CHAPTER 4

TRANSPORTATION

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Objective 1:
Vision Zero.

Objective 2:
Reclaim space for people walking and biking.

Objective 3:
Improve access points to the neighborhood and create a sense of place.

Objective 4:
Improve mobility by expanding transportation options to balance all users.

Objective 5:
Address opportunities and issues related to parking spaces and loading zones.

Objective 6:
Improve connections to and from the 606.

TRANSPORTATION

Wicker Park Bucktown has one of the most expansive transportation networks in Chicago and a growing share of people choosing transit, bike, and walking to get around. Despite the solid baseline and positive momentum of a variety of transportation options, there are still many opportunities to improve the way people get around and promote transportation choices.

Wicker Park Bucktown is one of the few neighborhoods in Chicago with a breadth of transportation options that allow one to easily access the Loop within minutes as well as the north and northwest suburbs, and the many Chicago neighborhoods in between via the CTA, Metra, or the I-90/94 expressway. Good roadway connectivity is maintained through the regular grid, despite being limited by Expressway crossings. In addition, Milwaukee Avenue cuts through the regular grid with a direct line to the Loop, which many drivers and bicyclists take advantage of. There is also easy access via bus or car along major north-south and east-west arterials.

The neighborhood has also been known as one of the most bike-friendly areas of the City, which was recently named the #1 City of Biking in the US by Bicycling Magazine. Milwaukee Avenue, which connects Wicker Park Bucktown with the Loop, is the busiest biking street in the City and possibly the country. Adding in the popularity of the 606, a linear park and path that opened in 2015, the Divvy bikeshare system, and the coming of the City's first public bike counter, the momentum of the bicycling trend is likely to continue.

2016: Chicago Named #1 City for Bicycling in the United States by Bicycling Magazine

WPB Today...

2016 FACTS + FIGURES

- **Division Street = Pedestrian Street**
- **8 TOD Projects Currently Planned / Underway**
  - **Adding + 482 New Units**
  - **Requiring + 124 Parking Spaces**
  - **With a ratio of 0.26 Cars Per Unit**

In 2015, the City of Chicago amended the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Ordinance that was first enacted in 2013. The TOD Ordinance provides incentives in terms of reduced parking and Minimum Lot Area requirements. The revised ordinance doubles its reach to 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) from a transit station or 2,640 feet (1/2 mile) along a Pedestrian-Designated street from 600 feet or 1,200 feet, respectively. In Wicker Park, Division Street and portions of Milwaukee and North Avenue are designated as Pedestrian Streets. Developments have the opportunity to propose a reduction of up to 100% for residential parking requirements if they meet certain criteria and are replaced with alternative transportation options.

Eight TOD projects are currently planned or under construction in 2016. These new developments are adding approximately 482 new units with options ranging from studios to 3-bedroom units while adding approximately 124 new parking spaces. The average parking ratio for these developments combined is 0.26 spaces per unit compared with the standard ratio of one space per unit. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote alternative transportation and encourage the placement of development near existing train stations that can serve the residents.

Objective 1: Vision Zero.

Traffic-related fatalities are avoidable tragedies and should be considered unacceptable on the streets of WPB and Chicago overall. Vision Zero represents the goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities. Adopting a Vision Zero policy would send a strong message that the community is willing to implement policies that make its streets safe for all users. The projects identified here will create a safer WPB, working towards a community where no one loses their life in a traffic crash.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ 1.1: Improve intersection pedestrian crossings, particularly at six corner intersections.
- ☐ 1.2: Install a pedestrian crosswalk for the Western CTA station.
- ☐ 1.3: Ensure all pedestrian signals have countdown timers.
- ☐ 1.4: Install pedestrian refuge islands along Western Avenue and Ashland Avenue.

PROJECT 1.1

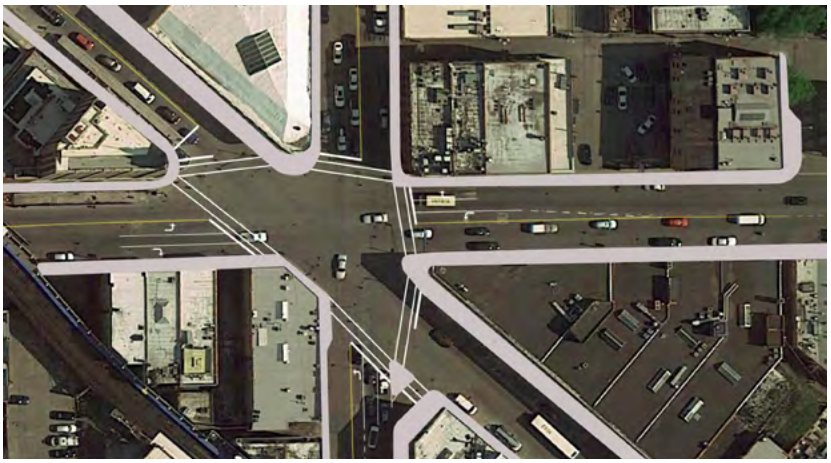
Improve pedestrian crossings, particularly at six corner intersections.

Pedestrians are most at risk while crossing streets; the more complex the intersection, the more difficult it is for a pedestrian to traverse. High-visibility crosswalks should be marked and maintained at all crossings. Where possible, opportunities should be sought to reduce the crossing distance through curb bump-outs.

Six-corner intersections are particularly complicated to navigate for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles alike. Simplifying these intersections should be a priority. This could be accomplished by claiming space for pedestrians in curb bump-outs, or converting slip lanes to pedestrian space. Altering traffic operations to eliminate left or right turns could also simplify the intersection and improve safety.

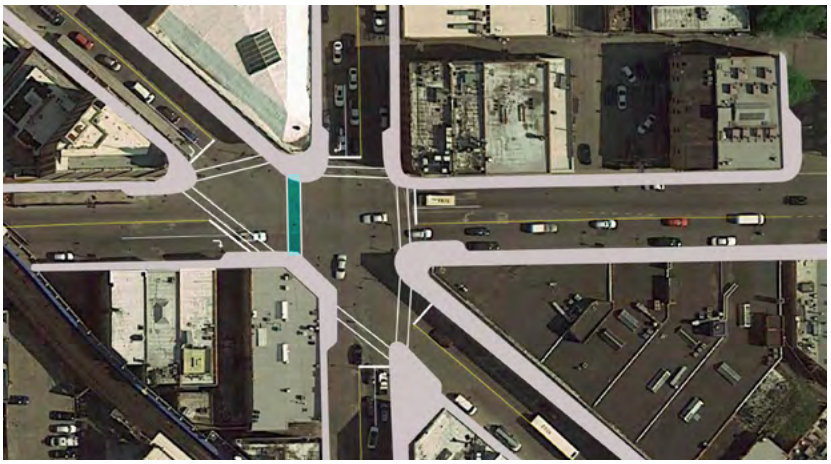
Actions

- ☐ Call for volunteers to take an inventory of all crosswalks and the conditions of the crosswalks within the SSA.
- ☐ Examine all six-corner intersections to identify strategies to streamline movements through the intersection and shorten crossing distances for pedestrians.



EXISTING INTERSECTION
NORTH, MILWAUKEE AND DAMEN

- ☐ ***Difficult for Pedestrians to Cross***
- ☐ ***Long Crossing Distances***
- ☐ ***Conflicts Between Pedestrians, Bikes, Cars and Trucks***



PROPOSED INTERSECTION
NORTH, MILWAUKEE AND DAMEN

- ☐ ***Reduce Crossing Distance***
- ☐ ***Add Curb Bump-Outs***
- ☐ ***Mark / Maintain High Visibility Crosswalks***
- ☐ ***Convert Slip-Lane to Ped-Space***
- ☐ ***Investigate Eliminating Some Turning Movements***
- ☐ ***Bike Improvements at Intersections (bike boxes and bike lanes up to the intersection)***

PROJECT 1.2

Install a pedestrian crosswalk for the Western CTA station.

