

Chapter 4

Central Area Planning Subdistricts

CENTRAL AREA SUBDISTRICTS

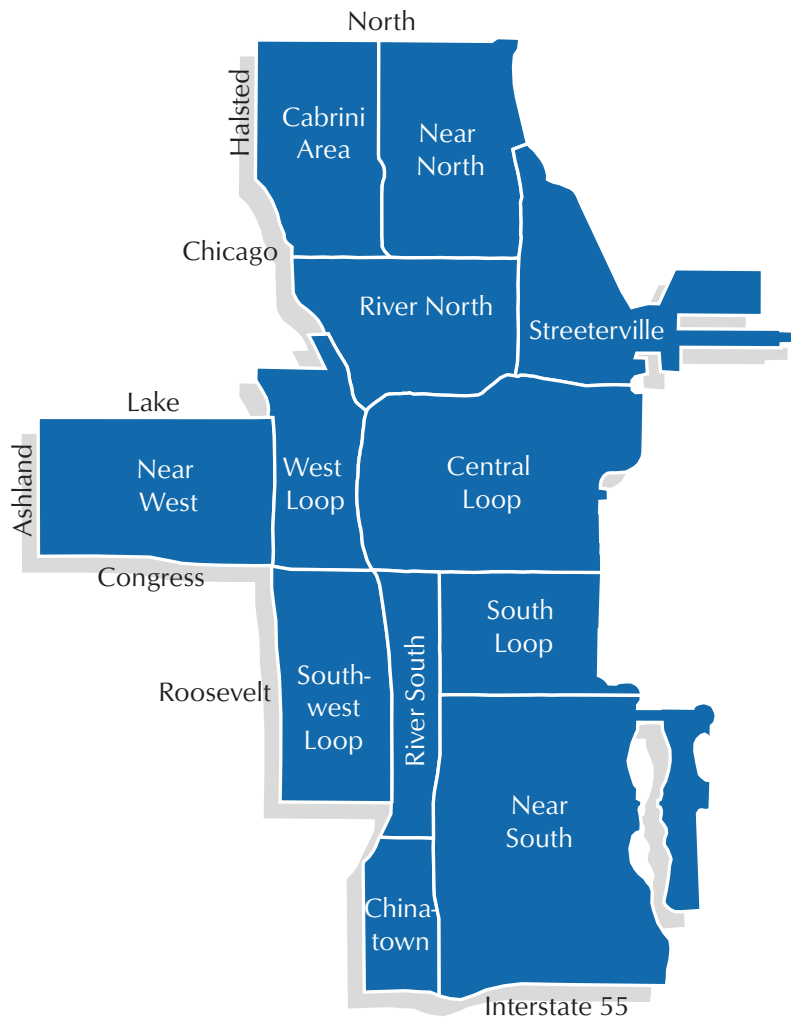
The City of Chicago’s Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning divides the Central Area into twelve planning subdistricts. In some cases, the policies and projects contained within the Central Area Action Plan are located wholly within one subdistrict – in most cases, they span several subdistricts. For the purposes

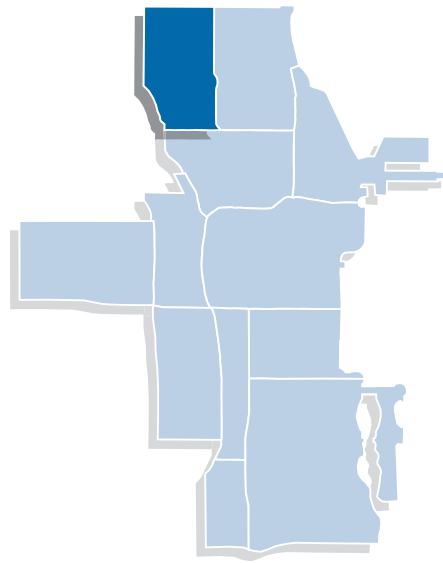
of presenting a succinct implementation plan, this section describes the key elements of the Plan for each subdistrict.

Each subdistrict report begins with a brief description of the character and ongoing development trends in that subdistrict; followed by a vision and

set of goals; and lists of policies, actions and projects to be undertaken by the City between 2008 and 2020. Each section forms the basis for future planning and development in that particular portion of the Central Area.

Figure 4-1: Central Area Planning Subdistricts





Cabrini Area

Cabrini Area is located in the northwest corner of the Central Area and bounded on the north by North Avenue, on the south by Chicago Avenue, on the east by Orleans Street, and on the west by Halsted Street (north of Division) and the North Branch of the Chicago River (south of Division).

Cabrini-Green, one of the largest public housing developments in Chicago, has dominated the area for decades. Demolition of public housing high-rises began in 1995, followed by new developments including replacement housing for Cabrini-Green residents alongside market-rate and affordable housing. Commercial redevelopment includes Old Town Square, a grocery-anchored shopping center that demonstrates the viability of the Cabrini Area for retailers serving households with a broad range of incomes.

CABRINI AREA



Image CA-1: The Old Town Village townhomes along Clybourn provide affordable housing as part of CHA's Plan for Transformation.



Image CA-2: River Village is one of many new residential developments along the River.



Image CA-3: The new Schiff Residences (Mercy Housing) along Clybourn through the Cabrini Area.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Cabrini Area changed dramatically between 2000 and 2007, as the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) continued its "Plan for Transformation" for Cabrini-Green. North Town Village, Old Town Village and Near North Apartments are among the projects that have provided townhomes, mid-rise condominiums and apartments for households with a diverse set of incomes.

