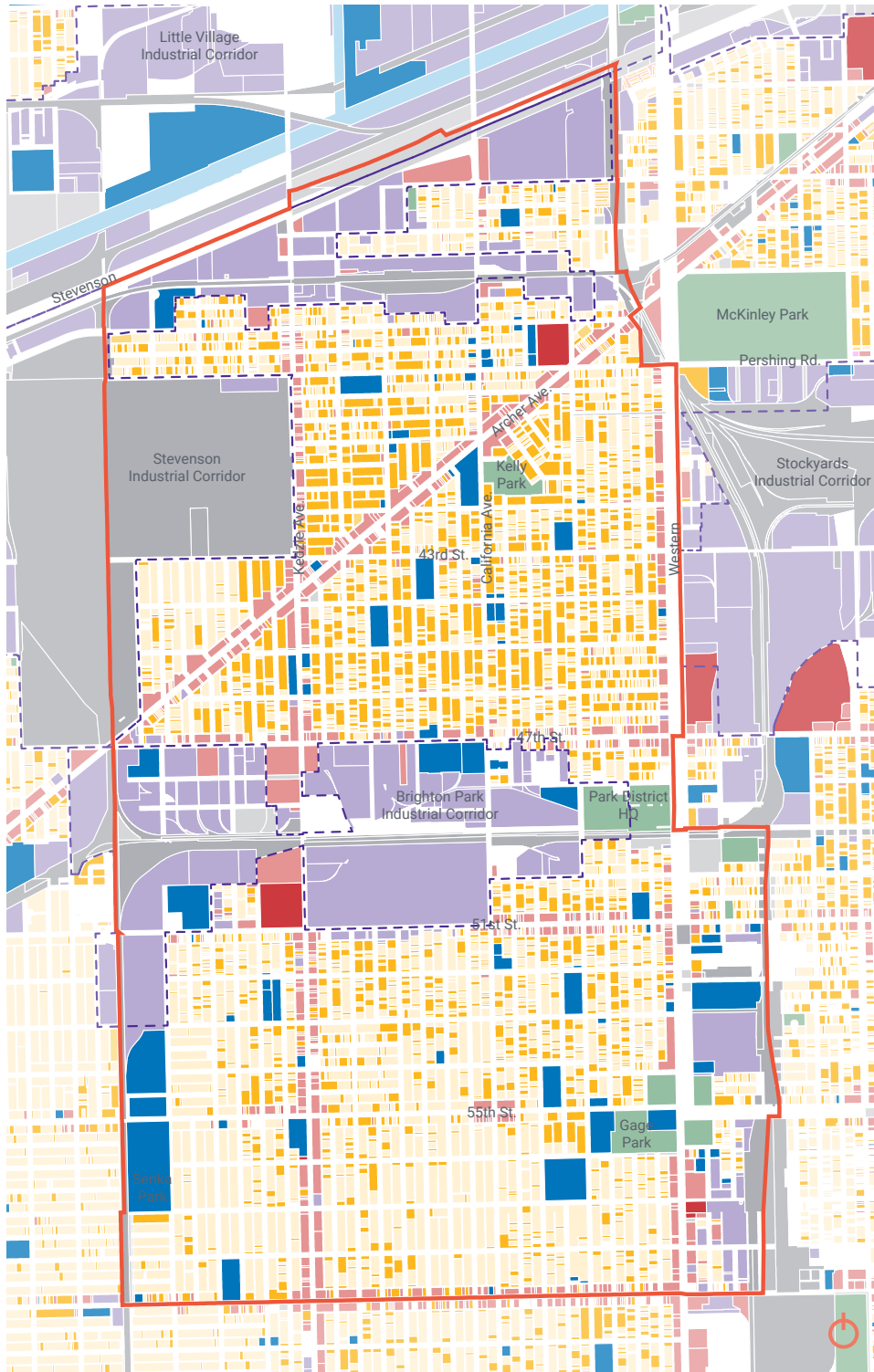
- ⑪ El Zócalo (2022)
- ⑫ Park Place Apartments (Ongoing)

**Industrial**

- ⑬ Bridgewater Studio (2015)
- ⑭ Amigos Meat (2018)
- ⑮ Amazon Distribution Center (2019)
- ⑯ Sputnik Coffee Roasters (2024)



## Land Use



An industrial legacy has provided economic opportunity and growth in the region. This legacy affects current traffic patterns and the concentration of industrial operations. Conflicting land uses, such as industrial uses adjacent to residential, impact residents and business operations alike.

The new Park District HQ sits in a transition zone between industrial and non-industrial land uses within the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor.

### Residential

- Single Family
- Multi-family

### Business and Commercial

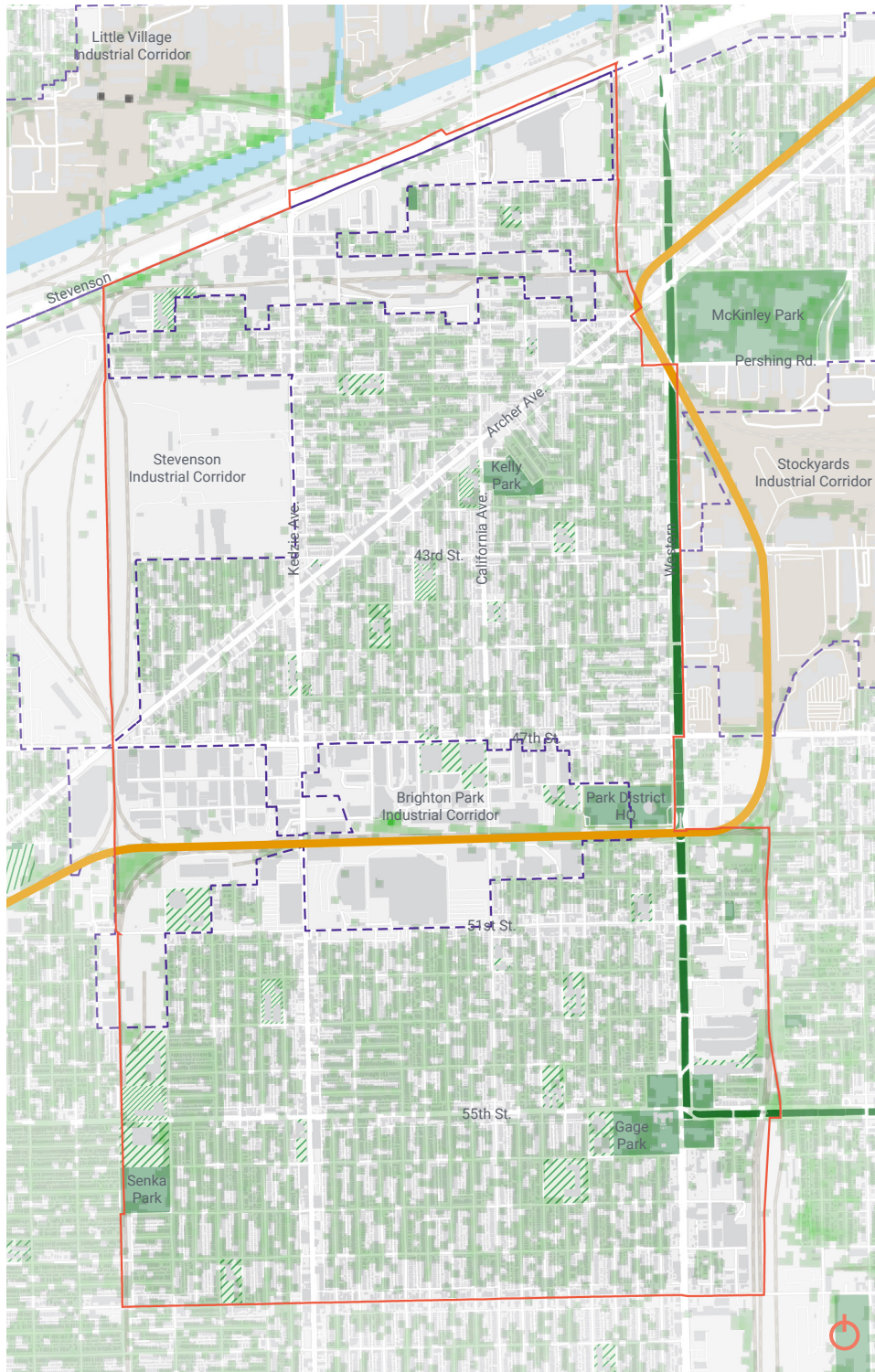
- Regional Commercial
- Neighborhood Retail

### Other

- Industrial
- Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Utilities and Parking Lots
- Rail right-of-way or Intermodal Yard

Source: City of Chicago, CMAP

## Open Space and Tree Canopy



In Chicago, around 98% of residents have easy access to parks. For Latine and Hispanic neighborhoods have 41% less access to park space per person than the city's average neighborhood.

Due to its industrial and freight legacy, the existing tree canopy in the region is lower than the city average, further exacerbating issues like flooding, air pollution, and urban heat island effect. For comparison, areas like Lincoln Park have about a 30% tree canopy coverage, while Brighton Park only has about 12%.

Chicago Park District's long-term open space goal is to provide a standard of two acres of open space per 1,000 residents. The Park District also utilizes the 10-minute walk metric to assess access to open space in the City. The goal of the 10-minute walk metric is for Chicago residents to be within ½ mile or a 10-minute walk to open space. The 10-minute walk goal is achieved in the Brighton Park and Gage Park community areas. Despite the addition of the Park District HQ, Brighton Park still has only about one acre per 1,000 residents. Gage Park has about 1.70 acres per 1,000 residents.

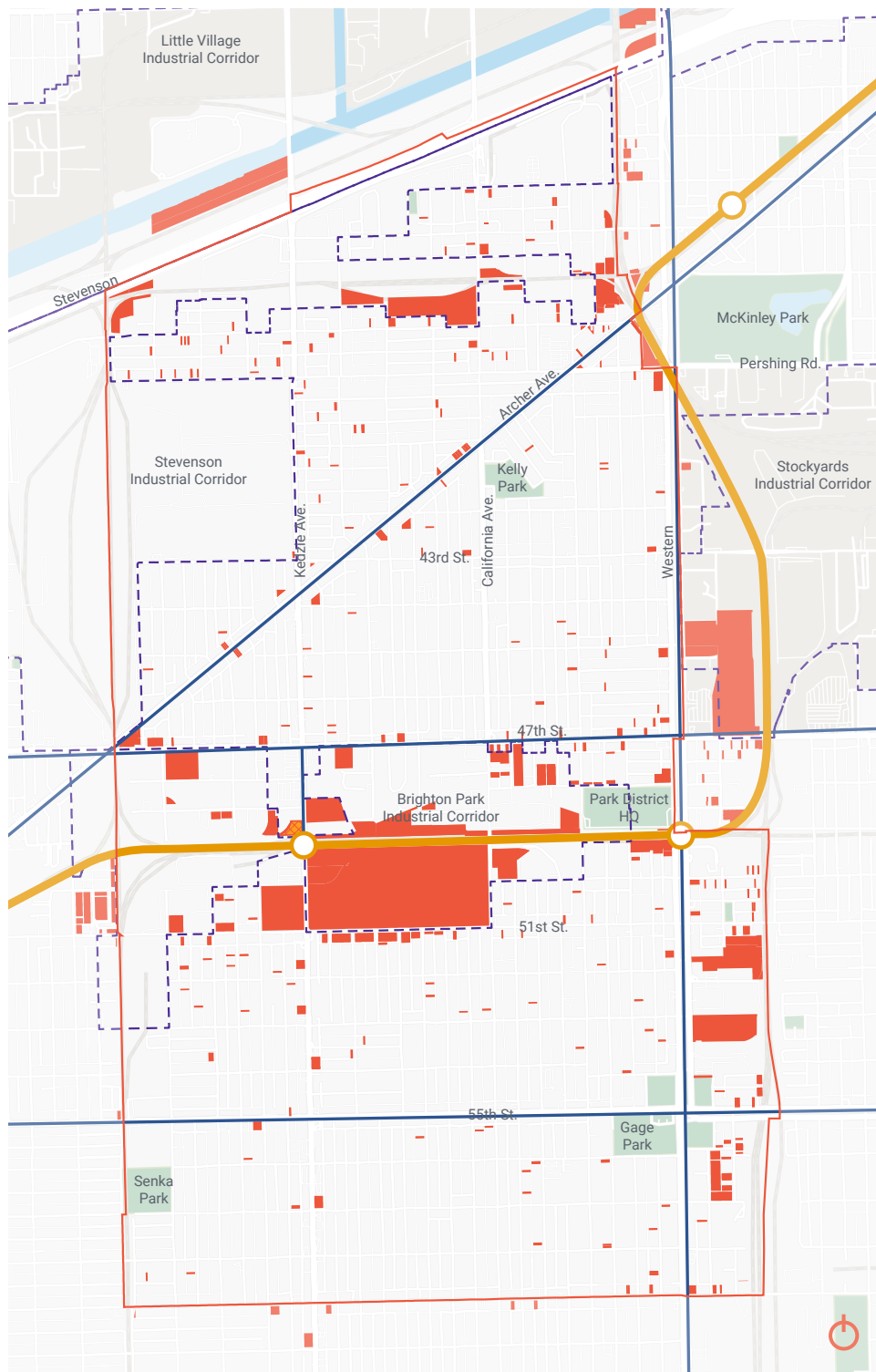
In addition to open space managed by the Park District, additional open space resources include Chicago Public Schools (CPS) playgrounds, other community institutions and Western Boulevard.

### Legend

- Park District Open Space
- CPS Playground/Fields
- Western Boulevard
- Existing Tree Canopy

Source: National Land Cover Database (NLDC), USGS NLCD Tree Canopy Cover, City of Chicago, Chicago Park District 2017 Master Plan, Trust for Public Land

## Underutilized and Vacant Lots



There are multiple lots in Brighton Park and Gage Park that are underutilized or vacant. Some of these lots are poorly maintained and impact safety perceptions.

Certain legacy industrial operations have large footprints. Changing operational needs and relocations may open up additional formally industrial land.

### Legend

- Underutilized or Vacant Lots
- - - Industrial Corridors
- Transit-Served Location
- Selected Bus Line
- Orange Line
- Orange Line Stop

**Please note:** Underutilization status may have changed since last update to data sources.

Sources: CMAP 2020 Land Use Inventory, City of Chicago, Google Street view





Soto and Idár Schools



4938 S. Kedzie Ave.



Solorio High School



Park District HQ and Senior Suites of New City



El Zocalo on 47th



Murals by the Western CTA station



Amazon distribution on St. Louis and 51st

Source: CoStar Group

# 2

## Existing Conditions and Context



# Overview and Context

Brighton Park is generally bounded by the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal to the north, Western Avenue to the east, the BNSF rail yard to the west, and the CTA Orange Line to the south. It is bordered by Gage Park to the south, McKinley Park and New City (Back of the Yards) to the east, and Archer Heights to the west.

Gage Park is generally bounded by the CTA Orange Line to the north, the CSX rail line to the east, the BNSF rail line to the west, and 59th Street to the south. It is bordered by Chicago Lawn to the south, New City (Back of the Yards) and West Englewood to the east, and West Elsdon to the west.

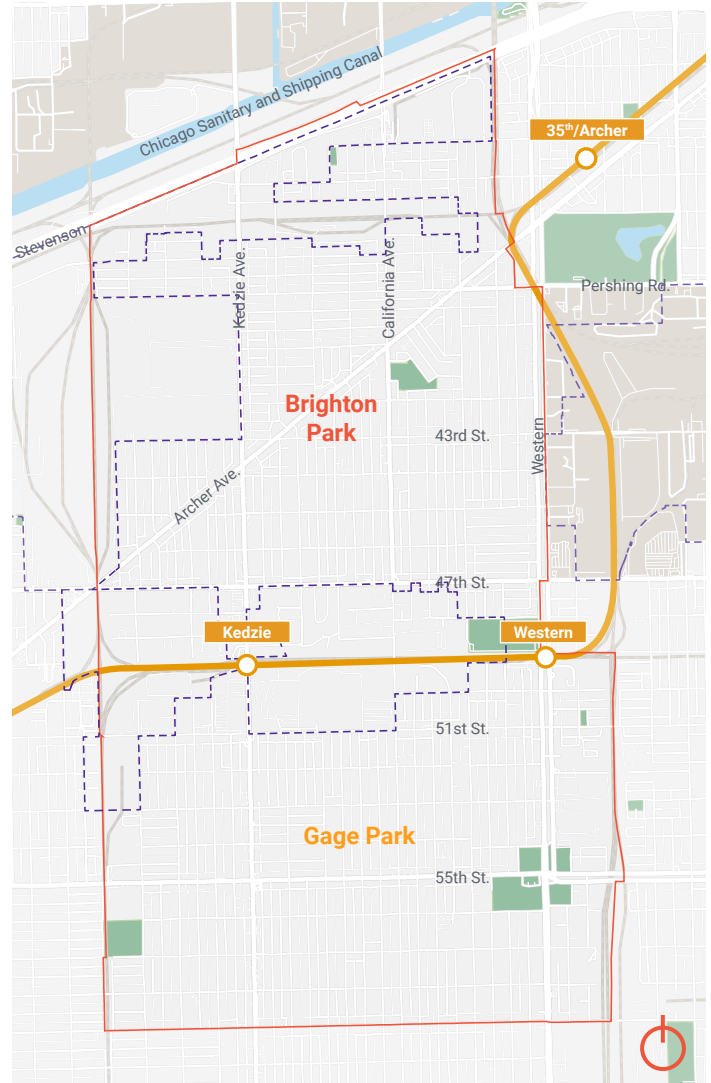
Brighton Park and Gage Park share a rich cultural heritage, have strong community member support, and are inviting to families of all generations and from different parts of the world. This chapter documents existing conditions and market trends for both communities. It covers the following topics:

- History of Brighton Park and Gage Park
- Summary of Existing Conditions
- Population Demographics
- Age Distribution
- Community Health and Wellbeing
- Safe Streets and Community Spaces
- Land Use
- Zoning
- Transit-Served Locations and Density
- Auto-Oriented Uses
- Industrial Corridors
- Industrial Trends
- Retail Trends
- Retail Vacancy and Underutilized Lots
- Residential Trends
- Institutional Investment
- Street Network
- Bike Network
- Public Transit Network
- Open Space Amenities
- Environmental
- Current Plans and Development

These existing conditions lay the foundation for *Stitching It Together*. They helped inform the community engagement process, priorities, action items, and implementation plan.

**Please note:** Brighton Park and Gage Park have high immigrant populations and are predominantly Latine communities. Data collected from the 2020 Census and American Community Survey after 2020 may undercount individuals due to the immigration status of individuals or family members.

Brighton Park and Gage Park





### Two Communities on the Southwest Side

Brighton Park and Gage Park are two of Chicago's 77 community areas, located on the Southwest Side of Chicago. These communities are separated by industrial uses and rail infrastructure, which can make it difficult for people to easily access community services and amenities.

The ancestral home of the Pottawatomie, these communities have seen demographic changes that have included an influx of French, Germans, and Eastern European Jews, followed by Poles, Lithuanians and Italians. Today, Brighton Park is home to a large Latine population and a growing Asian community. Both Brighton Park and Gage Park were annexed into the City of Chicago in 1889.

### The History of Brighton Park

Brighton Park urbanized following the construction of the Illinois & Michigan Canal in the 1850s. Brighton Park began as a livestock trading center. A growing industrial jobs base drew migrants from across Europe in the late 19th Century. Industrial parks like the Central Manufacturing District opened in 1905, and the Kenwood Manufacturing District opened on the southern edge of the neighborhood around 1915.

Gradual de-industrialization in the second half of the 20th century, along with suburbanization, led to a population decline between 1930 and 1980. By 2000 the population had rebounded to 44,912, and is now primarily Hispanic or Latino, with 69% of Mexican origin.

The neighborhood historically attracted a variety of industries and benefited from large industrial investment at the Union Stockyards, the Central Manufacturing District and other surrounding industrial areas.

### The History of Gage Park

Gage Park was settled in 1865 by German farmers and saw residential and industrial growth as Western and Garfield Boulevards expanded to the area. Gage Park grew as a residential community for workers of the Union Stock Yards. Eastern and Central European migrated to the community in the early 20th Century. Bordered on three sides by railroads, Gage Park attracted important employers, including the Central Steel and Wire Company, Royal Crown Bottling Company, and World's Finest Chocolate.

In more recent decades, Gage Park has seen rapid growth in its Hispanic and Latine population. In 1993, the Orange Line Elevated (CTA Orange Line) rapid transit line was finished, connecting the Loop to Midway Airport, two miles west.

### Context

The study area includes a wide range of industrial buildings of various sizes and uses, including the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor where most of the industrial buildings are located. Industrial Corridors act as job centers and provide a stable landscape for new and expanding manufacturers, wholesalers and distribution companies to operate near vital logistics infrastructure.

Important commercial corridors are located along 47th, Kedzie, Western, 51st, 59th, and Archer. These commercial corridors serve the surrounding communities and include a variety of businesses like restaurants, small scale retail, grocery stores, local businesses and community spaces.

Brighton Park and Gage Park are surrounded by commuter and freight rail infrastructure as well as connections to the Stevenson Expressway to the north. Archer Avenue slices through the middle of the Brighton Park grid, offering direct connections to Midway Airport, to Chinatown and the Loop. The proximity to rail and highway infrastructure has benefited local industry but has also impacted quality of life due to heavy traffic and air pollution. Overall, these communities are primarily residential with many multi-generational households.

Recent investments have brought new schools, health centers, and the new Park District HQ to the area. These investments have continued to encroach on the industrial corridor. These changes have intensified conflicts between industrial and nonindustrial activities.

Brighton Park and Gage Park are within the 12th Ward (Ald. Julia Ramirez), 14th Ward (Ald. Jeylú Gutiérrez), and the 15th Ward (Ald. Raymond Lopez).

# Key Findings and Existing Conditions

The existing conditions help identify challenges these communities face and potential opportunities, and suggest improvements to the built environment, programming and services, economic conditions and investment, community wellbeing, and safety. Below are some highlights from the existing conditions analysis grouped into categories that span these two communities and the goals of this study:

## Open Space and Beautification

- Open spaces are at or near capacity for programming, services, and gathering.
- The open space on Western Boulevard is an untapped opportunity for recreation.
- Brighton Park remains under-served by park space based on Park District long-term goal of 2 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, despite the addition of the Park District HQ. The 10-minute walk goal is achieved in the Brighton Park and Gage Park community areas.

## Safe Streets and Community Spaces

- Areas around transit stations, bus stops and rail infrastructure are poorly lit, in need of maintenance, and access may be limited.
- Community assets are not well-connected and in some areas are separated from residents by industrial land uses and rail infrastructure. The overall street layout and prevalence of one-way streets may limit mobility.
- There is a lack of bike and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Community spaces are at or near capacity for programming, services, and gathering.
- Conflicts between motorists and pedestrians are prevalent at major intersections like Western and 47th, and near transit, amenities and institutions.
- Streetscape amenities are lacking along commercial corridors.
- Public realm improvements like lighting, road maintenance, and sidewalk repairs are needed in some parts of major corridors.

## Community Programming

- Cultural identity is featured on community murals, events, and organizations.
- Senior and youth services and programs are at or near capacity.
- The Gage Park Library is one of the few remaining storefront library branches in the city and could use increased capacity to serve community needs.

## Environment and Health

- Buffers between industrial and nonindustrial uses are minimal or nonexistent.
- Industrial areas have smaller tree canopies and a higher proportion of impervious surfaces.
- Current land use and traffic conditions may have a disproportionate impact on the region's environment.

## Economic Development and Opportunity

- Existing City programs, like small business incentives and workforce development programs, may require better outreach due to language and other barriers to participation.
- There is a presence of vacant storefronts and underutilized lots along commercial corridors.

## Housing

- There is a higher prevalence of multi-generational families and households.
- Current rents may not incentivize the market to construct new housing units.
- Typical financial tools, like Tax Increment Financing (TIF), are not available in large portions of the study area, some programs have expired, and current zoning may not allow certain construction or housing types, like multi-family units or additional dwelling units (ADU).
- In the past 10 years, rents have increased while vacancy has decreased.

For additional analysis, please see the Appendix.

- I. Financial Resources
- II. Example Typologies
- III. Multifunctional Landscapes
- IV. Additional Community Engagement Exhibits
- V. Terms and Planning Resources







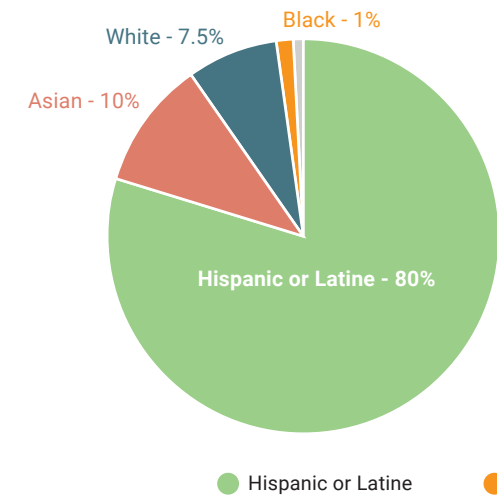
# Population and Demographics

## Demographics

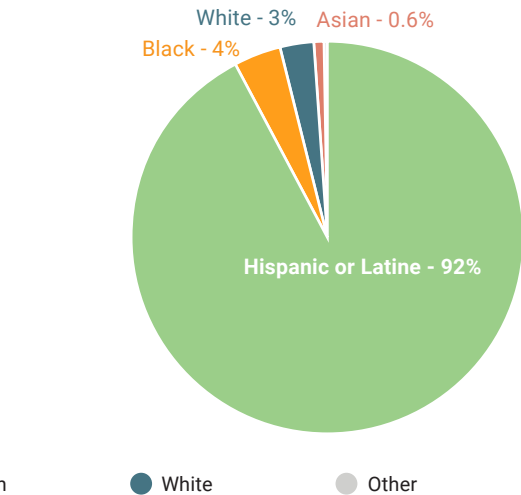
The study area for *Stitching It Together* (which included parts of New City) is home to 111,670 people and has 35,890 households living in 32,480 housing units. There are 13,520 jobs in the area. The Brighton Park and Gage Park neighborhoods have seen substantial growth in their Latine populations in recent decades. In addition, there has been growth in the Asian American population.

The overall population declined by 4% in the study area between 2010 and 2023 and is projected to decline by an additional 3% from 2023 to 2028, according to the U.S. Census. However, area non-profits and community organizations suggest that the population count is likely under-reported given lower 2020 Census responses among immigrant and undocumented households residing in the area.

### Brighton Park Population

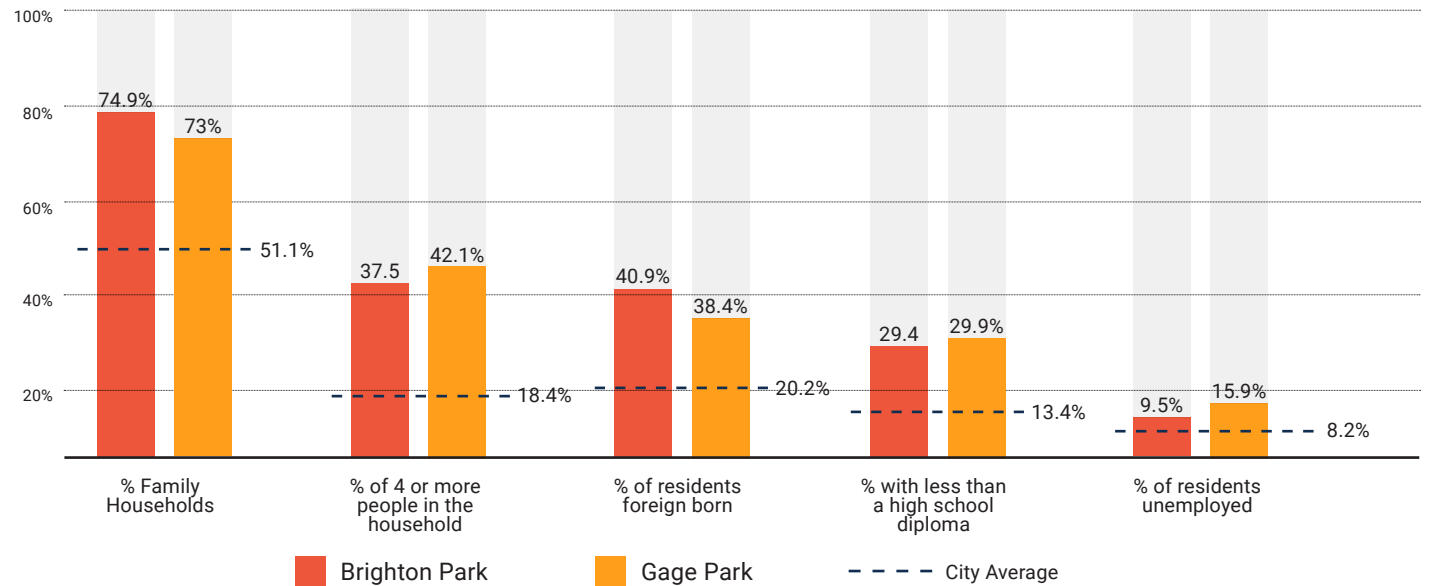


### Gage Park Population



Source: CMAP Community Data Snapshots 2024

## Household Demographics



Source: UIC Health Impact Assessment, 2023, CMAP Community Data Snapshots 2024

## Population Demographics

| General Numbers        | Brighton Park | Gage Park | City      |
|------------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Population       | 42,243        | 34,788    | 2,721,914 |
| Number of Households   | 13,105        | 10,301    | 1,129,908 |
| Average Household Size | 3.2           | 3.4       | 2.4       |
| Median Age             | 32.4          | 32.5      | 35.3      |
| Median Income          | \$52,145      | \$50,112  | \$71,673  |

### Highest Educational Attainment (%)

|                          |      |      |      |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|
| Less than High School    | 29.4 | 29.9 | 12.4 |
| High School Diploma      | 37.5 | 38.5 | 21.7 |
| College Enrollment       | 67.0 | 60.0 | 63.0 |
| College Completion       | 50.0 | 51.0 | 47.0 |
| Some College, No Degree  | 13.4 | 15.3 | 16.7 |
| Associates Degree        | 6.1  | 5.0  | 5.8  |
| Bachelor's Degree        | 9.6  | 9.0  | 24.4 |
| Graduate or Professional | 3.9  | 2.3  | 18.0 |

### Household Income (%)

|                        |      |      |      |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Less than \$25,000     | 19.6 | 21.3 | 20.3 |
| \$25,000 to \$49,999   | 28.3 | 28.6 | 17.4 |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999   | 18.1 | 18.6 | 14.1 |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999   | 12.0 | 10.2 | 11.7 |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 12.7 | 14.5 | 15.4 |
| \$150,000 and Over     | 9.2  | 6.8  | 21.2 |

### Housing Availability

|                          |       |     |      |
|--------------------------|-------|-----|------|
| Vacant Housing Units (%) | 7.6   | 6.8 | 10.2 |
| Vacant Housing Units     | 1,075 | 746 | N/A  |

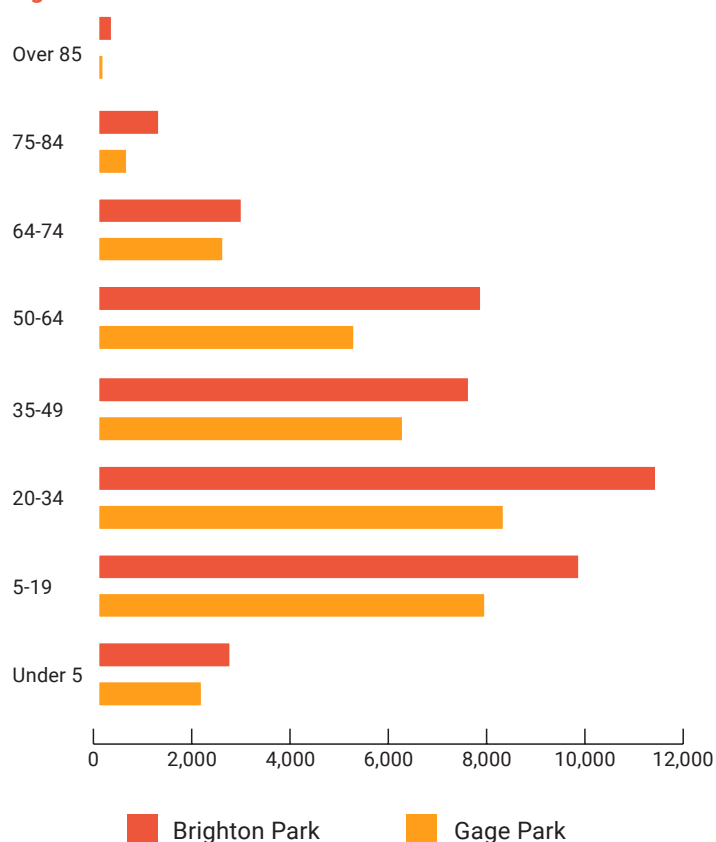
### 30% or More of Household Income for Housing Cost by Household Income (%)

|                      |      |      |      |
|----------------------|------|------|------|
| Less than \$20,000   | 9.3  | 8.7  | 12.4 |
| \$20,000 to \$49,999 | 25.3 | 24.8 | 16.2 |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 4.0  | 5.7  | 5.7  |
| \$75,000 or More     | 2.0  | 1.1  | 5.0  |

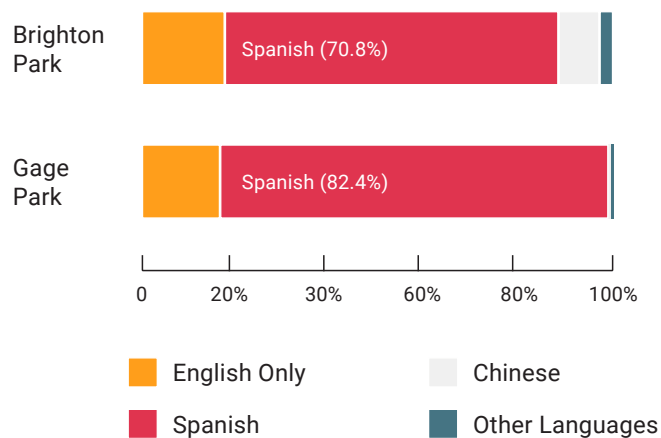
### Housing Size (%)

|                    |      |      |      |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| 0 to 2 Bedrooms    | 52.3 | 48.2 | 60.4 |
| 3 Bedrooms         | 32.1 | 31.1 | 26.8 |
| 4 Bedrooms         | 10.9 | 12.6 | 9.0  |
| 5 or More Bedrooms | 4.8  | 8.1  | 3.9  |

## Age Distribution



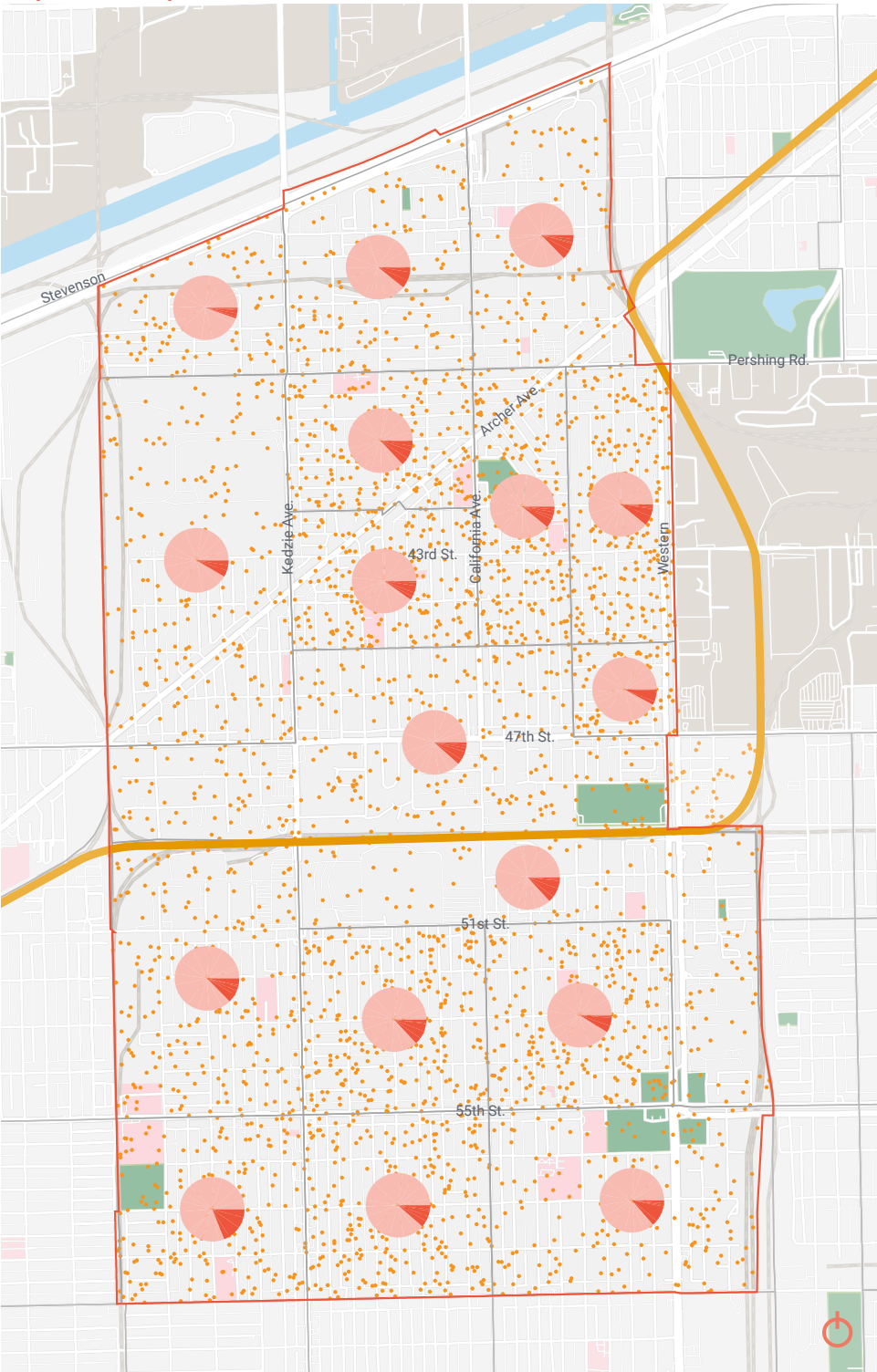
## Language Distribution



For individuals who speak a language other than English, about 41.5% of respondents from Brighton Park and 38.0% of respondents from Gage Park claim they speak English less than "Very Well." The city average is 14.3%.

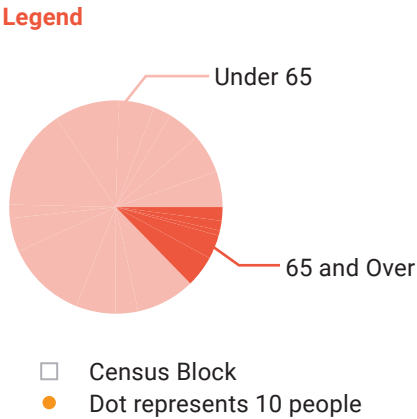
Source: CMAP Community Snapshots 2024, University of Chicago, CPS

Proportion of Population over 65



Multi-generational households may be more common in Brighton Park and Gage Park due to their cultural demographics. Asian, Black and Hispanic Americans are more likely than white Americans to live in multigenerational family households. Immigrant communities are also more likely to live in multigenerational households compared to US-born residents.

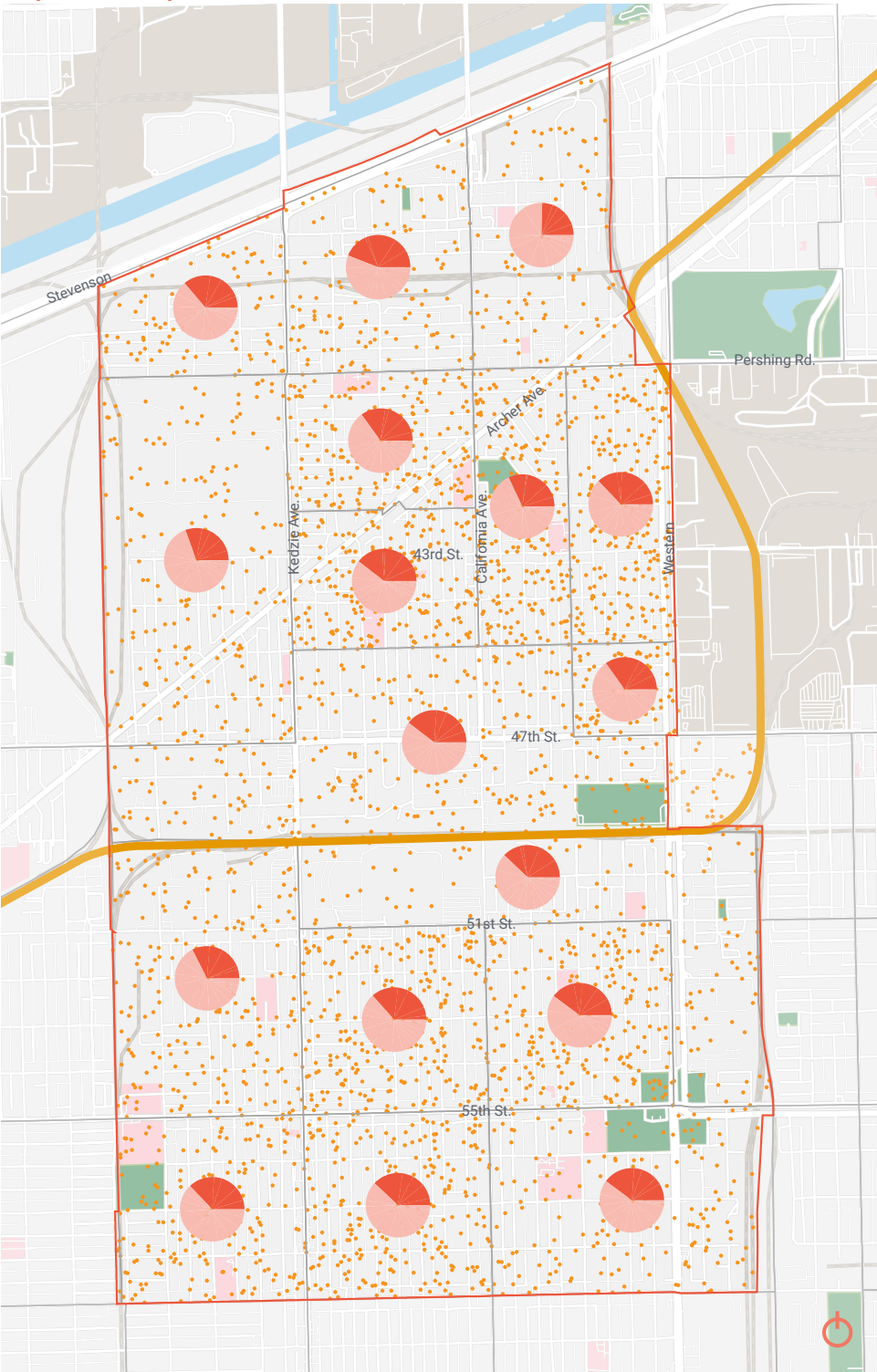
| Proportion of Population Over 65 |              |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Brighton Park                    | Gage Park    | City         |
| <u>10.4%</u>                     | <u>12.8%</u> | <u>13.4%</u> |



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2023 5-Year Estimate, Pew Research Center



Proportion of Population 24 and Under

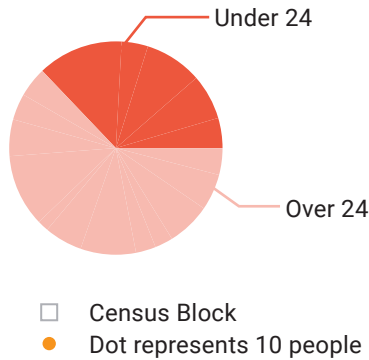


Youth and young adults are a significant proportion of the population in Brighton Park and Gage Park compared to the entire city.

Proportion of Population 24 and Under

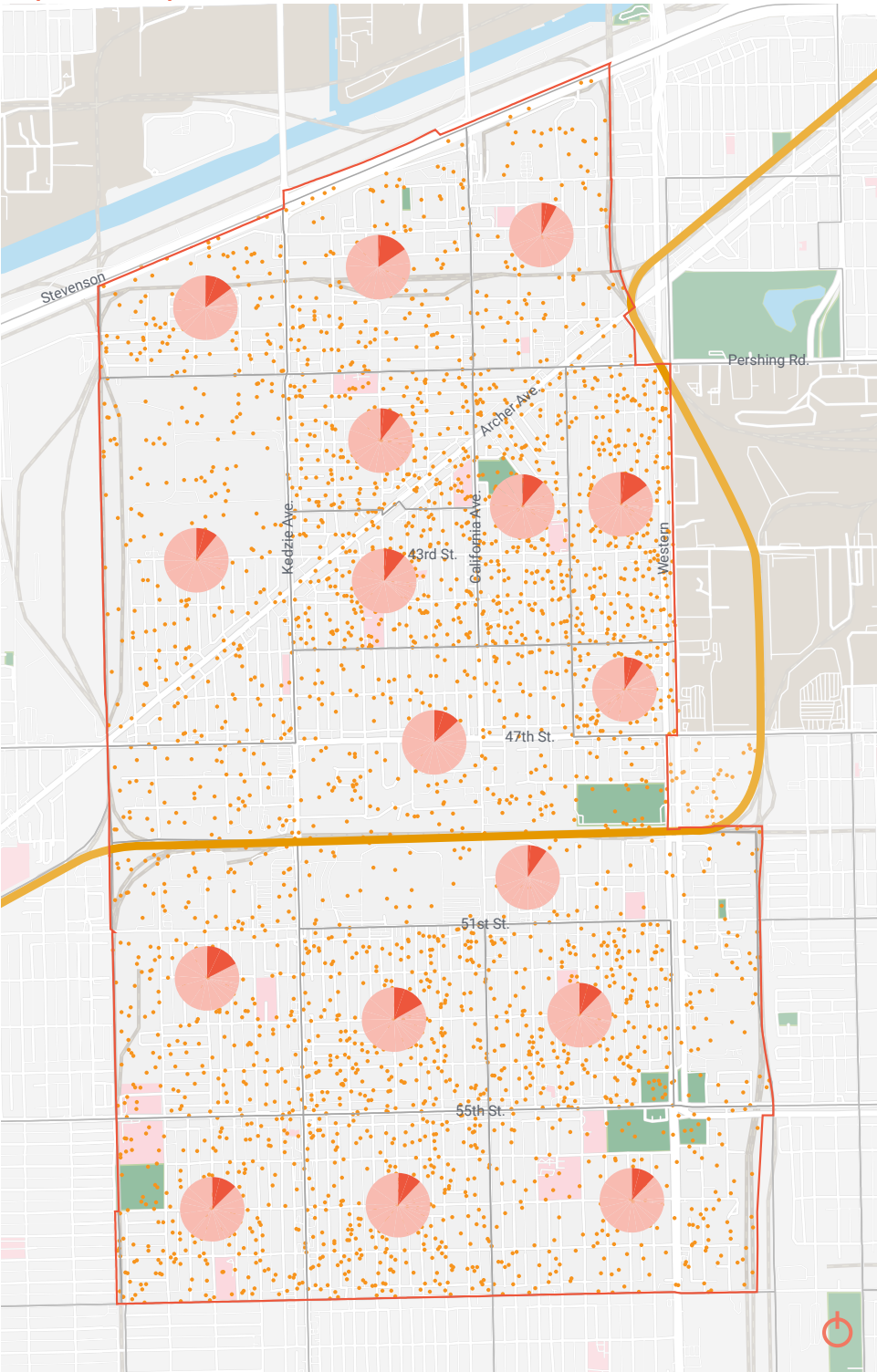
| Brighton Park | Gage Park    | City         |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>35.9%</b>  | <b>37.3%</b> | <b>28.9%</b> |

Legend



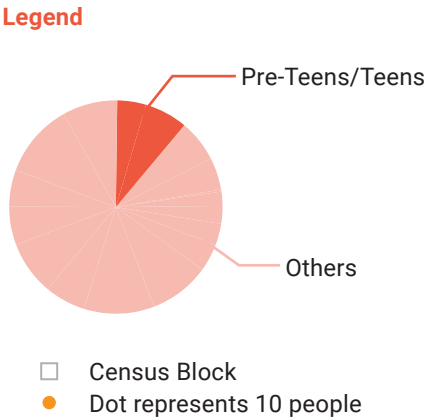
Source: American Community Survey 2018-2023 5-Year Estimate

Proportion of Population Pre-Teens and Teens



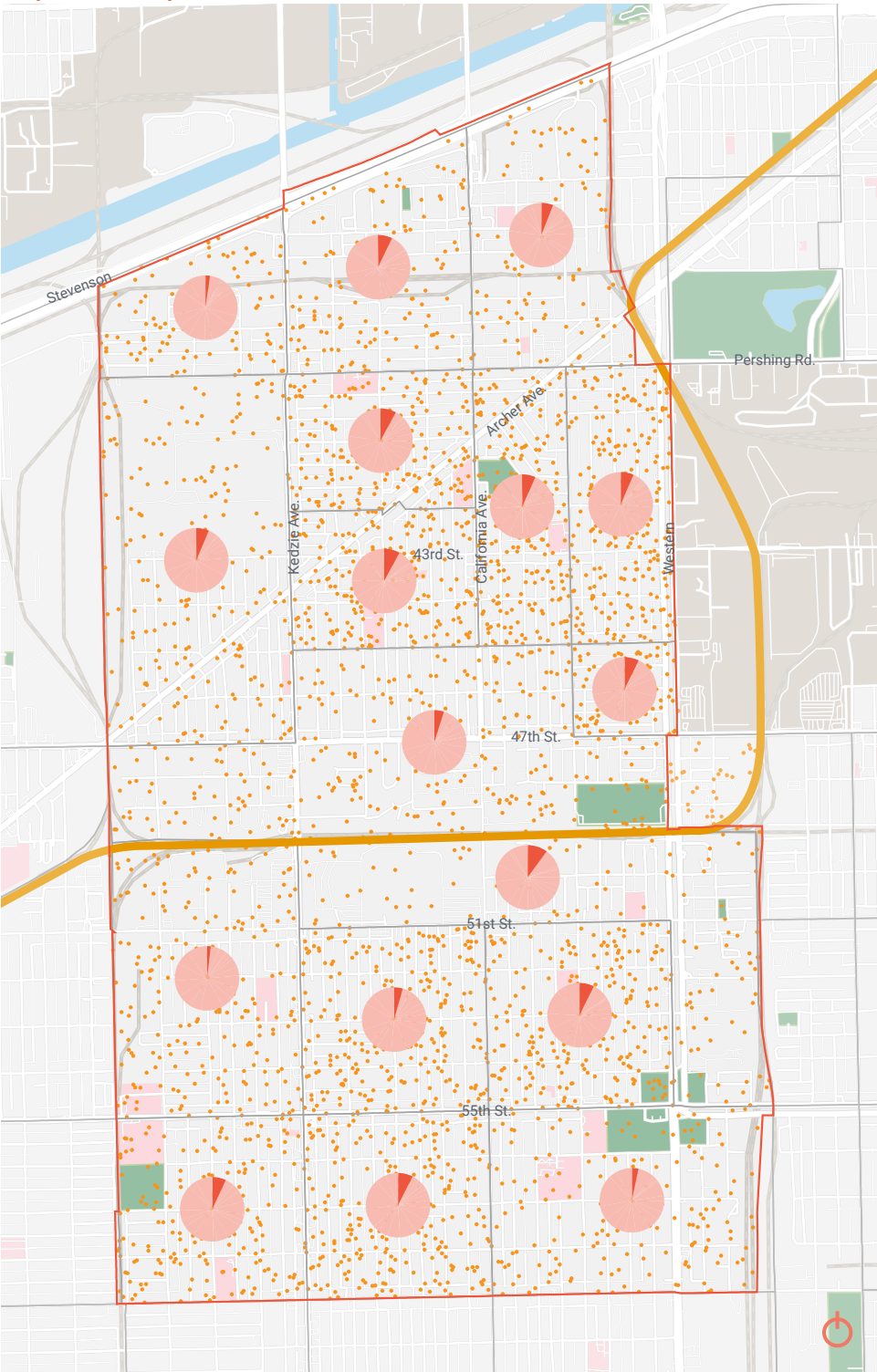
The proportion of pre-teens and teens in Brighton Park and Gage Park is about 50% higher than the city as a whole.

| Proportion of Population Pre-Teens and Teens |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Brighton Park                                | Gage Park    | City         |
| <b>15.8%</b>                                 | <b>16.8%</b> | <b>11.2%</b> |



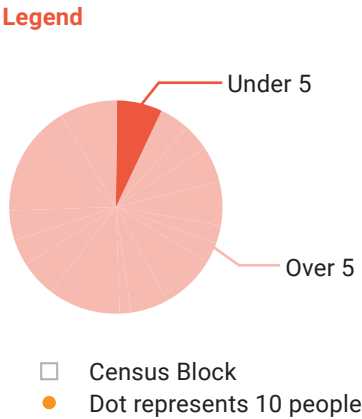
Source: American Community Survey 2018-2023 5-Year Estimate

Proportion of Population under 5



Despite a similar proportion to the rest of the city, Brighton Park and Gage Park have a birth rate about twice the city average. Per 1,000 people, Brighton Park has a birth rate of 21.5 and Gage Park has a birth rate of 23.8, while the citywide birth rate is 10.0.

| Proportion of Population Under 5 |             |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Brighton Park                    | Gage Park   | City        |
| <b>5.3%</b>                      | <b>5.3%</b> | <b>5.5%</b> |



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2023 5-Year Estimate



# Community Health and Wellbeing

## Health and Wellbeing Conditions

Brighton Park and Gage Park are more heavily burdened by environmental and social impacts compared to other parts of the city. Understanding existing economic, environmental, social, and health conditions for Brighton Park and Gage Park helps identify gaps that impact health and wellbeing. Below is a summary of the notable highlights:

**Air Quality and Health Index:** Based on the City of Chicago 2020 Air Quality and Health Report, Brighton Park and Gage Park are in the **7-9** deciles, with 9 representing the most vulnerable to the effects of air pollution. This means more of the population is exposed to air pollutants that can cause various health problems like respiratory issues, heart disease, and higher cancer rates, reducing overall quality of life.

