



# WOODLAWN PLAN CONSOLIDATION REPORT



CITY OF CHICAGO



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



FEBRUARY 2020



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The past plans and studies summarized in this report reflect more than 10 years of community engagement and define a collective vision for Woodlawn that has been articulated by its residents and stakeholders. The City of Chicago thanks those who were involved in contributing to these plans and studies.

The Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Housing would also like to thank the following local organizations for participating in focus groups for this report: Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative, Network of Woodlawn, Obama Foundation, POAH, the University of Chicago, and WECAN.

Organizations that helped to develop the past plans and studies incorporated into this report include:

Chicago Central Area Committee (CCAC)  
Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA)  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Chicago office  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
Network of Woodlawn (NOW)  
Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corp. (WPIC)  
Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors (WECAN)

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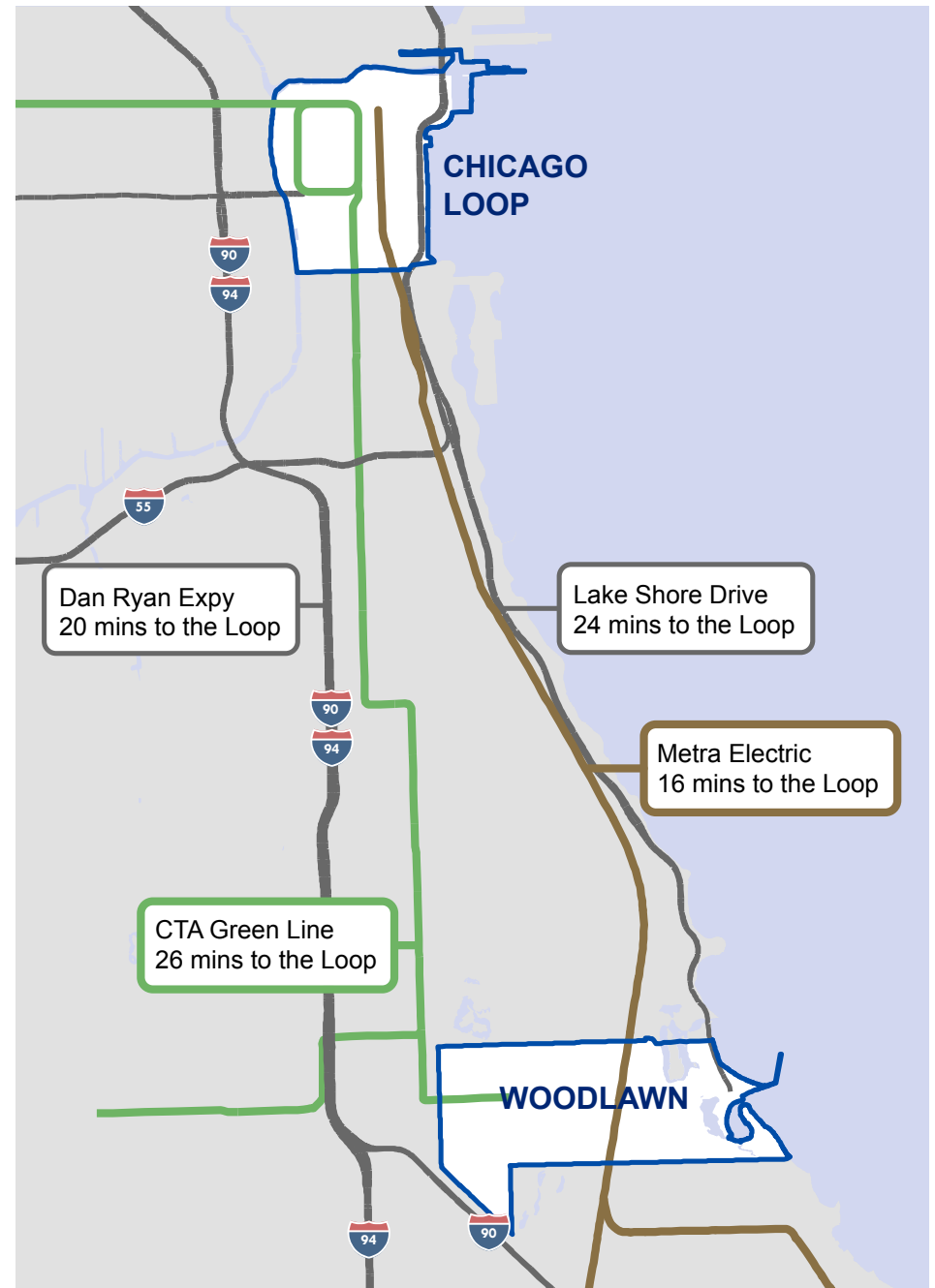
# INTRODUCTION

## WHY A PLAN CONSOLIDATION REPORT?

Since LISC Chicago first published its *Rebuilding the Neighborhood* plan in 2005, nearly a dozen plans and studies have been developed for the Woodlawn community by the City, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, and others. The number and breadth of these plans reflect how many people and organizations care about Woodlawn and its success, but also underscore a deep need for greater coordination and a unified path forward. Furthermore, with future investments planned by the University of Chicago, the Obama Foundation, and others in and around Woodlawn, the community is poised for transformational change.

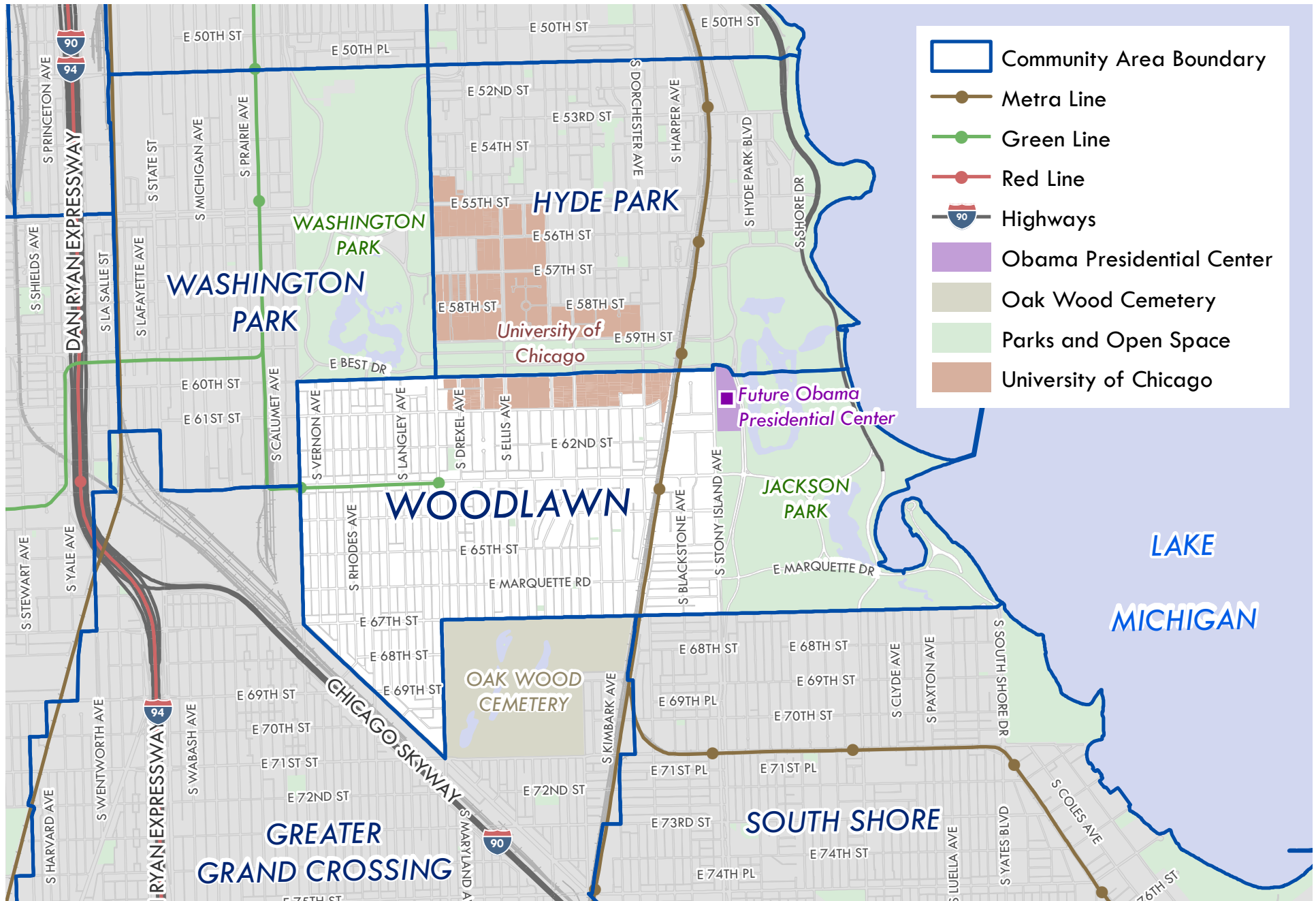
This document provides a review of past plans and studies and identifies where they align; a survey of existing conditions and projected future trends to help inform collective efforts; and a set of preliminary recommendations aimed at synthesizing these elements into actionable items that the City of Chicago, its partner agencies, and the community can implement to move Woodlawn forward.

Figure 1.1: Woodlawn and Its Connectivity on Chicago's South Side



Three of the nearly one dozen plans developed for Woodlawn since 2005

Figure 1.1: Overview and Context of the Woodlawn Community



- Community Area Boundary
- Metra Line
- Green Line
- Red Line
- Highways
- Obama Presidential Center
- Oak Wood Cemetery
- Parks and Open Space
- University of Chicago

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The past plans and studies incorporated into this document already reflect nearly two decades of engagement and input from those who live, work and invest in Woodlawn. Several of these plans were developed by community organizations directly, such as Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors (WECAN) and the Network of Woodlawn (NOW). This report acknowledges and respects the community input that was provided in their development. The City of Chicago has engaged with individual stakeholder groups and the community more broadly in the development of this Plan Consolidation Report to ensure that goals and priorities articulated in past plans and studies still reflect the vision of the community.

In fall 2019, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) conducted stakeholder interviews with residents, economic development and institutional stakeholders in Woodlawn, to review the findings from past plans and studies, and support preliminary recommendations. In January 2020, both DPD and the Department of Housing (DOH) conducted stakeholder meetings and a public open house where residents could provide input directly. Feedback from stakeholder meetings and the open house was incorporated into this Plan Consolidation Report.

Since 2018, the City of Chicago has also engaged with the community through its attendance at meetings of the Network of Woodlawn's Economic Development Subcommittee and 1Woodlawn initiative, and through community meetings focused on the federal review process for the future Obama Presidential Center.