The Western Blue Line Station is a hub of pedestrian activity for residents, visitors, and people passing through the neighborhood, and is an important transfer point between the CTA Blue Line and the Milwaukee and Western bus routes as well as a connection to the 606 located three blocks to the south. The station entrance is located just south of Milwaukee Avenue on the east side of Western Avenue. Across the street is a secondary entrance/exit with stairs leading directly to the platforms.

FACT: Many people making the transfer from the southbound bus route to the Blue Line need to cross the street and are not likely to detour from the direct route to find a marked crosswalk, which is roughly 300 feet to the north.

The southbound Western bus stop is located directly south of the tracks and across from the main station entrance. Many people making the transfer from the southbound bus route to the Blue Line need to cross the street and are not likely to detour from the direct route to find a marked crosswalk, which is roughly 300 feet to the north. To the south, the nearest crosswalk is at Wabansia Avenue, a quarter mile away.

Actions

- ☐ **Work with CDOT to install a pedestrian refuge and crosswalk at Cortland Avenue and Western Avenue to improve connections to CTA Blue Line.**

Southbound Western Bus | Proposed mid-block crossing / pedestrian refuge highlighted in teal.

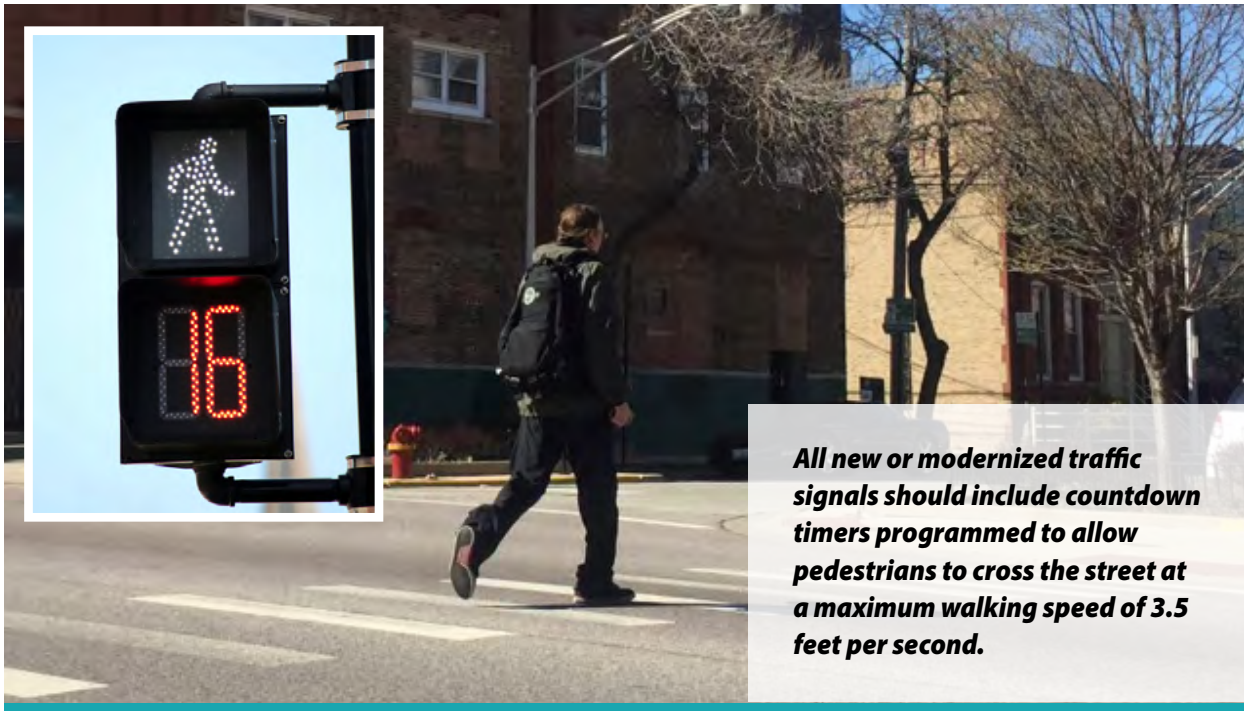
PROJECT 1.3

Ensure all pedestrian signals have countdown timers.

A signal with a pedestrian countdown timer, with the addition of numbers counting down the time remaining for pedestrians to clear the crosswalk is a more intuitive crossing than the traditional pedestrian signal. The pedestrian countdown timer begins in conjunction with the flashing "DON'T WALK" signal interval and allows pedestrians to decide if they have enough time to complete a crossing. All new or modernized traffic signals should include countdown timers. All countdown timers should be programmed to allow pedestrians to cross the street at a maximum walking speed of 3.5 feet per second. Walking speeds slower than 3.5 feet per second should be considered at all locations, particularly at crossings typically used by children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Actions

- ☐ **Call for volunteers to take an inventory of all pedestrian signals within the SSA.**
- ☐ **Coordinate with CDOT to identify opportunities to upgrade pedestrian signals in conjunction with other projects.**
- ☐ **Coordinate with Aldermen to identify funding opportunities to upgrade remaining pedestrian signals.**



All new or modernized traffic signals should include countdown timers programmed to allow pedestrians to cross the street at a maximum walking speed of 3.5 feet per second.

PROJECT 1.4

Install pedestrian refuge islands along Western Avenue and Ashland Avenue.

A pedestrian refuge island is a protected area in the center of a multi-lane crossing which gives pedestrians a space to pause safely between traffic lanes in each direction. Pedestrian refuge islands should be at least 6 feet wide and should be protected by a curbed median on both sides. Detectable warnings, using truncated dome surface areas, must also be installed to allow pedestrians who are visually impaired to detect the refuge island.

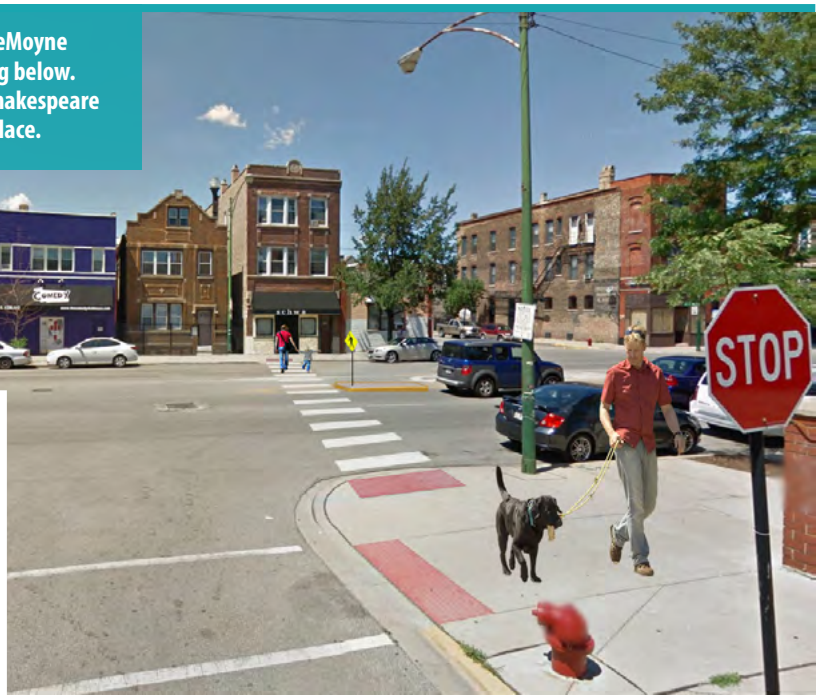
Western Avenue and Ashland Avenue are designed to carry high volumes of traffic efficiently across the city. With four or more lanes and few signals, they create barriers for pedestrians between neighborhoods and make it hard to reach destinations. These streets should be a priority for pedestrian refuge islands to encourage foot traffic and create better connections.

