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# CITY OF CHICAGO

## RULES

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# Plan Commission

## Rules

**Last Updated: January, 2014**



**DPD**

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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**Mayor Rahm Emanuel**

**Commissioner David L. Reifman**

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BY AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE PLAN COMMISSION PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 2-45-040, 2-45-045, AND 2-120-370 AND THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO, THE FOLLOWING RULES REGARDING **PLAN COMMISSION** ARE PROMULGATED HEREIN.

By Order of the Commissioner:

Signed:   
Commissioner David L. Reifman

Date: 11-13-15

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CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Planned Development Division  
121 N. LaSalle St. #905  
Chicago, IL 60602

January 2014

## POWERS AND DUTIES

*Excerpted from the Chicago Municipal Code and other sources*

***The Chicago Plan Commission provides recommendations to City Council on development projects, plans and policies that directly affect the viability and quality of life of city neighborhoods.***

The commission's review authority includes:

- Permits and applications within the Lakefront Protection District
- Applications for Planned Development zoning
- Designations and zoning amendments involving Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Zoning map amendments within designated Industrial Corridors
- Citywide and community area plans
- Proposals by public agencies to acquire, dispose, or change property

The commission does not have the statutory power to enforce its decisions but its recommendations to approve or deny proposals usually have an effective sanction within government.

The 22-member commission is composed of nine private citizens appointed by the mayor with City Council approval and 13 ex-officio members from city government: the mayor; the president of the Board of Local Improvements; the commissioners of the departments of Housing and Land Use Planning and Transportation; the chairmen of the City Council committees on Parks and Recreation, Buildings, Finance, Zoning, Housing, and Traffic Control and Safety; the general superintendent and chief executive officer of the Chicago Park District; and the chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority.

The mayor designates the chairman and vice-chairman from among the appointed members. The appointed members hold no other public office unless that office provides no compensation.

Terms of the appointed members are as follows: one for one year, two for two years, two for three years, two for four years and two for five years and until their successors are appointed. Members thereafter appointed shall serve for five years, except that in case of vacancy appointments shall be made for the unexpired term. The terms of the ex-officio members coincide with their terms of public office.

The commission meets at least once a month with at least three days notice of the time and place provided by the chairman. Six members constitute a quorum, but at least five affirmative votes constituting a majority of those voting shall be required to pass any matter.

Staff services are provided by the Planned Development Division of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). Meetings are usually held at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month, at City Hall, 121 N. LaSalle St., in City Council chambers.

## RULES AND PROCEDURES

*The rules and procedures of the Chicago Plan Commission are the result of input by city officials, civic groups, business organizations and private developers. They are intended to be responsive to the public's right to be fully apprised of development proposals and the development community's need for an efficient review process.*

### ARTICLE I - THE COMMISSION

**Section 1, Name of Commission.** The name of the commission shall be the "Chicago Plan Commission," hereinafter referred to as the commission.

### ARTICLE II - OFFICERS

**Section 1, Officers.** The officers of the commission shall be a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. The mayor shall designate the chairman and vice-chairman from among the appointed members.

**Section 2, Chairman.** The chairman shall preside at meetings of the commission. The chairman executes, in the name of the commission, such documents as the commission may authorize or direct. At each meeting of the commission, the chairman shall submit such recommendations and information as he or she may consider proper concerning the business, affairs, and policies of the commission.

**Section 3, Vice-Chairman.** The vice-chairman shall perform the duties of the chairman in the absence or incapacity of the chairman. In the absence or incapacity of both the chairman and vice-chairman, the commission may elect by majority vote of those present, one of its appointed members to preside at such meeting to fulfill the duties of the chair. In the event that the chairman must leave during a commission meeting, and the vice-chairman is not present, the chairman shall select an appointed member to act in his or her place. Likewise, in the event that the vice-chairman is presiding and must leave during a commission meeting, the vice-chairman shall select an appointed member to act in his or her place.

**Section 4, Secretary.** The commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development shall act as secretary of the commission and shall keep the records of the commission; shall act as secretary of the meetings of the commission; shall record all votes; shall keep a record of the proceedings of the commission in a journal of proceedings to be kept for such purposes; and shall perform all duties incident to that office.

**Section 5, Committees.** The chairman may from time to time appoint from the members of the commission such committee or committees as shall be deemed requisite or advisable.

## ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

**Section 1, Regular Meetings.** The commission shall meet at least once during each month on the second Thursday thereof or at such other time and at such place as the chairman may designate. Notice of the time and place of each monthly meeting shall be delivered to each member of the commission or shall be mailed to the business or residence address of each member at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

**Section 2, Special Meetings.** The chairman of the commission may call, and shall call upon the written request of two commission members, a special meeting of the commission for the purpose of transacting any business designated in the call. The call for a special meeting shall be delivered to each member, or shall be mailed to the business or residence address of each member, at least seven days prior to the date of such special meeting. At such special meeting, no business shall be considered other than as designated in the call.

**Section 3, Other Meetings.** The chairman of the commission may call, and shall call upon the written request of two commission members, other meetings in addition to regular and special meetings. Such other meetings may include but not be limited to briefing sessions, training sessions, and other types of meetings as may be necessary to apprise commission members of background information relevant to city planning and development activities and policies, pending applications, changes in planning and development regulations, etc.

**Section 4, Notice of Meetings.** Notice of all regular and special meetings shall be in compliance with provisions of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance and shall be sent to the applicant of matters to be heard before the commission as well as to the commission's mailing list. All other meetings of the commission will be noticed in compliance with the Open Meetings Act (Illinois Revised Statutes, Chapter 102).

**Section 5, Community Hearings.** Commission community hearings, when deemed necessary, shall be called by the chairman. All requests for such hearings shall be made in writing to the secretary of the commission. Every effort will be made to hold commission community hearings when significant interests and concerns are expressed by affected parties.

## ARTICLE IV - CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

**Section 1, Robert's Rules of Order.** All matters of procedures not covered by these Rules and Procedures of the commission shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 2, Quorum.** Six members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business of the commission and exercising its power and for all purposes, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

**Section 3, Order of Business.** At the regular meetings of the commission, the following shall be the order of business:

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting
3. Matters to be heard in accordance with the Inter-Agency Referral Act
4. Matters submitted in accordance with the lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance and/or Chicago Zoning Ordinance.
5. Deferred matters

All resolutions shall be set forth in the minutes of the proceedings of the commission.

**Section 4, Manner of Voting.** Passage or adoption of any measure, other than amendment of these rules and procedures, shall be by simple majority of those voting, but at least five affirmative votes shall be required to pass any matter. A roll call vote on any measure shall be at the request of any commission member. Proxy voting is not encouraged. However, if a member of the commission must leave a meeting before a vote is taken and that member is fully apprised with respect to the matter, a proxy vote may be left with the chairman. In matters considered under the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection ordinance, proxy voting is not allowed.

**Section 5, Continuances.** Excessive continuances of matters before the commission are not encouraged. However, in cases where a continuance is deemed necessary or advisable by the applicant, the alderman, the commissioner of Department of Housing and Economic Development, or the commission, the continuance may be granted by the chairman with the applicant's concurrence. If a matter is repeatedly continued at the request of the applicant, the commission by action in a regular meeting may refuse to grant the applicant any further continuances and order the applicant to proceed at the next following meeting of the deemed a withdrawal by the applicant. The applicant's failure to so proceed shall be deemed a withdrawal by the applicant. Any reapplication shall be treated as a new or initial application.

**Section 6, Public Noticing of Planned Development and Lakefront Protection Applications.** Notice of all applications received by the Department of Planning and Development for Planned Development and Lakefront Protection matters will be sent to all commission members and the alderman of the ward upon receipt by the department, and to all other interested parties no less than two weeks prior to the commission meeting at which the matters are scheduled to be heard.

**Section 7, Agendas.** The tentative agenda sent to the commission's mailing list prior to a regular or special meeting shall constitute all matters to be considered, though a matter, or matters, may be continued or withdrawn after the agenda has been made public.

**Section 8, Pre-Application Conference.** All applicants are strongly urged to hold a pre-application conference with Department of Planning and Development personnel. At such time, departmental staff will review the development proposal with the applicant and indicate what studies and other pertinent information supporting the applicant's proposal must be submitted.

**Section 9, Staff Reports.** Department of Planning and Development staff reports for Planned Development and Lakefront Protection matters shall be submitted to each commission member



no fewer than five working days prior to a commission meeting. These reports shall be in a form acceptable to the commission and shall include indications of known community opposition to any matter.

**Section 10, Background Review Materials.** Planned Development and Lakefront Protection applications along with all supporting materials, studies, drawings, etc., submitted by the applicant shall be available for the public and the commission to review in the Department of Planning and Development 28 days prior to a commission meeting at which the matter is scheduled to be heard or, in the event of materials received within said 28 days period, upon receipt thereof by the Department of Housing and Economic Development.

**Section 11, Speaker Sign-In.** Any person wishing to testify on behalf of or against any matter before the commission shall register with staff at each commission meeting on forms provided by the commission.

#### ARTICLE V - AMENDMENTS

**Section 1, Amendments to Rules and Procedures.** The Rules and Procedures of the Chicago Plan Commission shall be amended only with the approval of no less than a majority of all appointed and ex-officio members of the commission at a regular or special meeting, but no such amendment shall be adopted unless at least seven days written notice thereof has been previously sent to all commission members.

# THE LAKE MICHIGAN AND CHICAGO LAKEFRONT PROTECTION ORDINANCE

*Excerpted from the Chicago Municipal Code/16-4 and other sources*

***The Chicago Plan Commission is responsible for the administration of  
the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance.***

The ordinance addresses the environmental, recreational, cultural, historical, aesthetic interests and community values related to the shoreline, which is part of a designated Lakefront Protection District.

The district, designated in 1973, is divided into three zones:

- The off-shore zone - surface, subsurface and air rights extending to east to the state line
- The public use zone - public open space and public ways adjacent to the shoreline.
- The private use zone -all zoning lots contained within the private use zone.