**Walkability Index:** Gage Park has walkability index of **13.62**, and Brighton Park has a walkability index of **14.52**. The city of Chicago has citywide score of **14.57**. A score of 20 represents most walkable.

**Mental Health Treatment:** In 2023, unmet moderate or serious mental health treatment for adults in Gage Park was **77.4%** and **81.8%** for Brighton Park. These are significantly higher than the city average of **73.4%**. The Adult Loneliness Rate was **39.3%** for Brighton Park and **33.4%** for Gage Park, higher than the city average of **30.4%**.

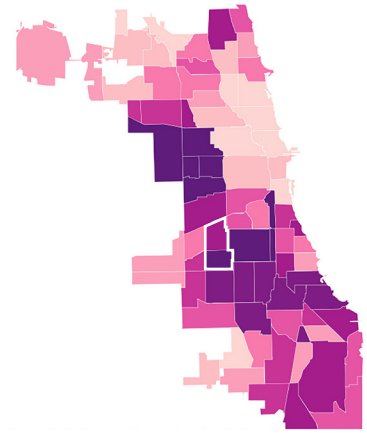
**Social Vulnerability Index:** This indicator identifies communities most likely to need public health support based on social factors. Gage Park is in the **89.80** percentile and Brighton Park at **80.42** percentile. These are significantly higher than the city average of **61.46**.

**Hardship Index Scores:** Gage Park has a score of **91.9** and Brighton Park **86.1**. These are significantly higher than the city average of **55.2**, indicating that the communities face a range of economic, housing, and opportunity challenges.

**Environmental Justice Impact Rate:** This indicator considers average environmental exposure and conditions to sensitive populations. About **88%** of Brighton Park's and **67%** of Gage Park's population are impacted. Scores of 75 or above are designated as Environmental Justice Neighborhoods. This indicates that at least 75% of tracts experience less severe cumulative impacts that the tracts in the study area.

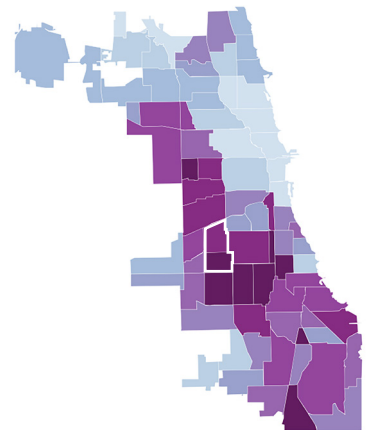
### Social Vulnerability Index

Low High



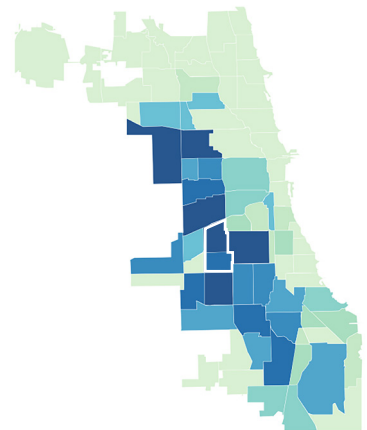
### Hardship Index Score

Low High



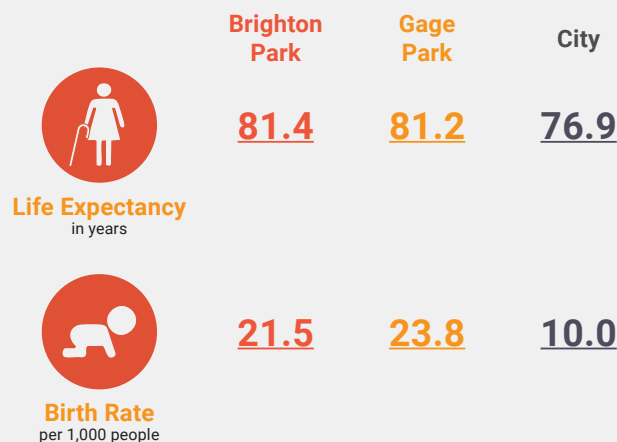
### Environmental Justice Impact Rate

Low High

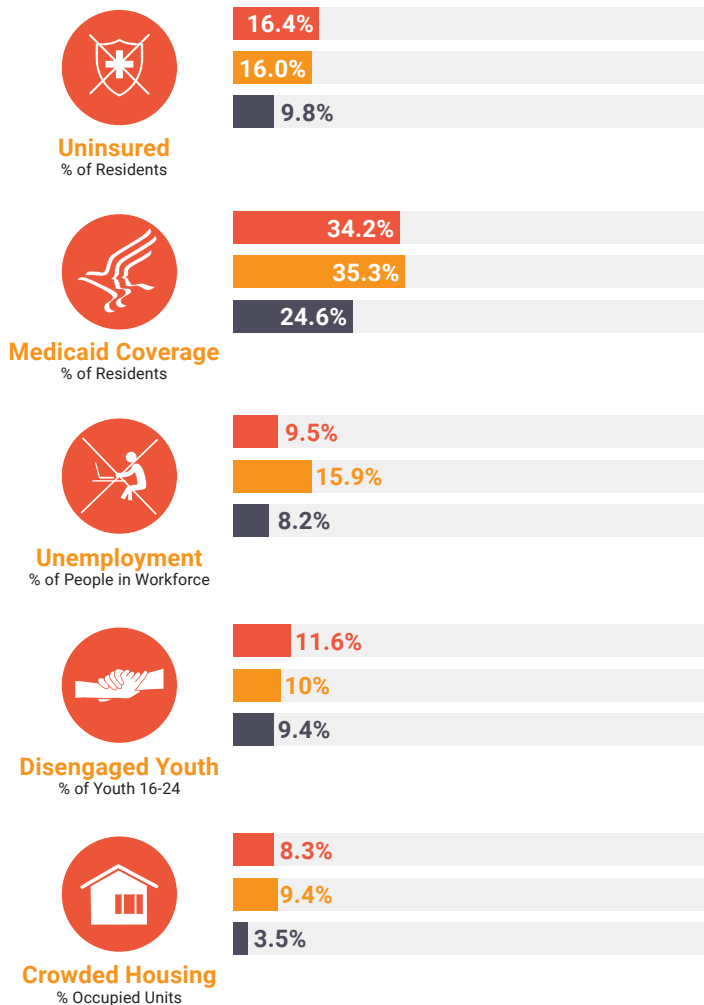


Maps highlight Brighton Park and Gage Park. Source: UIC Health Impact Assessment, 2023, Chicago Health Atlas, University of Chicago

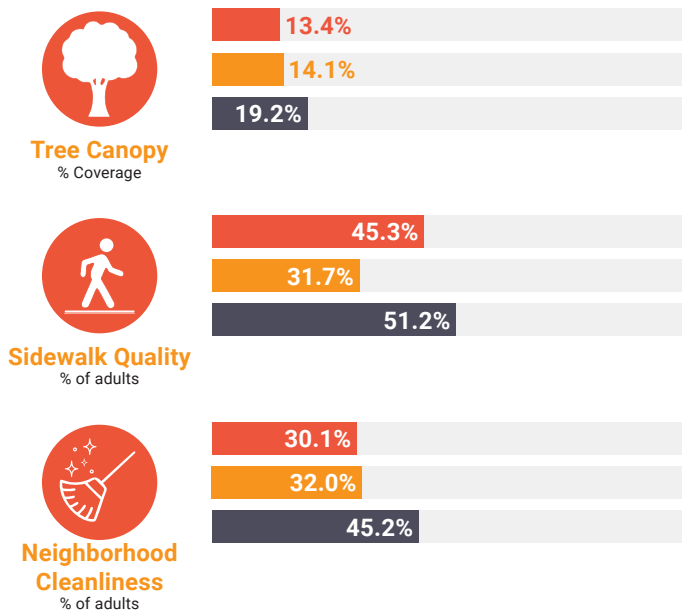
### Lifetime Indicators



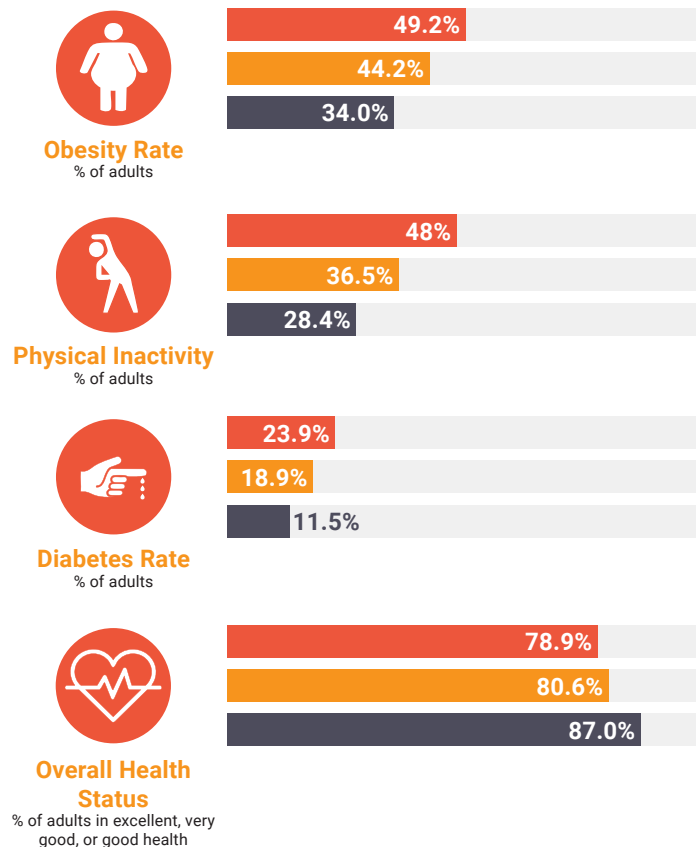
### Economic and Social Hardship Indicators



### Environmental Hardship Indicators



### Health Indicator Highlights



 Brighton Park
  Gage Park
  Citywide

Source: UIC Health Impact Assessment, 2023, Chicago Health Atlas, University of Chicago, US ACS

# Safe Streets and Community Spaces

## Access to Safe Streets and Community Spaces

In 2023, traffic fatalities in the city dropped by 27%. The most common incidents involving bikes and pedestrians were straight ahead collisions with vehicles and when vehicles turn left without a dedicated left turn signal or in other areas without traffic calming improvements. Citywide, the majority of vehicle crashes occur on local streets and collectors, while fatal crashes mainly occur on collectors and major roads. Pedestrian fatalities typically occur in the roadway, followed by crossing at crosswalks.

Compared to the other parts of the city, Brighton Park and Gage Park are some of the community areas that face a High Mobility and Economic Hardship. This indicator considers the Economic Hardship Index, which considers household overcrowding, poverty level, unemployment, educational attainment, and per capita income, and mobility indicators like commute time, percent of population with a disability, and transportation costs as a percent of income. This indicator helps identify community areas with the greatest need for focus and investment and is a criterion in data-driven decision-making at CDOT to help guide initiatives.

Recent improvements include:

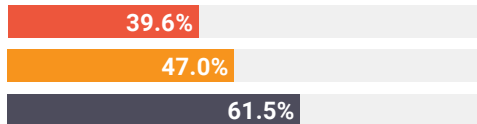
- Raised crosswalks at Kelly High School and Kelly Park
- Completion of the Rockwell Neighborhood Greenway
- School zone improvements at Columbia Explorers Academy
- Resurfacing and Restoration on Kedzie (Archer to 47th, Orange Line Stop to 63rd), and 42nd (Western to Archer)
- Expected pedestrian safety improvements and bike lanes on Archer (47th to Western) and Kedzie (Archer to 31st)
- Expected resurfacing on 55th (Western to Central Park)

Source: City of Chicago, Chicago Traffic Crashes Annual Report (CDOT, 2024)

## Safety Indicator Highlights

**Do you feel safe at least most of the time?<sup>1</sup>**

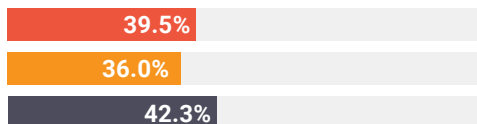
% of Adults



**Answer Choices:** Yes, all of the time; Yes, most of the time; Sometimes; or No, mostly not

**Do you feel part of your neighborhood?**

% of Adults



**Answer Choices:** Strongly agree; Agree; Neither agree or disagree; Disagree; Strongly disagree

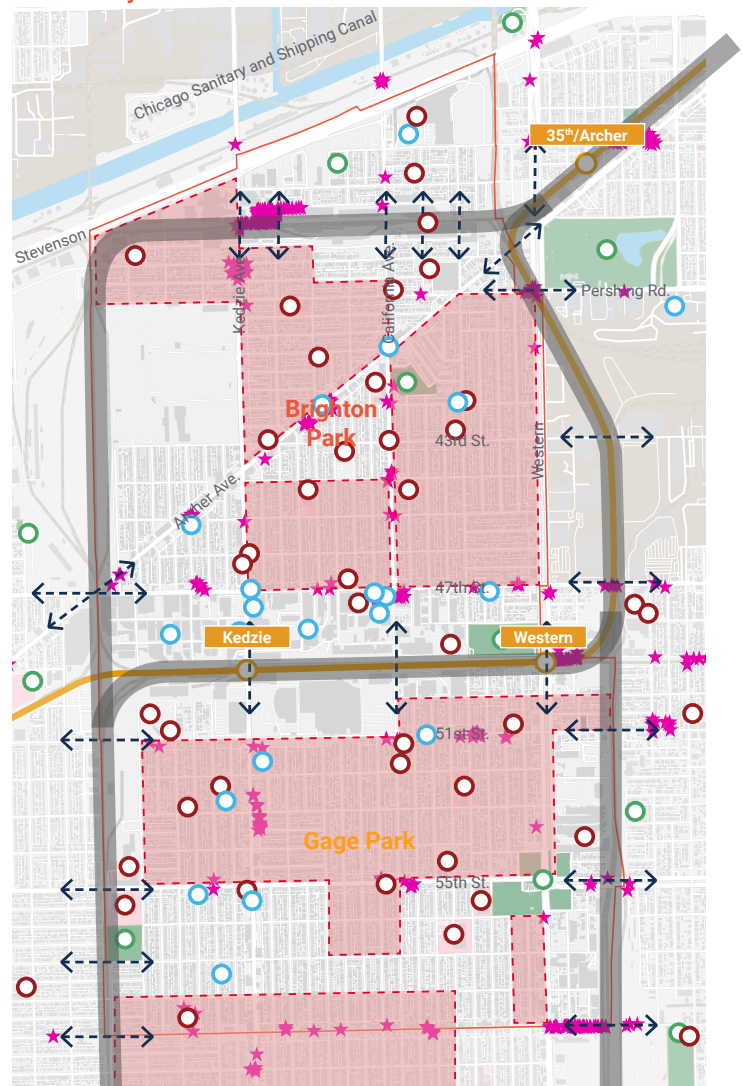
Feeling part of your neighborhood or "neighborhood belonging" refers to a sense of connection, identity, and inclusion to a community. It provides a sense of mutual support and acceptance among neighbors and leads to strong social cohesion, trust, and well-being among all residents.

**Methodology:** This survey was administered by CDPH. Participants were invited to answer the survey.

**Please note:** The perception of safety is a personal interpretation by survey respondents.

Source: Chicago Health Atlas

## Community Assets and Barriers

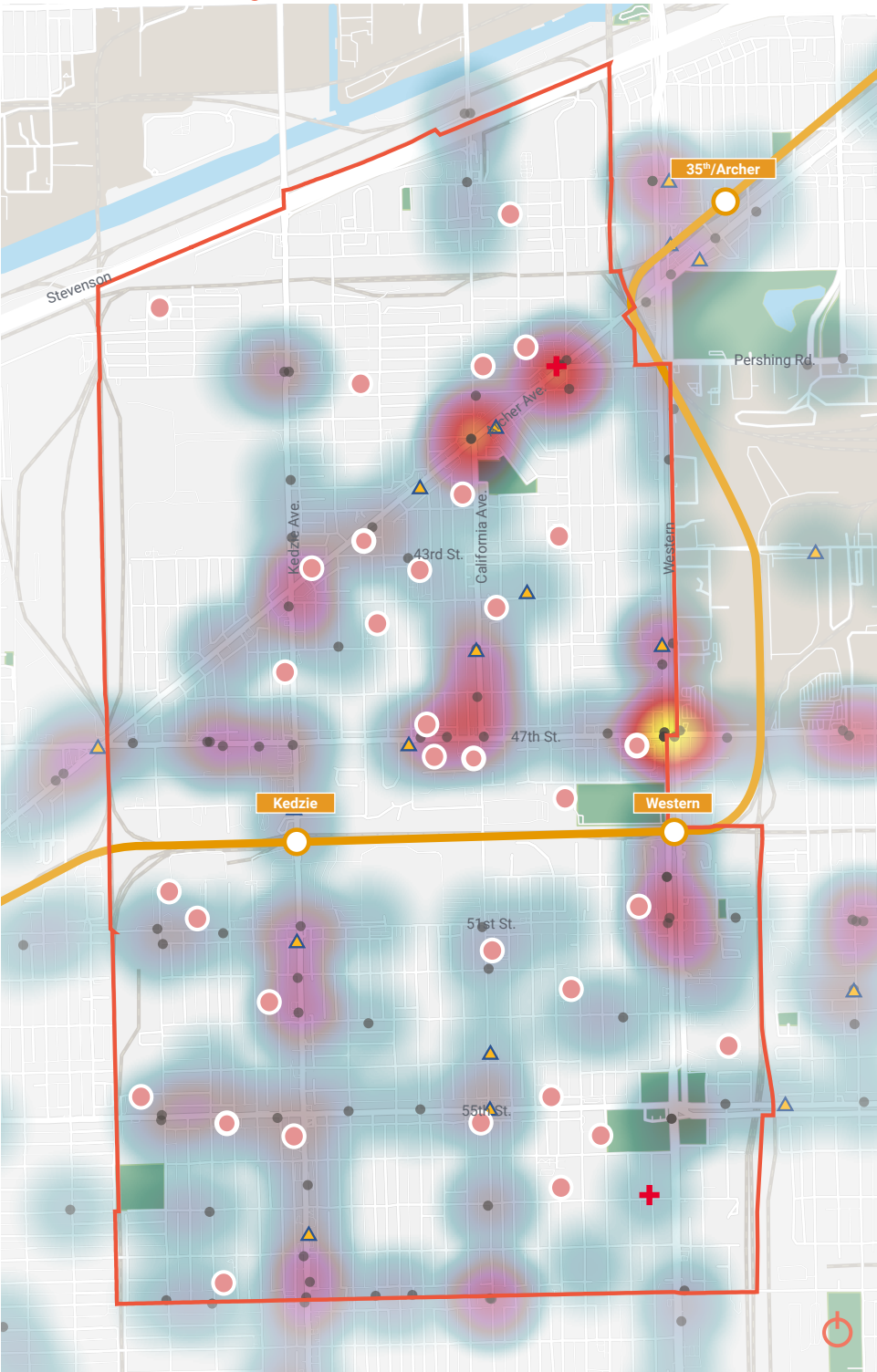


- Community Group
- Community Institution
- Park
- Mural/Art Wall
- Crossing
- Rail Infrastructure
- Possible Gang Area

Source: City of Chicago, Google Street view



Traffic Incidents Involving Pedestrians in 2024



Due to existing truck and vehicular traffic patterns, traffic incidents involving pedestrians and bikes are a major concern. Some of the traffic incident hot spots are located close to schools and other community assets.

The greatest number of traffic incidents involving pedestrian or bikes occurred at the Western CTA Station, adjacent to the Park District HQ/ Brighton Park Community Campus.

Incidents from Jan-Dec 2024

- ✚ Fatal Incident
- ▲ Incapacitating Incident
- Non-incapacitating Incident
- CTA L Stations
- Schools and Major Institutions

Concentrations of incidents involving pedestrian and bikes

LOW HIGH

Source: City of Chicago





Trick-or-Trunk at Gage Park High School



Brighton Park Industrial Corridor sidewalk



Back to School Fiesta at Columbia Explorers Academy



Brighton Park Industrial Corridor southwest birdseye view



47th St. and Kedzie Ave. Intersection



Viaduct at 47th and Archer



Splash pad at Park District HQ



## Community Safety and Root Causes

Community safety is a major concern for residents. Perceptions of safety in Brighton Park and Gage Park are more than 20% lower than the city average.

Addressing the root causes of violence in Brighton Park and Gage Park requires a multifaceted approach that is beyond the scope of this plan, but combines law enforcement efforts with socioeconomic development, educational improvements, and community engagement.

While improving community safety is complex, identifying gaps in programs and services, as well as potential improvements in the built environment, is a starting point.

Programs like the Chicago Recovery Plan and Road to Recovery Plan used \$487 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support initiatives that address some of the root causes impacting community violence. Some of these programs included:

### Youth and Economy

- Chicago Empowerment Fund (\$32.44M)
- Chicago Student Aid Program (\$3.92M)
- Community Development Program (\$6.25M)
- My CHI. My Future (\$14.79M)
- Re-entry Workforce Development (\$8.16M)
- Small Business Support (\$4.19M)
- Youth Opportunity Programs (\$66.10M)
- Workforce Development Programs (\$5.86M)

### Community Safety

- Community Violence Intervention (\$19.47M)
- Place-Based Violence Interventions (\$7.44M)
- Street Ambassadors Program (\$12.25M)
- Youth Intervention Programs (\$14.43M)
- Youth Justice Diversion Programs (\$6.32M)

### Mental Health and Wellness

- Mental Health Equity Initiative (\$19.73M)

### Housing & Homelessness Supports

- Rapid Rehousing Program (\$32.33M)
- Rapid Rehousing Service for Gender-Based Violence Survivors (\$4.46M)
- Vacant Lot Reduction Strategy (\$4.61M)

The programs tackle some of the root causes impacting community safety by offering business growth opportunities, workforce development, safe spaces for youth, events, employment, housing support, help for those re-entering society, community arts, and income programs. For example, My CHI. My Future provided safe spaces and events for over 26,000 youth in 2024 and a universal income pilot program provided \$500 per month to 5,000 Chicagoans for one year.

Source: City of Chicago

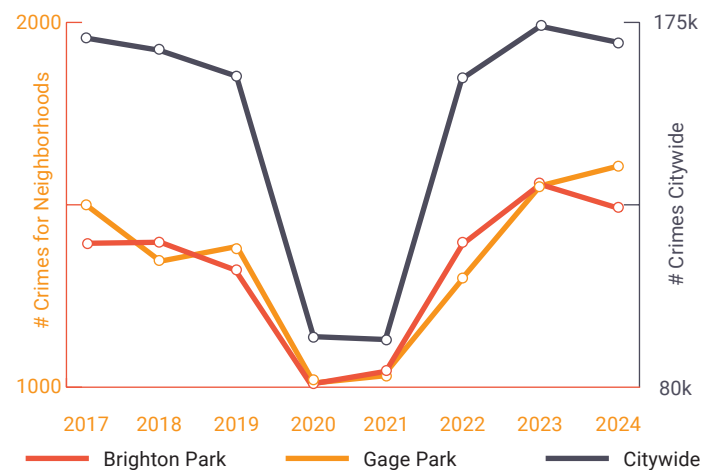
## A SAFE CHICAGO FOR ALL

*"Safety is more than protection. It's support through secure housing and outreach programs. It's policies that drive more community-focused investments. It's government and corporate leaders building justice and equity across sectors. It's an expanding force of community health workers, educators, and victim advocates. It's an infrastructure of safe and public spaces. Safety is all of us working together for a Safe Chicago for All."*

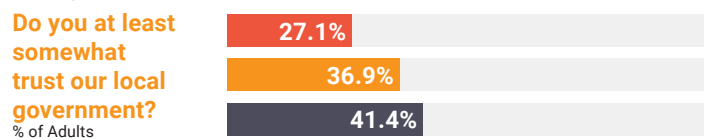
**Mayor Brandon Johnson**

### Major Crime

Includes homicide, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, burglary, theft, vehicle theft, and arson.

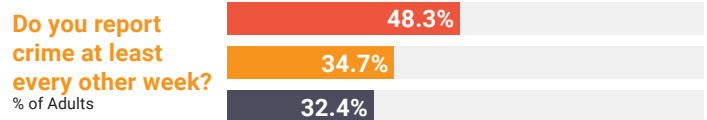


### Safety Indicator Highlights



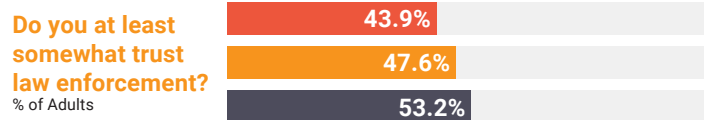
% of Adults

Answer Choices: A great extent; Somewhat; A little; Not at all



% of Adults

Answer Choices: Every day; At least every week; At least every month; Every few months; Once a year or so; Never



% of Adults

Answer Choices: A great extent; Somewhat; A little; Not at all

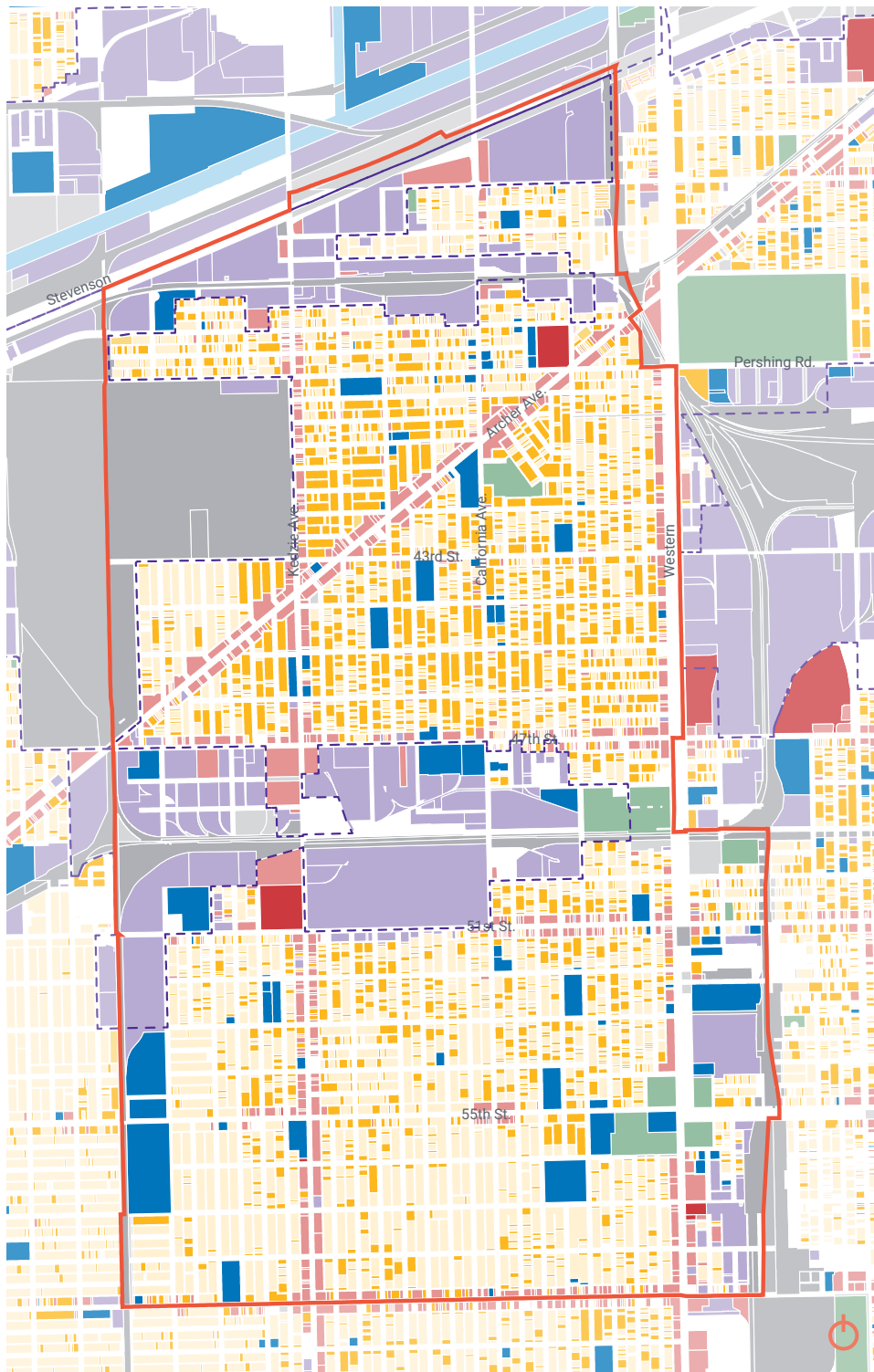
■ Brighton Park ■ Gage Park ■ Citywide

**Methodology:** This survey was administered by CDPH. Participants were invited to answer the survey.

Source: Chicago Health Atlas



# Land Use



Source: City of Chicago, CMAP

Brighton Park and Gage Park are primarily residential neighborhoods. Land use around the industrial corridors is a patchwork.

## Brighton Park Land Use Composition

| Residential |   |
|-------------|---|
| 14.3%       | Single-family   |
| 17.4%       | Multi-family  |
| Commercial  |   |
| 5.7%        | Regional Commercial   |
| 1.6%        | Neighborhood Commercial                                       |
| Other       |   |
| 14.3%       | Industrial  |
| 3.0%        | Institutional   |
| 0.5%        | Parks and Open Space  |
| 43.7%       | Vacant, Utility, Rail right-of-way, Rail Yard, or Parking Lot |

## Gage Park Land Use Composition

| Residential |   |
|-------------|---|
| 28.9%       | Single-family   |
| 11.1%       | Multi-family  |
| Commercial  |   |
| 4.7%        | Regional Commercial   |
| 1.3%        | Neighborhood Commercial                                       |
| Other       |   |
| 11.7%       | Industrial  |
| 6.9%        | Institutional   |
| 1.8%        | Parks and Open Space  |
| 33.6%       | Vacant, Utility, Rail right-of-way, Rail Yard, or Parking Lot |

## Residential

- Single-family
- Multi-family

## Business and Commercial

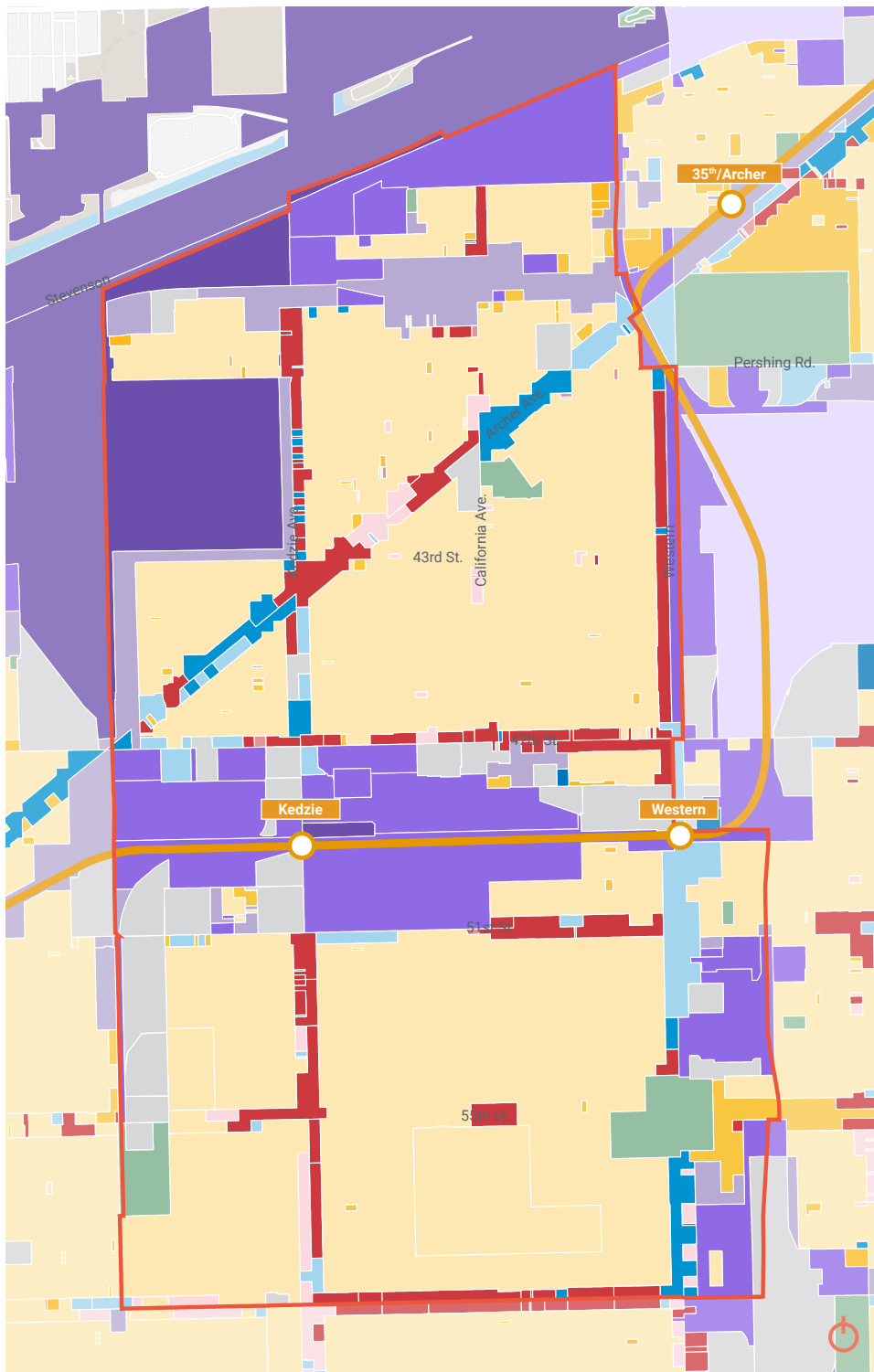
- Regional Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial

## Other

- Industrial
- Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Utilities and Parking Lots
- Rail right-of-way or Intermodal Yard

Industrial Corridor

# Zoning



## Residential Districts

- RS1, RS2, RS3
- RT3.5, RT4
- RM4.5, RM5, RM5.5, RM6, RM6.5

## Business Districts

- B1
- B2
- B3

## Commercial Districts

- C1
- C2
- C3

## Manufacturing Districts

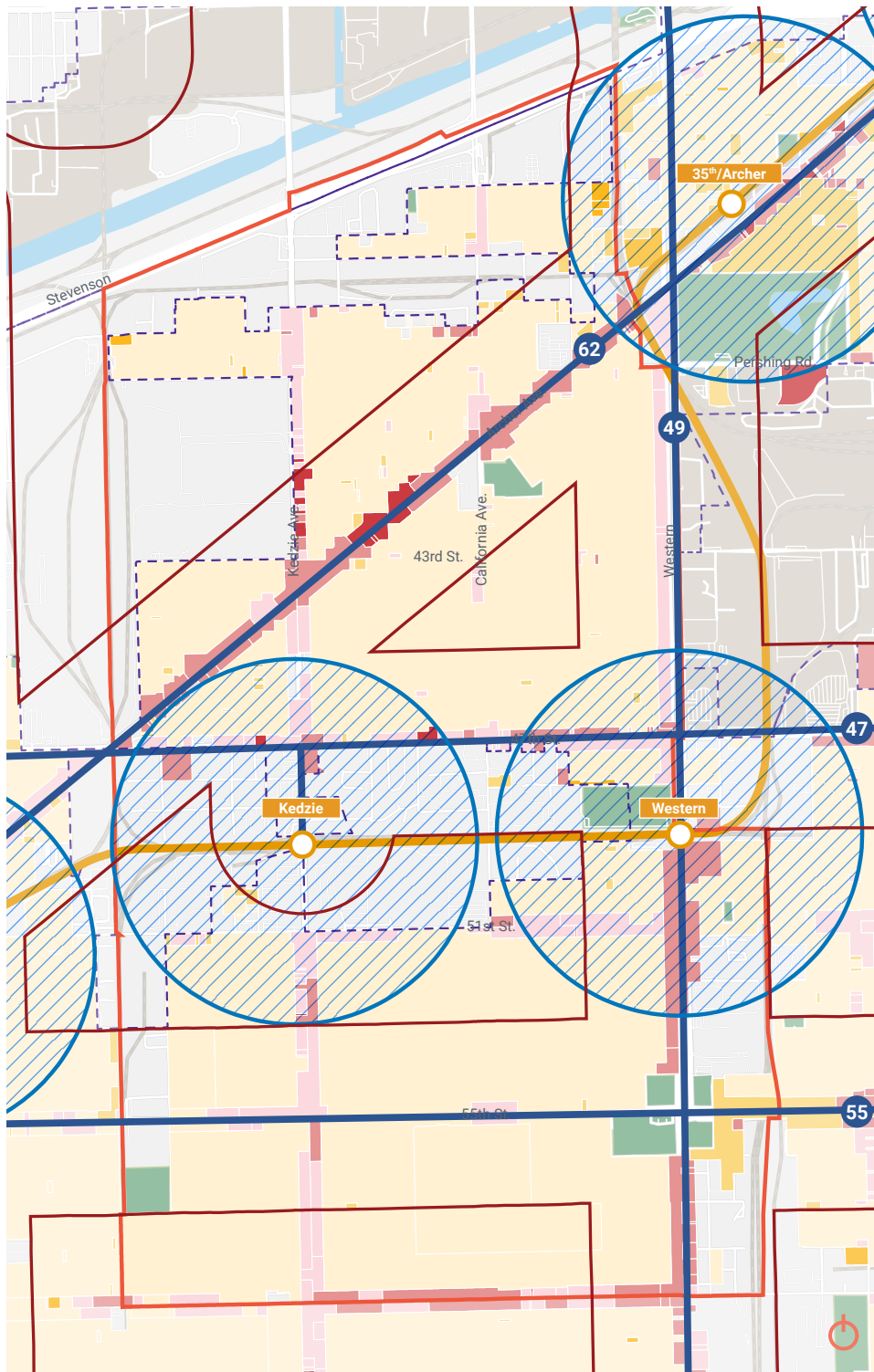
- M1
- M2
- M3

## Other

- Planned Development (PD)
- Planned Manufacturing District (PMD)
- Public Open Space (POS-1, POS-2)

Source: City of Chicago

# Transit-Served Locations



Brighton Park and Gage Park are served by the CTA Orange Line via the Kedzie and Western stops. About 75% of both communities is covered by transit service.

Permitted density in both communities is low with most residential areas zoned for single-family (RS). Along major corridors, there are very few areas that allow higher density development by-right. Some of these areas include Archer and 43rd, and Archer and Western south of the Orange Line. Remaining corridors are limited to lower densities.

## Permitted Density

### Residential Districts

- Low Density
- Medium Density
- High Density

### Business/Commercial Districts

- Low Density
- Medium Density
- High Density

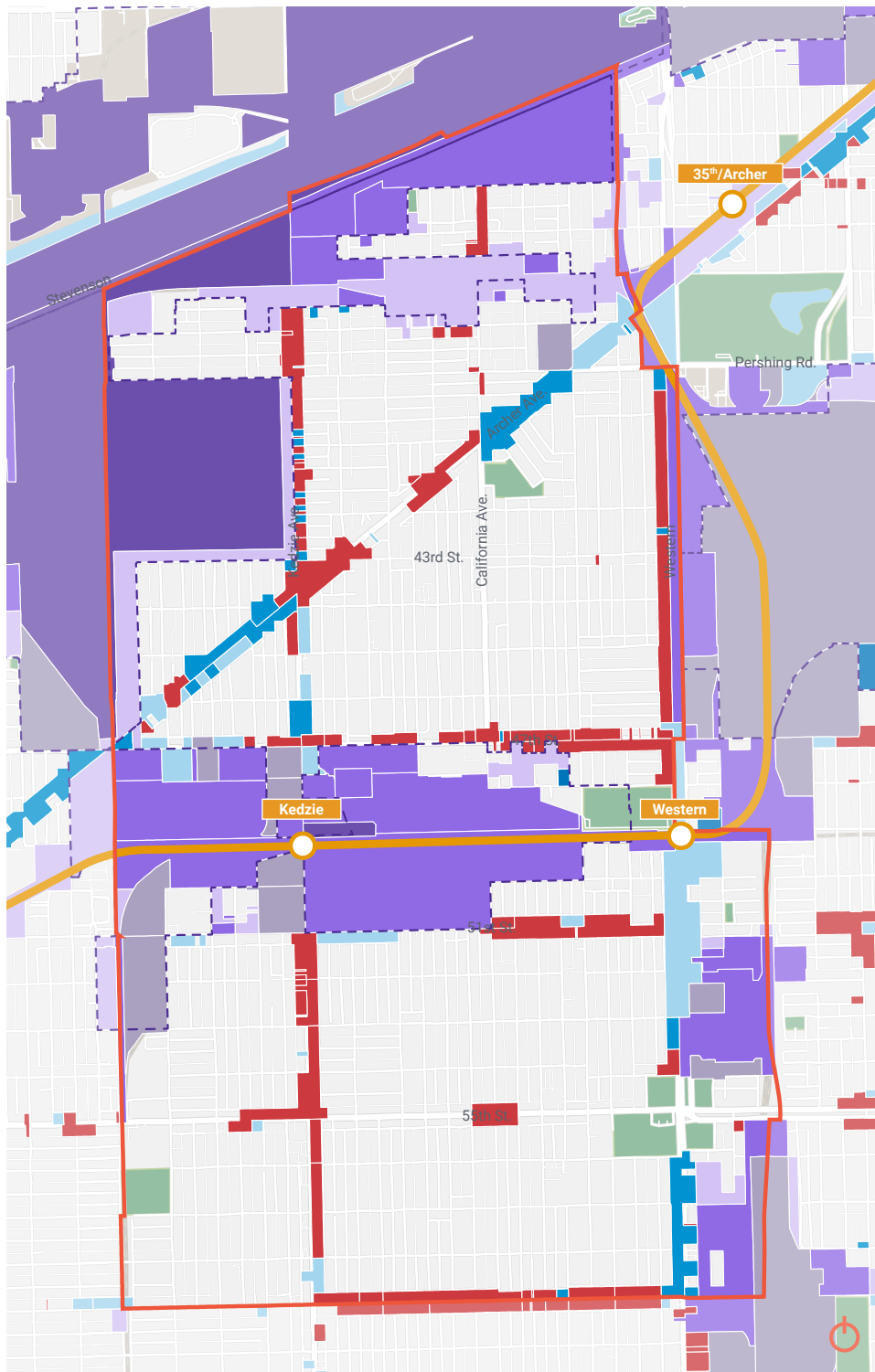
## Transit-Served Locations (TSL)

- TSL Bus Route
- Station
- Industrial Corridor
- TSL Bus Line
- Orange Line
- Orange Line Stop

Source: City of Chicago



# Auto-Oriented Uses



Primary corridors in the study area are dominated by auto-oriented uses. There are multiple zoning designations that allow auto-oriented uses along major corridors.

## Certain Principal Uses

| Use   | B3  | C1 | C2 | C3 |
|---|-----|----|----|----|
| Car Wash                                      | -   | P  | P  | P  |
| Auto Body Shop                                | -   | P  | P  | P  |
| Auto Repair Shop                              | P   | P  | P  | P  |
| Auto Sales (Outdoor)                          | -   | -  | P  | P  |
| Construction Storage Yard                     | -   | P  | P  | P  |
| Drive Thru ATM                                | P/S | P  | P  | P  |
| Drive Thru Facility                           | S   | S  | S  | S  |
| Gas Station                                   | S   | S  | S  | S  |
| Heavy Equipment Sales/Rental                  | -   | -  | P  | P  |
| Light Equipment Sales/Rental (Outdoor)        | -   | -  | P  | P  |
| Vehicle Storage and Towing (Indoor)           | -   | -  | P  | P  |
| Vehicle Storage and Towing (Outdoor)          | -   | -  | S  | S  |
| Recycling Facilities, Class I                 | P   | -  | P  | P  |
| Recycling Facilities, Class II                | -   | P  | P  | P  |
| Warehousing, Wholesaling and Freight Movement | -   | P  | P  | P  |
| Residential Storage                           | P   | P  | P  | P  |
| Building Materials Sales                      | P   | P  | P  | P  |

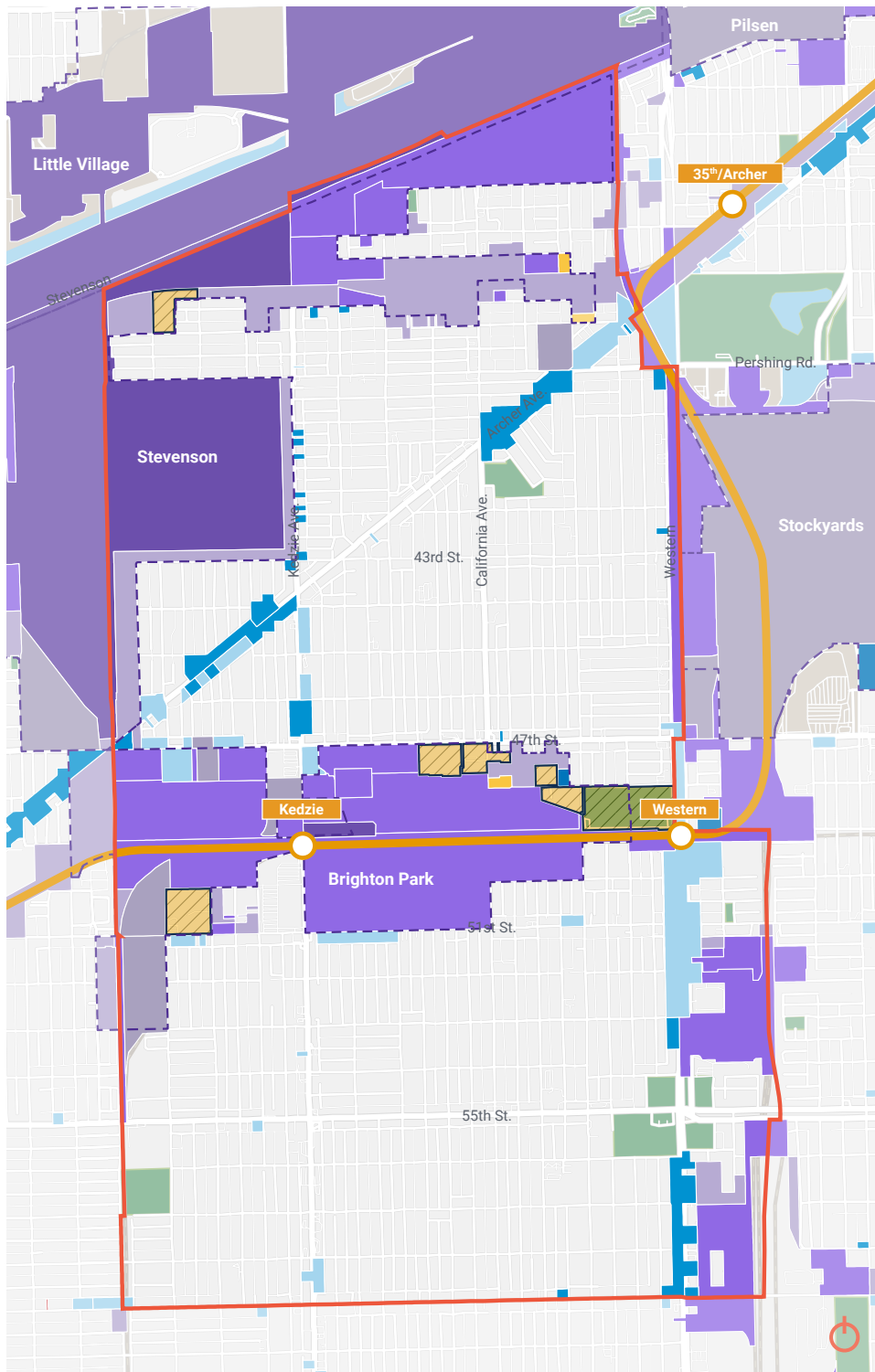
**P:** Permitted by-right  
**S:** Special use approval required  
**P/S:** Permitted or Special Use, dependent on zoning bureau determination  
**-:** Not allowed

Please note: M zoning districts typically allow more auto-oriented uses. Some of these uses may be more intensive than others, see §17-3-0207 for use groups and standards.

