CHAPTER 2
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Advisory Committee

Project Website:
2,800+ Unique Visitors
6,500+ Page Views

Online Quick Polls:
10 Polls
4,000+ Responses

Idea Sharing Tool:
100+ Ideas

Interviews:
Community Organizations
Aldermen
City Officials
Developers / Real Estate Professionals
School Representatives
Business Owners
SSA Chair

Public Workshops:
05/16/16 Kick-Off Meeting
08/09/16 Think Tank Event
11/09/16 Community Event

News / Media Integration

Video Business Spotlight
Wicker Park Bucktown cherishes its independence, range of views and free expression. The diversity of residents, businesses, community organizations, arts organizations, and volunteer groups meant an extensive outreach process.

In 2016 SSA #33 set out to develop a Master Plan for the commercial corridors in WPB, a blueprint that would bring together the diversity of perspectives and viewpoints and create a plan that was more than the sum of the parts. An Advisory Committee was invited that involved people and organizations that had multiple connections and widespread networks. Organizations such as Wicker Park Committee, Bucktown Community Organization, East Village Association, the three Aldermen offices, and City departments were all invited to be the “eyes and ears of the plan,” making sure their friends and networks would know how to participate in the process.

A variety of tools were used including: focus groups and stakeholder interviews, community meetings, outreach to the media as well as online engagement via the website – from idea sharing and quick polls to photo voting. Outreach highlights, including public comments, event photos, and poll results are integrated throughout the plan.

The SSA #33 Commission takes ultimate responsibility in listening to all of the feedback and moving forward with an update to the Master Plan. The Commission members reviewed all of the information, ideas, and projects and developed a Plan that prioritizes those projects that it believes will have the most positive impact in the community.
The Plan is not written in stone.

Just as the last Master Plan, this plan will be a guidepost to the actions of the SSA to forge consensus and work in partnership with other local and citywide organizations to make progress. It will also evolve over time based on resources, feasibility, and new opportunities and challenges. We look forward to partnering with businesses and residents and elected officials on additional ideas, but offer this vision of steps that we think meet the ideas and consensus we heard through the process.

Some projects are already underway or are a continuation of past efforts; others are brand new. Some, like renovating the Clybourn Metra Station or extending the 606, will take a partnership of all of us to make happen. Others, like arts in parkways, are our “bread and butter” activities that we can do to make our streets a little bit more inviting and inventive.
We want WPB to be...

“Eclectic, affordable, urban utopia, diverse, multi-generational, stable, ruled by bikes…”

These were just some of the “We want WPB to be __________ in 2026” keywords noted by Advisory Committee members at the very first Master Plan meeting back on April 6th, 2016. More public art, support local businesses, more street trees and landscaping, stronger connection to local culture, shared street at the Polish Triangle – these were some of the “wants” and ideas noted at the first community workshop on May 16th, 2016.

The layered aspect of outreach paired with the structured Master Planning process have provided an organized yet organic system through which projects have emerged and been solidified.

Video Spotlight

A video interview with the local business owner Tim Gillengerten of Transit Tees, located at 1371 N. Milwaukee Avenue, shared and celebrated the insights of unique WPB businesses.

http://vimeo.com/165035177
100+ Ideas and comments were shared in person at workshops and via the “Share an Idea” tool on the project website.

“Change Clybourn Station to BUCKTOWN Station.”

“I would like the Milwaukee – North – Damen intersection to be safe for everyone.”

“Create a liaison to map all possible buildings for hosting art and giving hosts benefits for supporting art initiatives.”

“Milwaukee Avenue is a historic district, don’t use trees to landscape it — it covers and hides the buildings. Instead, get creative with hanging planters and lower shrubs, etc.”

“Rather than a WPB App, create a WiFi Network. Check out Digital Lobby and BigFunWiFi.com for examples — better way to wire in local businesses, integrate history, news (DNA Info), etc.; need to secure a sponsor.”

“Love the idea of partnering with local health care providers to further movement as medicine — this is a growing trend and there are definite opportunities to explore.”

“I would love to build on the work that WPB SSA has done thus far in bringing more public seating to the neighborhood by continuing to add even more! I think it adds to neighborhood character by bringing people to our public places, and it’s also a great asset and service for our elderly or disabled neighbors. It would be great to couple it with our local arts community and offer ways in which a local artist can design and customize.”

In The News...
A Quick Poll focused on what types of improvements people would like to see at the Cortland / Ashland Underpass yielded nearly 2,200 responses. DNA Info highlighted the poll, as noted in the article snapshot below.

“Big things can happen if you just step forward…”

Interview with SSA Chair, Brent Norsman
An interview with SSA Chair Brent Norsman midway through the master planning process provided visionary insight and perspective on projects underway as part of the Master Plan.