## POLICIES AND PURPOSES

The district is intended to guide 14 basic policies:

1. Complete the publicly owned and locally controlled park system along the entire Chicago lakefront.
2. Maintain and enhance the predominantly landscaped, spacious and continuous character of the lake shore parks.
3. Continue to improve the water quality and ecological balance of Lake Michigan.
4. Preserve the cultural, historical, and recreational heritage of the lakeshore parks.
5. Maintain and improve the formal character and open water vista of Grant Park with no new above-ground structures permitted.
6. Increase the diversity of recreational opportunities while emphasizing lake-oriented leisure time activities.
7. Protect and develop natural lakeshore park and water areas for wildlife habitation.
8. Increase personal safety.
9. Design all lake edge and lake construction to prevent detrimental shoreline erosion.
10. Ensure a harmonious relationship between the lakeshore parks and the community edge, but in no instance will further private development be permitted East of Lake Shore Drive.
11. Improve access to the lakeshore parks and reduce through vehicular traffic on secondary park roads.
12. Strengthen the parkway characteristics of Lake Shore Drive and prohibit and roadway of expressway standards.
13. Ensure that all port, water supply, and public facilities are designed to enhance lakefront character.
14. Coordinate public and private development within the water, park, and community zones.

The district also has 13 underlying purposes:

1. Promote and protect the health, safety, comfort, convenience, and the general welfare of the people, and to conserve our natural resources
2. Identify and establish the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection District and to divide that District into several zones wherein any and all development or construction, as specified in Article V hereinafter, shall be specifically restricted and regulated
3. Maintain and improve the purity and quality of the waters of Lake Michigan
4. Insure that construction in the lake or modification of the existing shoreline shall not be permitted if such construction or modification would cause environmental or ecological damage to the Lake or would diminish water quality; and to insure that the life patterns of fish, migratory birds and other fauna are recognized and supported
5. Insure that the lakefront parks and the lake itself are devoted only to public purposes and to insure the integrity of and expand the quantity and quality of the lakefront parks
6. Promote and provide for continuous pedestrian movement along the shoreline
7. Promote and provide for pedestrian access to the Lake and Lakefront Parks from and through areas adjacent thereto at regular intervals of one-fourth mile and additional places wherever possible, and to protect and enhance vistas at these locations and wherever possible
8. Promote and provide for improved public transportation access to the lakefront
9. Insure that no roadway of expressway standards, as hereinafter defined, shall be permitted in the lakefront parks
10. Insure that development of properties adjacent to the lake or the lakefront parks is so defined as to implement the above-stated purposes, provided, however, that with respect to property located within the Private Use Zone, the permitted use, special use, lot area per dwelling unit, and floor area ratio provisions of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance shall govern except where such provisions are in substantial conflict with the purposes of the ordinance or the 14 basic policies.
11. Achieve the above-stated purposes, the appropriate public agency should acquire such properties or rights as may be necessary and desirable
12. Define and limit the powers and duties of the administrative body and officers as provided herein
13. Nothing contained in the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance shall be deemed to be a waiver or consent, license or permit to use any property or to locate, construct or maintain any building, structure or facility or to carry on any trade, industry, occupation or activity which may be otherwise required by law.

#### REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

**Application Review.** Proposals for any landfill, excavation, impoundment, mining, drilling, roadway building or construction project within the district are forwarded to the Chicago Plan Commission by the commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), along with any relevant preliminary findings or recommendations, not less than five business days prior to a public hearing. Building permit applications are provided to the commission by the commissioner of the Department of Buildings not less than five business days in advance.

**Public Hearings.** Public hearings under the Lakefront Protection Ordinance must be scheduled within 60 days of an application filing. Once scheduled, legal notice about the hearing is made by Department of Planning and Development staff within 15 and 30 days of its date. (Applicants meanwhile notify all property owners within 250 of the subject property). Hearings are intended to provide a reasonable opportunity for all interested parties to express their opinions about a proposed application. Each speaker is fully identified by name, address and interests which he or she represents.

**Application Determination.** The commission approved or disapproves of each application, then notifies the forwarding public agency and the applicant of its determination, setting forth findings of fact constituting the basis for its decision, within 30 days after a hearing is conducted. Plan Commission decisions are final and binding upon all parties. Failure of the commission to make a determination within the required time is deemed a disapproval. Every resolution of the commission approving a Lakefront Protection application will terminate unless construction as authorized by a building permit, has commenced within four years of the date of approval. Approvals granted in conjunction with a Planned Development, will be governed by the expiration date set forth in the planned development.

**Laws and Enforcement.** It is unlawful for any physical change, whether temporary or permanent, public or private, to be undertaken, including, but not limited to, landfill, excavation, impoundment, mining, drilling, roadway building or construction of any kind, within the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection District or for any acquisition or disposition of real property by a public agency, whether by sale or lease, or other means, to be consummated within the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection District without first having secured the approval there for from the Chicago plan provided, however, that the following shall be exempt from the prohibition aforesaid: accessory buildings; repairs and rehabilitation which do not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of replacement of the existing structure; additions which do not increase the site coverage or the height of the structure; and residential structures containing not more than three dwelling units; the sale, lease or transfer of real property, or any interests therein, from one Public Agency to another Public Agency; and the lease of a below-grade parking garage system owned by a Public Agency to a private party, any such private party's assignment of their leasehold interest to one or more lenders providing financing to such private party for the acquisition of such leasehold interest, [and] any renovation or improvement of such below-grade parking garage system, and any change of or modification to the roadway or pedestrian access for such parking garage system.

Any person found guilty of violating, disobeying, omitting, neglecting or refusing to comply with, or resisting or opposing the enforcement of any of the provisions when otherwise specifically provided, upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$300 for the first offense and not less than \$200 nor more than \$500 for the second and each subsequent offense in any 180-day period.

In the event any structure or building, landfill, excavation, impoundment, mining or drilling has been undertaken in violation of this chapter, the City of Chicago may institute appropriate legal or equitable proceedings to prevent the completion or maintenance of said unlawful undertaking.

EXEMPTIONS FROM REVIEW

The following Lakefront Protection District proposals are exempt from the Chicago Plan Commission review process:

- Accessory buildings
- Repairs and rehabilitation which do not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of replacement of the existing structure
- Additions which do not increase the site coverage or the height of the structure; and residential structures containing not more than three dwelling units
- The sale, lease or transfer of real property, or any interests therein, from one public agency to another public agency
- The lease of a below-grade parking garage system owned by a public agency to a private party
- Any renovation or improvement of such below-grade parking garage system, and any change of or modification to the roadway or pedestrian access for such parking garage system.

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

*from the Chicago Municipal Code/17-8 and other sources*

***The Chicago Plan Commission is responsible for approving or disapproving Planned Development applications made to the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development.***

Planned Development (PD) zoning is required for certain development projects to ensure adequate public review, encourage compatible and contextual planning and development, enable design flexibility, and conserve of the city's natural resources.

### REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

Planned Development review and approval is required for proposals involving:

- Air rights
- Airports and heliports
- Non-accessory parking in "D" zoning districts
- Government-assisted and elderly housing developments
- Hospitals, colleges, universities and campus-style institutional uses
- Religious Assembly, community centers and similar assembly uses
- Schools, safety services and government facilities exceeding two acres
- Bonus floor area in excess of 150 percent of the base FAR
- Power, water and wastewater plants
- Spectator facilities with a seating capacity of 1,000 or more persons

Planned Development review is also required for:

- New development within 100 feet of any waterway - Waterways subject to this provision include the Chicago River Main Branch, Chicago River North Branch and North Branch Canal, Chicago River South Branch and South Fork of the South Branch, North Shore Channel, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Calumet River and Lake Calumet, Little Calumet River, Grand Calumet River, Wolf Lake, and DesPlaines River. Proposed buildings and accessory structures outside of the downtown area that contain three or fewer dwelling units are exempt.
- Large commercial developments - Required for any building in a B or C zoning district to be occupied by any retail sales-related use with a gross floor area of 75,000 square feet or more, and for any commercial development with a net site area of four acres or more.
- Large industrial developments - Required for projects on M-zoned land with a net site area of five acres or more if the lot on which the development is located is within 100 feet of any residential district. Otherwise, Planned Development review and approval is required only for industrial development on M-zoned land with a net site area of 10 acres or more.
- Large residential developments - Required for any residential development that meets or

- exceeds the Zoning Code's land area or unit-count thresholds for PDs. (See appendix)
- Tall buildings - Required for any building that meets or exceeds the Zoning Code's PD height thresholds. (See appendix)

Except as otherwise expressly stated, Planned Developments must comply with any special regulations that apply to the subject property, such as the Chicago Landmark Ordinance and the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance. Planned Developments must also be consistent with plans that have been adopted by the Plan Commission or approved by the City Council.

**Applications and filing.** PD applications are filed with the city's Zoning Administrator, either by the mayor, City Council, the Zoning Administrator or the property owner. The Zoning Administrator must transmit an original copy of the application without delay to the City Clerk, who must record it in the proceedings of the City Council at its next regular meeting. The Zoning Administrator must also, within five days of application filing, transmit copies of the application to the Plan Commission.

**Zoning Administrator Recommendation.** The Zoning Administrator reviews each Planned Development and forwards a recommendation on the proposal to the Chicago Plan Commission and the City Council Committee on Zoning before their respective public hearings.

**Plan Commission Hearing.** Within seven days of the receipt of a complete application, the Plan Commission provides public notice and schedules a public hearing to review the Planned Development application. The Plan Commission hearing provides a reasonable opportunity for all interested parties to express their opinions.

The Plan Commission hearing must be concluded within 30 days of commencement, provided that commission may grant such extensions of time as the applicant may request. If the applicant requests or agrees to an extension of time, such action will be deemed a waiver of the 30-day public hearing period. Whenever practicable, any public hearings required to be held by the Plan Commission affecting the same property are held concurrently.

Within seven days of the close of the hearing, the commission forwards its findings, determination and recommendation to the City Council Committee on Zoning.

**City Council Committee on Zoning Hearing.** The City Council Committee on Zoning holds a public hearing for the purpose of reviewing the proposed project and taking testimony.

**City Council Action.** The City Council is the final decision-making body on proposed PDs. The City Council may act by simple majority vote. If the City Council does not take action within six months from when the Plan Commission recommendation is filed with the City Council Committee on Zoning, the application is considered denied.

**Review and Decision-Making Criteria.** In reviewing and making decisions on proposed Planned Developments, review bodies and decision-making bodies consider at least the

following factors:

- compliance with the standards and guidelines for Planned Developments
- compatibility with the surrounding area in terms of uses, density and building scale
- adequacy of public infrastructure and city services to serve the proposed PD

Minor changes to approved PDs may be permitted by the Zoning Administrator provided the changes will not result in significant changes to the project. Proposed changes that do not meet the criteria for minor changes may be approved only in accordance with the review and approval procedures for PDs.

