

SOUTH SHORE CORRIDOR STUDY

South Shore



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

MAY 15, 2019



Regional
Transportation
Authority



Greg
MITCHELL
7th Ward Alderman



CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT



SOUTH SHORE
chamber of commerce

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Office of Alderman Gregory Mitchell (7th Ward) worked to secure a grant through the Regional Transportation Authority’s Community Planning program to develop a plan for two corridors in the South Shore neighborhood: East 75th and East 79th streets, from Stony Island Avenue to Lake Michigan.

Over the next year, DPD will work with the community to develop a blueprint for both corridors by focusing on land use, housing, retail and connectivity to transit, within the context of changing demographics. Preliminary work began in January 2019, and will include robust community engagement efforts with assistance from the South Shore Chamber of Commerce. DPD staff expects to complete the study in early 2020.

MEETING

On the evening of Wednesday, May 15, more than 100 residents, business owners, and other South Shore stakeholders convened at South Shore International College Prep High School to discuss how people travel in the neighborhood and along the corridors, and what people would like to see along these corridors in terms of improved transit, and new retail and housing options. The event was open-house style, which meant that attendees could explore at their own pace; around the room stations were set up to discuss topics such as retail in the neighborhood, housing conditions, transportation, city-owned vacant land, general neighborhood conditions, and a vision wall where people shared what they like about South Shore and what they would like the neighborhood to be in the future.

DPD also launched an online survey the same evening, which ran through June 5, and asked the same questions that were posed at the topic stations during the open house. Nearly 300 people responded to the online survey, the vast majority (82%) of whom live in the South Shore neighborhood.

WHAT WE HEARD

The meeting offered attendees an opportunity to provide feedback on a number of topic areas related to the larger study. The following sections provide a summary of what we heard at each topic area station. An online survey was also conducted between May 15 and June 5, to which nearly 300 stakeholders responded. In the charts below, the results of the interactive boards from the open house and results from the online survey have been combined.



Retail Conditions

- People identified a need for better grocery options in the neighborhood.
- Besides groceries, people said they also left the neighborhood for sit-down restaurants, entertainment, clothing and other services.
- People travel to Hyde Park, Indiana and other parts of Chicago for shopping needs.
- Participants expressed that more businesses should locate along 79th Street. Many think 75th Street no longer has enough activity to

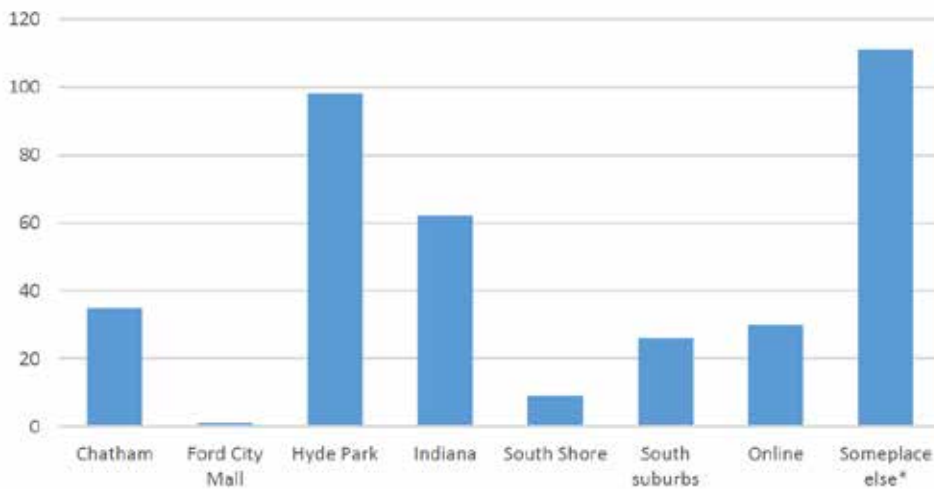
function as a retail corridor.

- 85.8% of online survey respondents would support more housing and greater density along 75th and 79th streets if it meant retail could be better supported.
- People would like to see a mix of both national retailers and local businesses, although many expressed a preference for local businesses and would like to see them better supported.
- Regarding future retail, attendees wanted to see more grocery and fresh food options, sit-down

restaurants, outdoor dining, places to go for happy hour, creative use and reuse of vacant storefronts, retail that supports the cannabis industry, and artist space.