Another major redevelopment area is located in the southwest portion of the district along the Chicago River. The former Montgomery Ward campus has become a new neighborhood with both adaptive-reuse and new construction projects with residential and commercial space.

While the rest of the Central Area boomed in the 1990s, the Cabrini Area lost population. With the implementation of the Plan for Transformation, between 2000 and 2007 the area grew by an estimated 1,686 households and 2,712 residents to reach a population of 13,353.

New institutional facilities, including the Near North Branch of the Chicago Public Library, 18th Police District station, Jenner Academy of the Arts and Seward Park support residential redevelopment. A 58,000-SF retail center anchored by Borders Books was developed at North Avenue and Halsted Street, the highest capacity north-south roadway in the Cabrini Area and its western boundary.

Forecast, 2008-2020

In 2008, the Cabrini North Extension site is being redeveloped with a mix of 760 market-rate, public, and affordable housing units at the ParkSide of Old Town development. Redevelopment of the William Green Homes and Cabrini Extension South will complete the CHA's Plan for Transformation for Cabrini-Green.

The retail concentration around the North and Clybourn intersection continues its expansion into the Cabrini Area, with projects planned in the Halsted corridor south to Division Street. Plans have been unveiled for redevelopment of the 8.2-acre New

City YMCA site at Clybourn and Halsted (1515 N Halsted). The developer, Structured Development, has plans for 550,000 SF of retail space and 280 residential units, with 10% of these units reserved as affordable housing and another 10% designated as low-income housing. Roundy's Supermarkets, a Milwaukee-based company, will anchor the retail portion of development with an 80,000-SF store on two levels.

2020 Vision/Goals

- The Cabrini Area will provide housing opportunities for households of a variety of types and with a range of incomes.
- Existing residents and newcomers will be well served with parks, schools and other community facilities.
- The Cabrini Area will strengthen its connection to the North Branch of the Chicago River, with infrastructure projects that enhance public access and use of the River corridor.
- As retail pushes south of North Avenue, the Halsted and Clybourn corridors will emerge as retail corridors with stores and services to meet the needs of local residents and complement the adjacent retail concentration at North and Clybourn.
- The Division and Chicago corridors will become important east-west connections with attractive streetscapes and high-density residential and retail uses.
- Public transportation options will be expanded by a re-opened Division Street Brown Line station and new stations on the proposed Clinton Street Subway that connects to the Red Line.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Near North TIF and Chicago/Kingsbury TIF Districts cover much of the Cabrini Area and will provide infrastructure improvements, as well as support for affordable housing.

CABRINI AREA

Figure CA-1: Division Street Urban Design Recommendations



- While some private-sector development will proceed without incentives, others will require TIF support.

Development

- Redevelopment of CHA sites will create major opportunities for mixed-use (residential and commercial) development.
- Plans are unfolding for other sites, including the former White Way Sign site and the CMHDA site at Clybourn and Larrabee. Other opportunity sites remain.

Regulatory

- Existing zoning is generally appropriate and much of the area is already in Planned Developments (PDs). A few remaining industrial sites are likely to convert to residential and commercial development.

Urban Design

Clybourn South

The area around Clybourn Avenue between Division Street and North Avenue is undergoing major changes, and was identified as a district focus area during the planning process. This area includes a portion of the former Cabrini-Green public housing development, which is being redeveloped as part of the CHA Plan for Transformation. The urban design study area also included the area known as the Halsted Triangle. A number of large-scale developments are being planned or are underway, including Orchard Courts, New City Development and North Town Village.

Design recommendations for this area include the following (see Figure CA-2 below):

- The establishment of an inter-connected street network around which new development sites are oriented. These streets are identi-

fied for pedestrian, vehicular or service/loading orientations.

- Park and open space investments that improve access to the River.
- Large parcels in public control offer an opportunity for master planned communities that should include a mix of product types, distinctive project character, public amenities and supportive community retail.

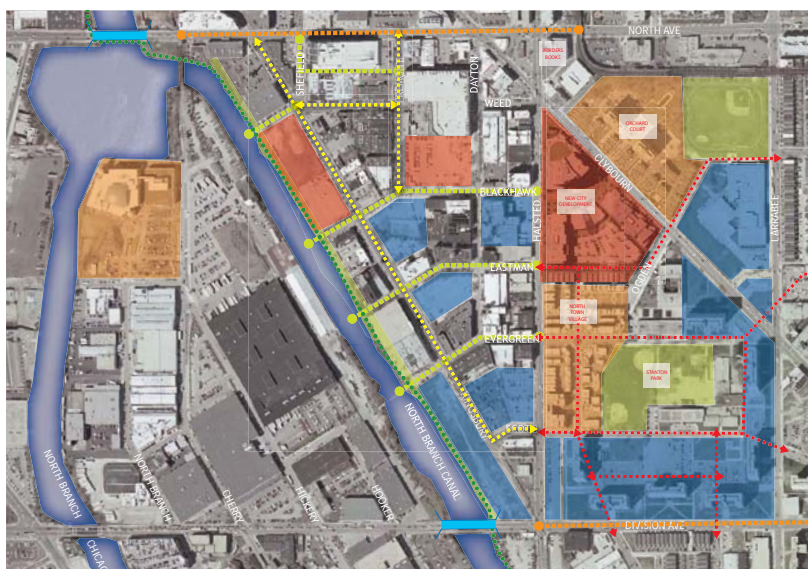
Signature Street – Division

Division is the key east-west street through the Near North and Cabrini Area. Unlike most other east-west streets, Division provides uninterrupted access from Inner Lake Shore Drive and the Lakefront to the Chicago River and Kennedy Expressway. This street is undergoing massive change as high levels of new residential and commercial projects are being developed. With the associated increase in residential density, and the proposal for a new CTA Brown Line Station at Division, pedestrian and vehicular use of this street will increase.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure CA-1 above):

- Street and sidewalk upgrades are recommended to improve the function and appearance of this street (see discussion below of streetscape improvements under Cabrini Area Projects).
- Planted medians should be considered along with minimum sidewalk widths of 14 feet.