**Timing and Construction.** Every Planned Development ordinance will lapse and be null and void unless construction, as authorized by a building permit, has commenced within six years of the date of City Council approval of the Planned Development ordinance and is thereafter diligently pursued to completion.

The six-year period may be extended by up to one additional year if, before expiration, the Zoning Administrator receives a written request from the applicant stating the reasons for the proposed extension, and the Zoning Administrator determines that good cause for an extension is shown. If a Planned Development ordinance requires construction to begin at an earlier date, then that time period will control.

If construction does not begin within the time set forth, or the construction does not proceed with reasonable diligence, or if construction in a multi-phase development does not proceed according to the specific schedule set forth in the Planned Development ordinance, then the Planned Development ordinance will lapse and be null and void. Should a PD ordinance lapse, the Zoning Administrator must initiate a Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment to rezone the subject property to the zoning classification that applied to the subject property before approval of the PD.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

**Number of Buildings, Uses and Lots.** PDs may include one or more principal buildings and one or more principal uses. PDs may consist of one or more lots to be developed as a unit, whether simultaneously or phased within a period of time commensurate with the character of the proposal.

**Ownership, Control and Designated Control.** All PD applications must be at the time of filing under single ownership, or control or single designated control. Provided, however, that after the adoption of an ordinance wherein the property is divided into specifically delineated subareas or subparcels, each having its own bulk and density standards, or similar subarea specific or subparcel specific development controls or requirements, the owners of or designated controlling party for each subarea may seek amendments, changes, or modifications for that subarea without the consent of the owners or designated controlling party of the other subareas.

**Affordable Housing Requirement.** Every Planned Development in which a residential housing



project will be developed shall comply with the affordable housing provisions of the city's municipal code, where applicable.

**Expansions of Existing Development.** If an approved planned development is proposed to be expanded or changed, PD approval requirements apply. Proposed expansions of any other existing development that will result in an increase in building height, lot area or number of dwelling units must be reviewed and approved in accordance with the planned development procedures if the expanded development meets the threshold for a mandatory planned development.

**Elective Planned Development thresholds.** Applicants for developments that do not meet the minimum criteria for a mandatory planned development may nonetheless elect to follow the PD review and approval procedures if the proposed development is to be located on a site with a minimum site area of 12,500 square feet in any D district, or 21,875 square feet in any other district and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- At least 50 percent of the number of dwelling units that triggers a mandatory PD
- At least 50 percent of the gross floor area that triggers a mandatory PD.
- At least 50 percent of the height of a building that triggers a mandatory PD.

In any D district, an application to substantially rehabilitate and preserve an individual building which is an official city landmark, a contributing structure in a landmark district, or been coded red or orange in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey may elect to follow the PD review and approval procedures regardless of site area or other qualifying criteria.

**Urban Design.** Planned Developments should be designed to:

- Reinforce desirable urban features found within the surrounding area, such as siting patterns, massing arrangements and streetscape characteristics;
- Create seamless or gradual transitions in bulk and scale when high-intensity development occurs in or near areas with a lower-intensity character; and
- Ensure that signs associated with the development are appropriate to the scale and character of the development and the surrounding area.

**Uses, Bulk, Density and Intensity.** PDs are subject to strict compliance with the floor area ratio standards of the zoning district applicable to the subject property immediately before approval of the Planned Development. Planned Developments must be in substantial compliance with density, use, setback, building height, and open space and other (non-FAR-related) development standards of the zoning district applicable to the subject property immediately before approval of the Planned Development.

**Transportation and Traffic Circulation.** Planned Developments should:

- Promote the safe and efficient circulation of pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles;
- Promote transit, pedestrian and bicycle use

- Ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities
- Minimize conflict with existing traffic patterns in the vicinity
- Minimize and mitigate traffic congestion associated with the proposed development
- Provide safe and ample access for emergency and delivery vehicles, while minimizing the adverse visual impact of vehicular service areas
- Provide adequate bicycle and vehicle parking, while minimizing the adverse visual impact of any off-street parking areas.

**Parking.** Vehicular use areas within a Planned Development should:

- Avoid large parking areas and instead be broken up into smaller areas that are defined by buildings, landscaping and pedestrian paths.
- Be located behind buildings or to the side of buildings. Large parking areas between buildings and the adjacent street/sidewalk should be avoided.
- Provide shared parking wherever possible. Parking lots should be constructed to allow easy access to one or more buildings and multiple storefronts/uses.
- Provide multi-level parking structures, versus large surface parking lots, for large retail and shopping center sites
- Be laid out to maximize pedestrian safety and ease of connections to adjoining property.
- Provide separate and distinct pedestrian pathways within large retail and shopping center sites to connect adjacent public sidewalks and parking areas with building entrances.
- Provide easily accessible and secure bicycle parking areas.
- Locate driveways to maximize pedestrian safety and comfort.

**Parking in “D” Districts.** Vehicle access and service functions should be accessed from alleys in order to diminish conflicts with pedestrian traffic on sidewalks and underground parking is strongly encouraged as a means of reducing the height and bulk of downtown buildings. Covered entrances for automobiles are generally discouraged. When used, such features should be limited in size and serve lobbies that are clearly visible from the street. Entrances should be combined with landscaped open space. Any portion of a multi-level parking garage not located below grade should be lined by active use for a minimum depth of 20 feet. Motor courts and parking courts are discouraged.

**Pedestrian-Orientation.** PDs should be designed to promote pedestrian interest, safety and comfort by creating safe and attractive walkways and pedestrian routes; providing street-level spaces within buildings that are designed to accommodate active uses or to otherwise engage pedestrian interest; avoiding blank walls, especially near sidewalks; and emphasizing building entries through architecture and design.

**Building Features.** Buildings within a Planned Development should:

- Be located abutting the sidewalk with doors, windows and active uses adjacent to it. Exceptions are appropriate when building setbacks allow the widening of a narrow sidewalk or where a large site allows a plaza or open space.
- Be located at sidewalk level and form a significant focal element through the use of

façade variations, porticos, roof variations, recesses or projections, or other architectural forms that are integral to the building.

- Employ townhouses or multi-story retail as liner space on large lots to screen parking garages from view and to ensure active uses at sidewalk level.
- Avoid large expanses of blank walls, particularly where pedestrian movement is expected.
- Include clear, non-reflective windows that allow views of indoor commercial space or product display areas.
- Provide, in lieu of windowless walls, articulated walls with arches, piers, columns, planters, landscaping and other elements that reduce building scale at ground level and add visual interest.
- Break up street-facing façades of neighborhood buildings by using horizontal bays that give the appearance of smaller, individual storefronts.
- Provide adequate sidewalk widths to ensure pedestrian clear zones with a width appropriate for the level of pedestrian activity expected.

**Building Orientation and Massing.** Building orientation and massing should create active “street or building walls” lining the sidewalk. Site plans should also:

- Locate buildings close to the sidewalk and close to one another.
- Avoid gaps between buildings that interrupt the street wall.
- Locate corner buildings close to both street frontages to help “hold” and give prominence to the corner. Parking areas and driveways should not be located at corners.
- Reinforce the characteristics of urban streets by placing retail buildings (outlot buildings) near the street/public sidewalk.
- Provide separation distances between multiple buildings that are adequate to protect public safety and to ensure privacy and open space for residents of the development. Setbacks and separation distances within Planned Developments should be at least as large as would otherwise be required for similar buildings located outside of a Planned Development.

**Residential Developments.** Gated, walled-off residential developments are not characteristic of Chicago neighborhoods and should not be used. Large-scale residential developments of two or more acres should include a variety of housing types, such as townhouses and detached houses. A mix of building types is representative of Chicago’s neighborhoods.

**Transitions.** Service areas, such as those for Dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment, should be located away from the street and away from residential buildings and entrances. Landscaping and walls should be used to screen such areas/activities from view.

## BUILDING DESIGN

**General Guidelines.** Buildings within a Planned Development should be designed such that:

- Cornices or similar enhancements are located at the top of building façades that face public streets.

- Elements such as cornices, belt courses, window bays, variations in wall plane and roof features are used to create interesting attractive buildings.
- Architectural design articulates and enhances their form, especially those located at intersections due to their prominence and visibility.
- All sides and areas of buildings that are visible to the public are treated with materials, finishes and architectural details that are of high-quality and appropriate for use on the primary street-facing façade.

**High-rises.** Tall buildings should have a clearly defined vertical appearance, comprised of a base, midsection, and top. The bases and upper stories of high-rise buildings should be in the same vertical plane along all building façades fronting public streets. Upper-story setbacks should be used to reduce the apparent mass and bulk of tall buildings. Such setbacks should convey a sense of sculpting to the tower and the top floors of the building.

**Green Design.** Planned Developments should minimize human exposure to noxious materials, conserve non-renewable energy and scarce materials, minimize life-cycle ecological impact of energy and materials used, use renewable energy and materials that are sustainably harvested, protect and restore local air, water, soils, flora and fauna, support pedestrians, bicycles, mass transit and other alternatives to fossil-fueled vehicles. Planned Developments should also reduce the speed and contamination of stormwater runoff from a site.

**Parks, Open Space, and Landscaping.** Open spaces should be located to ensure maximum exposure to sunlight. In addition to providing a visual amenity to the street, open space should be designed to allow public gathering space and activity. Planned Developments should also:

- Provide adequate, inviting, usable and accessible parks, open spaces and recreation areas for workers, visitors and residents;
- Provide special elements within parks, open spaces or on sidewalks to create a sense of place associated with the development; and
- Provide substantial landscaping of the open areas on the building and the site
- Include on-site amenities, such as common open space, recreational facilities, dog runs/exercise areas and health/fitness facilities where appropriate.
- Provide significant perimeter landscaping and setbacks when located near different land uses.

**Public and Civic Amenities.** Planned Developments should provide public, social and cultural amenities for workers, visitors and residents; and promote public safety and security.

**Historic and Cultural Resources.** Planned Developments should give priority to the adaptive reuse of historic buildings which are designated Chicago landmarks, contributing structures in a designated Chicago landmark district, or color-coded red or orange in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey.

