
Broadway Land Use Framework

Edgewater and Uptown, Devon to Montrose



February 20, 2025

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Purpose

To support consistent, intentional, and transparent development decisions along Broadway, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and partners collaborated to create this draft land use framework. The framework translates community priorities into clear expectations for land uses, density, zoning districts, and other development parameters.

Process

Partners

The following organizations worked together throughout this planning process:

- Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
- Department of Housing (DOH)
- 46th Ward, Ald. Angela Clay
- 47th Ward, Ald. Matt Martin
- 48th Ward, Ald. Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth
- Edgewater Chamber of Commerce
- Uptown United

Past Studies

This planning process builds upon recent visioning efforts along the Broadway corridor in Edgewater and Uptown. This process identified the elements relating to property development to refine and create a plan for implementation.

Some of the key examples that were referenced and built upon include:

[2023 Uptown eTOD Site Study](#) by Uptown United

[2021 Broadway Community Vision](#) by the 48th Ward

[2021 Development Guide for Central Uptown](#) by Uptown United

[2018 Red and Purple Modernization Transit-Oriented Development Plan](#) by Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

[2014 Uptown Corridor Development Initiative](#) by Metropolitan Planning Council

[2008 Discover Asia on Argyle](#) by the Urban Land Institute and Metropolitan Planning Council

Key Analysis Findings

Current public investment into the Red and Purple Line Modernization project along the Broadway corridor provides once-in-a-generation opportunities for improved transit service, infrastructure upgrades, and new transit-oriented development in Uptown and Edgewater. CTA construction is projected to be complete by late 2026 or early 2027. Ridership for stations within the study area is still only about half what it was in 2015, even after post-pandemic rebound.

Uptown and Edgewater are both below their historic populations, with Edgewater at about 90% of its prior peak population and Uptown less than 70% of its peak. At the same time, troubling demographic trends have manifested with median incomes in both areas rising significantly faster than inflation since 2010 and the share of non-white residents declining since 2000. With significant unmet housing demand, the neighborhood has seen rising housing costs, which can contribute to these demographic changes.

Throughout the corridor, properties are currently vacant or function as low-activation uses such as parking, auto lots, and storage facilities. These sites create gaps between more vibrant areas of the corridor and can discourage foot traffic that local businesses depend on. Business owners and advocates also describe challenges in opening or expanding businesses due to restrictive zoning requirements. These regulations likely play a role in the lack of investment for certain areas along the corridor in addition to impacts from the pandemic and CTA construction.

For more on existing conditions and analysis, see the [October open house materials](#).

Timeline

Summer 2024:

Initiated coordination with project partners and began focused research and analysis, including past planning work, demographics, existing conditions, history, and relevant regulations.

Fall 2024:

Shared [summary of analysis as well as the initial challenges and opportunities with the larger community for feedback](#) on October 7, 2024 and began to evaluate potential strategies and their trade-offs based on that feedback.

Winter 2024/2025:

Shared [draft recommendations for feedback](#) with the larger community on December 16, 2024 and began targeted outreach with local businesses and others. Also described the recommendations in an [online information session](#) on January 30, 2025.

Implementation Next Steps:

Properties currently in use for CTA's Red and Purple Modernization construction are projected to be solicited for redevelopment in early 2025, with projected future building construction beginning in 2026/2027.

Rezoning ordinances, including the Pedestrian Street extensions, may begin the legislative process in early 2025, which could mean that portions or all proposed properties may be rezoned before the end of 2025.

Engagement

Partners Working Group:

DPD, DOH, Wards 46/47/48, Edgewater Chamber of Commerce, and Uptown United met every other week for several months to share feedback and coordinate outreach to the larger community.

Project Website:

[Chicago.gov/Broadway](https://chicago.gov/Broadway) includes project information, an email sign-up, information about future ways to get involved, materials and summaries from past events, and [answers to frequently asked questions](#).

Open Houses:

Two in-person open house meetings took place at Furama Restaurant at 4936 N Broadway on October 7th and December 16th in 2024. Each meeting had estimated attendance of over 150 participants and included several opportunities for attendees to learn more about Broadway, share ideas, discuss concerns, and ask questions.

Online Feedback Forms:

Opportunities for feedback online mirrored the types of questions and activities from the in-person open houses but made available for people who preferred to type their feedback or were unable to attend the events. The first survey had 142 responses and the second had 1,480 responses. Results from the first meeting and set of survey responses are summarized [here](#). [Results from the second survey](#) and a summary of feedback on the recommendations are included [here](#).

Information Session:

An [online information session](#) was held on January 30th, 2025 to review the goals, recommendations, and expected impacts that resulted from the planning process. The project partners were also present to answer questions from participants. The slides are online [here](#).