Figure CA-2: Clybourn South Area Urban Design Recommendations



CABRINI AREA



Image CA-4: Suburban-style retail development, such as the Old Town Square shopping center, should be avoided in the future.



Image CA-5: The Riverwalk at 1000 N. Kingsbury will become part of a continuous pedestrian corridor that connects into the Central Loop and the Lakeland.



Image CA-6: The re-establishment of a CTA station at Division will improve access for Cabrini Area residents.

- New buildings should be oriented along street frontage or setback lines with their primary entrance oriented toward Division Street.
- Suburban development styles that feature parking lots between the street and building facades, such as Old Town Square, should be avoided in the future.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.

Cabrini Area Projects

(see project map below)

1. CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple)

A new station on the elevated Brown/Purple Line near Division and Orleans will serve the nearby residents and businesses. The Cabrini Area currently only has CTA rapid transit stations along its northern edge at North/Clybourn (Red Line) and Sedgwick (Brown/Purple Line). **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

2. Division Streetscape

Division anchors high levels of new private sector investment in housing and retail and should receive priority for streetscape enhancement funds. Streetscape elements should include wider sidewalks, street lighting, street

trees, street furniture, improved crosswalks, bike lanes and planted medians. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

3. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

A bicycle lane along Division Street should be coordinated with the streetscaping improvements in this corridor and will build on existing bike routes along Halsted and Clybourn. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

4. North Branch Riverfront

The North Branch section of the Riverwalk will be completed, creating a continuous pedestrian walkway and open space network. Improvements are proposed for both the east bank of the River and Goose Island. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

5. River Bridges

Though not in the Central Area, the Division and Halsted Street bridges (and railroad underpasses) will be upgraded to a minimum of four lanes to provide arterial quality access to the Kennedy Expressway and areas north and south. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

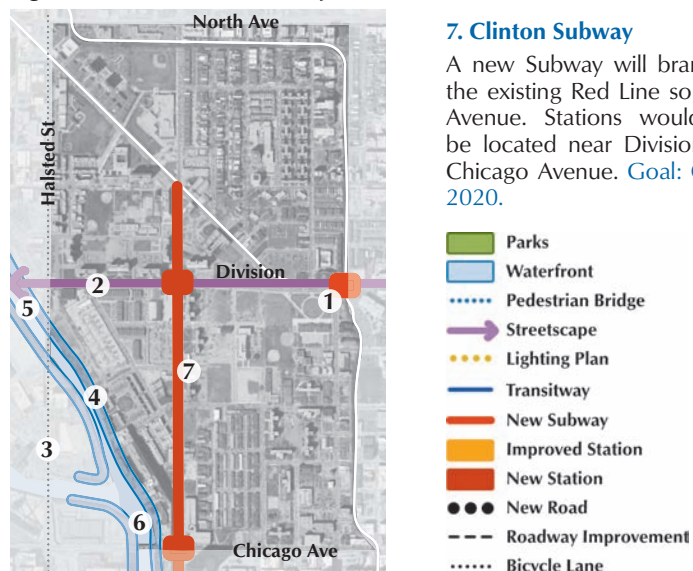
6. Expanded Water Taxi Service

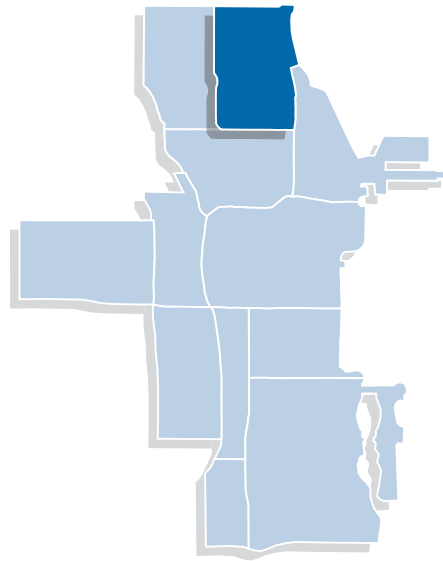
The water taxi service area will expand by developing new docks at Chicago Avenue and Goose Island. As riverfront development continues along the North Branch, the City will work with private developers to identify sites. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

7. Clinton Subway

A new Subway will branch off from the existing Red Line south of North Avenue. Stations would potentially be located near Division Street and Chicago Avenue. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

Figure CA-3: Cabrini Area Projects





Near North

Near North is located in the northeast corner of the Central Area, bounded on the north by North Avenue, on the south by Chicago Avenue, on the west by Orleans Street, and on the east by Lake Michigan (between North Avenue and Division Street), and Inner Lake Shore Drive/Michigan Avenue (between Division Street and Chicago Avenue).

Near North is currently the most populated subdistrict in the Central Area, containing established neighborhoods such as Gold Coast, Old Town and Sandburg Village. Residential uses predominate in the northern half, while a mix of retail, institutional, entertainment, hotel and residential uses coexist in the southern half. Local and national retailers and restaurants are along major corridors, which include a portion of the North Michigan Avenue retail area. The Near North's institutional assets include the Newberry Library, the Chicago History Museum and the expanded Latin School.