**Waterways.** The beauty, amenity, economic potential, recreation value and environmental quality of Chicago's waterways should be protected and enhanced by developing more attractive

relationships between land and water. Planned Developments adjacent to waterways must:

- Provide a minimum setback of 30 feet from the top of the bank along all points of the waterway adjacent to the Chicago River Main Branch, Chicago River North Branch and North Branch Canal, Chicago River South Branch and South Fork of the South Branch, North Shore Channel, and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
- Provide public waterfront paths, plazas, overlooks, esplanades and access points where appropriate
- Include provisions for landward connections to maintain continuity and linkage with nearby public edge improvements at locations of active commercial/industrial waterfront activities
- Provide adequate setbacks for bulk storage facilities to prevent littering or leaching of pollutants into the waterways
- Include stabilizing treatments for waterway edges with landscaping screening for visual relief and safety provisions for landslide and waterside users
- Provide boat landings and/or water-oriented commercial facilities where appropriate and feasible
- Provide landscaping within all waterway setback areas, with trees and vegetation that are compatible with and enhance the riparian environment
- Comply with the general goals set forth in the “Chicago River Urban Design Guidelines” and any other inland waterway design guidelines adopted by the Plan Commission or City Council

## PLANNED MANUFACTURING DISTRICT DESIGNATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

*Excerpted from the Chicago Municipal Code/17-5 and other sources*

***Upon recommendation of the Chicago Plan Commission, any area of five or more contiguous acres is eligible for City Council designation as a Planned Manufacturing District.***

A Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) is a special zoning district designed to protect and enhance the functions of the city's heaviest industrial users. Located within industrial corridors across the city, PMDs are intended to strengthen and foster the city's industrial base; maintain a diversified economy for the general welfare of its citizens; and encourage industrial investment and expansion by providing for a stable work environment. No residential uses are allowed in a PMD.

### REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

**Initiation.** PMD applications are filed with the Zoning Administrator, who provides copies to the Chicago Plan Commission and City Clerk.

**Community Meeting.** The Department of Planning and Development holds at least one public meeting in the ward of the proposed district for the purpose of explaining the proposal and soliciting comments on it prior to a public hearing before the commission. Also before the hearing, the commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development provides a written report and recommendation on the proposal to the commission.

**Public Hearing.** A public hearing is held for plan commissioners to hear testimony regarding the industrial viability of the district and the need for the PMD zoning.

With respect to industrial viability, determining factors include:

- Size
- Number of affected firms and employees
- Nature and size of recent and planned public and private investments
- Potential to support additional industrial uses and employment
- Proportion of land dedicated to industrial and legal nonconforming uses
- The area's industrial importance
- Amount of support and opposition

With respect to need, determining factors should include:

- Evidence of conflict on industrial uses by non-industrial uses
- Demand for zoning changes or use conversions
- Continuing industrial viability of the area

**Recommendation.** Within seven days after the hearing, the commission forwards its recommendation for City Council consideration in a written report describing the proposed district in detail. Every ordinance involving a new or existing planned manufacturing district ordinance requires City Council approval.

**Ongoing Review.** The commission may occasionally review the effectiveness of designated planned manufacturing districts in achieving their purposes. The commission, after consultation with the Zoning Administrator, may recommend additional land use regulations in the nature of prohibited uses, permitted uses, allowable special uses or special restrictions which the commission may deem necessary to enhance the character of the particular district and further the purposes of industrial viability. Likewise, the commission may recommend to repeal a district after following the procedures for its designation.

# INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS

*Excerpted from the Chicago Municipal Code/17-13*

***The Chicago Plan Commission reviews each request to rezone land within one of the city's designated Industrial Corridors from an M, PMD, POS or T zoning district classification to any other zoning district classification.***

Each rezoning request is reviewed by the Plan Commission as part of a legislative action made in the best interests of public health, safety and general welfare while also recognizing the rights of individual property owners.

## REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

In making decisions on proposed zoning map amendments, commission members consider at least the following factors:

- Consistency with area plans adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission or City Council
- Compatibility with area growth and development trends
- Compatibility with nearby land uses, density and building scale
- Compatibility with surrounding zoning
- Adequacy of public infrastructure

Commissioners also consider whether a proposed rezoning would adversely affect continued industrial viability by considering:

- Size
- Number of affected firms and employees
- Nature and size of recent and planned public and private investments
- Potential to support additional industrial uses and employment
- Proportion of land dedicated to industrial and legal nonconforming uses
- The area's industrial importance

The Plan Commission's recommendation is forwarded to the City Council's Committee on Zoning, which holds a public hearing prior to a full vote by City Council.



## CITYWIDE, COMMUNITY, TIF DISTRICT AND POLICY PLANS

*The Chicago Plan Commission reviews planning documents that provide formal guidelines, goals and policies for long-term development and quality of life improvements within the City of Chicago*

Planning documents presented to the Plan Commission may involve the entire city, specific areas of the city, or policy standards related to aspects of the city’s function. Plans formally adopted by the commission provide the City Council, city departments, and community stakeholders with an official reference tool to be used when assessing the merits of proposed projects and policies.

The Plan Commission’s review of certain plans are required, such as designation plans for Chicago’s Tax Increment Financing districts. Others are introduced on an as-needed basis.

Recent plans approved by the commission include.

### Community Area Plans

*Central Area Plan  
Central Area Action Plan  
Life Along the Boulevards Plan  
Milwaukee Avenue Corridor Plan  
Near Northwest Side Plan  
Near South Plan  
Lake Calumet Plan*

### Sustainability Plans

*Adding Green to Urban Design  
Eat Local Live Healthy  
Chicago Sustainable Industries*

### Open Space Plans

*Calumet Area Land Use Plan  
Calumet Design Guidelines  
Calumet Open Space Reserve  
Chicago Nature and Wildlife Plan  
Chicago River Corridor Development Plan  
Chicago Riverwalk Main Branch Framework Plan  
CitySpace Plan  
Logan Square Open Space Plan*

### Transportation Plans

*Reconnecting Neighborhoods  
Transit Friendly Development Guide*

## REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

**Community, Citywide and Policy Plans.** Plans presented to the commission involve a presentation by the proposer, typically a specific city department or agency. Plans are reviewed for need, potential impact, conformity with other plans, community support, and other factors relative to the geographic area or subject.

**Tax Increment Financing.** TIF district plans outline a comprehensive improvement program for a specific redevelopment area. New property tax growth within the district-subsequent to

## CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

its designation-is used for economic development and public improvement projects within its borders.

A redevelopment area is a slum, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating area of at least two acres where buildings, improvements or vacant lots are detrimental to the public safety, health, morals, welfare or economic stability because of age, dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, lack of light, ventilation or adequate sanitary facilities, inadequate utilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or layout, inadequate or ineffective use, or failure to generate a proper share of tax revenues, housing opportunities or employment commensurate with the capacity of the area, or any combination of such factors.

A TIF plan may include, but is not limited to:

- Land uses
- Improvement, alteration or vacation of streets and alleys
- Provisions for restricted services access and off-street parking
- Locations and easements for public and private utilities
- Community facilities
- Landscaping and site improvement
- Recommended construction including new buildings, rehabilitation and conversions, demolition of designated structures and elimination of nonconforming uses
- Density, number of units, land coverage and setback requirements
- Provisions for open spaces and plazas
- Environmental conditions and proposed remediation
- State and federal landmark restrictions

Plan Commission recommendations involving TIF District plans are forwarded to City Council committees on Real Estate and Finance.

## **PUBLIC AGENCY PROPERTY SALES AND ACQUISITIONS**

*The Chicago Plan Commission reviews proposed sales and acquisitions of land owned by public agencies within specific areas of the city.*

Plan Commission review is required for public agency proposals within:

- Planned Manufacturing Districts
- Tax Increment Financing Districts
- Lakefront Protection District
- Industrial corridors

A public agency could be any unit of federal, state, county or city government, including schools, boards, commissions or related corporate entity. To be eligible for review, agency proposals are generally forwarded to the Plan Commission not less than 90 days nor more than 365 days prior to the initiation of the action proposed.

### **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION**

In reviewing each proposal, commission members consider its potential effect on existing or proposed area land uses, plans and other factors that may be relevant. The commission makes a recommendation either approving or disapproving the proposal and forwards the decision to the City Council Committee on Real Estate.

Certain public agency land sales and acquisitions in the geographic areas above require approval by the full City Council.

## GENERAL TERMS

*Excerpted from the Chicago Municipal Code and other sources*

**Abandoned Sign Structure.** A sign structure that has had no sign in place for a continuous period of 6 months or more.

**Abutting Property Line.** A border, boundary or property line with no intervening public way or other land.

**Accessible Dwelling Unit.** A dwelling unit provides at least one accessible bedroom on the entrance level, and at least one toilet room, bathtub, shower, water closet or lavatory on the entrance level.

**Accessory Building.** A building that is subordinate in area, extent and purpose to the principal use and building on the zoning lot and that is customarily used or occupied in conjunction with a permitted accessory use.

**Accessory Parking.** Parking provided to comply with minimum off-street parking requirements and non-required parking that is provided exclusively to serve occupants of or visitors to a particular use, rather than the public at-large.

**Accessory Structure.** A structure that is subordinate in area, extent and purpose to the principal use and building on the zoning lot and that is customarily used in conjunction with a permitted accessory use.

**Accessory Use.** A use that is subordinate in area, extent and purpose to the principal use on the zoning lot and that is customarily found in conjunction with a permitted principal use.

**Administrative Adjustment.** Modification of an otherwise applicable standard, approved in accordance with Sec. 17-13-1000.

**Agent.** A person duly authorized to act on behalf of a property owner.

**Air Rights.** The ownership or control of all land property, and that area of space at and above a horizontal plane over the ground surface of land utilized for railroad or expressway purposes. The horizontal plane must be at a height above the city datum that is reasonably necessary or legally required for the full and free use of the ground surface.

**Alley.** A public right-of-way that affords a secondary means of access to abutting property.

**Allowed Use.** A permitted use or special use in the subject zoning district.

**Applicant.** Usually the owner of the subject property or a duly authorized representative.

**Artist Live/Work Space.** A dwelling unit in which

up to 50% of the floor area is used for the production, showing, and sale of art.

**Attic.** Unfinished floor space located immediately below a gabled roof or other form of sloped roof.

**Automated Teller Machine.** An electronically powered machine activated by means of a coded celluloid card or other similar device that permits banking transactions.

**Automated Teller Machine Facility.** A facility or store whose principal use is for the location and operation of one or more remote service units. A "remote service unit" means an automated teller machine, automated loan machine, and an automated device for receiving deposits, or an other such similar device.