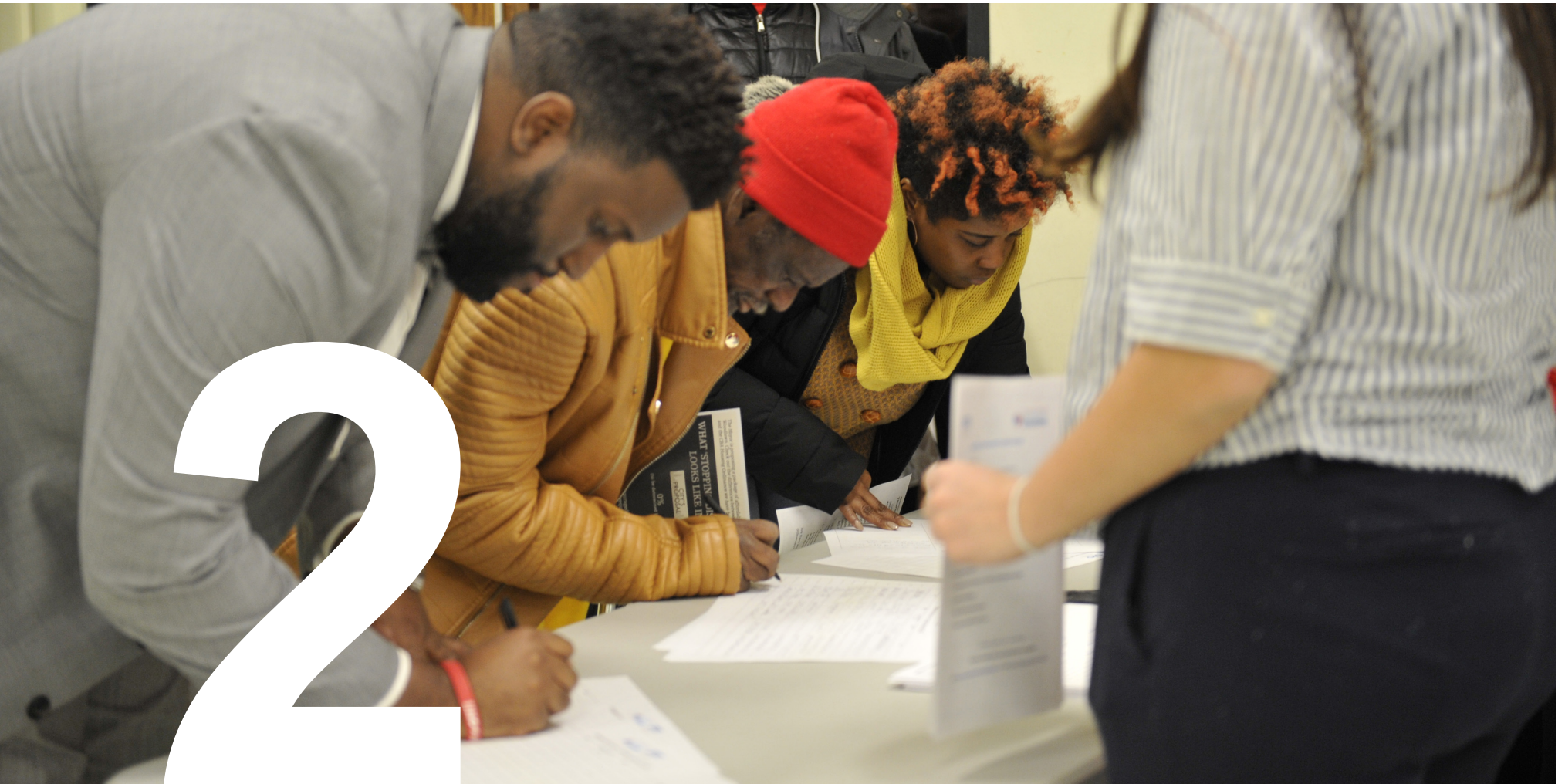
The Department of Housing simultaneously conducted a series of workshops and stakeholder engagement efforts around housing and affordability concerns in Woodlawn. In total, nearly 300 stakeholders across multiple community groups and organizations participated in both DPD and DOH's public engagement efforts.



*Department of Housing working group, November 2019*



*Woodlawn Open House, January 2020*



# PAST PLANS AND STUDIES



There have been nearly 20 years worth of plans and studies developed for the Woodlawn community, and also for specific elements within the community. Starting in 2005 with LISC Chicago's *Rebuilding the Neighborhood*, and culminating in 2018 and 2019 with Network of Woodlawn's *Getting Ahead of Gentrification* and *Woodlawn Community Area Economic Analysis*, a wealth of input and analysis exists to inform and advance a unified vision for the community. This chapter provides a review and analysis of these past plans and studies to articulate a set of common goals the community has indicated are important. This report addresses these goals in terms of what the City of Chicago and its partner agencies can do to advance them.

From an examination of the past plans and studies that have been developed for Woodlawn, nine broader themes are prevalent. These, in turn, can be organized into three types of interventions focused on (1) housing, (2) commerce and (3) the physical realm, as shown in the matrix below. Appendix A provides a full list of past plans and studies reviewed in this analysis and Appendix B provides a comprehensive alignment matrix.

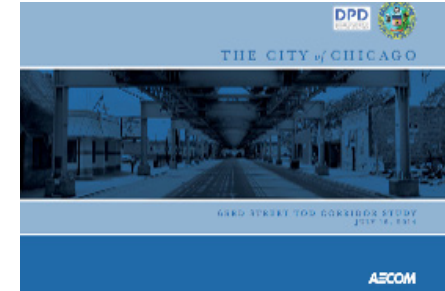
**The Nine Broader Themes in Past Plans and Studies**

HOUSING	COMMERCE	PHYSICAL REALM
Support existing residents, address displacement	Expand local ownership and neighborhood retail	Expand internal and external connections
Encourage reinvestment and redevelopment	Redevelop vacant buildings and vacant lots	Improve conditions of the public realm
Expand housing choice, including affordable	Re-establish 63rd Street as a neighborhood center	Address real and perceived safety concerns



**Rebuilding the Village**  
2005, LISC-Chicago

Commissioned by the Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corp., the Woodlawn Organization, and the University of Chicago, this Quality-of-Life plan contains a number of recommendations that subsequently are referenced in later plans and studies for Woodlawn.



**63rd Street TOD Study**  
2014, AECOM

Commissioned by the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, this study identifies ways to leverage transit-oriented development opportunities along 63rd Street, between the Cottage Grove and Martin Luther King Drive Green Line stations.



**63rd & Cottage Grove Retail Analysis**  
2015, Goodman Williams Group

Commissioned by the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, this study identified opportunities for additional commercial and mixed-use development along 63rd Street, between Drexel and Langley Avenues.



**Woodlawn Master Plan & Woodlawn Neighborhood Indicators**  
2016, Gensler

Commissioned by Network of Woodlawn, both documents provide key demographic information to inform strategies, and identify four key performance indicators to measure success.



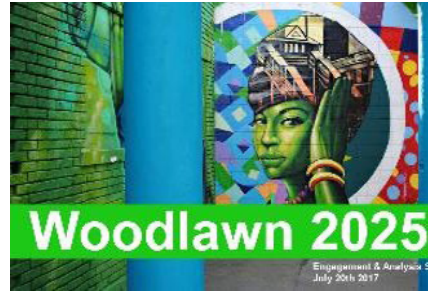
**2017 Sprint: Central Area to Jackson Park & Restitching Woodlawn**  
2017, CCAC

CCAC’s Burnham Council participated in a charrette exploring how transportation can unlock economic development around the site for the proposed Obama Presidential Center. The results of the charrette are articulated in these reports.



**Getting Ahead of Gentrification**  
2018, Thurman Smith, Vince Lane, and Mattie Butler

A response to concerns related to the construction of the future Obama Presidential Center, this report summarizes current housing and affordability conditions, and outlines a set of strategies to address concerns of gentrification and displacement in Woodlawn.



**Woodlawn 2025**  
2018, SOM

Commissioned by the Network of Woodlawn, this plan catalogs Woodlawn’s assets and challenges, and articulates a vision for the future success of the community.



**Woodlawn Community Area Economic Analysis**  
2019, AECOM

Commissioned by the Network of Woodlawn, this study establishes economic context, evaluates demand drivers that may change Woodlawn’s trajectory in the future, and evaluates the relationship between these and future development potential.



**Woodlawn Corridor Development Initiative**  
2018, Metro Planning Council

Commissioned by the Cook County Land Bank, this study focuses on the former Washington Park Bank building at the corner of 63rd and Cottage Grove and identifies ways it may contribute to the catalytic redevelopment of the 63rd corridor.

**Other Plans, studies, and community input**

A full list of past plans and studies that were used to develop this Plan Consolidation Report are available in Appendix A.

This Report also incorporates ideas from 1Woodlawn meetings that DPD attended in 2018 and 2019, and community input from the stakeholder meetings, public open house, and other engagement activities outlined in Chapter 1.

## HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY

Three past plans provide goals around housing and affordability issues: *Rebuilding the Village*, and Network of Woodlawn’s *Woodlawn 2025* and *Getting Ahead of Gentrification*; some of these are additionally reflected in other plans and studies. Primary goals include supporting lower and fixed income households to protect against displacement, expanding on housing choice and affordable housing options to accommodate a range of people and families, investing in the maintenance of existing housing units provide quality housing, the rehabilitation and renovation of existing vacant housing units, and supporting economic development and local wealth building opportunities. Figure 2.1 shows where these past plans and studies align on housing and affordability concerns.

Figure 2.1: Housing and Affordability Goals in Past Plans and Studies

	Rebuilding the Village	63rd Street TOD Study	Woodlawn Master Plan	Woodlawn 2025	Corridor Development Initiative	Getting Ahead of Gentrification
Protect lower income households from displacement			●			●
Expand the supply of mixed income housing options	●	●		●	●	●
Encourage reinvestment in existing housing	●			●		●
Expand housing types and choice to support a diversity of households	●			●		●
Target existing residents over investors to build local wealth						●
Improve access to housing resources	●					●
Redevelop vacant lots and buildings	●		●	●		●



Contemporary, market-rate housing development on Ellis Avenue

## COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Goals around commerce, retail and economic development are most clearly defined in Network of Woodlawn’s 2017 *Woodlawn 2025* plan, and in LISC’s *Rebuilding the Village* to a lesser extent. Two studies commissioned by the City of Chicago provide some clarity around priorities along 63rd Street specifically.

Areas of agreement center on re-establishing 63rd Street as a neighborhood center for commerce and activity, redeveloping the significant amount of vacant land along 63rd Street, and expanding opportunities for local ownership and local wealth building by supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs. Figure 2.2 shows where past plans and studies align on commercial corridor and economic development concerns.