Actions

- ☐ **Identify candidate locations for pedestrian refuge islands and bumpouts near major destinations such as schools, parks, or grocery stores and based on the spacing of protected crossings.**
- ☐ **For instance, Western @ Shakespeare or Charleston is at a midpoint between signals at Lyndale and at Armitage and near the Fresh Market grocery store. Similarly, Ashland at LeMoyne could add a safer crossing option midway between signals at Blackhawk and North (see rendering below).**
- ☐ **Work with the Aldermen and CDOT to determine feasibility, cost, and potential funding sources.**

Install a pedestrian refuge island at LeMoyne and Ashland as shown in the rendering below. Also install a refuge at Western and Shakespeare or Charleston near the Fresh Market Place.

Western and Shakespeare



LeMoyne and Ashland

Objective 2: Reclaim space for people walking and biking.

Many different activities are forced to jockey for limited space within the public right-of-way. The spaces between buildings and private property serve the mobility needs of people walking, bicycling, or driving, transit service, freight and goods deliveries, and support commerce and social gathering at plazas or sidewalk cafes.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **2.1: Explore additional opportunities for bike parking; install additional bike corrals.**
- ☐ **2.2: Complete bike lanes and/or neighborhood greenways where gaps are present.**
- ☐ **2.3: Amend zoning/policy for sidewalk cafes such that they form a consistent zone along the street.**
- ☐ **2.4: Improve Polish Triangle and sidewalks that experience heavy volumes.**
- ☐ **2.5: Convert parking spaces to other uses.**

PROJECT 2.1

Explore additional opportunities for bike parking; install additional bike corrals.

As one of the neighborhoods with the highest bike ridership in the City, WPB also has one of the highest demands for bike parking. With limited sidewalk space, accommodating bike parking in on-street bike corrals creates a high-capacity bike parking area while freeing up space on the sidewalks where those bikes might otherwise infringe on pedestrian space. Each on-street corral holds up to 20 bikes.

Actions

- ☐ **Survey bike parking at peak times; identify areas with significant bike parking, noting if bikes are parked improperly or informally to sign poles or other structures that aren't bike racks.**
- ☐ **Reach out to businesses near the high bike parking demand areas to gauge interest in taking on maintenance of the bike corrals. Locations that have already been identified as potential candidate sites include 1861 N. Milwaukee and 1531 N. Damen.**
- ☐ **Work with CDOT and aldermen to install bike corrals.**

Examples of on-street bike corrals

PROJECT 2.2

Complete bike lanes and/or neighborhood greenways where gaps are present.

One of the City's first neighborhood greenways was recently installed in WPB along Wood Street. Neighborhood greenways create comfortable and convenient connections for people on bikes, including those who are not comfortable traveling on busier streets. Continue to build out a comprehensive network of bikeways by implementing bike lanes and neighborhood greenways at regular intervals so everyone has access to good biking facilities.

Actions

- ☐ The Chicago Streets for Cycling Plan 2020 proposed neighborhood bikeways within WPB along Oakley, Leavitt, and Webster, in addition to Wood. Coordinate with the Aldermen to engage residents and identify funding to implement neighborhood greenways along these routes.
- ☐ Coordinate with CDOT to determine the best design for the proposed routes.

PROJECT 2.3

Amend zoning/policy for sidewalk cafes so they form a consistent zone along the street.

Sidewalk cafes are an essential component of a vibrant corridor, lending an atmosphere that attracts more passers-by. However, inconsistent siting of the cafes creates an obstacle course along the commercial corridors. Simply creating a policy that creates a consistent and predictable zone for sidewalk cafes and maintaining a through pedestrian zone will make navigating the sidewalks of WPB easier.

Actions

- ☐ Create a working group within the SSA to determine the optimal placement for sidewalk cafes on each commercial street.
- ☐ Develop a brochure or handout on consistent sidewalk café placement.
- ☐ Work with Aldermen to educate them on this effort and encourage them to adhere to this policy when reviewing and approving café permits.

Clockwise: Wood Street Greenway | Division Street, The Boundary Sidewalk Patio

PROJECT 2.4

Improve Polish Triangle and widen sidewalks that experience heavy volumes.

WPB has a strong culture of strolling along streets and walking to shops, restaurants, and nightlife that make up much of the SSA and biking, particularly along Milwaukee Avenue and to a lesser extent along Division Street and Damen Avenue. The area's popularity has stressed the sidewalks that are trying to serve sidewalk cafes, bike parking, newsstands, sign and lightpoles, etc. All components contribute to a vibrant area, but can make it hard to get around.

Widening the sidewalk along the east side of Milwaukee Avenue between Division Street and Ashland Avenue would have a big impact on the potential for streetlife and commercial vitality and the block. Enlivening this block would also support a more vibrant Polish Triangle and make it easier to access by shortening the pedestrian crossings along Division and Ashland.

Actions

- ☐ Meet with CTA to discuss potential of relocating the near-side bus stop on Milwaukee at Ashland to a far-side stop.
- ☐ Conduct outreach to local businesses on the benefits of a widened sidewalk and alternative locations for parking.
- ☐ Design and implement widening of the east side of Milwaukee Avenue sidewalk between Division Street and Ashland Avenue.
- ☐ Coordinate with CDOT, Active Transportation Alliance, and the Polish Triangle Coalition to secure public place funding and grants.

**** See Guide Development Project 11.1 for additional ideas to improve the Polish Triangle.***

Widen sidewalk...

Extending the sidewalk width on the east side of Milwaukee Avenue between Ashland and Division has many benefits that together could serve as a catalyst to further enliven and improve the atmosphere and heighten positive activity at the Polish Triangle.

Stop and stay...

At its most basic level, a wider sidewalk means more room -- more room to walk and stroll, more room to stop and dine outside, more room for street trees and landscaping to buffer and mask the sight and sound of traffic... and more room for enjoyment.

Activate space...

Wide sidewalks provide a canvas for enhancing the streetscape. They provide pedestrians with greater ease of motion and comfort but they also attract tenants and shops who desire this added space, and have intentions and ideas on how to activate it.

EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

POLISH TRIANGLE PUBLIC SPACE CATALYST

Widen and enliven the sidewalk on Milwaukee Avenue to support a more vibrant Polish Triangle.

While direct improvements to the Triangle will and have had a positive impact, as evident by Tuesdays at the Triangle, taking proactive measures to improve the surrounding environment and streets that face the Triangle will have a compound, lasting, synergistic effect.

PROJECT 2.5

Create a parklet program to capture public space for the benefit of the community.

There are many areas where sidewalks within WPB are narrow with no opportunity to widen them. In these situations, the SSA can take advantage of the City's People Spots program to integrate seating, art, and landscaping that contribute to a friendlier pedestrian atmosphere along the street.

Actions

- ☐ Identify strategic locations along commercial corridors for a People Spot / parklet.
- ☐ Coordinate with neighboring businesses to identify someone willing to take on maintenance responsibilities.
- ☐ Put it to a vote! Use the parklet event (highlighted in the Arts + Culture Chapter, Project 3.3) to do a trial run / determine a design "best" liked by the community. Work with a consultant or community members to plan, design, and build.
- ☐ In addition to temporary parklets, explore areas for widening the sidewalk, installing bumpouts and permanent parking elimination, as there may be needs to widen the sidewalks based on year-round travel volumes.

Refer to Arts + Culture Project 3.3 | Page 39

Host an annual Park(ing) Day Event (Sept 16), wherein a connected line of parking spaces (parklets) in the SSA would be rented by the Chamber / SSA. Local artists and merchants could take part and design a parklet to showcase artistic expression or sell goods.

PARKLET CONCEPTS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SPOTS?

People Spots (also called parklets) are temporary platforms adjacent to sidewalks, typically within existing parking lanes. By expanding the sidewalks, they create seasonal space for outdoor seating and dining. As a placemaking tool, they also contribute to an increase of pedestrian volumes and help promote economic development in retail corridors.

Objective 3:
Improve access points to the neighborhood and create a sense of place.