**Business Districts** B3  
**Commercial Districts** C1, C2, C3  
**Manufacturing Districts** M1, M2, M3  
**Other** PD, PMD  
 Industrial Corridor

Source: City of Chicago

# Industrial Corridors



Brighton Park is surrounded by industrial uses that include the Brighton Park, Stevenson and Stockyards Industrial Corridors. These corridors are areas of the city prioritized for industrial development and job creation. Not all industrial land use is within industrial corridor boundaries and there are instances of non-industrial uses within the corridor boundaries.

While M districts typically allow more intensive industrial uses, C districts allow more auto-oriented uses and, in some cases, provide a land use buffer between industrial and non-industrial land uses.

## Residential Districts

- RS
- RT
- RM

## Commercial Districts

- C1
- C2
- C3

## Manufacturing Districts

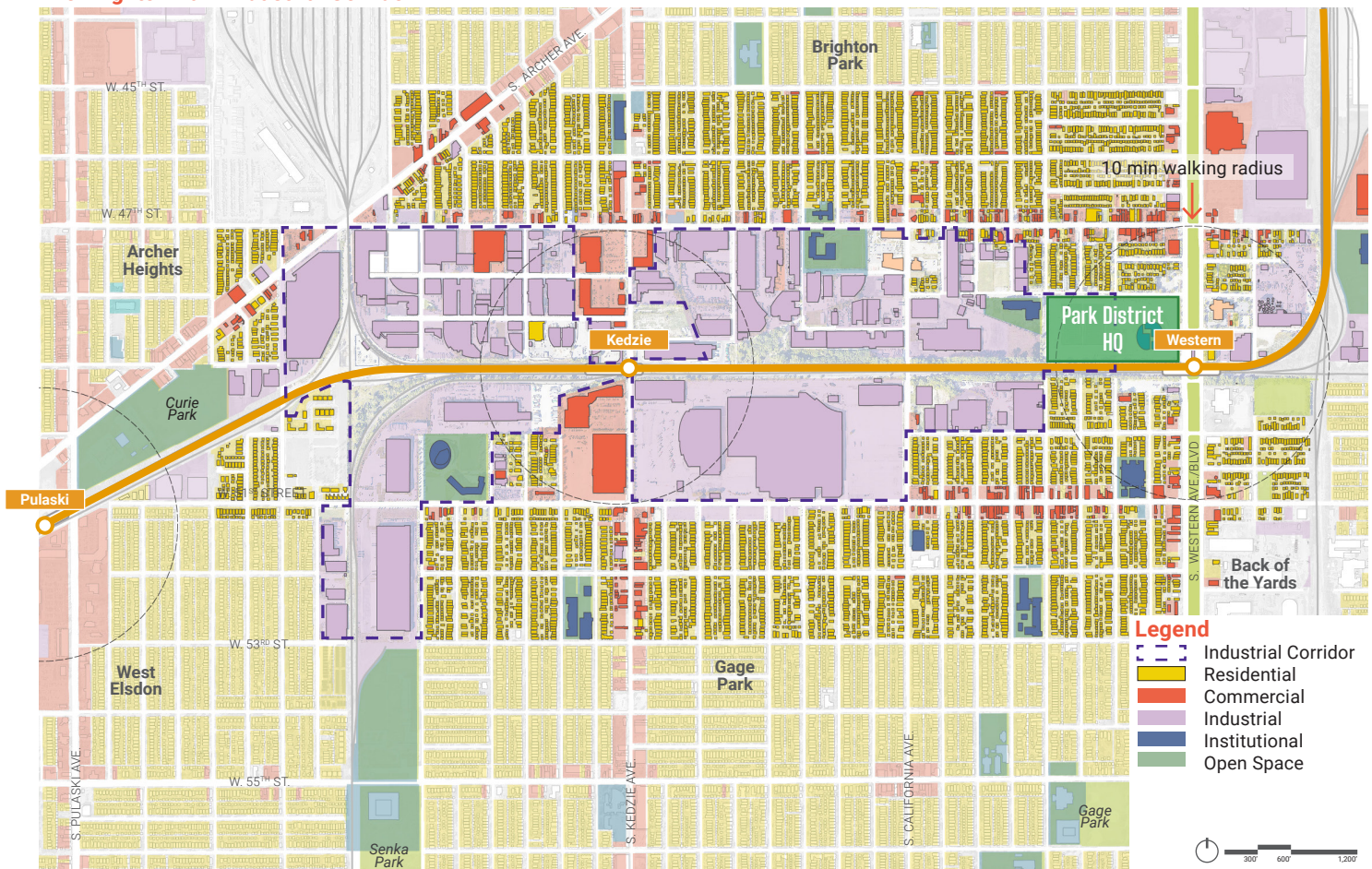
- M1
- M2
- M3

## Other

- PD or PMD
- Non-industrial PD
- Industrial Corridor

Source: City of Chicago, CMAP

## The Brighton Park Industrial Corridor



### Brighton Park Industrial Corridor

The Brighton Park Industrial Corridor is one of the City of Chicago's 26 industrial corridors designated in the 1990s. In recent years, institutional uses have eroded the edges of the corridor where former industrial sites have been converted to institutional uses, including schools, health centers and parks. Shopping centers and grocery stores have also been developed on Kedzie Avenue creating a mixed-use corridor with commercial and industrial uses adjacent to one another.

### Land Use around the Industrial Corridor

The core of the study area is dominated by the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor. This industrial zone has amassed a wide range of industrial uses over the more than 100 years it has existed. It is a smaller corridor when compared to others nearby like the Stockyards and the Stevenson Industrial Corridors, yet it provides critical job opportunities to the neighboring communities.

Kedzie bisects the industrial corridor. Along the northern edge of the industrial corridor, 47th is a commercial street starting at Western Avenue, transitioning back to more industrial uses when approaching Archer and Pulaski.

Industrial and commercial areas are primarily surrounded by residential neighborhoods that include traditional Chicago-style homes, apartment buildings, parks and schools. The transition from large-scale industrial and commercial uses to residential neighborhoods offers little to no buffers and these uses are often directly adjacent to each other causing traffic, operations, and environmental conflicts.



# Market Trends

## Market Considerations

The market analysis for this study covers a general area of interest around the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor (BPIC). The Brighton Park Industrial Corridor (BPIC) is one of 26 designated industrial corridors in Chicago.

In 2023, more than 30% of the land use in Brighton Park and Gage Park is classified as industrial or intermodal. Within the BPIC and surrounding area, about 40% of the land is classified as industrial. Between 2010 and 2023, about 373 permits were issued for improvements in the BPIC area with reported value of \$314 million in total investments. Investments include the new Park District HQ, Esperanza Health Center, El Zocalo housing development, Amazon Distribution Facility, and improvements at Central Steel and Wire.

Most new construction has either been industrial or institutional. The BPIC area includes 70 entirely vacant lots, 28 lots with minor improvements, and 4 vacant buildings.

## Overall Summary

Market considerations vary by land use.

- **Industrial.** The study area is well suited for multiple industrial typologies including Livestock Processing and Food Processing. The current industrial stock in the study area is older and site availability is critical in attracting new industrial development as city sites compete with the affordability of suburban sites. Key Sectors include:

### Livestock Processing

In the study area, this will see faster growth than the city overall. The Southwest Side is forecasted to capture about 81% of the industry's projected job growth. This industry employed nearly 6,000 individuals in the Southwest Side of Chicago

Livestock processing facilities are old and tenants are largely in older buildings, with 94% of the inventory currently leased in buildings built before 2000. Livestock processing tenants typically sign long term leases; the median lease length is 14 years, and the longest leases are 40+ years. Tenants occupy moderate sized spaces with a typical tenant in a new building built after 2000 occupying about 34,500 sq. ft. On average there are approximately 5-10 loading docks per 50,000 sq. ft. of building.

### Food Processing and Manufacturing

The study area and nearby neighborhoods capture about 10% of the city's total food and manufacturing facilities. Nearly 2,000 individuals in the southwest area are employed in food processing & manufacturing sectors. The only regional industrial target economic cluster with declining employment in the Southwest Side is Food Processing & Manufacturing.

Food processing & manufacturing tenants occupy mid-sized spaces with a typical tenant in buildings built after 2000 occupying 56,000 sq. ft. There are typically 10-15 loading docks per building.

## Transportation and Logistics

Jobs are grew by 5% in the study area. There are currently about 2,400 jobs in the study area.

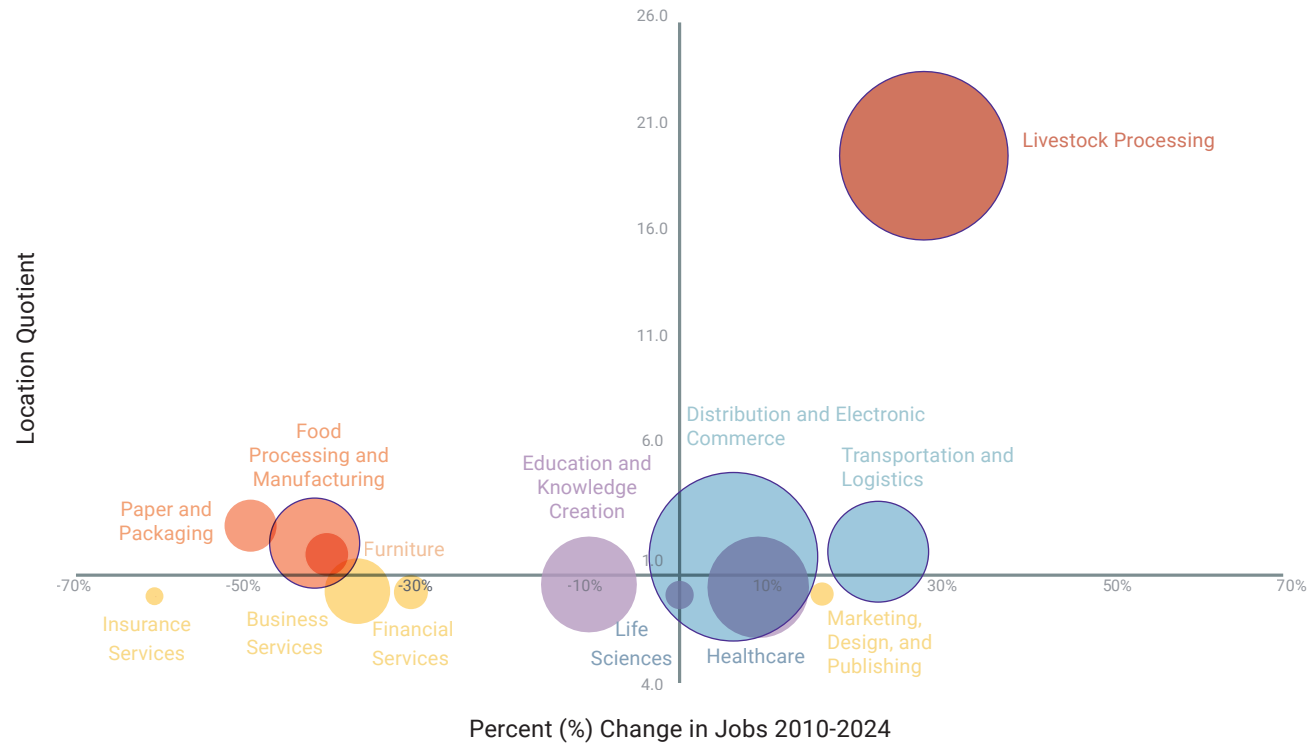
## Distribution and E-Commerce

Only a small share of distribution and e-commerce jobs within the region are local to Chicago. The study area captures about 16% of the city's total distribution and e-commerce tenants reported. Tenants may occupy moderate sized buildings but require ample truck bays. These businesses typically occupy spaces from 20,000 to 300,000 sq. ft.

The study area had lower job growth for distribution & e-commerce employment from 2010 to 2024 than either the City or MSA. The truck intensive uses and large sites requirements may not be optimal for most sites in the BPIC.

- **Rental Multi-family Residential.** Although low vacancy implies demand for more multi-family rental housing, rents are performing below levels required to support the cost of new development exhibited throughout the rest of the City.
- **For Sale Residential.** There has been some recent construction near the CPKD and rapid growth of existing home values in the area. Home prices still lag below the cost of new construction for most typologies.
- **Retail.** The Study Area contains multiple retail centers with a variety of commercial businesses. Performance of existing retailers is indicative of a strong retail market, however there are also existing long-term vacancies.

Brighton Park Industrial Corridor Job Changes



Source: SB Market Analysis Report Dec. 2024 Lightcast 2024

Employment in Brighton Park and Gage Park

| Primary Employment Sectors of Brighton Park and Gage Park Residents | Count | Share |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Manufacturing  | 3,065 | 12.6% |
| 2. Health Care and Social Assistance                                | 2,955 | 12.2% |
| 3. Accommodation and Food Services                                  | 2,800 | 11.5% |
| 4. Retail Trade   | 2,728 | 11.2% |
| 5. Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation       | 2,528 | 10.4% |

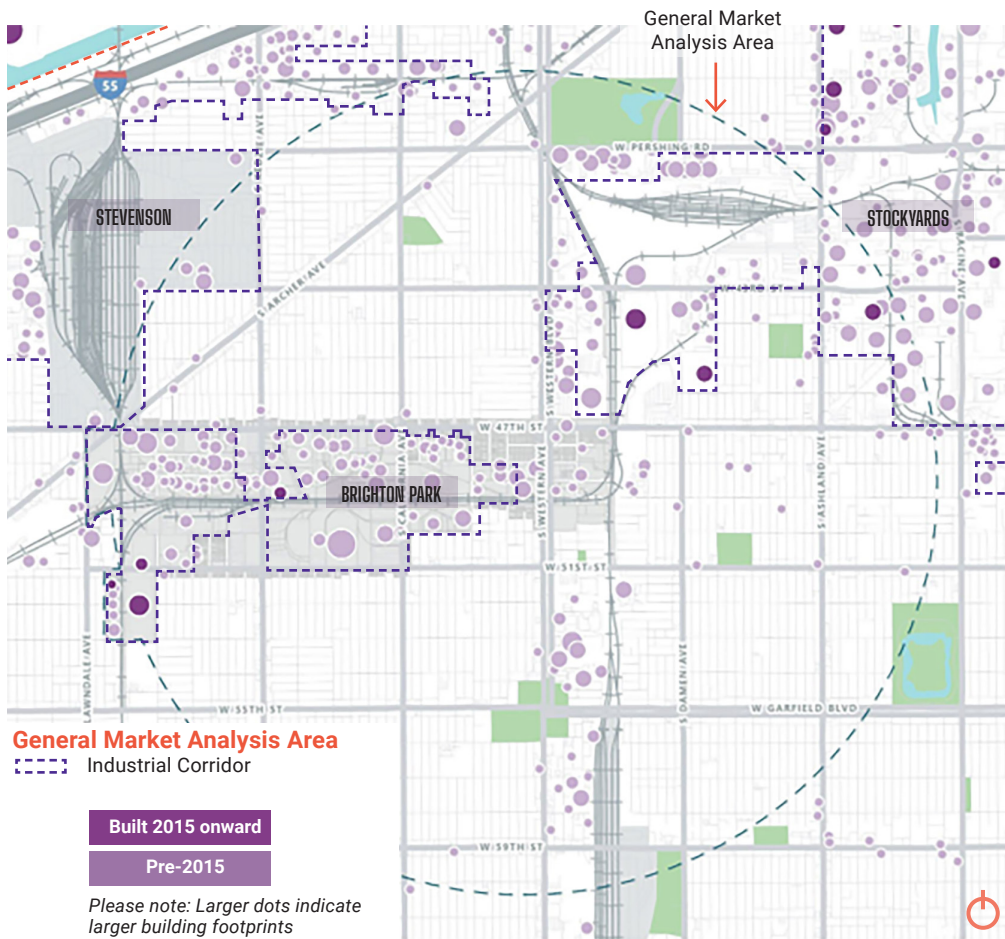
| All Jobs in Brighton Park and Gage Park                       |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation | 2,792 | 23.8% |
| 2. Manufacturing  | 1,676 | 14.3% |
| 3. Transportation and Warehousing                             | 1,357 | 11.6% |
| 4. Retail Trade   | 1,335 | 11.4% |
| 5. Accommodation and Food Services                            | 1,116 | 9.5%  |

| Workplace Destination for Brighton Park and Gage Park Residents | Count  | Share |
|---|--------|-------|
| Chicago   | 15,735 | 59.5% |
| Outside Chicago   | 10,697 | 40.5% |

| Employed in Brighton park and Gage Park by Where they Live |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|
| Chicago  | 6,385 | 54.5% |
| Outside Chicago  | 5,325 | 45.5% |

Source: US Census 0 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic, 2022

# Industrial Trends



## Space Availability Summary

Within the general market analysis area, the region captured 1.3 million sq. ft. or 15% of total city industrial development from 2018-2023. Very few of the older properties within the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor have been renovated in the past decade.

Vacancy in the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor is lower than vacancy across the general market analysis area. There is about 857,500 square feet or 12.4% of vacancy in the immediate area by the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor.



## General Area Market Analysis

**19.4 Million sq. ft.**

Industrial in the larger area of interest

**1.3 Million sq. ft.**

Built since 2018  
(6 buildings)

## Immediate Area around the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor

**7.7 Million sq. ft.**

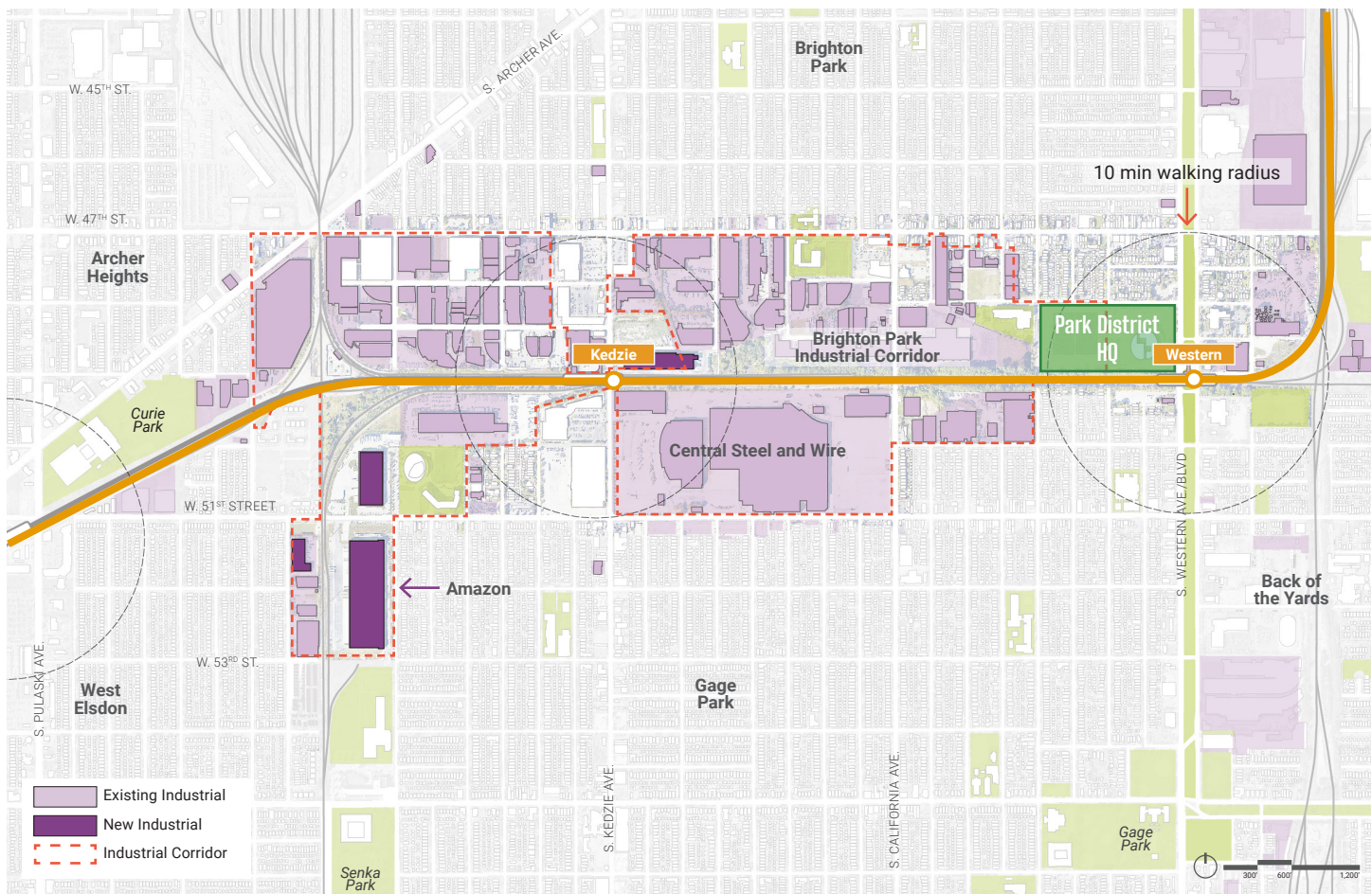
Industrial in the immediate study area

**480,000 sq. ft.**

Built since 2018  
(3 buildings)

Source: CMAP 2020 Land Use Survey, Co Star, SB Friedman, Cook County Assessor, Lightcast





Recent industrial development in the city peaked in 2021, with substantial declines in 2022 and 2023. In 2024, there was a development rebound with nearly 2 million sq. ft. of new industrial construction citywide. Between 2018 to 2023, the Calumet and Stockyards Industrial Corridors were the fastest growing.

The region includes a wide range of industrial building types and ages. The larger general market analysis area overlaps Brighton Park, and segments of the Stockyards and Stevenson Industrial Corridors. Within this area there are nearly 19.4 million sq. ft. of existing industrial uses, of which 1.3 million sq. ft. or 7% of the total was built since 2018.

The industrial building stock includes smaller legacy industrial buildings, typically built before 1965 and averaging about 65,000 sq. ft. in size. Newly built industrial, logistics, and distribution center buildings average 83,000 sq. ft. in size and can reach up to 315,000 sq. ft. An example of a sizable new industrial use is the Amazon distribution center south of 51st Street which is 316,000 sq. ft.

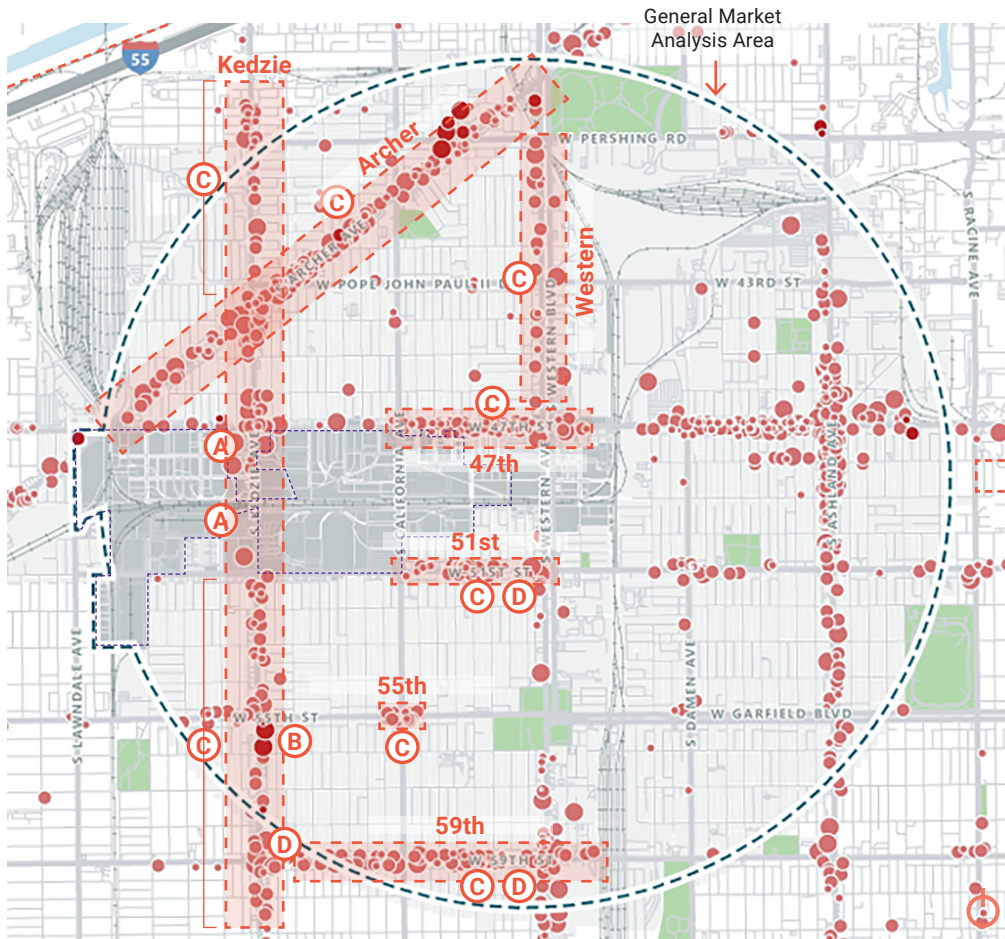
The industrial buildings between 47th and the CTA Orange Line around California and Kedzie tend to be older and have smaller

footprints, with a few buildings closer to Pulaski that begin to get larger in size. This is a typical reflection of the scale of early 20th century manufacturing businesses.

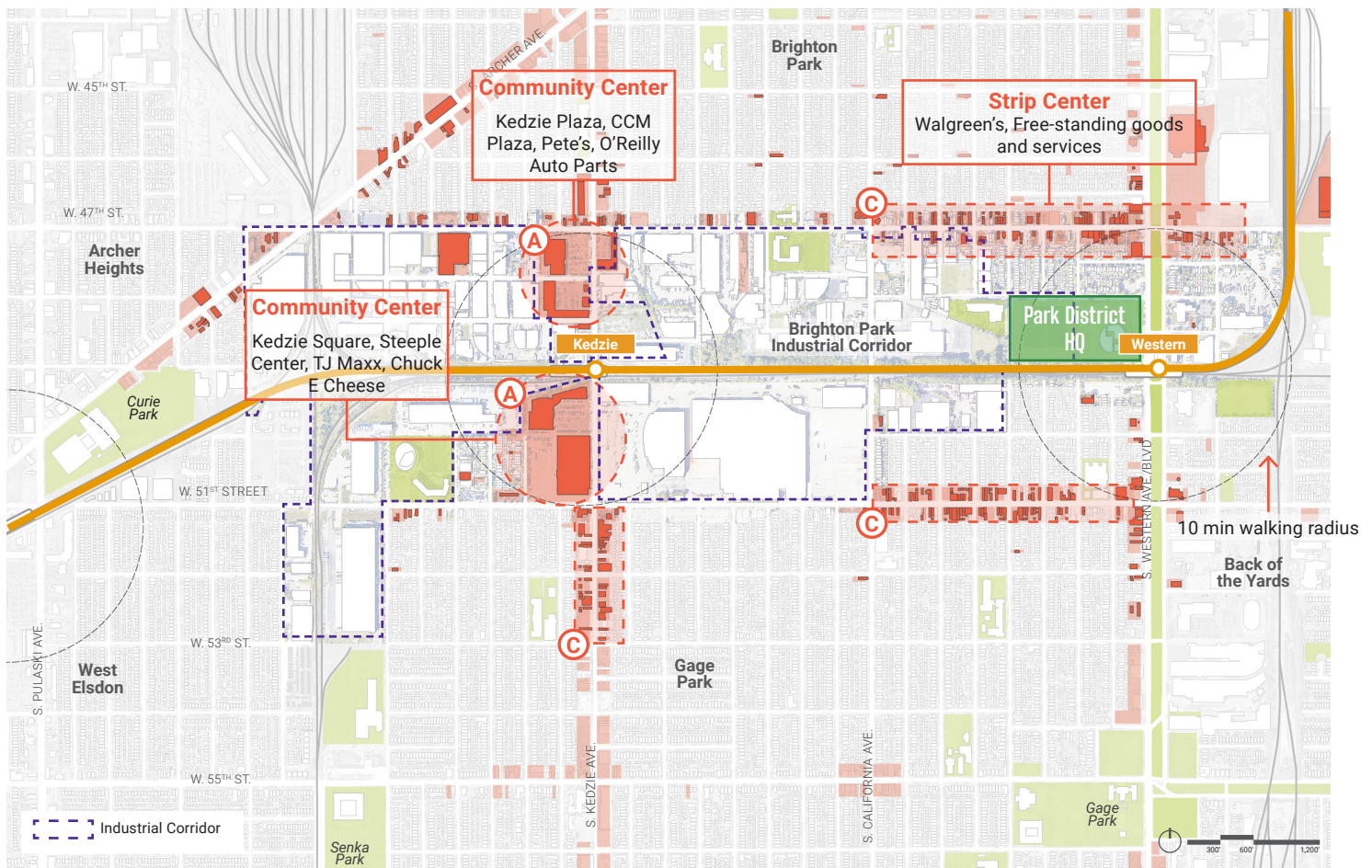
At 51st, between Kedzie and California, The Central Steel and Wire site, originally built in the 1930s, remains the largest site in the industrial corridor with an estimated 1,800,000 sq. ft. facility. Central Steel and Wire has relocated their operations and there are currently no future plans to develop the site, leaving almost 2 million sq. ft. of underutilized land in the neighborhood. Other new investments in the region include larger processing and distribution facilities, resulting in a unique mix of legacy and newer industrial buildings. High growth and key economic clusters in the industrial corridor include livestock processing and transportation, distribution and logistics. Livestock processing tenants are largely in older buildings and typically sign longer leases. Livestock processing is experiencing employment growth in the industrial corridor.

Some industrial sites have seen use changes as retail, school or healthcare redevelopment is growing in the region. Some example sites that have converted away from their original industrial uses are: Mansueto High School, Park District HQ, Esperanza Health Centers, and Acero schools.

# Retail Trends







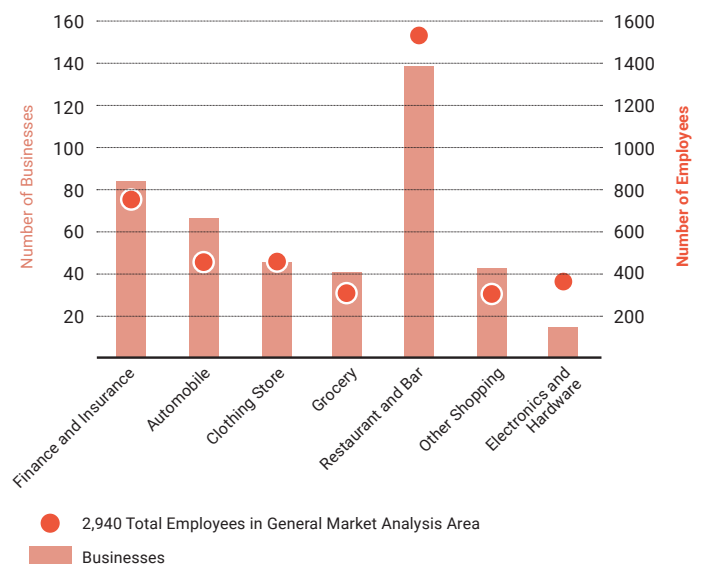
Commercial areas are primarily located at Archer, Kedzie, 47th and 59th corridors with pockets of additional retail at 51st, Western and California. Performance of existing retailers indicates a strong retail market, however there are also existing long-term vacancies.

Of the top 10 shopping destinations, five are located within Brighton Park and Gage Park, with Pete's Fresh Market having the most visitors in the surrounding area. Visitors to the Pete's Fresh Market are predominantly from the neighborhood.

There are 75 retailers located around the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor. Restaurants and bars are the largest employers and number of businesses (31% share of businesses). Overall, retail tends to be competitive, local, and neighborhood-serving.

There is an even split in peddler licenses between Brighton Park and Gage Park. The overall sales of peddlers are general merchandise sales, including fruit and flowers.

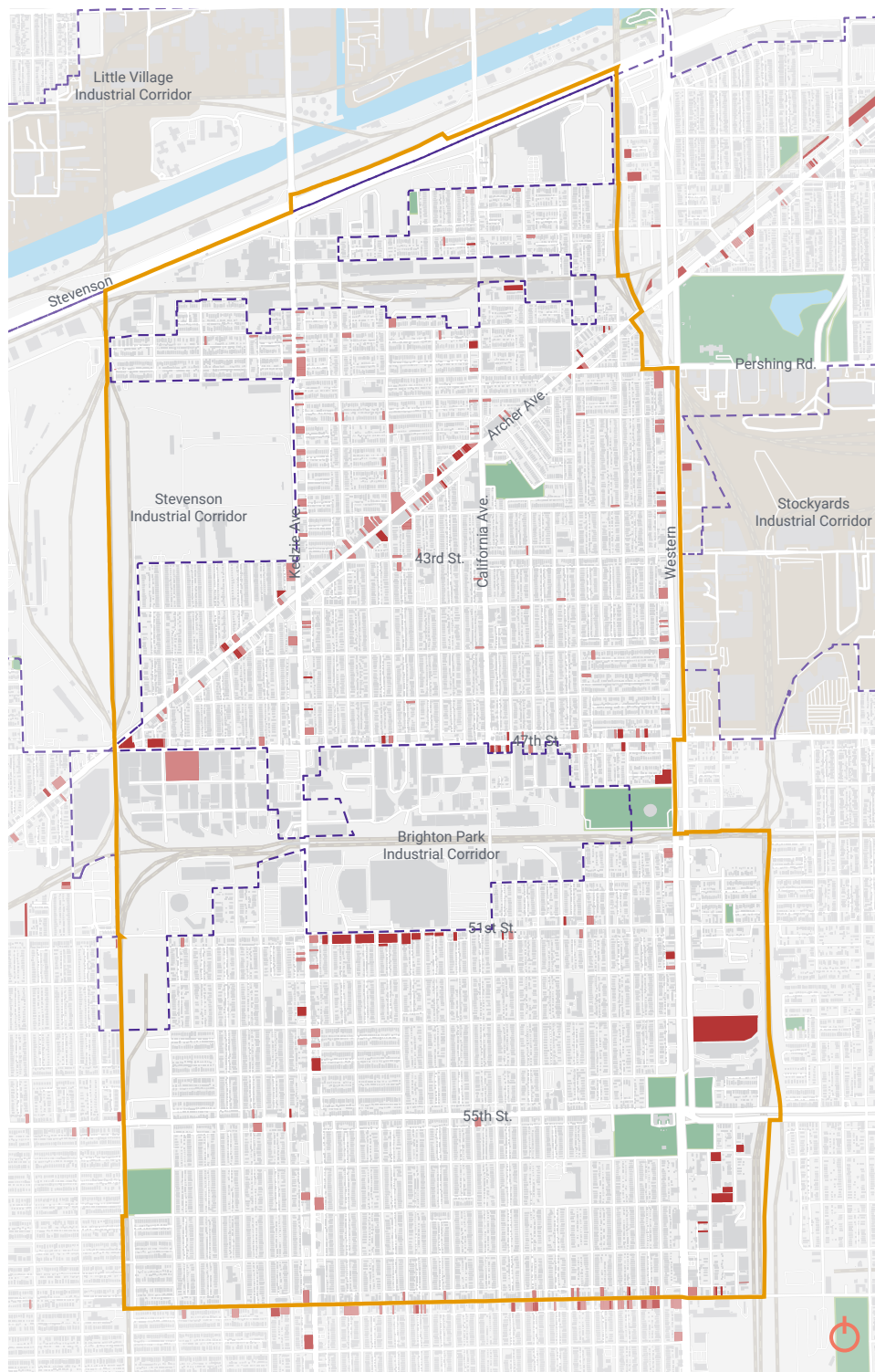
**Total Businesses and Employees in General Market Analysis Area**



Source: CMAP 2020 Land Use Survey, Co Star, SB Friedman, LoopNet, ESRI Business Analyst 2023, Placer.ai, City of Chicago



# Retail Vacancy



Along major corridors, higher storefront vacancy is centered on Archer Avenue between California Avenue and Kedzie Avenue, while the Brighton Park side of Kedzie Avenue is experiencing higher vacancy than the Gage Park side. There are multiple vacant commercial properties within residential areas. Vacant land is primarily located adjacent to industrial corridors.

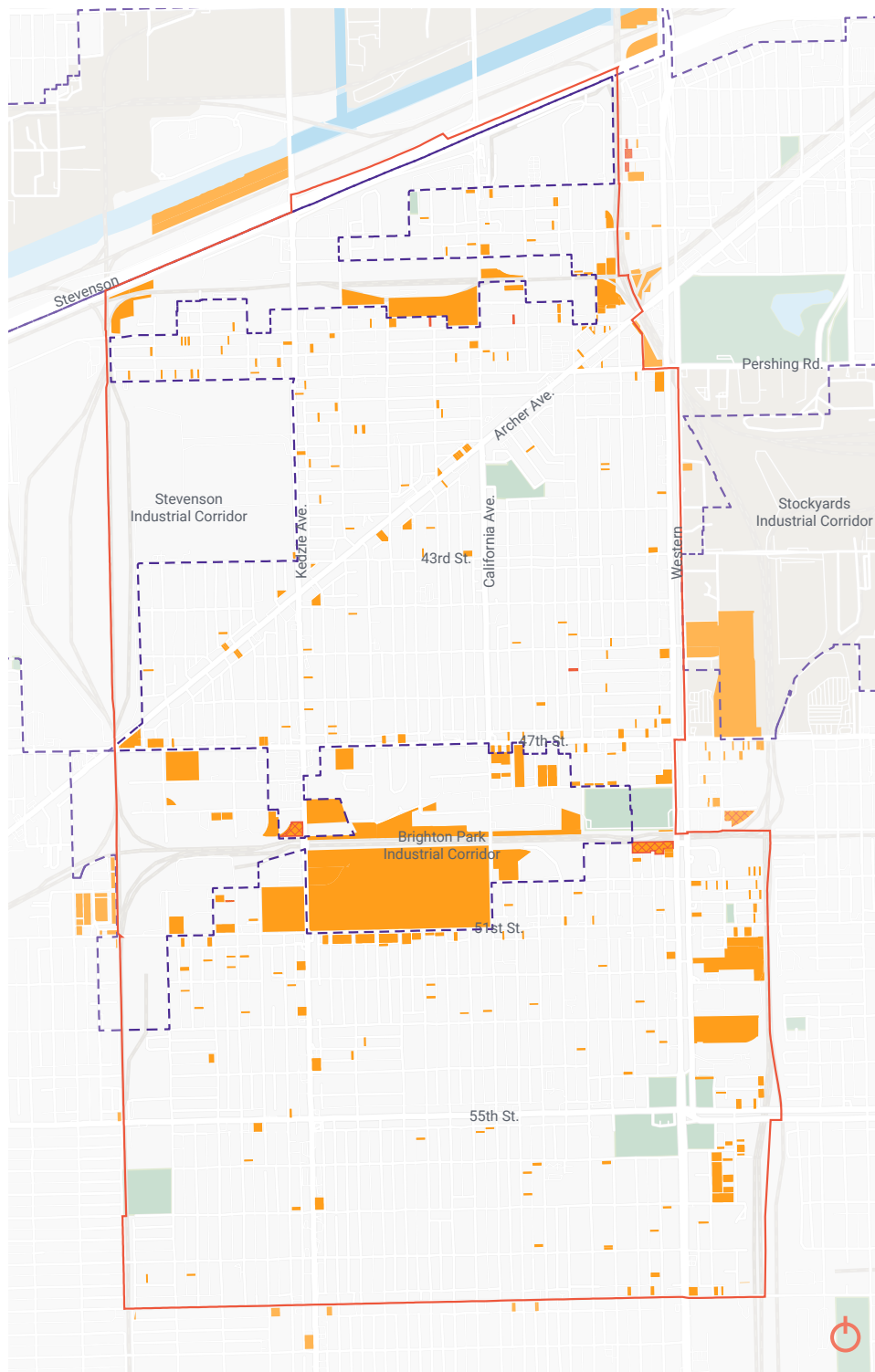
## Vacancy Legend

- Vacant - No Structure
- Vacant Storefront or Building
- Industrial Corridor

Please note: Vacancy status may have change since last update to date sources.

Sources: CMAP 2020 Land Use Inventory, City of Chicago, Google Street view

# Underutilized Lots



There are multiple privately-owned and a few public-owned vacant and underutilized sites of a variety of sizes in Brighton Park and Gage Park. Many of these sites are in the industrial corridor. These sites could offer potential redevelopment opportunities for new open space, mixed-use buildings, housing, and other needed community assets and investments.

## Legend

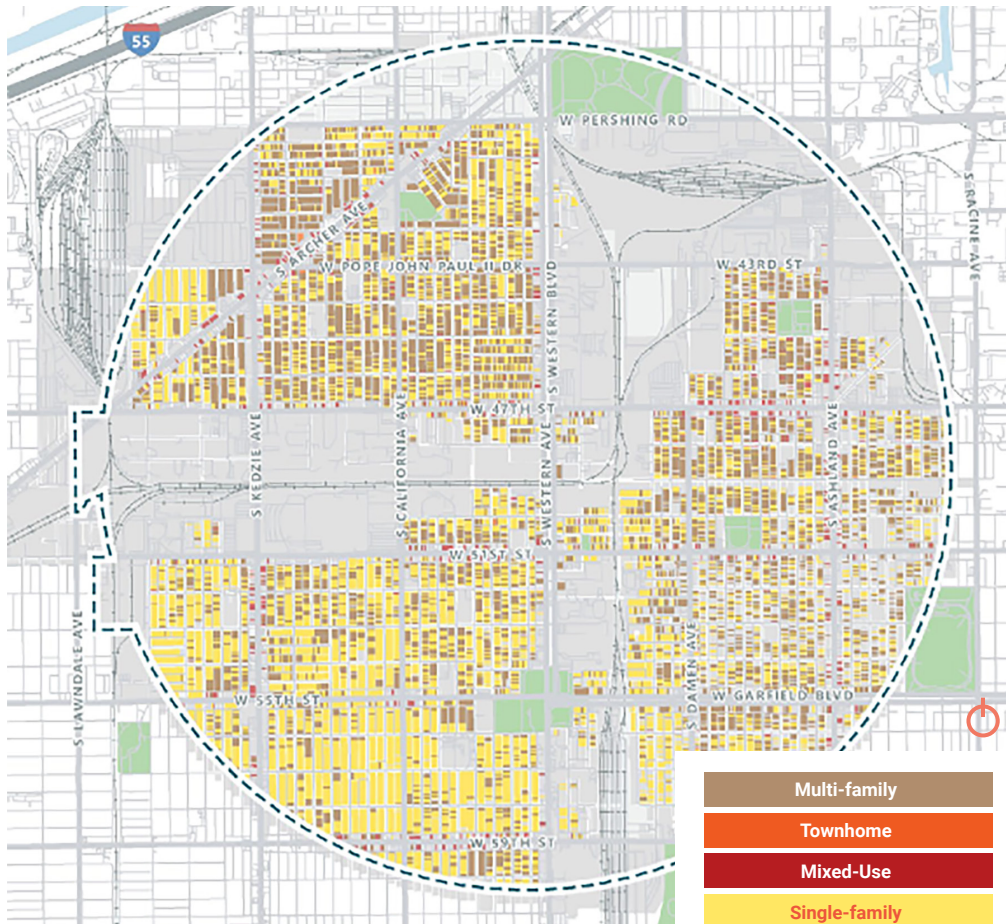
- Underutilized Space
- Industrial Corridor

Sources: CMAP 2020 Land Use Inventory, City of Chicago, Google Street view

Please note: Underutilization status may have change since last update to date sources.



# Residential Trends



## General Market Analysis Area

**10,961**

Single-family Units

**23,300**

Multi-family Units

**639**

Mixed-Use Units

**10%**

Vacant Housing Units

**232**

Vacant Lots in Brighton Park

**297**

Vacant Lots in Gage Park

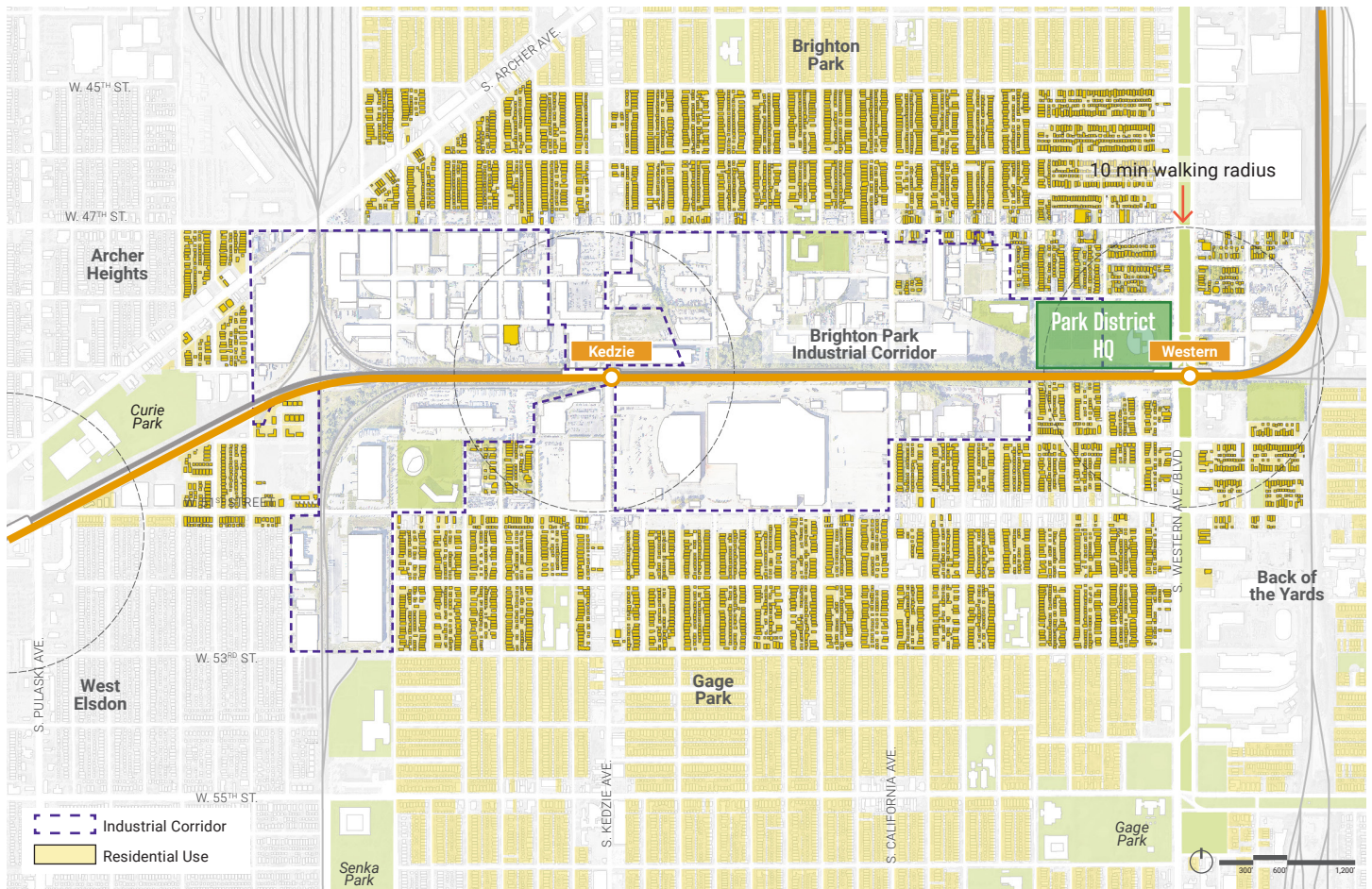
Source: Cook County Assessor 2022,  
SB Friedman



Housing stock is primarily made up of bungalows, single-family homes, two and three flats, and three to four story apartment buildings. In the region, about two-thirds of the housing units are multi-family, while single-family units account for 50% of residential land use. In the general market analysis area, more than half of housing units are rented with 10% vacancy in the region, or  $\pm$  3,500 units. Brighton Park and Gage Park have a 7.6% and 6.8% vacancy respectively, lower than the city average and are less volatile. Both communities have seen a 30-50% reduction in vacancy since 2008.

For additional information, see Appendix I. Financial Resources



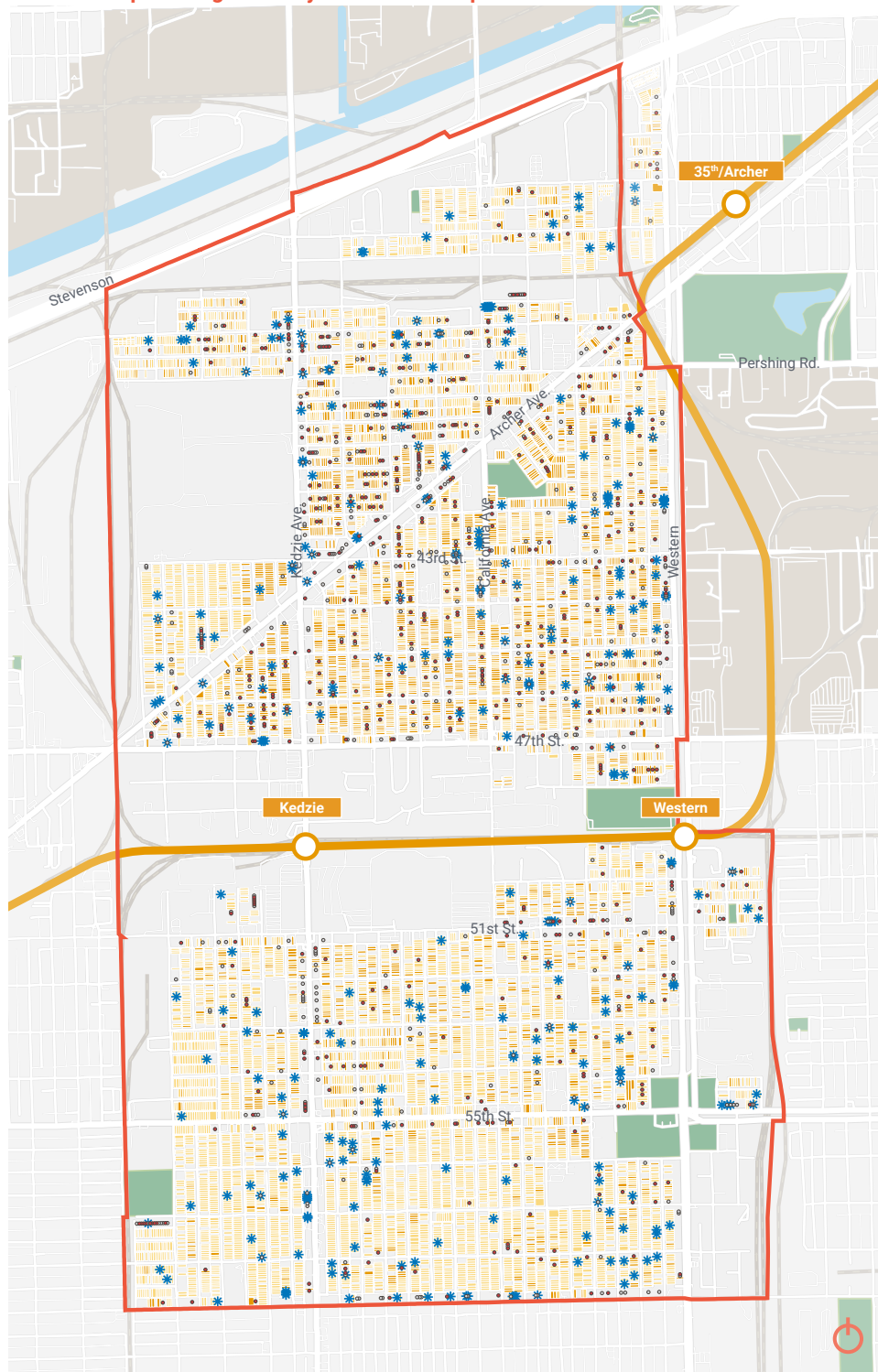


Many multi-family buildings were constructed prior to 1920. New multi-family development has been built towards the west side of Brighton Park and Gage Park. There has been minimal development of multi-family housing in the region and most new developments are within the immediate study area. On average, multi-family rents are far below the rates required (about 31% of the city average) for privately-funded new construction. Median housing prices within the study area are lower than the city as a whole but are experiencing faster growth. This is evidenced by an 11% compound annual growth rate in the average home sale price between 2016 and 2023 in the area.



Source: City of Chicago CMAP 2020 Land Use Survey, ESRI Business Analyst, Cook County Assessor, SB Friedman, CoStar, MLS, Zillow, Redfin

## Owner Occupied Single-Family Homes and Duplexes



Most homes in Brighton Park and Gage Park are owner occupied. About 50% of homes in Brighton Park are duplexes or two-flat, while most homes in Gage Park are single-family.

### Legend

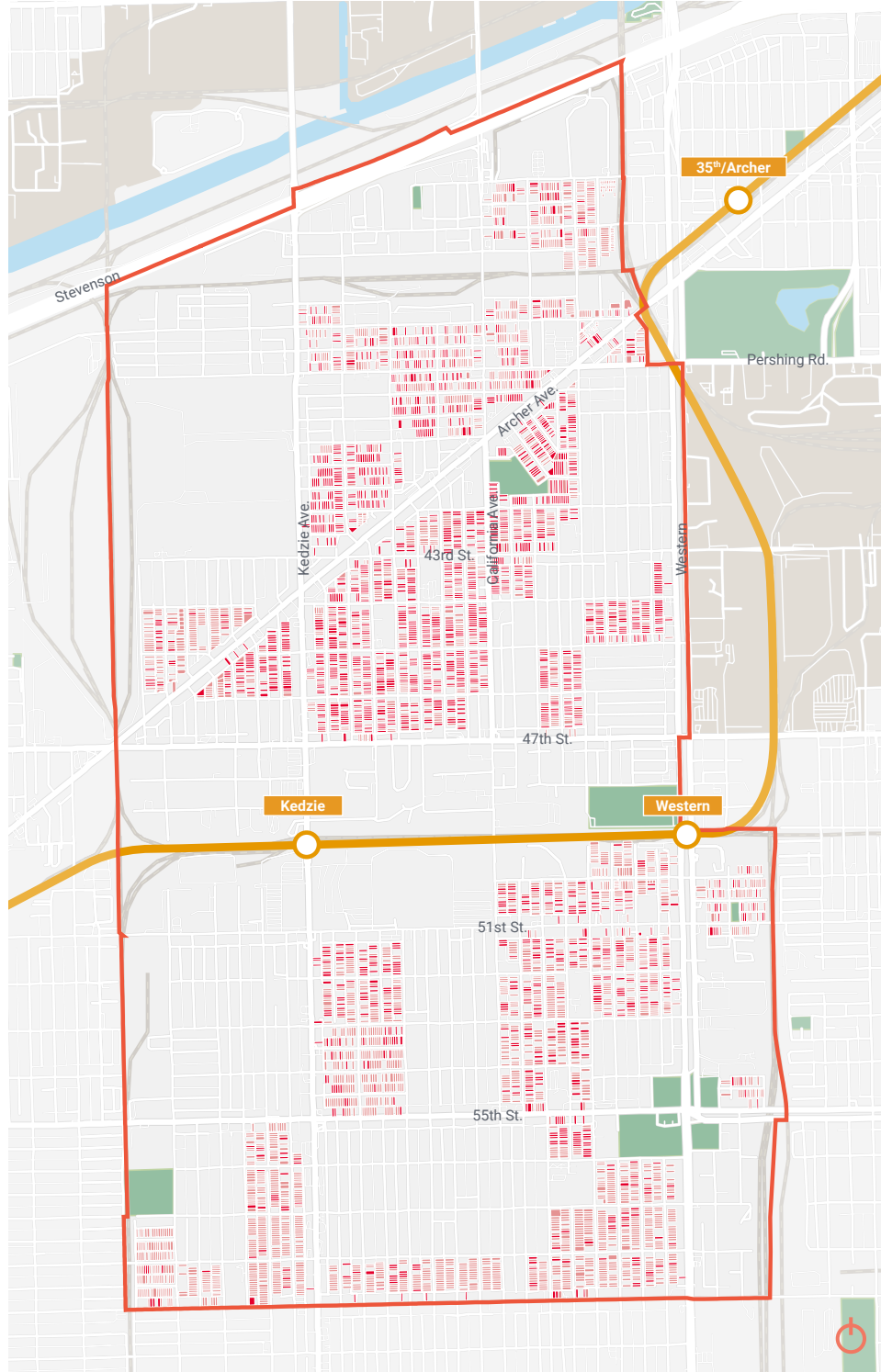
- Single-Family
- Duplex or Two-Flat
- Multi-Family (Owner-Occupied)
- Multi-Family (Not Owner-Occupied)
- Corporate-owned

**Please note:** Data presented on this map may not be accurate. Certain data was generated by a third party. Maps should only be used for illustrative purposes and high-level analysis.

Source: City of Chicago, Cook County Assessor, US Census, Tolemi



## Owner Occupied Single-Family Homes and Duplexes under 50% AMI (Households of 3)



The average household size in Brighton Park is 3.2. The average household size in Gage Park is 3.4. For a household of 3, the 50% below the limit of the Area Median Income (AMI) is \$50,450. About 87% of all households are 80% below the AMI at \$80,750.

### Households 50% below AMI

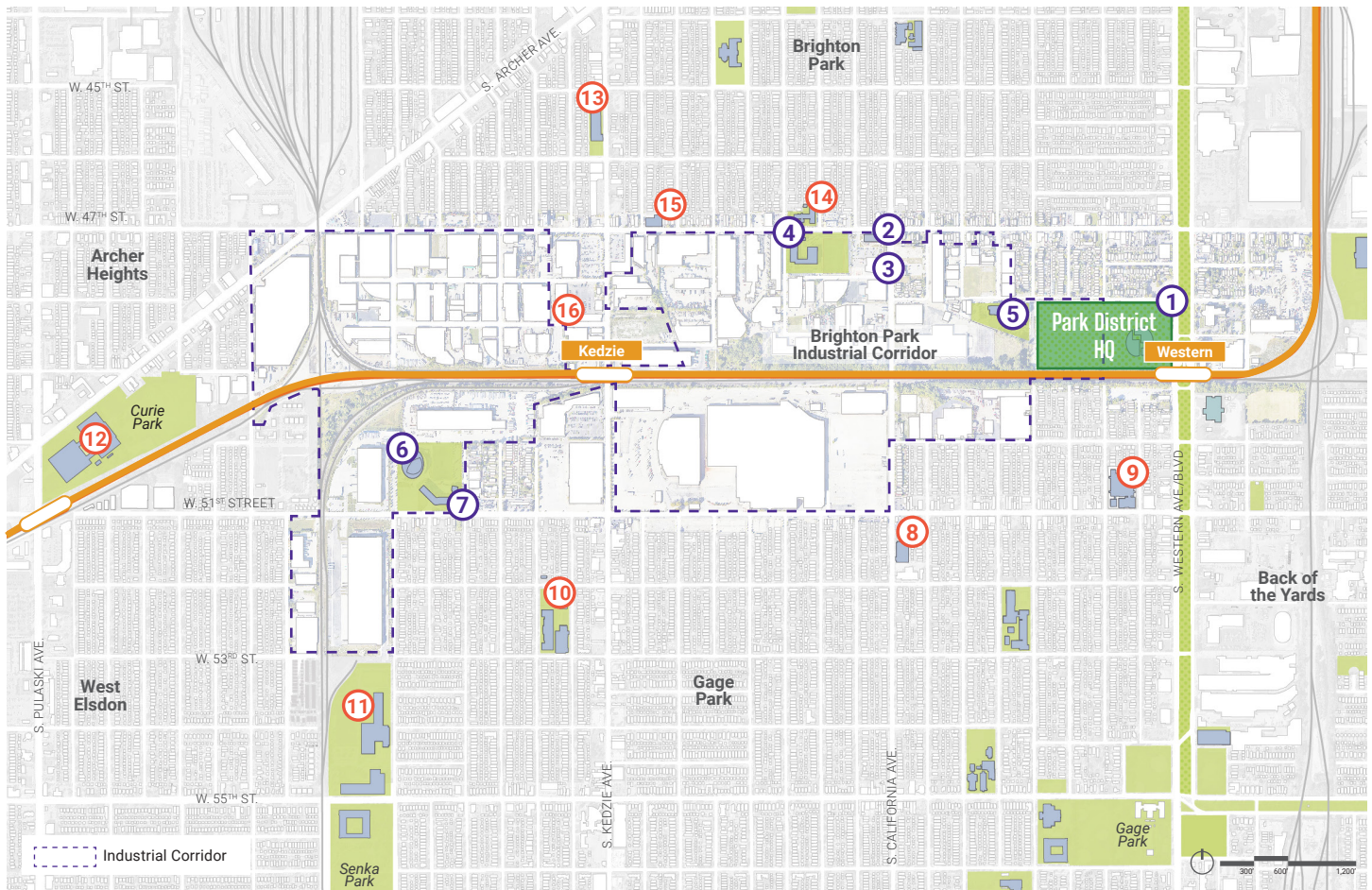
- Single-Family
- Duplex or Two-Flat

**Please note:** Data presented on this map may not be accurate. Certain data was generated by a third party. Maps should only be used for illustrative purposes and high-level analysis.

Source: City of Chicago, Cook County Assessor, US Census, Tolemi



# Institutional Investments



## Institutional Investment in the Region

In recent decades, new investment in academic campuses, open space, and healthcare facilities has developed near or within the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor. This has eroded the industrial corridor by converting industrial areas to institutional uses. While recent developments have invested millions into the neighborhood, current land use patterns have led to conflict between industrial and nonindustrial uses. These conflicts include traffic, especially between trucks and schools, environmental degradation, and infrastructure capacity. There were about 5,000 to 25,000 monthly visits in 2023 since the construction of the Park District HQ. Visits to the park at highest in the evening hours and in the summer months.

## Institutions Serving the Community

Historically undeserved by community programming and services, recent investments in the area include two community healthcare facilities and a new park that provides spaces for recreation and programming. Despite these new investments, residents are still undeserved by community space and services, open space availability, and programming. Both Brighton Park and Gage Park include a significant portion of multi-generational families who value their community assets immensely.

## Nearby Institutions

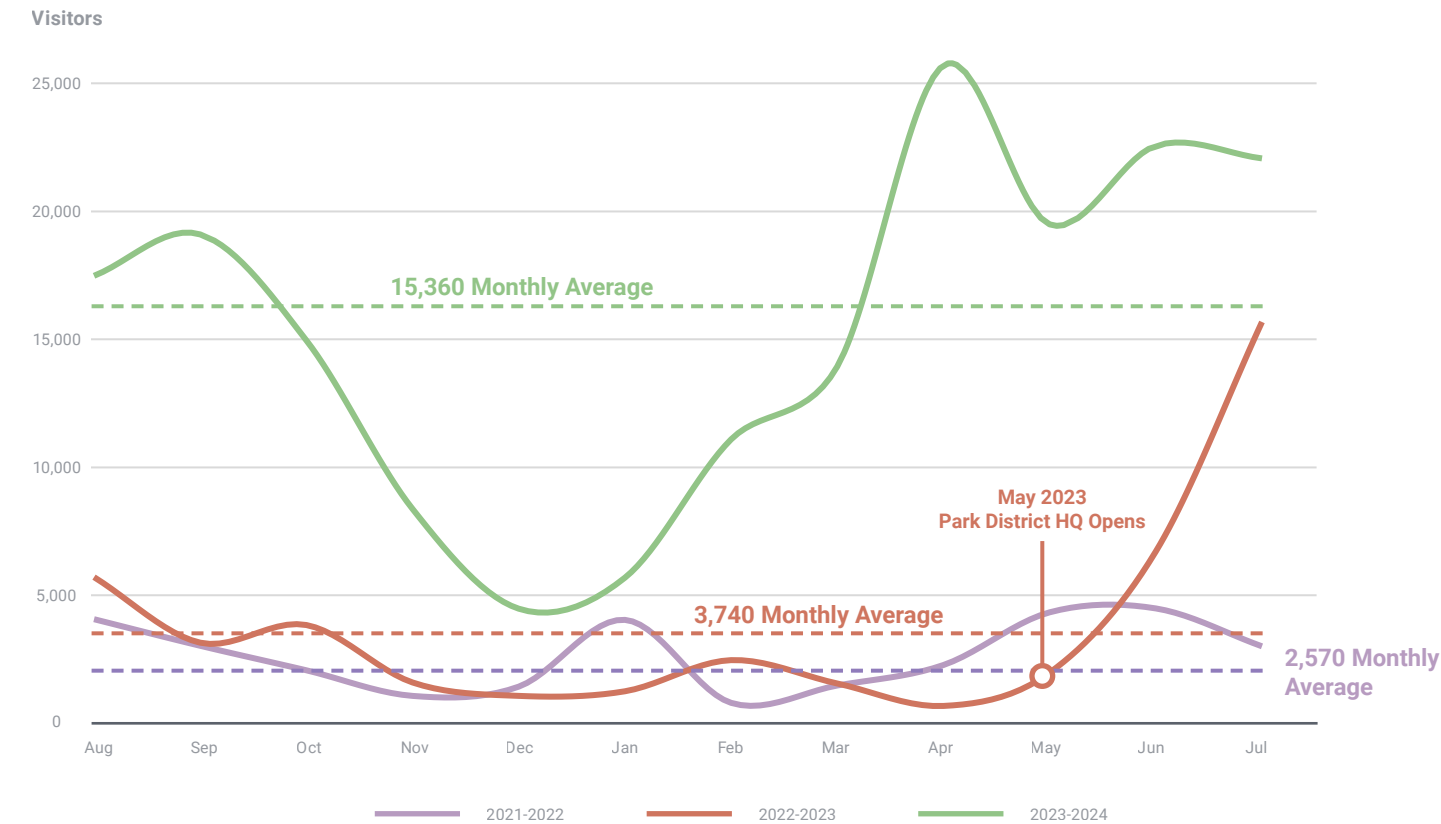
In the Industrial Corridor

- ① Park District HQ
- ② Esperanza Health Centers Brighton Park North
- ③ Esperanza Health Centers Brighton Park South
- ④ Mansueto High School
- ⑤ James Shield Middle School
- ⑥ Victoria Soto High School
- ⑦ Jovita Idar Elementary School

Near the Industrial Corridor

- ⑧ Rufino Tamayo Elementary School
- ⑨ Florence Nightingale Elementary School
- ⑩ Sawyer Elementary School
- ⑪ Solorio Academy High School
- ⑫ Curie Metropolitan High School
- ⑬ Columbia Explorers Academy
- ⑭ Donald J. Marquez Elementary School
- ⑮ Pathways Education

Seasonality of Park District HQ Visits

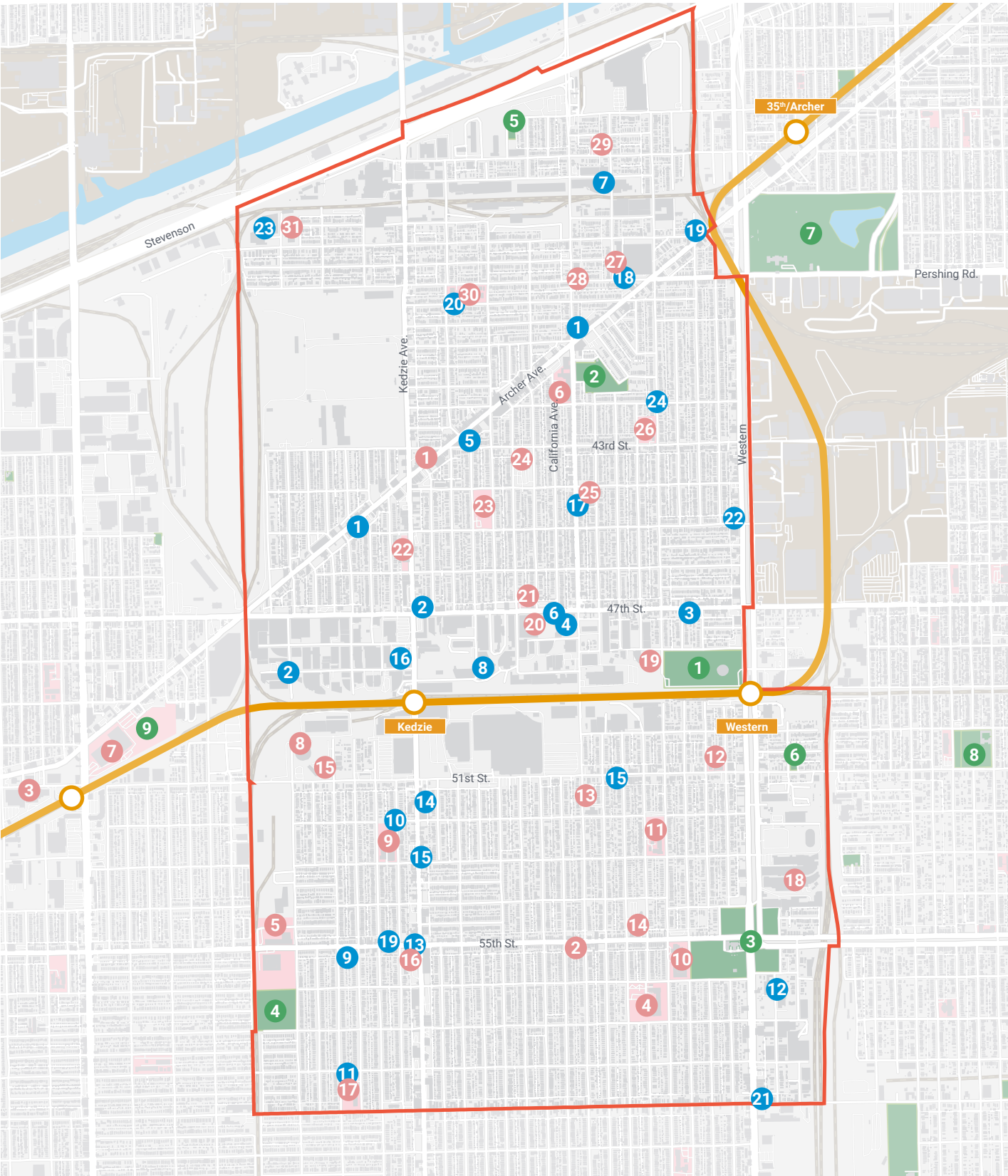


Source: SB Market Analysis Report Dec. 2024,Placer.ai





Community Assets





## Parks

- 1 Park District HQ/Brighton Park Community Campus
- 2 Kelly Park
- 3 Gage Park
- 4 Senka Park
- 5 Brighton Park
- 6 Little Venice Park
- 7 McKinley Park
- 8 Cornell Square Park
- 9 Curie Park

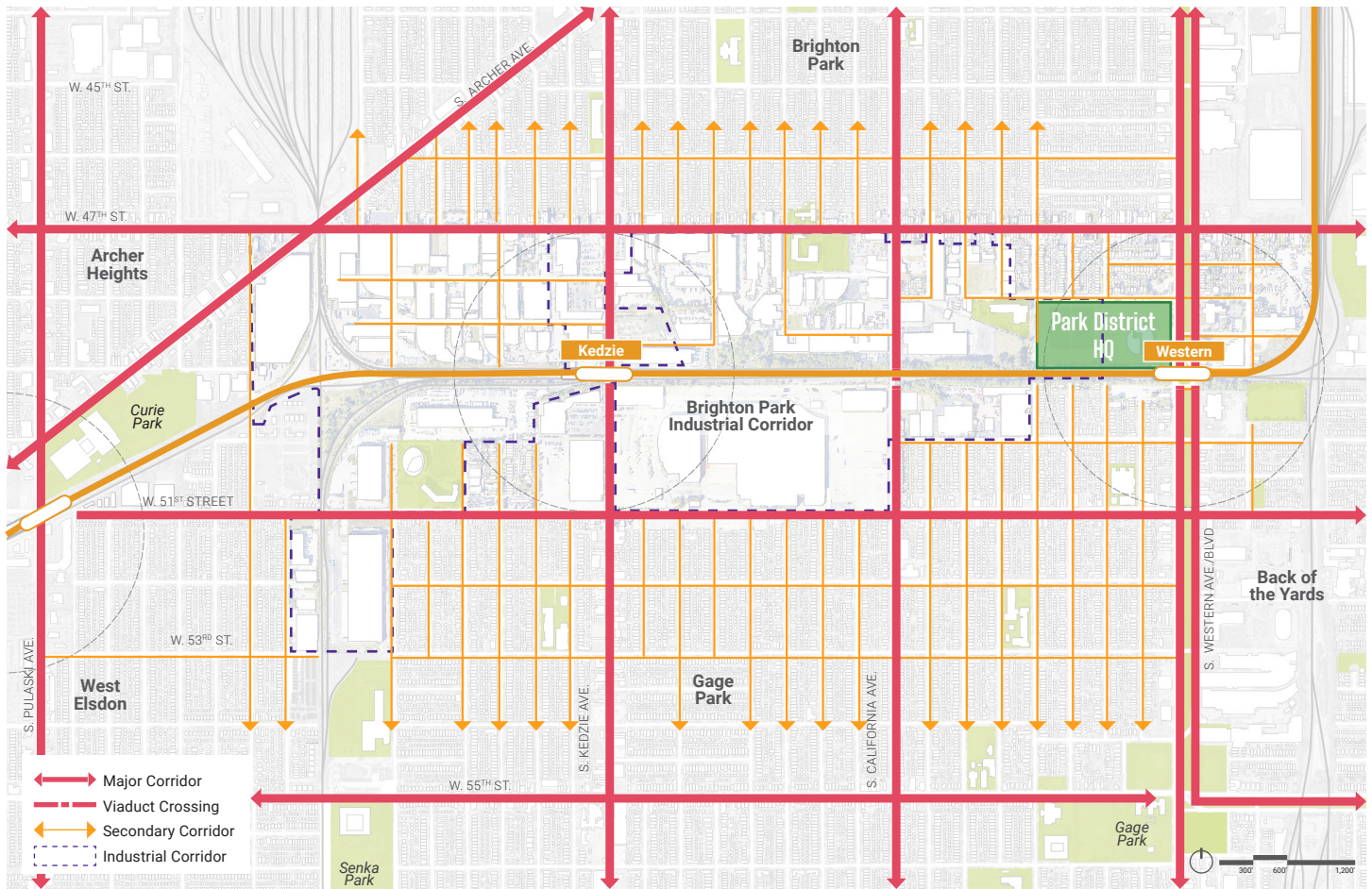
## Community Groups and Organizations

- 1 Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
- 2 SGA - Youth and Family Services
- 3 La Casa Norte
- 4 Esperanza Health Centers
- 5 Gads Hill Center
- 6 Mujeres Latinas en Acción
- 7 Center for Independence
- 8 Chicago Furniture Bank
- 9 PODER
- 10 CircEsteem
- 11 A Blessing Hand
- 12 Chicago Lithuanian Center
- 13 St. Gall Church
- 14 Frida Kahlo Community Organization
- 15 Gage Park Latinx Council
- 16 Access Health Center
- 17 Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
- 18 The Circle Resource Center
- 19 Pilsen Wellness Center
- 20 Davis health and Wellness Center
- 21 Friend Health
- 22 Healthcare Alternative Systems
- 23 Thresholds - Bridge Southwest
- 24 New Life Centers

## Institutions

- 1 Brighton Park Library Branch
- 2 Gage Park Library Branch
- 3 Archer Heights Library Branch
- 4 Gage Park High School
- 5 Solorio Academy High School
- 6 Kelly High School
- 7 Curie High School
- 8 Soto High School
- 9 Sawyer Elementary School
- 10 Carson Elementary School
- 11 Nightingale School
- 12 Christopher Elementary School
- 13 Tamayo Elementary School
- 14 Talman Elementary School
- 15 Idar Elementary School
- 16 St. Gall School
- 17 Monarcas Academy
- 18 Horizon Science Academy
- 19 James Shield Middle School
- 20 Mansueto High School
- 21 Marquez Elementary School
- 22 Columbia Explorers Academy
- 23 Gunsaulus Public School
- 24 John Paul II Catholic School
- 25 Acero Brighton Park Elementary School
- 26 Shield Elementary School
- 27 Brighton Park Elementary School
- 28 Cisneros Elementary School
- 29 Burroughs Elementary School
- 30 Davis Elementary School
- 31 Calmecca Academy

# Street Network



Industrial land use and rail infrastructure impact connectivity between Brighton Park and Gage Park by limiting north-south access. North-south access is limited to streets like Western, California and Kedzie. These streets are also main thoroughfares for all vehicles, including trucks moving to and from industrial sites.

Train tracks run east-west through the middle of the industrial zone and surround both communities. Although most tracks are elevated, ground-level tracks near residential and institutional uses impact neighborhood safety perceptions and aesthetics. Elevated tracks are traversable at viaducts on major streets. Although these viaducts provide access between neighborhoods, they are not well lit and are poorly maintained. Many residents perceiving them as unsafe.

The current land use configuration creates conflicts between industrial and nonindustrial uses. These conflicts include trucks using neighborhood streets to access major thoroughfares and industrial operations impacting the neighborhood and streetscape aesthetics. Consequently, major thoroughfares prioritize large levels of vehicular traffic instead of multi-modal use like pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.



## Street Conditions

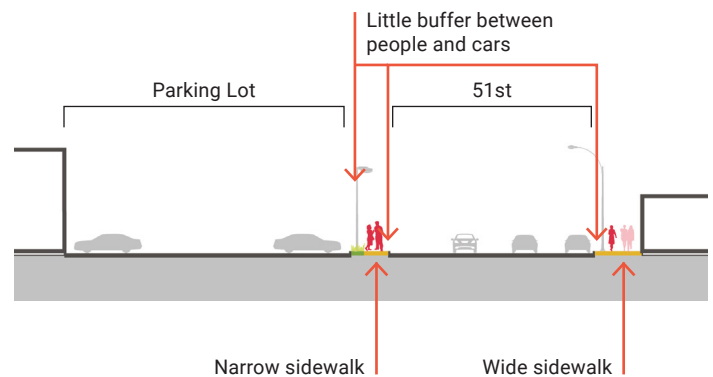
Major corridors are designed for moving trucks and vehicles quickly through the area. This creates conflicts between the vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Sidewalks are often narrow with little or no separation from travel lanes, especially near congested and industrial areas.
- Parking lots, service yards, and logistic areas lack landscape buffers.
- The Western CTA station entrance is between two four-lane thoroughfares with heavy traffic. There are no entrances or signaled crossings on the Park District HQ side of the street.
- Most train tracks sit on solid, non-traversable foundations, limiting north-south access to crossings at Western, California, and Kedzie.
- Kedzie and Western CTA stations do not provide landscaping or other beautification elements to buffer from traffic and industrial uses.
- Landscaped areas on rights-of-way are poorly maintained.

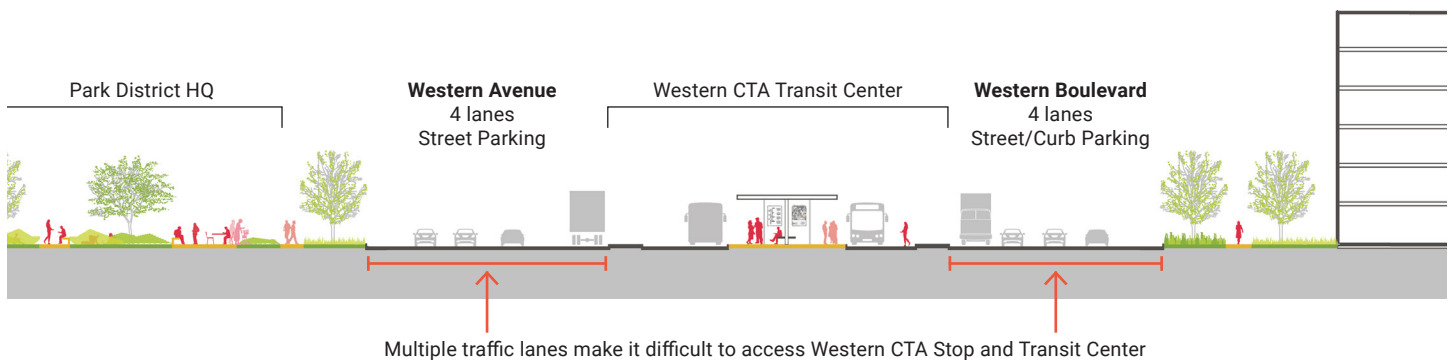
## Typical Viaduct Conditions



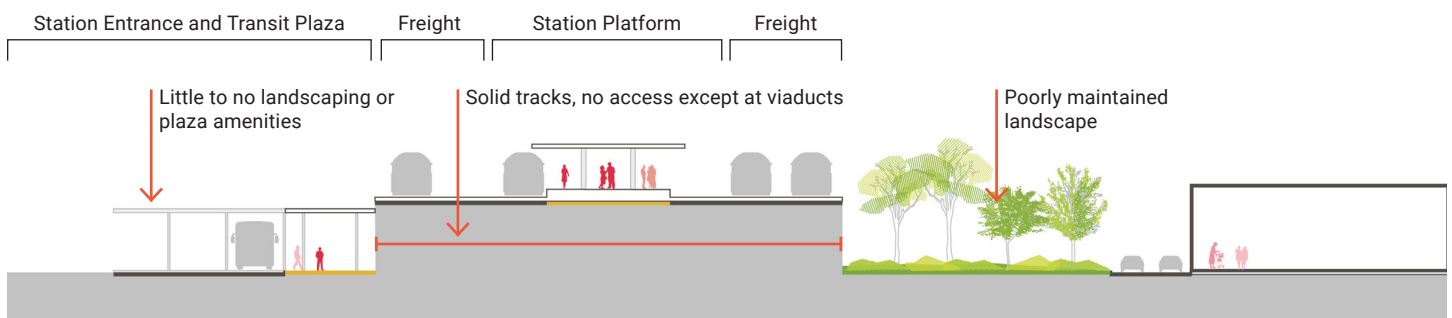
## 51st Street Typical Existing Conditions



## Western at CTA Transit Center Typical Existing Conditions

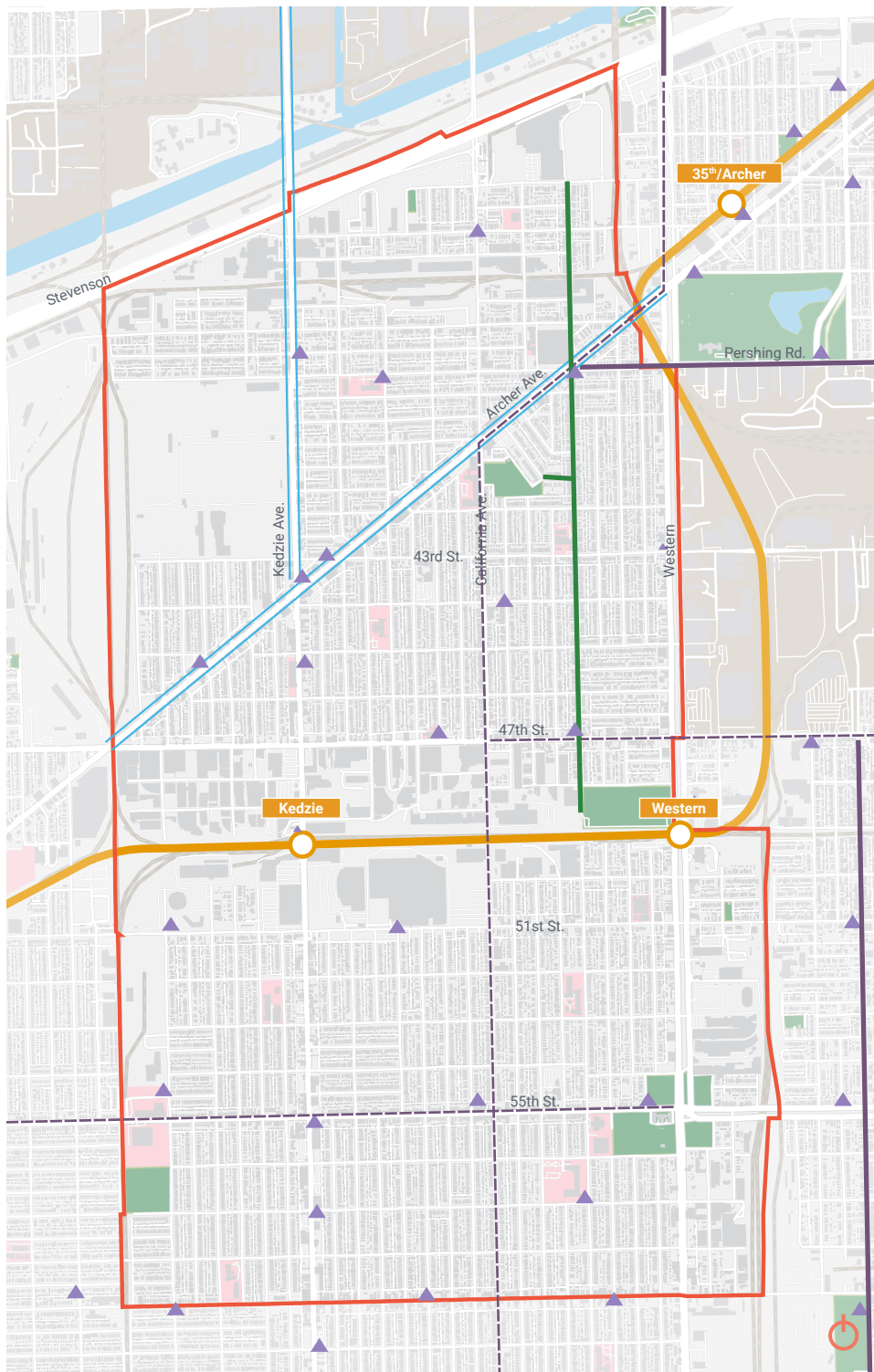


## Kedzie Orange Line Stop Embankment Typical Existing Conditions





# Bike Network








Source: City of Chicago, Chicago Cycling Strategy (2023)

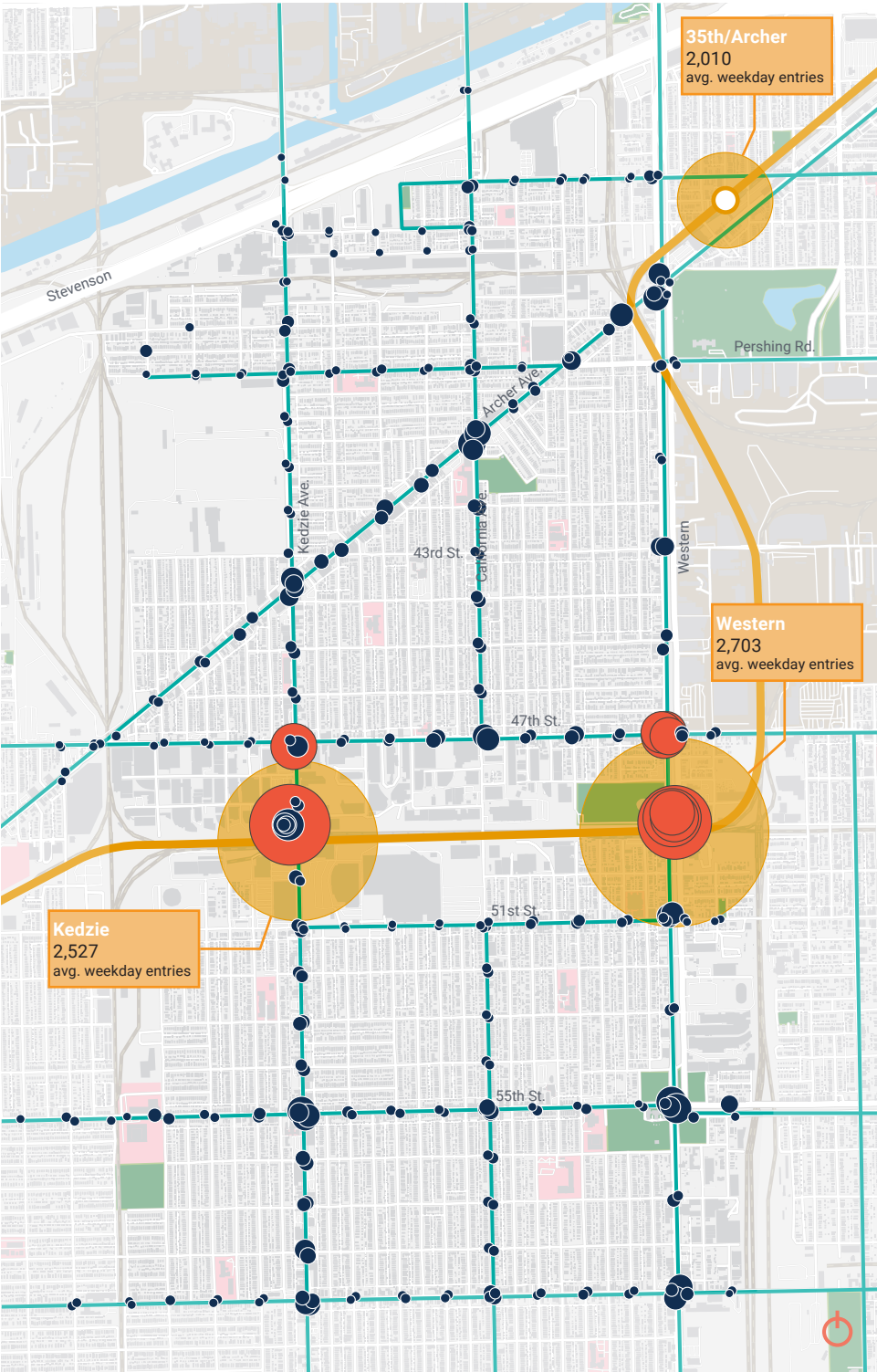
Brighton Park and Gage Park have less dedicated bike lane infrastructure compared to other community areas. Ongoing efforts to bring bike lanes to Brighton Park, Gage Park, and McKinley Park are led by CDOT through the Southwest Side Neighborhood Bike Network initiative that began in 2023.

There are signed shared bike routes on California, a portion of Archer, 47th and 55th streets. There are a few Divvy stations throughout both communities, and Brighton Park and Gage Park are neighborhood planning areas under the Chicago Cycling Strategy.

There are proposed protected bike lanes and pedestrian safety improvements planned for Archer and Kedzie, with construction expected to begin in late 2025.

-  Divvy Station
-  Signed Bike Route
-  City Proposed Bike Route
-  Rockwell Neighborhood Greenway
-  Proposed Protected Bike Lanes

# Public Transit Network



Source: City of Chicago, Ridership Date: from CTA Counts September 2024

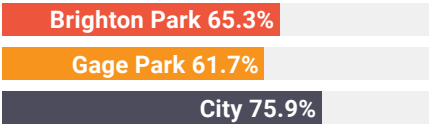
The CTA Orange Line provides direct transit service to major jobs centers at Midway Airport to the southwest and downtown Chicago to the northeast of the study area.

Large physical barriers like train tracks and industrial uses as well as the conditions of viaducts may limit connections between communities and access to transit options.

### Ease of walking to transit stop rate

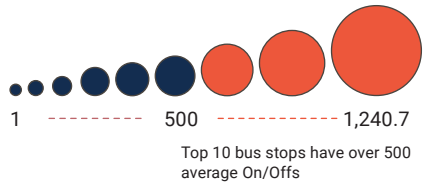
% of Adults

Percentage of adults that agree or strongly agree that it is easy to walk, scoot, or roll to a transit stop (bus, train) from their home.



### Bus Ridership

By average daily On/Offs at bus stops (September 2024)

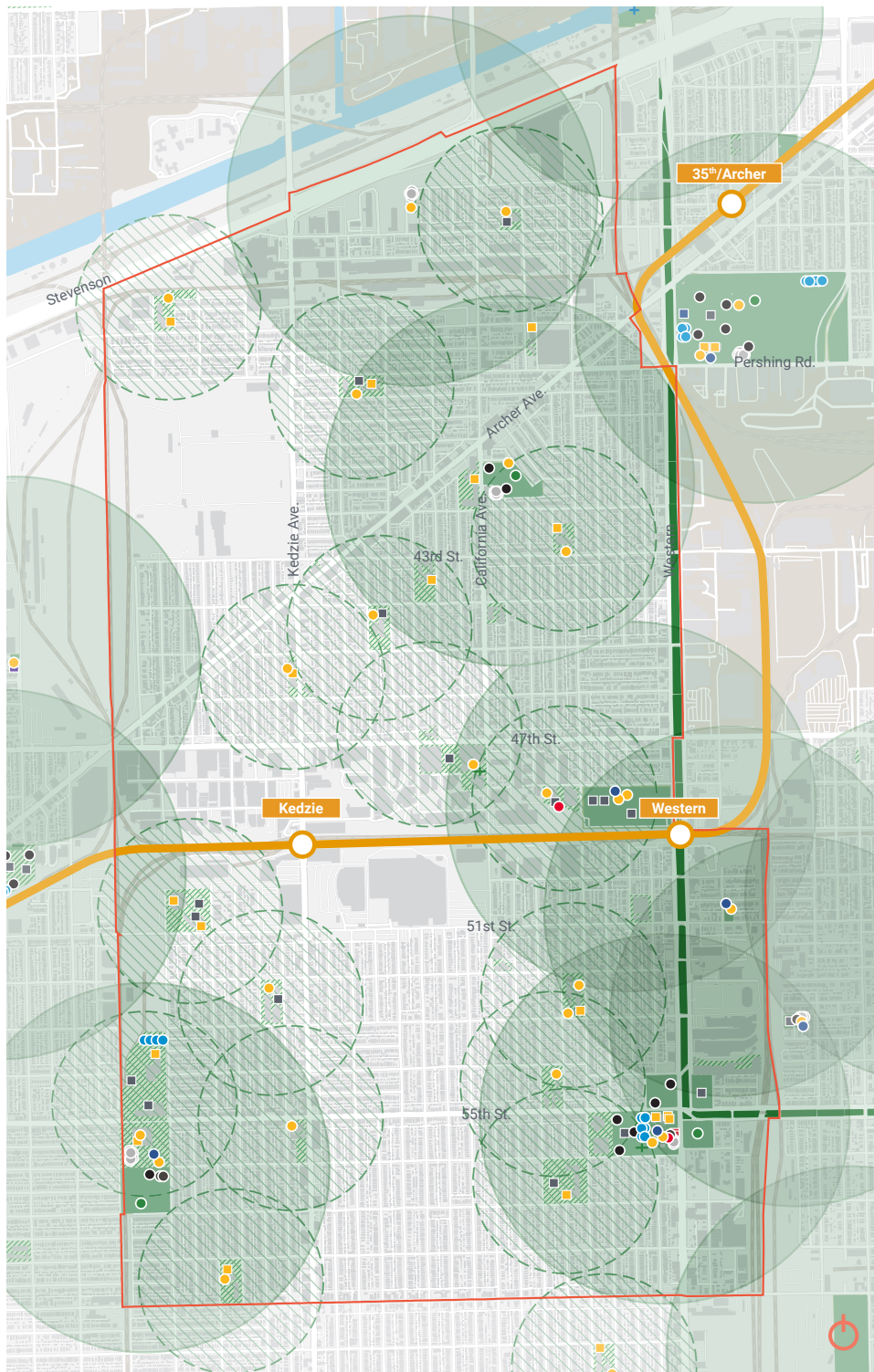


- CTA Bus Routes
- 35 - 31st/35th
- 39 - Pershing
- 94 - California\***
- 47 - 47th
- 48 - Damen
- 49 - Western\***
- 51 - 51st
- 52 - Kedzie\***
- 55 - Garfield
- 59 - 59th/61st
- 62 - Archer
- CTA Orange Line
- CTA Station

**Bold\*:** Most used bus line by On/Offs in Brighton Park and Gage Park.



# Open Space Amenities



The City of Chicago goal is to provide two acres of open space per 1,000 residents. As of 2024, Brighton Park has about one acre per 1,000 residents while Gage Park has 1.70 acres per 1,000 residents. Large community parks include Gage, Senka, Kelly, McKinley and the new Brighton Park Community Campus at the Park District HQ. Local schools also provide some open space amenities, but many residents may still be more than a ten-minute walk from these spaces. The goal of the 10-minute walk metric is for Chicago residents to be within ½ mile or a 10-minute walk to open space. The 10-minute walk goal is achieved in the Brighton Park and Gage Park community areas.

## Legend

- Parks
- CPS Playground/Fields/Facilities
- Boulevard
- 10-minute Walk from Park
- 5-minute Walk from School Grounds
- Aquatic Play/Splash/Spray
- Playground
- Running Track
- Volleyball Court
- Tennis Court
- Turf Field
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Basketball Court
- Boat Launch
- Community Garden
- Field
- Gym or Fitness Facility
- Handball/Racket Court
- Ice skating Rink
- Sport Roller Court

Source: City of Chicago, Chicago Park District 2017 Master Plan



# Chicago Park District Headquarters



## Brighton Park Community Campus

The new Park District HQ and the Brighton Park Community Campus officially opened in May 2023. The park provides 17 acres of open space and a field house. The field house is equipped with a gymnasium, fitness center, bathrooms, locker rooms, teen center, community multi-purpose rooms, and a terrace. Outdoor features include two athletic fields, a flex lawn, playground, splash pad, nature play space, walkways, and natural area with native landscape.

The new park activates a previously vacant industrial site, provides a new open space centrally located between three community areas, and is accessible via the CTA Orange Line and various bus lines. The Park District HQ relocated to this location along with over 200 administrative staff.

The park provides local residents with spaces for a variety of community events, programs, activities, and services. The park has hosted seasonal events, festivals, community meetings, and other events.

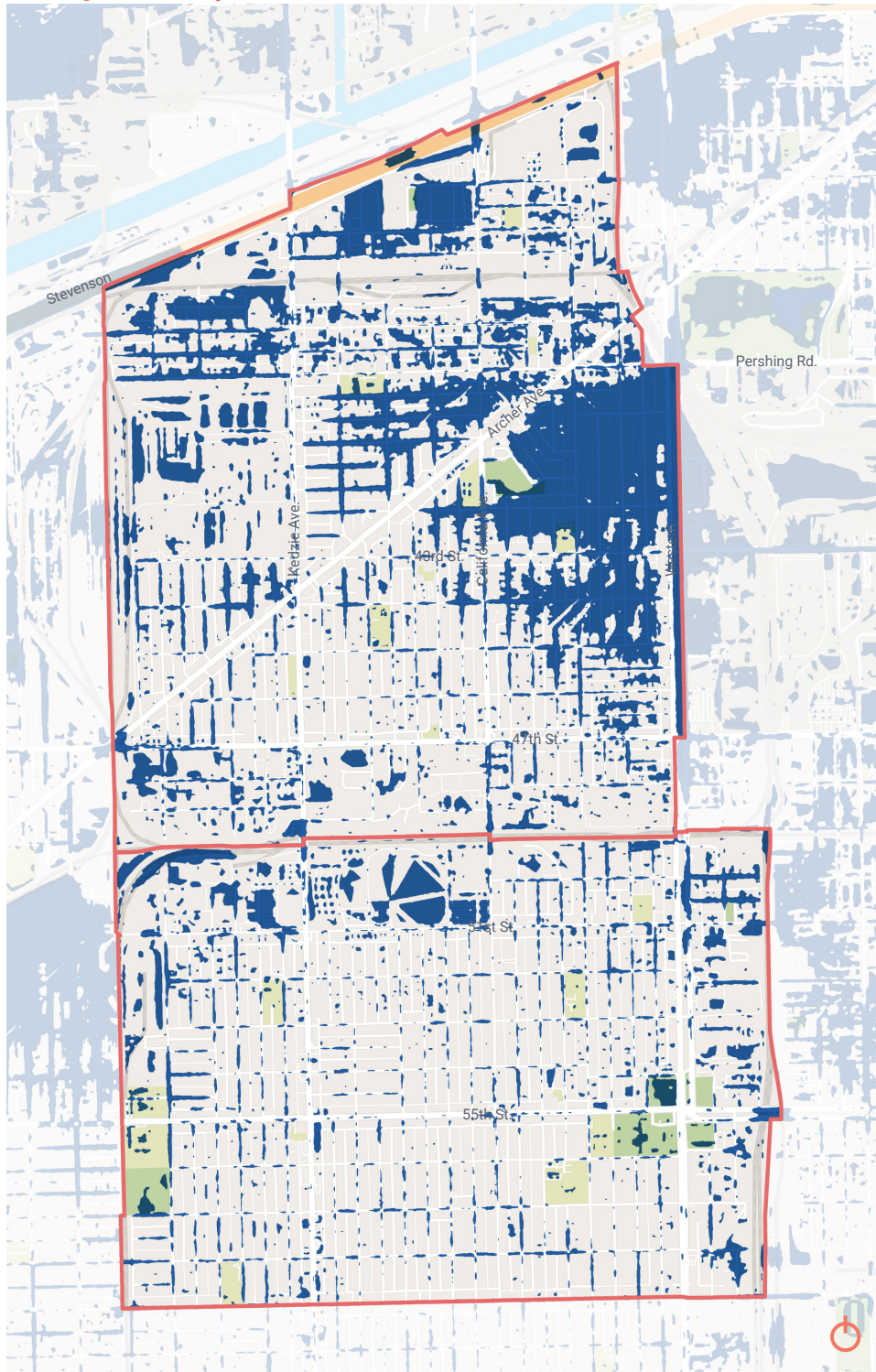
Since opening, the park has increased the average monthly visitors to the area from 2,500 in 2021 to over 15,000 in 2024.