**Automotive Lift.** Equipment designed to deposit motor vehicles in a parking space by moving motor vehicles vertically above floor level on pallets or platforms equipped with tracks, channels or similar devices to hold the vehicle's wheels, not the vehicle frame or designated support points in place while the vehicle is being moved vertically.

**Awning.** A roof-like structure of fabric or similar non-rigid material attached to a rigid frame that is supported completely or partially by either an exterior building wall or wall exterior to an individual tenant space.

**Awning Sign.** A sign incorporated into or attached to an awning.

**Banner.** A sign made of fabric or other similar non-rigid material with no enclosing framework or electrical components that is supported or anchored on two or more edges or at all four corners. Banners also include non-rigid signs anchored along one edge, or two corners, with weights installed that reduce the reaction of the sign to wind. See also "flag".

**Base District.** Any zoning district that is not an overlay district.

**Base Floor Area Ratio.** The maximum floor area ratio allowed under the subject zoning classification before any applicable bonus or premium floor area allowance is applied.

**Block.** A tract of land bounded by streets, or by a combination of streets and public parks, cemeteries, railroad right-of-way, bulkhead lines or shore lines of waterways, or corporate boundary lines of the City of Chicago.

**Block Face.** All lots abutting one side of a street between the two nearest intersecting streets.

**Breakwater:** a structure, usually detached from the shoreline, protecting a shore area, harbor, anchorage or

basin from waves.

**Buffer Zone.** Any natural or undeveloped area or existing open space that separates transfer stations, resource recovery facilities, incinerators, sanitary landfills and Class III recycling facilities from surrounding uses.

**Building.** Any structure that is permanently affixed to the land and built for the support, shelter, or enclosure of persons, animals, chattels, or movable property of any kind.

**Building Coverage.** The amount of a lot covered by buildings.

**Building Height.** The vertical distance from grade to a fixed point on the building. (See Sec. 17-17-0311 for rules governing measurement of building height)

**Building Line.** An imaginary line representing the actual location of an exterior building wall.

**Bulk.** The general term used to refer to the size of a building or the building features allowed on a lot. It includes the following: lot area; setbacks; open space; floor area; floor area ratio; building coverage; and building height.

**Business Park.** A planned, unified, campus-like development consisting primarily of office, research and limited manufacturing uses.

**Canopy.** A roof like structure of a permanent nature that projects from the wall of a building and overhangs the public way.

**Changing-image Sign.** Any sign that, through the use of moving structural elements, sequential lights, lighting elements, or other automated method, results in movement, the appearance of movement or change of sign image or message. Changing-image signs do not include otherwise static signs where illumination is turned off and back on not more than once every 24 hours.

**Commercial Establishment.** A business classified in the commercial use group, the ownership, management and physical location of which are separate and distinct from those of any other place of business located on the same zoning lot, as partly evidenced by maintaining separate and distinct doors and access points.

**Commercial Message.** Any sign, wording, logo or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises or calls attention to a business, product, service or other commercial activity.

**Common Open Space.** An outdoor area designated and intended for the common use and enjoyment of residents or other members of the controlling association.

**Common Parking Area.** An off-street parking area containing parking spaces that serve two or more dwelling units or uses.

**Completely Enclosed Building.** A building separated on all sides from the adjacent open space, or from other

buildings or other structures, by a permanent roof and by exterior walls or party walls, pierced only by windows and normal entrance or exit doors.

**Composting.** A controlled process that transforms landscape waste into products useful as soil amendments.

**Conversion, illegal or unlawful.** Any change to a building that results in the creation of one or more dwelling units that are illegal under the Zoning Ordinance either because they exceed the number of dwelling units permitted in the zoning district where the building is located, do not comply with the bulk and density standards of the zoning district where the building is located, or were created without a required special use.

**Corner Lot.** A lot situated at the intersection of two streets, the interior angle of such intersection not exceeding 135 degrees.

**Curb Level.** The level of the established curb that is adjacent to the front property line of the subject lot, measured at the center of such front property line. When no curb elevation has been established, the mean elevation of the finished lot grade immediately adjacent to a building is considered the "curb level".

**Dangerous Sign.** A sign constituting a hazard to public safety because it no longer meets the lateral and/or vertical loads as specified in the Building Code, or no longer meets the wiring and installation standards of the Electrical Code.

**Density.** The general term used to refer to the number of dwelling units allowed per unit of land area. It is expressed in this Zoning Ordinance in terms of a minimum amount of lot area required per dwelling unit (minimum lot area per dwelling unit).

**Detached Building.** A building surrounded by open space on the same lot.

**Detached House.** A dwelling unit that is located on its own lot and that is not attached to any other dwelling unit.

**Development Application.** Any application or petition for approval in accordance with the procedures of Chapter 17-13.

**Drive-through Facility.** Any service window, automated device or other facility that provides goods or services to individuals in a motor vehicle.

**Dwelling Unit.** One or more rooms arranged, designed or used as independent living quarters for a single household. Buildings with more than one kitchen or more than one set of cooking facilities are deemed to contain multiple dwelling units unless the additional cooking facilities are clearly accessory and not intended to serve additional households.

**Efficiency.** A dwelling unit, other than a single-room occupancy unit, that contains no more than 700 square

feet of floor area, consisting of one room exclusive of bathroom, kitchen, hallway, closets or dining alcove directly off the principal room, provided that such dining alcove does not exceed 125 square feet in area.

**Elderly Housing.** Dwelling units specially designed and marketed for persons who are 62 years of age or older, but not including buildings containing equipment for surgical care or for the treatment of disease or injury, other than emergency first-aid-care.

**Electric Sign.** Any sign containing electrical wiring, lighting or other electrical components, but not including signs illuminated by a detached exterior light source.

**End Wall.** An exterior wall that is generally perpendicular to front walls and rear walls.

**Expressway.** Any primary highway constructed as a freeway which has complete control of access and is designed for speeds in excess of 45 miles per hour.

**Façade.** The exterior plane or “face” of a building.

**FAR.** An abbreviation for “floor area ratio”. See “floor area ratio” definition.

**Flag.** A sign made of fabric or other similar non-rigid material supported or anchored along only one edge or supported or anchored at only two corners. If any dimension of a flag is more than 3 times as long as any other dimension, it is classified and regulated as a banner regardless of how it is anchored or supported. See also “banner”.

**Flashing Sign.** Any sign or portion of a sign that contains an intermittent or flashing light source or that changes light intensity in sudden transitory bursts. Example of flashing signs include signs that contain or use strobe lights, or rotating lights; signs with blinking or flashing features that are designed to merely to attract attention rather than convey a message; and changing-image signs that do not comply with applicable standards.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR).** The ratio of the floor area of all principal buildings to the total area of the lot upon which such buildings are located. (See Sec. 17-17-0305 for rules governing measurement of floor area ratio)

**Freight Container.** A non-wheeled, enclosed storage container designed to be integrated into the frame of a train car or truck bed.

**Freestanding Sign.** A sign on a frame, pole, or other support structure that is not attached to any building.

**Front Property Line.** That property line that abuts or is along an existing or dedicated public street, or when no public street exists, is along a public way. On lots with multiple street frontages, the property owner may select either street property line as the front property line.

**Front Setback.** The setback required between a building and the front property line of the lot on which the building is located, extending along the full length of the front property line between the side property lines.

**Front Wall.** In buildings that contain more than one dwelling unit on a single floor, front walls and rear walls are those walls that are generally perpendicular to the party walls between dwelling units. In buildings that do not contain more than one dwelling unit on a single floor, the front wall is the wall that is generally parallel and closest to the front property line and the rear wall is the exterior building wall opposite the front wall.

**Front Yard.** The actual area that exists between a building and the front property line of the lot on which the building is located, extending along the full length of the front property line between the side property lines. See also “Setback, Front”.

**Government-Subsidized (Dwelling Unit).** A dwelling unit that is financed in whole or in part with federal, state or local (Chicago Department of Community Development) financial assistance.

**Grade.** The curb level adjacent to the front property line or the mean elevation of the finished lot, as measured along exterior building walls of the principal building, whichever is higher.

**Gross Lot Area.** The entire land area within the boundaries of a site.

**High-Rise Building Sign.** An individual letter sign mounted at a height of 150 feet or more that is attached to the exterior wall of a building or to a roof-top mechanical equipment penthouse or other roof-top feature that is integral to the building upon which it is located.

**Home Occupation.** An accessory use of a dwelling unit for business or commercial purposes. Home occupations are subject to the standards of Sec. 17-9-0202.

**Household.** One or more persons related by blood, marriage, legal adoption or guardianship, plus not more than 3 additional persons, all of whom live together as a single housekeeping unit; or one or more handicapped persons, as defined in the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, plus not more than 3 additional persons, all of whom live together as a single housekeeping unit.

**Incidental Sign.** A sign that contains no commercial message and that is exclusively used to convey directions or other information for the convenience of the public. Included are signs designating restrooms, address numbers, hours of operation, entrances to buildings, help wanted, public telephone, etc. Also included are signs on private property designed to guide or direct pedestrians or vehicular traffic, such as “entrance” and “exit” signs.

**Indirect Lighting.** Illumination from a light source that is not contained within a sign or awning.

**Individual Letter Sign.** A wall sign or high-rise building sign consisting of raised individual letters, script or symbols. The background of an individual letter sign is either the exterior building wall surface or

another opaque, non-illuminated surface.

**Industrial Corridor.** Any area that has been designated as a priority area for industrial development and/or retention in a plan approved by the Plan Commission or City Council.

**Industrial Establishment.** A business classified in the industrial use group, the ownership, management and physical location of which are separate and distinct from those of any other place of business located on the same zoning lot, as partly evidenced by maintaining separate and distinct doors and access points.

**Industrial Park.** A planned, unified, campus-like development consisting primarily of manufacturing, industrial and warehousing uses.

**Interior Side Property Line.** A side property line that does not abut a street or alley.

**Internal Lighting.** Illumination from a light source that is contained within a sign or awning.

**Jetty:** on an open coast, a structure extending into a body of water, and designed to prevent build-up of littoral materials in a channel. Jetties are built at the mouth of harbors or other navigable waterways.

**Kennel.** The term “kennel” shall mean an animal care facility as that term is defined in Section 4-384-010.

**Landscaped.** Substantially covered with grass, ground cover, shrubs, trees or other living plant material.

**Legible.** Capable of being read or deciphered by a five-foot to six-foot tall person whose eyesight meets the minimum requirements necessary for receipt of an Illinois driver’s license (wearing any corrective lenses required by such license).