Access points to the neighborhood should draw people in and invite transitions between WPB and neighboring destinations. People walking, biking, and driving into and through the SSA should feel safe, comfortable, and welcome. Being bordered by overhead rail tracks and the Kennedy Expressway, and with the CTA Blue Line rising from a subway to elevated tracks within the neighborhood, creates many underpasses that become dark and intimidating spaces to pass through to get into the neighborhood. These conditions create visual barriers and limit travel, particularly for people on foot and on bikes. Priority sites are at Cortland Avenue, Clybourn Metra Station and North Avenue underneath the CTA Blue Line, west of Damen Avenue.

Many of the underpasses would benefit from wholesale rebuilding in order to best accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, but because reconfiguring these underpasses can be prohibitively expensive and time-intensive, focusing on incremental changes can effectively alleviate some of these harsh conditions for pedestrians.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **3.1: Undertake a comprehensive approach to improve the Clybourn Metra Station and address the underpasses.**
- ☐ **3.2: Improve conditions at all underpasses.**
- ☐ **3.3: Install signage to draw people from CTA Blue Line Stations to other points of interest.**

PROJECT 3.1

Undertake a comprehensive approach to improve the Clybourn Metra Station and address the underpasses.

The Clybourn Metra Station is a huge asset to WPB, providing residents and businesses with quick and efficient access to downtown Chicago as well as the north and northwest suburbs. It is the highest ridership station in Chicago outside of the Loop with two major lines (UP North and Northwest) and 1,600 riders on an average weekday. In addition, the station is a transfer to CTA Bus #73 Armitage and #9, #X9 (Express), #N9 (Night Owl) Ashland, as well as located just one block from the start of the 606 at Ashland Avenue and local Divvy stations. The Clybourn Metra Station provides the neighborhood with a unique opportunity that few neighborhoods in Chicago have to attract families that want to live in this vibrant, urban environment. In light of all these assets, there are fundamental issues that need to be addressed (turn page to view photos).

METRA STATION / AREA ISSUES

STATION NAME: The name of the station is confusing, it is located on Ashland Avenue, not Clybourn, which is a half mile away. There are no signs to CTA bus service.

STATION CONDITIONS: Conditions at the station are stark, with deteriorated staircases, few shelters from wind or rain, and deteriorated infrastructure. With improvements to the station and surrounding connections to CTA, not only will the station be more hospitable to local residents, but the station can serve as a more prominent and safe connection between Metra, CTA, the 606 and Divvy.

WAYFINDING: Getting to the platform is a confusing experience, particularly for those who aren't familiar with it. Access to the Clybourn Metra Station from the south is tucked between two rail lines, under an aging and poorly lit rail viaduct.

UNDERPASS/GATEWAY: Getting here on foot also requires one to walk beneath the Kennedy Expressway for about 250 feet. A single viaduct alone creates enough of a barrier to pedestrian travel, but taken together, and as a prominent entrance point to the neighborhood, it becomes a valuable opportunity for an upgrade.

** See Arts + Culture Project 3.3 for ideas on underpass improvements.*

Actions

- ☐ **STEP 1.** Coordinate with Metra and Alderman to gauge interest in station/underpass improvements.
- ☐ **STEP 2.** In conjunction with CDOT, coordinate with viaduct owner for approvals and permits.
- ☐ **STEP 3.** Develop a design for station area and underpass improvements; consult with a local artist or host a design competition for underpass design (*see Arts + Culture Project 3.3*). Design components should include the following:
  - Improve access points, staircases and infrastructure, to modernize and make station-area access safe and inviting.
  - Explore safety improvements for cyclists / bike lanes with CDOT.
  - Improve wayfinding signage to tracks and destinations including CTA bus routes and the 606.
  - Build new canopies in waiting areas along tracks that are attractive and distinctive to welcome visitors to WPB (see rendering).
- ☐ **STEP 4.** Submit final design to CDOT for review and approval.
- ☐ **STEP 5.** Once improvements have been made, change the name of the station to Bucktown Wicker Park Metra Station.

Looking North Along Ashland Avenue from The 606 Trailhead

ENHANCE PED/BIKE CONNECTION TO 606

A new off-road, multi-use path could be constructed along Ashland Avenue by utilizing 12 feet of property abutting Ashland that is currently owned by the Chicago Park District and is utilized for storage and maintenance. In the photo, the chain link fence on the left could be moved to the west opening up space for a new path.

Park District Maintenace Facility Along Ashland Avenue

OPEN SPACE EXTENSION

Develop long-range plans to extend Walsh Park to the north, replacing the Park District Maintenance Facility (see picture at left). Explore utilization and conversion of the space beneath the I-94 highway for use as permanent open space, such as a skate park. | Example: Toronto's Underpass Park

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Clybourn Metra Station and Underpass

PROJECT 3.2

Improve conditions at all underpasses.

Underpasses can halt economic development just as abruptly as they stop pedestrian traffic. During outreach for this plan, this was mentioned as an issue specifically along North Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue, where commercial development is drastically lower west of the overhead CTA tracks. In these instances, despite the fact that the tracks are relatively narrow and don't pose a great physical barrier, there remains a psychological barrier that seems to create an artificial boundary. Sprucing up the overhead structures can serve to draw people through and break down the barrier.

Actions

- ☐ Continue cleanliness, maintenance, upkeep.
- ☐ Install / replace lighting.
- ☐ Repair structural issues (cracking, deterioration).
- ☐ Improve staircases and walkways.
- ☐ Consider low-maintenance / temporary art.

PROJECT 3.3

Install signage to draw people from CTA Blue Line Stations to other points of interest.

The CTA Blue Line Stations serve as entry points to the neighborhood, despite being located within the neighborhood and not at an edge. These should be treated as a kind of "front door" to the neighborhood. Treatments proposed at the Polish Triangle and the Damen/Milwaukee/North intersection are discussed in Guide Development Project 1.1. In addition to those improvements, signage should be incorporated into the streetscape to direct visitors to other points of interest, such as the 606.

Actions

- ☐ Identify locations.
- ☐ Design signage and wayfinding.
- ☐ Work with CDOT on approvals for wayfinding.

Objective 4:
Improve mobility by expanding transportation options to balance all users

The variety of transportation options is one of the defining features of the area and part of what draws residents to choose to live here. Since the Wicker Park Bucktown Master Plan was adopted in 2009, the area has continued to experience vast changes. From the reform of the Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance, the opening of the 606, and the introduction of the Divvy Bikeshare program, the SSA has capitalized on the expansive transportation system that allows it to be one of the most transit-rich neighborhoods in Chicago. Despite the solid baseline and positive momentum of transit changes, there are still many opportunities to improve the way people get around, regardless of the mode they choose.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ 4.1: Re-envision Milwaukee Avenue to balance all users.
- ☐ 4.2: Adjust operations at Damen/Milwaukee/North to better accommodate all forms of transportation.
- ☐ 4.3: Increase visibility of existing bike lanes.
- ☐ 4.4: Sponsor additional Divvy Stations throughout the SSA.

PROJECT 4.1

Re-envision Milwaukee Avenue to balance all users.

> *"That's the heartbeat of our neighborhood," says Brent Norsman, SSA 33 Chair, referring to the 6-corners, "everything radiates out from there. It's a package deal. Successful urban locals balance the interplay between the users and the used – the cyclists and drivers, sidewalks and roadways, cleanliness and free-form art, walkability and safety. It's not an easy win to balance these but it's a necessary win."*

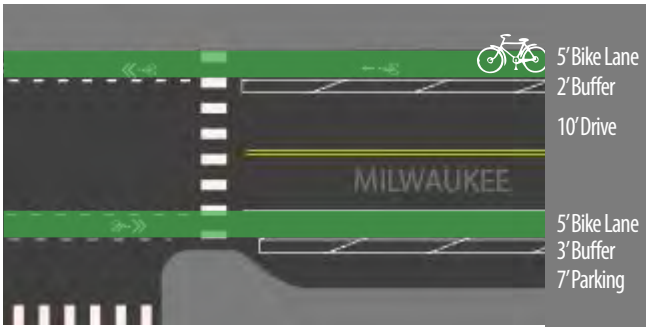
Milwaukee Avenue is the spine of WPB. It is an iconic street within the City of Chicago, serving a diverse mix of restaurants, art galleries, and retail. Milwaukee Avenue also serves as a direct link from near west and northwest side neighborhoods to the Loop, popular with transit riders, bicyclists, and people driving. With these uses comes a complex mix of traffic, parking, bus stops, and loading zones.