NEAR NORTH



Image NN-1: High-density residential development continues, but is limited due to a relative lack of development sites.



Image NN-2: Loyola University has expanded its presence in the area with a new Student Center and 627-bed dormitory.



Image NN-3: Old Town is an established residential neighborhood in the Near North.

Trends, 2000-2007

The Near North contained over 35% of Central Area households, and a total of 35,298 residents as of the 2000 Census. In 2007, with the emergence of other residential subdistricts and with few development sites, its share of households fell to 25%, even as the estimated population rose slightly to 36,849.

New hotels in the Near North include the 415-room Hotel Sofitel. Loyola University expanded its Water Tower campus at Pearson and State, recently completing a student center and 627-bed dormitory. A continuing care retirement community, the first in the Central Area, is under construction, with classroom space for Loyola on the lower floors of the 53-story building. Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, Chicago's newest citywide selective enrollment high school, opened in 2000.

Forecast, 2008-2020

New residential development in the Near North will continue to be limited by the availability of development sites. Walton on the Park (450 units) is being built on the former Scottish Rite property, which had a rare large parking lot. Although North Avenue is largely built out, Chicago Avenue and Division Street corridors have significant redevelopment potential for higher density residential, retail and mixed-use projects.

Retail and entertainment corridors are located along North Michigan Avenue, Rush Street and Oak Street, where projects such as the new Barney's store will continue to strengthen the area retail draw for residents and visitors. The Elysian at State Street and Walton represents a new type of Central Area project, with both condominium hotel rooms and private condominiums that share a spa and other amenities and services.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Higher densities should be supported around existing and planned transit stations and along major street corridors.
- Lakefront access from Near North will improve with the expansion of the Lakefront park between North Avenue and Navy Pier, and new pedestrian connections between North Avenue and Navy Pier.
- The Division and Chicago Street corridors will mature as balanced auto and pedestrian corridors and will feature enhanced streetscapes.
- The Near North will maintain a high quality of life for residents supported by enforcement of parking, zoning and noise regulations to mitigate the impacts of the vibrant entertainment and tourism district in the southeast portion of Near North.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The Near North TIF, which covers a portion of the subdistrict, could fund a portion of the recommended corridor and transit improvements.

Development

- As development projects are proposed, traffic impact studies should consider individual projects in the larger context of other projects in development and planning in the neighborhood.

Regulatory

- The zoning code should be enhanced with performance standards for noise, vibration, traffic and waste management to facilitate compatibility of uses, where needed.
- Entertainment businesses and restaurants need to provide sufficient off-street parking, or be adjacent to available off-street parking.

NEAR NORTH

Urban Design

Signature Street – Division

Division is the key east-west street through the Near North and Cabrini Area. Unlike adjacent streets, Division provides uninterrupted access from Inner Lake Shore Drive and the Lakefront to the Chicago River and Kennedy Expressway. This street is undergoing massive change as high levels of new residential and commercial projects are being developed. With the associated increase in residential density, and the proposal for a new CTA Brown Line Station at Division, pedestrian and vehicular use of this street will increase.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following (see Figure NN-1 below):

- Street and sidewalk upgrades will improve the function and appearance of this street (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under Near North Projects).
- Planted medians should be considered along with minimum sidewalk widths of 14 feet.
- New buildings should be oriented along street frontage or setback lines with primary entrances oriented toward Division Street.
- Suburban development styles that feature parking lots between the street and building facades, such as Old Town Square, should be avoided in the future.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.



Image NN-4: The Division Corridor is expected to become a site for increased residential development.



Image NN-5: Streetscaping improvements are recommended to improve the pedestrian environment along Division.

Figure NN-1: Division Street Recommendations



NEAR NORTH



Image NN-6: The existing Brown/Purple Line elevated tracks at Division will be the site of a new CTA station.



Image NN-7: The recent LaSalle Streetscape project and its planted medians (shown above) should be emulated on Division.



Image NN-8: Lakefront Trail expansion will enhance the open space amenities for Near North residents.

Near North Projects

(see project map below)

1. CTA Infill Station (Division - Brown/Purple Line)

A new infill station on the elevated Brown/Purple Line tracks is needed near Division and Orleans. The only existing CTA rapid transit station in Near North is on the Red Line at Clark/Division. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

2. CTA Station Modernization (Clark/Division - Red)

The Clark/Division (Red Line) station is programmed to be upgraded with new interior treatments, pedestrian access from LaSalle Street and improved platforms. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