Historically, 63rd Street was lined with commerce and retail (Image from ca. 1955)

Figure 2.2: Commerce Corridor Goals in Past Plans

	Rebuilding the Village	63rd Street TOD Study	63rd/Cottage Grove Retail Analysis	Sprint 2017: Restitching Woodlawn	Woodlawn 2025	Corridor Development Initiative
Central shopping district	●				●	
Create a food "scene" and skill sets					●	
Develop live/work or incubator space	●			●	●	
Expand entertainment options					●	
Expand neighborhood-serving retail	●	●	●	●	●	●
Healthy food options			●	●	●	
Redevelop vacant lots and buildings	●		●		●	●

## OPEN SPACE & THE PHYSICAL REALM

Goals around open space, streets, transportation, and the physical realm are addressed predominantly in *Woodlawn 2025*, CCAC's *2017 Sprint: Restitching Woodlawn*, and to a lesser extent in technical studies like the *63rd Street TOD Study* commissioned by the Department of Planning and Development in 2014. Goals in these studies focus on improving connections both within the community and with adjacent communities through an improved pedestrian realm and transportation options, providing additional open space and community gathering space, and implementing streetscape improvements to make it safer and more comfortable for pedestrians. Figure 2.3 provides a more complete summary of goals identified in these plans and studies.

Figure 2.3: Open Space and Physical Realm Goals in Past Plans

	Rebuilding the Village	63rd Street TOD Study	63rd/Cottage Grove Retail Analysis	Sprint 2017: Restitching Woodlawn	Woodlawn 2025	Corridor Development Initiative
Community gardens / urban agriculture / nurseries				●	●	
Community space	●			●	●	●
Improved linkages (bike, pedestrian, etc.)		●		●	●	●
New playground and/or open space	●	●		●	●	
Streetscape improvements	●	●	●	●	●	



Flying Squirrel Park at Woodlawn Avenue and Marquette Road

## OTHER IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES

*Rebuilding the Village, Woodlawn 2025*, and the 2016 *Woodlawn Master Plan*, provide additional priorities identified by the community. Many of these fall outside the City of Chicago’s primary focus, but remain important goals that the City supports, including improved alignment among local stakeholders, additional educational opportunities for youth, including facilities and programming, improving the perception of safety, and engagement with local artists to install public art that celebrates the community and its history. Figure 2.4 provides a complete summary of these other priorities.



*“Wonder of Woodlawn” designed by Bernard Williams in 2019*

**Figure 2.4: Other Goals Identified in Past Plans and Studies**

	Rebuilding the Village	Woodlawn Master Plan	Sprint 2017: Restitching Woodlawn	Woodlawn 2025	Corridor Development Initiative	Getting Ahead of Gentrification
Creation of a CDC or similar organization	●	●	●			●
Expand youth programming	●			●		
Improve alignment among stakeholders	●	●				
Improve educational facilities and opportunities	●	●		●		
Improve workforce development opportunities	●	●	●	●		●
Improve the perception of safety	●	●		●	●	
Provide opportunities for local art	●			●		

## WHAT THE CITY CAN DO

While the City of Chicago is supportive of the goals identified in past plans and studies for Woodlawn, there are some that the City can help to move forward or implement, and others that are more appropriate for a community-based organization or nonprofit to advance. The City owns 27% of the vacant land in Woodlawn, as well as the option of acquiring for redevelopment two former public schools in Woodlawn and one in Washington Park, and can use this property to catalyze development and encourage uses that reflect the community's vision. Additionally, the City has resources and programs to support affordability and redevelopment priorities.

Other Department of Planning and Development resources and programs include Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, New Markets Tax Credits, and property tax incentives, among others. Portions of Woodlawn fall within Census tracts that are eligible for the federal Opportunity Zones program and other incentives. More information can be found on the DPD website: [www.chicago.gov/dpd](http://www.chicago.gov/dpd)

Several partner agencies and city departments, including the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP), the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), have resources and programs that can be leveraged to advance some of the strategies in this report.



*Landscaped open space in West Woodlawn*



*Public art beneath the Metra tracks at 64th Street*



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



The Woodlawn community covers 2.1 square miles on Chicago’s South Side, along Lake Michigan. Much of Woodlawn’s eastern portion is made up of Jackson Park, but the remaining area contains a broad range of housing options, institutional uses, and more limited commerce. The area is bounded on the north by the Midway Plaisance and the University of Chicago, on the east by Jackson Park, on the south by Oak Wood Cemetery and South Chicago Avenue, and on the west by Martin Luther King Drive. This chapter provides an overview of current and projected future demographics, an analysis of existing land use and zoning within the community, and a review of the neighborhood’s architectural character.

## GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS

According to 2017 American Community Survey estimates, Woodlawn is home to 25,207 residents, down 3% from 2010. The neighborhood is home to nearly 800 elderly and retired residents, many of whom own homes on fixed incomes and may be more sensitive to property tax increases. Woodlawn is also home to a large number of renters. These two segments of the population may be at an increased risk of displacement if property values, rents and property taxes rise due to investment and increased housing demand in the community. Figure 3.1 provides some additional demographics for the neighborhood, and how those values compare to the city as a whole.

**Figure 3.1: Select Demographics for Woodlawn and the City of Chicago**  
 Source: American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates

Race and ethnicity	Woodlawn	City
White	9.8%	45.0%
Black or African American	83.5%	32.9%
Some other race	6.7%	22.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	3.1%	28.9%
Population density (/sq. mi.)	12,000	11,841

Age	Woodlawn	City
Under 18 years of age	27.4%	21.5%
18 - 64 years of age	69.4%	66.8%
65 years and older	3.1%	11.7%
Median age	34.4	34.1

Educational attainment	Woodlawn	City
Less than high school	8.8%	14.3%
High school diploma or equiv.	23.7%	25.4%
Some college or associate's	60.7%	42.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	6.8%	17.8%

Income and poverty	Woodlawn	City
Median household income	\$28,351	\$52,497
Persons below poverty line	38.0%	20.6%

## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Woodlawn has a vibrant housing mix of single-family homes, historic walk-ups, courtyard apartments and modern high rises. As of 2017, there were an estimated 11,929 housing units in the neighborhood, of which 23.5% were owner occupied and 76.5% renter-occupied. The neighborhood also contains a high proportion of both naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)—units affordable at market rates—and legally restricted affordable—units that must remain affordable at certain income levels by law. Nearly half of all housing units in Woodlawn are affordable, with 19% of housing units naturally occurring affordable, and an additional 28% affordable by law.

There are approximately 8,019 occupied rental units in the Woodlawn community. Just over 47% of these are considered affordable based on the 60% of area median income (AMI) rent threshold. Of these units, 28% are legally restricted affordable, which must remain affordable for a designated time period and 1,550 (19%) are NOAH, in this case, lower than the 60% AMI threshold. For comparison, approximately 36% of occupied rental units in Chicago as a whole are considered affordable at the same threshold, with 10% of units legally restricted and 26% NOAH. Figure 3.2 shows the number and percentage of occupied rental units for Woodlawn, select neighboring community areas and the City of Chicago.

When compared with neighboring communities, Woodlawn is most comparable to South Shore and Washington Park in percentage of affordable units. Hyde Park has the lowest number of affordable units, both NOAH and legally restricted, and is the lowest by percentage with just over 20% affordable. At 53.8%, South Shore has the highest percentage of affordable units, followed by Washington Park and Woodlawn, all of which have a higher percentage than the City as a whole. At 78%, Hyde Park has the highest percentage of units with rents higher than the 60% AMI threshold, while, Washington Park, South Shore, and Woodlawn range between 44% and 50%, respectively.

Woodlawn currently leads Chicago lakefront communities in permit volume growth. According to a 2019 AECOM study, permit activity for new residential construction and renovation of existing housing units has seen an uptick in recent years: between 2010 and 2017 permit activity increased by 6.7%, and mostly consist of construction permits for the renovation of existing units. While renovation and new construction activity is still modest, trends indicate a strengthening housing market. That said, according to 2017 estimates, nearly 3,000 housing units remain vacant in Woodlawn. Figure 3.3 summarizes permit activity data for Woodlawn. In addition, the value of residential transactions has grown since 2010.

**Figure 3.2: Occupied Rental Units and Affordable Housing**

Source: SB Friedman, City of Chicago, US Census, HUD, IDHA, CHA, 2017

Community	Total units	Total legally restricted	Total naturally occurring	Total affordable	Total higher rent	Percent legally restricted	Percent naturally occurring	Total percent affordable	Percent higher rent
Hyde Park	8,027	125	1,496	1,621	6,265	1.6%	18.6%	20.2%	78.0%
South Shore	16,927	2,148	6,961	9,109	7,640	12.7%	41.1%	53.8%	45.1%
Washington Park	3,750	1,340	647	1,973	1,649	35.7%	17.3%	52.6%	44.0%
<b>Woodlawn</b>	<b>8,019</b>	<b>2,251</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>3,801</b>	<b>3,968</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>47.4%</b>	<b>49.5%</b>
CITY	580,202	59,269	150,158	209,427	355,738	10.2%	25.9%	36.1%	61.3%

**Figure 3.3: Permit Activity for New Construction and Home Renovation**

Source: AECOM, City of Chicago, Illinois Public Records, 2018

Category	2010	2017	Change 2010-2017	City comparison
Total permit volume	304	478	6.7%	2.8%
Renovation permit volume	284	432	6.2%	2.3%
Residential transaction value	\$92,846	\$170,653	9.1%	7.5%

## FUTURE GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Several recent studies have articulated projections for future population and job growth that will be important to incorporate into any strategies for redevelopment in Woodlawn. A 2019 AECOM study of the neighborhood commissioned by Network of Woodlawn found that the Woodlawn population could grow at roughly a 1.9% annual growth rate. If vacant land and residential units were redeveloped, the study suggests that Woodlawn could grow even faster, and potentially accommodate an additional 11,000 new residents by 2040. The future Obama Presidential Center and continued investment by the University of Chicago will also generate new jobs and attract new businesses and opportunities to the community that will, in turn, drive demand for new housing and amenities. Woodlawn’s proximity and ease of access to jobs and attractions in the Loop (see Figure 1.1) could also drive new development and population growth in the neighborhood.

An estimated 1,100 jobs were created in Woodlawn between 2010 and 2017, many of which can be attributed to the expansion of the University of Chicago southward into the neighborhood, according to a 2017 AECOM study. A 2016 IMPLAN analysis of primary and secondary effects of a future Obama Presidential Center also provides some insight into potential trends in Woodlawn; according

to the study, an estimated 1,407 full- and part-time jobs could be created on the South Side during construction and start-up, and 2,175 jobs could be supported during the Center’s operation.