The ideal cross-section of Milwaukee Avenue to best accommodate how the street is used is difficult to pinpoint. Instituting a pilot project in which the effects of changes are closely monitored is the best way to test possibilities before a reconstruction of Milwaukee Avenue will cement in lasting changes.

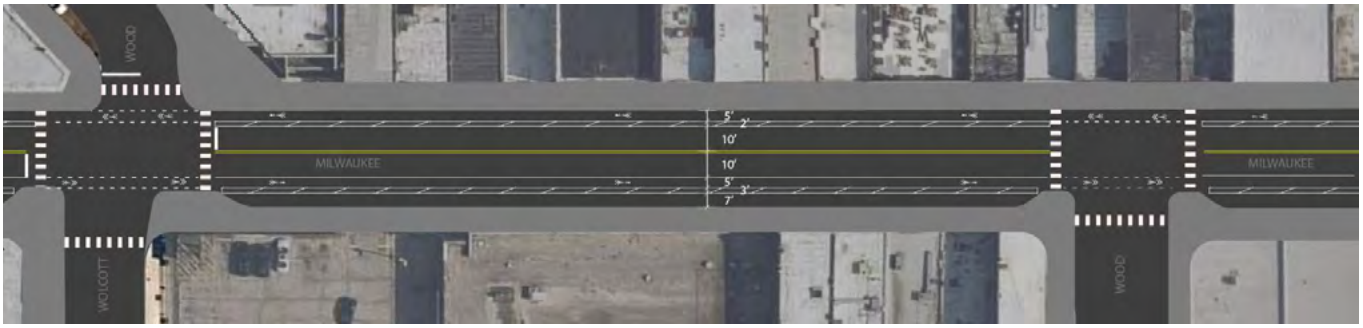
Through this planning process, different cross-section options were tested with the public and stakeholders in WPB. There was consensus that the ideal cross-section of the street, if the overall width of the street were to remain, would include removing parking on one side of the street and adding bike facilities on-street. But it is not just about accomodating bikes. Making these changes will improve the sense of place along the sidewalk as well.

Actions

- ☐ Work with CDOT to develop and implement a pilot project to introduce bike lanes on Milwaukee Avenue.
- ☐ Study before and after effects of the changes.
- ☐ Develop a report summarizing the findings and lessons learned.
- ☐ Investigate reducing the speed limit to 20 MPH on Milwaukee Avenue



PROPOSED BIKE LANE CONFIGURATION ALONG MILWAUKEE AVENUE

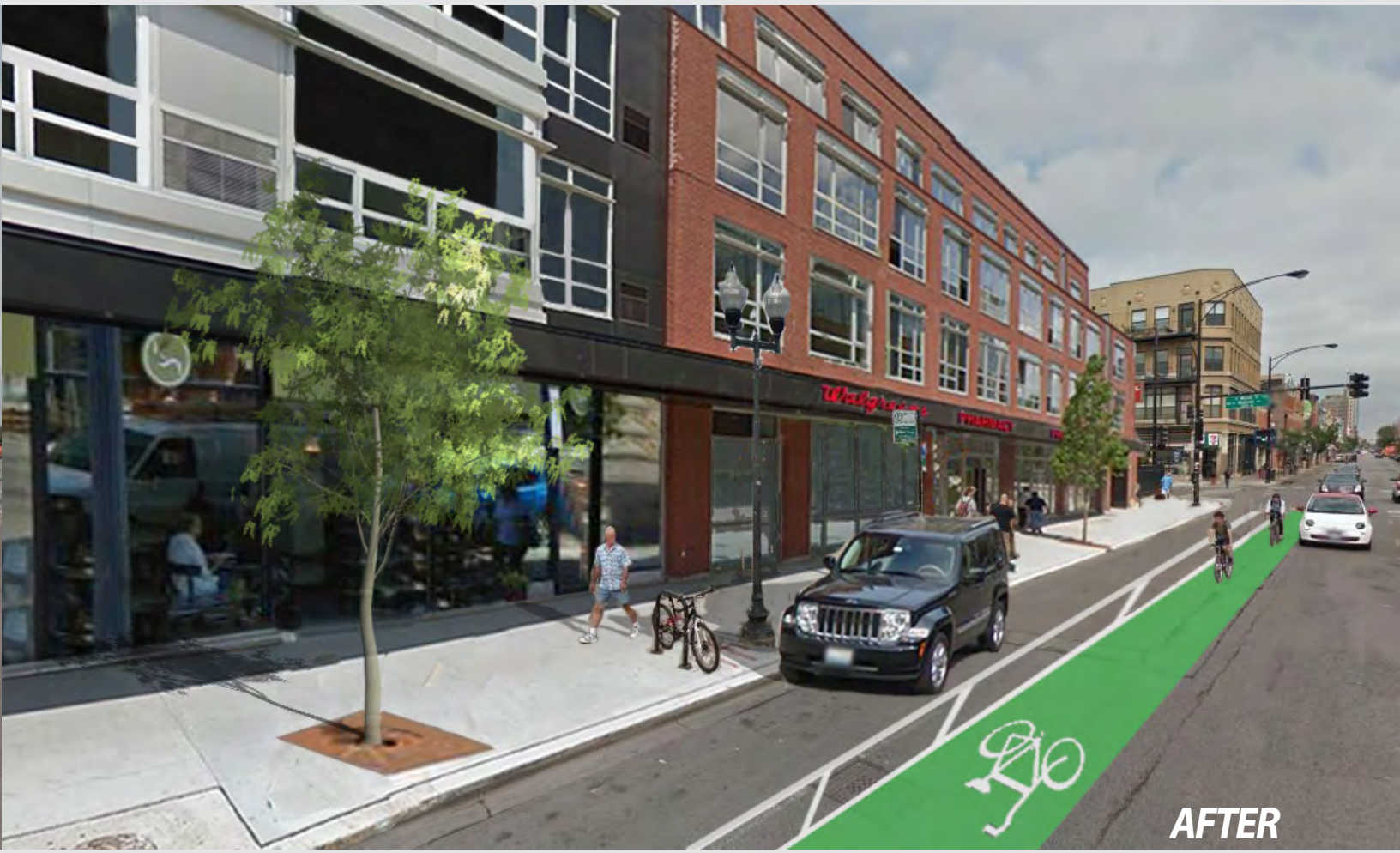


Promote a mixed-use redevelopment of the Walgreen's site at Milwaukee and Wood that will provide new parking on upper stories above a replacement location for Walgreens on the ground floor.

BEFORE

ACTIONS

- ***Create a bike lane on Milwaukee Avenue.***
- ***Work with property owners to promote a mixed-use parking facility with commercial space on the ground floor and parking above.***



In this illustration the Walgreens site at Milwaukee Avenue and Wood Street is redeveloped into a mixed-use garage with a new Walgreens or other stores on the ground floor.

PROJECT 4.2

Adjust operations at Damen/Milwaukee/North to better accommodate all forms of transportation.

Chicago's diagonal streets create challenging conditions particularly for pedestrians throughout the City. But with the mix of commercial destinations, the CTA Damen Blue Line Station, and three bus lines converging in addition to vehicular and bike traffic, the Damen/Milwaukee/North intersection is a unique situation. It is also the heart of the neighborhood.

As with Milwaukee Avenue, the necessary changes are not clear cut. Piloting changes and studying the impacts on all modes will be the best way to determine what long-term, permanent changes would best serve mobility at the intersection and the neighborhood overall.

Actions

- ☐ Work with CDOT to develop and implement a pilot project.
- ☐ Study before and after effects of the changes.
- ☐ Develop a report summarizing the findings and lessons learned.