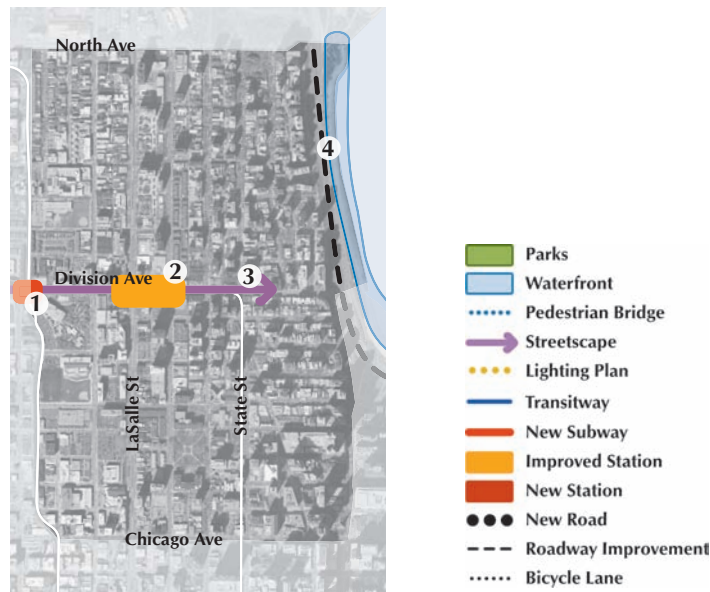
3. Division Streetscape

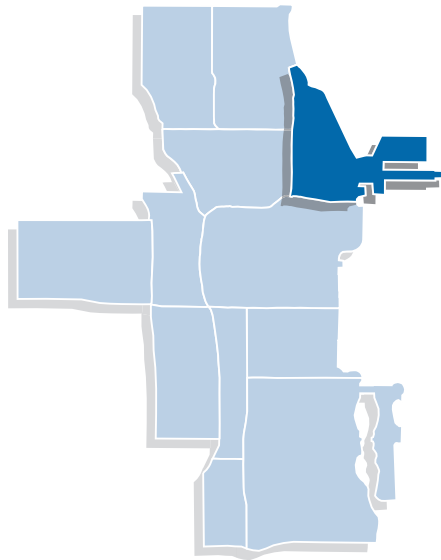
Division Street is a signature street that will anchor high levels of new private sector investment in housing and retail and should receive priority for streetscape enhancement funds. Streetscape elements should include wider sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, street furniture, improved crosswalks, bike lanes and possibly planted medians. These improvements should connect to the existing LaSalle Street streetscape. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

4. North Lake Shore Drive Improvements & Lakefront Trail Expansion

Roadway improvements to Lake Shore Drive, combined with a redesign of the Lakefront Trail between North Avenue and Navy Pier, will significantly improve traffic flow, safety and enjoyment of the Lakefront. The roadway will be relocated to the east, smoothing the sharp curve at Oak Street. **Goal: Completed by 2016.**

Figure NN-2: Near North Projects





Streeterville

Streeterville is located north along the Lakefront, generally bounded on the north by Division Street, on the south by the Main Branch of the Chicago River, on the west by Michigan Avenue, and on the east by Lake Michigan.

Streeterville contains a mix of residential, institutional, hospitality, office, retail and entertainment uses. It features an established residential concentration at its northeastern edge, and a growing residential neighborhood along the Chicago River. The cluster of medical campuses located in Streeterville is a major economic engine of the Central Area, fueling much of the recent and anticipated job growth. The Museum of Contemporary Art, destination shopping on Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier are among the diverse cultural and tourism attractions.

STREETERVILLE



Image ST-1: McClurg Court north of the River provides a view of high-density residential area of Streeterville.



Image ST-2: Retail and commercial development continues to become more prevalent, including the AMC Theaters complex.



Image ST-3: The Streeterville skyline as seen from Navy Pier

Trends, 2000-2007

In 2000, Streeterville was the second most populated Central Area district with 15,421 residents. By 2007, even though Streeterville had grown to an estimated population of 19,398, it was the fourth most populated district behind the Near North, Near South and River North.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital has brought significant new investment to Streeterville. Since 1980, it has more than doubled its facilities on the 33-acre campus to nearly 9.8 million SF. Recent developments include the Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center and expanded visitor and employee parking facilities. In 2005, the hospital had approximately 6,500 full-time equivalent employees, and served 42,200 inpatient visitors and over 70,000 emergency room visitors. Overall, nearly 20,000 people visit the campus daily. The new Prentice Women's Hospital opened in October 2007.

Residential and commercial development continued at River East, a large planned development on the former Dock & Canal property. A 250,000-SF retail/entertainment center at River East includes 21 movie screens, and the adjoining Embassy Suites Hotel has 455 rooms. The mixed-use City-Front Plaza contains two residential towers and a Dominick's grocery store. On Michigan Avenue, the Palmolive Building was adapted for 102 condominium units.

A total of 761 hotel rooms have been added in Streeterville since 2000, including a Marriott Courtyard with over 300 rooms. While other commercial sectors expanded, office space in Streeterville and the North Michigan Avenue corridor contracted by more than one million square feet through conversions to other uses. This is indicative of Streeterville's comparatively weak competitive position in the downtown office market. A countervailing trend has been the leasing of office space by Northwestern Hospital in nearby office buildings as it continues to expand.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Children's Memorial Hospital is relocated from Lincoln Park to a new \$750 million facility adjacent to the new Prentice Women's Hospital. It broke ground in 2008, is scheduled for completion in 2011, and is expected to treat over 12,000 patients a year. The hospital has 3,500 employees in its present location, and this is expected to grow at its new Streeter-ville campus.

With the strong pace of residential development, primarily in the southern portion of Streeterville, large development sites are becoming scarce. The former Kraft Building property on Peshtigo Court will be redeveloped, as will the former site of the CBS Studios on North McClurg Court. The 1,200-unit, 124-story Spire designed by Santiago Calatrava will add dramatically to Chicago's skyline and become the tallest building in North America.

Planning is underway for improvements to Navy Pier, which has developed into Chicago's most visited tourist attraction. With plans for new hotels, Streeterville will be positioned to attract even higher numbers of tourists and visitors in the future.

2020 Vision/Goals

- Northwestern Memorial Hospital and associated medical facilities will continue to expand and be a major contributor to Central Area employment growth.
- Streeterville will have many of its remaining vacant sites, including the large Veterans Administrations site, developed with a mixture of residential, retail and hospitality uses.
- Navy Pier will continue to be a vital element in the character and economic vitality of Streeterville and the Central Area.
- Expansion of the Lakefront Trail and straightening of the Oak Street curve on Lake Shore Drive will improve the safety and function of auto and pedestrian mobility in the area.
- The new Carroll Avenue and Lakefront Transitways will significantly

STREETERVILLE

improve access to the West Loop train stations, Millennium/Grant Parks and the Loop.

- A Lakefront Trail bridge over the Chicago River will improve the safety and function of this area and add vital connections to the Lake and nearby attractions.
- A high quality of life for Streeter-ville residents will be supported by provision of open space and performance standards that address noise, waste management, and other factors, and mitigate conflicts that may arise from the mix of residential with other uses.

Policies & Actions

Financial / Incentive

- The City and neighborhood organizations should explore creation of business improvement or redevelopment districts to fund new services and selected capital projects. Currently there are no TIF districts in Streeterville.

Development

- Street rights-of-way should be expanded where feasible to improve traffic circulation.
- The scale and importance of recent and planned projects requires open communications between community groups and the City. Impacts on traffic, parking, and pedestrians must be studied and considered.
- Curb cuts on major east-west streets should be minimized, with alley access encouraged instead.

Regulatory

- Permissible zones for street entertainment in Streeterville should be defined.
- The Illinois-Grand Traffic Management Authority (TMA) should be reactivated to deal with important transportation issues.

Urban Design

Signature Streets – Grand Avenue & Illinois Street

The Grand Avenue and Illinois Street corridors serve important functions within the Central Area. These streets

link Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier, and also serve new residential high rises, neighborhood stores and downtown entertainment venues.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Streetscape enhancements are needed to establish a safe environment for neighborhood residents, as well as for pedestrians walking between Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under Streeterville Projects).
- New, easily accessible pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians between these lower level streets and Upper Michigan Avenue.
- A unique visual character that is distinguishable from adjacent areas should be established.
- Ground floor uses should include active uses such as retail in order to build and strengthen the pedestrian utilization of this corridor.

Streeterville Projects

(see project map, following page)

1. Carroll Avenue Transitway

This new transit corridor will connect the West Loop train stations, River North and Streeterville via a dedicated east-west right-of-way north of the Chicago River. In Streeterville, the transitway would use the existing street network to provide limited-stop service to Navy Pier, the Northwestern Hospital Campus, and other destinations. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

2. Lakefront Transitway

Using an existing, improved right-of-way traveling north-south through Grant Park, this transit service will connect McCormick Place and Streeterville. In Streeterville, the service would connect to the Carroll Avenue Transitway. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**



Image ST-4: Grand Avenue provides a poor visual image for Chicago in its current condition as a primary corridor for visitors between downtown and Navy Pier.



Image ST-5: The Grand/Illinois Corridor provides a direct connection to Navy Pier.



Image ST-6: Pedestrian crossings and wayfinding need to be improved.

STREETERVILLE

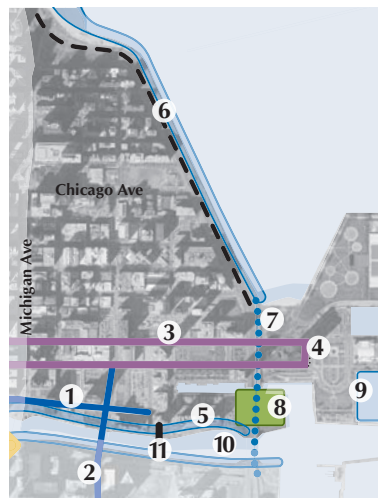


Image ST-7: A flyover bridge will remove the existing bottleneck on the Lakefront Trail



Image ST-8: The pedestrian and open space network along the River will be improved.

Figure ST-1: Streeterville Projects



3. Grand & Illinois Streetscape

Grand Avenue and Illinois Street are one-way streets that link Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier for both vehicles and pedestrians. New pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians between the lower level streets and Michigan Avenue. Target streetscape amenities include street trees, planted medians, new lighting fixtures and improved crosswalks. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bicycle lanes are planned for Grand and Illinois and should be undertaken as part of the streetscaping project in South Streeterville. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

5. Main Branch Riverfront

Completion of the continuous Riverwalk along the Main Branch of the Chicago River would include under-bridge connections at Michigan Avenue and Lake Shore Drive. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

6. North Lakeshore Drive Improvements & Lakefront Trail Expansion

Roadway improvements to Lake Shore Drive, combined with a redesign of the Lakefront Trail north of Navy Pier, will significantly improve traffic flow, safety and enjoyment of the Lakefront. The roadway will be relocated to the east, smoothing the sharp curve at Oak Street. These improvements will also allow the Chicago Avenue and Lake Shore Drive

intersection to be rebuilt to improve access to the Northwestern Memorial and Children’s Memorial Hospital campuses, in particular. **Goal: Feasibility study completed by 2010, Lakefront improvements completed by 2016.**

7. Lakefront Trail Bridge

A pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the Main Branch of the Chicago River will address a major bottleneck and safety concern for bikers, runners, and walkers. While the Lakefront Trail is separated from street traffic throughout the Central Area, in this location trail users are currently directed along a sidewalk. The pedestrian bridge also connects to DuSable Park. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

8. DuSable Park

The building of DuSable Park will be coordinated with the completion of The Spire. The park will be accessible from the new pedestrian bridge. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