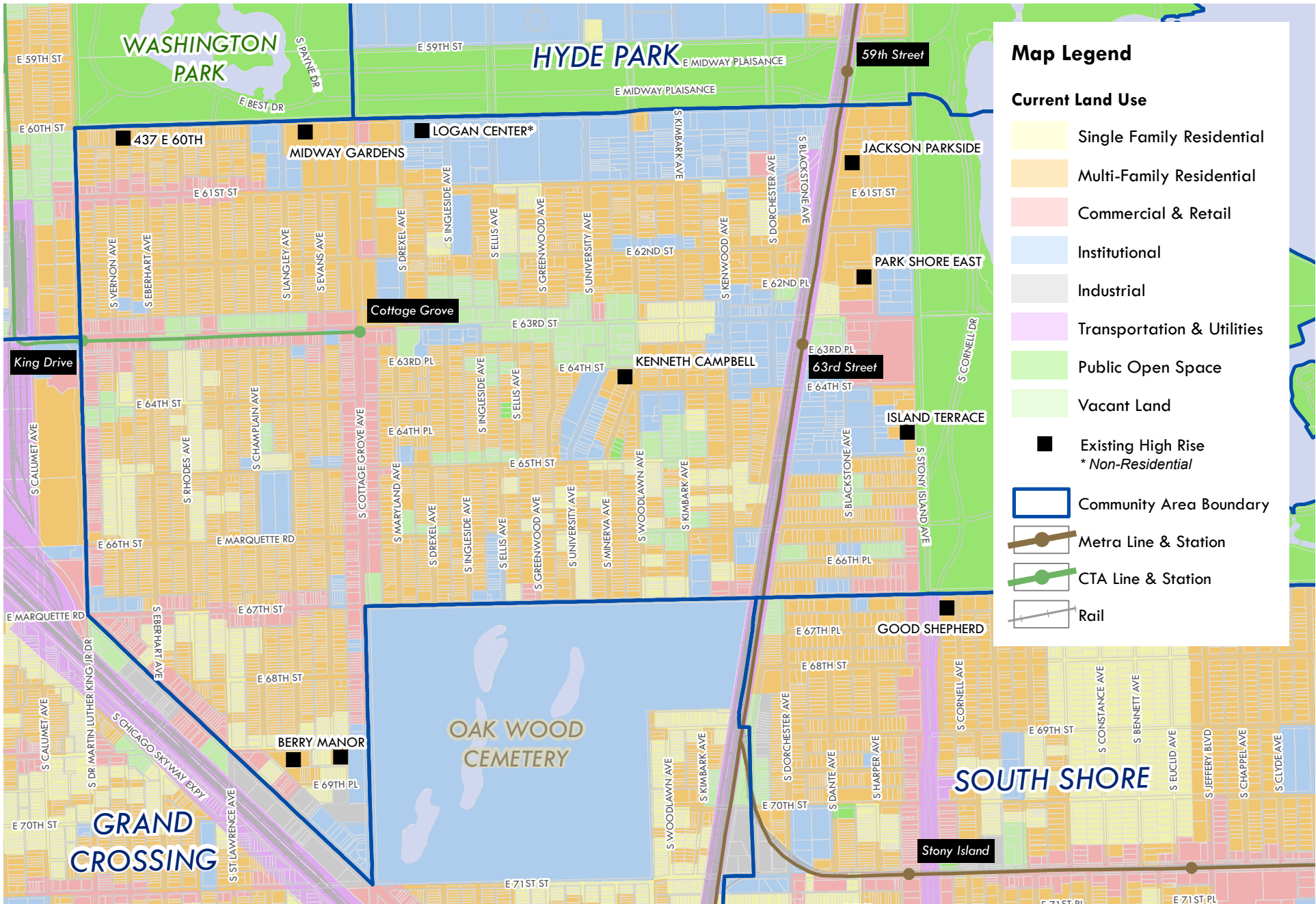


*Future University of Chicago investments in Woodlawn*



*A rendering of the proposed Obama Presidential Center*

Figure 3.4: Current Land Use (CMAP 2013) and Existing High Rises in Woodlawn



## EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING

Woodlawn is predominantly residential, bounded by parks on its north and east sides, and a cemetery along a significant portion of its southern extent. The major thoroughfares of Martin Luther King Drive, Cottage Grove and Stony Island avenues cross the community from north to south, and 63rd Street is a major thoroughfare that bisects the community from east to west. Woodlawn is well-served by transit, and has two stops for the CTA Green Line and a Metra station, in addition to frequent CTA bus service along its major thoroughfares. Less than one mile to west, the Dan Ryan Expressway (Interstate 90/94) provides quick access to the Loop by automobile. Limited commerce and local retail exists within Woodlawn, particularly at the nodes of 61st Street and Eberhart Avenue, 63rd and Cottage Grove, and then lesser concentrations along Martin Luther King Drive, Cottage Grove, and Stony Island. Historically, 63rd served as the community's primary retail corridor but, today, the corridor is dominated by vacant land due to aggressive demolition in the 1980s and 1990s. To the north, along 60th Street and the Midway Plaisance, the University of Chicago has expanded its reach into Woodlawn with a new Center for the Arts and other buildings related to the institution. Figure 3.4 shows current land use in Woodlawn, according to 2013 CMAP data.

Woodlawn's residential blocks are home to diverse housing types, from denser courtyard apartments and modern high-rises to the north and east, to more modest six-flats and greystones in the blocks north and south of 63rd Street, and stepping down to three-flats and single-family homes to the south. Existing zoning reflects this, with a mixture of multi-family (RM), single-family (RS), and townhouse (RT) zoning, although RT-4 is the predominant zoning category. Along the area's former commercial corridors, business (B2 and B3) zoning dominates, with some commercial (C) zoning mixed in. Finally, significant portions of the neighborhood, particularly in the north and east, are covered by planned development (PD) zoning for the University of Chicago and for more recent housing developments. Figure 3.5 shows current zoning in Woodlawn.

## VACANT LAND IS AN ASSET

Figure 3.6 shows the locations of vacant land in the Woodlawn community, by property owner. While much emphasis is placed on City-owned vacant land in Woodlawn, only about 27% of the existing vacant land is under city control. That said, the City does own a significant amount of vacant land along 63rd Street, which provides opportunities both to leverage this highly visible land in a way that catalyzes further development, and to build in greater density to support the businesses and amenities the community would like to see.

It will also be imperative for the City to implement strategies that help to direct the redevelopment of the other 73% of vacant land in Woodlawn in a way that complements the City's, its partners' and the community's revitalization efforts.



*The City owns a significant amount of vacant land on 63rd Street*

Figure 3.5: Current Zoning in Woodlawn

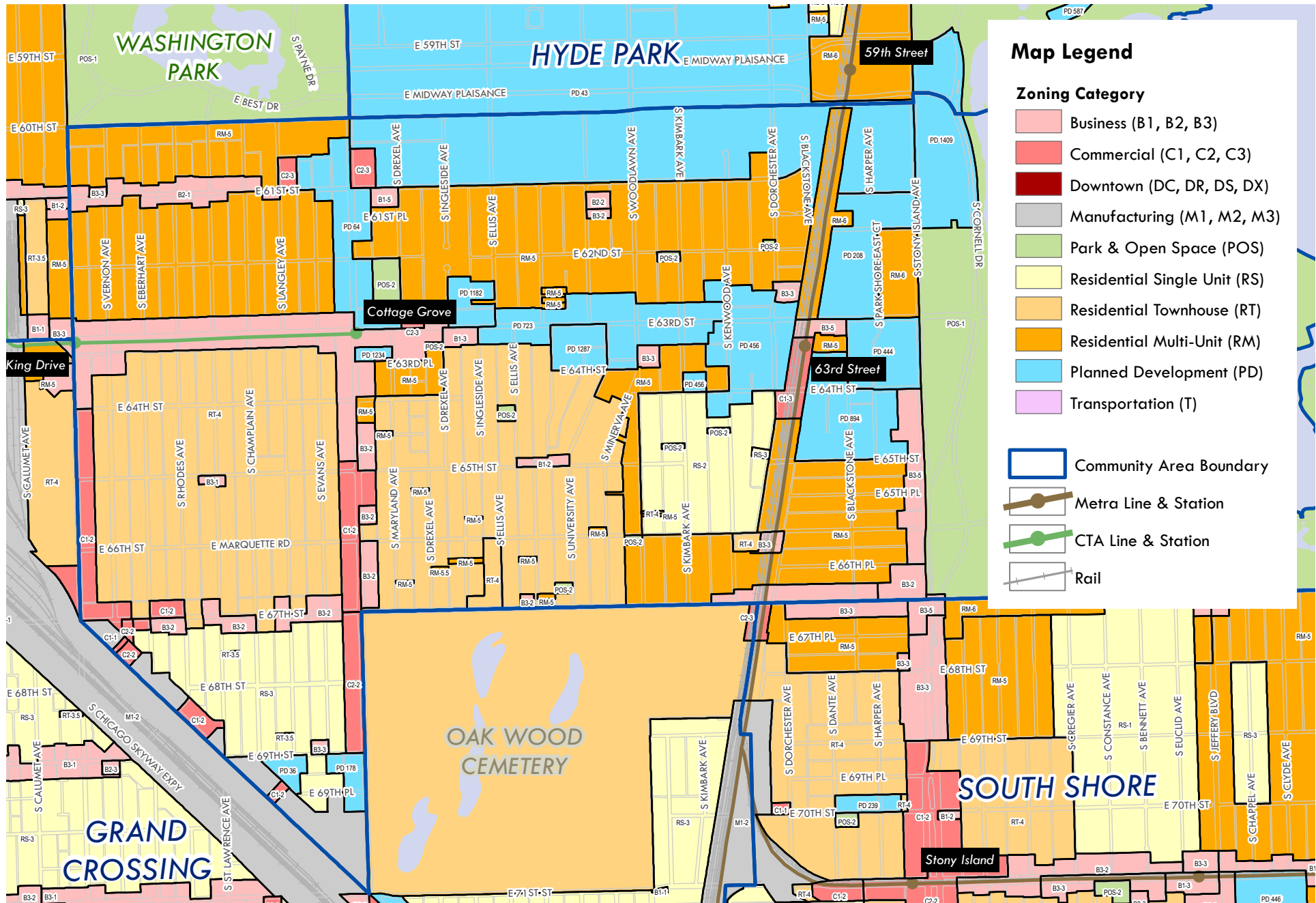
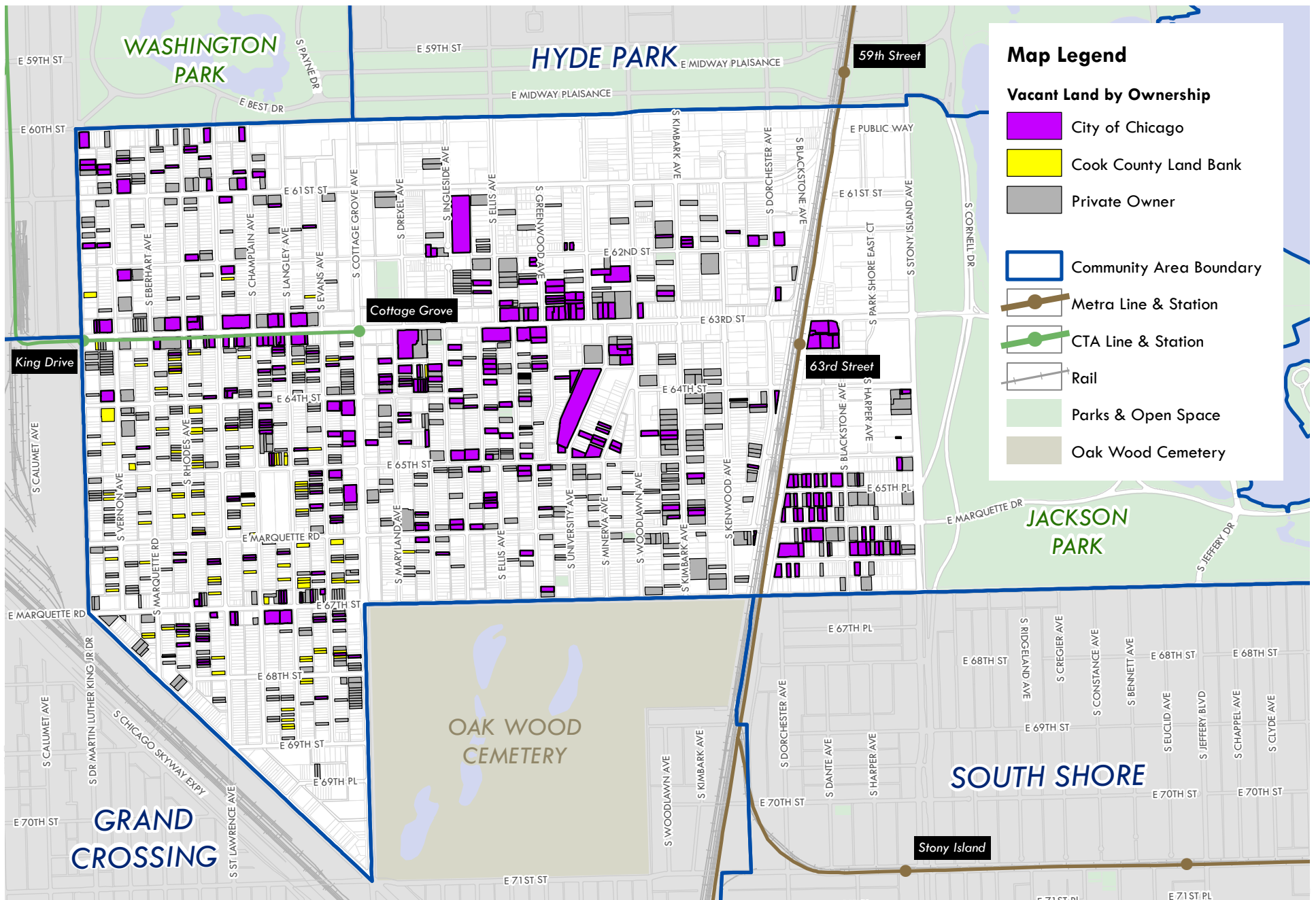