> **I think it is important that vehicular traffic is analyzed and considered as part of the plan.**
> - Mike McElroy, SSA 33 Guide Development Committee

PROJECT 4.3

Increase visibility of existing bike lanes.

Bike lanes and shared lanes lose their effectiveness when the markings are diminished. Focus on maintaining the existing bike lanes by refreshing the markings where needed and, where possible, upgrading to green bike lanes or enhance shared lane markings with a green backing or dashed lines edging the marking. High priority routes that cannot support a full bike lane, such as Milwaukee Avenue or Cortland Avenue, are good candidates for enhanced shared lane markings.

Actions

- ☐ Ensure bike lanes on Damen Avenue, Milwaukee Avenue, and Cortland Avenue are visible; re-stripe/paint as needed.
- ☐ Engage volunteers to conduct a condition assessment of all bike route markings within the SSA on a bi-annual basis.
- ☐ Identify routes or portions of routes that should be refreshed.
- ☐ Work with the Aldermen and CDOT to determine if any routes are scheduled for repaving in the near future; for those that aren't, work with CDOT to refresh markings.

EXAMPLE OF HIGHLY VISIBLE GREEN BIKE LANES

PROJECT 4.4

Sponsor additional Divvy Stations throughout the SSA.

The introduction of the Divvy bikeshare system in 2013 provided a new form of public transit for Chicagoans. It provides a great option for short trips and is an ideal way to get around the SSA. The City continues to work on expanding the system, however, much of the focus in the next few years will be on extending the boundaries of the system area to serve new neighborhoods.

The SSA currently has 17 stations within its boundaries. Based on the higher than average ridership experienced at these stations, additional stations would likely improve the overall network by creating more options for people who find a station with no available bikes or no available docks.

Actions

- ☐ **Identify ideal locations for additional Divvy stations based on gaps in the existing network and/or major destinations. An additional station near Division & Leavitt should be the highest priority. Additional potential sites based on the existing Divvy network are near Cortland/Armitage & Wood or Western & Palmer.**
- ☐ **Conduct outreach to existing businesses and developers to gauge interest in sponsoring a Divvy station and/or sponsor one or more stations through the SSA.**
- ☐ **Work with Divvy and CDOT to site and install the stations.**

Objective 5: Address opportunities and issues related to parking spaces and loading zones.

Freight deliveries are a big issue in WPB, particularly along Milwaukee Avenue and, to a lesser extent, Division Street. Limited alleyways throughout the SSA and few loading docks create a need for on-street loading zones. The designation of a loading zone allows the use of a parking space exclusively for short-term use, intended to support loading and unloading for local businesses.

Enforcement of these zones is often difficult and they tend to be abused due to the varying restrictions and time frames they are in use. A significant amount of double-parking is also experienced along Milwaukee Avenue, where people choose to load and unload from the travel lane when the curbside space is not available. This creates obstacles for people biking along the right edge of the travel lane, forcing them into the path of vehicles and creates a pinch point for vehicles and bicyclists alike.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **5.1: Investigate changes to loading zone policies to increase efficiency on a district-wide basis.**
- ☐ **5.2: Focus loading zone enforcementduring specific times.**
- ☐ **5.3: Ensure there are consistent parking regulations for residential parking areas.**

PROJECT 5.1

Investigate changes to loading zone policies to increase efficiency on a district-wide basis.

Loading zones are generally applied for and paid for by a single business entity. While the loading zone is not restricted to use for the sponsoring business, it may be viewed that way and some businesses use the zone for parking rather than limiting their use to short-term deliveries.

The long-term enforcement of loading zones is also difficult and loading zones are often not updated once a business moves out of the area, no longer needs the loading zone, or simply stops paying the annual fee for the zone. As a result, there may be extraneous loading zones or zones that are not in the ideal location for the current mix of businesses.

The SSA should investigate strategies that would increase the efficiency of loading zones for the commercial district. This may include consolidating and sharing loading zones between several businesses, ensuring an appropriate frequency of loading zones to prevent double-parking, charging a market rate for loading zones rather than a flat fee, and developing a consistent process for approving zones among all three wards within the SSA.

*** See graphic on next page showcasing recommendations ***

Actions

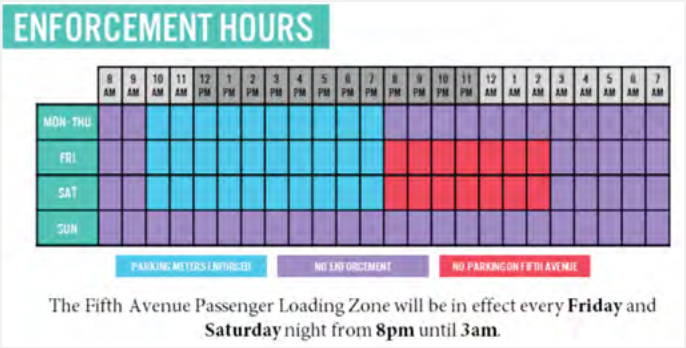
- ☐ Set up a working group within the SSA to research best practices.
- ☐ Develop recommendations and conduct outreach to businesses and aldermen.
- ☐ Work with Aldermen to pilot and/or institutionalize the changes.

*** In 2016, the Chicago's budget office proposed to roll-out a pilot for variable-prices metered parking and user-paid loading zones in three downtown wards.*