9. Gateway Harbor

Gateway Harbor, adjacent to Navy Pier, will draw larger crafts and attract boaters from the entire Great Lakes Region. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

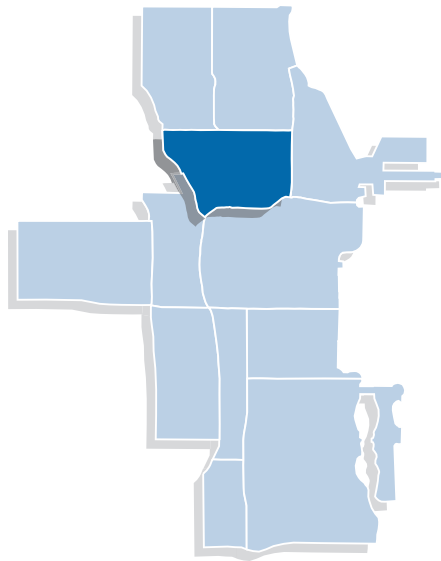
10. Expand Water Taxi Service

In Streeterville, options will be explored for extending service to directly serve the southern edge of Navy Pier if access is created to the Chicago River. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

11. Pedestrian Bridge Over River

Dedicated pedestrian bridge connecting the Central Loop to Streeterville (over the Chicago River) would ease pedestrian congestion at a key point in the area. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

- Parks
- Waterfront
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Streetscape
- Lighting Plan
- Transitway
- New Subway
- Improved Station
- New Station
- New Road
- Roadway Improvement
- Bicycle Lane



River North

River North has a north central riverfront location and is bounded on the north by Chicago Avenue, on the south by the Main Branch of the Chicago River, on the east by Michigan Avenue, and on the west by the North Branch of the Chicago River.

River North contains a mix of land uses, including office, residential, entertainment, hospitality, arts and retail, with small enclaves of institutional uses. Residential uses are becoming increasingly concentrated in the northwestern portion of River North, while a mixed entertainment, restaurant, retail and tourism district emanates from the Michigan Avenue Magnificent Mile on the eastern edge of the subdistrict. Major office developments are occurring along the southern edge of River North, a district which is anchored by the Merchandise Mart.

RIVER NORTH



Image RN-1: The North Branch riverfront has become a major residential development zone.



Figure RN-2: The former Montgomery Ward headquarters has been transformed into The Montgomery, a condominium tower.



Image RN-3: Erie Park has provided needed open space along the River.

Trends, 2000-2007

With over 6,000 new residential units, River North experienced the Central Area's second-highest level of residential growth since 2000. The population of River North more than doubled, and grew to an estimated 20,599 in 2007 (up from 9,466 in 2000). While residential development occurred throughout River North, activity was heaviest along the North Branch of the River, which contained the southern portion of the former Montgomery Ward Campus and old industrial sites ideal for redevelopment. Erie Park along the North Branch provided needed open space in this new neighborhood. Further east in River North, the Cathedral District emerged with the completion of projects such as the Fordham (247 units) and 55 East Erie (214 units). Another development cluster in the heart of River North centered around Grand Plaza, which contains two residential towers with over 100,000 SF of retail space anchored by a Jewel grocery store.

The Magnificent Mile was bolstered by the addition of NorthBridge, the largest retail addition to the Central Area during this period. The historic Medinah Temple became the 130,000-SF Bloomingdale's Home Store, as retail activity spilled over to Wabash, State and Ontario. River North captured roughly 30% of Central Area hotel rooms developed since 2000, with the single largest addition coming in 2001 with the completion of the 339-room Peninsula Hotel, a tower built over an existing retail development.

The area's office inventory grew by 1.3 million SF between 2000 and 2007, with major developments clustered near the River at the southern edge of the River North district. The Reid-Murdoch Building, which had housed Chicago's traffic court, was renovated for 280,000 SF of office space with additional ground level retail space.

Forecast, 2008-2020

Residential development in River North is expected to continue, particularly in the western portion where sites are more readily available.

Six other hotels are proposed or under construction in River North, including the 339-room Trump International Hotel.

Two major office towers, 300 North LaSalle and the second phase of River North Center, are now under construction on sites north of the Chicago River. These projects will add another 2.4 million SF of office space.

Plans for Wolf Point include three towers that will house 350 hotel rooms, 1,500 condominium units, 850 rental units and 1 million SF of office space. The tallest tower is envisioned to be 89 stories tall and will provide a major visual focal point at the southern corner of the district.

2020 Vision/Goals

- River North will continue to mix restaurant, retail, entertainment, office, hotel, and residential uses.
- The character of the Gallery, Courthouse, and Mart districts will be maintained through sensitive rehabilitation and development controls.
- The Ontario/Grand corridor will feature new residential buildings with retail, restaurant, entertainment and other commercial uses at street level.
- The Chicago Avenue corridor will add high-density residential development to its vibrant mix of uses, particularly around the transit stations.
- LaSalle Street will attract residential and hotel development.
- High-density office and mixed-use development will line the Chicago River's Main Branch.
- High-density residential development will continue along the North Branch of the Chicago River.
- New parks will provide open space for the growing residential and office populations.

RIVER NORTH

Policies & Actions

Regulatory

- Rights-of-way for the Carroll Avenue Transitway must be preserved as new development projects are undertaken adjacent to the designated route.
- The Ohio/Wabash TIF may provide funding for River North infrastructure projects.
- Performance standards should address noise, waste management, and other factors to mitigate conflicts that may arise from the mix of residential with other uses.

Culture

- The City should continue to support special events such as block parties and tours.

within the Central Area. These streets provide linkage between areas west of Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier, as well as anchor high levels of new residential development, neighborhood stores and downtown entertainment venues.

Design recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Streetscape enhancements are needed to establish a safe environment for neighborhood residents, as well as for pedestrians walking between shopping and hotel development located in River North and Navy Pier (see discussion of Streetscape improvements under River North Projects).
- A unique visual character that is distinguishable from adjacent areas should be established.



Image RN-4: Wolf Point is located at the confluence of the Main, North and South Branches of the Chicago River.

Urban Design

Wolf Point

Wolf Point is located at the confluence of the Main, North and South Branches of the Chicago River adjacent to the Merchandise and Apparel Marts. Opportunity sites in this area also include land west of the Chicago River. This is one of the most visible development sites in downtown.

Design recommendations for this area include the following (see Figure RN-1 at right):

- Building height recommendations include utilization of Wolf Point for a signature building that is taller than buildings on adjacent parcels. A target height in the 80-story range is recommended with an adjacent building target height in the 50-story range.
- The natural character of the riverfront edge on Wolf Point should be maintained to balance and complement the hard edge character of adjacent developments.
- Pedestrian access via land, and potentially water, should be incorporated.

Signature Streets – Grand Avenue & Illinois Street

Grand Avenue and Illinois Street corridors serve important functions

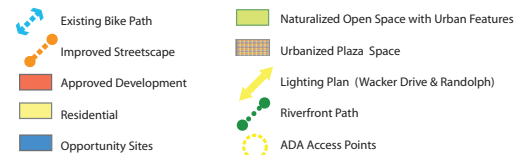
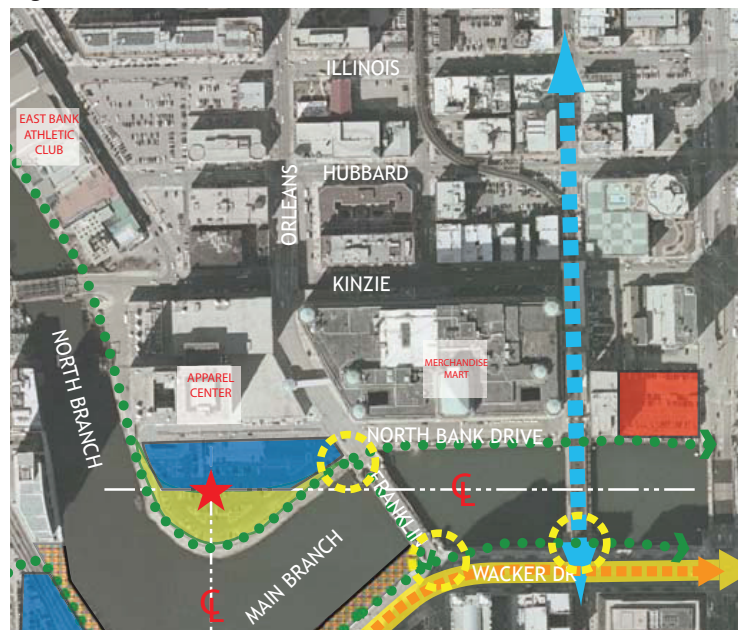


Figure RN-1: Wolf Point



RIVER NORTH



Image RN-5: The Carroll Avenue Transitway will directly connect River North with Streeterville and the West Loop.



Image RN-6: Modernization of the Grand Red Line Station will improve platforms and mezzanines.

River North Projects

(see project map below)

1. Carroll Avenue Transitway

This new transit corridor will link River North residents and workers to Streeterville and the West Loop train stations. With a dedicated east-west right-of-way at the north edge of the Chicago River, station stops in River North will be along the below-grade right-of-way. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

2. CTA Station Modernization (Grand-Red)

The modernization of the Grand Red Line station will begin in 2008, bringing improved access, a new mezzanine level, and a better platform environment. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

3. Grand & Illinois Streetscape

Improvements have begun along Grand and Illinois, one-way streets that link Michigan Ave and Navy Pier. New pedestrian and handicapped access features are needed to move pedestrians easily and safely from lower level streets up to Upper Michigan Avenue. Streetscape elements include trees, light fixtures, improved crosswalks and possibly planted medians between Navy Pier and LaSalle. **Goal: Complete by 2012.**

4. Bicycle Lanes & Markings

New bike lanes along Kinzie, Illinois, and Grand will be coordinated with Streetscaping projects and connect to

existing lanes at Wells and Dearborn. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

5. Main Branch and North Branch Riverfront

The River North section of the Riverwalk includes a pedestrian walkway and open space. The North Branch has several existing points of access needs that need to be connected, with improvements proposed for the east sides of the River and Goose Island. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

6. Clinton Subway

The Clinton Subway, located below Larrabee and Kingsbury, has potential for stations near Chicago and Grand. The new line will connect River North to West Loop and provide residents with improved access to the Metra/Amtrak train terminals. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

7. Fort Dearborn Park

A new open space to serve the fast growing River North population. The City is will partner with a private developer to redevelop the square block site currently occupied by the Fort Dearborn Post Office. Part of the redevelopment will include the construction of a new public open space. **Goal: Complete by 2020.**

8. Expand Water Taxi Service

Water taxi service will be extended along the North Branch as far as Chicago Avenue and Goose Island. **Goal: Complete by 2016.**

Figure RN-2: River North Projects