**Lighting, Direct.** Exposed lighting or neon tubes on a sign face. Direct lighting of signs also includes signs whose message or image is created by light projected onto a surface.

**Lighting, Indirect.** A light source that is separate from the sign face and that is directed to shine onto the sign.

**Lighting, Internal.** A light source that is concealed within a sign.

**Littoral Drift:** the movement of sediments, caused by wave action, along the coastline. On the western shoreline of Lake Michigan, littoral drift carries sediments from the north to the south.

**Lot.** A “zoning lot” unless the context clearly indicates a “lot of record. The term “lot” will be construed to include the terms “site”, “parcel” and any other similar undefined term.

**Lot Area.** The total horizontal land area contained within the property lines of a lot.

**Lot Coverage.** The area of a lot covered by principal buildings, as measured along the exterior building wall at ground level, and including all building projections other than those expressly allowed encroaching into required setback areas.

**Lot Depth.** The mean horizontal distance between the front property line and the rear property line of a lot measured within the lot’s boundaries.

**Lot Frontage.** The horizontal distance between side property lines on a lot, as measured along the front property line.

**Lot of Record.** An area of land designated as a lot on a plat of subdivision recorded or registered, pursuant to statute, with the Recorder of Deeds of Cook County and the Ex-officio Examiner of Subdivisions of the City of Chicago.

**Lot Width.** The mean horizontal distance between the side property lines of a lot measured within the lot’s boundaries.

**Marina.** A facility located on a body of water that provides for the storage (wet and dry), launching, and mooring of pleasure boats together with one or more accessory retail and service uses, such as marine equipment sales, showers, private clubs and restaurants.

**Marquee.** A roof-like structure of a permanent nature that projects from the wall of a building and overhangs the public way.

**Marquee Sign.** A sign incorporated into or attached to a marquee or permanent canopy.

**Mobility Street.** Any street officially designated as a mobility street in accordance with Sec. 17-4-0600.

**Motor Vehicle.** Any passenger vehicle, truck, truck-trailer, trailer or semi-trailer propelled or drawn by mechanical power.

**Multi-Unit Residential.** A residential building that contains 3 or more dwelling units that share common walls or common floors/ceilings with one or more dwelling units. The land upon which the building sits is not divided into separate lots.

**Net Site Area.** The entire land area within the boundaries of a site, less the area of all land required or proposed for public use.

**Non-Accessory Parking.** Parking spaces provided in excess of the maximum accessory parking limits established in Sec. 17-10-0208, and parking spaces (and the drive aisles and circulation area associated with such parking spaces) that are provided to serve the general public rather than being reserved exclusively by occupants of and visitors to a particular use (e.g., public parking garages).

**Nonconforming Building.** A building that was lawfully established in accordance with zoning regulations in effect at the time of its establishment but that no longer complies with the bulk standards of the zoning district in which it is now located.

**Nonconforming Development.** Any aspect of a development – other than a nonconforming lot, nonconforming use or nonconforming sign – that was lawfully established, in accordance with zoning

regulations in effect at the time of its establishment but that no longer complies with one or more standards of this Zoning Ordinance. Common examples of nonconforming developments are buildings that do not comply with current setback or height standards, off-street parking or loading areas that contain fewer spaces than required by current standards or sites that do not comply with current landscaping standards.

**Nonconforming Lot.** A tract of land lawfully established as a lot on a plat of subdivision recorded or registered, pursuant to statute, with the Recorder of Deeds of Cook County and the Ex-officio Examiner of Subdivisions of the City of Chicago that does not comply with the minimum lot area or lot width standards of the zoning district in which it is now located.

**Nonconforming Sign.** A sign that was lawfully established, in accordance with zoning and other sign regulations in effect at the time of its establishment but that is no longer allowed by the regulations of this Zoning Ordinance.

**Nonconforming Use.** A use that was lawfully established in accordance with zoning regulations in effect at the time of its establishment but that is no longer allowed by the use regulations of the zoning district in which it is now located.

**Nonconformity.** Any nonconforming building, nonconforming development, nonconforming lot, nonconforming sign or nonconforming use.

**Off-premise sign.** A sign that directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, or offered elsewhere than upon the lot upon which it is located or to which it is affixed.

**On-premise Sign.** A sign that directs attention to a business or profession conducted or to a commodity, service, or entertainment sold or offered upon the premises where the sign is located.

**Ornamental Fencing.** A decorative metal fence, including wrought-iron or fencing that gives the appearance of wrought-iron fencing, but expressly excluding chain-link, barbed wire and similar non-decorative fences.

**Overlay District.** A zoning district that overlays one or more base zoning districts and imposes requirements in addition to those of the base district or modifies the standards otherwise applicable in the base district.

**Painted Wall Sign.** A sign applied to a building wall with paint or a thin layer of vinyl, paper or similar material adhered directly to the building surface and that has no sign structure.

**Parapet.** A low wall or railing to protect the edge of a roof.

**Parkway, Public.** See “public parkway”.

**Parkway Tree.** Trees planted or required to be planted within the public parkway.

**Pedestrian Street.** Any street officially designated as a pedestrian street in accordance with Sec. 17-3-0500 or Sec. 17-4-0500.

**Perched Beach:** a sand beach retained above the otherwise normal profile level by an off-shore submerged dike or bulkhead. Perched beaches are constructed where a beach is desired but the water depth is too deep and profile too steep to fill with sand. Examples are the beaches south of Fullerton Avenue.

**Permanent Sign.** Any sign not classified as a temporary sign.

**Permitted Use.** A use permitted by- right in the subject zoning district in accordance with the applicable use regulations of this Zoning Ordinance.

**Planned Development.** A development that meets mandatory planned development thresholds of Sec. 17-8-0500 or the elective planned development thresholds of Sec. 17-8-0600.

**Planned Manufacturing District (PMD).** A district of five acres or more that is contiguous or would be contiguous except for separation by a public way or a railroad right-of-way and that is designated as a PMD in accordance with the procedures of Sec. 17-13-0700.

**Portable Sign.** Any sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure or a sign designed to be transported, including, but not limited to, signs designed to be transported by means of wheels and signs made as A-frames or T- frames.

**Pre-construction Grade.** The unfinished mean grade of a lot before commencement of any building or construction activity.

**Principal Building.** A building or combination of buildings of chief importance or function on a lot. In general, the principal use is carried out in a principal building. The difference between a principal building and an accessory building or structure is determined by comparing the size, placement, similarity of design, use of common building materials, and the orientation of the structures on the lot.

**Principal Use.** An activity or combination of activities of chief importance on the lot. One of the main purposes for which the land, buildings or structures are intended, designed, or ordinarily used.

**Processing.** A series of operations performed in the making or treatment of a product or to perform operations on data.

**Product Display Window.** An illuminated window display area in which products and goods are displayed to pedestrians but that do not generally allow visibility into the interior of the building.

**Projecting Sign.** A sign attached to and projecting out from a building face or wall, generally at right angles to the building. Projecting signs include signs that are totally in the right-of-way, partially in the right-of-way,



or fully on private property.

**Property Line.** The boundary of a lot, as shown on a plat of subdivision recorded or registered pursuant to statute or as designated by the lot's owner or developer as the boundary of a parcel of land to be used, developed, or built upon as a unit, under single ownership or control.

**Property Owner.** The legal or beneficial owner of an improved or unimproved parcel of real estate.

**Public Agency.** Any agency of the United States Government, State of Illinois, any county, township, district, school, authority, municipality, or any official, board, commission or other body politic or corporate or subdivision of the State of Illinois, now or hereafter created, whether herein specifically mentioned or not.

**Public Open Space.** Any publicly- owned open area, including, but not limited to parks, playgrounds, beaches, waterways, parkways and streets.

**Public Parkway.** That portion of the public way between a street and the nearest parallel property line, including sidewalk areas.

**Public Way.** Any sidewalk, street, alley, highway, or other public thoroughfare.

**Railroad Right-of-Way.** A strip of land with tracks and auxiliary facilities for track operation, but not including freight depots or stations, loading platforms, train sheds, warehouses, car or locomotive shops, or car yards.

**Rear Property Line.** That property line that is most distant from and is most parallel to the front property line.

**Rear Setback.** The setback required between a building and the rear property line of the lot on which the building is located, extending along the full length of the rear property line between the side property lines.

**Rear Wall.** In buildings that contain more than one dwelling unit on a single floor, front walls and rear walls are those walls that are generally perpendicular to the party walls between dwelling units. In buildings that do not contain more than one dwelling unit on a single floor, the front wall is the wall that is generally parallel and closest to the front property line and the rear wall is the exterior building wall opposite the front wall.

**Rear Yard.** The actual area that exists between a building and the rear property line of the lot on which the building is located, extending along the full length of the rear property line between the side property lines. See also "Setback, Rear".

**Recyclable Material.** Any aluminum or scrap, bi-metal or tin cans, glass and paper products, rubber, textiles, landscape waste or plastic products such as polyethylene terephthalate, high-density polyethylene, low-density polyethylene, polystyrene and polypropylene, and any other material designated by the commissioner by rule or by regulation.

**Recycling.** The collection, temporary storage, and minimal processing of recyclable materials for the purpose of marketing that material for use as a raw material in a manufacturing process or reuse as consumer products. For the purpose of interpreting this definition only, the term "processing" means manual, mechanical or automated separation of recyclable material from other materials; separation of recyclable materials from each other; cleaning, bundling, compacting or packing of recyclable material. "Processing" in this context does not include melting, rendering, smelting, vulcanizing or purification by application of heat or chemical process.

**Reprocessable Construction / Demolition Material.** Broken concrete, bricks, rock, stone or paving asphalt generated from construction or demolition activities.

**Residential Building.** A building that is arranged, designed, used or intended to be used exclusively for residential occupancy by one or more families; or for a mixture of nonresidential and residential occupancy and in which the floor area devoted to residential dwelling units makes up 50% or more of the building's total gross floor area.

**Residential District.** Any R or DR zoning district or residential planned development.

**Reversed Corner Lot.** A corner lot, the street side property line of which is substantially a continuation of the front property line of the first lot to its rear.

**Roof Line.** The top edge of a roof or parapet, whichever is higher.

**Roof Sign.** A sign or any portion of a sign that is erected upon or projects more than 24 inches above the roofline of any building whether the principal support for the sign is on the roof, wall or any other structural element of the building.