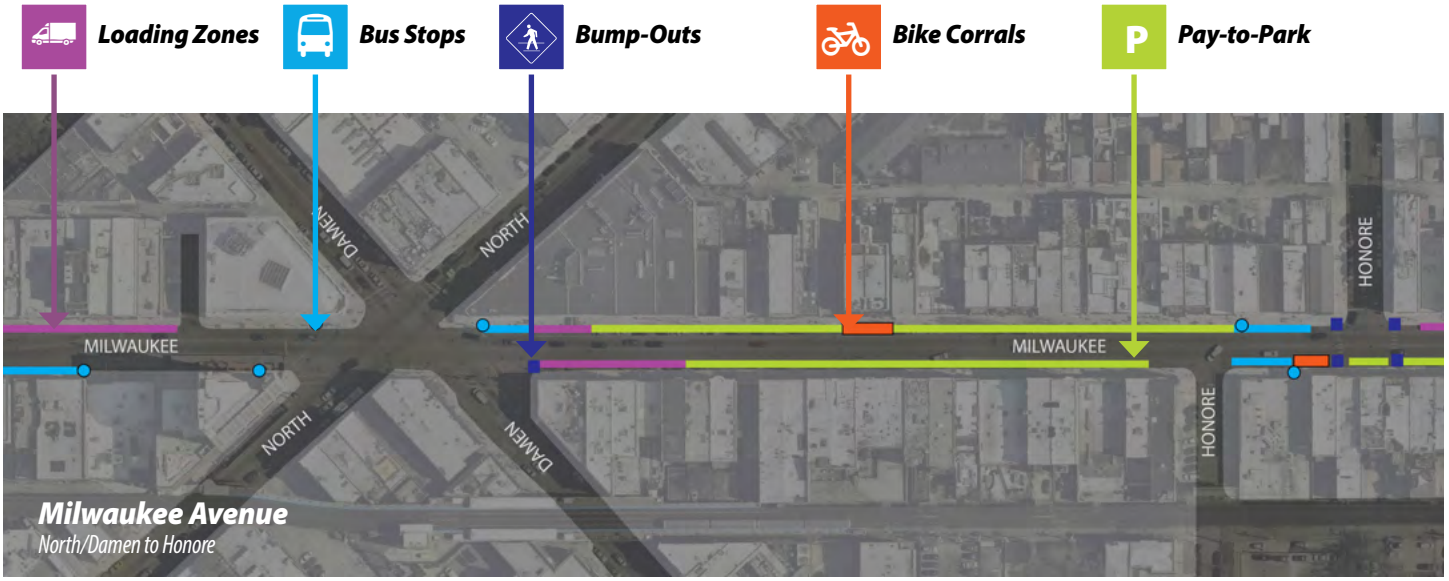
EXAMPLE OF A CONSOLIDATED LOADING ZONE

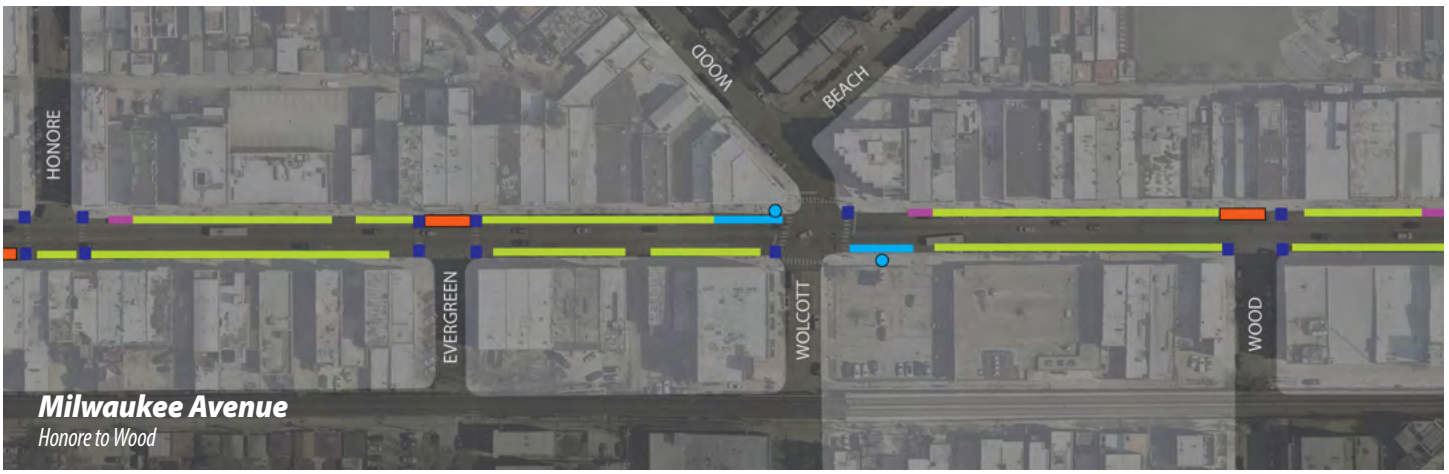
PILOT PROGRAMS

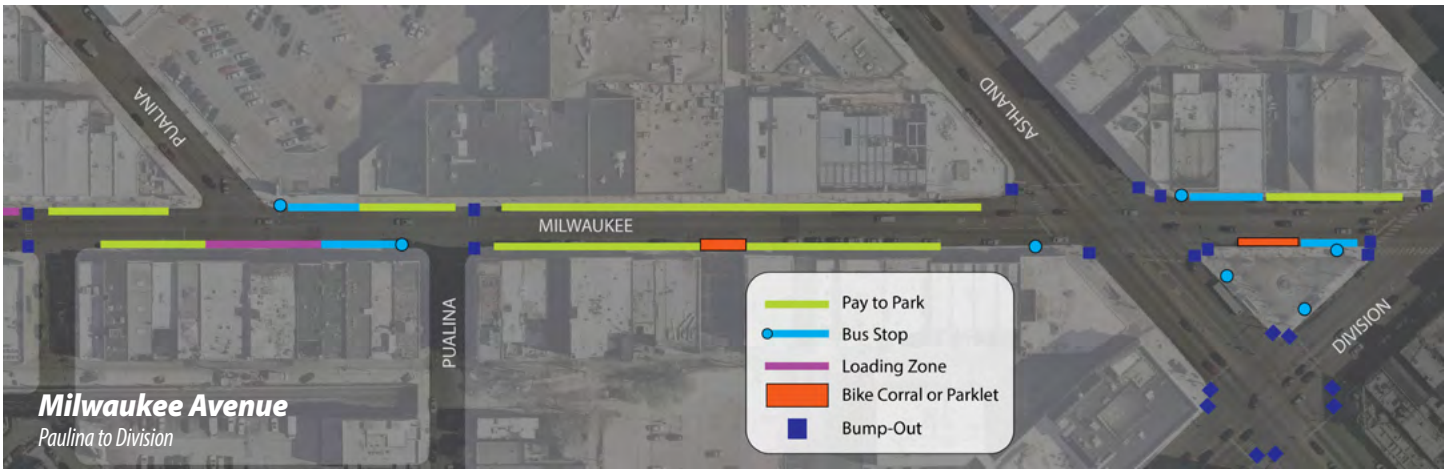
Look to creative pilot programs happening elsewhere for ideas and potential solutions to mitigate congestion and negative impacts caused by loading zones. The Fifth Avenue Passenger Loading Zone in San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter transitions the street from parking to a 3-minute passenger loading/unloading zone between the hours of 8pm and 3am on Friday and Saturday nights to reduce congestion.



LOADING ZONE CONSOLIDATION + BUMP OUTS
Proposed transportation improvements along Milwaukee Avenue in WPB







PROJECT 5.2

Focus loading zone enforcement during specific times.

Work with businesses to develop a time-of-day restriction for deliveries, noting that there is far less traffic during morning hours.

Actions

- ☐ **Conduct observations on a typical weekday and weekend day of loading zone use throughout the day; record data on vehicle use to determine how long vehicles remain in the zone, and the extent to which vehicles double-park.**
- ☐ **Identify the time periods with the most frequent infractions.**
- ☐ **Coordinate with the Department of Finance to conduct targeted enforcements during these time periods.**

> **Conduct enforcement only during the most congested times of the day when loading zone infringements have the biggest impact on overall mobility.**

PROJECT 5.3

Ensure there are consistent parking regulations for residential parking areas.

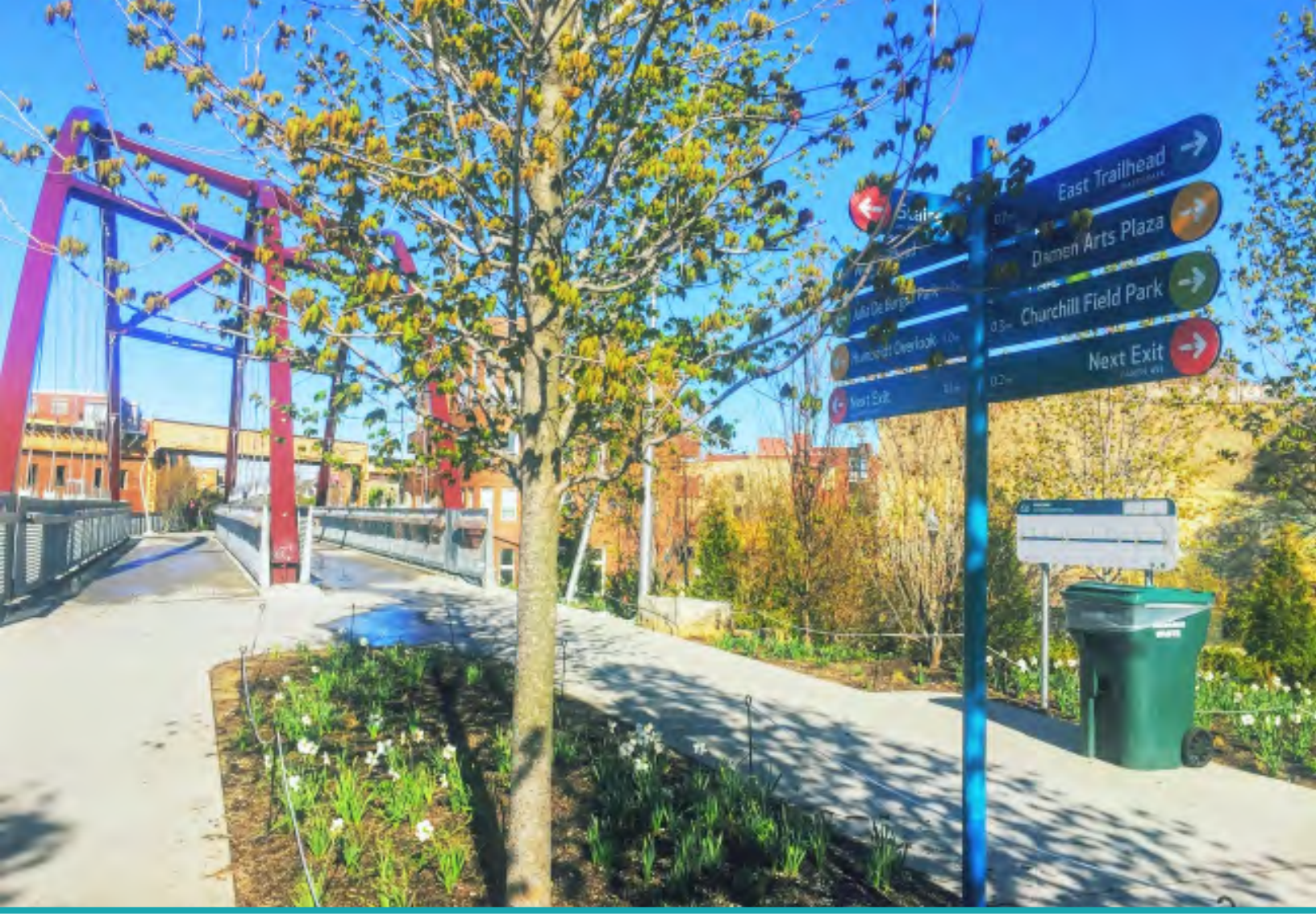
While residential streets are outside the purview of the SSA, regulations along these streets impact the commercial corridors. When parking is full along the major streets, vehicles spill into the residential neighborhoods to find parking. In response to this, many blocks have instituted residential parking permits, by request and consensus of the neighbors. This solution works well for certain times, such as evenings, when residents return home from work and hope to find a parking space near their home. However, there are many times, particularly mornings and midday on weekdays, when parking on the residential streets is largely vacant and could be a good resource for visitors and employees.