Figure 3.6: Vacant Land in Woodlawn by Ownership Type



## ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Originally established as part of Hyde Park Township, Woodlawn began as a sparsely-populated village of truck farmers between the 1860s and 1880s. The Illinois Central Railroad (ICRR) opened a passenger station at East 63rd Street near Stony Island Avenue in 1862, but initial growth remained slow. When the Washington Park Club opened within the community at East 61st Street and South Cottage Grove Avenue in 1883, Woodlawn's population was only about 500. Less than a decade later, the community's development was propelled by its proximity to the University of Chicago and the fairgrounds for the World's Columbian Exposition. The population surge was rapid and intense, growing from approximately 2,000 people in the late 1890s to 20,000 less than a decade later.

Between the early 1890s and 1900s, blocks of Greystone two- and three-flats went up in Woodlawn, as did low-rise apartments, and in the 1910s and 1930s, as Woodlawn thrived, it developed into a desirable, urbane neighborhood. By this time, apartment buildings had clear appeal to middle-class Chicagoans who wanted access to the community. Multi-family structures with larger, more luxurious units also were being erected by wealthier South Siders.

By 1913, 63rd Street had developed into a major arterial street, with a bustling commercial district about a mile west of the new Hyde Park High School, near Cottage Grove. A number of vibrant restaurants, hotels, and movie palaces opened in the area in the 1910s and 1920s (most of these buildings no longer exist).

Chicago's black population of 40,000 in 1910 had more than doubled a decade later, and increasing numbers of African-Americans sought to live in Woodlawn. By the early 1920s, a small number of middle-class African-Americans had purchased homes just outside of the Black Belt, on the west side of Woodlawn in an area called the Washington Park Subdivision. Between the late 1940s and the 1960s, during this second wave of the Great Migration, Chicago's black population grew from 278,000 to 813,000. The Woodlawn



*Historic Greystones, S. Rhodes Avenue (Southwest Woodlawn)*



*S. Kimbark Avenue (North Central Woodlawn)*



population reached an all-time high of 81,000 in 1960. At that time, African-Americans made up 89% of Woodlawn's population.

During urban renewal efforts of the 1960s, extensive demolition occurred within the Woodlawn neighborhood, particularly in areas to the north and east. Clearing of lots south of the Midway facilitated the expansion of the University of Chicago campus. Community groups formed in response to the widespread building demolition to advocate and spearhead the development of better quality housing. The passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 created financial incentives for the construction of several large-scale residential developments of affordable rental townhouses, mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. Remaining examples of these late-20th century housing developments include the Island Terrace Apartments at 6430 Stony Island Avenue and Jackson Park Terrace further north between 60th and 61st Street. Figure 3.6 shows existing land use and the location of high rises in Woodlawn.

### East of the Illinois Central Railroad (ICRR) tracks

- The northeast corner of the Woodlawn neighborhood consists of large sites occupied by campus-like developments with open space in the form of residential courtyards or athletic fields (Jackson Park Terrace, Park Shore East, Hyde Park Academy H.S., and South Side YMCA). Three-story walk-ups are clad with brick or artificial siding. This area is punctuated by two concrete-frame residential towers dating to the late-1960s and early 1970s (Island Terrace Apartments, Jackson Park Terrace).
- The southeast corner of Woodlawn has large expanses of vacant lots east of the railroad tracks, notably on 66th Place. However, the buildings that remain are typically Revival-style residential three-flats and six-flats of brick and limestone dating to the turn of the 20th century.
- Existing buildings almost universally have a tripartite composition with a base, mid-section, and roofline cornice.
- Cladding is either brick, limestone, or a combination of the two materials with Revival-style ornamental details.



*Kenwood Avenue (Southeast Woodlawn)*



*Marquette Road (Southeast Woodlawn)*

## Central Woodlawn (Dorchester Street to Cottage Grove Avenue)

- University of Chicago campus buildings are concentrated along the south edge of the Midway.
- Predominantly four-story mid-rise brick apartment buildings, closely followed by three- and four-story masonry six-flats.
- Larger buildings are sited along the east-west streets and create a continuous street wall, while the north-south streets are a mix of detached two-, three-, and six-flats that are set back from the front, side and rear property lines to provide relief front the street and allow for private open space.
- Existing buildings almost universally have a tripartite composition with a base, mid-section, and roofline cornice.
- Cladding is either brick, limestone, or a combination of the two materials accented by Revival-style ornamental details at the window and door surrounds, beltcourses, porch balconies and rooflines.
- Detached single-family houses have been constructed in the 6400-6500 blocks of Kenwood Avenue in a limited area zoned for such use. Streets of exclusively single-family homes, however, are the exception and are more common in the far southwest corner of the neighborhood.

## West Woodlawn (Cottage Grove Avenue to MLK Drive)

- The area closest to Washington Park, which was a former horse racing track, was subdivided for housing after its closure. Existing housing stock is characterized by three- and four-story brick six-flats as well as 4-story mid-rise brick apartment buildings.
- Neighborhood Mixed Use District (B-2): 61st Street and Eberhart Avenue has a small grouping of low-scale brick commercial buildings that retain a high level of integrity.
- Larger buildings are sited along the east-west streets and create a continuous street wall, while the north-south streets are a mix of detached two-, three-, and six-flats that are set back from the front, side and rear property lines to provide relief front the street and allow for private open space.



*Martin Luther King Drive (Northwest Woodlawn)*



*Champlain Avenue (Southwest Woodlawn)*

- Existing buildings almost universally have a tripartite composition with a base, mid-section, and roofline cornice.
- Cladding is either brick, limestone, or a combination of the two materials accented by Revival-style ornamental details at the window and door surrounds, beltcourses, porch balconies and rooflines.
- The southwest portion of Woodlawn, south of 63rd Street, is lower in density and distinctly different aesthetically from the majority of the neighborhood. Two flats and single family homes are most common, however they are of a wide variety of styles and construction dates, ranging from 19th century cottages to post-World War II bungalows.

**Arterial Streets (MLK Drive, Cottage Grove Avenue, 63rd Street, Stony Island Avenue)**

- Cottage Grove: The former Woodlawn Gardens housing development has been replaced incrementally by new, three- and four-story affordable housing developments, including the Trianon Lofts, The Grant, The Jackson, and Woodlawn Station at the 63rd Street CTA Green Line stop.
- 63rd Street: Once a thriving commercial corridor for the neighborhood, large swaths of 63rd Street have been lost to demolition. Near the Metra station at the east end of 63rd, brick single- and two-family homes were constructed fronting onto 63rd as part of a 1999 planned development project.



*Newer affordable housing along Cottage Grove Avenue (Central Woodlawn)*



*Historic density still visible at 63rd and Cottage Grove (Central Woodlawn)*



# STRATEGIES & ALIGNMENT

The City of Chicago has a number of programs and resources that can be leveraged strategically in Woodlawn to help support the vision and goals of the community, but perhaps the most important role the city will have in Woodlawn is helping to direct and manage the redevelopment of its vacant land. The following recommendations outline best practices for the disposition and redevelopment of vacant land and where to target density (4.1), how to support small businesses and entrepreneurs (4.2), and ways to improve the physical realm and address other community concerns (4.3). Following these recommendations, a set of implementation strategies are described (4.4).

## VACANT LAND

Preserving affordability is important to the future of Woodlawn, and addressing affordability concerns will need to be a critical component of any redevelopment strategy for the community. Given current zoning and existing development patterns, vacant land in Woodlawn is likely to redevelop in predictable ways. The following section outlines the ways in which redevelopment of vacant land could occur, and estimates how many housing units could be provided under various redevelopment scenarios. It will be incumbent upon the city's Department of Housing, affordable housing developers and operators, and housing advocacy groups to agree upon the appropriate mix of affordable to market rate housing, and how they would like to see these housing units delivered.

This analysis focuses vacant land redevelopment in Woodlawn, with a particular emphasis on city-owned vacant land. The rehabilitation of existing housing units, however, is another important component of an overall housing strategy, which is not addressed here.