**Satellite Dish Antenna.** A device designed or used for the reception or the transmission of television or other electric communication signal broadcast or, relayed from a satellite. It may be a solid, open mesh, or bar configured structure, in the shape of a shallow dish or parabola.

**Setback.** An open, unobstructed area that is required by this Zoning Ordinance to be provided from the furthestmost projection of a structure to the property line of the lot on which the building is located.

**Side Property Line.** Any property line that is not a front property line or a rear property line.

**Side Setback.** The setback required between a building and the side property line of the lot on which the building is located, extending along a side property line from the point of the minimum front setback to the point of the minimum rear setback.

**Side Yard.** The actual area that exists between a building and the side property line of the lot on which

the building is located, extending along a side property line from the point of the minimum front setback to the point of the minimum rear setback. See also “Setback, Side”.

**Sign.** Materials placed or constructed, or light projected, that: (1) conveys a message or image and (2) is used to inform or attract the attention of the public. Some examples of “signs” are materials or lights meeting the definition of the preceding sentence and that are commonly referred to as signs, placards, A- boards, posters, billboards, murals, diagrams, banners, flags, or projected slides, images or holograms. When not qualified with the terms “on-premise” or “off- premise”, the term “sign” refers to all signs, whether on- or off-premise in nature.

**Sign Maintenance.** Normal care needed to keep a sign functional, such as cleaning, painting, oiling, and changing of light bulbs.

**Sign Repair.** Fixing or replacement of broken or worn parts. Replacement includes comparable materials only. Repairs may be made with the sign in position or with the sign removed.

**Sign Structure.** A structure specifically intended for supporting or containing a sign.

**Single-Room Occupancy.** A residential building containing 5 or more single-room occupancy units in which at least 90% of the units are single room occupancy units occupied by the same tenants for a continuous period of at least 32 days.

**Single-Room Occupancy Unit.** A dwelling unit within a single-room occupancy (building) that is used or intended to be used as sleeping quarters or living quarters with or without cooking facilities, and that contains not more than one habitable room consisting of not more than 250 square feet of floor area, excluding from the calculation of floor area any kitchen having less than 70 square feet of floor area.

**Special Character Overlay District.** A zoning district that has been established in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 17-7-0600 and that imposes special, supplemental and zoning regulations for the use and development of land within such district.

**Special Events Signs.** A temporary sign announcing an event at stadium, auditorium or public or civic facility.

**Special Use.** A use allowed in the subject zoning district only if reviewed and approved in accordance with the special use procedures of Sec. 17-13-0900.

**Story.** That portion of a building included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the floor next above, or if there is no floor above, the space between the floor and the ceiling next above. A basement or below-grade floor will be counted as a story when more than one-half of the floor-to- ceiling height is above grade.

**Street.** A public right-of-way that affords a primary means of access to abutting property.

**Street Frontage.** Any portion of a lot that abuts a street. (See also “lot frontage”)

**Strip Center.** A building used for 2 or more commercial establishments (including stores, shops, businesses services and offices), that is typically one story in height and typically separated from the street frontage by parking, and that contains less than 65,000 square feet of floor area. This definition does not include single-use buildings when such buildings include accessory business such as coffee shops, dry cleaners, banks or automated teller machines and when such accessory uses are not separated from the principal use by demising walls.

**Structural Alteration (to a sign).** Modification of a sign, sign structure or awning that affects size, shape, height, or sign location; changes in structural materials; or replacement of electrical components with other than comparable materials. The replacement of wood parts with metal parts, the replacement of incandescent bulbs with light emitting diodes (LED), or the addition of electronic elements to a non-electric sign are all examples of structural alterations. Structural alteration does not include ordinary maintenance or repair, repainting an existing sign surface, including changes of message or image, exchanging painted and pasted or glued materials on painted wall signs, or exchanging display panels of a sign through release and closing of clips or other brackets.

**Submerged Bulkhead:** an underwater structure designed to retain sand or landfill to the shore side. The lake bottom on the lake side is deeper. Submerged bulkheads are used to create plateaus or perched beaches.

**Substandard Lot Depth.** Lot depth of less than 125 feet.

**Temporary Overnight Shelter.** A building, or portion thereof, in which sleeping accommodations are provided for no more than twelve hours per day, for three or more persons who are not related to the property owner, operator, manager or other occupants thereof by blood or by marriage, as described in Chapter 13-208 of this Code.

**Temporary Sign.** A sign that is designed to be used only temporarily and not permanently mounted to a structure or permanently installed in the ground. These include “for sale”, leasing and grand opening signs.

**Through Lot.** A lot having a pair of opposite property lines along two more or less parallel public streets, and that is not a corner lot.

**Top of the Bank.** The slope adjacent to the water’s edge and that point at the top of the slope at which the contour of the slope ceases to be 10% or greater.

**Townhouse.** A dwelling unit that shares a common wall with another dwelling unit or that has an exterior wall that abuts the exterior wall of another dwelling unit and that shares a common roof. Such common or exterior walls extend from the ground to the roof or from the roof of the garage to the roof of the dwelling unit.

**Townhouse Development.** Two more townhouse units.

**Transitional Residence.** A temporary residential living arrangement for persons who are receiving therapy or counseling for purposes such as, but not limited to, the following: (a) to help persons recuperate from the effects of drugs or alcohol addiction; (b) to help persons re-enter society while housed under supervision while under the constraints of alternatives to imprisonment including, but not limited to, pre-release, work-release and probationary programs; (c) to help persons with family or school adjustment problems that require specialized attention and care in order to achieve personal independence; or (d) to provide temporary shelter for persons who are victims of domestic abuse.

**Transitional Shelter.** A building, or portion thereof, in which temporary residential accommodations are provided for three or more persons who are not related to the property owner, operator, manager or other occupants thereof by blood or by marriage, as described in Chapter 13-212 of the Municipal Code.

**Transitional Shelter Room.** A room used as sleeping and living quarters, but without cooking facilities or without individual bathrooms, as part of a transitional shelter. In a suite of rooms without cooking facilities, each room that provides sleeping accommodations will be counted as one transitional shelter unit.

**Two-flat.** A residential building that contains two dwelling units located on a single lot. The dwelling units must share a common wall or common floor/ceiling.

**Use.** The purpose or activity for which the land, or building thereon, is designed, arranged or intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained. Unless the otherwise expressly indicated, the term “use” means principal use.

**Use of Open Land.** Storage yards, construction debris sites, used vehicle sales lots, vehicle impound yards, auto wrecking, junkyards, and similar open-air uses when the only buildings on the lot are incidental and accessory to the open-air use of the lot.

**Variation.** Modification of an otherwise applicable standard, approved in accordance with Sec. 17-13-1100.

**Vehicular Use Area.** Any area of the lot not located within any enclosed or partially enclosed structure and that is devoted to a use by or for motor vehicles including parking (accessory or non-accessory); storage of automobiles, trucks or other vehicles; gasoline stations; car washes; motor vehicle repair shops; loading areas; service areas and drives; and access drives and

driveways.

**Video Display Sign.** A sign capable of displaying full-motion imagery of television quality or higher.

**Wall Sign.** A single-faced sign attached flush to a building or other structure or a sign consisting of light projected onto a building or other structure. Wall signs do not include signs that are attached to sign structures.

**Yard.** The actual (as opposed to “required”) open space on a zoning lot that is unoccupied and unobstructed from its lowest level to the sky. See also “Setback”.

**Zoning Inspector.** A municipal employee supervised to issue citations for code violations and conduct inspections of public or private real property in Chicago to determine if code violations exist.

**Zoning Lot.** A single tract of land located within a single block, that (at the time of filing for a building permit) is designated by its owner or developer as a tract to be used, developed, or built upon as a unit, under single ownership or control.

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT THRESHOLDS

### NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS

Zoning District	Height Threshold (feet)
RM6	110
RM6.5	140
B/C-5	75*/80 (*See Sec. 17-3-0408-A)

### NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS

Zoning District	Thresholds		
	Detached Houses	Town-houses	Multi-Unit or Mixed Housing Types
RS1-RS3	3 acres net site area	NA	NA
RT3.5-RT4	3 acres net site area	40 units	30 units
RM4.5	3 acres net site area	50 units	40 units
RM5	3 acres net site area	60 units	50 units
RM5.5	3 acres net site area	70 units	60 units
RM6	3 acres net site area	80 units	80 units
RM6.5	3 acres net site area	100 units	100 units
B/C-1	3 acres net site area	50 units	30 units
B/C-1.5	3 acres net site area	50 units	30 units
B/C-2	3 acres net site area	60 units	40 units
B/C-3	3 acres net site area	85 units	60 units
B/C-5	3 acres net site area	100 units	100 units