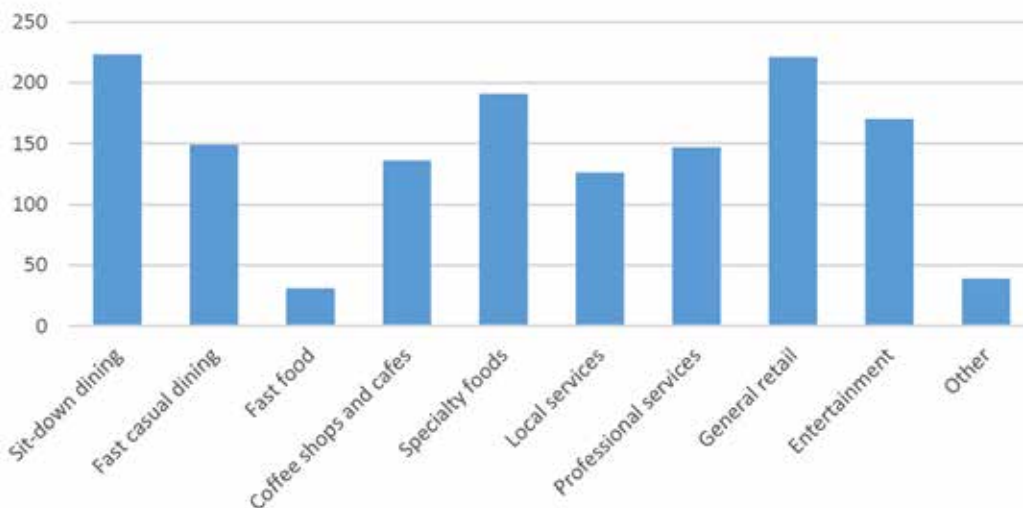
- People saw an opportunity for business incubators, a manufacturing center, and other amenities that could nurture and support entrepreneurs and local businesses.
- New entertainment options are needed, including a movie theater; it would be nice to see the Regal Theater renovated and reopened.

Where do you go for most of your shopping needs?



* Someplace else includes South Loop, Bronzeville, Woodlawn, northern suburbs and specific stores that may not be part of a larger shopping district. The most significant numbers were for South Loop and Bronzeville.

What types of retail would you like to see more of along 75th and 79th streets?

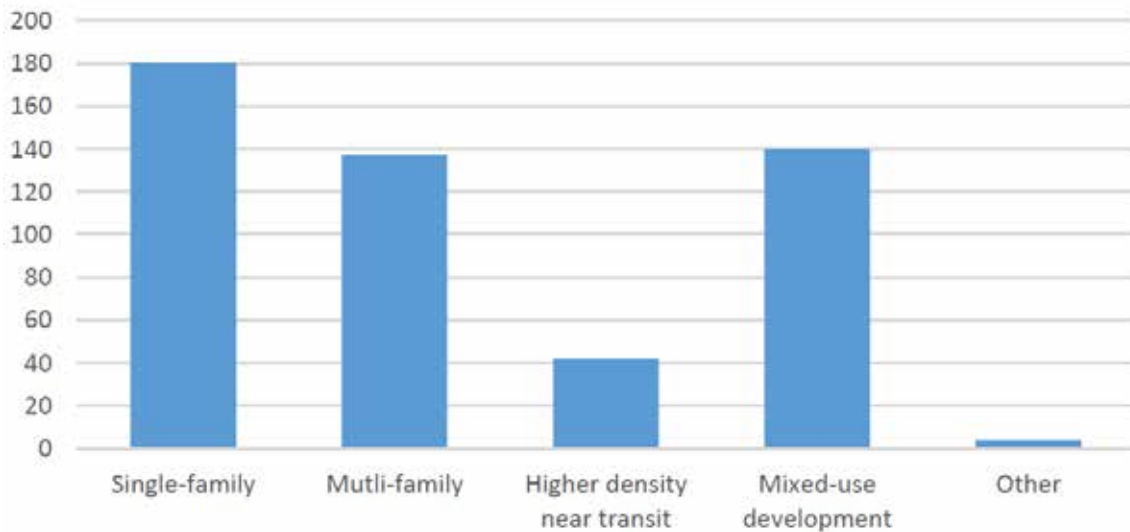


Housing Conditions

- A majority of respondents ranked single-family housing as a priority for the community. Multi-family and mixed-use development were also identified as important. Although there was a less interest in higher density housing near transit nodes, In conversation, there seemed to be general support for it even when the surrounding area is primarily single-family housing.
- There are concerns that housing management firms are purchasing large blocks of multi-family homes in the neighborhood, and focusing rental on Section 8 tenants.
- People would like to see more owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood.
- There is a need for housing support for vulnerable populations: homeless, youth, LGBTQ, etc.