Figure 3.6 shows where vacant land exists within Woodlawn and who owns it: only 326 vacant lots, or about 27% of the total in Woodlawn are owned by the City of Chicago, an additional 88 are owned by the Cook County Land Bank Authority. The remaining 66% of vacant lots are privately owned, and the city is more limited in how it can direct

development on these lots. Recommendations in this section apply specifically to city-owned vacant lots. Based on a City analysis, if City-owned vacant lots were developed according to existing zoning, they could supply an estimated additional 1,850 units. If the remaining vacant lots were also redeveloped under existing zoning, an estimated additional 2,290 units could be supplied, for a total of approximately 4,140 housing units. The Department of Housing has engaged community members to identify how they would like to prioritize potential new housing units in terms of ownership versus rental, and affordable versus market rate.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show where City-owned vacant lots are located in relation to transit stops and major arterials within the community: these lots may provide an opportunity for increased density and mixed-use development that could support neighborhood-serving commerce. Residentially zoned City-owned vacant lots that are away from transit stations and major arterials should be developed similar to existing zoning, and fit the context of the blocks on which they are located. Developing in this way respects the existing fabric of residential blocks and targets greater density to areas where it is more appropriate.



*Vacant land along 63rd Street, west of Cottage Grove*

Figure 4.1: City-Owned Land in Proximity to Mass Transit (CTA & Metra)

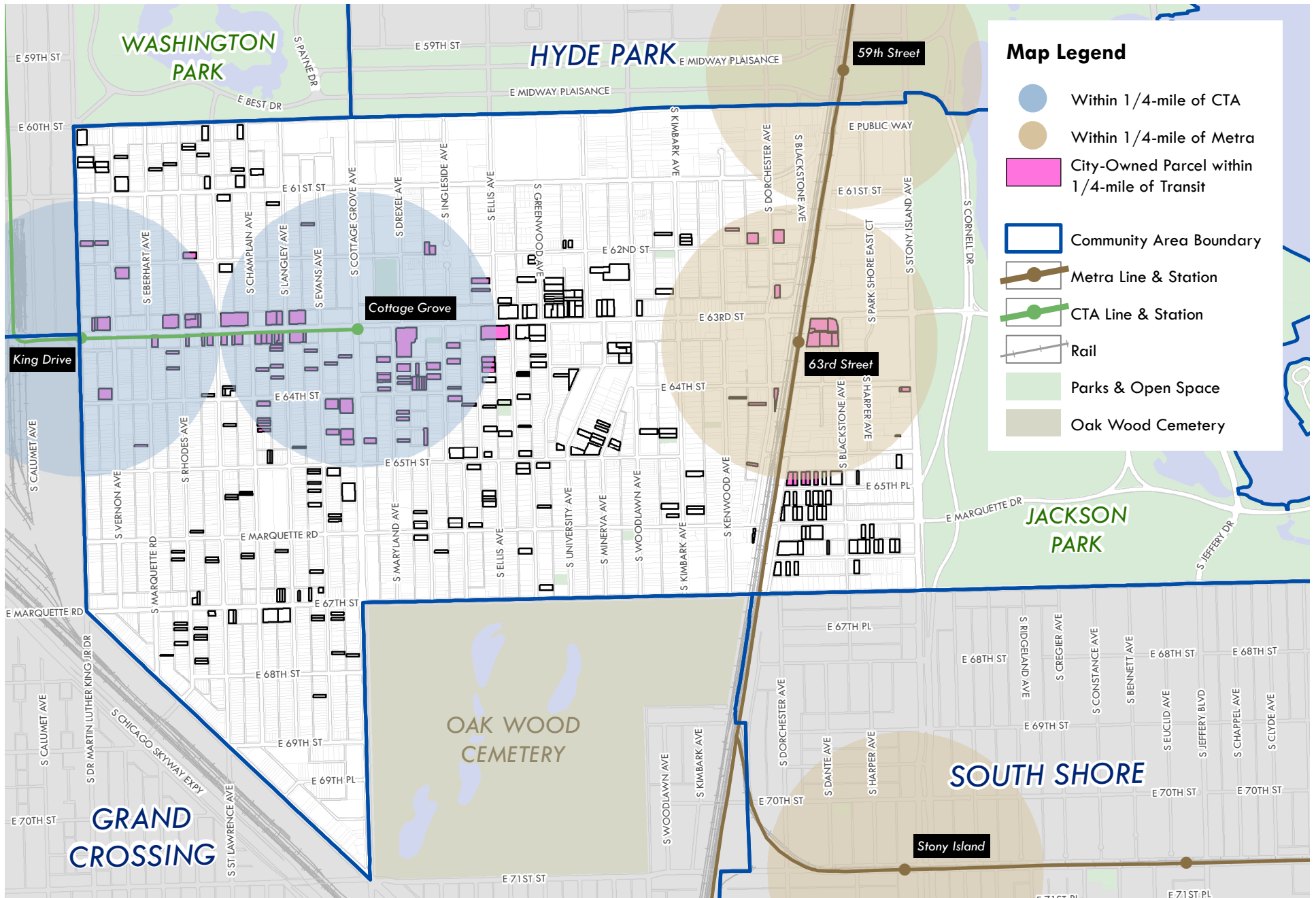
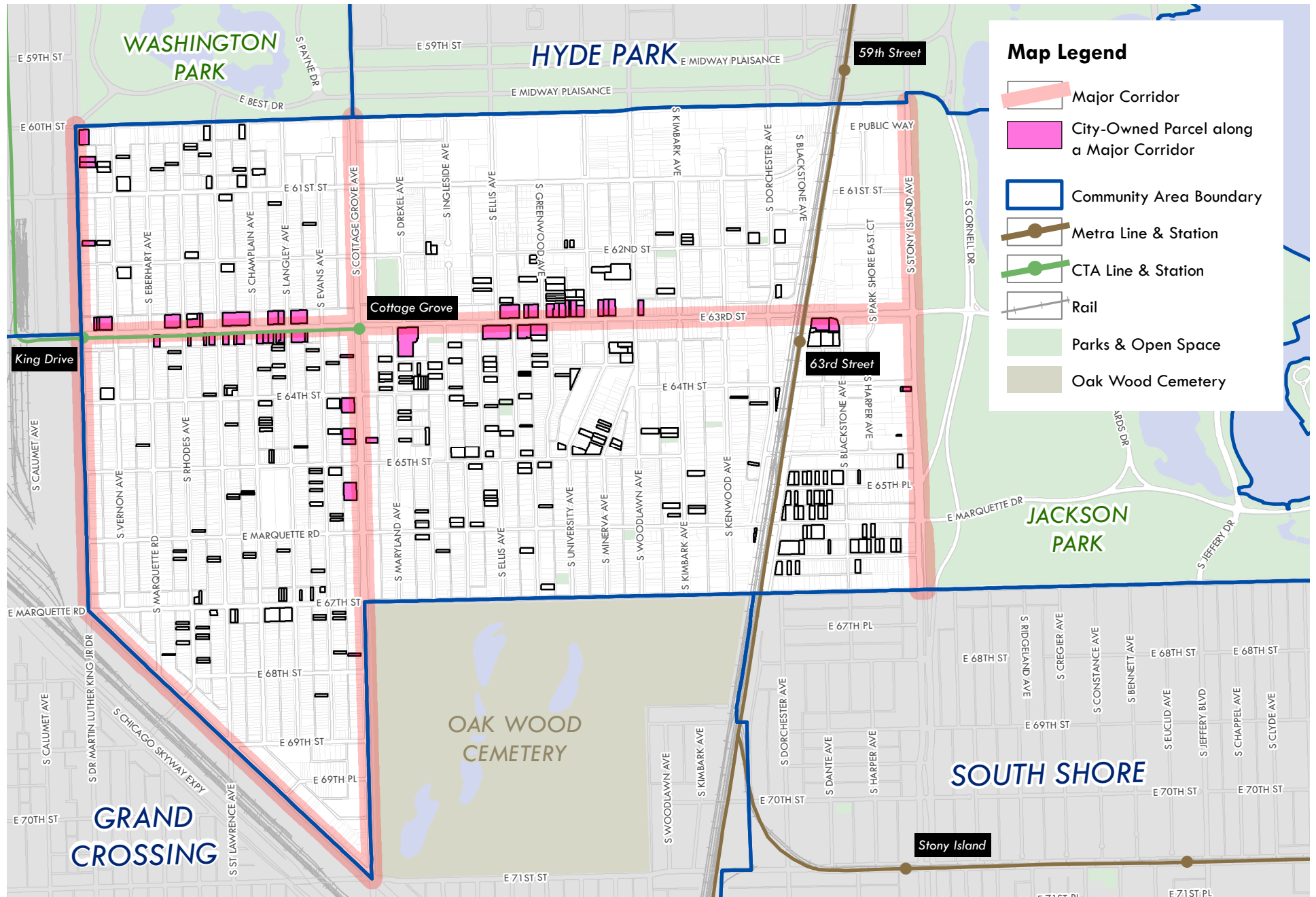


Figure 4.2: City-Owned Land along Major Arterials



**Map Legend**

- Major Corridor
- City-Owned Parcel along a Major Corridor
- Community Area Boundary
- Metra Line & Station
- CTA Line & Station
- Rail
- Parks & Open Space
- Oak Wood Cemetery

**The following recommendations primarily address goals that were articulated in Rebuilding the Village (LISC, 2005), Woodlawn 2025 (Network of Woodlawn, 2017) and Getting Ahead of Gentrification (Network of Woodlawn, 2018). Housing redevelopment within these recommendations should align with the housing and affordability goals identified in Department of Housing community engagement efforts. Figures 4.3 and 4.4 are meant to provide a framework for how City-owned land and former CPS facilities could be redeveloped, but individual property redevelopment decisions may vary from this matrix, based on existing conditions, feasibility, or other considerations.**

**Recommendation 4.1.1:** Target greater density along 63rd Street, around CTA Green Line stations at Martin Luther King Drive and Cottage Grove, and at the 63rd Street Metra Station.

**Recommendation 4.1.2:** Engage the community in a broader visioning exercise to explore density along Stony Island Avenue. Consider greater density on blocks in the southeast corner of Woodlawn, roughly bounded by 63rd Street on the north, Stony Island Avenue on the east, 67th Street on the south, and the Metra tracks on the west. Identify creative ways to adaptively reuse former Chicago Public Schools buildings in the community.

**Recommendation 4.1.3:** Preserve the existing character of residential blocks by developing vacant lots in these areas under existing zoning, and require proposed development to match the massing, setbacks, and architectural form of adjacent residential buildings.