# Environment

## Flooding Vulnerability



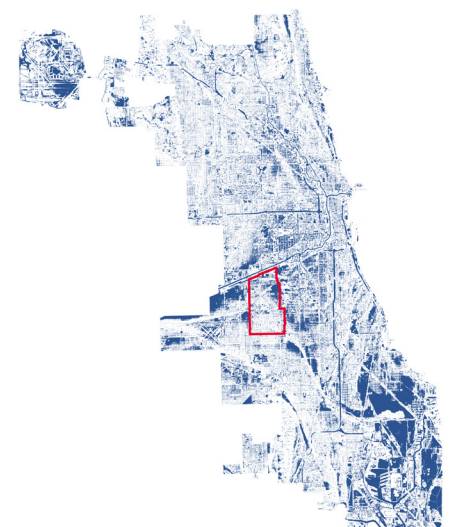
The number of impermeable surfaces on the Southwest Side and Chicago's flat topography make flooding problems a constant threat after heavy storms. This can lead to financial and infrastructure problems to those impacted. The map highlights areas with the highest topographic wetness index (TWI). The index helps identify rainfall runoff patterns, areas of potential increased soil moisture, and ponding areas. When large storm events occur, impervious surfaces contribute to stormwater accumulation and these areas have a higher potential for accumulation and flooding.

**Please note:** Map does not consider storm sewers or other draining infrastructure. For illustrative purposes only.

### Legend

- Topographic Wetness Index (TWI) Area
- Study Area

### Citywide

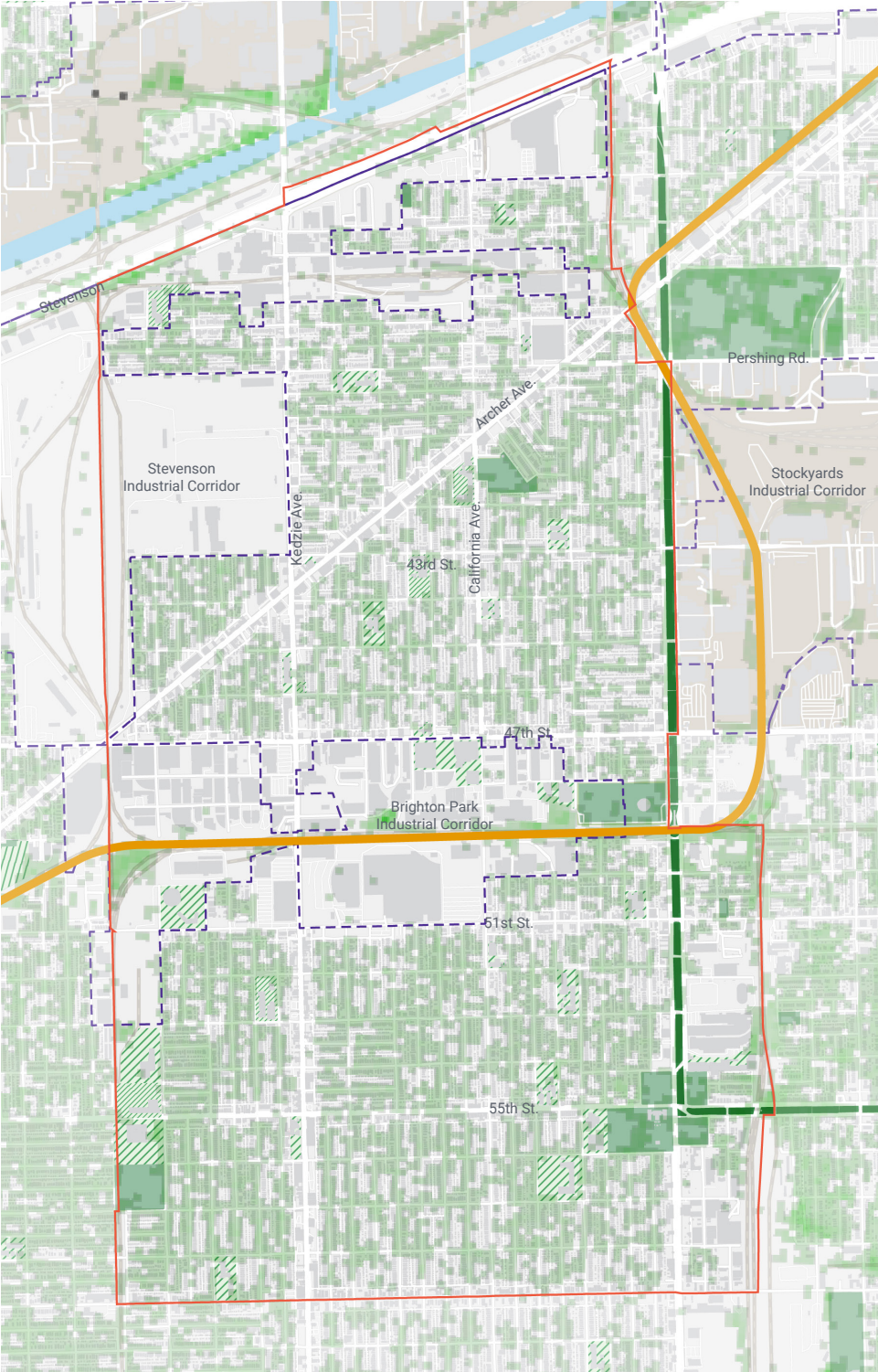


For additional information, see Appendix III. Multifunctional Landscapes.

Source: University of Illinois, Illinois State Water Survey, FEMA, Illinois Department of Natural Resources



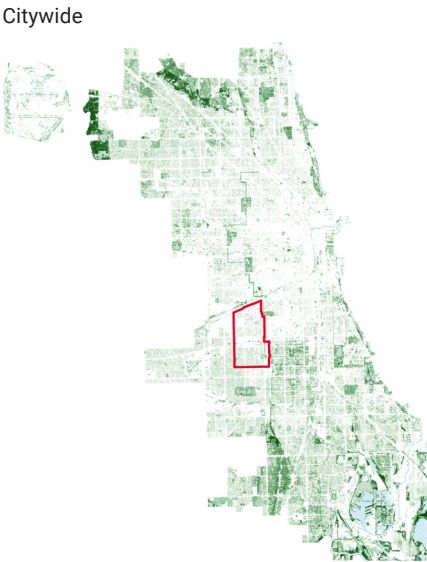
Tree Canopy and Landscape Coverage



Brighton Park and Gage Park have a tree canopy that is about 30% smaller than the city average. Brighton Park has a smaller tree canopy and less landscaping than Gage Park due to the amount of land dedicated to industrial and freight uses and the limited availability of open space.

- Legend**
- Boulevard
  - Existing Tree Canopy
  - Landscape Areas
  - Study Area

**Please note:** This map is for illustrative purposes only.

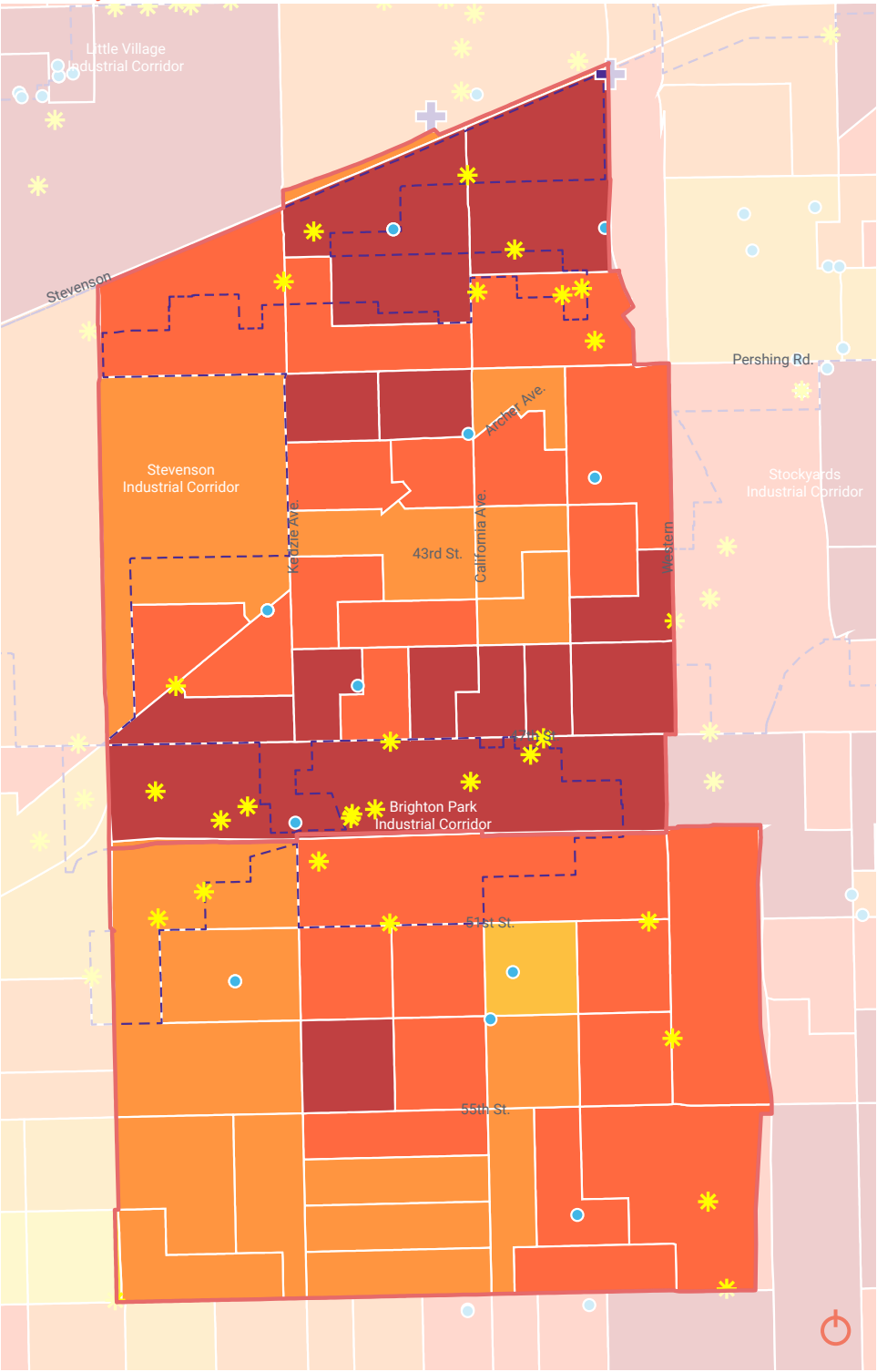


For additional information, see Appendix III. Multifunctional Landscapes.

Source: National Land Cover Database (NLCD), USGS NLCD Tree Canopy Cover, City of Chicago



Air Quality



Communities on the Southwest Side suffer from lower air quality compared to the rest of the city. The amount of industrial uses, freight traffic, and lack of landscaping contribute to these impacts.

The Air Quality Health Index by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) considers: Pollution Burden (Air Pollution by estimated concentrations of outdoor pollutants, Polluted Sites) and Population Characteristics (Health Factors by characteristics that make people more likely to experience adverse health impacts and Social Factors like socioeconomic vulnerability). Scores range 1 (best) to 9 (worst).

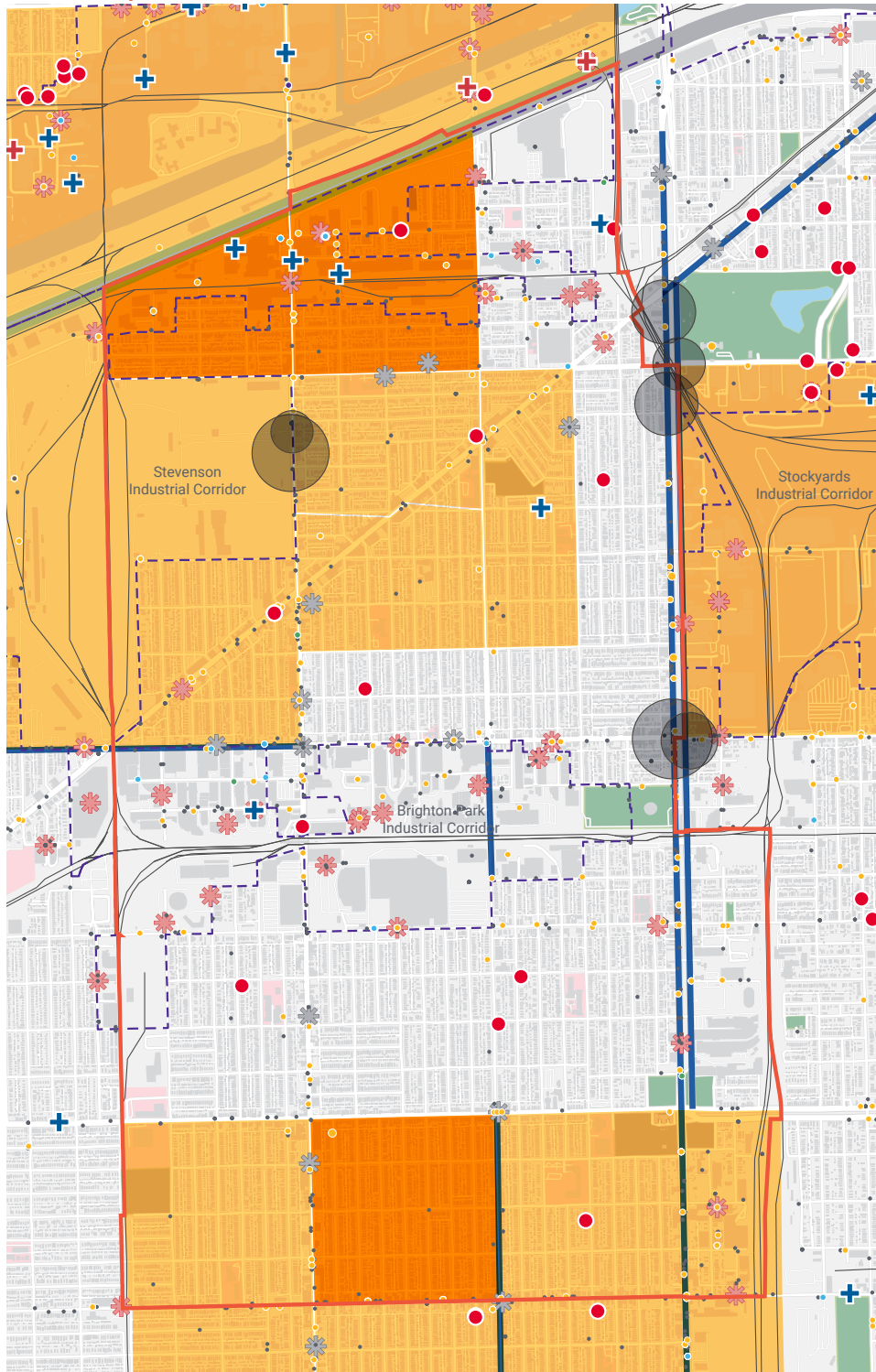
Legend

- 6th Percentile
  - 7th Percentile
  - 8th Percentile
  - 9th Percentile
  - Air Quality Complaint
  - Air Pollution Control Permits  
General Pollution Prevention (P2)  
*Moderate to Intensive Uses*
- This refers to a facility with regulated equipment or regulated area as set forth in the Chicago Municipal Code, regardless of size of the facility nor the amount of the air contaminant. In general, a piece of regulated equipment or regulated area is one that has a potential to emit any air contaminant into the atmosphere.

For additional information, see Appendix III. Multifunctional Landscapes.

Source: City of Chicago (Current as of August 2024, only “open” permits are illustrated)

## Pollution Impacts



### Areas impacted by high levels of PM2.5 during peak summer conditions

Particulate matter (PM2.5) can be small solid particles or liquid droplets found in the air. These particles can be found in the air through dust or pollen and produced by car emissions, industrial activity, and burning fossil fuels. Exposure to high levels of PM2.5 can cause detrimental health issues like poor conditions of asthma and other health problems. Brighton Park is impacted by high levels of PM2.5 compared to other parts of the City.

- 11.00-11.99
- > 12.00

### Infrastructure

- Highway
- IDOT Road
- Rail

### Permits

- Air Pollution Control Less Intensive
- Air Pollution Control Moderate to Intensive Uses
- Waste Handling
- Recycling Facility

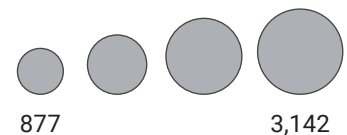
### Storage Tanks

- Fuel or Petroleum Products
- Chemicals
- Empty or Abandoned
- Unknown

### Environmental Complaints

- Air Quality Complaint

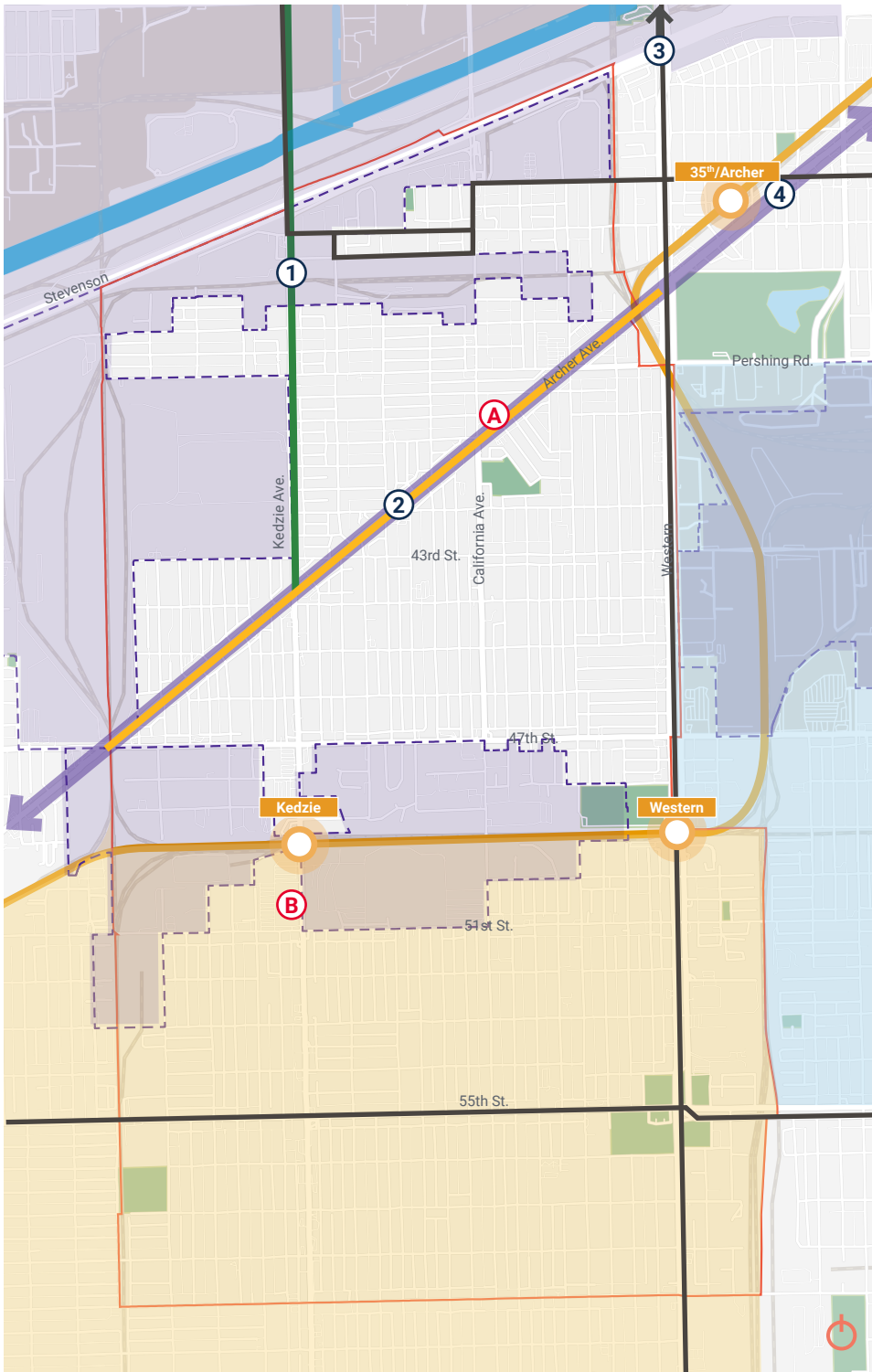
### Truck and Buses count per day



Source: City of Chicago (Current as of August 2024, only "open" permits are illustrated), University of Chicago, CNT, LVEJO, Truck Count Data 2023

For additional information, see Appendix III. Multifunctional Landscapes.

# Current Plans and Developments



Source: City of Chicago

For additional information, see Appendix V. Terms and Planning Resources.

## Plans Completed by Planning Partners

- Back of the Yards Forward Quality of Life Plan (LISC - 2014)
- Chicago Southwest Quality of Life Plan (LISC - 2018)
- ON TO 2050 (Regionwide - CMAP 2022, Chicagoland Plan)

## City of Chicago Plans

- Transit Friendly Development Guide (2009)
- Corridors of Industrial Opportunity: A Plan for Industry in Chicago (2014)
- Chicago River Design Guidelines (2019)
- We Will (Citywide Plan, 2023)
- Better Streets for Buses Plan (2023)

## Ongoing Strategies - Citywide

- Vision Zero Action Plan (2017)
- CDOT Strategic Plan (2021)
- Chicago Cycling Strategy (2023)

## Initiatives Pipeline

- ① Kedzie from 31st to Archer Safety Improvements (2024-Ongoing)
- ② Archer from 47th to Western Safety Improvements (2024-Ongoing)
- ③ Western [Bridge] Safety Improvement Plan (2024-Ongoing)
- ④ Moving Archer Forward: Archer Avenue Corridor Study (TBD 2025)

## New and Future Developments

- Ⓐ Brighton Park Neighborhood Network Service Center (In construction, 2024-Ongoing)
- Ⓑ Discount Mega Mall, Gage Park (Opened 2025)



3

# Community Engagement

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# The Community Engagement Process

## Learning from the Community

The focus of *Stitching It Together* is to improve connections to the new Park District HQ. Through the initial engagement process, it became apparent that the study needed to expand to provide a broader framework for future work in the area. The feedback shared by participants shaped action items addressing housing affordability, safer streets and the public realm, health and the environment, community programming, economic opportunity, and neighborhood beautification.

The community engagement process included the following elements:

- **Targeted Interviews**  
Interviews with community organizations provided a foundation for understanding these communities, and generated ideas on how to engage with the community more broadly. The team met with these groups periodically to debrief and collaborate on other engagement opportunities.
- **Community Advisory Group**  
A Community Advisory Group (CAG) was established and consisted of community representatives and key implementation partners, including community organizations, businesses, City departments and sister agencies. This group provided guidance on ongoing work, helped to ground-truth priorities, and distributed project updates to their networks.
- **Community Open Houses, Work Sessions, Surveys and Pop-Up Resource Tables**  
A series of events provided opportunities to engage with the community and share information about the plan, capture feedback, and connect with residents. Work sessions provided an opportunity to address more granular ideas and specific locations that needed attention. Surveys provided community members who were unable to attend scheduled events an opportunity to contribute their feedback.

Touch points with community members allowed findings and action items to continually evolve during the study.

## Pre-Engagement Session

Gage Park Trunk-or-Treat  
**Pop-Up**

**Fall 2023**

## Engagement Session #1

Interviews with 12th, 14th,  
15th Wards, SGA, Brighton  
Park Neighborhood  
Council, Back of the Yards  
Neighborhood Council  
**Community Interviews**

**Winter 2024**

**March 5th, 2024**

Open House #1  
**Community Open House**

**Community Advisory Group  
Meeting #1**

Issues and Concerns  
**Survey**

Kickbacks - Brighton Park

**Pop-Up**

Kickbacks - Gage Park

**Pop-Up**

## Engagement Session #2

**Spring-Summer 2024**

**May 29th, 2024**

Open House #2  
**Community Open House**

**Community Advisory Group  
Meeting #2**

Priorities and Preferences  
**Survey**

Kickbacks - Brighton Park

**Pop-Up**

Esperanza: Sabor y Salud  
**Pop-Up**

Business Stakeholders  
**Survey**

Back to School Fiestas

Gunsaulus School

Senka Park

**Pop-Up**

Sawyer Block Party  
**Pop-Up**

Back to School Fiesta

Columbia Explorers Academy

**Pop-Up**

Southwest Senior Center  
End of Summer Fiesta  
**Pop-Up**

## Engagement Session #3

**Fall 2024**

**October 10th/13th, 2024**

Community Exhibition  
**Community Open House**

**Community Advisory Group  
Meeting #3**

Park District HQ:  
Trunk-or-Treat

**Pop-Up**

PODER: Trunk-or-Treat  
**Pop-Up**

Fall Kermes at Kelly HS  
**Pop-Up**

Brighton Park Neighborhood  
Network  
**Community Advisory Group**

Solorio Student Voice  
Committee

**Workshop**



### Community Advisory Group and Affiliates

The following organizations were invited to participate in the Community Advisory Group:

**Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council**

Community Organization, Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) Delegate Agency for the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor

**Bridgewater Studio**

Local Business

**Brisas del Mar**

Local Business

**Chicago Department of Transportation**

City Government

**Chicago Park District**

City Sister Agency

**Chicago Public Library**

City Sister Agency

**Department of Planning and Development**

City Government

**Esperanza Health Centers**

Community Organization

**PODER**

Community Organization

**SGA-Youth and Family Services**

Community Organization

**Southwest Collective**

Community Organization

**Sputnik Coffee Roasters**

Local Business

Other organizations that contributed to the community engagement process include: Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, CircEsteem, Increase the Peace, and Mujeres Latinas en Accion. Other City departments included: Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS), Department of Environment (DOE), and Department of Housing (DOH).

### Engagement Flow



# STITCHING IT TOGETHER



# Community Engagement Summary

The following provides a high-level summary of the community engagement process for *Stitching It Together*.

## Community Engagement Session #1

March 5th, 2024

Session #1 focused on introducing the planning study and listening to the visions, hopes, concerns, priorities and needs of community members. During this session, about 80% of all participants were young adults.

### Key Takeaways

Residents value the places they gather like Senka Park and the Gage Park library, the programming and services offered by community partners and relevant City agencies, but existing assets are at or near capacity. Residents would like to see more open space programming that offers space for activities like community gardening, urban agriculture and recreation, as well as services that consider the needs of multi-generational families, especially youth and seniors.

Some existing community assets are difficult to access due to infrastructure barriers between neighborhoods. Connections between different spaces are limited by traffic patterns, public realm challenges, availability of multi-modal transit options, and the need for pedestrian safety features on major corridors. Lack of maintenance along rail infrastructure has negative impacts while underutilized industrial spaces contribute to a perception that the area is unsafe.

Community members suggested vacant and underutilized lots should be re-imagined to provide new housing options to offset housing costs, expand the capacity of community assets, and offer opportunities to create gathering spaces like pocket plazas or parks.

Community members would like to see more economic opportunities that provide job training, workforce development, access to capital, educational and wealth-building resources. Commercial corridors are a large source of job opportunities in the neighborhood. These corridors could benefit from more public realm investment and targeted financial incentives that address the needs of existing small businesses. In addition, community members would like to see vacant storefronts activated and consideration given to street vendors and peddlers. The industrial corridor is seen as a vital job center, but there are concerns related to its impact and the pollution generated by truck traffic, especially near community assets and residential areas.

## Community Engagement Session #2

May 29th, 2024

Session #2 explored the priorities and opportunities shared by community members. A set of preliminary action items were generated based on the feedback received during the Community Engagement Session #1. A total of more than 200 surveys were completed by individuals and households.

### Key Takeaways

The following priorities and preliminary action items were identified:

### Housing Options

**Top Priorities:** Homeownership support, neighborhood amenities, units for multi-generational households

### Open Space and Beautification

**Top Priorities:** Improve parks and open space maintenance, public art and neighborhood beautification, new open spaces

### Safe Streets and Community Spaces

**Top Priorities:** Traffic calming improvements, safer intersections, activate vacant or underutilized lots, welcoming spaces, infrastructure maintenance

### Health and Environmental Justice

**Top Priorities:** Healthcare and wellness support, exercise and recreation, policy and environmental regulation

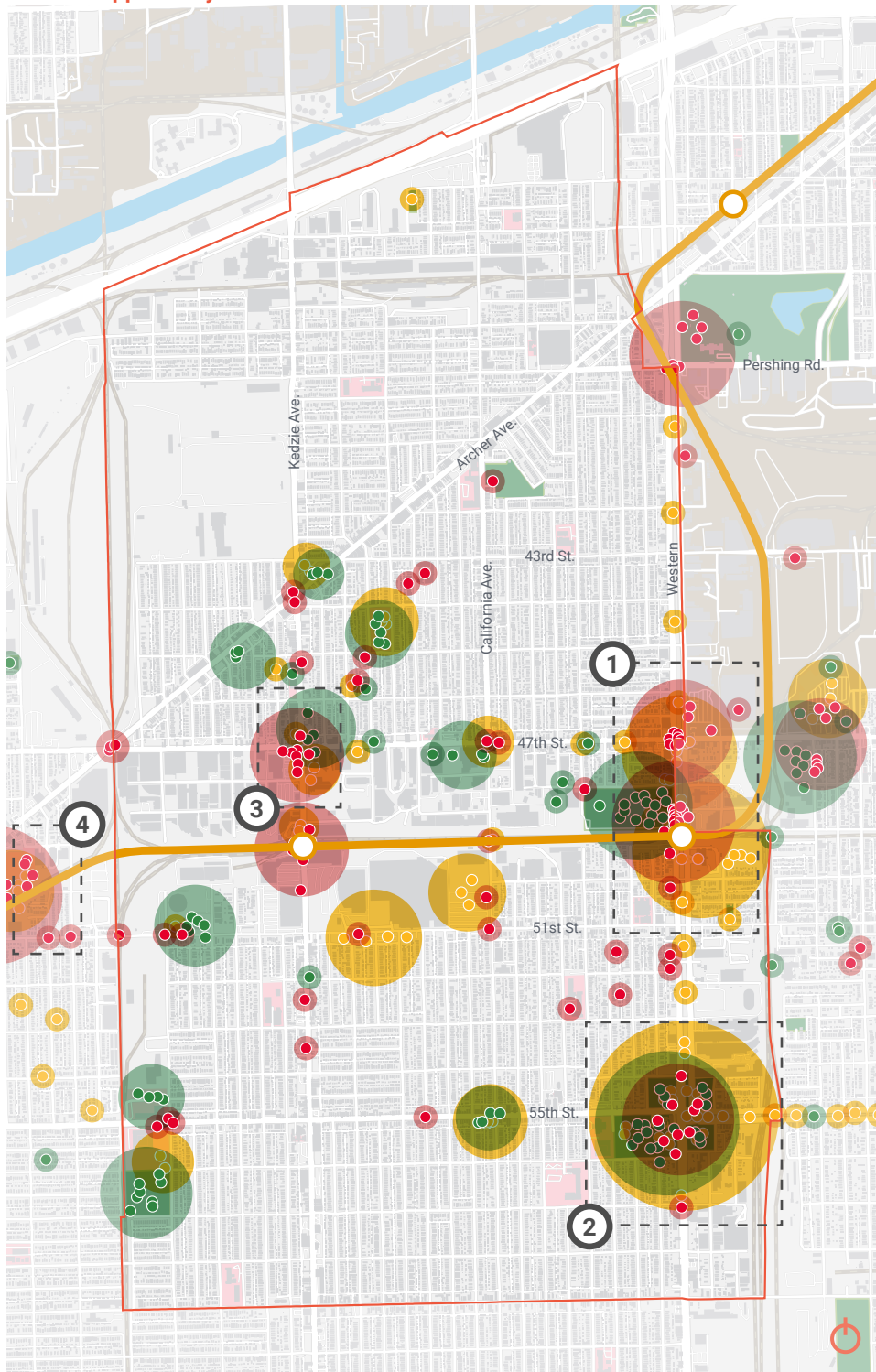
### Economic Development and Opportunity

**Top Priorities:** Workforce development, sustainability guidance, financial incentives

### Community Programming for All

**Top Priorities:** Elderly and youth services, celebrating culture heritage, community facilities, learning and skills development, recreation and wellness opportunities

## Areas of Opportunity and Concern



- **Favorite Places**  
Places the community enjoys and values.
- **Potential for Change**  
Places with the potential for change, new development, or for the provision of new amenities.
- **Challenging Places**  
Places that need attention, maintenance, or feel unsafe.

Community members identified important and challenging places in the community. This map highlights the largest concentrations for each category with specific areas receiving the most stickers and notes:

- 1 Western-Park District HQ**  
The new Park District HQ is well-liked but access to the CTA station is difficult and many pedestrians jaywalk across Western.
- 2 Gage Park**  
Gage Park is an important open space for the community. Increased park programming, continued maintenance, and safety are some of the community priorities for this space.
- 3 47th Street / Kedzie Avenue**  
There is a constant presence of truck traffic and crossings can be difficult for pedestrians. There are noticeable tire marks on sidewalks from truck turning maneuvers.
- 4 51st Street / Curie Park**  
The community would like to see pedestrian improvements near Curie High School. This area is challenging to cross due to the traffic on Pulaski, one-way streets, and nearby rail infrastructure.



### Community Engagement Session #3

October 10th/13th, 2024

In session #3, the team shared the feedback received throughout the course of the engagement process, presented the priorities and draft action items, and invited community members to share feedback and suggest areas where particular action items could be applied.

### What Should the City Do First?

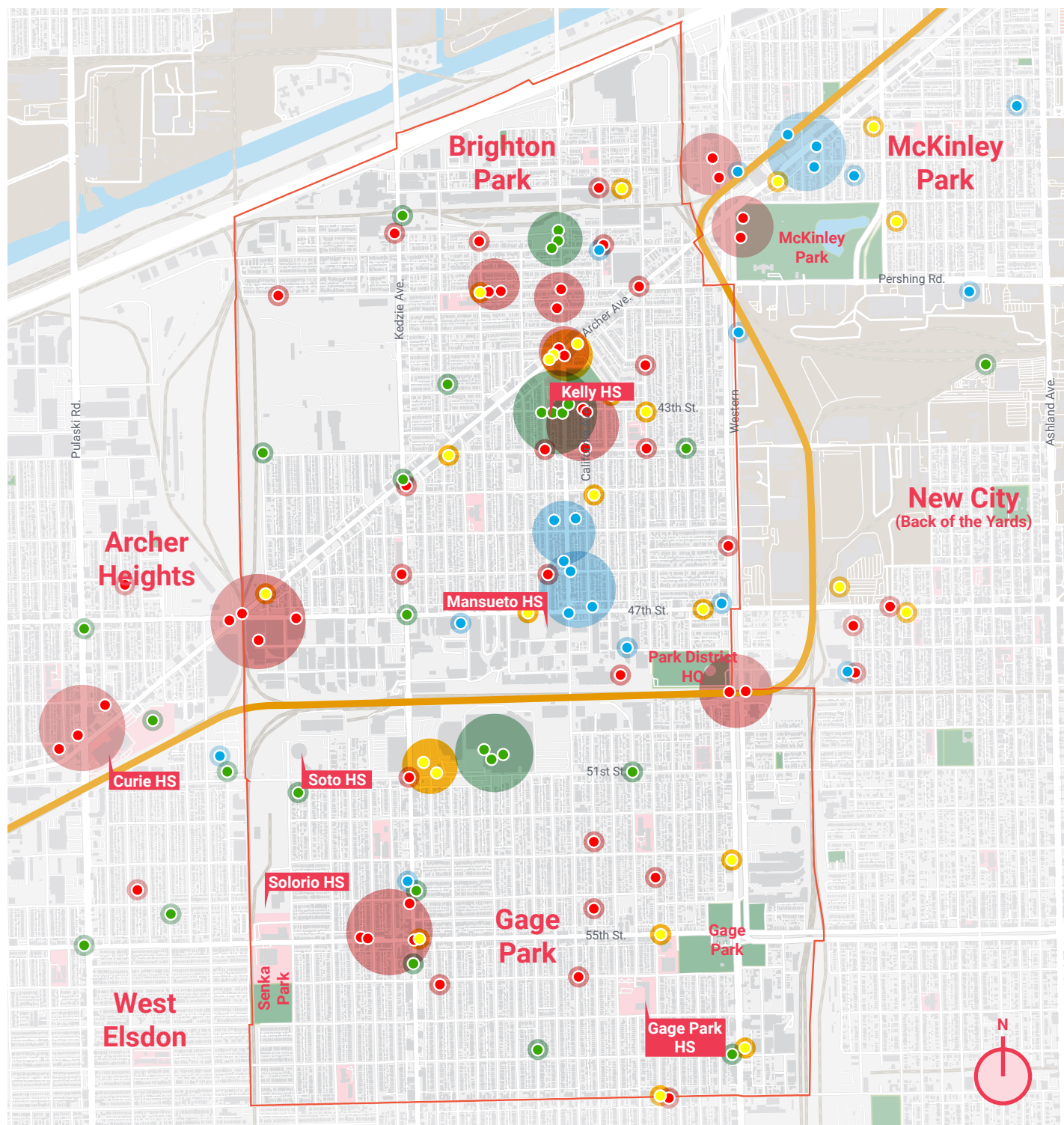
Community members shared their thoughts and ideas on what the City should target first, and what services, facilities, amenities and programming are missing in the community.

- Support programming, especially for youth, teens and women that focus on education, health, and community activities like cultural heritage.
- Provide community spaces like more parks and a new Gage Park Library.
- Encourage new developments to include recreation areas, open spaces, health services and vet clinics, and other community spaces that provide amenities and services.
- Embed police presence in the neighborhood and include different types of patrols like on foot and bike.
- Improve emergency service response times.
- Incorporate pedestrian safety improvements along streets and crosswalks, especially near community assets, transit stops, and major streets like Western and California.
- Prioritize repairs and maintenance for vital city infrastructure like roads and viaducts.
- Enforce maintenance regulations for underutilized rail infrastructure, industrial, and vacant and underutilized lots.
- Strategize ways to improve circulation patterns around the neighborhood, especially addressing congestion, parking and traffic on major corridors.
- Regulate environmental issues that impact air quality and flooding.
- Find ways to bring missing amenities in the community and promote business development along major corridors.





## Where and What?



Community members shared their ideas on locations that need attention and recommended places for new development.

- What parts of your community need better maintenance, attention, or pedestrian safety improvements?
- Where should the city consider more housing options like apartments and duplexes?
- I would like to see more art/cultural features or amenities (coffee shops, restaurants, stores) here...
- I would like to see more public spaces like parks, plazas, and spaces to hang out (indoors or outdoors) here...

# What We Heard

From Community Session #1

There are too many trucks

Increase park space and park programming

[The Gage Park] Library needs improvements [like increased capacity]

Promote community resources

Youth programs are at capacity

Increase foot traffic in commercial corridors

[There are too many cars. There needs to be more...] strategic parking or limit cars per household

[The community needs] more multi-generational spaces and programming

Increase the tree canopy

Restrict truck traffic from the residential areas

Expand senior services and programming

Expand places to gather

[We should reimagine vacant land along rail corridors as] greenways on rails lines

[Community spaces for programs are at capacity. We] need safe spaces for youth and families

CTA train stations feel dark and unsafe

Improve pedestrian crossings

Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure

Community spaces need safe street crossings and transit access

Drivers are too aggressive

THINK LESS about the cars AND MORE about people using CTA, Biking, and walking

Expand and maintain park spaces

Existing community spaces are at capacity

[We need services for the unhoused that] provide services, opportunities, and safe spaces

[Provide spaces for] markets for peddlers, street vendors, and creators

Better sidewalks near schools and public spaces

Take care of the parks like Senka and Gage Parks

[We need better] mental health services for everyone

More crossing guards near schools and mass transit

Retail opportunities!

Maintain L stations and bus stops better

## Community Thoughts and Aspirations

From Community Session #1

### Today My Neighborhood Is...

- Full of potential
- People who care
- Needs color, trees, and green space
- Feels unsafe, polluted, congested, noisy because of trucks and traffic
- In dire need of school programs
- Inaccessible to pedestrians
- Needs improved infrastructure and facilities to keep it clean
- Divided

### Tomorrow My Neighborhood Will Be...

- Beautiful, vibrant, and prosperous
- Full of parks, green spaces and bike paths
- Cleaner and safer
- Walkable and accessible for all
- Offers more programs, classes, and opportunities
- Has the same amenities and features of the north side neighborhoods
- Healthy and environmentally friendly
- Successful
- Filled with educational and art programs

For additional information, see Appendix IV. Additional Community Engagement Exhibits.

## Community Engagement Summary by the Numbers







# 4

## A Planning Framework

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# Realizing a Vision

## Stitching the Community Components

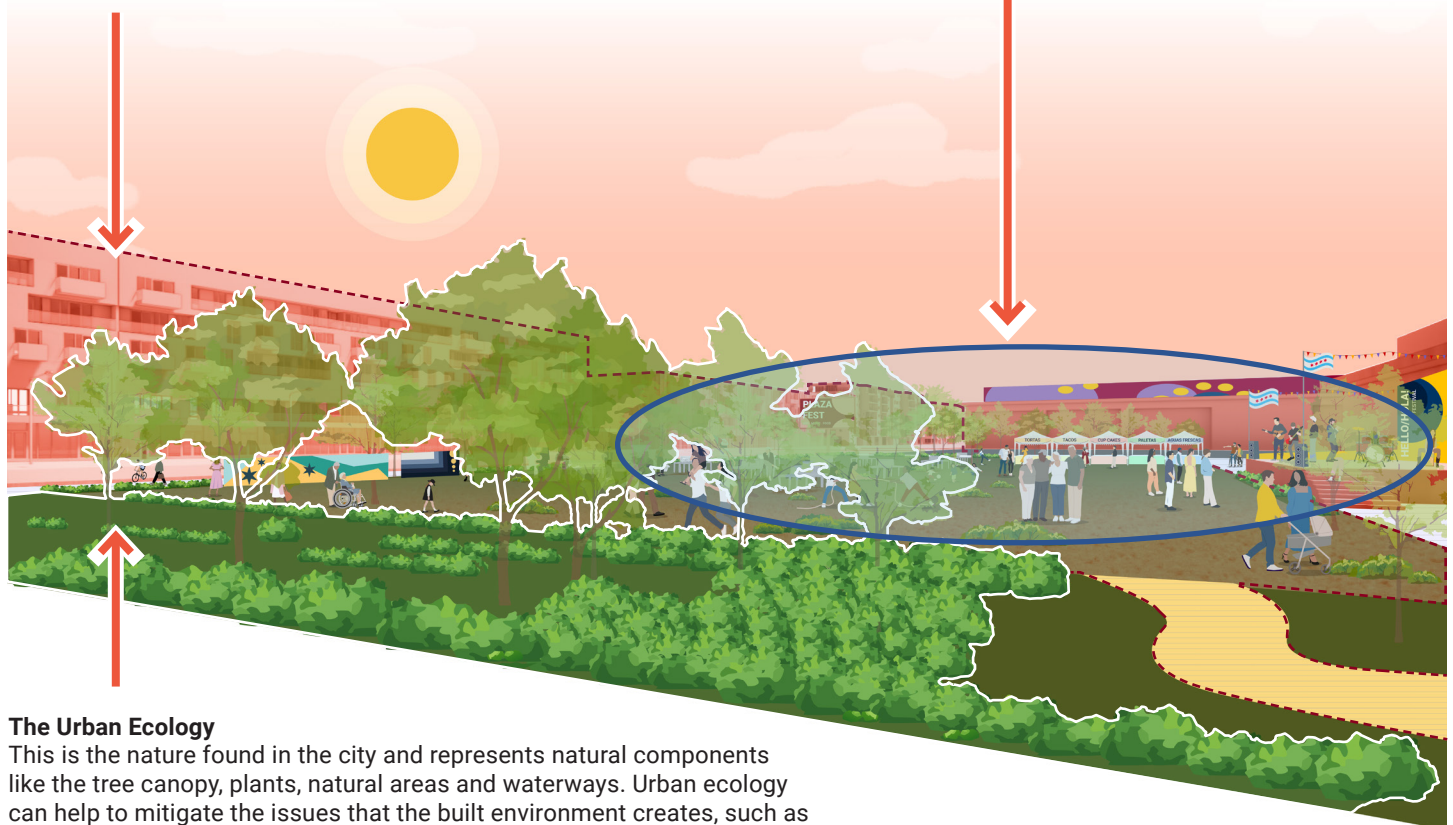
This chapter stitches together the six priorities to articulate a set of action items that aim to address the needs of the community and set the stage for future planning work. The stitches in this framework are the action items recommended to implement the community's vision. Each recommended action item relates to one or more components that make up a city and are implemented through either policy, development or programming. Three important components that make up cities are the built environment, the urban ecology, and the social-cultural fabric; the framework articulated in this chapter aims to engage these three components to improve connections and address the priorities that were expressed throughout the community engagement process.

### The Built Environment

These are the buildings, the sidewalks, and everything that is physically built in a city. The built environment includes homes, schools, restaurants, parks, and other physical features. These recommended action items include building more housing, providing more open space and community gathering spaces, adding a new library branch, and improving streetscape and bikes lanes.

### The Social-Cultural Fabric

Social-cultural fabric describes ways in which people interact with each other, come together, and learn or celebrate. The built environment provides a stage for these interactions. How residents enjoy their city and meet their neighbors is what turns a neighborhood of buildings into a community of people. Action items to support the social-cultural fabric of these communities include providing more senior and youth programming, increasing cultural events and festivals, implementing more public art, providing more learning and resource hubs, and supporting new ways for neighborhood residents, business owners and other locals to engage with each other.



### The Urban Ecology

This is the nature found in the city and represents natural components like the tree canopy, plants, natural areas and waterways. Urban ecology can help to mitigate the issues that the built environment creates, such as reducing urban head island effects and air pollution. The action items that fall into urban ecology include increasing urban tree canopy, envisioning sustainable features in the neighborhood, and exploring opportunities to improve environmental policy.



## How to Use This Framework

To realize this vision, a set of priorities, objects, strategies, and action items are meant to guide initiatives. These fall under the scope of different community partners like City departments, sister agencies, elected officials, and other community groups. Action items are meant to serve as a guide and their implementation will depend on available capacity, funding mechanism, and timelines by the various partners involved.

### 3. PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

During the community engagement process, community members highlighted specific concerns affecting overall community safety. These concerns included traffic calming and pedestrian safety, the conditions of viaducts and other hard infrastructure, the lack of youth spaces for after school activities, and underutilized and unmaintained lots. Industrial land uses and infrastructure pose a significant barrier to accessing community assets and services.

**A vision to prioritize safe streets and community spaces could include:**

**3.1 Prioritize pedestrian safety and multi-modal options for transportation**

3.1.1 Integrate traffic calming measures at crosswalks to provide safer accessibility.

3.1.2 Improve streetscapes with features like street furniture, greenery, bike lanes, sidewalk connections and other inviting beautification elements.

3.1.3 Make infrastructure barriers, like viaducts and rail crossings more permeable and traversable to improve access to community amenities.

**3.2 Target spaces that impact public safety perceptions like underutilized lots and walkways**

3.2.1 Target and activate vacant and underutilized lots through programming, development, and improved maintenance.

3.2.2 Maintain and improve essential city infrastructure through appropriate maintenance schedules, reporting and enforcement.

**3.3 Provide well-distributed and inclusive community spaces**

3.3.1 Consider social and physical barriers and develop strategies to make community assets accessible for everyone.

3.3.2 Promote the creation of inclusive spaces that can be inviting for recreation, learning and activities for everyone.

|            | D<br>Action Item  | E<br>Time Frame | F<br>Partner  | G<br>Status | H<br>Tools         |
|------------|---|-----------------|---|-------------|--------------------|
| C<br>3.1.1 | a. Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas. | ●●●●            | CDOT*, IDOT, DPD, Ward Offices                      | ●           | CP, CF, FI, RE     |
|            | b. Improve pedestrian access to CTA Orange Line stations and implement features of the Better Streets for Buses toolkit at bus stops and along bus corridors.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, IDOT, CTA                                    | ●           | CP, CF, FI         |
|            | c. Continue to expand the Divvy bike share network and bike safety resources.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, Community Partners                           | ●           | CF, FI             |
|            | d. Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, IDOT   | ●           | CP, CF, FI, RE     |
|            | e. Enforce safe streets for pedestrians to access community assets by incorporating cameras and speed monitoring technology, as appropriate.  | ●●●●            | CDOT*, IDOT, CPD, Community Partners                | ●           | CF, CP             |
| C<br>3.1.2 | a. Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, DPD, DCASE, Community Partners, Ward Offices | ●           | CF, FI, RE, GR     |
|            | b. Explore the feasibility of prioritizing lanes for multimodal transportation options like bus, bike, scooter, and other accessible mobility options, including the study of on-street parking, loading and service impacts along main corridors.  | ●●●●            | CDOT*, IDOT, CTA, DPD                               | ●           | RE                 |
|            | c. Continue to implement Southwest Side Bike Network improvements.  | ●●●●            | CDOT*   | ●           | CF, FI, RE         |
| C<br>3.1.3 | a. Continue to improve pedestrian infrastructure and lighting on major corridors and near community assets.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*   | ●           | CF, FI             |
|            | b. Expand opportunities to incorporate public art, landscaping or other beautification along industrial corridors, viaducts, public rights of way, and on underutilized lots.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, DCASE, DPD, PDEV                             | ●           | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
|            | c. Evaluate the potential of a CTA Orange Line station at California.   | ●●●●            | CTA*, CCDOH, CDOT                                   | ●           | RE                 |
| C<br>3.2.1 | a. Continue to enforce maintenance requirements for vacant and underutilized lots.  | ●●●●            | Ward Offices, Property Owners                       | ●           | CP                 |
|            | b. Study the feasibility of programming opportunities like markets, pocket parks, and other active community uses on vacant and underutilized lots.   | ●●●●            | DPD*, DCASE, Community Partners                     | ●           | RE                 |
| C<br>3.2.2 | a. Improve maintenance schedules along major streets, lighting, roads and alleys, and transit stops.  | ●●●●            | Ward Offices, CDOT, CTA                             | ●           | CF, FI             |
|            | b. Develop wayfinding signage to identify community assets.   | ●●●●            | Community Partners, CDOT, DCASE, BACP               | ●           | CP                 |
| C<br>3.3.1 | a. Coordinate with local groups and institutions to understand and mitigate territorial social issues that may limit access to community assets and services.   | ●●●●            | Ward Offices, Community Partners                    | ●           | RE                 |
|            | b. Build upon previous studies to conduct a comprehensive review of key multi-use corridors to identify and implement accessibility improvements.   | ●●●●            | CDOT*, DPD, Community Groups                        | ●           | CP, RE             |
| C<br>3.3.2 | a. Continue to provide spaces for community gatherings, especially for seniors and youth.   | ●●●●            | DFSS, CPL, CPKD                                     | ●           | CF, GR             |
|            | b. Explore location opportunities for a new Gage Park Library Branch.   | ●●●●            | CPL*, DPD   | ●           | CF, FI, GR, RE     |
|            | c. Establish, new and deepen existing partnerships with local community organizations, city departments, and agencies to activate open spaces for community use.  | ●●●●            | CPKD, DFSS, CPL, CPD, CCC                           | ●           | CF, RE             |

**Time Frame**

0-6 Months   ●   6-12 Months   ●   12+ Months   ●

Short   →   Long

**Status**

Not Initiated   Preliminary Work   Partners Identified   Funded or Priority   Ready for Implementation

**Tools**

CP: Corporate Funds or City Funds  
 CF: City Policy  
 FI: Financial Incentive (TIE, Bond, or Other)  
 GR: Grant Funded or Opportunity  
 PI: Private Investment  
 RE: Research or Study

**Implementation Partners**  
 Main Partner\*: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.  
 Supporting Partner: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.

### Partner List

**BACP:** Business Affairs and Consumer Protection

**CDOT:** Chicago Department of Transportation

**CDPH:** Chicago Department of Public Health

**Community Partners:** Relevant Community Groups like the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, World Business Chicago, and other delegate agencies

**CPKD:** Chicago Park District

**CPL:** Chicago Public Library

**CPS:** Chicago Public Schools

**DCASE:** Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

**DFSS:** Department of Family Services and Support

**DOE:** Department of Environment

**DOH:** Department of Housing

**DPD:** Department of Planning and Development

**DSS:** Department of Streets and Sanitation

**DWM:** Department of Water Management

**Government Partners:** Relevant Departments or Agencies

**IDOT:** Illinois Department of Transportation

**PDEV:** Developers, either public or private

**Ward Offices:** 12th, 14th, and 15th Ward Offices

**CCDOH:** Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways

### Implementation Partners

**Main Partner\*:** Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

**Supporting Partner:** Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.

For additional information, including implementation examples, see Appendix II. Example Typologies.

- A Priority** The six priority categories guiding for the plan.
- B Objective** What the plan aims to achieve. The objective helps manage progress towards goals, guide efforts, and identify important steps.
- C Strategy** Provides an approach towards achieving the objective.
- D Action Item** A specific task or step. Action items are like a to-do list.
- E Timeline** Estimates the time to complete an action item. Some action items are short, while others may take years to complete.
- F Partner** Specifies the relevant partner(s) to collaborate and complete a task. See Partner List for the partners included in this framework.
- G Status** The steps towards implementation. These include: preliminary work (project scope and analysis), partners identified (collaboration and dialogue between partners), and funded or priority (available funding or priority of the implementation partner).
- H Tools** Mechanisms for implementation through policy, funding, research or study.



# 1. INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPTIONS

Multi-generational households are common on the Southwest Side. The current housing stock and available amenities in the region may not adequately meet these housing needs. Although many homes in this area are listed as single-family use, many are suspected of having been partitioned to provide additional housing.

The change in demographics in recent decades, proximity to job opportunities, and recent investments in new institutions have increased demand for new housing options and amenities for this multi-generational community.

**A vision to increase access to housing options could include:**

## 1.1 Support pathways to affordable homeownership and increase community amenities

- 1.1.1 Expand programs that offer and support homeownership education.
- 1.1.2 Encourage new housing units that support existing and new community services such as cafes, places to eat and other entertainment to help activate corridors.

## 1.2 Build more units to sustain housing affordability

- 1.2.1 Support new housing development that expands housing offerings and options, including nontraditional housing units like accessory dwellings, ground floor residential, equitable transit-oriented development near multimodal transportation options, and new community assets and amenities.
- 1.2.2 Encourage dwelling unit configurations for multi-generational households.



Shared outdoor common areas



Ground-floor activation opportunities



Housing options for multi-generational families

|       | Action Item   | Time Frame | Partner                                    | Status | Tools              |
|-------|---|------------|--|--------|--------------------|
| 1.1.1 | a. Continue to partner with local organizations to offer homeownership education and counseling programs.   |            | DOH*, Community Partners                   |        | CF, GR             |
|       | b. Promote down payment assistance programs.  |            | DOH*, Community Partners                   |        | GR                 |
| 1.1.2 | a. Encourage development opportunities to include housing units along commercial corridors.   |            | DPD*, PDEV                                 |        | CF, CP, FI, PI     |
|       | b. Where appropriate, encourage new developments to include open spaces like plazas, landscaping, or other features designed in a pedestrian-friendly way.  |            | DPD*, PDEV                                 |        | CF, GR, FI, CP, PI |
|       | c. Where opportunities for ground-floor retail are limited, consider limited ground-floor housing to reactivate street frontage.  |            | DPD*, PDEV                                 |        | CF, FI, CP, PI     |
| 1.2.1 | a. Encourage and target development opportunities along main corridors by utilizing existing housing development ordinances to build more housing units, changing zoning designations as appropriate to allow housing, and promoting available financial tools. |            | DOH*, DPD*, PDEV                           |        | FI, GR, CP, RE, PI |
|       | b. Explore opportunities for mixed-use development on underutilized land adjacent to CTA Orange Line stations and high frequency bus corridors.   |            | DPD*, CTA, and Relevant Community Partners |        | RE, CP             |
|       | c. Consider re-zoning areas near transit stations and high frequency bus corridors to accommodate denser, mixed-use development.  |            | DPD*, Ward Offices*, CTA                   |        | RE, CP             |
|       | d. Where appropriate expand the Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) ordinance to areas of Brighton Park and Gage Park.  |            | DPD*, Ward Offices*, DOH                   |        | CP                 |
|       | e. Where appropriate, consider re-zoning low-density residential areas from RS to RT.   |            | DPD*, Ward Offices*                        |        | RE, CP             |
| 1.2.2 | a. Encourage a variety of affordable unit types, including 3- and 4-bedroom units, to accommodate family sizes and multiple generations living together and the preservation of existing affordability.   |            | DOH*, DPD, PDEV                            |        | CP, GR, FI         |
|       | b. Continue to encourage new housing development to include residential amenities for multiple generations and family configurations like in-building amenities, play areas, recreation and gathering spaces.   |            | DOH*, DPD, PDEV                            |        | CP, GR, GI         |
|       | c. Identify ways to better inform the community about affordable housing opportunities, housing services, city programs and incentives.   |            | DOH*, Community Partners, Ward offices     |        | CF                 |

**Time frame**

0-6 Months Ongoing  
 Short Long

**Status**

Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

**Tools**

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**Main Partner\***: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

**Supporting Partner**: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.





## 2. EXPAND OPEN SPACE ACCESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS

Parks and open space provide places for the community to come together. They offer important health benefits for residents, provide space for art and community programming, and contribute important ecological services and beauty to the region. Parks are seen as important by the residents of both communities.

**A vision to expand access to open spaces and neighborhood beautification could include:**

### 2.1 Continue to maintain and improve parks and open spaces

2.1.1 Continue to repair facilities and develop a maintenance program to promote community park stewardship.

### 2.2 Increase access to open space amenities

2.2.1 Improve and provide new connections between public spaces that increase overall safety, activate underutilized areas, and increase accessibility.

2.2.2 Increase the number of open space options and encourage the creation of different sized spaces that activate underutilized areas and are near areas with less access.

### 2.3 Support efforts and local participation in neighborhood beautification efforts

2.3.1 Find opportunities to expand neighborhood art initiatives that celebrate the community and invite local residents to participate.

2.3.2 Promote efforts to increase overall neighborhood greenery and landscaping that are multifunctional, offer access to fresh foods, produce, and gardening activities through community garden spaces and partnerships and provide opportunities for community use.



Open spaces of different sizes and programming



Opportunities for neighborhood art



Spaces for recreational activities

|       | Action Item  | Time Frame | Partner  | Status | Tools              |
|-------|--|------------|--|--------|--------------------|
| 2.1.1 | a. Prioritize providing missing amenities like places to sit, restrooms, and other everyday amenities, where appropriate and needed.   |            | Community Partners*                                  |        | CF, GR, FI, PI     |
|       | b. Continue to facilitate community engagement by promoting existing open space stewardship groups as well as collaboration and partnerships on green space clean up events.     |            | CPKD*, Community Partners, Ward Offices              |        | CP, RE             |
|       | c. Collaborate with the Park District and the community to coordinate on park improvements based on community needs and available budget.  |            | CPKD*, Community Partners                            |        | CP, RE             |
|       | d. Identify infrastructure and accessibility issues with relevant departments to find solutions to improve connectivity and strategize maintenance.                              |            | CDOT*, CPKD, IDOT                                    |        | CF, RE             |
| 2.2.1 | a. Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.               |            | CDOT*, DPD, DCASE, Community Partners                |        | CF, CP, FI         |
|       | b. Explore the feasibility of a greenway or trail system along rail embankments or right-of-way that improves access to the Park District HQ and connects communities.           |            | DPD*, CDOT*, CPKD, CTA, Community Partners           |        | RE, CP             |
|       | c. Promote Western Boulevard as a green space by expanding access, programming, and mitigating traffic impacts.  |            | CDOT*, DPD, DCASE, IDOT, Community Partners          |        | CP, CF, GR, FI     |
| 2.2.2 | a. Develop an open space plan for Brighton Park and Gage Park.   |            | CPKD*, DPD, CDOT, CPS, Community Open Space Partners |        | CP, RE             |
|       | b. Re-imagine vacant and underutilized lots and identify opportunities to activate them for community uses.  |            | DPD*, City Partners                                  |        | CF, FI, RE         |
|       | c. Encourage pocket parks and private open spaces adjacent to and/or in conjunction with new development or to activate vacant and underutilized land.                           |            | DPD*, DCASE, Community Partners, PDEV                |        | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
|       | d. Establish new and deepen existing partnerships with local community organizations to activate open spaces and facilities for community use.                                   |            | CPKD, CPL, CPS, Community Partners                   |        | CF, FI, GR         |
| 2.3.1 | a. Amplify current grant opportunities and identify new resources to incorporate community art in public spaces, infrastructure, transit stations and stops and along corridors. |            | DCASE, CDOT, CTA, RTA, Community Partners            |        | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
|       | b. Encourage and incentivize projects to dedicate a portion of project costs towards community art on-site or within the Brighton Park or Gage Park community areas.             |            | DPD*, DCASE, PDEV                                    |        | CP, FI, PI         |
|       | c. Increase connections to information on best practices for public art.   |            | DCASE, DPD   |        | CP, RE             |
| 2.3.2 | a. Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.  |            | DPD*, CDOT, PDEV                                     |        | CP, RE             |
|       | b. Encourage landscape buffers that can serve as multifunctional places that provide public space for recreation, greenery, or other community benefits.                         |            | DPD*, CDOT, DOE, Community Partners, PDEV            |        | CP, FI, CF         |

**Time frame**

0-6 Months Ongoing  
Short —————> Long

**Status**

Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

**Tools**

CF: Corporate Funds or City Funds  
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**Implementation Partners**

Main Partner\*: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

Supporting Partner: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.





## 3. PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

During the community engagement process, community members highlighted specific concerns affecting overall community safety. These concerns included traffic calming and pedestrian safety, the conditions of viaducts and other hard infrastructure, the lack of youth spaces for after school activities, and underutilized and unmaintained lots. Industrial land uses and infrastructure pose a significant barrier to accessing community assets and services.

**A vision to prioritize safe streets and community spaces could include:**

### 3.1 Prioritize pedestrian safety and multi-modal options for transportation

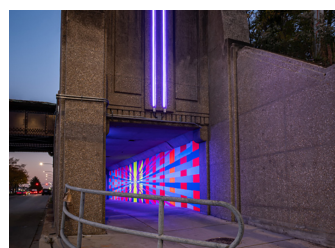
- 3.1.1 Integrate traffic calming measures at crosswalks to provide safer accessibility.
- 3.1.2 Improve streetscapes with features like street furniture, greenery, bike lanes, sidewalk connections and other inviting beautification elements.
- 3.1.3 Make infrastructure barriers, like viaducts and rail crossings more permeable and traversable to improve access to community amenities.

### 3.2 Target spaces that impact public safety perceptions like underutilized lots and walkways

- 3.2.1 Target and activate vacant and underutilized lots through programming, development, and improved maintenance.
- 3.2.2 Maintain and improve essential city infrastructure through appropriate maintenance schedules, reporting and enforcement.

### 3.3 Provide well-distributed and inclusive community spaces

- 3.3.1 Consider social and physical barriers and develop strategies to make community assets accessible for everyone.
- 3.3.2 Promote the creation of inclusive spaces that can be inviting for recreation, learning and activities for everyone.





|       | Action Item   | Time Frame | Partner   | Status | Tools              |
|-------|---|------------|---|--------|--------------------|
| 3.1.1 | a. Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas. | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, IDOT, DPD, Ward Offices                      |        | CP, CF, FI, RE     |
|       | b. Improve pedestrian access to CTA Orange Line stations and implement features of the Better Streets for Buses toolkit at bus stops and along bus corridors.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, IDOT, CTA                                    |        | CP, CF, FI         |
|       | c. Continue to expand the Divvy bike share network and bike safety resources.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, Community Partners                           |        | CF, FI             |
|       | d. Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, IDOT   |        | CP, CF, FI, RE     |
|       | e. Enforce safe streets for pedestrians to access community assets by incorporating cameras and speed monitoring technology, as appropriate.  | ● ● ● →    | CDOT*, IDOT, CPD, Community Partners                |        | CF, CP             |
| 3.1.2 | a. Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, DPD, DCASE, Community Partners, Ward offices |        | CF, FI, RE, GR     |
|       | b. Explore the feasibility of prioritizing lanes for multimodal transportation options like bus, bike, scooter, and other accessible mobility options, including the study of on-street parking, loading and service impacts along main corridors.  | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, IDOT, CTA, DPD                               |        | RE                 |
|       | c. Continue to implement Southwest Side Bike Network improvements.  | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*   |        | CF, FI, RE         |
| 3.1.3 | a. Continue to improve pedestrian infrastructure and lighting on major corridors and near community assets.   | ● ● ● →    | CDOT*   |        | CF, FI             |
|       | b. Expand opportunities to incorporate public art, landscaping or other beautification along industrial corridors, viaducts, public rights-of-way, and on underutilized lots.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, DCASE, DPD, PDEV                             |        | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
|       | c. Evaluate the potential of a CTA Orange Line station at California.   | ● ● ● ●    | CTA*, CCDOTH, CDOT                                  |        | RE                 |
| 3.2.1 | a. Continue to enforce maintenance requirements for vacant and underutilized lots.  | ● ● ● →    | Ward Offices, Property Owners                       |        | CP                 |
|       | b. Study the feasibility of programming opportunities like markets, pocket parks, and other active community uses on vacant and underutilized lots.   | ● ● ● ●    | DPD*, DCASE, Community Partners                     |        | RE                 |
| 3.2.2 | a. Improve maintenance schedules along major streets, lighting, roads and alleys, and transit stops.  | ● ● ● →    | Ward Offices, CDOT, CTA                             |        | CF, FI             |
|       | b. Develop wayfinding signage to identify community assets.   | ● ● ● ●    | Community Partners, CDOT, DCASE, BACP               |        | CP                 |
| 3.3.1 | a. Coordinate with local groups and institutions to understand and mitigate territorial social issues that may limit access to community assets and services.   | ● ● ● →    | Ward Offices, Community Partners                    |        | RE                 |
|       | b. Build upon previous studies to conduct a comprehensive review of key multi-use corridors to identify and implement accessibility improvements.   | ● ● ● ●    | CDOT*, DPD, Community Groups                        |        | CP, RE             |
| 3.3.2 | a. Continue to provide spaces for community gatherings, especially for seniors and youth.   | ● ● ● →    | DFSS, CPL, CPKD                                     |        | CF, GR             |
|       | b. Explore location opportunities for a new Gage Park Library Branch.   | ● ● ● ●    | CPL*, DPD   |        | CF, FI, GR, RE     |
|       | c. Establish new and deepen existing partnerships with local community organizations, city departments, and agencies to activate open spaces for community use.   | ● ● ● →    | CPKD, DFSS, CPL, CPS, CCC                           |        | CF, RE             |

**Time frame**

0-6 Months ● ● ● ● 10+ years  
 Short → Long

**Status**

Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

**Tools**

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**Implementation Partners**

Main Partner\*: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

Supporting Partner: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.



# 4. FOSTER A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Brighton Park and Gage Park are disproportionately impacted by environmental issues compared to the rest of the City. Air pollution, flooding, and areas with minimal tree canopy or landscaping are a concern for the community. Landscape improvements could provide multiple benefits including wellness opportunities, improvement of overall air quality and the environment, open space, beautification, and support for better access to community services. These spaces can be multi-functional and offer opportunities to play and exercise, gather, and support the environment.

**A vision to foster a culture of community health and environmental justice could include:**

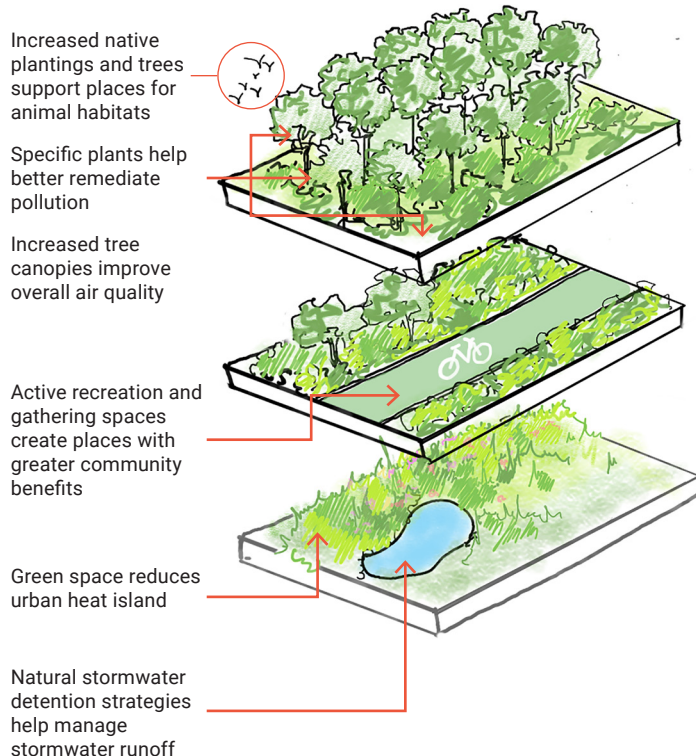
## 4.1 Strengthen the health and wellbeing of the community

- 4.1.1 Encourage opportunities that support walking, biking and other physical activity by connecting community amenities and improving multimodal connections.
- 4.1.2 Promote access to healthcare services for all ages.

## 4.2 Incorporate green infrastructure that mitigates industrial and other intensive land uses

- 4.2.1 Develop policies that address issues with truck and freight traffic, pollution and other congestion.
- 4.2.2 Promote efforts to increase urban greenery and landscaping along intensive land uses to mitigate their impacts.

### Multi-functional Landscapes



|       | Action Item   | Time Frame | Partner                              | Status | Tools      |
|-------|---|------------|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 4.1.1 | a. Continue to improve sidewalk maintenance to better connect community spaces and services.  |            | CDOT, Ward Offices                   |        | CF, FI     |
|       | b. Where appropriate, increase pedestrian and bike infrastructure along multi-use corridors and improve resources like the Divvy bike share network and bike safety training.                             |            | CDOT*                                |        | CF, FI, RE |
| 4.1.2 | a. Continue to provide and expand healthcare services and programs that include diet, mental health, and other wellness resources.  |            | Community Partners, CDPH             |        | CF, GR     |
|       | b. Continue to provide and promote year-round fitness classes and wellness services for all groups.   |            | CPKD, CDPH, DFSS, Community Partners |        | CF, GR     |
| 4.2.1 | a. Develop and promote alternative freight routes to reduce truck traffic on neighborhood streets, in residential areas, or where trucks are not wanted or warranted, through policies or infrastructure. |            | CDOT*, DOE, IDOT                     |        | CP, RE     |
|       | b. Work towards updating the City's designated truck route system as appropriate.   |            | CDOT*, IDOT                          |        | CP, RE     |
|       | c. Incentivize adoption of pollution-reducing options like EV charging, on-site green energy systems, and green infrastructure for all types of buildings and developments.                               |            | DPD*, CDOT, DOE                      |        | CP, RE     |
|       | d. Conduct a comprehensive review of key multi-use corridors; identify and implement context-sensitive solutions to reduce the environmental impacts of freight.  |            | CDOT, DPD                            |        | CP, RE     |
|       | e. Periodically review process and outcomes for the Air Quality Zoning Ordinance, including the Traffic Study and Air Quality Study to ensure alignment with City goals.                                  |            | CDOT*, CDPH*, DOE*                   |        | CP, RE     |
| 4.2.2 | a. Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality. |            | DPD*, CDOT, DSS, PDEV                |        | CP, FI, PI |
|       | b. Where appropriate, increase tree plantings along major corridors like Western Boulevard and other high traffic roads.  |            | CDOT, DSS                            |        | CF, CP, FI |
|       | c. Where appropriate, encourage new development to incorporate permeable surfaces and landscaping in parking lots, service areas, and other areas traditionally paved with impervious materials.          |            | DPD*, DWM, PDEV                      |        | CP, FI, PI |
|       | d. Develop industrial site design guidelines, including best practices for landscape buffers, buffers between residential or other sensitive uses, green stormwater infrastructure, and other tactics.    |            | DPD*, CDOT, DOE, DWM                 |        | RE         |

**Time frame**

0-6 Months Ongoing  
 Short Long

**Status**

Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

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# 5. POSITION OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Brighton Park and Gage Park include vital infrastructure and industrial capacity important to the city's economic development. Industrial activity in Brighton Park and the surrounding areas provides access to well-paying jobs close to transit. Commercial corridors on major streets are an important source for community amenities like restaurants, retail, and other services. In addition, existing vacant and underutilized lots are an opportunity to re-imagine spaces that provide community-serving uses, including housing and job opportunities. Continued support through better infrastructure maintenance, skills development, and financial incentives are essential to providing residents with economic opportunities.

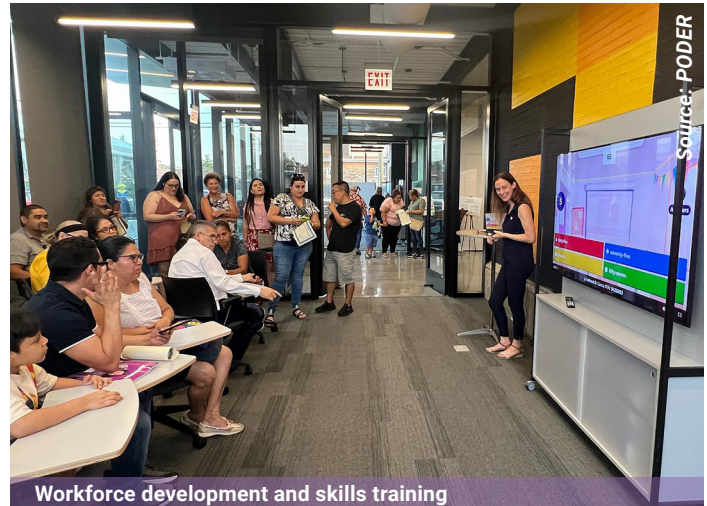
**A vision to position opportunities for increased economic development could include:**

## 5.1 Support incentives and workforce development opportunities that meet the needs of the community

- 5.1.1 Continue to expand and create new workforce development opportunities that support the needs of local businesses and aspirations of the community.
- 5.1.2 Adapt existing incentive programs to meet the needs of local businesses and improve program outreach efforts by the City, its partners and community enterprises.

## 5.2 Activate vacant and underutilized sites

- 5.2.1 Target vacant and underutilized sites and provide support for future development of housing, community amenities, businesses, or other site improvements.
- 5.2.2 Promote uses that increase foot traffic, activate ground floors and empty storefronts, and provide amenities and services that foster lively corridors.



Workforce development and skills training



Activate lots and provide market spaces



Support grant programs for small businesses

|       | Action Item  | Time Frame | Partner   | Status | Tools          |
|-------|--|------------|---|--------|----------------|
| 5.1.1 | a. Expand and promote workforce development programs for businesses on commercial and industrial corridors.  |            | DPD, DCASE, Community Partners                        |        | CF, FI, GR     |
|       | b. Explore the feasibility of a career resource hub that connects youth and job seekers to future employment opportunities.  |            | DPD, DFSS, CPS, CPKD, Community Partners              |        | CF, FI, GR, PI |
| 5.1.2 | a. Evaluate existing programs and business needs to develop and adapt incentive programs that work for or are more responsive to community needs.  |            | DPD, BACP, Community Partners                         |        | CP, FI, RE     |
|       | b. Continue to evaluate existing outreach strategies to businesses that remain unfamiliar with City programs or have barriers to applying to City programs.  |            | DPD, BACP, DCASE, Community Partners                  |        | FI, RE         |
| 5.2.1 | a. Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment. |            | DPD*, CDOT, CTA                                       |        | CF, CP, FI, RE |
|       | b. Evaluate the existing land use of the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor to position it for continued success as a vital jobs center.  |            | DPD*, Community Partners, City Partners               |        | CP, FI, RE     |
|       | c. Explore the feasibility to re-purpose or reconfigure larger parcels to support a range of different uses that could include industrial and job creation opportunities.                                    |            | DPD*, PDEV  |        | CP, RE         |
|       | d. Explore opportunities to co-locate community assets like neighborhood-serving amenities, libraries, health centers or other services in new developments.   |            | DPD*, City Partners, PDEV                             |        | CP, FI, PI     |
| 5.2.2 | a. Find opportunities to invite entertainment and cultural amenities, diverse restaurants, vendors, and other retail services to main street corridors.  |            | Ward Offices, Community Partners, City Partners, PDEV |        | FI, GR, PI, RE |
|       | b. Continue supporting incentive programs and consider rezoning to B2, where appropriate and where there are significant storefront or retail vacancies on commercial corridors.                             |            | DPD*, Ward Offices*                                   |        | CP, RE         |
|       | c. Explore the feasibility of marketplaces for small vendors and dedicated space for peddlers on main commercial corridors.  |            | DPD, CDOT, City Partners, PDEV                        |        | RE             |
|       | d. Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.  |            | DPD*, BACP, DCASE, CDOT, PDEV, Community Partners     |        | CP, FI, PI     |

#### Time frame

0-6 Months Ongoing  
Short Long

#### Status



Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

#### Tools

CF: Corporate Funds or City Funds  
CP: City Policy  
FI: Financial Incentive (TIF, Bond, or Other)  
GR: Grant Funded or Opportunity  
PI: Private Investment  
RE: Research or Further Study Needed

#### Implementation Partners

Main Partner\*: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

Supporting Partner: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.





# 6. ENHANCE COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL GENERATIONS

Community-focused programming creates opportunities for people to come together. The demographic composition of Brighton Park and Gage Park, which includes a high proportion of youth and multi-generational families, has led to programming being at or near capacity and community spaces with limited availability. Community members expressed the need for more multi-generational programming that is inclusive and offers a variety of activities. Spaces to come together and opportunities to celebrate and honor cultural heritage are a high priority.

**A vision to enhance community programming for all generations could include:**

## 6.1 Provide multi-generational programming and spaces

- 6.1.1 Expand and provide services and year-round programming for youth and the elderly.
- 6.1.2 Provide opportunities for education and community classes, new skills, hobbies, and wellness activities.

## 6.2 Create and support opportunities for the community to gather

- 6.2.1 Promote the creation of spaces that can serve multiple functions and host different kinds of community events.

## 6.3 Celebrate the local culture

- 6.3.1 Create and support events that celebrate the cultural richness of the community.
- 6.3.2 Support and expand beautification efforts and neighborhood cultural spaces by community members and local organizations.



Community spaces



Recreational activities



Festivals



|       | Action Item   | Time Frame | Partner  | Status | Tools              |
|-------|---|------------|--|--------|--------------------|
| 6.1.1 | a. Expand opportunities to learn more about existing resources in the community.  |            | Community Partners, City Partners                      |        | CF, CP, GR         |
|       | b. Continue to collaborate with community organizations to host neighborhood-specific programs and events.  |            | Community Partners, CPKD, CPL, DFSS                    |        | CF, CP, GR         |
|       | c. Continue to engage with the community to identify programming needs and tailor programs and activities according to community preferences. Continue to strategize and survey programming needs with community partners by hosting Park District round tables and other engagement opportunities. |            | CPKD, CPL, DFSS, Community Partners                    |        | CF, CP, GR         |
| 6.1.2 | a. Continue to offer programming opportunities and spaces for community members.  |            | Community Partners, CPKD, CPL, DFSS                    |        | CF, GR             |
|       | b. Continue to provide year-round health, recreation, and wellness activities for all groups.   |            | CPKD, DFSS, Community Partners                         |        | CF, GR             |
| 6.2.1 | a. Encourage the creation of mixed-use, multi-purpose facilities that can accommodate a variety of amenities, services, and programming, including co-locating community assets and public services.  |            | DPD, City Partners, Community Partners, PDEV           |        | CP, FI, RE         |
|       | b. Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.   |            | DPD, DCASE, CDPH                                       |        | CF, FI, GR, RE     |
|       | c. Support the development of a new Gage Park library branch that accommodates community and programming needs.   |            | CPL*, DPD  |        | CF, FI, GR, RE     |
| 6.3.1 | a. Continue to identify opportunities to create more events along main corridors like street festivals, kermeses, and other events.   |            | Community Partners*, DCASE                             |        | CP, RE             |
|       | b. Continue to support local cultural institutions, artists and practitioners with events and community art initiatives.  |            | DCASE, Ward Offices, Community Partners, City Partners |        | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
| 6.3.2 | a. Create a signature identity on Western Boulevard and main commercial corridors that respects historical character, cultural heritage, and reflects the Brighton Park and Gage Park communities through art, lighting, and signage.   |            | CDOT*, DCASE, Community Partners                       |        | CF, CP, RE         |
|       | b. Amplify current grant opportunities and identify new resources to incorporate community art along industrial and commercial corridors.   |            | DCASE, DPD, Community Partners                         |        | CF, CP, FI, GR, PI |
|       | c. Initiate collaborations that advance community goals and resources for winter programming and seasonal space activation.   |            | DCASE, DPD, Community Partners, City Partners          |        | RE                 |

**Time frame**

0-6 Months Ongoing  
 Short Long

**Status**

Not Initiated



Preliminary Work



Partners Identified



Funded or Priority



Ready for Implementation

**Tools**

CF: Corporate Funds or City Funds  
 CP: City Policy  
 FI: Financial Incentive (TIF, Bond, or Other)  
 GR: Grant Funded or Opportunity  
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**Implementation Partners**

Main Partner\*: Responsible for implementation or lead initiative.

Supporting Partner: Supports in implementation or multiple partners responsible.



A

# Appendix and Resources

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# I. Financial Resources

## Financial Resources

Industrial corridors located along I-55 have been some of the most successful in attracting recent industrial development citywide. Industrial activity in Brighton Park and the surrounding areas provides access to well-paying jobs close to transit and neighborhoods. To attract economic activity, improve quality of life and address environmental issues within industrial corridors, the City and local businesses leverage various existing state and local economic development programs.

### Stevenson / Brighton TIF

Most of the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor is within by the Stevenson/Brighton Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. This TIF is intended to fund improvements to local industrial facilities, commercial structures, railroad rights-of-way, and residential and public properties within its borders. It also facilitates the preparation of vacant and underutilized sites for business-related development within the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor.

This TIF prioritizes the repair and replacement of streets, sidewalks, curbs, and water and sewer systems where needed, and funding for landscape improvements at appropriate locations. It also supports job training and capital improvements to local schools.

TIFs also support reimbursement grant programs like Workforce Solutions, a workforce development program for businesses to train employees and Small Business Improvement fund (SBIF), a reimbursement grant program for permanent building improvements and repairs. This TIF is currently set to expire in 2031.

### Housing and Economic Development Bond

The \$1.25 billion Housing and Economic Development Bond will fund projects throughout the city focused on housing, business, innovation, and job growth, and cultural and community assets. The bond will be appropriated through the following programs:

#### Community Development Grants\*

- Small grants (\$250k or less)
- Medium grants (\$250k-\$5m)
- Large grants (Over \$5m)

#### Small Business Capacity Building

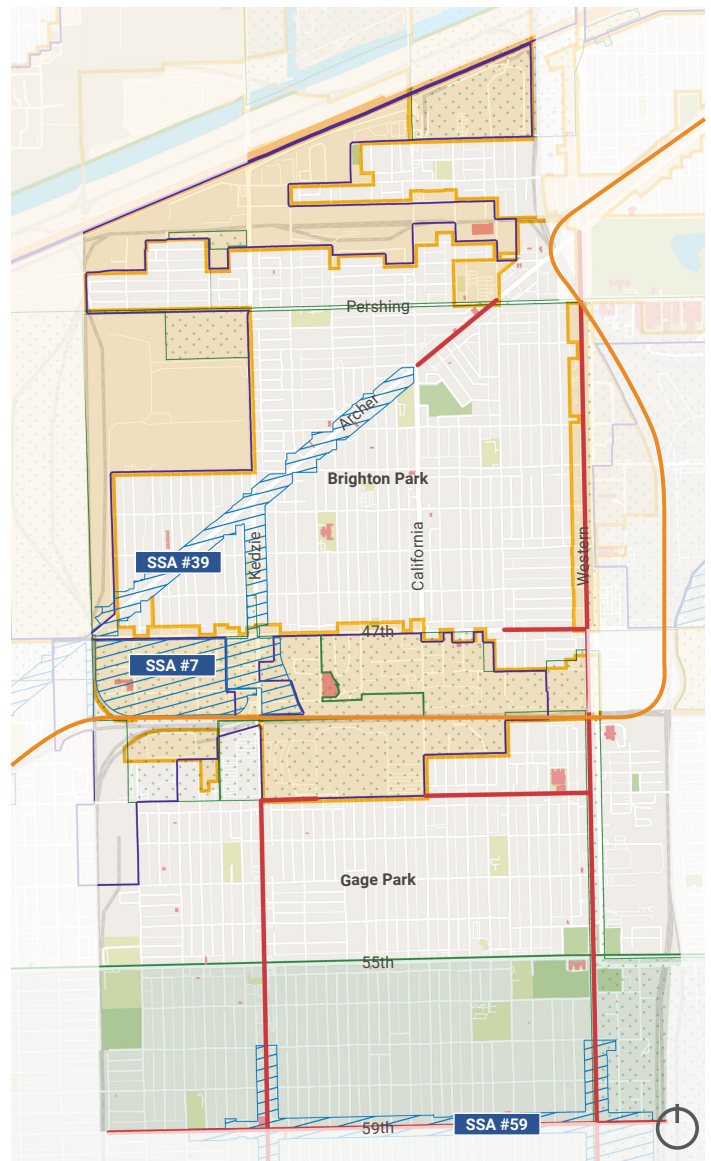
- Small and emerging business loan fund<sup>+</sup>
- Pre-development grants<sup>+</sup>

#### Jobs and Wealth Building

- Jobs and workforce training grants<sup>\*</sup>
- Missing middle housing infill strategy<sup>+</sup>

(\*) Expanded Program

(+) New Program



#### Business Development

Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI) / Neighborhood Business Development Centers (NBDC)

- Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council (BYNC)<sup>1</sup>
- Greater Southwest Development Corporation (GSDC)<sup>1</sup>
- Industrial Corridors
- Special Service Areas

#### Development Incentives

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts
- Enterprise Zones
- Neighborhood Opportunity Funds (NOF) Corridors
- Chicago Historic Resources Survey Building

1. **Please Note:** Prior to 2025, BYNC served as the LIRI for the BPIC. GSDC now serves as the LIRI delegate agency for the BPIC.

### Business Development

Opportunities and assistance for business development and growth help property owners and businesses improve the aging building stock to meet the needs of industrial users today. Existing tools to support this include:

#### Local Industrial Retention Initiative (LIRI)

- Agencies designated by DPD support industrial businesses with job retention and job creation, leveraging financing, liaising with City departments, and finding resources to grow businesses.
- The Greater Southwest Development Corporation serves as the study area's LIRI agency partner.

#### Neighborhood Business Development Centers

- Support for commercial businesses is provided by nonprofit organizations across the City.
- Near Brighton Park, Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council provides these services as a cultural specialist, assisting business owners with cultural and language barriers they may come across.

#### Special Service Area (SSA) Program

- Local tax districts that fund expanded services and programs within contiguous areas.
- Fund projects like: public way maintenance and beautification, district marketing and advertising, business retention/attraction, special events, auto and bike transit, security, facade improvements, and other economic development initiatives.

### Development Incentives

Incentivizing commercial and industrial development in the study area will encourage further development and support the area's growth.

#### Tax Increment Financing

- A portion of the study area is located within the Stevenson/Brighton TIF District, making many commercial and industrial properties in the study area eligible for TIF funding.

#### Small Business Improvement Fund

- Industrial and commercial properties located within a TIF can earn a grant up to \$150,000 for commercial properties and \$250,000 for industrial properties to be used toward building improvements and repairs. Properties located within the Stevenson/Brighton TIF are eligible for SBIF grants.

#### Workforce Solution (Formally TIFWorks)

- Companies within the Stevenson/Brighton TIF are eligible to apply for a reimbursement grant that supports employee training/certification programs and On-the-Job Training (OJT) for new hires in an effort to help companies grow, stay competitive and improve operational efficiency.

### Property Tax Incentives

The City of Chicago, Cook County, and the State of Illinois offer multiple property tax incentives for industrial and commercial properties.

- Class 6(b) – 12-year reduction in real estate assessments for industrial properties involving new construction, substantial rehabilitation, or re-occupancy of abandoned property.
- Class 7(a) and 7(b) – 12-year reduction in real estate assessments for commercial properties located in a Redevelopment Area, Empowerment or Federal Enterprise Zone.
- Class 7(c) – 5-year reduction in real estate assessments for commercial properties located anywhere and involve new construction, substantial rehabilitation, or re-occupancy of abandoned property.
- Class 7(d) – For properties used for development of a grocery store in a food desert, as defined by the Illinois Department of Public Health. The approved property will be assessed at 10% for 10 years, 15% for the 11th year and 20% for the 12th year. The standard assessment rate is 25%. Other grant opportunities may include the Illinois Grocery Initiative.
- Class 8 – 12-year reduction in real estate assessments for commercial or industrial properties in areas experiencing economic depression.
- Class C – Reduced property tax rates on environmentally contaminated commercial and industrial properties who remediation costs are greater than \$100,000 or 25 percent of the property's market value.
- Class L – 12-year reduction in real estate assessments for designated landmark districts or buildings, determined by the U.S. Department of the Interior.
- Illinois Data Center Investment Tax Exemptions and Credits – New and existing data centers and their tenants may receive a tax credit of 20% on wages paid for construction workers for projects located in underserved areas when investing at least \$250 million over a 60-month period.

#### Enterprise Zone

Enterprise Zone 2 and Enterprise Zone 6 overlap the study area. Ran by the State of Illinois, Enterprise Zones offer multiple tax exemptions for real estate transfer tax, machinery and equipment sales tax, and utility tax as well as investment tax credits.

#### New Market Tax Credits

Credits can be used to provide capital at below-market terms to industrial, commercial, institutional, and mixed-use real estate projects located in "Areas of Greater Economic Distress" within Chicago.

### Housing Affordability

Neighborhoods in this study area and around the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor have historically been characterized as stable, moderate-income neighborhoods.

The majority of housing units were built in the early 1900s and are affordable relative to other areas of the City. However, in recent years, the cost of both rental and for-sale housing has been increasing.

***From 2016 to 2023, the average home sale price doubled within the area of interest.***

Rising prices, an aging housing stock, and increasing demand for housing all point to a need for more housing units at affordable price point. The community identified ensuring continued affordability as a key concern.

Strategies that help to preserve affordable housing and create new housing should build upon work already championed by non-profits and the City and include the following examples of programs that could be leveraged.

### Preserving Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) units

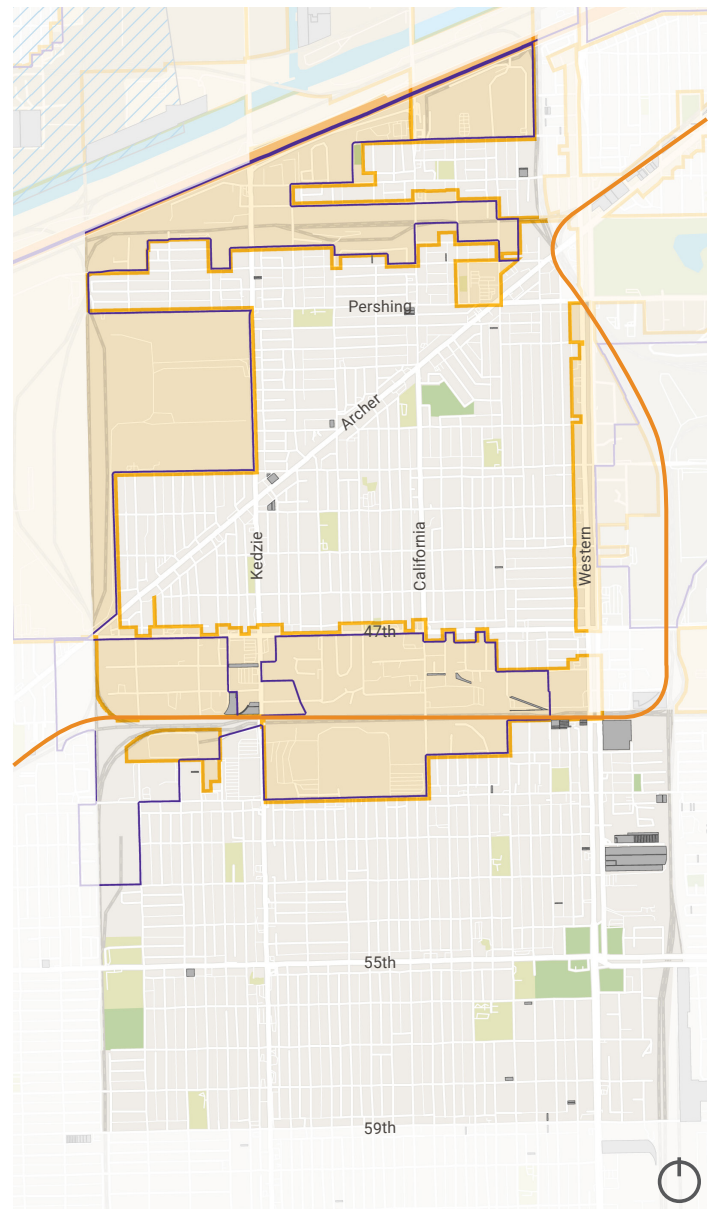
Naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) is existing market-rate housing that is affordable to households earning less than 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). Rents and pricing of these units are not legally restricted and therefore are at risk of losing affordability over time as markets evolve. 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 Services (NLS)

- A subsidiary of Neighborhood Housing Services, NLS offers multiple grants to provide and preserve affordable homeownership, including grants for purchase assistance and home improvement grants.

#### 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 of property taxes on homeowners' budgets.
- 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.



#### Legend

- Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) Districts
- City Land
- Industrial Corridors
- Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) Allowed



## Explore Creating New Income-Restricted Multi-family Housing

Income-restricted affordable housing ensures long-term affordability. Potential 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 construction and rehabilitation of residential buildings that are affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI).
- Rents must be kept affordable for an initial 15-year compliance period with a subsequent 15-year extended use period.

### Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

- The City Multi-Family TIF Purchase-Rehab Program provides an additional 30-50% of the total cost to acquire and/or rehab multi-family and mixed-use buildings in need of substantial rehabilitation.
- Properties must have five 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% AMI for a 10-year period.
- The program is not currently active within the study area but is eligible within the nearby 47th and Ashland TIF.

### 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% AMI.
- The majority (50%+) of units are set aside for households earning less than 15% AMI.

### State Tax Incentives - Tax Incentives for Affordable Housing (HB2621)

The Property tax abatement can be used in a wide variety of circumstances, from subsidized to unsubsidized, new construction and rehab, and high-cost markets to lower-cost markets when properties have a certain level of affordable housing on site.

## Investing in Homeownership Initiatives

Homeownership is a critical means to ensure community members can stay in their community as well as build wealth. Potential 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.

### Down Payment Assistance Programs

- Down payment assistance programs typically offer either a grant or second mortgage that reduces the upfront barrier to purchasing a home.
- The Building Neighborhoods and Affordable Housing (BNAH) Program provides purchase assistance grants of up to \$100,000 to citywide prospective homeowners of for-sale single-family homes in a City Council-approved land sale redevelopment agreement.

### 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.
- Brighton Park Neighborhood Council currently conducts financial literacy workshops and rental/homeownership counseling.

### Community Land Trust

- In exchange for upfront subsidies that increase affordability for prospective home buyers, 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 non-profit managed by the City of Chicago. Homeowners within the program have access to pre-purchase homeownership counseling, post-purchase educational programming and estate planning.

## Housing and Economic Development Bond

The \$1.25 billion Housing and Economic Development Bond will fund projects throughout the city. Part of the bond will be appropriated through the following housing programs:

### Affordable Rental Housing

- Build and preserve affordable rental homes\*
- Green Social Housing Revolving Fund\*
- Multi-family retrofit and energy modernization\*

### Homeownership

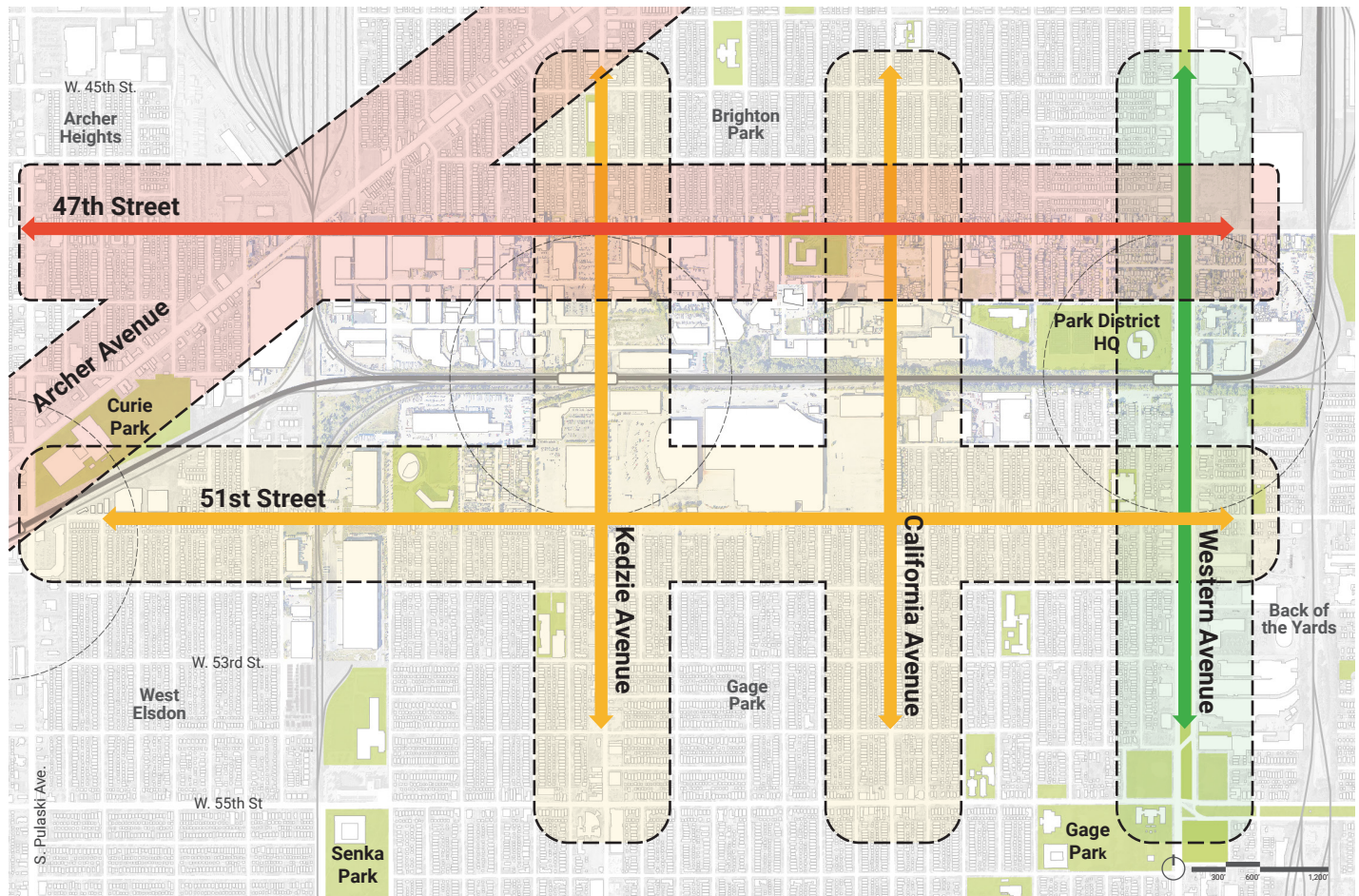
- Down payment assistance, home repair, and homeowner support\*\*
- Home retrofit and energy modernization\*
- Rehabilitation and preservation of ownership housing\*\*

### Homeless

- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Preservation\*

(\*) Expanded Program, (+) New Program

## II. Example Typologies



### Thematic Typologies

Three thematic typologies explore how the recommendations articulated in this plan can be applied to areas in Brighton Park and Gage Park. These typologies are meant to be illustrative and do not suggest specific investments or interventions that will be made. The example typologies are primarily focused around the industrial corridor area since this represents most of the land uses and circulation challenges.

The typologies are intended to show how to create better connections between communities while also improving overall experience. They address opportunities to improve health and safety through open space, greening, and pedestrian-focused interventions.

The typologies also explore opportunities to improve the relationships between various land uses. The recommendations align with the priorities and outline strategies to implement each one based on specific typology.

- Typology 1:** Strengthen Community Corridors
- Typology 2:** Create Well-Scaled Land Use Transitions
- Typology 3:** Re-Imagine Boulevards as Green Connections

Reading Implementation Examples

The following implementation examples highlight how priorities, solutions, and action items could be implemented in typical typologies found around Brighton Park and Gage Park. Each example typology is for illustrative purposes only.



**Main Street Corridor: Open Space + Public Realm**  
The corridors are envisioned as vibrant retail areas that enhance walking and bike comfort, and feature a diverse mix of businesses, services, and institutions. By revitalizing vacant and underutilized lots and incorporating existing buildings, the corridors aim to boost activity and connectivity. Active ground floors, sidewalk cafes, art, and landscape will contribute to a livelier atmosphere. Improvements in pedestrian safety, such as better crossings, sidewalk conditions, and street lighting are needed for better connectivity.

Typology Illustrative

Brief description of typology, implementation highlights, and other information.

List of implemented priorities for this typology

Action Items Illustrated

Increase access to housing options

1.1.2a

Encourage development opportunities to include housing units along commercial corridors.

1.2.2b

Continue to encourage new housing development to include residential amenities for multiple generations and family configurations like in-building amenities, play areas, recreation and gathering spaces.

Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification Efforts

2.2.1a

Improve the public realm experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

2.2.2c

Create pocket parks and encourage private open spaces adjacent to and/or in conjunction with new development or to activate vacant and underutilized land.

2.3.2a

Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.

2.3.2b

Encourage landscape buffers that can serve as multifunctional places that provide public space for recreation, greenery, or other community benefits.

Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

3.1.1a

Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

3.1.2b

Explore the feasibility to prioritize lanes for multimodal transportation options like bus, bike, scooter, and other accessible mobility options, including the study of on-street parking, loading and service impacts along main corridors.

Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

4.2.2a

Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.

4.2.2c

Where appropriate, encourage the increase of permeable surfaces and landscape in parking lots, service areas, and other traditionally impervious surfaces.

Position opportunities for increased economic development

5.1.2a

Evaluate existing programs and business needs to develop and adapt incentive programs that work for or are more responsive to community needs.

5.2.1a

Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

5.2.2d

Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.

Enhance community programming for all generations

6.2.1a

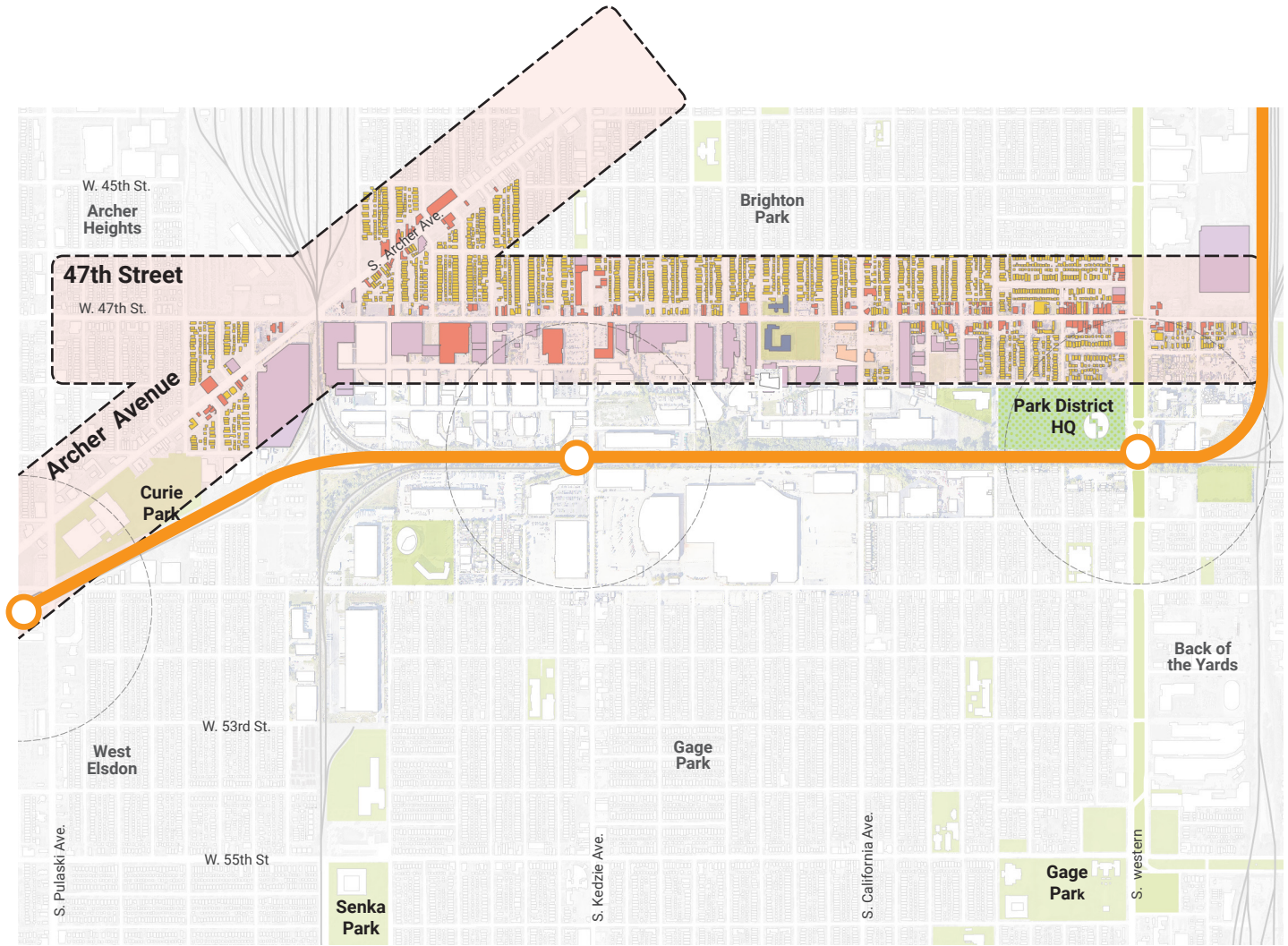
Encourage the creation of mixed-use, multi-purpose facilities that can accommodate a variety of amenities, services, and programming, including co-locating community assets and public services.

6.2.1b

Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.

List of action items implemented by priority in this typology






### Typology #1: Commercial Corridors

#### Strengthen Neighborhood Main Streets

Neighborhood main streets can be vibrant, multi-functional corridors that provide a safe and fun way to experience a wide range of activities, access to businesses and services, and allow community members to be part of local institutions. Strategies that make these streets more comfortable places could include pedestrian and bike improvements, reducing the impact of the truck and vehicular traffic, and supporting local small businesses. Incorporating active ground floors, new streetscapes with integrated landscape, street furnishing, and lighting could make these corridors more vibrant.




 **Typology 1:** Strengthen Neighborhood Corridors





Main streets are vibrant, multi-use corridors that include neighborhood-serving retail and amenities. They are comfortable places to walk and bike. A successful community main street promotes the culture and identity of the local neighborhood. Through public realm interventions and strategic redevelopment and activation opportunities, these neighborhood corridors can be transformed into vibrant main streets.

47th Street and Archer Avenue are commercial corridors in Brighton Park. Today, these corridors are heavily impacted by truck and car traffic, degrading their environment and experience. They could be re-imagined as community hubs by transforming them into neighborhood main streets with improved streetscapes that highlight their identity, cultural heritage, and provide a mix of small businesses and services.

-  Main street corridor
-  Desired active street edge
-  Primary pedestrian crossings





### Main Street Corridor: Open Space + Public Realm

The corridors are envisioned as vibrant retail areas that enhance walking and bike comfort, and feature a diverse mix of businesses, services, and institutions. By revitalizing vacant and underutilized lots and incorporating existing buildings, the corridors aim to boost activity and connectivity. Active ground floors, sidewalk cafes, art, and landscape will contribute to a livelier atmosphere. Improvements in pedestrian safety, such as better crossings, sidewalk conditions, and street lighting are needed for better connectivity.



## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

**1.1.2a** Encourage development opportunities to include housing units along commercial corridors.

**1.2.2b** Continue to encourage new housing development to include residential amenities for multiple generations and family configurations like in-building amenities, play areas, recreation and gathering spaces.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification Efforts

**2.2.1a** Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

**2.2.2c** Encourage pocket parks and private open spaces adjacent to and/or in conjunction with new development or to activate vacant and underutilized land.

**2.3.2a** Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.

**2.3.2b** Encourage landscape buffers that can serve as multifunctional places that provide public space for recreation, greenery, or other community benefits.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

**3.1.1a** Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

**3.1.2b** Explore the feasibility to prioritize lanes for multimodal transportation options like bus, bike, scooter, and other accessible mobility options, including the study of on-street parking, loading and service impacts along main corridors.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

**4.2.2a** Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.

**4.2.2c** Where appropriate, encourage the increase of permeable surfaces and landscape in parking lots, service areas, and other traditionally impervious surfaces.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

**5.1.2a** Evaluate existing programs and business needs to develop and adapt incentive programs that work for or are more responsive to community needs.

**5.2.1a** Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

**5.2.2d** Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.



### Enhance community programming for all generations

**6.2.1a** Encourage the creation of mixed-use, multi-purpose facilities that can accommodate a variety of amenities, services, and programming, including co-locating community assets and public services.

**6.2.1b** Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.



### Main Street Corridor: Vibrant Streetscape

The vibrant, multi-use corridor prioritizes safe streets and community spaces. Enhancing pedestrian and bike infrastructure along the corridor will increase accessibility to the ground floor active uses.

Reconsider the street design to allow for interesting landscaping, street lighting, and larger pedestrian zones where possible. Prioritize active uses along the corridor and incorporate murals and other cultural identity markers along the street to highlight the neighborhood character and make a more vibrant street.

## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

1.1.2c

Where opportunities for ground-floor retail are limited, consider limited ground-floor housing to reactivate street frontage.

1.2.1c

Consider re-zoning areas near transit stations and high frequency bus corridors to accommodate denser, mixed-use development.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts

2.2.1a

Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

2.2.2b

Re-imagine vacant and underutilized lots and identify opportunities to activate them for community uses.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

3.1.1a

Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

3.1.1d

Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.

3.1.2a

Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

4.1.1b

Where appropriate, increase pedestrian and bike infrastructure along multi-use corridors and improve resources like the Divvy bike share network and bike safety training.

4.2.1c

Incentivize adoption of pollution-reducing options like EV charging, on-site green energy systems, and green infrastructure for all types of buildings and developments.

4.2.2b

Where appropriate, increase tree plantings along major corridors like Western Boulevard and other high traffic roads.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

5.1.2a

Evaluate existing programs and business needs to develop and adapt incentive programs that work for or are more responsive to community needs.

5.2.1a

Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

5.2.2b

Continue supporting incentive programs and consider rezoning to B2, where there is significant storefront or retail vacancy on commercial corridors.

5.2.2c

Explore the feasibility of marketplaces for small vendors and dedicated space for peddlers on main commercial corridors.

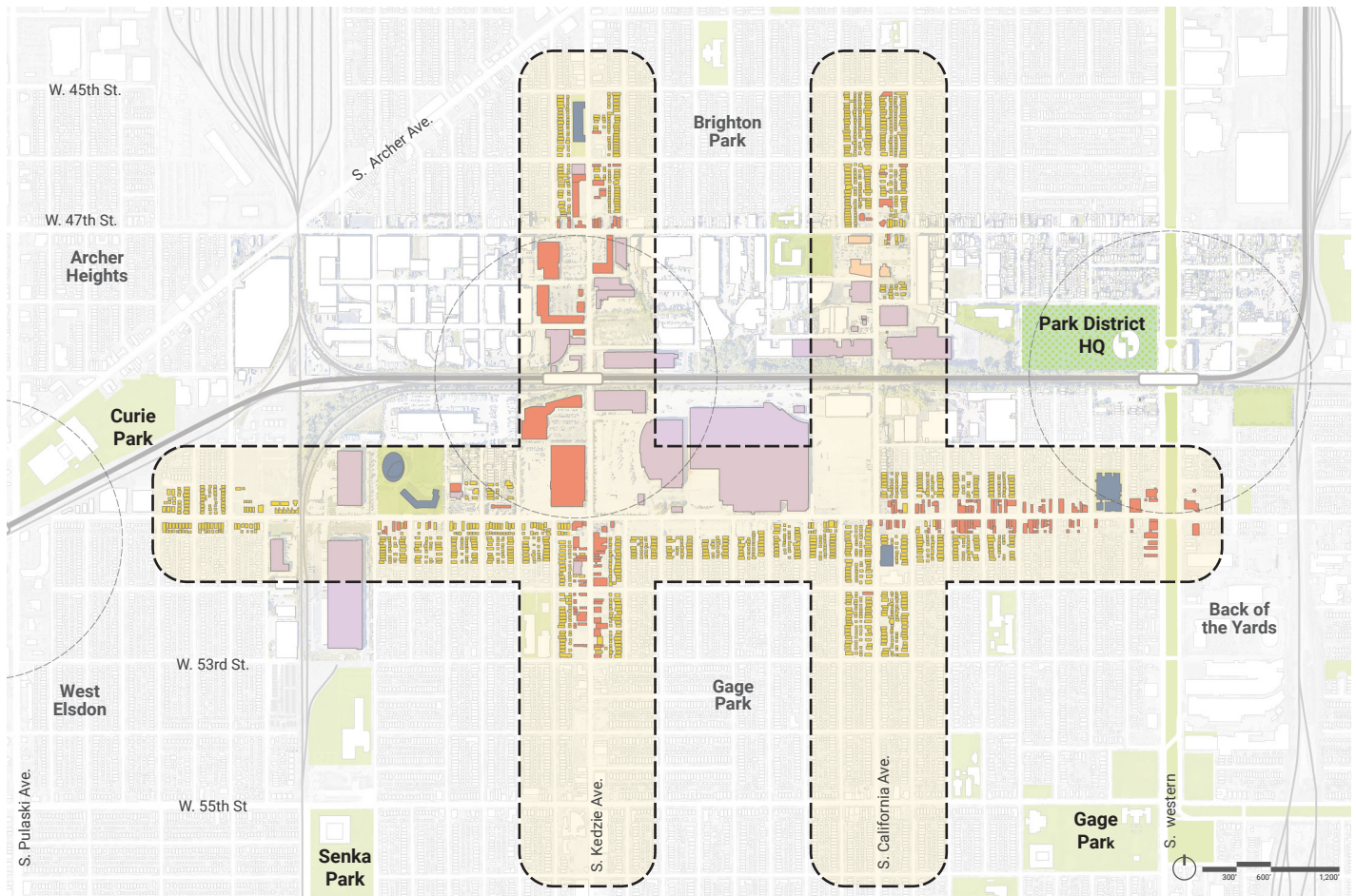


### Enhance community programming for all generations

6.2.1b

Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.





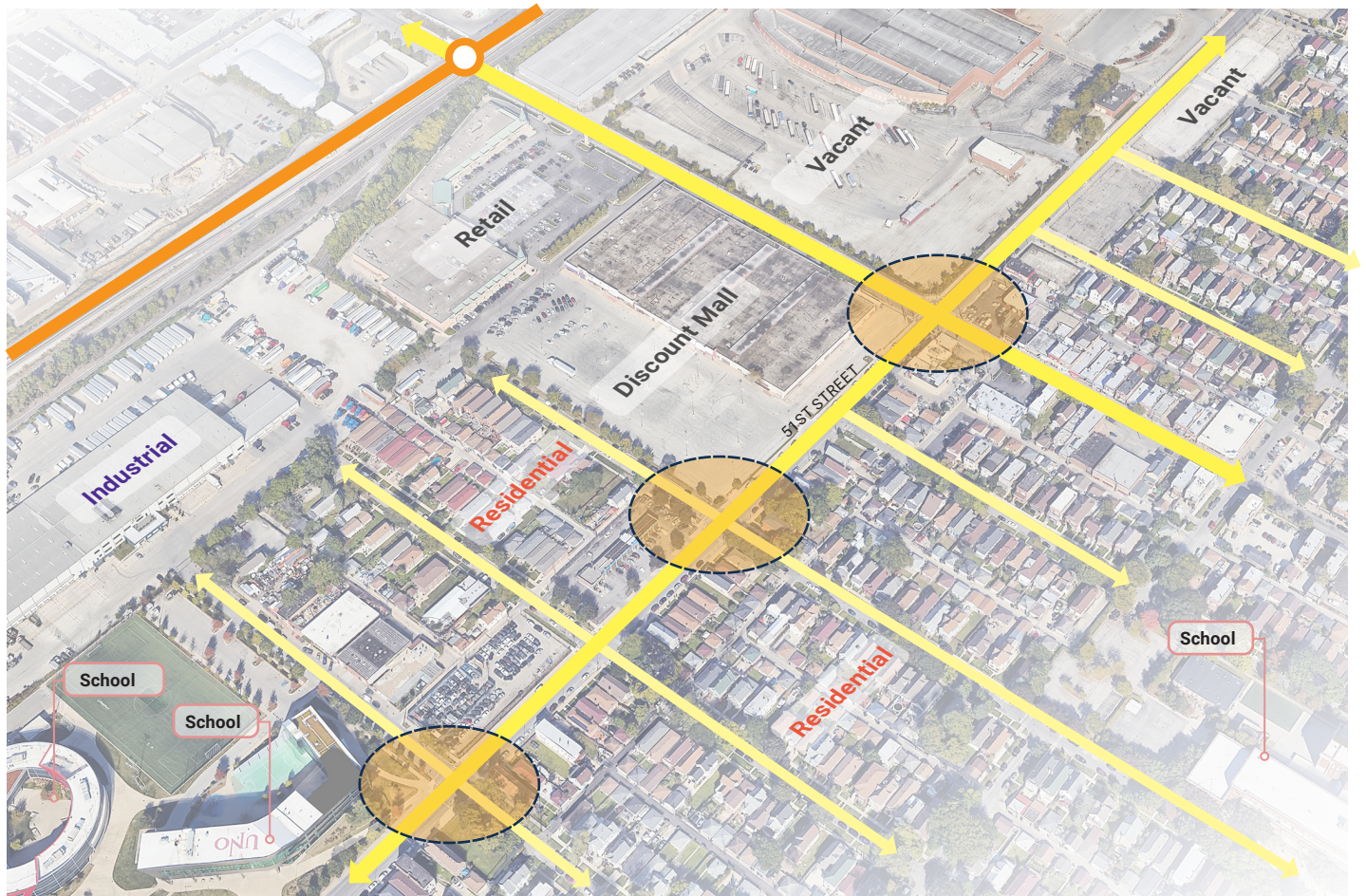
### Typology #2: Land Use Transitions Create Well-Scaled Land Use Transitions

Homes, small businesses, community institutions, industry and infrastructure are next to and in between each other in Brighton Park and Gage Park.

Transitions between homes and streets and more intensive uses can be enhanced through improvements to the sidewalks, trees, streetlights within the public right-of way and setbacks that contain landscape buffers, sustainable plantings, public art and decorative lighting. Building facades that face streets or neighbors can include high-quality materials, window and door openings, lighting, murals and green walls and roofs that enhance their appearance.

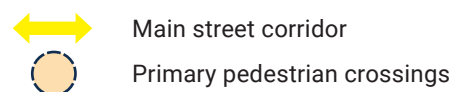
 **Typology 2: Well-Scaled Land Use Transitions**





51st Street / Kedzie Avenue Transition Zones

Areas with the potential for transitions between land uses:

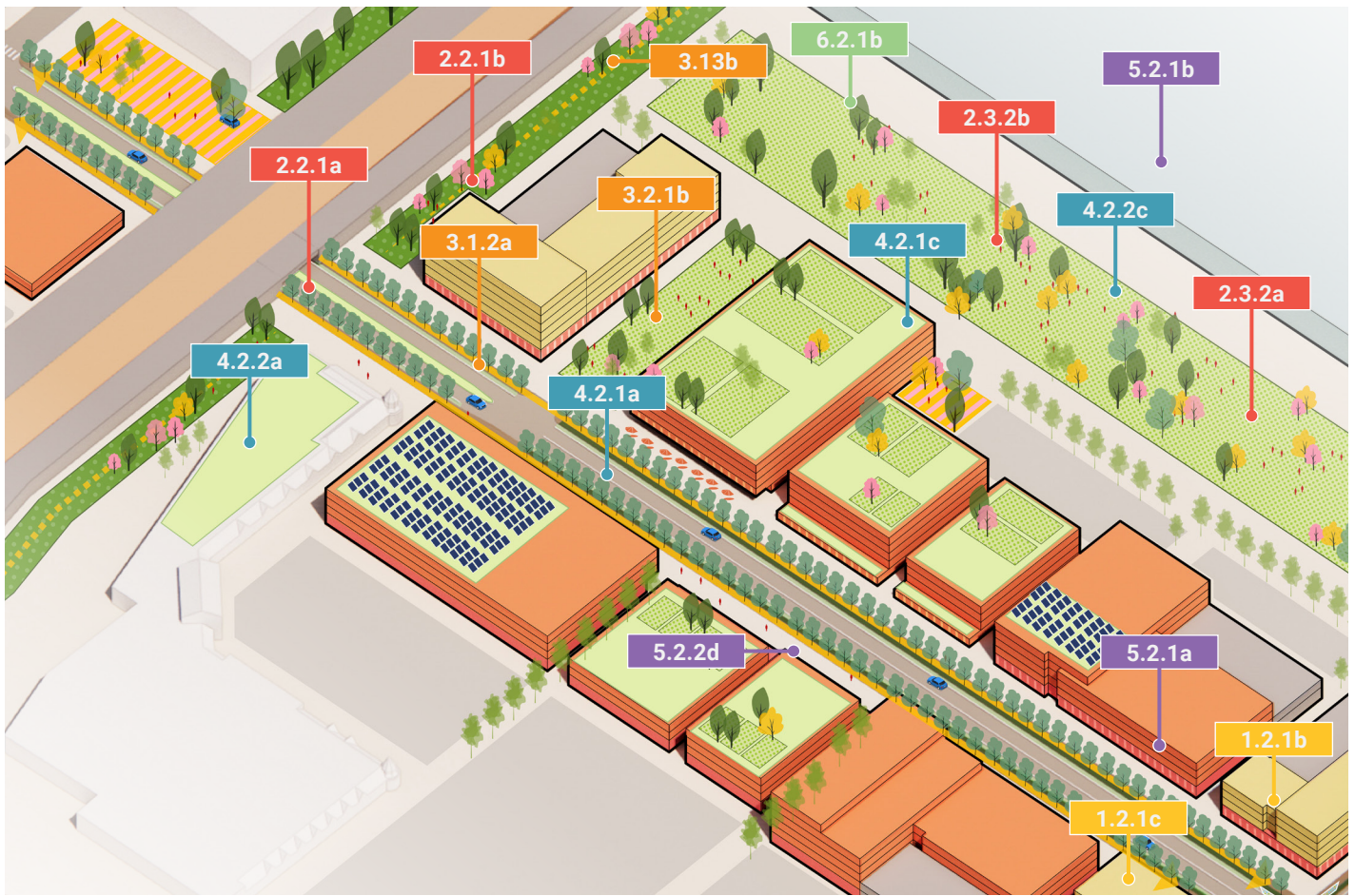


**51st Street:** Infill opportunities along 51st Street can create dynamic hubs in underutilized lots. New, mixed-use development on surface parking lots can provide a transition between industry and residential blocks, while enhancing the walkability and attractiveness of the street.

**Kedzie Avenue** includes multiple businesses and links communities, bus routes and a CTA Orange line station. Existing conditions are not pedestrian friendly. Retail faces away from sidewalks, parking lots buffer pedestrian from main entrances, and viaducts are poorly maintained. It can become an active street if public realm improvements, sustainable landscape buffers, and new development is prioritized.

**California Avenue** connects both neighborhoods with new community institutions like the Esperanza Health Center at 47th. East of Western, California is the next street connection between both communities. This area includes underutilized lots and poorly maintained infrastructure. Streetscape improvements, viaduct activation and landscape buffers around industrial uses and new development could improve the resident experience and connect community assets.





### Kedzie Avenue: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

The Kedzie CTA Station is an opportunity to explore the feasibility of a transit-oriented development. Kedzie Avenue is one of the few links between Brighton Park and Gage Park. Providing a welcoming, safe, and enjoyable experience along this corridor could connect multiple business, community assets and transit options. New development opportunities could be explored in this corridor at underutilized sites. Future developments should consider how to activate ground-floor uses, new housing options, and provide multi-functional landscape buffers between industrial and nonindustrial uses that also offer open space amenities to residents.



## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

**1.2.1b** Explore opportunities for mixed-use development on underutilized land adjacent to CTA Orange Line stations and high frequency bus corridors.

**1.2.1c** Consider re-zoning areas near transit stations and high frequency bus corridors to accommodate denser, mixed-use development.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts

**2.2.1a** Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

**2.2.1b** Explore the feasibility of a greenway or trail system along rail embankments or right-of-way that improves access to the Park District HQ and connects communities.

**2.3.2a** Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.

**2.3.2b** Encourage landscape buffers that can serve as multifunctional places that provide public space for recreation, greenery, or other community benefits.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

**3.1.2a** Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.

**3.1.3b** Expand opportunities to incorporate public art, landscaping or other beautification along industrial corridors, viaducts, public rights-of-way, and on underutilized lots.

**3.2.1b** Study the feasibility of programming opportunities like markets, pocket parks, and other active community uses on vacant and underutilized lots.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

**4.2.1a** Develop and promote alternative freight routes to reduce truck traffic on neighborhood streets, in residential areas, or where trucks are not wanted or warranted, through policies or infrastructure.

**4.2.1c** Incentivize adoption of pollution-reducing options like EV charging, on-site green energy systems, and green infrastructure for all types of buildings and developments.

**4.2.2a** Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.

**4.2.2c** Where appropriate, encourage new development to incorporate permeable surfaces and landscaping in parking lots, service areas, and other areas traditionally paved with impervious materials.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

**5.2.1a** Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

**5.2.1b** Evaluate the existing land use of the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor to position it for continued success as a vital jobs center.

**5.2.2d** Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.



### Enhance community programming for all generations

**6.2.1b** Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.



### California Avenue

Industrial land use and freight infrastructure are barriers between Brighton Park and Gage Park, limiting available connections at Western, California and Kedzie about 1/2 a mile apart. These barriers limit the use of multimodal options to access community services and assets. The California corridor offers connections between the 47th Street and 51st Street commercial corridors and community assets like the Esperanza Health Center and multiple schools. The current state of the California corridor includes poorly maintained sidewalks and viaducts, underutilized lots with overgrown vegetation, and heavy traffic.

By improving the pedestrian experience on California, residents can have better access to community assets. The relocation of industrial operations in the corridor provides an opportunity to re-imagine underutilized parcels to provide new development. Improving streetscape conditions can not only provide a better pedestrian experience but it can also be an opportunity to improve the community tree canopy. Expanding the tree canopy and landscape buffers could mitigate environmental issues like the urban heat island effect, stormwater management, and air quality.

## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

1.1.2a

Encourage development opportunities to include housing units along commercial corridors.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts

2.2.1a

Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance. Explore the feasibility of a greenway or trail system along rail embankments or right-of-way that improves access to the Park District HQ and connects communities.

2.2.1b

2.2.2c

Encourage pocket parks and private open spaces adjacent to and/or in conjunction with new development or to activate vacant and underutilized land.

2.3.2a

Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

3.1.1a

Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

3.1.1d

Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.

3.1.2a

Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.

3.1.3b

Expand opportunities to incorporate public art, landscaping or other beautification along industrial corridors, viaducts, public rights-of-way, and on underutilized lots.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

4.2.1a

Develop and promote alternative freight routes to reduce truck traffic on neighborhood streets, in residential areas, or where trucks are not wanted or warranted, through policies or infrastructure.

4.2.2a

Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.

4.2.2c

Develop industrial site design guidelines, including best practices for landscape buffers, buffers between residential or other sensitive uses, green stormwater infrastructure, and other tactics.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

5.2.1a

Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

5.2.1b

Evaluate the existing land use of the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor to position it for continued success as a vital jobs center.

5.2.2d

Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.

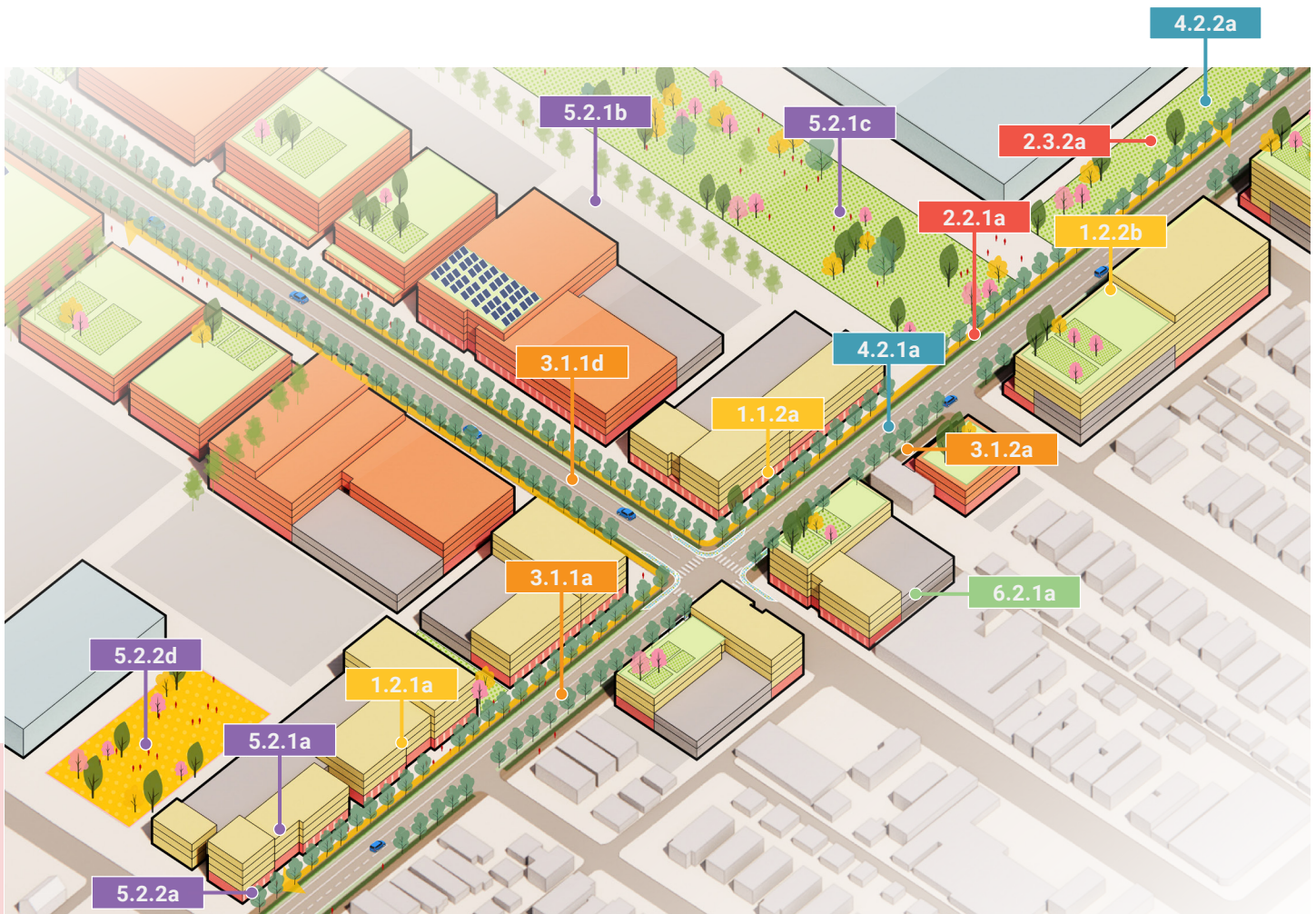


### Enhance community programming for all generations

6.2.1b

Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.





### 51st Street

There are many vacant and underutilized sites along 51st Street. The corridor could see significant change and infill development through future development. Vacant lots on 51st Street are connected by a bus corridor. Activating these lots could address the major gaps imposed by the unused, overgrown parking lots that impact on the pedestrian experience of the 51st Street corridor. New development on these lots could provide housing options for an area where the rent burden is growing, active ground-floor retail space, and community-serving assets.

New developments should consider how to provide well-scaled transitions between industrial, commercial and the residential neighborhood. The Central Steel and Wire site is the largest underutilized site on the Southwest Side. While there are no plans to redevelop the site, given its size, appropriate landscape buffers between industrial and nonindustrial uses on the site that provide community open space and ecological infrastructure should be explored for any future development.

## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

**1.1.2a** Encourage development opportunities to include housing units along commercial corridors.

**1.2.1a** Encourage and target development opportunities along main corridors by utilizing existing housing development ordinances to build more housing units, changing zoning designations as appropriate to allow housing, and promoting available financial tools.

**1.2.2b** Continue to encourage new housing development to include residential amenities for multiple generations and family configurations like in-building amenities, play areas, recreation and gathering spaces.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts

**2.2.1a** Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

**2.3.2a** Encourage landscape buffers between car-intensive uses (like parking lots, drive-thrus and car washes) and pedestrian areas.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

**3.1.1a** Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

**3.1.1d** Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.

**3.1.2a** Encourage streetscape improvements along major corridors that prioritize street furniture (i.e. benches, bus shelters, trash cans and light poles), sidewalk improvements, landscape features, tree plantings, and showcase neighborhood identity.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

**4.2.1a** Develop and promote alternative freight routes to reduce truck traffic on neighborhood streets, in residential areas, or where trucks are not wanted or warranted, through policies or infrastructure.

**4.2.2a** Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

**5.2.1a** Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

**5.2.1b** Evaluate the existing land use of the Brighton Park Industrial Corridor to position it for continued success as a vital jobs center.

**5.2.1c** Explore the feasibility of re-purposing or reconfiguring larger parcels to support a range of different uses that could include industrial and job creation opportunities.

**5.2.2a** Find opportunities to invite entertainment and cultural amenities, diverse restaurants, vendors, and other retail services to main street corridors.

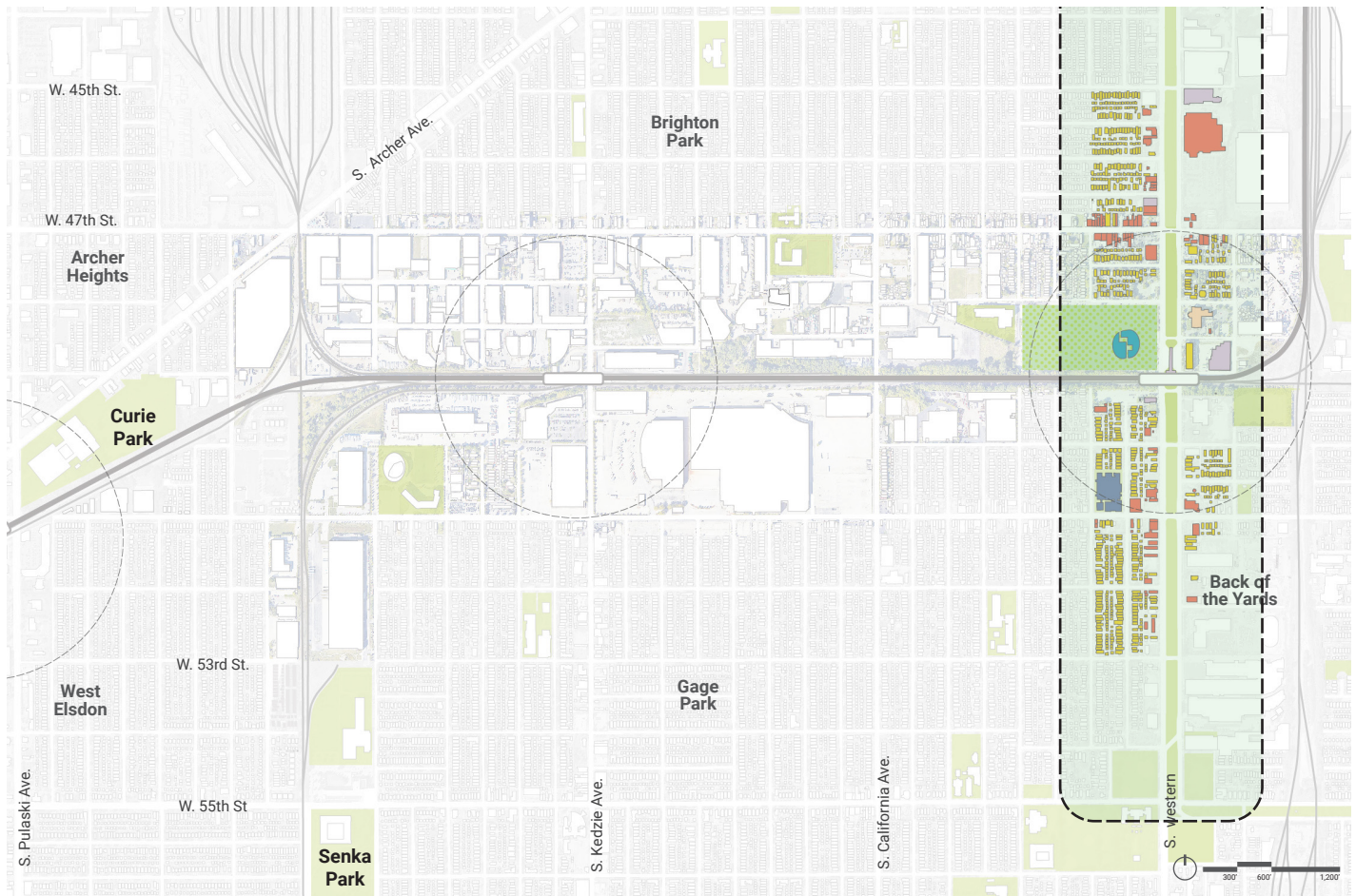
**5.2.2d** Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.



### Enhance community programming for all generations

**6.2.1a** Encourage the creation of mixed-use, multi-purpose facilities that can accommodate a variety of amenities, services, and programming, including co-locating community assets and public services.





### Typology #3: Boulevards The Boulevard as an Active Space

Western Boulevard is one of Chicago's main north/south corridors. It is also the longest street in the city. In Brighton Park and Gage Park, Western is part of the city's historic boulevard system that spans various neighborhoods. While the boulevard provides a nice tree canopy and landscape areas, the existing traffic conditions create a significant barrier to access this community amenity. Pedestrian movement and crossings are difficult, vehicular and truck traffic are significant, existing infrastructure like roads and lighting are poorly maintained, and the road layout includes four two-way lanes on each side of the boulevard. The boulevard extends from McKinley Park to Gage Park before turning into Garfield Boulevard.

### Typology 3: Re-Define Boulevards as Green Connections





Western Avenue Boulevard Today

- Street Crossing
- Primary Pedestrian Crossings
- Boulevard / Central Median







### Western Boulevard as a Community Connector

To improve access and the experience of the boulevard, a connector with trails and seating amenities, bike paths connecting to other routes and enhanced landscape can help incorporate this area into the community open space network. Other amenities to transform the boulevard should include signage to highlight its history, create a hub for multimodal options with its various connections, create multiple crossings and road layout changes to prioritize pedestrians, bikes, and connections to community assets.



Western Boulevard Illustrative Section

## Action Items Illustrated



### Increase access to housing options

**1.2.1a** Encourage and target development opportunities along main corridors by utilizing existing housing development ordinances to build more housing units, changing zoning designations as appropriate to allow housing, and promoting available financial tools.

**1.2.1b** Explore opportunities for mixed-use development on underutilized land adjacent to CTA Orange Line stations and high frequency bus corridors.

**1.2.1c** Consider re-zoning areas near transit stations and high frequency bus corridors to accommodate denser, mixed-use development.



### Expand open space access and neighborhood beautification efforts

**2.2.1a** Expand public realm improvements that elevate the experience of main street corridors through character, identity, art, and landscape features and maintenance.

**2.2.1c** Promote Western Boulevard as a green space by expanding access, programming, and mitigating traffic impacts.

**2.3.1a** Amplify current grant opportunities and identify new resources to incorporate community art in public spaces, infrastructure, transit stations and stops and along corridors.



### Prioritize safe streets and the public realm

**3.1.1a** Implement traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures from resources like the Better Streets for Buses toolkit and by limiting car-intensive uses along major pedestrian corridors and intersections, near open spaces, schools and other community assets, and in high-accident areas.

**3.1.1d** Incorporate street designs to mitigate truck impacts by minimizing conflict points between trucks and vulnerable road users.

**3.1.2b** Explore the feasibility of prioritizing lanes for multimodal transportation options like bus, bike, scooter, and other accessible mobility options, including the study of on-street parking, loading and service impacts along main corridors.



### Foster a culture of community Health and environmental justice

**4.2.2a** Encourage new development to include multifunctional landscape buffers that increase the tree canopy and manage, reduce, and improve stormwater management, urban heat island effect, and air quality.

**4.2.2b** Where appropriate, increase tree plantings along major corridors like Western Boulevard and other high traffic roads.



### Position opportunities for increased economic development

**5.2.1a** Position and prepare underutilized sites along main corridors for redevelopment to support mixed-use development through incentives, re-zoning, transit-supportive land use, and public realm investment.

**5.2.2d** Encourage uses that provide public open space, ground-floor retail, restaurants or other opportunities that increase foot traffic in new developments.



### Enhance community programming for all generations

**6.2.1b** Continue to provide and expand opportunities to re-imagine underutilized areas into flexible community open space for programming.

**6.3.2a** Create a signature identity on Western Boulevard and main commercial corridors that respects historical character, cultural heritage, and reflects the Brighton Park and Gage Park communities through art, lighting, and signage.

**6.3.2b** Amplify current grant opportunities and identify new resources to incorporate community art along industrial and commercial corridors.



# III. Multifunctional Landscapes

## Improve the Environment with Landscape

As new landscapes are incorporated into streetscapes, buffers, and developments, incorporate specific plant species and plant characteristics known for improving overall air quality.

### Cleaning Pollutants through Plantings

Plants play a crucial role in capturing, cleaning, and storing pollutants through a process called phytoremediation. They take up contaminants from the soil or air through their roots or leaves.

Once inside the plant, these pollutants are either broken down into less harmful substances by the plant's internal processes or stored in various plant tissues. For example, some plants can convert toxic heavy metals into safer forms or lock them away in their leaves and stems, preventing them from spreading further.

Plants can help cleanse the air by absorbing pollutants like nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. By capturing and processing these pollutants, plants effectively act as natural detoxifiers, helping to reduce environmental pollution and improve overall ecosystem health.

### Phytoaccumulation

Pollutants are stored in the leaves and utilized by the plant. Large canopies and leaves assist in greater capture and storage. Pollutants come from vehicles, trucks, industry and other intensive use like PM<sub>2.5</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, Ground-level ozone, CO.

### Phytometabolism

Pollutants are captured and broken down into less toxic materials and utilized by the plant.

## Plant Selection Guidelines

To create a plant palette that can withstand the urban conditions, provide carbon sequestration and impart air purifying benefits, the selected species should have the following:

- Plants with large canopies and surface area leaves which are more effective in capturing and storing airborne pollutants.
- High tolerance to pollution such as ozone, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide.
- High drought and salt tolerance to withstand urban conditions.
- Native or native cultivars which are adapted to local climate and soil conditions.
- Extensive root systems to enhance soil carbon storage.
- Where applicable, evergreen trees and shrubs to provide year-round benefits.
- Refer to the larger plant selection list for additional recommendations on species.



### Carbon Sequestration

Chicagoland's trees capture about 61.9 million tons of carbon dioxide. One large tree can capture 1,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year. For comparison, one gallon of gasoline produces about 20 lbs.

### Shade and Cooling

Trees provide, share, and cool the air. By reducing surface temperatures, they reduce the impacts of the urban heat island effect. These benefits may reduce surface temperatures by 20-45 degrees. During the summer, trees can reduce air temperatures by 2-9 degrees.

### Phytoextraction

Both inorganic and organic materials are pulled through the root system and utilized by the plant while treating groundwater. Trees slow down water flow, helping reduce flooding and absorb waterborne toxic waste. About 500-760 gallons of storm water per year can be captured by a single deciduous tree.



**Trees:** Desired traits include high pollutant absorption, large canopies, and large leaves.



**Exclamation! London Planetree**  
*Platanus x acerifolia* 'Morton Circle'



**American Elm**, *Ulmus americana*



**White Oak**, *Quercus alba*

**Shrubs:** Desired traits include dense and broad foliage and resilient to harsher conditions.



**Forsythia**, *Forsythia x intermedia*



**Common Lilac**, *Syringa vulgaris*

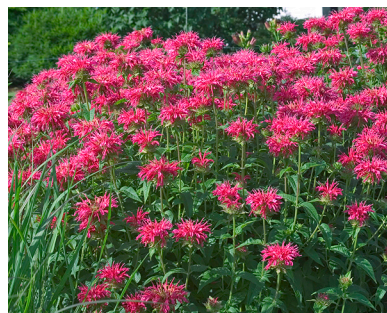


**Viburnum**, *Viburnum* spp.

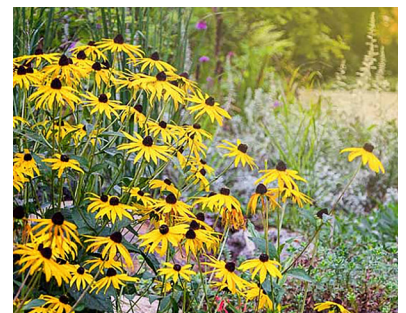
**Perennials:** Desired traits include particulate trapping, native species, and long blooming.



**Goldenrod**, *Solidago* spp.



**Bee Balm**, *Monarda didyma*



**Black-eyed Susan**, *Rudbeckia hirta*

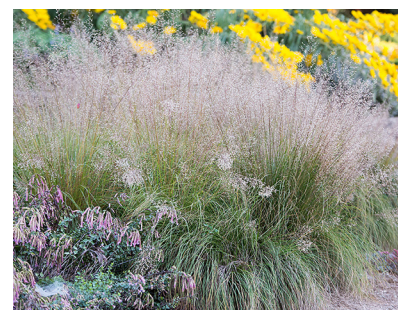
**Grasses:** Desired traits include deep root system, erosion control, and drought tolerance.



**Switchgrass**, *Panicum virgatum*

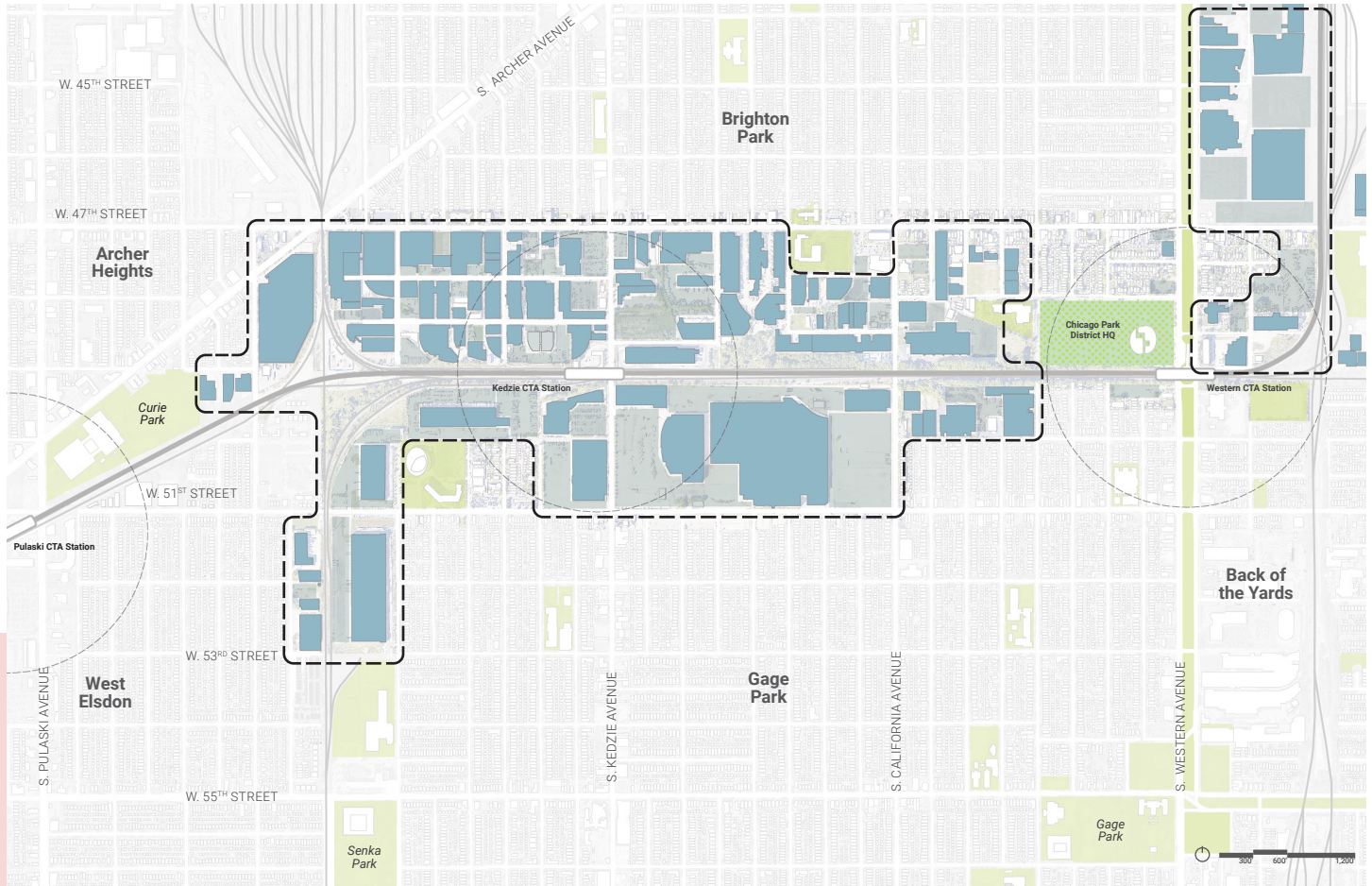


**Big Bluestem**, *Andropogon gerardii*



**Prairie Dropseed**, *Sporobolus heterolepis*



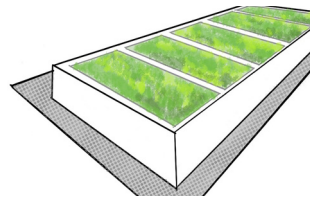


### Incorporate Multi-Functional Open Spaces

Permeable surfaces play a crucial role in enhancing urban sustainability by allowing water to pass through and be slowed, stored or absorbed by ground, thereby reducing runoff and mitigating flood risks.

- Integrating permeable pavements, rain gardens, and bioswales at the ground level, especially near underutilized areas or areas that create a lot of stormwater runoff helps mitigate risk.
- The potential to integrate green roofs into large flat rooftops would also positively benefit the district.
- Larger flat rooftops could be used for energy production with the installation of solar panels.

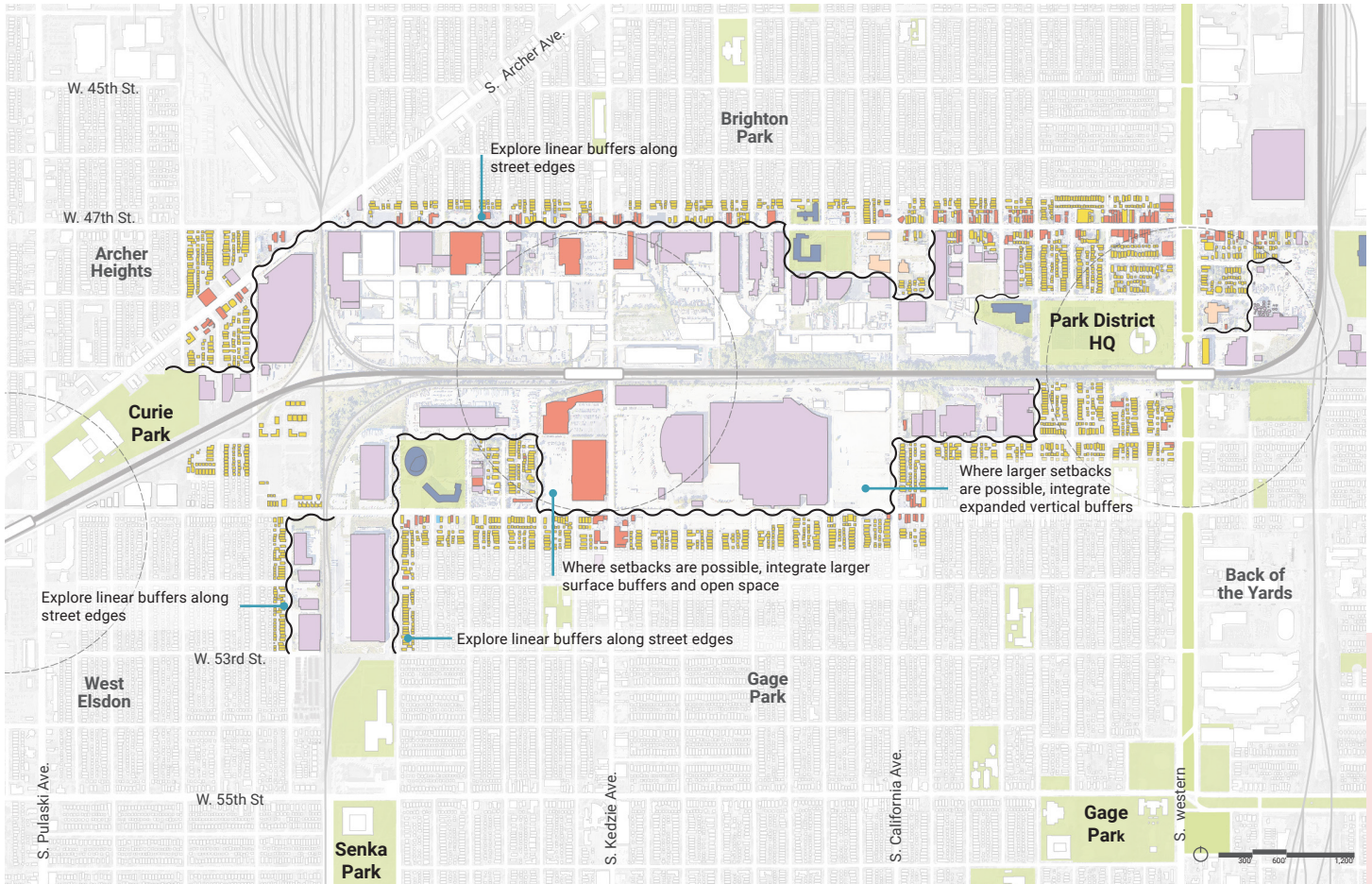
- Existing non-permeable surfaces
- Existing larger footprint flat roofs
- Priority zone to increase permeable surfaces



### Green Roofs

Planting landscape over flat surfaces on roofs. Can Reduce the urban heat island effect in the industrial areas by integrating green roofs into existing and new buildings.





— Priority buffer zone between uses

### Landscape Buffers between Industrial and Residential Uses

Landscape buffers serve to physically and visually separate different land uses, such as industrial and residential areas, by mitigating noise, pollution, and unsightly views while enhancing the aesthetic and environmental quality of the space.

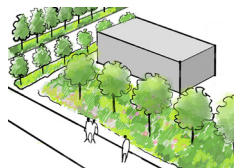
- **Linear Buffer:** a parkway typically along roads and property boundaries which provides separation of uses with low vegetation and trees to maintain clear sight lines.
- **Surface Buffer:** a multi-functional, landscaped area providing increased ecological benefits. This may take the form of a rain garden, pollinator garden or gathering space.
- **Vertical Buffer:** a planting strategy using trees and large shrubs to create a visual barrier between uses while providing ecological services such as habitat creation.

### Buffer Examples



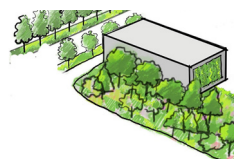
#### Linear Buffer (parkway)

Locate where existing industrial development has limited setbacks from the roadways.



#### Surface Buffer (Garden)

Locate where setbacks allow for expanded buffers.



#### Vertical Buffer (Tree Grove)

Locate where large setbacks are possible or along train embankments.



### Multifunctional Green Infrastructure

Much of the lands in the industrial areas, as well as many of the primary roadways, have limited tree cover today which has impacts on the air quality, temperature, and stormwater management. Landscape buffers can physically, and visually separate different land uses and improve aesthetic and environmental quality of the space.

### Landscape for the People

By integrating open spaces within its ecological context for recreation, social gatherings, and community events, these spaces enhance character of the neighborhood while also providing larger health benefits.

Incorporate open spaces that serve multiple uses beyond single-purpose facilities. Consider how open spaces can also add ecological benefits such as habitat creation, reduction of urban heat island effect, and stormwater management. Consider how interventions can include both active and passive opportunities including green ways, rain gardens, increased plantings and increased tree canopy.

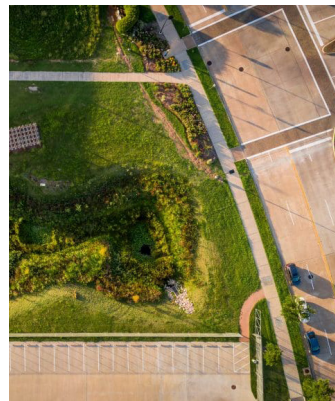
Pairing permeable surfaces with multi-functional landscapes can better connect the project area with programming such as gathering spaces, interesting plants and trees, and other ways to incorporate stormwater infrastructure into daily life while providing important ecological services like stormwater management, habitat creation, pollution mitigation, and urban heat island reduction.

Overall, multi-functional open spaces are crucial for creating vibrant, adaptable communities that thrive on accessibility and ecological balance.

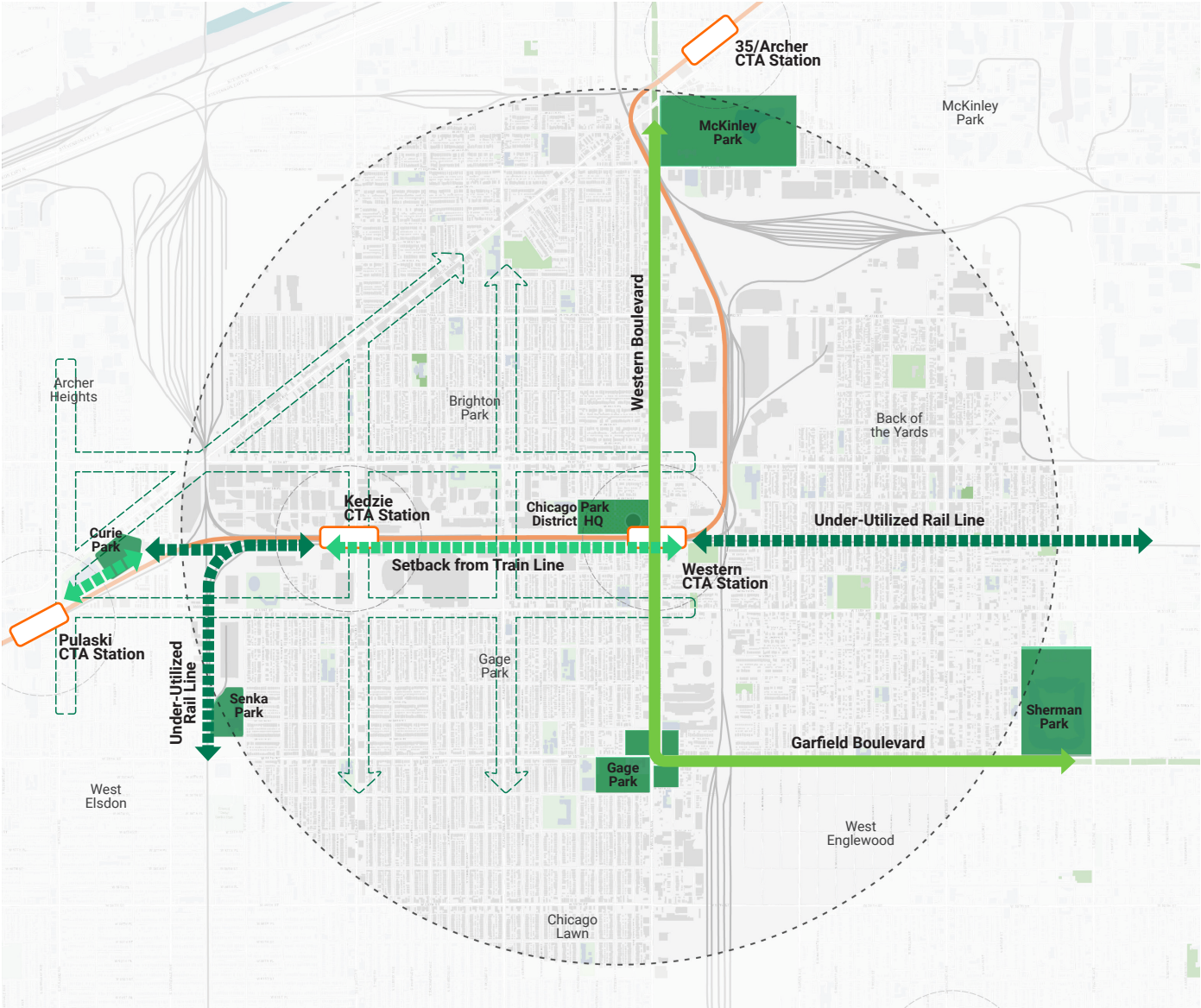
### Tree-lined Streets

Street trees along major corridors provide important services that enhance the aesthetic and ecology of a street. They provide shade when it's too sunny and hot and provide wind protection on winter days.

Depending on the street tree species, trees could fill streetscapes with seasonal interest like color and flowers throughout the year as well as providing year-round ecological benefits like stormwater management.







**Position Underutilized Infrastructure for Longer-Term Transformation**

Zooming out beyond the study area, the larger connection of open spaces, parks, and boulevards linking Brighton Park and Gage Park are visible.

Expanding the connective green links from the boulevards into an expanded trail network transforming underutilized rail lines and adjacent lands into a more robust trail system will link the larger community to the Chicago Park District HQ and the surrounding communities together.

- ←→ Potential Trail on Underutilized Rail Lines
- ←→ Potential Trail Adjacent to Train Embankment
- ←→ Potential Trail in Existing Boulevards
- Existing Park Space
- School
- CTA Station
- Tree Canopy Priority Corridors



### Plant Selection Guidelines

To create a plant palette that can withstand the urban conditions, provide carbon sequestration and impart air purifying benefits consider the following the selected species:

| Latin Name   | Common Name                      |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Trees</b>   |                                  |
| <i>Acer miyabei</i>  | State Street Miyabe Maple        |
| <i>Catalpa speciosa</i>  | Northern Catalpa                 |
| <i>Gleditsia tricanthos</i> 'Shademaster'                          | Shademaster Honeylocust          |
| <i>Platanus x acerifolia</i> 'Morton Circle'                       | Exclamation! London Planetree    |
| <i>Quercus bicolor</i>   | Swamp White Oak                  |
| <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>  | Bur Oak                          |
| <i>Sophora japonica</i>  | Japanese Pagodatree              |
| <i>Taxodium distichum</i> 'Shawnee Brave'                          | Shawnee Brave Baldscypress       |
| <i>Ulmus americana</i> ('Princeton', 'Valley Forge', New Harmony') | American Elm                     |
| <i>Zelkova serrata</i> 'Village Green'                             | Village Green Japanese Zelkova   |
| <b>Shrubs</b>  |                                  |
| <i>Aronia melanocarpa</i> 'Morton'                                 | Iroquois Beauty Black Chokeberry |
| <i>Ceanothus americanus</i>  | New Jersey Tea                   |
| <i>Diervilla lonicera</i>  | Dwarf Bush Honeysuckle           |
| <i>Forsythia x intermedia</i>                                      | Forsythia                        |
| <i>Hydrangea arborescens</i> 'NCHA8'                               | Invincibelle Limetta Hydrangea   |
| <i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i> 'Bailmacfive'                         | Summer Crush Hydrangea           |
| <i>Ilex glabra</i> 'Shamrock'                                      | Shamrock Inkberry                |
| <i>Pinus mugo</i> var. <i>pumilo</i>                               | Mugo Pine                        |
| <i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>  | Potentilla                       |
| <i>Rhus aromatica</i> 'Gro Low'                                    | Fragrant Sumac                   |
| <i>Rubus odoratus</i>  | Purple Flowering Raspberry       |
| <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>  | Common Lilac                     |
| <i>Viburnum</i> spp.   | Viburnum                         |
| <b>Perennials</b>  |                                  |
| <i>Allium cernuum</i>  | Nodding Onion                    |
| <i>Anemone canadensis</i>  | Meadow Aneome                    |
| <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>  | Columbine                        |
| <i>Blephilia hirsuta</i>   | Hairy Wood Mint                  |
| <i>Camassia scilloides</i>   | Wild Hyacinth                    |
| <i>Campanula americana</i>   | Tall Bellflower                  |
| <i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>                                    | Partridge Pea                    |
| <i>Conoclinium coelestinum</i>                                     | Mistflower                       |

|                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Dalea purpurea</i>            | Purple Prairie Clover   |
| <i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>        | Midland Shooting Star   |
| <i>Echinacea purpurea</i>        | Purple Coneflower       |
| <i>Eurybia macrophylla</i>       | Big-Leaved Aster        |
| <i>Fragaria virginiana</i>       | Wild Strawberry         |
| <i>Geranium maculatum</i>        | Wild Geranium           |
| <i>Geum triflorum</i>            | Prairie Smoke           |
| <i>Isopyrum bitermum</i>         | False Rue Anemone       |
| <i>Liatris aspera</i>            | Button Blazing Star     |
| <i>Lupinus perennis</i>          | Wild Lupine             |
| <i>Monarda didyma</i>            | Bee Balm                |
| <i>Penstemon digitalis</i>       | Foxglove Beardtongue    |
| <i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>        | Hairy Beardtongue       |
| <i>Phlox divaricata</i>          | Wild Blue Phlox         |
| <i>Phlox maculata</i>            | Wild Sweet William      |
| <i>Porteranthus stipulatus</i>   | Western Indian Physic   |
| <i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>  | Mountain Mint           |
| <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>           | Black-eyed Susan        |
| <i>Solidago spp.</i>             | Goldenrod               |
| <i>Symphotrichum cordifolium</i> | Heart-Leaved Aster      |
| <i>Tradescantia ohimensis</i>    | Ohio Spiderwort         |
| <i>Triticum aestivum</i>         | Winter Wheat            |
| <i>Viola pedata</i>              | Bird's Foot Violet      |
| <b>Grasses</b>                   |                         |
| <i>Andropogon gerardii</i>       | Big Bluestem            |
| <i>Avena sativa L.</i>           | Spring Oats             |
| <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>    | Side-Oats Grama         |
| <i>Carex pensylvanica</i>        | Pennsylvania Sedge      |
| <i>Carex rosea</i>               | Curly-styled Wood Sedge |
| <i>Carex sprengei</i>            | Long-beaked Sedge       |
| <i>Elymus virginicus</i>         | Virginia Wild Rye       |
| <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>   | Little Bluestem         |
| <i>Panicum virgatum</i>          | Switchgrass             |
| <i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>    | Prairie Dropseed        |

# IV. Additional Community Engagement Exhibits

## Community Space and Programming Ideas by Community Members

Curated collection of spaces and programming suggested by the community throughout the engagement process.



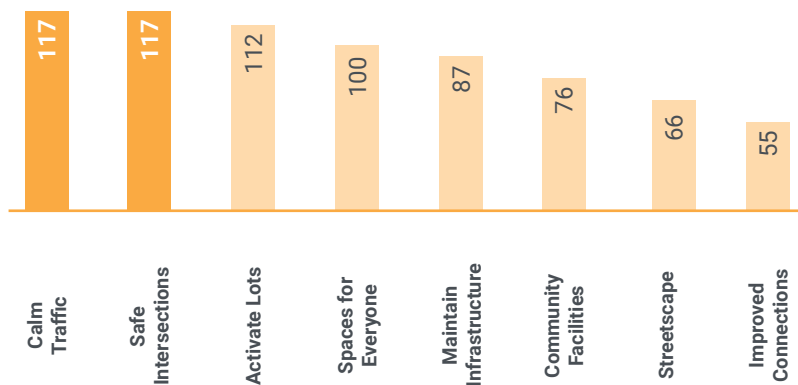
Community spaces programs can be divided into categories by scale (small, medium and large and daily use to large scale events) which helps to inform potential uses within existing or future park and open spaces.



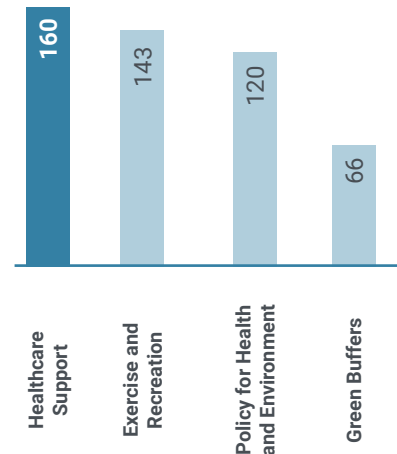
## Preliminary Recommendations Survey Results

205 Online and Paper Surveys Completed

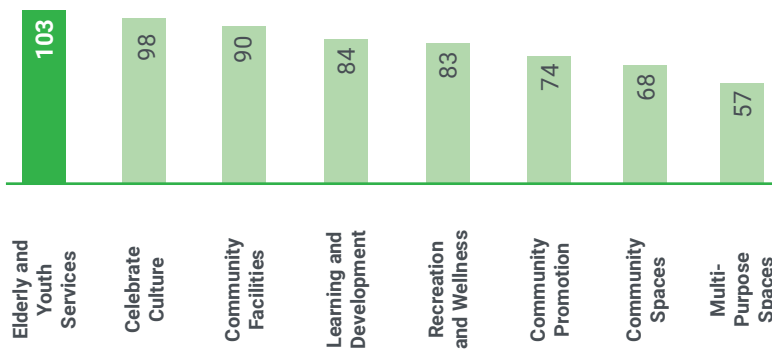
### PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND COMMUNITY SPACES



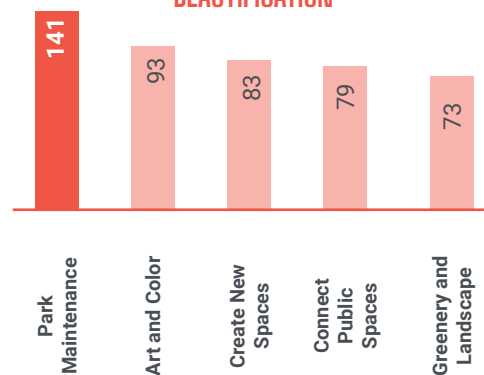
### HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



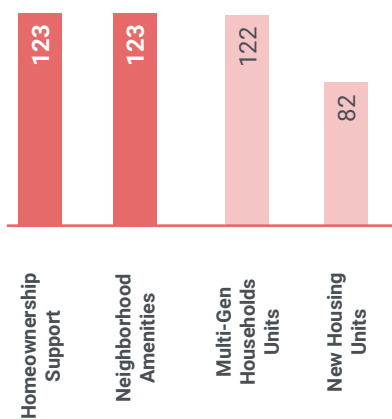
### COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL



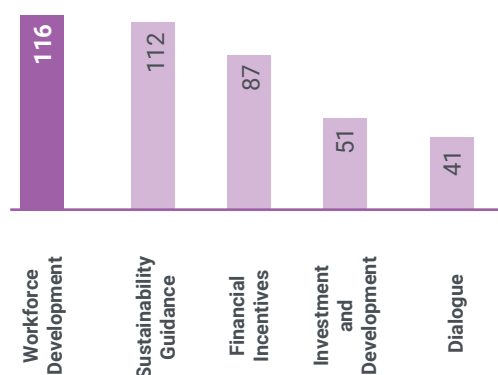
### OPEN SPACE AND BEAUTIFICATION



### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



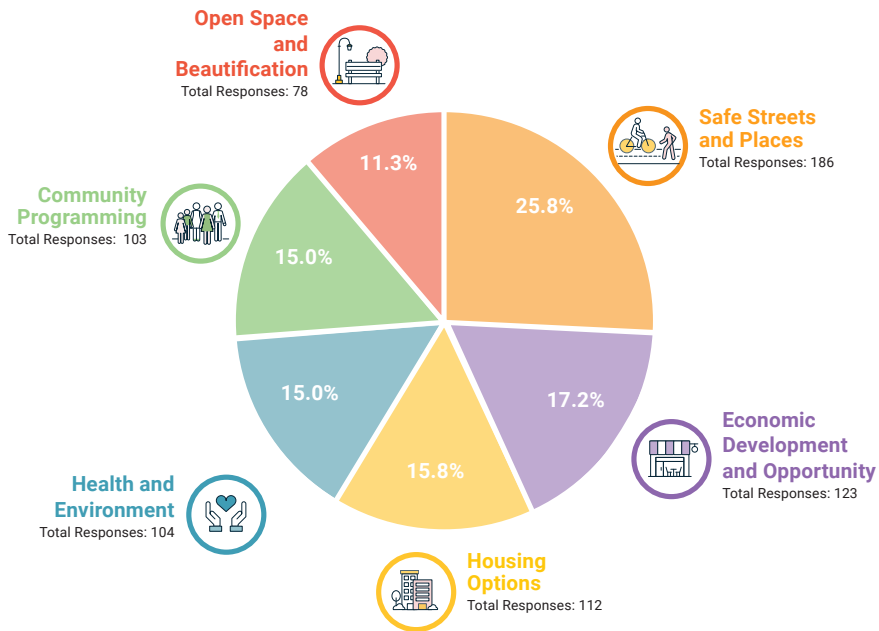
### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITY



Community Priorities

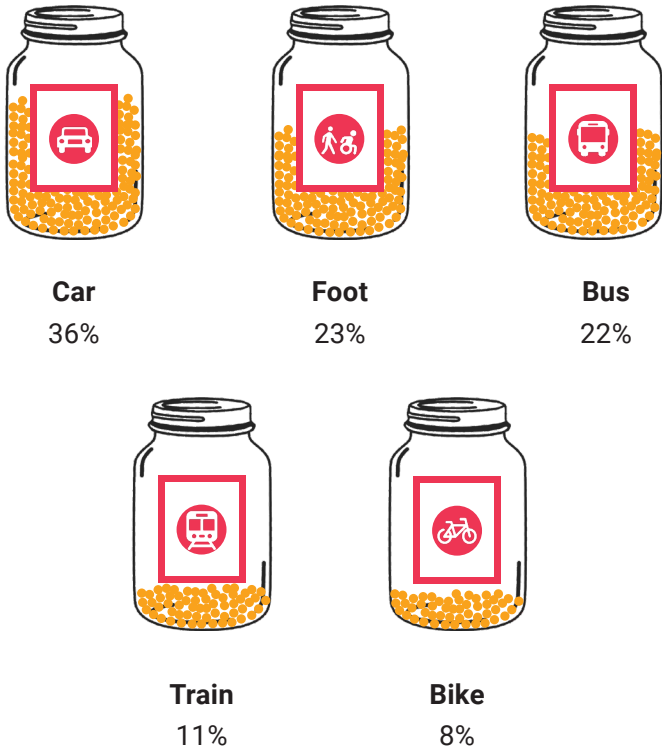
Community members were asked to identify the priorities that are most important to them. These results shaped the development of action items in this plan.

A series of priorities were identified to guide planning recommendations. The community priority rankings are based on results collected from surveys and other community engagement events.



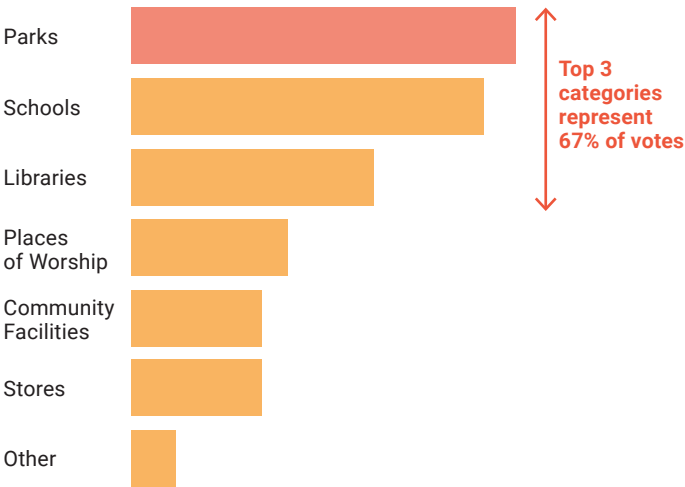
How do you transport yourself around the community?

Community members shared their typical mobility choices to move between home, school, work, or other community destinations. Personal cars are the most used method, followed by walking (or mobility device) and the bus.



Where does the community like to hang out?

Community members were asked where they spend time.



### Inclusive Engagement Learned Experiences in Brighton Park and Gage Park

Historically, communities on the Southwest Side have been underrepresented in city planning initiatives and may lack familiarity with this type of work when compared to other parts of the city. With this in mind, the team focused on finding ways to engage with residents at community events, explored different outreach methods to distribute information, offered opportunities to participate in both English and Spanish, and engage through key community partners.

The team developed an ongoing engagement process that welcomed continued dialogue with community members. This way, regardless of the engagement platform (in-person meetings or events, online or paper surveys, community advisory group meetings, etc.) findings and recommendations constantly evolved based on participant feedback.

The project team met people in the community. Through an ongoing presence at community events, the project team provided community members with opportunities to learn about the study and contribute feedback. Each community engagement initiative was followed by a report documenting feedback and observations. Lastly, the events attended and held by the team were centrally located within each community in well-known neighborhood spaces, like parks and houses of worship, and accessible to different modes of transportation. The team also provided contact information for additional feedback.

### When Engaging on the Southwest Side

- Provide materials in both English and Spanish, additional languages may need to be included based on community demographics
- Survey materials must be offered in both online and physical formats and provide options for anonymity
- Survey respondents can include family units and family units may be composed of multiple generations
- Coordinate with relevant City departments and sister agencies to identify delegate agencies working in the community
- Coordinate with delegate agencies and community organizations for survey and outreach material distribution
- Distribute outreach materials at common gathering spaces like libraries, houses of worship, community-serving facilities, grocery stores, relevant to a community's cultural background
- Connect with local organizations and explore engagement opportunities at community events hosted by them
- Staff all events with bilingual staff
- Account for missing voices at events and find ways to engage to those audiences
- At events hosted by the project team, consider inviting local community groups to participate and provide a resource fair component
- Consider the audience, age, demographic, accessibility needs when preparing engagement materials so that providing feedback is easy, welcoming and fun
- Consider including festive decor or swag depending on the season
- Offer stand-alone engagement activities where participants can independently participate
- Ask participants about the areas near their home, frequently attended institutions or favorite neighborhood spots to facilitate a conversation on their concerns and ideas



## Ideas Shared by Community Members



### INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING OPTIONS

- Build new housing units near transit, services, amenities, and connections to job opportunities
- Target the activation of vacant storefronts, ground-floor uses, open spaces, and plazas to invite more neighborhood amenities like recreation, restaurants, cafes, and other entertainment amenities
- Offer more housing options like multi-family housing, expanding accessory dwelling units, and affordable housing to lower rent burdens
- Explore ways to limit or avoid displacement.
- Continue to expand outreach on housing programs and resources like home ownership, rental assistance, services for the unhoused, and others
- Encourage housing developments to provide units and amenities for multi-generational family units.



### EXPAND OPEN SPACE ACCESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS

- Continue to expand everyday amenities in parks like restrooms, places to sit, and community spaces
- Continue to provide more open space and programming in the neighborhood by allocating more resources to the parks and libraries
- Expand and continue to organize volunteer groups to help clean the parks
- Provide more outdoor spaces and programming like markets, concerts, movies, pools, festivals, community gardening/agriculture and other events
- Continue to expand partnerships with institutions for open space
- Find ways to activate the boulevard on Western
- Provide more landscape buffers between intensive uses like high-traffic streets and industrial areas
- Increase the tree canopy and overall neighborhood greenery
- Explore converting underutilized spaces, like embankments and vacant lots, into open spaces, connections, and trails.
- Use vacant and underutilized land for open space, pocket parks, and plazas
- Include art in new developments, public spaces, and improve the aesthetic of the neighborhood



### PRIORITIZE SAFE STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

- Continue to improve response times by emergency services
- Consider gang boundaries and their impacts on accessing existing and future community assets
- Improve crosswalks and provide safe intersections/connections, especially near schools, community assets, and industrial areas with heavy freight usage
- Continue to improve lighting and provide way-finding signage along major corridors and community assets
- Make infrastructure crossings, like viaducts, more accessible by improving maintenance and activation
- Improve the circulation and availability of street and business parking and loading
- Prioritize pedestrian connections to mass transit like the Western CTA station
- Increase multi-modal mobility options for bikes, strollers, and those with limited abilities
- Expand bike and Divvy infrastructure near transit to connect community spaces/amenities
- Continue maintenance improvements on streets, improve response times to 311 requests, and create truck traffic reduction measures near community assets and residential streets
- Expand the capacities of all community assets and develop new ones like the Gage Park Library Branch, programming, and open spaces that provide spaces for community gathering, invite all age groups, and are easy to access
- Enforce the maintenance of underutilized lots and encourage new development on opportunity sites.



## FOSTER A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- Decrease the impact of existing barriers to community services and assets through better sidewalks and multi-modal transportation options
- Expand the bike lane network for mobility, recreation, and exercise
- Continue to regulate polluting businesses and operations, like truck traffic, that impact community health and the environment like flooding, the urban heat island effect, and air pollution.
- Increase the tree canopy and landscaping in the neighborhood
- Expand the capacity of community clinics and other health resources that keep everyone active, healthy eating, and promote overall wellness



## POSITION OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to support and expand workforce development, skills, and vocational education programs, and connect local residents and students to local opportunities
- Offer education resources and guidance on economic development, entrepreneurship, and sustainability
- Continue to support and cultivate supply chain partner relationships
- Support investment along corridors and underutilized lots and curate incentive programs to meet the demands of existing businesses
- Expand and identify ways to improve outreach strategies on incentive programs
- Improve reliability of transit and multi-modal transportation options from home to workplace
- Incentivize job creation along corridors with multimodal transportation options and amenities
- Provide sustainability guidance and resources that consider existing businesses and harmful industrial impacts by encouraging the development of landscape buffers between industrial and residential uses
- Encourage mixed-use development on neighborhood corridors
- Create a working dialogue between decision-makers and business partners to address issues impacting economic development like taxes, community safety, rents, and other operational expenses
- Explore the potential for markets by creators and peddler-designated locations and support.



## ENHANCE COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING FOR ALL GENERATIONS

- Develop and encourage opportunities for the community to gather at events, resource fairs, and programs throughout all seasons
- Identify ways to highlight the character of the neighborhood and celebrate the community
- Expand programming offerings to include wellbeing, mental health, good diets, arts and crafts, personal finance, healthy habits, cultural heritage, and other lifelong learning topics
- Promote opportunities for local artists and cultural organizations
- Expand art along commercial and industrial corridors
- Increase open space, playgrounds, and recreation/athletic fields that are well-distributed and accessible to everyone
- Encourage new development to include community-serving spaces
- Prioritize the maintenance and repair of existing community-serving facilities
- Provide programming for all ages and address gaps in services, staffing, and space needs to sustain year-round programs, including after-school, health or ability limitations, and seniors
- Provide guidance on winter programming to encourage active participation.

Survey for Business Owners

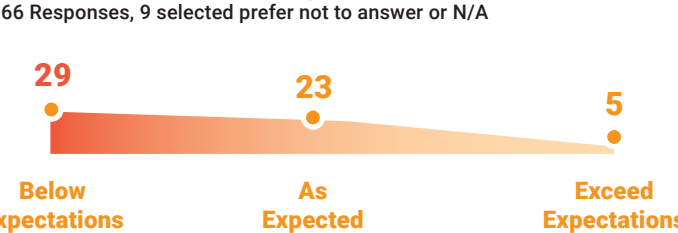
A business survey included responses from a broad range of local and industrial businesses. A total of 78 surveys were completed (32 from Brighton Park, 44 from Gage Park, 2 from other places). Delegate agencies distributed the survey in their respective commercial corridors. Online surveys were provided in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. Paper format surveys were provided in English and Spanish.

About 88% of respondents were in physical storefronts, offices or workplaces. This feedback will be shared with relevant city departments and organizations to inform ongoing and future programs and initiatives.

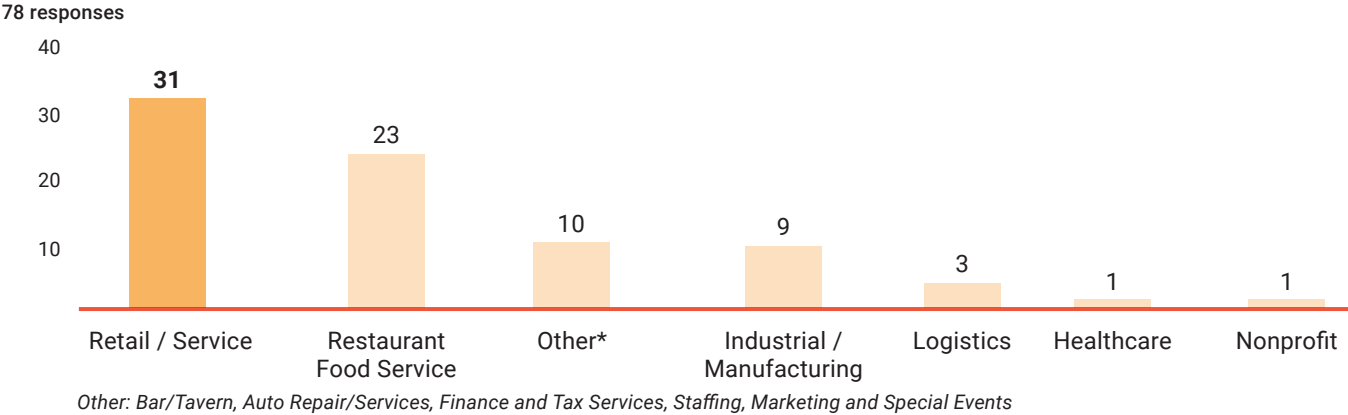
Overall Business Outlook for 2024



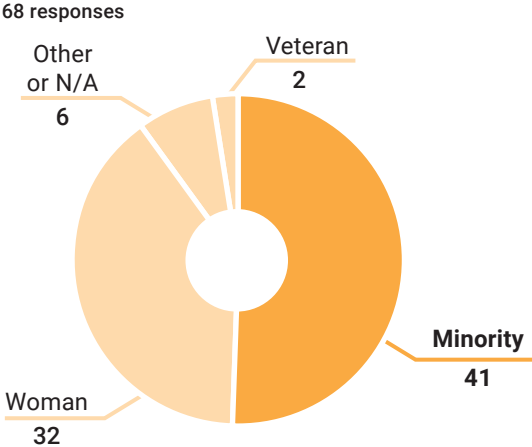
Overall Business Profitability for 2023



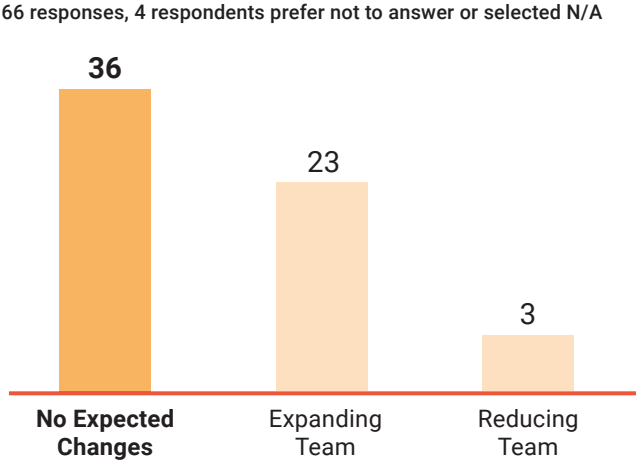
Business Categories



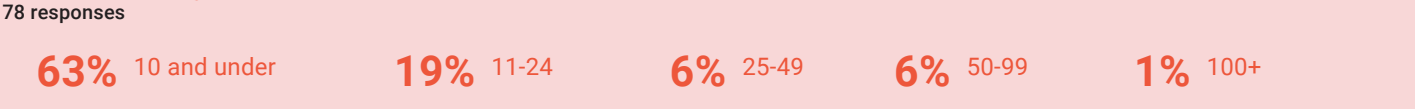
Business Ownership by Number



Hiring Outlook for 2024



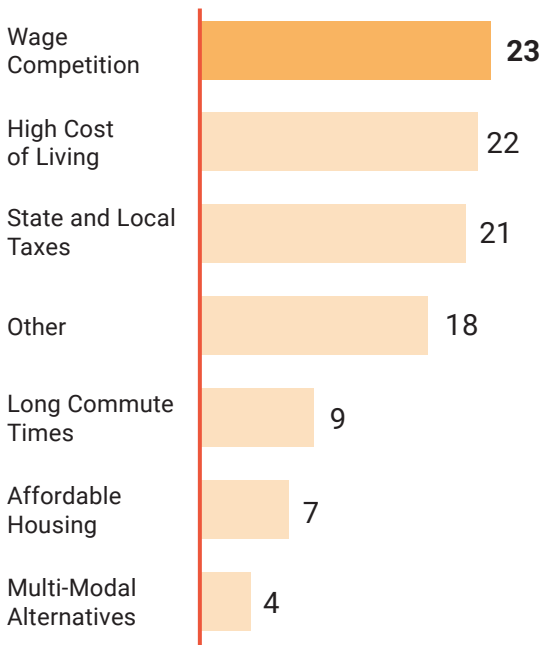
Number of Employees





### Factors Challenging Ability to Attract and Retain Employees

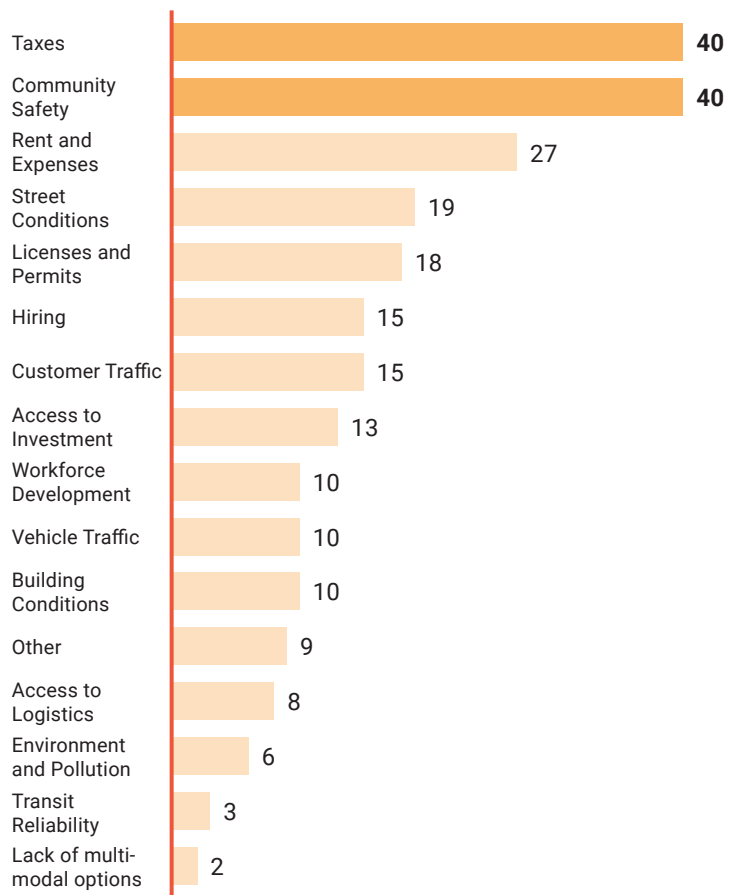
66 responses



Other: Educational Attainment and Worker Skills, Community Safety, Language Barriers, Financial Support

### Biggest Concerns Impacting Business Today

66 responses



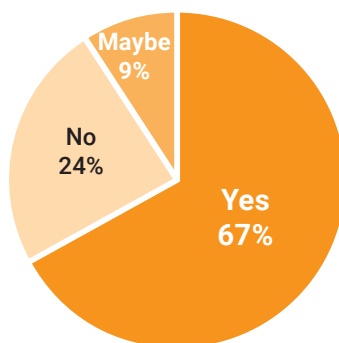
Other: Street tree maintenance, market conditions, Buying Property, Parking and Traffic from Trucks, Current Laws

### City Programs: Outreach and Familiarity

- 69%** Are **UNAWARE** of programs and incentives offered to businesses by the City of Chicago.
- 64%** Of those **AWARE** of programs and incentives have applied
- 78%** Are **UNSURE OR DO NOT** believe existing programs and incentives meet their business needs
- 41%** Indicated **HAVING** difficulty filling job openings.
- 77%** Indicated they would be **VERY OR SOMEWHAT WILLING** to partner with local institutions to improve hiring
- 82%** Would like to hear more about the business support programs offered by the city

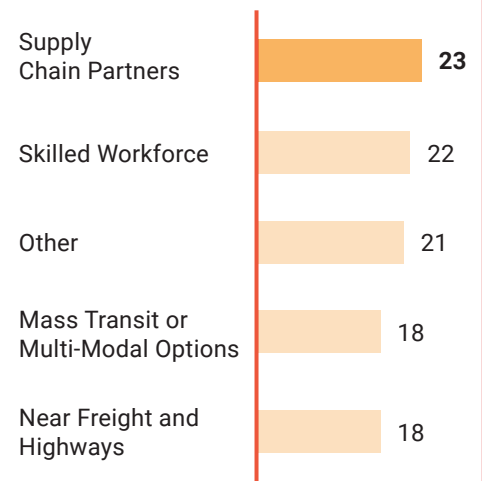
### City Location

Does the current location meet business demand or needs?  
33 responses



### Top 3 Reasons to Stay in Chicago

62 responses



Other\*: Profit, Chicago is home, Need to regulate the distance between similar businesses, Family-Owned Business, Good Clients, Good Neighbors, Better Opportunities, Density, Alderpeople

# V. Terms and Planning Resources

**Access** The ability to use spaces, programming, and services without significant barriers that support the quality of life like grocery stores, schools, and other community assets.

**Air Quality Indicator** Measures the primary air pollutants on a scale from “Good” to “Hazardous” on a numeric value of 0-500. Brighton Park and Gage Park are impacted by poor air quality, leading to adverse respiratory issues.

**Built Environment** The structures and the infrastructure where people live, work, and enjoy. This includes buildings, parks, roads and everything else made by humans.

**City Departments and Sister Agencies** Groups within the City that oversee different aspects that impact the lives of residents. This includes transportation, development, public health, and others. Sister agencies that are affiliated with the city but remain independent. These include CPS, Park District, and the Chicago Public Library.

**Community Advisory Group** A group of community members representing different groups that inform and guide the project.

**Community and Public Safety** Addressing issues and concerns impacting residents’ safety perceptions like underutilized lots, infrastructure conditions and providing accessible and good quality public spaces.

**Community Assets** Resources that support and improve the quality of life for residents. This includes people with specific expertise like community health and immigration support, spaces like libraries, organizations, and services.

**Community Character** Physical and/or cultural features that uniquely define the neighborhood.

**Community Engagement** The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting their well-being. It is a powerful vehicle for environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs and practices (CDC, 1997).

**Community Organizations** Local groups with a specific community-serving interest doing work in the community.

**Community Partner** Groups from the public, private, nonprofit sectors and residents needed to implement initiatives successfully.

**Complete Streets** The approach to planning, designing, building, operating and maintaining streets that enables safe, easy access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, people using mobility devices, transit riders, bicyclists and motorists of all ages and abilities.

**Development** Creates growth, rehabilitation, opportunity, spaces and/or programs by public, private, or nonprofit sectors.

**Displacement** When existing residents and businesses can no longer afford rising housing costs in their neighborhood and are forced to move to another neighborhood.

**Economic Clusters** Geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field. Economic clusters that are meaningfully present within a region have a combination of linked industries, suppliers, service-providers, government agencies and institutions working collectively to advance training and education, research and production of a similar field.

**Environmental Justice** The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. (U.S. EPA)

**Equity** Both an outcome and a process that results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive.

**Guidelines** A resource that shares information on best practices and design for specific goals.

**Historically Marginalized** Groups who have experienced discrimination and exclusion due to race, age, immigration status, income, family size, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, legal history or other statuses.

**Implementation Strategy** A road map to realizing recommendations in the community with community partners.

**Industrial Corridor** Areas of the city allocated for industrial development and job creation.

**Land Use** The activity that occurs on a lot. These uses may include intensive uses like industrial or infrastructure and less intensive uses like residential and open space. Land uses adjacent to each other can cause conflict between specific uses and lead to environmental issues for communities.

**Mobility Hub** A nexus to access different modes of transportation.

**Multi-generational Households** When households include more than one family generation like grandparents and non-nuclear family households.

**Multimodal Mobility** Different ways to access places by walking/Using a Mobility Device, biking, transit, rail, or others that do not include cars.

**Open Space** Parks, plazas, and other places to gather and recreate outside.

**Pedestrian Safety Improvements** Tactics to provide more comfortable accessibility for non-vehicular traffic. This may include traffic calming measures like speed reductions and sidewalk bump outs or designated bike lanes and crosswalks.

**Plans** Documents that inform the future development, initiatives, and allocation of resources by the City, its departments and sister agencies, and community partners. Plans can inform a variety of scales from the neighborhood to provide a guide for a select number of blocks to framework or vision plans that set long term priorities and guidelines.

**Policy** Rules and regulations that impact development, initiatives, and laws to protect residents.

**Public Realm** Spaces open to all residents where they share and experience the built environment.

**Resiliency** The ability of individuals and groups to survive and adapt to personal stresses and collective change.

**Root Causes** This is the process in identifying issues that impact the quality of life, perceptions of public safety, and barriers to community success.

**Sense of Belonging** The feeling that connects residents to a community. This promotes stewardship and care for a community and allows residents to thrive with a sense of ownership.

**Social-Cultural Platform** This is where people interact with others, where they come together, where they learn and enjoy their community.

**Urban Design** This focuses on how the built environment and its urban ecology are experienced by the people of Chicago.

**Urban Planning** This focuses on how different features of the urban environment like buildings, infrastructure, housing, and services systems work together. This informs regulations, investments, and facilitates collaboration between different community partners.

**Well-being** This measures how residents' physical, emotional and social needs are met in daily and long-term community life.

**Zoning** Ordinance that regulates the types of development that can occur on a lot. Zoning limits uses and specifies requirements.

## OTHER CITY ADOPTED PLANS AND RESOURCES

### Chicago Park District Strategic Plan 2025 \* 2024

Guides the direction, decision-making, and growth of the Chicago Park District for the next five years.

### Ground Floor Commercial Design Guidelines \* 2024

Provides best practices and design inspiration for ground floor storefronts along Chicago's commercial corridors.

### Ground Floor Residential on Commercial Corridors Design Guidelines \* 2024

Provides best practices and inspiration for ground floor housing along Chicago's neighborhood commercial corridors.

### Guidelines for the Evaluation of Complete Street Design Elements in Major Transportation Projects \* 2024

A path toward achieving a more equitable transportation system through enhanced street design.

### Healthy Chicago 2025 Strategic Plan \* 2024

Guides health strategies for the next few years by addressing the drivers to health inequality.

### Better Streets for Buses Plan \* 2023

Guide to help with better design of street, sidewalks, and signal infrastructure to improve the bus riding experience.

### Chicago Cycling Strategy \* 2023

A new path toward achieving an equitable transportation system through cycling.

### We Will Chicago \* 2023

Consists of more than 40 goals and 150 objectives to guide the City's governance across eight planning pillars for the next decade.

### Neighborhood Design Guidelines \* 2022

Provides specific recommendations to enhance the planning, review and impact of development along the city's commercial corridors.

### Strategic Plan for Transportation \* 2021

Provides guidance on future projects and initiatives that promote transportation equity.

### Chicago Cultural Plan \* 2012

A blueprint for Chicago to elevate its profile as a global capital for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts for the next 20 years.





**STITCHING IT  
TOGETHER**