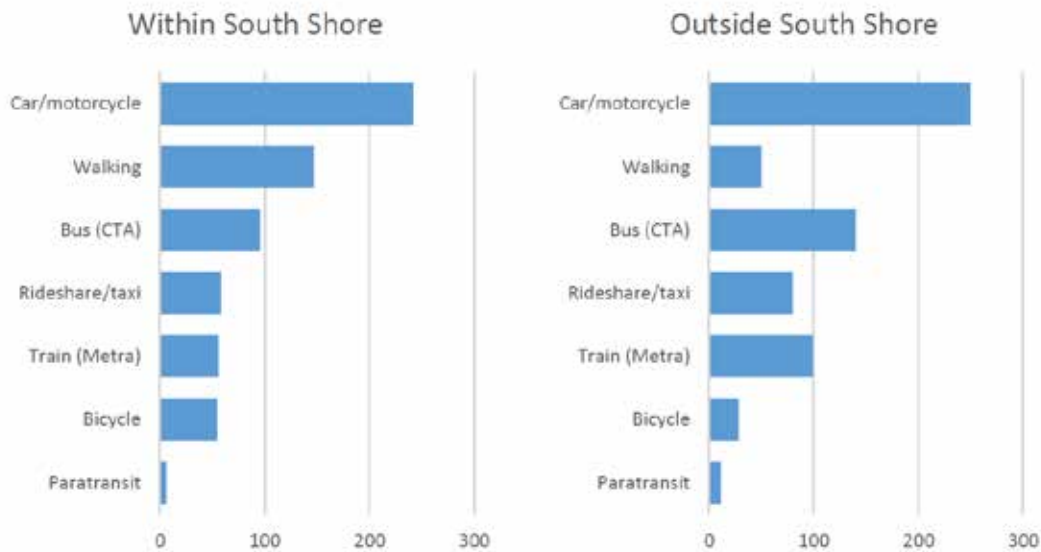
What types of housing do you think should be prioritized in South Shore?



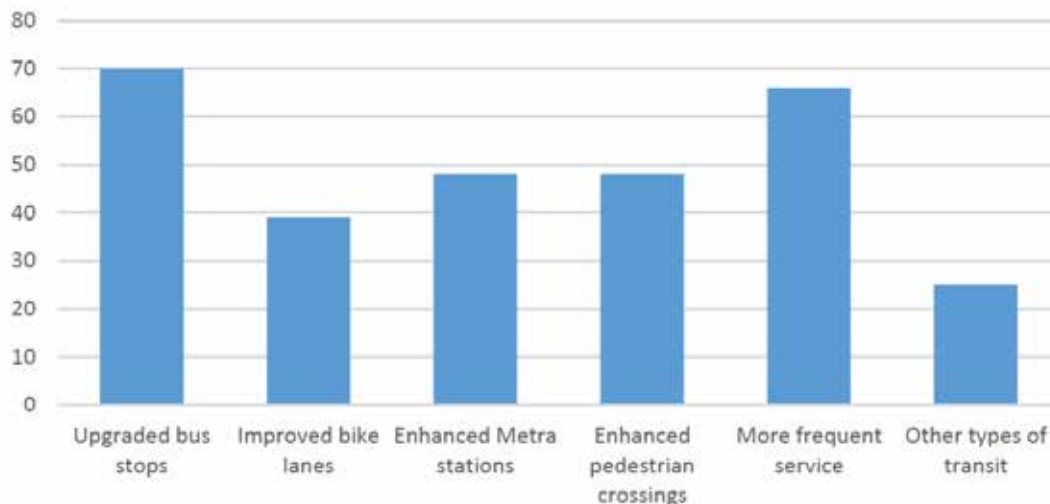
Transportation Conditions

- A majority of people said they use cars to get around the neighborhood and to travel outside of the neighborhood. Walking was the next most common way for people to get around. Bus was a close second for travel outside the neighborhood. Some people expressed that they choose to drive distances that they could walk because of safety or lack of adequate pedestrian amenities.
- Providing improvements at bus stops and greater frequency along both bus and Metra routes was identified as something that would make people more likely to use transit.
- Making Metra passes available for local residents to travel to nearby areas was suggested.
- Infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, lighting and parking were all important for people to make transit more accessible.
- There is a need for more taxis in the neighborhood.
- Survey respondents prioritized improving existing bus stops (4.23/5), enhancing pedestrian crossings (4.07/5) and enhancing Metra stations (4.03/5) as most important and most likely to entice them to use transit more often along 75th and 79th streets.
- Better lighting along the corridors, at bus stops, and in Metra stations could improve safety.