Targeted Business Outreach:

Once draft recommendations began to come together, project partners met with businesses along the corridor to share information, collect feedback, and answer questions. Handouts were translated into several languages to provide information in common languages used along the corridor.

Future Opportunities:

Many recommendations require additional public processes beyond adoption of the framework plan itself. For example, any future zoning changes will involve public noticing via mail as well

as public hearings with the Committee on Zoning and City Council. For certain future development projects, there are also expected to be approvals from the Chicago Plan Commission, City Council, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and/or the Commission on Chicago Landmarks. These processes all provide opportunities for feedback at public hearings.

Community Goals and Priorities

The following goals and priorities were initially gleaned from past visioning work and refined through this planning process with input from the community. They are specific to planning and development topics.

1. **Improve neighborhood housing affordability**
 - Create and preserve a variety of housing types and for a variety of income levels
 - Allow development dense enough to meet demand for housing units
2. **Support local business environment**
 - Create more opportunities for people to live on Broadway, supporting businesses along the corridor
 - Promote a more active and walkable corridor to attract more foot traffic
 - Activate storefronts along Broadway throughout the day/week/year
3. **Create a more livable neighborhood**
 - Celebrate the unique history and culture of the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods
 - Foster a transit- and pedestrian-oriented environment by encouraging housing near transit and robust multi-modal transportation options
 - Encourage new active uses along the sidewalk
 - Mitigate the neighborhood's carbon footprint by promoting more sustainable development patterns
4. **"Right size" approval processes to align with community priorities**
 - Provide greater transparency and consistency in expectations for development
 - Reduce barriers for businesses to get licenses and activate underutilized storefronts and sites
 - Reduce barriers for projects that support community goals, needs, and priorities
 - Prohibit or discourage projects that are incompatible with community goals, needs, and priorities
 - Maintain opportunities for community feedback for large or impactful projects

How to Use this Framework

When proposing or evaluating development projects or initiatives within the study area, please refer to this document as a tool to guide decisions.

Land Use Framework Map

This map outlines land uses, density levels, and zoning districts that might be appropriate for different areas along the corridor. The segments blur one into the next, so if a site is in between multiple segment types, consider the development parameters from both.

Zoning

Determine the current zoning of the property in question by visiting the [Chicago Zoning Map](#) and reviewing the [Chicago Zoning Ordinance](#) to see what regulations apply based on that location. For specific questions about what could be possible based on the existing zoning, reach out to the local ward office or [email DPD zoning staff](#) for feedback.

Note that in 2025, it is anticipated that properties in the study area may undergo rezoning, so also refer to the proposed zoning map to determine what future zoning districts are being considered. A side-by-side of the existing and proposed zoning recommendations are included in the [December 16th open house materials](#). Note that zoning requires City Council approval.

Development Opportunity Analysis Map

This map describes the physical characteristics of each property to determine sites that may be redeveloped in the future. The sites are either underutilized or the current design is incompatible with a pedestrian friendly, mixed-use built environment. Tier 1 sites are the most underutilized and incompatible and therefore provide the most opportunity for positive transformation. Tier 2 sites are low density, 1-2 story buildings that are generally low to moderate quality architecture. Tier 3 sites are also low density 1-2 story buildings but possess greater architectural quality and are also considered to be neighborhood character buildings. Development is anticipated in all three tiers of opportunity sites, but tier 1 sites are the highest priority and present the most transformational opportunity for the neighborhood.

Architectural Character and Historic Resources Map

This map identifies historic resources and buildings with unique architectural character and can help identify additional restrictions, approvals, or other considerations for those properties. If the map identifies a property within a Chicago Landmark District or as an individual Chicago Landmark, there is oversight by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and potential approval required based on the designation report for that property. Orange Rated buildings were identified to be potentially historically significant and are therefore subject to a 90-day demolition delay for DPD to explore options, as appropriate, to preserve the building, including but not limited to Landmark designation. Finally, neighborhood character buildings, as a group, demonstrate a scale and design style unique to the corridor's history. These buildings may not have any of their own restrictions for demolition or development, but they may present good opportunities for adaptive re-use and/or preservation of key building features during redevelopment of the site.

Urban Design Guidelines

When designing a new project or making any external improvements to an existing building, please refer to the [Neighborhood Design Guidelines](#), which are user-friendly urban design guidelines to shape development along neighborhood commercial corridors such as Broadway. The guidelines are adaptable to the unique context of individual neighborhoods, corridors, and blocks. There are further guidelines to explore inspiration and best practices for projects that include [ground floor housing](#) or [commercial spaces](#) as well. Note that projects subject to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks review have separate design requirements specific to the Landmark building or district.