The regulations on residential parking permits vary by zone within the WPB neighborhood, but many of these restrict parking 24 hours a day. Streamlining the permits so that they are consistent and allow for more flexibility during hours when restricting parking is unnecessary would alleviate parking and congestion on the commercial corridors.

Alternatively, residential parking could be permitted on one side of each block or a portion of a block in order to allow for visitors.

Actions

- ☐ **Allow more fexibility for residential parking permit streets, such as identifying ways to allow parking based on time of day, or on only portions of the block.**



Objective 6: Improve connections to and from the 606.

The 606 is a wildly successful trail connecting neighborhoods with an east-west non-motorized trail fully separated from traffic. The 606 started as a grassroots effort more than a decade ago to transform an abandoned, elevated rail line into a linear park. The 606 is a significant advancement in the City's bike network and one of the key reasons that Bicycling Magazine named Chicago the #1 city in the US for biking in September 2016.

Connections to the trail were well-planned and built at the same time as the trail roughly every ¼-mile. Trail access points emerge from parks, residential streets, as well as major streets.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **6.1: Continue the 606 further east towards the river.**
- ☐ **6.2: Improve connections from the 606 to the east in the short term.**
- ☐ **6.3: Add directional signage on the road to 606 access points and on the 606 to points of interest.**

PROJECT 6.1

Continue the 606 further east towards the Chicago River.

The 606, although a park system, is used as both a recreational trail as well as a commuting route. The 606 should be extended east to the Chicago River where a trail is being planned that will eventually extend south towards the Loop as well as further east to Lincoln Park.

Actions

- ☐ **Work with The 606, Alderman, CDOT and Active Transportation Alliance to identify funding sources.**
- ☐ **Design route and secure right-of-way.**

PROJECT 6.2

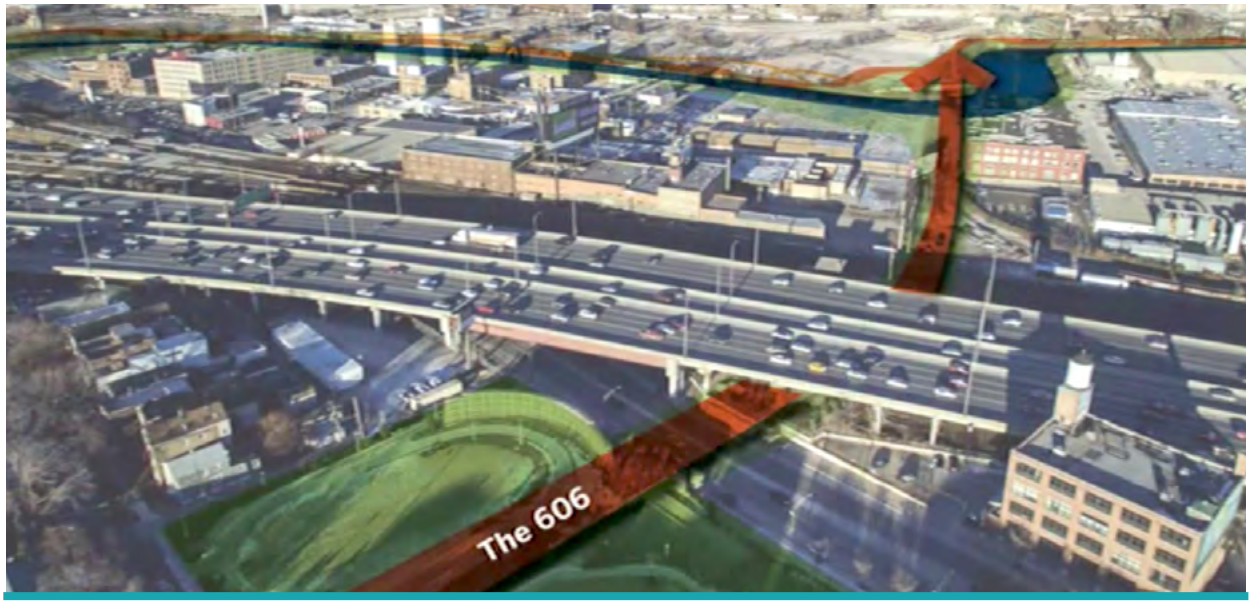
Improve connections from the 606 to the east in the short term.

Currently, the best bikeway to continue east beyond the terminus of the 606 is Cortland Avenue. With a bike lane and a bike-friendly bridge over the Chicago River, Cortland is a comfortable route for many bicyclists. The connection between the 606 and Cortland Avenue is currently a marked shared lane along Marshfield Avenue. This connection could be strengthened by developing an off-street path along the west side of Ashland Avenue between the 606 and Cortland Avenue. This land is owned and maintained by the Chicago Park District as a maintenance facility. Work with the Park District to dedicate a sliver of their land to this path (see Transportation Project 3.1).

Actions

- ☐ **Convene meeting with the Chicago Park District to discuss the possibility.**
- ☐ **Meet with Alderman to discuss potential funding sources.**
- ☐ **Consult with Chicago Park District on any proposed wayfinding signs.**

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE 606 EAST



PROJECT 6.3

Add directional signage on the road to 606 access points and on the 606 to points of interest.

Some of the access points are not obvious to those walking or biking along the street. As WPB welcomes its first hotel within the SSA and can expect tourist activity to rise, making it easier to get to the 606 becomes even more important.

There are also many people traveling the 606 either as tourists or even as residents of neighborhoods further west along the trail who aren't familiar with the neighborhood and everything it has to offer. The unique park is a huge draw for the neighborhood and should be integrated as much as possible to be experienced as a seamless component.

Actions

- ☐ Identify ideal locations for wayfinding signs along the street.
- ☐ Identify points of interest to include in signage along the 606.
- ☐ Work with the Trust for the Public Land and CDOT to develop a design and strategy for sign placement that best integrates with the 606.