How do you travel to destinations within / outside of South Shore?



What is the one thing that would best improve transit and transportation in your neighborhood?



General Neighborhood Conditions

- Residents like living in South Shore and are proud of their community
- South Shore has many assets
- Residents want to see a vibrant, welcoming, trendy, safe and affordable neighborhood
- Commercial corridors need to be improved
- There is a need to address perceptions that the community is not safe

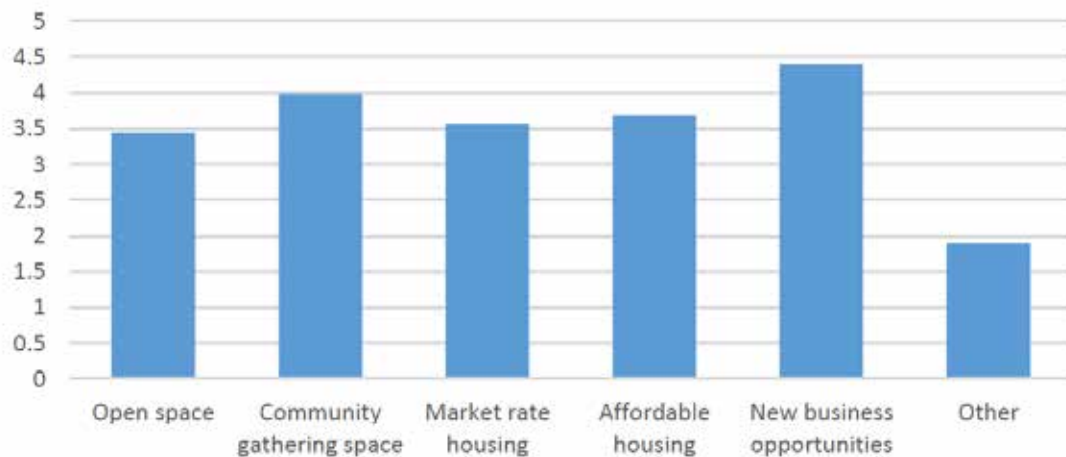
Other Considerations

- Attendees would like to see city-owned vacant land prioritized for local businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Local land could provide opportunities for beautification, open space, and natural habitat.
- Commercial uses should be prioritized along 71st and 79th streets, with 75th Street being prioritized more for residential uses.
- Opportunities for workforce development and small business support should

be identified, including co-working and incubator or pop-up spaces for entrepreneurs and start-ups.

- Physical improvements, like improved infrastructure, trash receptacles and street furniture along sidewalks, and improved aesthetics along the corridors would help improve conditions and attract new businesses and patrons.
- People would like to see more public art featured along the corridors.

How should city government prioritize city-owned land along 75th and 79th streets in South Shore? (ranked)



Vision

People were asked what things they liked about the community. They indicated that they liked South Shore’s location; access to Lake Michigan and Rainbow Beach; sense of community; access to transit (Metra, and the CTA J/14 – Jeffrey Jump); the older and architecturally interesting housing stock; proximity to Jackson Park; movies in the park; ice cream trucks; and the people, neighbors and culture.

People were also asked what things they would like to see change in South Shore. These ideas are reflected in the previous sections of this document. Finally, people were asked what they thought different segments of the community might need or value. Their responses are detailed in the table below.



<p>Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After-school programs • Youth center • Mentoring program • Teen activities – at SS Cultural Center • Competitive sports programming • Slides! • Kids play areas at Rainbow Beach • Safe places to play 	<p>Businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher-end businesses – no more dollar stores, fast food or beauty supplies • More customers • Pet shop • Ice cream shop • Creative storefronts • New/artsy products • Art supplies • Music instrument shop • Clean lots and storefronts
<p>Millennials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet cafes • Quiet study/reading spaces • Yoga • Bigger library • Co-working spaces 	<p>Adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult education classes • Vocational/trades training programs • Therapeutic support services • Entertainment, live music
<p>Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dollar store • Nature trails • Police presence at night 	<p>Seniors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places to hang out and socialize, doesn't need to be an entire Center • Tech learning opportunities
<p>Commuters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated bus lanes • Less crowded/more comfortable • Clean, smooth streets 	