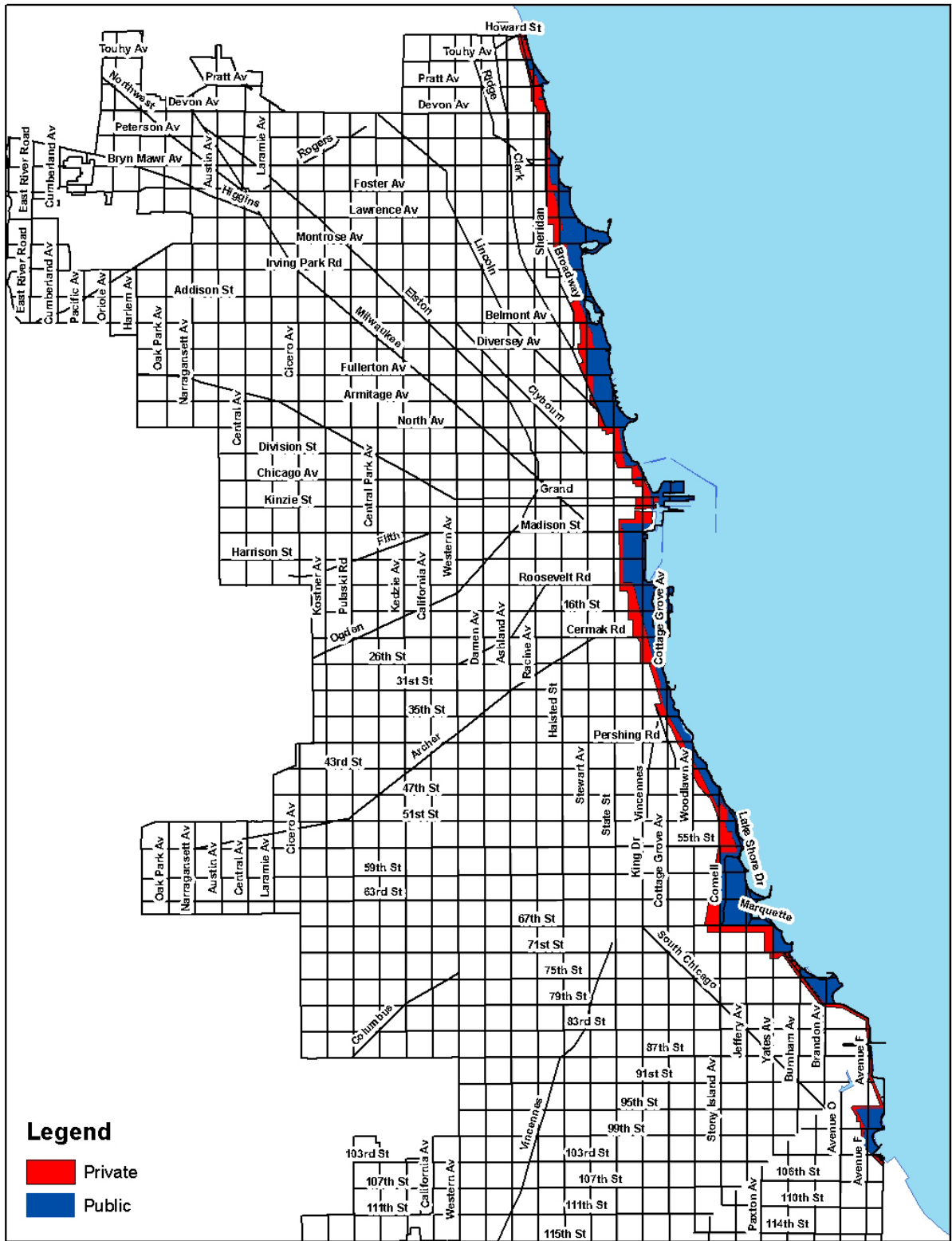
### DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

Zoning District	Residential Building Height Threshold (feet)	Nonresidential Building Height Threshold (feet)
D dash 3	75	90
D dash 5	130	150
D dash 7	155	180
D dash 10	220	310
DX-12	330	390
DC-12	330	470
DX-16	440	520
DC-16	440	600

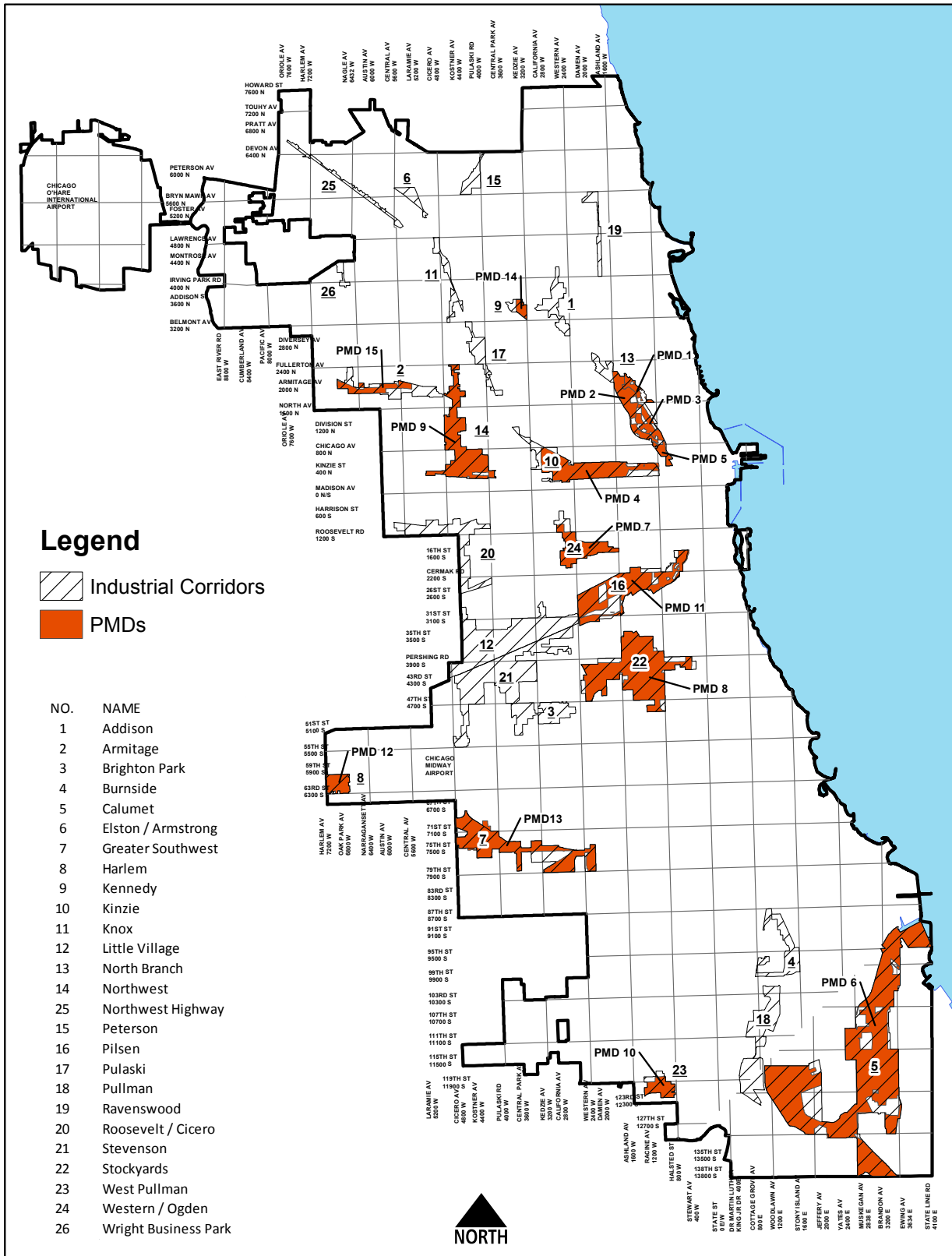
### DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

Zoning District	Threshold (Number of Dwelling Units)
D dash 3	90 units
D dash 5	150 units
D dash 7	200 units
D dash 10	300 units
DX-12	350 units
DC-12	350 units
DX-16	400 units
DC-16	350 units

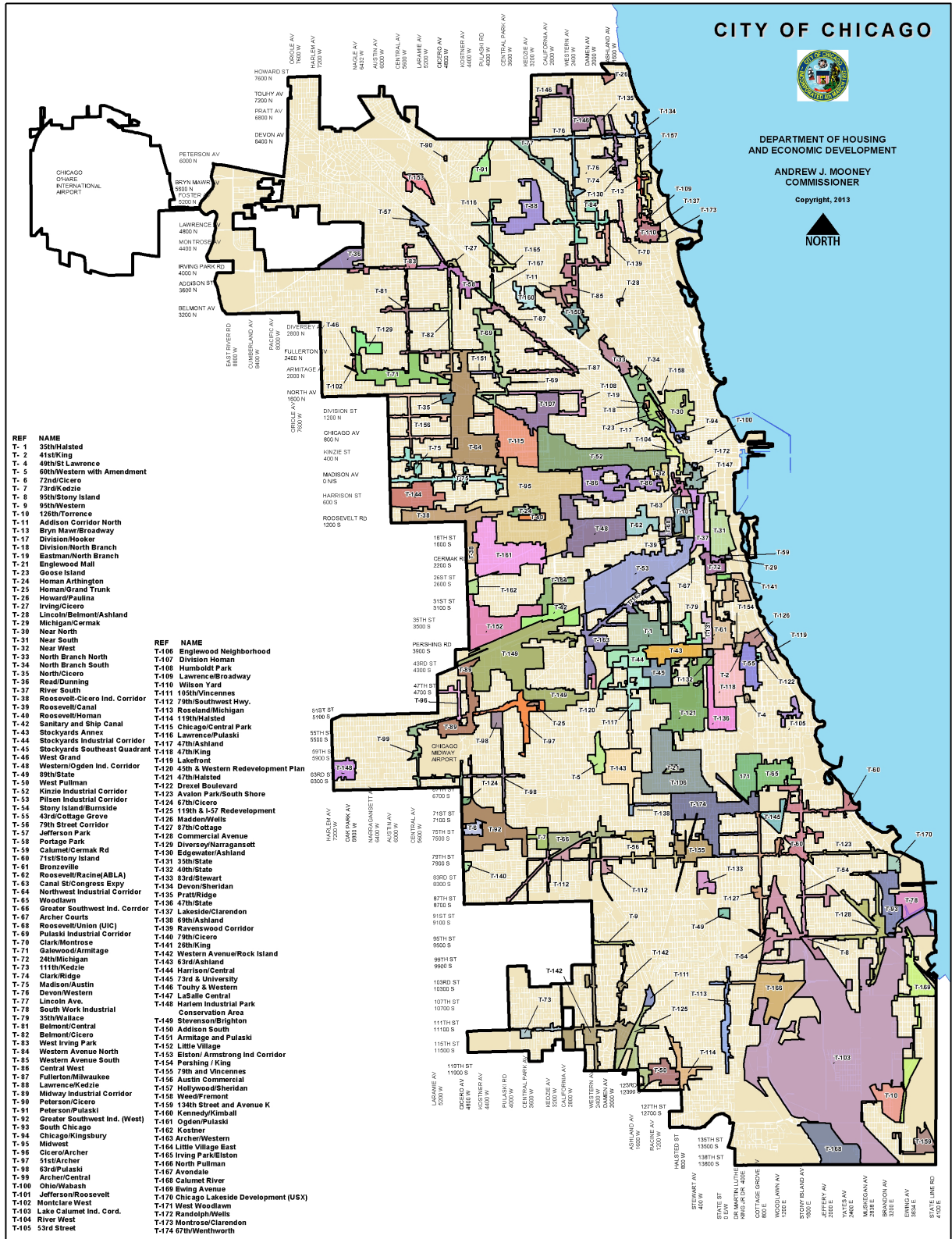
# LAKEFRONT PROTECTION DISTRICT



# PMDs AND INDUSTRIAL CORRIDORS



TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS



# COMMUNITY PLANS