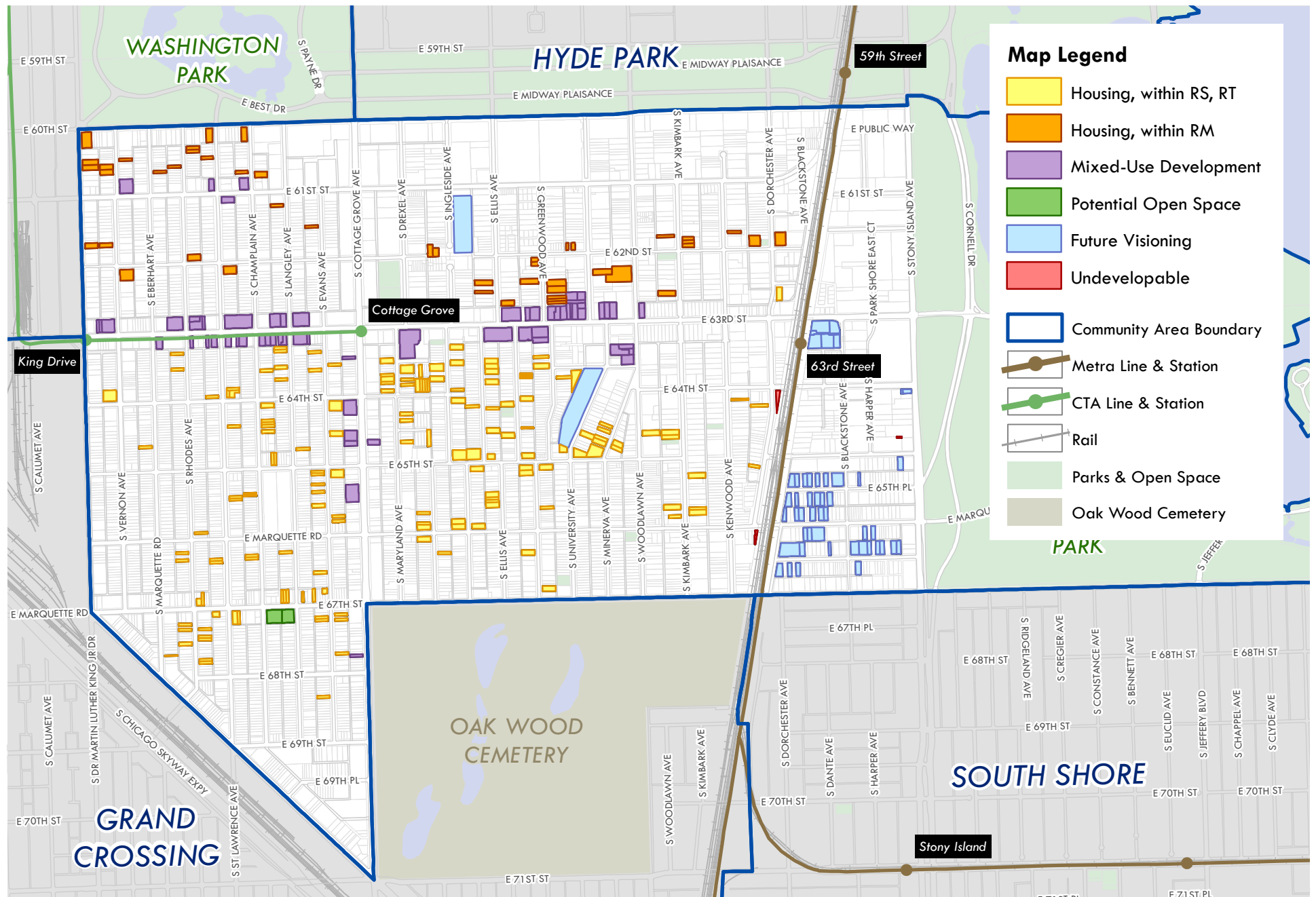
Figure 4.3 details how city-owned vacant land could be used to achieve the various goals identified in past plans and studies and in recent community work conducted by the Department of Housing. Figure 4.4 illustrates where these different uses are distributed within the Woodlawn community, but the map is meant to provide a general framework, and not intended to dedicate specific properties to particular uses.

**Figure 4.3: Potential Disposition of City-Owned Vacant Land**

Use	Relevant Recommendation(s)	Parcels	Sq. Ft.	Acres	Percent
Housing, within neighborhood context, areas zoned RS and RT	4.1.3: Preserve character 4.4.2: Support Woodlawn Housing Preservation Ordinance	161	722,286	16.6	32.3%
Housing, within neighborhood context, areas zoned RM	4.1.3: Preserve character 4.4.2: Support Woodlawn Housing Preservation Ordinance	47	311,205	7.1	13.9%
Mixed-used housing with commerce, and/or amenities	4.1.1: Target greater density along 63rd Street 4.2.1: Permit ground-floor residential (short term) 4.2.3: Prioritize mixed-use development (longer term)	63	604,903	13.9	27.1%
Potential open space	4.3.1: Identify and pursue new open space in Southwest Woodlawn	2	32,299	0.7	1.4%
Future visioning (east of Metra + schools)	4.1.2: Explore greater density along Stony Island, east of Metra	52	556,292	12.8	24.9%
Undevelopable	N/A	3	7,029	0.2	0.3%
<b>CITY OWNED LAND TOTALS</b>		<b>328</b>	<b>2,234,014</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**Figure 4.4: Potential Disposition of City-Owned Vacant Land in Woodlawn**



## COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Revitalizing 63rd Street as a neighborhood center and community asset is important to the future redevelopment of the community. It will also serve as a key gateway to the future Obama Presidential Center and for many visitors will be their first and perhaps only introduction to the Woodlawn community. Redevelopment of the vacant land along 63rd, however, will need to be phased in a way that builds density and demand that can support the reintroduction of commerce and neighborhood-serving retail.

*The following recommendations primarily address goals that were articulated in Rebuilding the Village (LISC, 2005), the 63rd & Cottage Grove Retail Analysis (City of Chicago, 2015), 2017 Sprint: Restitching Woodlawn (Chicago Central Area Committee), and Woodlawn 2025 (Network of Woodlawn, 2017).*

**Recommendation 4.2.1:** In the short term, consolidate zoning along 63rd Street to permit a broader range of uses, including ground-floor residential (particularly away from transit nodes) to help reactivate the corridor, but also allow for future commerce and retail as demand for these uses increases.

**Recommendation 4.2.2:** Better target and coordinate existing city resources like Small Business Improvement Funds (SBIF), Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) and workforce development funds through TIF Works to support entrepreneurs and local business development along 63rd Street.

**Recommendation 4.2.3:** In the medium- and longer-terms, prioritize mixed use development along 63rd Street and Cottage Grove Avenue, and particularly at the intersection of these two streets and in relation to existing transit nodes, to re-establish a neighborhood center, neighborhood-serving commerce, and other amenities the community desires.



*An occupied and a vacant storefront along Cottage Grove Avenue*



*The Strand Residences, a renovated historic building on Cottage Grove Avenue*

## OPEN SPACE & THE PHYSICAL REALM

*The following recommendations primarily address goals that were articulated in Rebuilding the Village (LISC, 2005), the 63rd Street TOD Study (City of Chicago, 2014), 2017 Sprint: Restitching Woodlawn (Chicago Central Area Committee), and Woodlawn 2025 (Network of Woodlawn, 2017).*

**Recommendation 4.3.1:** Woodlawn is generally well-served by public open space in the form of destination parks that border the community on its north and east sides. The southwest portion of Woodlawn, located furthest from these larger recreational amenities, could benefit from additional open space. The City of Chicago will engage the community and work with its partners at the Chicago Park District and NeighborSpace to identify and pursue options for new open space in the southwest quadrant of Woodlawn, south of 63rd Street and west of Cottage Grove Avenue, potentially utilizing existing city-owned vacant land. Figure 4.5 shows existing parks and open space in Woodlawn.

**Recommendation 4.3.2:** The City of Chicago's 2014 63rd Street TOD Study articulated the importance of improving the condition of the street in order to provide a more comfortable environment for pedestrians and also to encourage new development and investment along the corridor. DPD will work with CDOT on potential streetscape improvements along 63rd Street, within the context of the 2014 TOD study.

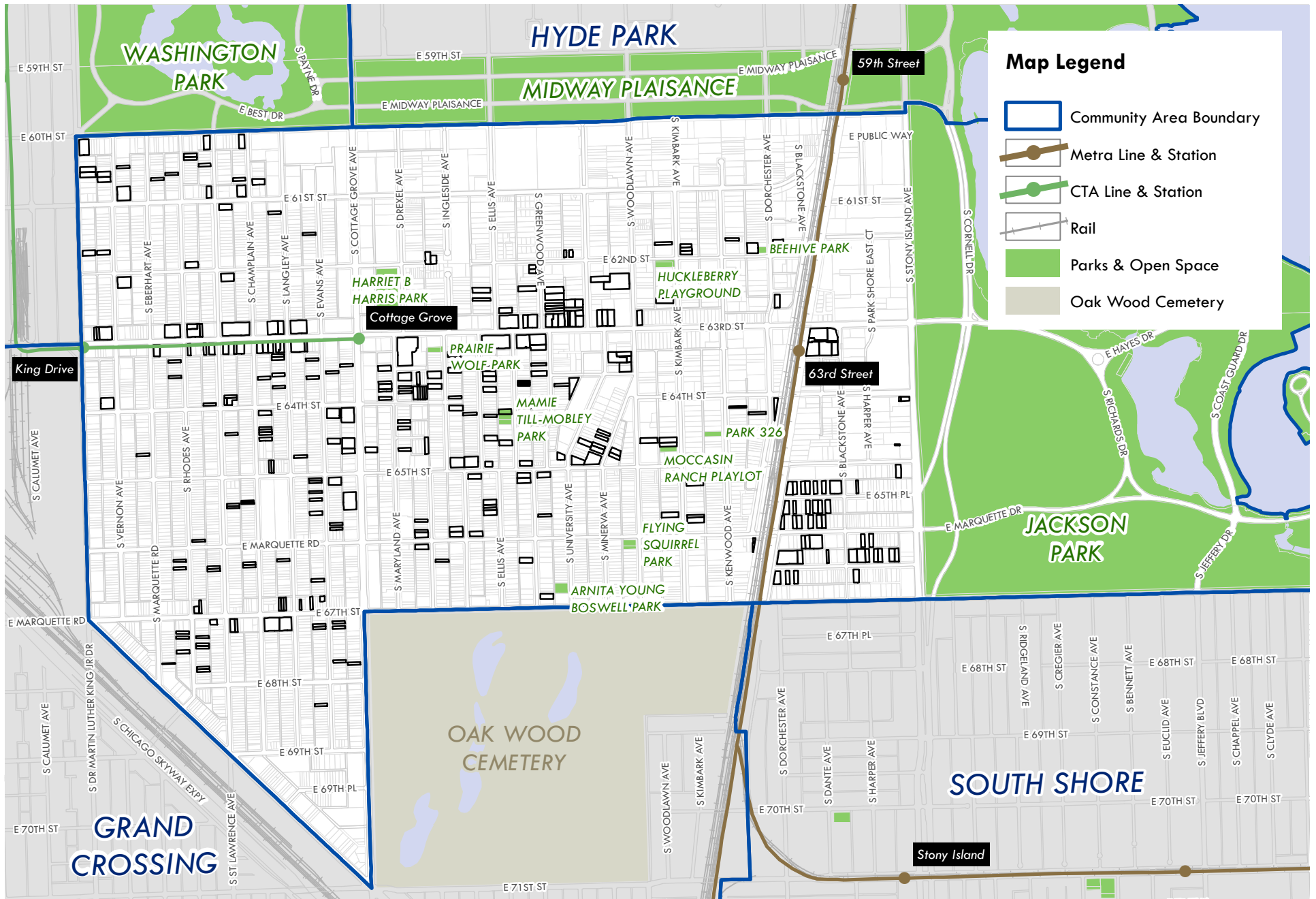


Huckleberry Park at 62nd and Kimbark



*New developments like POAH's Woodlawn Station have provided improved streetscaping, but more can be done to create a comfortable pedestrian environment along the extent of 63rd Street*

Figure 4.5: Existing Parks and Open Space in Woodlawn



## IMPLEMENTATION

The findings from the architectural character analysis in 3.4, as well as the recommendations in 4.1 and 4.2, should be organized and codified to provide clear set of expectations for investors and developers on what the city and community want to see built in Woodlawn, including an enforcement mechanism. This could be a zoning overlay district with an integrated form-based code and design guidelines to clearly articulate how development should occur and provide ways of ensuring that these goals are achieved. It should also incorporate affordability and home ownership requirements that have been articulated in the Department of Housing's community engagement process to better achieve housing opportunity and equity in the community.

