



February 16, 2021

Maurice D. Cox
Commissioner
Chicago Department of Planning and Development
121 N. LaSalle St., 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Draft Fulton Market Innovation District Plan Update

Dear Mr. Cox,

Neighbors of West Loop (NoWL) would like to thank the City Department of Planning & Development (DPD) for initiating the process to update the Fulton Market Innovation District (FMID) Plan, which was originally developed in 2014. Considering the ongoing and dynamic growth of the area, any plan designed to promote innovation must be revisited on a frequent basis. NoWL is pleased to participate in the review process for this important document and the initiatives that follow from it.

We have reviewed the draft FMID Plan update and are happy to see the goals you have set forth: mixed-use and mixed-income developments, access for all transportation modes, and enhancing historic and cultural aspects. Neighbors of West Loop supports the adoption of the FMID Plan update, pending the resolution of a series of specific comments gathered from our Development Committee (see attached). These include the following:

- The proposed amendment does not fully address the **green space deficit** that we have in the West Loop and particularly in the Fulton Market Innovation District. We support the efforts to improve Union Park as it is an issue that we have been advocating for. However, this will not address the critical lack of public park space in the area to serve "existing" and "new" residents – especially when such a large area is being opened up for more residential development. Many residents also raised the issue of public park space as a concern during the FMID webinar conducted on January 21, 2021. One potential solution is the *Cap the Kennedy* initiative, which we would like to see referenced in the FMID plan.
- The FMID update process has highlighted how much of Fulton Market's **public infrastructure has been overlooked** as the neighborhood has exploded in population. Fulton Market (and the larger West Loop) was designated as a downtown zoning district and deserves to receive the same infrastructure and services that the Loop and Magnificent Mile enjoys. To help prioritize these needs, we provided DPD with a list of specific infrastructure issues that we developed from community feedback in 2017 (see attachment). We thank the City for addressing some of these items since 2017 and for including others in the Fulton Market Streetscape project and an upcoming initiative to rebuild Lake Street. That said, there is still much to be done to improve sidewalks, traffic control, lighting, bike lanes, rail crossings, lack of parking, more trash

receptacles. Specific examples include 1) Improved lighting for all viaduct underpasses south of Hubbard; 2) sidewalk repairs on the north side of Hubbard (generally from Halsted to Morgan); and 3) improved landscaping maintenance along sidewalks where overgrowth tends to obstruct sidewalk access, e.g., Ogden and Hubbard. We are pleased to see many of these items included in the proposed FMID improvements and look forward to more specifics about the work and when it will be implemented.

- We support improvements to the **affordable housing ordinance** but would also like to see **affordable retail** included to help keep our local businesses in the neighborhood.
- The designation of Fulton Market and Randolph as **pedestrian streets** is welcome.
- We would also like to see wording to address **traffic circulation challenges**. The plan should promote the development of a neighborhood-wide traffic model that can be augmented by developers' traffic studies. This will allow the City, the community, and developers to better understand the comprehensive impacts of proposed developments. Related to this, the plan should address the activity of ride-share services like Uber and Lyft to prescribe measures that developers should take to minimize the impact that ride-share operations has on pedestrian, cyclist, and automobile traffic flow.
- The plan makes mention of Transit Served Locations (TSLs) and their ability to reduce or eliminate parking requirements for new buildings, however the plan does not contain **solutions to address parking demand**, which is expected to increase with the reintroduction of residential development in Fulton Market.
- Building density and height are important aspects of development to our committee and the larger community. Through an extended process of community outreach, Neighbors of West Loop established the [Neighborhood Plan](#) to provide guidance to developers about many elements of their proposals, including density. We ask that you limit the transferring of air rights from adjacent properties and deny the use of railroad air rights for new development projects.
- We are also intrigued by the **concepts presented for Hubbard Street** and look forward to future conversations about ideas like this and other improvements to traffic circulation.

Thank you again for your efforts in support of the future growth and prosperity of the Fulton Market. We look forward to working with you to implement elements of the FMID Plan that further improve the quality of life for residents in the West Loop.



Matt Letourneau

Neighbors of West Loop
President and Development Committee Chair

cc: Eleanor Gorski, DPD
Cynthia Roubik, DPD
Alderman Walter Burnett (27th Ward)



Summary of Infrastructure Needs & Potential Solutions Identified by West Loop Residents for Neighborhood Opportunity Bonus Priorities

Priority/Status
High
Medium
Addressed

Infrastructure Needs	Potential Solutions
High traffic congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct a large-scale traffic study to identify constraints and improvements, e.g., traffic control, signal phasing/timing adjustments* ● Add stop signs and signals on Lake Street, e.g., at Morgan ✓
Dangerous intersections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved lighting on Lake Street, near Skinner School, other poorly-lit areas* ● Improve signing and pavement marking in school zones ● Enhance pedestrian crossings on main east-west thoroughfares: Randolph, Lake, Madison, Monroe, Washington, Adams, across Ogden to Union Park ✓ ● Implement improvements on key routes as proposed in the City's <i>West Loop Design Guidelines</i>* ● Improve rail crossing safety north of Fulton Market* ● Remove existing planters near Madison Street intersections ✓
Poorly distributed parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement an expanded resident permit parking program on sidestreets ✓ ● Introduce shared parking ● Establish and enforce loading zones, e.g., along Green Street north of Washington
Reduced transit capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extend the Morgan Station El platform ● Add more and/or articulated buses on Madison ● Reintroduce the 127 Madison Circulator or X20 express bus
Lack of permanent public art installations & place-making efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Light up Lake Street" lighting and public art installations* ● Introduce more green space, e.g., pocket parks* ● Install holiday lights along retail corridors
Incomplete bicycling infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a bike lane on Randolph or Fulton, not Lake Street* ● Connect West Loop bike lanes to downtown routes (Washington/Randolph)
Poor pavement & sidewalk conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sidewalk repairs on Adams, Fulton, Lake & Randolph* ● Provide wider (8 ft minimum) sidewalks*
Litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide more trash receptacles
Inadequate pest control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add more rat abatement

* solution proposed in FMID Update (February 2021)

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Dear Commissioners,

I write this letter in full support of Item #2 on the agenda, amending the Fulton Market Innovation District. The entire West Loop has been booming for the past decade, this area in general is ripe for dense urban redevelopment of mixed-use variety.

The initial plan was designed for flexibility and this amendment is allowing just that. Rapid change called for another look at the guidelines to focus on infrastructure and expanded residential and denser growth.

Thinking outside the box... With IMD a stones throw, I can see a merging of the districts with job growth in medical/bio. Fulton Labs is nearly topped out and other companies are wanting lab space.

I hope there's a look at Ashland Avenue as a connective spine for the two districts.

With the FMID framework being updated, I hope there's a renewed look at the West Loop guidelines to see what's worked and what's not since it's implementation.

Many questions are asked about green space. It's my understanding the city doesn't own any of the land, making a public park challenging. Leaving this to the developers is concerning and it's challenging if there isn't compromise... Encouraging taller and thinner buildings along with underground parking may be a beginning.

Additional density allows for larger payments into the NOB which is funding the INVEST South/West program.

For the recent January 21, 2021 Webinar, I asked, "How can we do a better job of saving/preserving historical and architecturally significant buildings within the area? Is adopt-a-landmark viable/valid in this district?" Yes there's a Fulton Market Landmark District, but there are a number of individual landmark worthy and contributing structures. Some that are in danger of demolition and others already lost to the wrecking ball.

1393-99 West Lake (ENDANGERED / 90 Day Demo Hold
Images by Butler V. Adams



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810 West Lake (DEMOLISHED)
Images by Butler V. Adams



Ransom Gillis House Detroit (Date/Photographer Unknown)



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Ransom Gillis House Detroit (02.16.21/Butler V. Adams)



I'm the first person who'll say bigger, taller and denser. I also have a love for historical architecture and Chicago does a crappy job of preservation. If they can restore the Ransom Gillis House in Brush Park, Detroit, we can save structures in Chicago that are in better condition and have historical and architectural significance.

810 West Lake should never have been torn down.

With that, I support this item and look forward to the burgeoning growth in this area.

Thank you,

Butler V. Adams
Chicago Native
Civic Boaster

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