**Recommendation 4.4.1:** Implement a zoning overlay district with form-based code and design guidelines for Woodlawn, to codify and provide an enforcement mechanism around the community's vision of what future development and affordability should look like.

**Recommendation 4.4.2:** Support continued efforts to develop a diversity of housing options and mix of incomes within Woodlawn, and work with the Department of Housing to target the disposition of City-owned land for projects that achieve identified targets for home ownership and affordability, and leverage existing and new city housing resources.

**Recommendation 4.4.3:** Market City-owned land for redevelopment, according to the zoning changes, design guidelines, and housing affordability goals that have been established.

**Recommendation 4.4.4:** DPD's Southeast Region planning team will continue stakeholder and community engagement efforts on the implementation of the recommendations contained within this Plan Consolidation Report, and on other planning-related issues that may arise through these efforts or in the future.

### *What is a form-based code?*

Nearly all residents can identify things in their communities that they like and want to preserve, and things that they would like to change. Conventional zoning often focuses narrowly on what uses are permitted and what square footages are allowable on a given property. This can shape the built environment in unintended ways. Moreover, whenever exceptions are needed from conventional zoning, the process can be complex and confusing, and drive up costs for smaller, local developers.

An alternative to conventional zoning is to establish a zoning overlay district with a form-based code. A form-based code, like every zoning code, specifies what uses are permitted in a given place, but prioritizes the **physical form and character** that new development takes and illustrates these concepts with visual diagrams that are easier to understand than a standard, text-based zoning code. The development of a form-based code can also be done in conjunction with the community, so that the code reflects a shared vision for the future. Some examples of form-based codes can be reviewed in Appendix C.

#### Advantages of a Form-Based Code:

- A form-based code can provide a mechanism for the community to participate in the process to articulate its vision for development, which can be reflected in the code.
- A form-based code can be tailored to specific blocks in the community and reflect local architecture and character.
- A form-based code can be proactive and focus on what the community wants to see, rather than what it wants to avoid.
- A form-based code can emphasize overall design and building form rather than numeric measurements for density or land uses.
- A form-based code can provide information more clearly than conventional zoning code because it tends to be shorter, more concise, and supported with clear illustrations.
- A form-based code can be developed in a way that supports goals for housing affordability and unit mix.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: List of Past Plans and Studies

The past plans and studies listed below helped to inform this Plan Consolidation Report.

<b>Plan Title</b>	<b>Commissioned by</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>
<b><i>Rebuilding the Village</i></b>	WPIC and TWO	LISC-Chicago	2005
<b><i>63rd Street TOD Study</i></b>	City of Chicago	AECOM	2014
<b><i>63rd &amp; Cottage Grove Retail Analysis</i></b>	City of Chicago	Goodman Williams Group, Ginkgo, CR&M	2015
<b><i>Woodlawn Master Plan</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	Gensler	2016
<b><i>Woodlawn Neighborhood Indicators</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	Gensler	2016
<b><i>2017 Sprint: Central Area to Jackson Park</i></b> <i>(includes Restitching Woodlawn)</i>	Chicago Central Area Committee	Chicago Central Area Committee	2017
<b><i>Woodlawn 2025: Community Vision Strategies</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	SOM	2017
<b><i>Woodlawn 2025: Engagement Analysis Summary</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	SOM	2017
<b><i>Woodlawn Corridor Development Initiative</i></b>	Cook County Land Bank	Metropolitan Planning Council	2018
<b><i>Getting Ahead of Gentrification</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	Smith, Lane and Butler	2018
<b><i>1Woodlawn Plan</i></b> <i>(materials from Economic Development Subcommittee meetings)</i>	Network of Woodlawn	Network of Woodlawn	2018
<b><i>Woodlawn Community Area Economic Analysis</i></b>	Network of Woodlawn	AECOM	2019

## Appendix B: Alignment Matrix of Past Plans and Studies

The chart below is a comprehensive alignment matrix that shows where the various plans and studies developed for Woodlawn since 2000 agree on key goals and strategies for the community.

DOCUMENT TITLE	Rebuilding the Village	63rd Street TOD Study	63rd/Cottage Grove Retail Analysis	Woodlawn Master Plan	2017 Sprint	Restitching Woodlawn	Woodlawn 2025	Corridor Development Init.	Getting Ahead of Gentrification
PUBLICATION DATE	2005	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017	2017	2018	2018
AUTHOR	LISC	AECOM	Goodman Williams; Gingko; CRN	Gensler	CCAC	CCAC	SOM	Metropolitan Planning Council	Network of Woodlawn
COMMISSIONED BY	Woodlawn Preserv. & Invest. Corp.	DPD	DPD	Network of Woodlawn	Chicago Central Area Committee	Chicago Central Area Committee	Network of Woodlawn	Cook County Land Bank Authority	Network of Woodlawn
<b>RESIDENTIAL / HOUSING</b>									
Encourage home ownership	•								
Encourage reinvestment in rental housing	•						•		•
Expand supply of mixed income housing options	•	•					•	•	•
Expanded housing types / choice	•						•		•
Implement inclusionary zoning strategies									•
Improved access to resources	•								•
Increased rental support for low income households				•					•
Redevelop vacant buildings / infill lots	•		•	•			•		•
Target existing residents over investors									•
<b>COMMERCIAL / RETAIL</b>									
Central shopping district	•						•		
Create a food "scene" and skill sets							•		
Develop live/work spaces or incubator space	•				•	•	•		
Expanded entertainment options							•		
Expanded neighborhood-serving / convenience retail	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	
Healthy food / full service grocery			•		•	•	•		
Redevelop vacant buildings / infill lots	•		•	•			•	•	
<b>OPEN SPACE / PHYSICAL</b>									
Community gardens / urban agriculture / nurseries					•		•		
Community space	•				•		•	•	
Improved linkages (bike, pedestrian, etc.)		•			•	•	•	•	
New playground / open space	•	•			•	•	•		
Streetscape improvements	•	•	•		•	•	•		
<b>OTHER PRIORITIES</b>									
Creation of CDC, SBC or similar	•			•	•	•			•
Expanded recreational / youth programming	•						•		
Improved alignment of stakeholders' efforts	•			•					
Improved educational facilities and opportunities	•			•			•		
Improved workforce dev't / employment opportunities	•			•	•		•		•
Perception of safety	•	•	•	•			•	•	
Public art / community sensitive	•						•		
Strengthen social service programming	•						•		



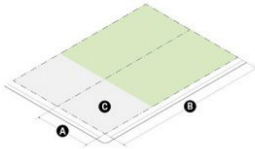
## Appendix C: Form-based code examples from other cities

The images below are meant to illustrate what a form-based code can look like. The one developed for Woodlawn may contain similar types of elements, but will be customized for the area based on community engagement and local needs.

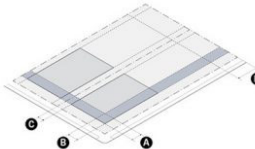
Example form-based code pages from Detroit's Brush Park neighborhood:

DIVISION 15: BRUSH PARK FORM-BASED DISTRICT  
Building Standards

(d) MULTIPLEX  
1. Lot Standards



2. Building Placement



Frontage	
Required Street Frontage	B or C Street

Lot Dimensions	
A Width	50' min
B Depth	135' min

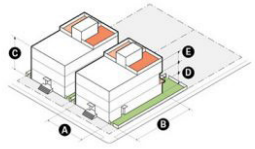
Lot Development	
C Building Coverage	35% max

Building Setbacks	
A Primary Front Setback	10' min 20' max
B Secondary Front Setback	10' min 20' max
C Side Setback	6' min
D Rear Setback	20' min

16 Detroit Zoning Ordinance (09/02/17)

DIVISION 15: BRUSH PARK FORM-BASED DISTRICT  
Building Standards

3. Building Standards



Massing	
Facade Build Out	70% min
A Width	35' min 38' max
B Depth	40' min 60' max
C Number of Stories	2 min 3 max
Story Height	10' min
Ground Floor Elevation	2' min

(Rear View)

Parking Setbacks	
A Primary Front Setback	60' min
B Secondary Front Setback	10' min
C Side Setback	6' min
D Rear Setback	2' min

Parking Ratio	
E Parking Spaces	1.0/DU max

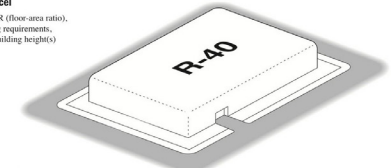
Parking Access	
Abutting an Alley	Required
Primary Frontage	Permitted
Secondary Frontage	B or C Street Only
Driveway Width	12' max

Lot Perimeter Definition	
Side & Rear Lot Line	Required
Fence or Hedge Height	4 min 6 max

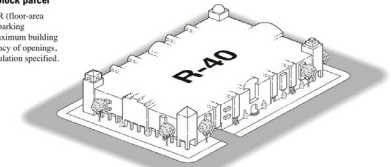
17 Detroit Zoning Ordinance (09/02/17)

Diagram that illustrates some differences between standard zoning, design guidelines and form-based code:

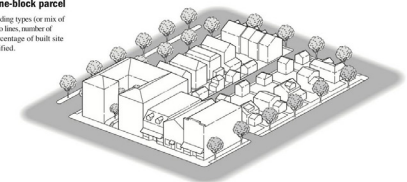
**How zoning defines a one-block parcel**  
Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, and maximum building height(s) specified.



**How design guidelines define a one-block parcel**  
Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building height(s), frequency of openings, and surface articulation specified.



**How form-based codes define a one-block parcel**  
Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site footage specified.



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Broader illustration of how form and uses can be organized and articulated:





**DPD**

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT